

RED TILES, WHITE MOSAIC: INDIGENEITY AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF
MULTICULTURALISM IN CANADA AND CANADIAN LITERATURE—
TOWARDS A LITERARY AND POLITICAL HISTORY

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Abstract

“Red Tiles, White Mosaic” offers a literary and political history analyzing the settler-colonial processes by which the state-driven project of multiculturalism became Canada’s distinctive, even “indigenous” national feature by settling itself on Indigenous lands. I examine multiculturalism as a politics of colonial *misrecognition* whose strategies of managing diversity have excluded or reframed Indigenous political difference as “cultural” difference, obfuscating Indigenous nationhood and the colonial dispossession at the formation of the multicultural nation-state. In Part 1, “Politics and Public Policy,” I historicize the “mosaic” and the development of Canadian *multicultural nationalism* in literary and political discourse since the nineteenth century, showing how official multiculturalism materialized as an extension of the colonial project of nation-building. Chapter 1 offers a novel and sustained historical critique of multiculturalism’s federal institutionalization since 1971 through the spheres of public policy, law, and political philosophy, mapping the strategies of Indigenous appropriation, exclusion, and containment in the architecture of liberal multiculturalism. Chapter 2 explores the ambivalent material effects of early ethnicity-oriented multicultural policy on publishing in Indigenous newsletters in the 1970s, examining the poetry in publications of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs as a case study. In Part 2, “Political Economy, Pedagogy, and Representation,” I study how the policy and ideology of multiculturalism and the state’s multicultural patronage of arts has transmuted within the Canadian literary field and inflected the reception and construction of Indigenous writing as “multicultural” literature, focusing primarily on the institution of the literary anthology. In Chapter 3, I historicize and theorize the anthology’s significance to multiculturalism’s growing visibility and institutionalization in Canadian literary studies in the 1970s and 1980s. In Chapters 4 and 5, I offer sustained close readings of the discrepant approaches to representing Indigenous literatures in two formative “multicultural” anthologies of the 1990s—*Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990) and *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* (1996)—examining how multicultural

recognition obscures the expressive literary politics of Indigenous nationhood. My conclusion brings this literary and political history into the ostensibly “post-multicultural” present, arguing for the ongoing need to decolonize multicultural Canada and Canadian literary multiculturalism.

Lay Summary

Multiculturalism is often considered the defining feature of Canada and its literature. The “mosaic” has long been a symbol of Canada’s cultural diversity and uniquely inclusive pluralism. Yet lands called Canada comprise not only multiple *cultures*, but many Indigenous *nations*. In fact, Canada’s “official” multiculturalism has largely excluded Indigenous peoples, and many Indigenous writers reject having their nations subsumed as one of many cultures in the mosaic. This dissertation provides a broad history of the state politics of multiculturalism in Canada and its influence in the field of Canadian literature that examines these tensions, analyzing multiculturalism’s settler-colonial architecture and its historical evolution as a literary and political nation-building project. I show how multiculturalism’s politics and policies have variously ignored or misrecognized Indigenous peoples and nations as Canadian “ethnic” or “cultural” minorities, and also how multiculturalism has materially influenced the production of Indigenous literatures and their construction as “multicultural” Canadian literature.

Preface

This dissertation is composed of original and independent work by the author. Portions of Chapter 3 were published previously in a 2018 peer-reviewed chapter for *CanLit Guides*, “Official Multiculturalism’s Funding of Canadian Literature: The Writing and Publications Program.” The bibliography in Appendix A will in the future be contributed to *The People and the Text*. Early versions of Chapter 2 were presented in 2017 at the annual conference of the Indigenous Literary Studies Association (Chilliwack) and at *Mikinaakominis/TransCanadas: Literature, Justice, Relation* (Toronto). Selections from Chapters 4 and 5 were presented at the 2019 Association of Canadian and Québec Literatures conference (Vancouver).

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Dedication

For Noush, Carys, and Logan.

[This] book records the initiatives now being taken by Native societies to preserve and promote their own cultural identity through the spoken and written word. . . . Not only are these endeavors valuable contributions to tribal cultures, but they also contribute to the past and ongoing literary heritage of Canada as a nation. Recognition of the place of Native literature as an integral part of the Canadian cultural scene is one of the main goals of *Native Writers and Canadian Writing*.

—W.H. New, Preface, *Native Writers and Canadian Writing* (1990)

“Recognized.” I like that term. Makes me feel almost real.

—Thomas King (Cherokee), *The Inconvenient Indian* (2012)

Introduction

If we are to be part of the Canadian mosaic, then we want to be colourful red tiles, taking our place where red is both needed and appreciated.

—Harold Cardinal (Sucker Creek Cree First Nation), *The Unjust Society* (1969)

In contemporary Canada, where multiculturalism is enshrined in law, difference is tolerated only in approved venues like the plethora of multicultural festivals that take place in Canada each year. The settlers believe in the inevitability of their culture's dominance and the corresponding demise of Indigenous cultures. ... Although the contemporary ideology of the neo-colonizers professes to embrace difference, the evidence suggests that in Canada difference is embraced only when convenient, entertaining, and colourful.

—Jo-Ann Episkenew (Métis), *Taking Back Our Spirits: Indigenous Literature, Public Policy, Healing* (2008)

When Harold Cardinal opened his 1969 treatise *The Unjust Society* by adopting the metaphor of the “mosaic,” he was wryly positioning the burgeoning Indian movement¹ in Canada within a discourse of multicultural diversity that was already well established in the nation's public imaginary, but was then on the verge of redefining the Canadian polity entirely. In so doing, he was also making a strategic rhetorical move, one of many demanded by his arduous writerly project of raising Canada's “Buckskin Curtain” of ignorance and indifference to the social realities and political aspirations of Indigenous peoples. An eloquent orator and intellectual force, Cardinal voiced a famously wicked satire throughout *The Unjust Society* to systematically expose the 1969 “White Paper” Indian policy of Pierre Elliott Trudeau's Liberal government for the hypocrisy of its “forked-tongue doubletalk” (111). Polemical ire bespoke the urgency of his task: resisting a policy proposal designed to finally solve Canada's so-called “Indian Problem” by eradicating legal Indian identity and collective Indigenous and treaty rights under the magnanimous pretext of integration and equal citizenship within Trudeau's liberal “Just Society”—a prospect Cardinal in no uncertain terms rejected as “a thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation” (1) leading “directly to cultural genocide” (118). His appeal made through the

¹ In this project, I most often use the term “Indian” when referring to the colonially constructed “image of the Indian” (cf. Francis, *The Imaginary Indian*; King, *The Inconvenient Indian*), though I also use it to register the term's prevalence within the dominant discourse of particular historical contexts I discuss: e.g., the “Indian movement” of 1960s-70s anti-colonial activism in North America, or the perceived “Indian problem” in the discourse and policies of the Canadian state. I use Status Indian when referring to Indigenous peoples legally defined as such by the Indian Act (1876), and Aboriginal in its Canadian legal meaning to describe First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people in the Constitution Act (1982). I otherwise use “Indigenous” or “Native” with reference to Indigenous peoples, with nation-specific identification where possible.

“mosaic,” though, was less to the righteous indignation of Indigenous peoples living in an Unjust Society, than to his Canadian audience’s own self-interest and emotion: the pride many Canadians felt in the mosaic itself, which had already become part of a nationalist narrative of progressive pluralism:

We listen when Canadian political leaders talk endlessly about strength in diversity in Canada, but we understand they are talking primarily about the French Canadian fact. Canadian Indians feel, along with other minorities, that there is purpose and place for us in a Canada which accepts and encourages diversified human resources. We like the idea of Canada where all cultures are encouraged to develop in harmony with one another, to become part of the great mosaic. We are impatient for the day when other Canadians will accord the Indian the recognition implied by this vision of Canada. (10)

Adopting the mosaic was a way of speaking to Canadians in terms they would hear, and playing on the integrity of those very ideals that propped up Canadian identity.² His deliberate anaphora—“We listen,” “We understand,” “We like,” but “We are impatient”—expressed a communal voice and collective opposition to a Canadian public more inclined to hearing anti-colonial protest as the tragic pathos of a lone Angry Indian.³ It also coolly made legible the impoverished colonial logics of Canada’s “great mosaic,” whose embrace was being unevenly extended to “all cultures” and largely denied to Indigenous peoples. His point was caustic, but clear: Indigenous communities were organized, paying attention to the magniloquence of Canada’s bureaucratic posturing over “strength in diversity,” well aware of the gap between those touted ideals and their own lived realities, and tired of waiting for “non-Indian society to wake up to things the way they are” (11).

If Cardinal turned to the mosaic metaphor figuratively, though, he was not asserting unequivocally the need for Indigenous presence within the liberal pluralism it symbolized. Instead, he marked that participation as conditional, placed in the hypothetical mood of a subjunctive: “If we are to

² Cardinal similarly deployed the metaphor in a 1969 *Maclean’s* article by Jon Ruddy: “The stronger the tiles within the mosaic, the stronger the mosaic as a whole. Before I can be a usefully participating and contributing citizen I must be allowed to develop a sense of pride and confidence in myself as an Indian. I must be allowed to be a red tile in the mosaic, not forced to become an unseen white tile” (19).

³ Hurtig subtitled *The Unjust Society* “The Tragedy of Canada’s Indians.” On the trope of the “Angry Indian” in mainstream media coverage of Indigenous politics, see Hayden King’s (Anishinaabe) “The National Media and the AFN’s ‘Angry Indians.’” Even sympathetic academic reviews of *The Unjust Society* cast Cardinal’s voice as detached from community and overdetermined by pathos, as in Joan Ryan’s for *BC Studies*: “While the text errs in some instances . . . , it remains the valid reflection of at least one individual who has suffered the frustration and the humiliation of a colonial administration” (60).

be a part of the Canadian mosaic, *then* we want to be colourful red tiles.” That “if” was and remains politically loaded, and one whose valence was radically shifting even within the historical moment of its enunciation. In 1969, Cardinal was, on one hand, responding to a Canadian political society whose “mosaic” had never included—never even really imagined, other than as vanishing—a place for Indigenous peoples, and was only very recently being rethought to include non-European immigrants and people of colour.⁴ On the other hand, and more presciently, his words anticipated the coming evolution of Canada’s existing liberal governance into an official multiculturalism—then being developed as national policy by the same Trudeau administration and declared in 1971 with a new White Paper on multiculturalism—that might draw Indigenous peoples and nations into the mosaic of Canada’s body politic and public imaginary as merely decorative cultural tiles. Looking backward and forward with the same glance, Cardinal thus took up the “mosaic” to express the political desires of Indigenous peoples historically denied “a meaningful place in the mainstream of Canadian society,” but also remained “acutely aware of the threat—the loss of our Indian identity, our place as distinct, identifiable Canadians” (12). *If* Indigenous peoples were to “add to the mosaic,” that “contribution [would] be based on what we are as a people” (11)—as nations, distinct “red tiles,” and without absolving Canada of its founding legal relationships with Indigenous peoples and its responsibility to uphold Indigenous and treaty rights. And importantly, if they were to join the mosaic, Indigenous peoples would do so on their own terms: as self-determined actors—“*taking our place* where red is both needed and appreciated”—rather than selves determined by a mosaic that might distort and ossify Indigenous nationhood within a patterned liberal arrangement of Canadian individuals and cultures.

⁴ I address the history of the “mosaic” metaphor in Part 1. Cardinal was also writing in the wake of John Porter’s bestselling study *The Vertical Mosaic* (1965), which had revealed Canadian society as a deeply classed and raced “mosaic” produced by historical patterns of settler-capitalism, where access to political and economic power was consolidated by an Anglo-Canadian monopoly atop a segregated hierarchy that isolated Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities at the bottom. While influential, even Porter’s study paid little attention to Indigenous peoples specifically, revealing how Cardinal’s “red tile” figured outside dominant ideas about the “mosaic,” even as it was being critiqued (see Jedwab and Satzewich xviii).

This dissertation tells some of the story of what happened next. It is about how the history of Canadian multiculturalism has shaped, and been shaped by, that “red tile” in the mosaic, and about the part literature and its study in Canada have played in how that story is told. In broad terms, the inquiry I embark on here resides in the distance between my two epigraphs—between Cardinal’s speculation in 1969 about whether “colourful red tiles” might fit within the Canadian multicultural mosaic, and Jo-Ann Episkenew’s critique, four decades later, of a neocolonial Canada that embraces Indigenous peoples only as “colourful” multicultural performers. For if Cardinal appealed to the mosaic with uncertainty, but also with impatience for a time when “Canadians will accord the Indian the recognition implied by this vision of Canada,” the history of Canadian multiculturalism, now late into its fifth decade, has often translated Indigenous political distinctiveness into ethnic or cultural difference. Cardinal’s tense subjunctive has been conjugated into a present indicative: Indigenous peoples are now regularly imagined into the multicultural mosaic, but it is precisely the deficient forms of “recognition implied by this vision of Canada” that have realized the profound ambivalence of the political desires he expressed, and made manifest the threat he perceived to Indigenous struggles for self-determination. From the shadow of historical non-recognition that Cardinal critiqued, we have arrived at a moment when the history of multicultural recognition has been revealed as a politics of colonial *misrecognition* that regularly subsumes Indigenous peoples as minorities within the Canadian nation-state, rather than as nations that pre-exist Canada with distinct histories and political aspirations toward sovereignty. Literature and its study, as forms of cultural production whose relation to “politics” is often obscured, are among those “approved venues” of cultural display Episkenew cites as sanctioning limited recognition of Indigenous difference, and thus are implicated in Canada’s history of multicultural misrecognition. And it is because literature and its study are political in ways that exceed narrow ideas of culture and encompass the critical expression of nationhood that they continue to participate in shoring up or rewriting these narrow colonial scripts, and can help to tell the story differently.

Though the fields of literature and state politics are not reducible to one another, as Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) argues, the “relationship of Aboriginal literatures to the broader Canadian literary canon is not unlike that of Aboriginal peoples in relationship to the Canadian nation-state—in a word, it is vexed” (“Necessity” 143). In the fifty-plus years since the White Paper, as the Canadian nation-state has become avowedly multicultural, much has transpired to bring belated “recognition” of Indigenous peoples within Canada’s imagined cultural community.⁵ A steady stream of parliamentary reports, public justice inquiries, prime ministerial statements, state apologies, Constitutional accords, Royal Commissions, Supreme Court cases, and now a Truth and Reconciliation Commission have done this at different times—always in response to the activism from within Indigenous communities whose demands for recognition and justice, like Cardinal’s in *The Unjust Society*, could not easily be ignored.⁶ Paralleling these political events, mainstream recognition of Indigenous cultural production has followed since the 1970s, significantly within the literary arts. Indigenous writing now regularly wins national awards, is celebrated as an integral part of Canada’s cultural patrimony, and has become firmly incorporated into the canons of multicultural Canadian literature. If we were to ask what has changed since the White Paper when it comes to the underlying relationship between the Canadian state and Indigenous peoples, though, the “short answer,” as Cree Elder Verna Kirkness suggests, is “not much” (3). Canada remains an Unjust Society, where limited

⁵ I am gesturing to Benedict Anderson’s argument in *Imagined Communities* (1983) that the nation is an imagined political community whose construction is enabled by, amongst other types of cultural production, print media and literature.

⁶ It’s essential to remember that these often highly public events, regularly held up as evidence of the state’s benevolence, have almost always emerged as reactive responses to Indigenous demands for justice. Just as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991-1996) was struck after public controversy ignited by Mohawk assertions of sovereignty at Kanehsatake that led to the armed standoff with the Quebec provincial police (SQ) and the Canadian armed forces near Oka, Quebec, in 1990 (the “Oka Crisis”), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2009-2015) was not a spontaneously state-developed enterprise, but part of the settlement of the largest class-action lawsuit in Canadian history filed by survivors of Indian residential schools. Aboriginal rights were only “recognized” in the Constitution Act (1982) after activists led by George Manuel (Secwepemc) of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs organized in 1980-81 to protest the absence of any mention of such rights in the Trudeau government’s initial proposals for patriation (the “Constitution Express”). High-profile court rulings over land such as *Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia* (2014) are sometimes framed as Canada “giving” Indigenous peoples back their land, whereas the very existence of those cases reflect instead the government’s fighting tooth and nail against the plaintiffs to keep the land, whether acquired by treaty or not.

conciliatory forms of cultural recognition have come with no robust corresponding capacity for fundamentally transforming the power asymmetries of a colonial relationship that continues to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and rights to self-determination. Indeed, as Dene political theorist Glen Coulthard has persuasively argued in *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (2014), it is precisely these deficient forms of “cultural” recognition that have defined the state’s responses to Indigenous anti-colonial nationalism since the White Paper, and that continue to reproduce the very configurations of colonial power that Indigenous peoples’ demands for nation-based political recognition resist (3). In light of this vexed Indigenous-state relationship, this dissertation arises from a conviction that it is necessary to ask as well how half a century of official multiculturalism and cultural recognition have configured the relationship between Indigenous literatures and the broader Canadian literary field.

Contemporary Challenges: Storying the Dissertation

What I aim to establish in *Red Tiles, White Mosaic* is a historical understanding of how the politics of multiculturalism relate to Indigeneity in Canada, and how the institutionalization of multiculturalism in Canada and within Canadian literary studies has inflected the production, reception, representation, and critical treatment of Indigenous literatures in Turtle Island north of the forty-ninth parallel. As my title and its rhetorical indebtedness both to Cardinal and to Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks* signals, this project was motivated by a need to critically interrogate the notion that the settler-colonial foundations of either Canadian literature or Canadian multiculturalism can be decolonized by Indigenous cultural recognition and accommodation alone. The impetus for this dissertation when it was initially conceived in 2014, under the working title “CanLit, Beyond Recognition,” came from my sense that the present moment, increasingly characterized in cultural and political criticism as “post-multicultural” (Kymlicka, “Rise and Fall”), invited a more thoroughly historicized study of how multiculturalism has structured Canadian perceptions of Indigenous political subjectivity and the Canadian study of Indigenous literatures. While by design the scope of such a project is at once broadly

historical and macro-political, its stakes were—also present and personal, based on my own process of working through some of the challenges I've encountered studying and teaching Indigenous literatures within the discipline of Canadian literature that has in part formed me as a scholar. *Red Tiles, White Mosaic* is thus invariably a reflection of my own social position as a white, settler Canadian and the particular conditions of knowledge production that location makes possible. I was born in 1984, the year Pierre Trudeau took his famous “walk in the snow” and left the prime minister’s office for the last time, and was raised in a family and educational system that largely embraced the liberal ideals he helped usher into Canadian public life. As a first-generation Irish Canadian on my father’s side and a descendent of many generations of Anglo Canadian settlers on my mother’s, the intersections of immigration and nationalism that helped produce official multiculturalism in the 1970s have deeply informed my subjectivity as a Canadian, and with it my claims to belonging in Canada. I thus understand multiculturalism and its history—largely, as we will see, developed in the work of various other white Canadians—as part of my own inheritance, and as constitutive of Canada’s continuing history of settler-colonial governance that privileges those like me who benefit from the ongoing displacement of Indigenous peoples. I acknowledge my place in the political and literary histories this project often critiques as a needed check against self-righteous settler detachment, but also to situate this work as part of a larger project of decolonizing multicultural Canada that is necessarily collective, but whose labour is often unevenly distributed to Indigenous and other racialized scholars.

One of my aims was to delineate what I considered to be multiculturalism’s role in engendering some of the sites of tension I then saw between the disciplines of Canadian and Indigenous literary studies—tensions that, in the time it has taken to write this project, have only intensified. The imperative to historicize these inter/disciplinary relations was in some ways a counterpoise to Len Findlay’s famous exhortation in 2000 for Canadianists to “Always Indigenize!”—or at least to my sense of how that challenge had been taken up in the Canadian field and informed my own training as a scholar. While a select number of Indigenous stories were central to the Canadian literature I

encountered as a student in the decade after the millennium—Thomas King’s (Cherokee) *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993), Tomson Highway’s (Cree) *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (1998), and Eden Robinson’s (Haisla/Heiltsuk) *Monkey Beach* (2001) all appeared on more than one syllabus—these stories formed cultural components of a national discipline in which Indigenous scholarship, critical methodologies, and storied intellectualism remained largely absent. As an emerging scholar, educator, and editor with a foot in both the Canadian and Indigenous literary fields, I recognized that the critical idioms and epistemological frameworks informing how Indigenous texts were being read, studied, and taught in these respective disciplines were often discrepant. I understand these discrepancies as reflections of conflicting, even clashing political imperatives underpinning the historically constituted institutional spaces and disciplinary formations in which Indigenous and Canadian literary studies take shape. What I wanted to better understand is how the enmeshed histories of multiculturalism and Canadian literature had facilitated the accommodation of Indigenous writing *as* Canadian, in part by making Indigenous literature multicultural, and thus subsuming the cultural expression of Indigenous peoples and nations within the ethnic and racial diversity of the nation-state.

In short, then, the study of Indigenous writing as multicultural *Canadian* literature, as I had experienced and indeed often practiced it as a student, looked quite different from the study of *Indigenous* literature as such. These differences largely hinged on the dislocation between cultural and political spheres of criticism that Kristina Bidwell (NunatuKavut) targets as part of a pervasive “culturalist” approach to the Canadian study of Indigenous literatures. For Bidwell, “culture,” as opposed to “nation,” is “politically soft and shifty,” facilitating engagement with Indigenous texts and peoples as “yet another culture in the mosaic” by artificially divorcing cultural expression from “specific Political (with a big P) topics within Native literature, such as land ownership, law, and governance” (“Tewatatha:wi” 14). Such criticism, notes Bidwell, “tend[s] instead to focus on small-p politics—that is, on power relations—and on large-scale issues such as colonization, sexism, and so forth” (14). One of the ways the discipline of literary study in Canada has *disciplined* Indigenous

literatures—particularly when these texts are studied and taught *as* Canadian, and thus often implicitly or explicitly in dialogue with the nation-state—is by framing Indigenous writing in reductive ways that facilitate the legibility of Indigenous differences within critical rubrics that ultimately expand or enrich,⁷ rather than fundamentally shifting, the grounds upon which Canadian literature as a national discipline rests. I myself learned to read Indigenous writing by either focusing on non-threatening markers of cultural difference,⁸ or, more often, seeking out subversion, pigeonholing multifaceted cultural expression within the thematic or discursive demands of postcolonial resistance writing against Canada and its colonial history. This interpretive mode, notes Thomas King, “makes it sound as though Native people spend their entire existence fighting against non-Native whatever. That just isn’t true (Interview 111). As Bidwell argues, “it is easy to understand general concepts of colonialism, [but] it is much more difficult and time consuming to learn about the specific traditions, languages, histories, and political priorities of particular First Nations,” and to “support Native people’s specific claims to self-determination, claims with material consequences” (15). For Canadianists entering into critical relationships with Indigenous literatures responsive to the often *sui generis* intellectual, cultural, and political contexts from which they emerge, one of those material challenges is the work of undisciplining Canadian studies commensurate to developing a critical interdisciplinarity attuned to multiple epistemological literacies.

It may be, as Kit Dobson wryly states in *Transnational Canadas* (2009), that Canadian literature as a discipline has over the years become “synonymous with multiculturalism and postcolonialism” (160). Yet the expansions of what is studied and taught as “Canadian” that facilitate such characterizations—including what Cynthia Sugars correctly recognizes as “the central importance that Indigenous

⁷ Ghassan Hage calls this “practical tolerance” within “multiculturalism’s spatial management of difference” (19), a kind of accommodation he critiques for its propensity to “enrich” the mainstream by “accepting and positioning the Other in the dominant’s sphere of influence according to their value (for the dominant)” (“Locating” 19, 32).

⁸ See Deanna Reder (Cree-Métis) and Linda Morra’s collection *Troubling Tricksters: Revisioning Critical Conversations* for a sustained engagement and historical reappraisal of “Trickster Criticism” in Canadian literary studies.

literature now has in the field of Canadian literature” (9) in her compendious introduction to the recent *Oxford Handbook of Canadian Literature* (2016)—have not necessarily disturbed the ideological presumption of Canadian literature’s intelligibility as a nationalist formation. Indeed, it is arguably Canadian nationalism’s propensity to institutionalize and contain differences against the threat of its own fragmentation that continues to rehabilitate that formation itself, as Eva Mackey cogently argues in *The House of Difference* (1998). Thus, as Lily Cho put it in 2007, the imperative toward recognition and *inclusion*—the once insistent question of whether Indigenous and other historically marginalized literatures now “qualify as CanLit”—needs serious critical revisioning: “Decades of liberal multiculturalism assert that they do. Rather, we must grapple with why it is that the marking of something like Native Canadian literature matters, why it is not ‘obviously’ CanLit; why these differences must be registered, and why the problem with registering these differences isn’t just one of inclusion or potential ghettoization” (97). In his recent *Elements of Indigenous Style* (2019), Greg Younging (Cree) centres this distinction as a guiding principle of Indigenous literary research: “Indigenous Literatures are their own canon and not a subgroup of CanLit,” and “the work of Indigenous authors, while shaped by the history of colonialism, is embedded in traditional knowledge systems and oral traditions that have existed since time immemorial and thus long predate CanLit” (15). For many Indigenous writers and critics, these distinctions matter because they are a matter of creative and political self-determination, or what Robert Warrior (Osage) defined as “intellectual sovereignty” in his formative *Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Indian Intellectual Traditions* (1995).

During the years in which this project came together, an expanding body of Indigenous intellectual production, activism, and creative and critical writing have made powerful assertions about the need to think outside what Canadian liberal philosopher Charles Taylor famously theorized as the “politics of recognition” at the heart of multiculturalism. It has become an important decolonizing strategy for many Indigenous thinkers and cultural workers to *reject* or *refuse* colonial recognition as a way of asserting sovereignty. As Audra Simpson writes in *Mohawk Interruptus* (2014),

There is a political alternative to ‘recognition,’ the much sought-after and presumed ‘good’ of multicultural politics. This alternative is ‘refusal,’ and it is exercised by [Indigenous] people ... [who] deploy it as a political and ethical stance that stands in stark contrast to the desire to have one’s distinctiveness as a culture, as a people, recognized. Refusal comes with the requirement of having one’s political sovereignty acknowledged and upheld, and raises the question of legitimacy for those who are usually in the position of recognizing: What is their authority to do so? Where does it come from? Who are they to do so? (11)

The “authority” presumed by those with the power to recognize derives from the colonial history of Canada, and is built on a foundation of legal fictions, public policies, national myths, and cultural constructs designed to subordinate or eradicate the legitimacy of individual and collective Indigenous subjectivities. And the politics of recognition have been complexly interwoven throughout Canada’s colonial history, often with deadly force. I will take the title of Mi’kmaq scholar Bonita Lawrence’s recent essay on the extermination of the Beothuk, “Unrecognized Peoples and the Concept of Extinction,” as a stark reminder of just how closely the invisibility of non-recognition is linked to histories of Indigenous genocide, legal erasure, and land expropriation in Canada. “For Indigenous peoples,” notes Lawrence, “recognition by Europeans has always been a double-edged sword” (297): weaponized by the state to define, classify, and make extinction permissible, but often necessary for Indigenous peoples to have their political claims heard and to survive in the context of colonization. This is a colonial history in which Canadian literature and Canadian multiculturalism—distinct institutions that have often overlapped in the services of nation-building—are both deeply implicated.

Simpson’s questions in the quote above hail an interlocutor, a reminder that the politics of recognition (like all politics) are about the ways power is exercised relationally, and are thus neither unilateral nor static. In 1986, amidst debates over cultural appropriation in Canadian literary culture, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias (Anishinaabe), Daniel David Moses (Delaware), and Tomson Highway formed The Committee to Re-Establish the Trickster to “gain recognition for Native contributions to Canadian writing” and to “reclaim the Native voice in literature” (“Let’s” 3). Protesting the stereotypes of Indian representation in Canadian literary production, the adoption of Indigenous voices and theft of traditional stories in the work of white writers, and the lack of space for Indigenous self-fashioning

within Canadian arts institutions (Keeshig-Tobias, “Stop Stealing”), their call for “recognition” was itself a radical and creative refusal of mainstream Canada’s history of non- and misrecognition. Writing three decades later in 2017, amidst the uncanny return of those same debates over appropriation (which were supposed to have ended, but never did),⁹ Two-Spirit Oji-Cree writer/scholar Joshua Whitehead articulated the sentiments now shared by many Indigenous authors and critics by refusing the ideal of making “room in CanLit for Indigenous,” affirming instead self-recognition of autonomous Indigenous space: “I am not CanLit, my words don’t recognize canonic or tectonic borders, I have all of Turtle Island to nourish and energy with my story. I am not CanLit. I am an Indigenous storyteller writing for Turtle Island, I am Indigenous Lit.” Still, a few months later, Canada’s national public broadcaster recognized Whitehead’s *full-metal indigiqueer* in CBC Books’ 2017 list of “Best Canadian Poetry,” dubbing Whitehead the “future of Canadian literature” (“Novelist”). In the arena of literary writing and publishing, cultural recognition is bound up not only in the configuration (and disfiguration) of political subjectivities, but in the distribution of cultural capital, the political economy of literary awards and funding, the construction of canons, courses, and literary value, and all the material conditions that enable authors to write and their texts to find readers.

I share with many a belief that there is no essential correlation between the fact that Indigenous literatures are now considered intrinsic to the diversity of Canadian literature and the decolonization of that national field. As Elizabeth Povinelli has shown in *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism* (2002), the liberal imaginary is entirely capable of accommodating Indigenous difference as an “adjustment” to the status quo rather than an opening to the “fundamental alterity” of “indigenous discourses, desires, and practices or their potentially radical challenge to the nation and its core institutions” (184). Indigenous cultural recognition can be cunning

⁹ See the introduction and essays in McGregor, Rak, and Wunker for an overview and critical engagement with Hal Niedzviecki’s 2017 *Write* magazine “Appropriation Prize” editorial, as well as the controversy over Joseph Boyden’s claims to Indigenous ancestry, the UBCAccountable affair, and other recent violent ruptures in “CanLit.” I return to some of these concerns as they relate to Indigenous literatures in my Conclusion.

when an “embedddness, implication, and engagement in the nation’s historic brutality towards its colonial subjects is rewritten as the necessary condition of nation-building in late modern liberal democratic societies” (161). This rehabilitative nationalist rewriting is perhaps a defining feature of multicultural Canadian nationalism in the current, post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2008-2015) era being defined by state-sanctioned discourses of “reconciliation” with Indigenous peoples. It is what enables the current Trudeau Prime Minister, for example, to centre the historical injustices of colonialism in a repentant narrative of Canada committed to multicultural diversity and a renewed “nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition, rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership” on the stump (J. Trudeau), while continuing to assert the unilateral sovereignty of the Canadian state over Indigenous nations, lands, and bodies for the development of infrastructure and extraction of resources in the services of a “national interest” (qtd. in Tasker). To risk being an evangelist of the obvious, the imperative question is: whose nation?

Indigenous literary nationalisms, tribal-centred criticism, and the consolidation of these pluriform theoretical discourses as dominant paradigms in the study of Indigenous literatures in Canada (and elsewhere) since the turn of the millennium, invite—insist upon—a rethinking of the “national interests” historically subtending the institution of Canadian literature (even in its most multicultural iterations) in ways literary criticism is still coming to grips with. For Canadianists invested in the study and teaching of Indigenous literatures, some of the questions that still need to be worked out are: What does it mean to conceive of nation-to-nation relations in the field of literature? What might these relationships look like in terms of an ethics of criticism and pedagogy for a comparative study of literatures in Canada across national contexts and their unique cultural histories or intellectual traditions? What critical dispositions or institutional frameworks impede upon an enactment of these relations in a discipline such as “Canadian” literature that continues to persist, albeit uneasily, within the settler-colonial national(ist) ideology of its historical formation? Of course, literary nationalism is not the *only* viable or necessary approach to interpreting Indigenous literary arts. And neither is it

without important criticisms. Contributors to the “Canadian Indian Literary Nationalism?” (2009) outline several concerns, even while asserting nationalism’s power to fulfil such strategic purposes as facilitating the centring of Indigenous worldviews and staking out a position from which to critique the colonizing history of English studies. These include the dominance of male (and US-based) voices in the most frequently-cited texts in the field; the pitfalls of circumscribing literary texts within political agendas that obfuscate the creative autonomy of cultural production;¹⁰ and the potential limitations of nation-based frameworks for engaging urban Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit literatures, specifically, or national traditions that are historically inter-/multi-tribal, pan-Indigenous, or indeed multicultural more generally.¹¹ I don’t consider myself an Indigenous literary nationalist, inasmuch as I am not Indigenous, and neither propose nor advance novel contributions to nation-specific or tribal-nationalist readings of Indigenous texts in this study (though I do turn to these existing works of criticism to inform my readings). Yet Indigenous nationhood, in its myriad, complex, and internally debated political and literary forms, provokes an immanent contestation of the liberal ideal of Canadian inclusion and the uncritical incorporation of Indigenous peoples and texts within the colonial nation’s multicultural body politic. Taking nationhood seriously demands significant (re)consideration of how Indigenous literatures, as *national* literatures, have become—and continue to function as—objects of *cultural* pedagogy within the national framework of Canadian literature.

In a claim that is equally (if not more) applicable in the Canadian multicultural context, Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Crow Creek Sioux) argues that Indigenous nations are “dispossessed of sovereignty in much of the intellectual discourse in literary studies” when their “natural and legal

¹⁰ On this point, see Bidwell [Fagan] and McKegey, “Circling the Question of Nationalism in Native Canadian Literature.”

¹¹ In her study of Indigenous feminist kinship in the Prairies, Lindsay Nixon takes up this latter point to critique how the current nationalist orientation in Indigenous studies aligns uneasily with Canada’s legislation of national status as a tool of management, using the mixed Cree-Métis-Saulteaux history of her Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation as an example: “Tootinaowaziibeeng’s designation as an Anishinabe community is resultant of nationalistic historicizing that has created rigid boundaries between Cree, Métis, and Saulteaux communities in the present” (1). For Nixon, these boundaries are both ahistorical and damaging to longstanding kinship bonds between “[m]ulticultural bands that formed on the Canadian prairies during the 1800s” and “evolved mixed identities instead of maintaining distinct [national] boundaries” (22).

autonomy is described as simply another American cultural or ethnic minority” (127). As Justice argues while asserting “The Necessity of Nationhood,” if Indigenous sovereignty is acknowledged, then “assimilative multiculturalism simply *cannot* be the assumed common ground for discussion if we are to engage in a responsible and meaningful study of Aboriginal literatures” (150). I agree. And yet I do not believe that all multiculturalisms are necessarily assimilative, and that even in its most pernicious forms as state policy in colonial Canada, multiculturalism has opened possibilities for recognition and self-fashioning that Indigenous peoples and writers have capitalized upon for the creative expression of peoplehood that exceeds the delimited imaginaries of the nation-state’s own interests. Like Povinelli, then, I am interested not only in how multiculturalism represents a specifically settler-colonial “form of domination” (6), but also in how Indigenous peoples “creatively engage the specific logic of liberal multiculturalism” (7). By dwelling in these tensions and contestations, the history I have come to write in this project is centred less on a singular overarching argument than it is on working through the many contradictions and ambivalences defining the colonial politics of multiculturalism in Canada as they relate to Indigenousness and Indigenous cultural production. This dissertation, then, ultimately developed as a way of addressing some of the contemporary challenges I’ve conveyed here currently informing the tense relations between Indigenous and Canadian literatures by mapping the part multiculturalism has played in how these political and literary relations have been produced historically.

The notion that multiculturalism in Canada has worked to circumscribe literary differences and contain oppositional politics within the realm of the “cultural” is by no means novel. An expansive corpus of critical multicultural scholarship in Canada predates this study, a body of work that has in one way or another targeted multiculturalism’s limitations and the propensity of its discourse to co-opt or appropriate racialized and ethnic differences into the services of Canadian nationalism. The work of Himani Bannerji (2000), Smaro Kamboureli (2000), Eva Mackey (1998), Roy Miki (1998), M. NourbeSe Philip (1992), Sunera Thobani (2007), Fred Wah (2000), Rinaldo Walcott (1997, 2000), and Sneja Gunew (2004), among many others, has been crucial in this regard, and provides some of the

intellectual foundations upon which this project rests and that have made its thinking possible. Critical multiculturalism in Canadian literary studies—often in conversation with critical race theory, Marxist analysis, feminism, and postcolonial theory—has worked carefully to subvert stable notions of identity promulgated by official multiculturalism and trace the often hybrid, ambivalent spaces of national (un)belonging, including in the more recent postcolonial turns to diaspora, transnationalism, and cosmopolitanism. However, no sustained study exists as yet of either Canadian multiculturalism or the fraught “multiculturalization” of Canadian literature that accounts for how these historically constituted projects relate to either Indigeneity generally or Indigenous literatures specifically. It is surprising that a study such as Povinelli’s on how Indigenous peoples function in the historical “making” of multiculturalism in Australia has not appeared in Canada, where, to a greater degree than in Australia, multiculturalism sits at the ideological centre of national identity and has been a prominent focus of literary discourse. Indeed, as I show in this project, multiculturalism is so deeply ingrained in Canadian nationalist thought that it has become intimately, organically linked to the nation-state’s story of itself, often constructed as a distinctly, even *indigenously* Canadian tradition.

As the dates of the formative critiques of multiculturalism I cite above suggest, a great deal of critical labour was devoted to interrogating multiculturalism as the millennium turned. In the wake of the Multiculturalism Act’s legislation (1988), a series of high-profile events in the national sphere—the Japanese Canadian redress movement and agreement (1988), the Oka “crisis” and failed Meech Lake Accord (both 1990), the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991-1996), the Writing Thru Race conference (1994), the publication and popularity of Neil Bissoondath’s *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (1994), to name a few—focused the attention of mainstream Canada on a cultural politics of difference and made multiculturalism, and its limits, a central topic of debate for cultural critics. In recent years, the sense of “multicultural fatigue” with which Kamboureli, in her influential *Scandalous Bodies* (2000), diagnosed Canadian public discourse at the turn of the millennium has in some ways taken hold in Canadian cultural criticism as well. If the “view of multiculturalism as a

fait accompli” in Canada reflects “the dominant society’s comfortable assumption that multiculturalism, through implementation of the official policy and the proliferation of discussions and forums about it, has already fulfilled, if not exceeded, its mandate” (Kamboureli 83), the relative dearth of literary criticism on the subject in the past decade suggests a broad consensus that the familiar terms upon which multiculturalism has been thoroughly critiqued are, if not now outmoded, largely settled.

So why multiculturalism now, again? For reasons I will elaborate upon in the conclusion of this project, I believe it behooves us as literary scholars in Canada not to let multiculturalism lay *settled* where it lies. The period in which this dissertation was written also saw, among other troubling political events, Donald Trump’s election in the US and the widespread rise in Western politics of a far-right strain of political conservatism, buoyed by explicitly anti-multiculturalist white supremacy and the “delirious” pathos of an affronted white, settler ethnonationalism (Quayson). Canada is by no means isolated from these developments. But in the midst of their growing visibility, multiculturalism is ascending again in much public discourse to its historical role of subverting Canadian nationalism as the exemplar *par excellence* of the nation’s enlightened and comparatively civil approach to tolerance and diversity. These are unfolding developments that, I will argue, continue to impede upon the prospects of decolonization and marginalize Indigenous peoples, nations, and political aspirations from Canada’s public discourse. If there is an orientation towards “post-multiculturalism” in this study, then, it is closest to that theorized recently by Sneja Gunew in her book on the same subject, where the “post” signals less a temporal break or singularly future orientation, but rather, in Jean-Francois Lyotard’s sense of the “post,” as a future anterior (“back to the future”): a return to elements “left out in various constructions of multiculturalism” and subsequently “forgotten in [its] contemporary denigration” (Gunew 3, 10). It is precisely the complex and deeply colonial relationship between Indigeneity and multiculturalism in Canadian political and literary history that remains undertheorized, and which this study returns to investigate historically.

The Australian anthropologist Ghassan Hage, reflecting on the lack of attention to Indigenous peoples in his own *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in Multicultural Australia*, describes the elision as reflecting an “institutionalized division of labour between academics interested in ‘multiculturalism’ and academics interested in ‘Aboriginality’” (24). Such divisions have informed the study of multiculturalism in Canada similarly. While critical multiculturalism in Canada has focused prominently on “Why Multiculturalism Can’t End Racism,” to use the succinct title-thesis of M. NourbeSe Philip’s foundational essay, critical dialogues have more recently addressed the limits of anti-racist theory to decolonization, a complex conversation influentially opened by Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua in their provocative “Decolonizing Antiracism” (2005). I see this project as contributing to and furthering some of the work already underway to think across such institutionally sedimented binaries and renegotiate the overlapping but often fraught relationships between Indigenous and multicultural Canadian literary studies. These projects, many of which are edited collections enacting a reflexive relationality in their very structure, include *Critical Collaborations: Indigeneity, Diaspora, and Ecology in Canadian Literary Studies* (2014, edited by Kamboureli and Christl Verduyn), *Narratives of Citizenship: Indigenous and Diasporic Peoples Unsettle the Nation-State* (2012, Aloys Fleischmann, Nancy Van Styvendale, Cody McCarroll), and *Cultural Grammars of Nation, Diaspora, and Indigeneity* (2012, Christine Kim, Sophie McCall, Melina Baum Singer). In the latter, Kim and McCall articulate the need to unpack the “interconnections and schisms” between Indigenous and diasporic literatures, and call for theorizing “non-reductive relations”; they ask, what critical approaches enable us “to think and speak simultaneously, alongside, and even diagonally to and from each other?” (14). Such vital lines of questioning, whose urgency here takes the form of a “future imperfect” responsive to the present, are part of important new trends in a Canadian critical field attempting a movement away from prior rubrics whose “cultural grammars” have proven deficient—what Kamboureli (following Foucault) calls necessary “epistemic breaks” from the discipline’s past in *Critical Collaborations*. Multiculturalism is significant among those antecedent grammars, inasmuch as its politics have engendered many of the

“reductive relations” (and also provocative critiques) that tether Indigenous and diasporic peoples to the Canadian nation through a rubric of cultural difference. It is my belief that such contemporary searches for future directions and breaks from received critical grammars can and must also take shape in historical excavations that help make sense of how it is we have arrived at our present (tense).

Historical Directions: Research Questions and Project Overview

My research thus began from a series of broad questions. The first, which seemed a necessary place to begin, was also the one I came to discover had not been addressed in any sustained way in existing scholarship: What, exactly, *is* the historical relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state-driven politics of “official” multiculturalism in Canada? That is, how has Canada conceptualized (or not) Indigenous peoples and nations within the political project of multiculturalism as it has developed historically in policy or political philosophy, and how have Indigenous peoples, scholars, cultural workers, and political actors positioned themselves in relation to Canadian multiculturalism? Second, I wanted to better understand how these political contexts have come to bear upon the Canadian literary field: How has the institutionalization of multiculturalism as an official cultural policy influenced either the means of production or modes of reception of Indigenous writing in Canada? What part has the discipline of Canadian literature and the politics of recognition played in constructing Indigenous writing as “multicultural” literature, to productive and restrictive ends alike? My use of the terms *institution* and *institutionalization*, in the context of both Canadian literature and Canadian multiculturalism, signals the focus I bring to this study on not only the contents of literary texts, but to the various locations and structural conditions that enable them to move into print and gain an audience based on, for example, publishing opportunities, government funding, and the pedagogical motivations of the academy. My attention to the state institution of “official” multiculturalism—sometimes called “big-M” multiculturalism or “multiculturalism from above,” often in tense relation

with the small-m multiculturalism from “below” as it is variously performed in the public sphere¹²— derives from my intent to grapple with the material effects of public policy. One of the primary contributions this project makes to existing multicultural studies is its focus on both policy analysis and multiculturalism’s effects upon the political economy of Canadian literature, or what Jeff Derksen calls the “relationship among the nation, its funding agencies, and the marketing of culture” in Canada (x).

Grappling with these broad questions turned this dissertation in the direction of a political and literary history that unfolds in two sections, each with its own Introduction designed to historicize the chapters and further frame how they speak to one another. In Part 1, “Politics and Public Policy,” I set out to analyze the historical contexts in which multiculturalism developed as a national political ideal, federal public policy, and liberal extension of Canadian settler-colonial governance. In the introduction, I trace the literary and political history of the “mosaic” and related metaphors of diversity popularized by writers and politicians throughout the twentieth century in advance of the “official” multiculturalism introduced by Trudeau. Through this history I outline how multiculturalism came to be settled upon and seen as “indigenous” to Canada largely through the erasure of Indigenous peoples, showing the settler-colonial ideology by which nineteenth-century Romantic cultural nationalism in Canada evolved into the state-sanctioned promotion of cultural pluralism. I call this political evolution of nation-building *multicultural nationalism*. In Chapter 1—this dissertation’s longest—I enter into a sustained retrospective analysis of “official” multiculturalism’s institutionalization vis-à-vis Indigeneity and Indigenous peoples specifically, focused through the three prisms of policy, law, and political philosophy. I argue that Indigenous peoples have been positioned as “in/visible” minorities in state multiculturalism’s history, which at times has appropriated Indigenous difference to authenticate a

¹² Stuart Hall makes the distinction between “multicultural,” an adjective describing a culturally plural society, and “multiculturalism,” an *ism* noun denoting substantive practice: “the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity” within multicultural societies (209). When I discuss “official multiculturalism,” I am referring to these policies and programs the Canadian government has implemented to put its theory of multiculturalism into practice.

nationalist narrative of longstanding, native Canadian diversity, but has otherwise obfuscated or disavowed Indigenous peoples and sovereignty in its bureaucratic management and institutionalization of categories such as “ethnic” or “visible” minorities. Part political history, part close discursive and rhetorical analysis of key policy and legal texts, and part literature review, this chapter works to make clear the architecture of official liberal multiculturalism as a technology of settler-colonial governance. It also establishes the key historical, political, and public policy contexts of multiculturalism and its intersections with Indigeneity that my literary interventions in subsequent chapters in turn speak to.

In Chapter 2, my focus turns to the 1970s and to some of the material effects of early multiculturalism policy initiatives on the production of Indigenous literary and political writing in newspaper during the post-White Paper moment of resurgent nationalism. Using as a case study the poetry appearing in *Nesika: The Voice of BC Indians*, the newsletter of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, I examine how, as an effect of the state’s misrecognition of Indigenous peoples as “ethnic” minorities, new ethnicity-oriented multicultural funding sources for Indigenous social and political organizations facilitated rapid expansions of publishing and communication in what has become known as the “Indian Press.” This print-cultural movement created generative spaces of creative writing and community-building that have been all but overlooked in institutional histories of Indigenous literature’s development in Canada. The material conjuncture of Indigenous cultural production and state multiculturalism’s early political economy that frames my analysis of *Nesika* thus becomes in Chapter 2 an occasion to add to the vital ongoing recovery work of Indigenous writers and literary arts historically neglected as “literary” in Canadian literature’s institutional history.

In Part 2, “Political Economy, Pedagogy, and Representation,” my attention turns to multiculturalism’s ascendance and interventions within the institution of Canadian literature, and to the emerging construction of Indigenous literatures as “multicultural” Canadian literature. In my Introduction, I outline what I call *multicultural literary nationalism* to describe the Canadian state’s investments in literary writing and publishing through the funding programs of its multiculturalism

directorate in order to promote national multiculturalism as the basis of Canadian identity. The three chapters that follow examine how these forms of arts patronage and cultural management transmuted in ambivalent ways to the mainstreaming of multiculturalism within Canadian literature, and to the growing visibility of Indigenous writing within that field. My analysis in Part 2 is undertaken primarily through the genre of the anthology, which, in Chapter 3, I argue has played an outsized, albeit understudied, role in the multiculturalism's institutionalization within Canadian literary studies. In Chapter 3, this argument unfolds in a history of 1970s and 1980s anthology production that explores both the "mainstream" history of canonical national-historical surveys and the growing proliferation of Indigenous and ethnic anthologies at this time, many of which were published with assistance from the state's multiculturalism directorate. Chapter 3 works not only to show how state multicultural funding participated in shaping the emerging mainstream/multicultural binary in Canadian literature, but also to historicize and theorize the anthology form in Canada. I argue that the anthology and its uniquely paradoxical form of unifying literary diversities make it a particularly conducive genre of representation for the pedagogical project of rearticulating what was once a predominantly white, Anglo, settler-nationalist Canadian literature as multicultural.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I offer sustained close readings of the discrepant approaches to Indigenous literary representation in the two most prominent "multicultural" Canadian literary anthologies of the 1990s: Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond's *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990), a collection funded by the state's multiculturalism directorate, and which explicitly excludes Indigenous writing from its statist definition of "multicultural" literature; and Smaro Kamboureli's *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* (1996), the first mainstream teaching anthology of Canadian literature to give substantial representation to Indigenous writers, and which intentionally incorporates Indigenous texts in the expanded, critical rubric of multicultural literature it enacted to make its intervention. My close readings situate these formative texts within the historical and political contexts of multiculturalism informing their production, and the radically different

imperatives toward recognizing Indigenous literatures their editors adopt in response to these contexts. As indexes of broader political values and pedagogical motivations in a Canadian literary field wherein the discourse of multiculturalism was being mobilized to extend belated recognition to racial, ethnic, and Indigenous differences historically marginalized by the settler-nationalism of its institutional formation, these anthologies offer conflicting and, as I will argue, deeply conflicted responses to Indigenous representation within the colonial politics of multicultural (mis)recognition.

Taken together, these chapters contribute to what I have called in my subtitle a movement “Towards a Literary and Political History,” a framing that can be clarified in part by describing what this project is *not*, which is neither a comprehensive history of Indigenous or Canadian literatures, nor a complete political history of multiculturalism *in toto*. While my chapters contribute in various ways to these sorts of existing projects, they are not animated by comprehensiveness in coverage. What the conjunction of “literary and political” attempts to signify is that my approach to literary history in the contexts of Indigeneity and multiculturalism targets specific sites—historical moments, political rhetoric, policy directives, legislation, and particular literary texts, genres, and modes of production—where these political and literary histories intersect. While my chapters take different approaches to reading literature and history, each is invested in unpacking sites where the politics of multiculturalism have shaped literary production and criticism, or where cultural producers have worked within and against the materials and imaginaries of multiculturalism’s politics. In its design, though, this project moves in a roughly chronological direction. It begins at a time when Indigenous writing was still outside the constructed borders of Canadian literature’s critical imaginary, and arrives at a contemporary moment when Indigenous literature’s recognition *as* Canadian seems more than obvious, asking along the way what multiculturalism has facilitated or occluded in this historical progression. I do not read this progression as a necessarily *progressive* linear narrative of multicultural incorporation as such, but rather one marked by a history of contradictions and ambiguities that continue to take shape in new ways. I am thus not interested in making yet another call for Indigenous “space” and

multicultural inclusion in Canadian literature. That work has been done. I am instead interested in establishing a genealogical perspective of the spaces that multiculturalism has opened or closed for the possibilities of Indigenous political subjectivity, literary writing, and creative expression of nationhood in this country, and in seeing how this history informs present configurations of Canadian literature.

One reason I've chosen to open with Harold Cardinal's speculations about the "mosaic" and Canada's then-emerging politics of multiculturalism is because the year 1969 is an important symbolic starting place for this project and its historical scope. It marks Trudeau's tabling of the abortive White Paper on Indian Policy, Cardinal's response in *The Unjust Society*, and a movement of pan-Indigenous nationalism that Cardinal later described as "the rebirth of Canada's Indians" in his 1977 book of that name. But the late 1960s and early 1970s is also a formative period of multiple, competing cultural and political renewals in Canada that overlap in complex ways and have come to shape the parallel institutional development of Indigenous literatures, Canadian literature, and Canadian multiculturalism whose triangulated relations this project works to historicize.

First, it marks the beginnings of what has come to be known as the Indigenous (literary) "Renaissance" in Canada, a term speaking broadly to Red Power-era political and social consciousness-raising that traversed the forty-ninth parallel, but which literary scholars have used more specifically to signal the upsurge then of literature published in English by Indigenous authors.¹³ Indeed, cultural and political resurgence at this time were, as they continue to be, mutually informing. Cardinal's *The Unjust Society* helped bring mainstream attention to a cross-Canadian movement of Indigenous writing. The subsequent publication of such pathclearing books as Maria Campbell's (Métis) autobiography *Halfbreed* (1973), Lee Maracle's (Stó:lō) "told-to" autobiographical novel *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel* (1975), Rita Joe's (Mi'kmaq) *Poems of Rita Joe* (1978), Beatrice [Culleton] Mosionier's (Métis) novel *In Search of April*

¹³ See Cox and Justice's introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature* for an overview of the "Renaissance." While the term is now idiomatic, I use it with awareness of its uncomfortable ties to the Enlightenment that deeply informed the history of imperialism, and, like Cox and Justice, of the way it risks framing Indigenous literary arts and their study as *beginning* in the more recent academic/institutional "Renaissance" or as less enlightened prior to it (2).

Raintree (1983), and Jeannette Armstrong's (Okanagan/Syilx) *Slash* (1985) followed and helped establish the contemporary field of Indigenous literature in Canada. As I examine in Chapter 2, though, book publishing alone offers only a partial view of Indigenous writing in this period, much of which appeared in Indigenous newsletters and magazines largely published by and for Indigenous communities. Still, Indigenous writing in Canada was not always recognized as *literature* until the late 1980s and early 1990s. It was not regularly taught in Canadian university English departments until the 1990s, and courses focused on Indigenous literature were still absent from many Canadian institutions into the 2000s.¹⁴ In 1990, Canada's flagship journal of criticism *Canadian Literature* published *Native Writers and Canadian Writing*, its first special issue on Indigenous writing, edited by W.H. New. The early work of settler scholars like New and Penny Petrone made important arguments for the belated recognition of Indigenous writing as part of Canada's literary history and present. The early institutionalized study of Indigenous literatures in Canada, often under the category "Canadian Native Literature,"¹⁵ was thus supported not only by a groundswell of creative writing and book publishing since 1990, but by the formative critical scholarship of non-Indigenous and Indigenous scholars alike, and in particular the work of Indigenous women. After Lee Maracle's *I Am Woman* (1988) and *Oratory: Coming to Theory* (1990), Armstrong's 1993 collection *Looking at the Words of Our People: First Nations Analysis of Literature* was the first collection of literary criticism written by Indigenous critics exclusively, and Armand Garnet Ruffo's (Anishinaabe) *(Ad)Dressing Our Words: Aboriginal Perspectives on Aboriginal Literatures* adopted and updated Armstrong's editorial model.¹⁶ Armstrong's short "Editor's Note" affirmed the cultural specificity of Indigenous literatures and the necessity of understanding Indigenous

¹⁴ While these are generalized timelines that obviously fail to capture the particular circumstances and important differences between specific institutions and scholars, they reflect the field's larger trends, and are borne out by a survey undertaken by the Indigenous Literary Studies Association in 2013 (see McKegney and Henzi).

¹⁵ Seen in the titles of such formative texts as Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie's formative *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English* (1992) and one of the earliest collections of Indigenous literary criticism in Canada, *Creating Community: A Roundtable on Canadian Aboriginal Literatures* (2002), edited by Jo-Ann Episkew and Renate Eigenbrod.

¹⁶ Both collections were by the Indigenous press Theytus Books (1980-), whose influence, together with the En'owkin Centre where it is based in Penticton, in publishing and disseminating Indigenous writing in Canada has been singular.

critics as experts in those cultures, while Kimberly Blaeser's (Chippewa) chapter "Native Literature: Seeking a Critical Centre" articulated the need for "critical methods ... that arise out of the literature itself" (53) rather than fitting into ready-made Western epistemological frameworks. These early interventions preceded and anticipated the subsequent work of American Indian literary nationalists such as Jace Weaver, Cherokee scholars Daniel Justice and Christopher Teuton, Craig Womack (Muscogee Creek), Lisa Brooks (Abenaki), and other US-based critics whose work has become influential to Indigenous literary studies and literary nationalism.

Second, the years surrounding Canada's Centennial in 1967 also saw the consolidation and academic institutionalization of "Canadian Literature" as a discipline, born as it was from the mix of state funding, post-colonial¹⁷ and anti-American political sentiment, and cultural nationalism defining the Centennial zeitgeist. New presses and creative writing brought much critical interest and renewed public enthusiasm to the notion that literature could contribute to the idea of "Canada," and a more general desire for Canada and its literature to be taken seriously and distinctively—as neither colonially British nor annexed American—both at home and abroad. While critics and writers adhering to Romantic cultural nationalist ideals since the nineteenth century had long worked to link literature to nation in Canada, the nationalism of the Centennial era drew inspiration as well from global decolonization movements taking place in many "Commonwealth" or former colonial states, both in the third-world and in settler-invader nations such as Australia and New Zealand. Centennial-era nationalism was facilitated by an influx of state funding for the arts following the Royal Commission

¹⁷ When used in this study, and following (long-debated) trends in postcolonial studies, "post-colonial" (hyphenated) speaks to the idea of a period of independence from colonial rule, whereas "postcolonial" is reserved for the field of postcolonial discourse theory (see Ashcroft; and Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 186-92). Centennial nationalism was bolstered by what were considered then *anti*-colonial desires for a Canadian identity that was no longer determined by British (or the threat of American cultural annexation), as were influential nationalist literary projects like Atwood's *Survival* (1972), though I do not call this settler nationalism "anti-colonial" given the lack of self-reflexivity it brought to Canada's ongoing colonialism. Canada is, of course, not *post*-colonial, insomuch it remains a settler colony whose legitimacy depends on the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands and rights. See Thomas King's rejection of the term in "Godzilla vs. Post-Colonial" or Lee Maracle's in "The 'Post-Colonial' Imagination." Though for some Indigenous scholars, the "post-colonial" remains useful as a space of imagined futurity (Battiste, "Introduction" xvi)

on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1949-1951), and a realization of its objective to leverage the arts and culture in the services of cultivating national identity as a bulwark against the threat of cultural and economic Americanization. The establishment of the Canada Council for the Arts (1957) and key literary infrastructure—Carl Klinck’s expansive *Literary History of Canada* (1965), the journal *Canadian Literature* (1959-), the New Canadian Library paperback series (1958), and many new teaching anthologies, for example—assisted the institutionalized study of Canadian literature in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Literary nationalism, a longstanding critical tradition in Canada, became an overt part of the Canadianist argument in the popular thematic criticism of works like Northrop Frye’s *The Bush Garden* (1971) and Margaret Atwood’s *Survival* (1972), which attempted to forge links between Canadian land, literature, and nation.¹⁸ While not without its critics (see Davey, “Surviving the Paraphrase”), settler-nationalist Canadian literary criticism helped consolidate a discipline whose mainstream was overwhelmingly Anglo and white. This would not substantially change until the late 1980s and 1990s, when a convergence of contexts—including poststructuralist criticism, feminism, the politics of multiculturalism, postcolonial theory, and the substantial organizing and activism of Indigenous and other racialized writers and cultural workers—began opening CanLit and its canon to voices marginalized by the Romantic nationalist tradition.

Third, it is the period when Canada as a nation-state first became officially “multicultural,” publically rebranding its politics in an attempt to promote national unity and to distance itself from the overtly assimilatory politics of earlier mono- or bicultural nationalisms. As first articulated by Trudeau, multiculturalism offered a solution that might reconcile Canada’s many “solitudes” with its newly official bilingualism (1969), and also define what made the country distinct on the international stage.

¹⁸ I return to this topic in Part 2, but Cynthia Sugars provides a historical overview of the “belated” 1960s-1970s consolidation of Canadian literature as a discipline (and the struggle to achieve it) in her Introduction to *Homework: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy, and Canadian Literature*; see also Margery Fee’s essay “Canadian Literature and English Studies in the Canadian University” and PhD thesis “English-Canadian Literary Criticism, 1890-1950: Defining and Establishing a National Literature” for a longer-lens historical perspective of Canadian literature’s roots in Romantic nationalism.

In the aftermath of the racial and ethnic atrocities of World War II, and amidst the threat to Canadian federalism posed by sovereigntist movements in Quebec, the so-called “third order” of “New Canadians” (largely Central and Eastern European immigrant communities) demanded equal recognition from the government and the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B&B, 1963-1969), which had been established to solidify national unity based on a partnership between the English and French Canada. The year 1969 saw the conclusion of the B&B Commission; in 1970, it released the fourth and final volume of its Report, on the “Cultural Contributions of Other Ethnic Groups” to Canada (“other” than English, French, or Indigenous), whose findings Trudeau accepted and used to introduce the federal policy of “multiculturalism within a bilingual framework” in 1971. In 1982, multiculturalism was enshrined in the Canadian Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and in 1988 the policy became law when Brian Mulroney’s Conservative government passed the Multiculturalism Act. Official multiculturalism ushered in not only new cultural spending and recognition for writing and publishing by members of “ethnic” or “visible” minority communities, but also a new emphasis on racial and ethnic difference itself in Canadian public discourse, and on the cultural particularity of Canadian writers within literary studies. By the 1990s, anthologies such as *Other Solitudes* and *Making a Difference* helped centre multiculturalism as a defining (albeit deeply disputed) feature of mainstream Canadian literary pedagogy, and high-profile works of cultural criticism such as Bissoondath’s *Selling Illusions* initiated more than a decade of creative and critical scholarship that placed the contested politics of multiculturalism at the fore of Canadian literary criticism.

These three histories of institutionalization—potted as I’ve recounted them here—developed contemporaneously but are linked beyond mere simultaneity, converging in ways that have significantly influenced ideas about Indigeneity and Indigenous literature within the Canadian public and literary imaginary. At a time when the thinking behind this study was in its nascent stages, Sam McKegney articulated this sentiment in his chapter “Criticism of Indigenous Literatures in Canada” in *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature* (2014). Because McKegney has captured, in broad strokes,

some of the historical tensions between multiculturalism and Indigenous literatures that motivated this project in the first place, and done so with concinnity and concision, I will quote him here at some length. McKegney reflects on the political contexts surrounding Canadian literature's academic institutionalization, focusing on the contemporaneous ascendance of multiculturalism specifically:

Indigenous nations have always persisted uneasily within the superstructure of multiculturalism; we must not forget that the policy initiatives leading to official multiculturalism emerged conterminously with the "White Paper" of 1969, which sought ... the rapid assimilation of Indigenous individuals into the Canadian body politic. The multicultural policy proposals tabled by the Liberal government in the early 1970s ... sought to corrode political differentiation among cultural and ethnic groups in Canada while ensuring, in Pierre Elliott Trudeau's words, that "[o]nly the individual is the possessor of rights." Thus, Canadian multiculturalism, which seeks to distinguish Canadian society from the supposed "melting pot" model of the United States through the celebration of cultural difference, has worked to efface the unique historical conditions of Indigenous nations as prior occupants of Turtle Island and to reimagine those *nations* as *cultures*, as particular shards within the Canadian mosaic. The critical treatment of Indigenous literatures in Canada has, over time, been influenced by the depoliticizing undertow of the multicultural master-narrative. (411)

The depoliticizing "multicultural master-narrative" McKegney gestures toward, which he also describes as an assimilative "multicultural ethos" defining Canadian literature's critical treatment of Indigenous writing (412), is one this study attempts to more thoroughly understand. For McKegney's synopsis, while valuable in articulating the kinds of historical convergences I take up, also prompts a series of questions about how state power is exercised, or "worked," upon Indigenous peoples within the multicultural "superstructure," and about how those political dynamics transmute within the fields of literature or criticism.¹⁹ As I will argue in this project, these questions are also deeply complicated by the state's "official" conceptualization of how Indigeneity relates to its multicultural project. Trudeau's multiculturalism—ostensibly a policy for "all" Canadians—was neither designed nor administered to support Indigenous peoples specifically. And Canada's Multiculturalism Act explicitly exempts

¹⁹ While such generalizations about multiculturalism are commonplace and thus not McKegney's alone, I want to recognize that McKegney's brevity is in part a reflection of the genre and pedagogical function of his chapter's historical overview, which must necessarily move quickly through currents of cultural history in order to summarize some of the larger trends characterizing the developments in Indigenous literary study in Canada. McKegney himself is careful to register that his chapter does not afford him the space to substantiate such claims conclusively or with necessary historical rigor. I thus find his words very useful to think *with* here, as a kind of heuristic, rather than *against*.

Aboriginal peoples and governments from its legislative mandate.²⁰ In other words, in Canada's long history of official multiculturalism, Indigenous peoples have never quite been "officially" multicultural.

If Canadian multiculturalism has "worked to efface the unique historical conditions" of Indigenous nationhood and "reimagine those *nations* as *cultures*," then, how has it *done* this? Through which political or cultural actors, and in which public or private arenas, is the "work" of multiculturalism done? What conjoins the 1969 White Paper on Indian Policy and the 1971 White Paper on multiculturalism, besides the contiguity of their development by the same Trudeau administration? If there is indeed a "multicultural master-narrative" whose "undertow" has depoliticized Indigenous writing, what constitutes this master-narrative, and in which discursive currents does it flow? Where and when has the discipline of Canadian literature been complicit in the process of re-imagining Indigenous nations as cultures, and Indigenous writers as "multicultural"?

Another set of questions emerge around the topic of agency as it relates to the capacity of Indigenous peoples and writers to either reject the multicultural master-narrative or strategically exploit its forms of cultural recognition in ways that contest being managed or depoliticized. How have Indigenous literary artists capitalized on the material or immaterial possibilities for cultural expression and recognition multiculturalism avails while resisting its reductive politics of misrecognition? When have critical multiculturalisms enabled a cultural politics of relation or exchange with other literary communities that may refute assimilation, and disturb the reductive narrative of Indigenous literary history in Canada conceived narrowly as an Indigenous-state binary of oppression and resistance?

These are some of the lines of inquiry that have subsequently sharpened the broad questions I first brought to this project, and that I now bring to the chapters that follow. In the final section of this

²⁰ I take up these ambiguities in detail in Chapter 1. The Multiculturalism Act exempts from its "Interpretation" of federal institutions responsible for policy implementation any "body established to perform a governmental function in relation to an Indian band or other group of aboriginal people." The Act's third subordinate preamble, "recognizes rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada," differentiates Aboriginal peoples from multicultural law by reference to existing Aboriginal and treaty rights enshrined in Section 35 of the Constitution and Section 25 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982).

introduction, though, I want to speak further about my historical methodology and why I have chosen to emphasize a material approach to policy analysis and political economy across this study.

Situating Multiculturalism, beyond the Metonym: Public Policy and Materialist History

In the influential *American Indian Literary Nationalism* (2006), Jace Weaver argues that a core tenet guiding the institutionalization of Indigenous literary studies is a defense against the “co-optation and incorporation” of Indigenous texts “grafted” as minority literatures onto pre-existing disciplinary formations (40). If the ethical stakes of literary criticism are the “definitional and actual sovereignty” of Indigenous peoples, then imposed national fields (e.g., American or Canadian Literature), global area studies (Commonwealth, Postcolonial, World Literature), or even, “*reductio ad absurdum*, the ‘literature of West 86th Street’” are frameworks whose epistemological and geo/political borders may be alien and colonial. The category of “multicultural literature” is for Weaver particularly impoverished for making Indigenous nationhood intelligible: “it becomes a meaningless othering ground for writings by non-whites” (41). Weaver’s criticism, though, while not inapplicable to Canada, also derives from the particular national context of America, where the discourse of multiculturalism emerged primarily in the pedagogical arena of higher education in debates over the canon and representation (see Yamane). In the context of Canada, where the institutionalization of multicultural politics has developed contemporaneously with that of Canadian literature, unpacking multiculturalism’s effects in the literary sphere is a woolier project. This is particularly so given that multiculturalism itself remains a somewhat loosely theorized concept when invoked for the purposes of critique in the field of Indigenous literary studies. In this sense, McKegney’s claim that a “multicultural ethos” in Canada has functioned to reimagine Indigenous *nations* into *cultures* is at once a core thesis underlying this project, but also a paradigmatic instance of the unspecified and often metonymic ways “multiculturalism” operates in criticism that I want to resist. What this “master-narrative” actually signifies, beyond a generalized sense of liberal pluralism or nonthreatening celebration of cultural difference, tends to be left implicit and largely unexplored. If the category “multicultural literature” in some ways reflects or refracts the

social and political contexts of Canadian multiculturalism itself, how those contexts intersect with Indigenous peoples and literatures materially and ideologically needs to be accounted for rigorously.

The glossed complexities operating within the contested term “multiculturalism” as an analytical category are certainly not endemic to Indigenous literary criticism alone. As Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka note, despite its significant symbolic import in Canada, “[m]ost Canadians have no clear idea how [the] complex field of multiculturalism” actually operates in various spheres of public life (51). The formidable challenge multiculturalism poses to any form of critique is its conceptual capaciousness. As Raymond Williams famously observed, “culture” is one of the most difficult words to pin down in the English language, and is itself also very culturally specific in any given usage. It can encompass anything from material or expressive culture (e.g., the arts and literature) to the entirety of customs, beliefs, and values shared by social groups. And in the context of multi-*cultural*-ism, “culture” tends to reify and encode a number of different categories, from ethnicity and race to language, religion, and Indigeneity. Moreover, when speaking of “multiculturalism,” is the implied referent a political theory of governance? An empirical social fact of demography? A rights-based liberal philosophy? A series of government programs and policies? A law and constitutionally entrenched charter right? A critical cultural theory? That the answer to all of these questions, at least in the Canadian context, is potentially “yes” illuminates the need for analytical specificity. On one hand, such flexibility has opened multiculturalism up as a “floating signifier” in a great deal of global theorizing, notes Homi Bhabha, a “portmanteau term for anything from minority discourse to postcolonial critique ... whose enigma lies less in itself than in the discursive uses of it” (“Culture’s” 31). On the other hand, this enigmatic signification is often matched in turn by multiculturalism’s function as kind of overdetermined shibboleth in colonial states where it has been explicitly adopted as political policy, demarcating a range of often conflicting critical positions and political allegiances “onto which groups project their fears and hopes,” as Sneja Gunew argues (“Postcolonialism” 26). As it has been variously conceived and debated from both the political left and right in Canada, multiculturalism has

represented either a progressive response to assimilation; an ongoing form of assimilation insidiously disguised as progressivism; a promotion and celebration of cultural differences; a restrictive management of cultural difference itself; an impoverished liberal ideology incapable of addressing racism or colonialism; an excessively accommodative threat to national unity; a quick fix to the threat of Quebec separatism and Indigenous sovereignty; a pacification of immigrant demands for recognition; a national marketing tool; or simply a popular synonym for everyday diversity.

Such contradictory and overlapping senses have been the stuff of multicultural debate and postcolonial nation-state theorizing in Canada and throughout the West for more than forty years.²¹ I do not wish to rehash them again in depth. A great deal of critical energy predating this study has been spent attempting to define what multiculturalism *is* or might be in its various formations across national contexts. Vijay Mishra argues, and I agree, that a base conclusion to be drawn from decades of global theorizing is that “multiculturalism is very much a discourse of the white liberal nation-state,” one that hinted at undoing “the glue that had hitherto bound the liberal nation-state together,” but “never altered real power or class relations, never radically altered the definition of justice itself and saw the nation-state as a ‘context’ (as Trudeau himself had observed) in which other cultures located themselves and not as a space that may be radically transformed” (“What” 5-6). I raise these definitional vicissitudes, rather, to stress the importance of what Gunew calls a “situated” analysis sensitive to the geopolitically specific and material conditions of national multiculturalisms that arise in relation to particular colonial histories and thus cannot be universalized (*Haunted*). And in the context of Canada, particularly, where multiculturalism represents at once an imagined ideal but also an evolving history of policy, law, and official programs, “situating” multiculturalism is not merely a geo/spatial move, but also a historical one: multiculturalism in Canada is not identical to its parallel incarnations in other nation-states, and neither is its present policy administration or political ideology

²¹ For a comprehensive but accessibly concise global overview of multicultural theory and its permutations in the realms of politics, philosophy, and critical studies, see Mishra’s *What Was Multiculturalism? A Critical Retrospective*.

reducible to that of its origins in 1971. In working to situate the politics of Canadian multiculturalism in relation to Indigeneity and literature both historically and analytically, then, I am less interested in the question of *what* multiculturalism is than I am in asking *where, when, and how* it has operated.

As Laura Moss notes, multicultural critique often posits a historically “static” or “decontextualized multiculturalism that crosses borders in time and space” (36), and thus risks overlooking the shifting attitudes in federal policy that, like Canada itself, have not gone unchanged over the decades. Moss demonstrates how the celebration of ethnocultural differences associated with the “mosaic” and so-called “song and dance” multiculturalism of the 1970s, which still regularly serves as the ideological target of multiculturalism’s critics, has undergone many changes and steady neoliberalization in the policy’s administration since the 1990s, a phenomenon Yasmeen Abu Laban and Christina Gabriel elaborated at the turn of the millennium in *Selling Diversity: Immigration, Multiculturalism, Employment Equity, and Globalization* (2002). This shift in federal multiculturalism’s priorities toward integration (economic, political), social justice, and national cohesion through common citizenship, on the one hand, and away from promoting diversity and funding cultural expression, on the other, has had significant implications in terms of multiculturalism’s place in the political economy of literature. As Moss argues in her analysis of the federal multiculturalism directorate’s annual reporting to parliament, the role of creative “culture” in multiculturalism—that is, the value placed by the government on promoting literature, specifically, and the arts generally—has moved from central to marginal within this evolving framework, following a broader devaluing of the arts and humanities in Canada’s political economy over recent decades.

Augie Fleras has schematized multiculturalism’s history in Canada according to four “stages” of development; the central goal—“to create an inclusive Canada without disrupting the status quo”—has remained relatively consistent, but the “rules of engagement” have changed alongside demographic shifts (heightened immigration), the steady erosion of the welfare state, and with the political climate and federal leadership in Canada. For Fleras, these stages can be mapped historically according to the

primary objectives of state multiculturalism policy: from “ethnicity” (1970s), devoted to promoting the mosaic and respecting differences via cultural exchange; to “equity” (1980s and early 1990s), targeted at improving race relations and promoting structural equality within institutions; to “civic” (1995-2005), intended to foster social inclusion amongst minority groups through shared citizenship values; to “integrative” (2006-present), directed at social integration and national community-building to combat the perceived threat of segregation and extremism in the post-9/11 context of heightened national securitization (*Racisms* 24). Such historical distinctions suggest that if there is a multicultural master-narrative by which Indigeneity has entered the Canadian imaginary, it is neither singular nor still.²²

Macrotheoretical debates and broad generalizations disconnected from how public policy manifests political ideology and functions materially “on the ground,” then, ironically submit multiculturalism to critique under the same conditions by which it is so routinely disparaged as a largely symbolic and immaterial ideal. Marjorie Stone targets this propensity for humanities criticism detached from policy-oriented analysis—what she loosely calls “ideological” approaches—in her own “critique of the humanist critique of ‘official multiculturalism.’” Stone cites as emblematic Bannerji’s *Dark Side of the Nation* and its formative analysis of multiculturalism as an “ideological elaboration from above” that pacifies anti-racist, anti-colonial, and class-conscious critiques of the nation through strategies of “culturalization and ethnicization,” thus rearranging social justice “into issues of cultural diversity” (45):

Critiques of this kind, and they are legion, often rely on “ize” formations to present multiculturalism as an ideological apparatus that marginalizes, ethnicizes, ghettoizes, minoritizes, essentializes, co-opts, domesticates, dehistoricizes, and fetishizes cultural groups (an array of the terms typically employed). ... While such critiques make important points about the intersections of power, state agendas, neo-liberalism, and capitalism, they tend to reproduce multiculturalism as an abstract, monolithic entity, functioning as a reified Other against which the critics define their own positions. They also anthropomorphize the “state” in ways that emphasize technologies of power from above more than the “governmentality” influencing differently positioned subjects acting from localized positions—often with somewhat conflicting agendas—both within government departments ... and outside of [them]. (150-51)

²² While the *future* of multicultural arts funding is not my subject here, I agree with Moss that the “replacement of arts in multicultural public discourse with action plans on ‘useful’ subjects like citizenship” (55) should alert critics for many reasons, not least the state’s long history of “civilizing” by “citizenizing” Indigenous peoples to make “useful subjects.”

This passage is, admittedly, rife with irony of its own in the sweeping and strategic generalizations it makes about “[c]ritiques of this kind,” and its rhetoric oversimplifies the specificity and philosophical rigor of Bannerji’s intersectional feminist/Marxist/anti-racist critique of multiculturalism. As a kind of call to arms amongst humanists to pay more attention to public policy, it perhaps performs the same kinds of dismissiveness it seeks to remedy. That said, I quote Stone at some length here because I agree with the logic of her argument against abstraction, more than her rhetoric. And her words help outline two specific interventions this study hopes to make within the existing corpus of critical scholarship on multiculturalism as it relates to both literature and Indigeneity.

The first intervention is to join theoretically informed critiques of multiculturalism as an “ideological elaboration from above” with attention to the actual economic, institutional, and discursive fields in which it operates. More specific analysis of the policy and legislative frameworks in which multiculturalism has been formed and administered can valuably contribute to ideological critique, and can help dispel the critical tendency to posit metonymic multiculturalisms that reproduces it in ahistorical abstraction. In asking how multiculturalism’s political and literary institutionalization has influenced the production and reception of Indigenous writing in Canada, I thus want to caution against the ways that “multiculturalism,” much like the shorthand “CanLit,” can strategically stand in for multiple sites where values and relations of power are exercised and contested. If multiculturalism has “ethnicized” Indigenous peoples and “culturalized” Indigenous writing, how has “it” done this?

The second, related intervention is that a materialist historiography demands more concerted attention to the ambivalence of multiculturalism’s policy effects in the literary sphere. As a number of writers and scholars in Canada have demonstrated, while multiculturalism, as a strategy of managing diversity, may attempt what Smaro Kamboureli calls a “sedative politics,” it has also helped to open the nation to alternative social imaginaries, in part by the *stimulative* politics of material support for literary writing and publishing. With official multiculturalism came new cultural spending for the arts and forms of recognition—both limited, but also both “enabling [for writers] to a degree,” as Fred Wah

puts it, despite being “controlled by a cultural machine that is very much manipulated by a sense of nationalism” (Rudy 164). Larissa Lai notes that, on one hand, “[f]or a generation of artists, writers, and activists raised under Trudeau’s multiculturalism, the possibilities of articulation and thus self-fashioning mark[ed] a clear break from the whitewash of the previous era”; on the other hand, she remains critical of the ways that this self-fashioning has been mediated by the categories of identity made legible by the state’s pedagogical rubrics, and thus incorporated into a rehabilitated narrative of national history (*Slanting* 71). To address the productive possibilities of multiculturalism’s material interventions in the sphere of literary production is not, as these writer/critics demonstrate, to succumb to a nationalist narrative of state magnanimity. Rather, it is to register the nuances and often ambiguous effects of recognition (even as misrecognition), and to acknowledge the agency of writers, critics, and cultural producers to mobilize multicultural policies for purposes that reflect their own communities’ interests, often in ways that radically oppose the state’s political motivations.

Policy analysis has been a hallmark of much historically engaged Indigenous literary criticism, at least since Warrior’s influential *Tribal Secrets*. The “intellectual historical mode” (45) Warrior outlined grounded close reading of texts in relation to their immediate political contexts, a dialectical process of analyzing Indigenous literature as a product of its political history and political history as it is produced in literature. Craig Womack also criticizes a “detached hypothetical analysis” of colonialism (8):

Federal Indian policies, court decisions, land claims, tribal governments, and politics are not the only factors important to an analysis of Native literature, since artistic imagination is more than a legal case study. On the other hand, complete disavowal of them leads to a largely romantic vision of the field. Unfortunately, it is just such a romanticism that dominates our criticism today; it hinges on culturally based studies, in the ethnographic sense of culture, rather than a consideration of tribes as legal entities. (“A Single” 78)

Womack argues that materialist attention to policy provides avenues for praxis in literary theory, though he is cautious about the dangers narrowing the expressive potential of Indigenous writing to narratives or resistance against the state and its policies. A “major dilemma” for criticism that takes up policy in relation to art is thus “articulating community strategies for increased health, while keeping

the work artful” (78). Episkenew’s *Taking Back Our Spirits: Indigenous Literature, Public Policy, and Healing* practiced such an ethics, examining Indigenous literatures that not only “respond to and critique the policies of the Government of Canada,” but also “effect healing from the ravages of colonialism” such policies have enacted (186). For Episkenew, reading Indigenous literatures through the lens of public policy is a strategy for challenging the “myth of the new Canadian nation-state,” a “master narrative ... which valorizes the settlers but which sometimes misrepresents and more often excludes Indigenous peoples” (2). One significant point of entry in my thinking for this project was the fact that multiculturalism, a policy so formative to the modern Canadian nation-state’s narrative, and one that, as we will see, has variously excluded or misrepresented Indigenous peoples, is mentioned only once in Episkenew’s far-reaching book, in the passage cited as an epigraph to this introduction.²³

The firm pedagogical grip that multiculturalism has on Canada’s narrative of itself, and the ongoing need to disentangle the colonial fingers of that policy’s ideological grip, is something I encounter regularly as an instructor in the field of Canadian literature—another key point of entry for my work in this project, and one I will close here by briefly articulating. In the many opportunities I’ve had to teach or assist in the teaching of Canadian literature, I’ve often opened on the first class by inviting my students to participate in a word-association game whose referent is, simply, “Canada.” I project the word at the front of the class and give students a range of questions to consider as they generate a number of (anonymous) one-word responses, which I use to create a word-cloud and present back to the class: What does “Canada” mean to you, specifically? What do you think it signifies to others, either in Canada or globally? What words are fundamental to Canada’s story? The narrative of signs this exercise creates is illuminating for establishing the variety of perceptions and investments

²³ Notably, Episkenew’s focus is on what she calls “policies of devastation” (the Indian Act, Bill C-31, residential schooling, the White Paper, and many others), whose implementation effected levels of material and psychic violence on Indigenous bodies and communities that her emphasis on literature’s healing power speak to directly. Multiculturalism, as a cultural policy that Indigenous peoples relate to often ambivalently, does not entirely fit within this framework, despite Episkenew’s linking it to a neocolonial narrative of settler cultural arrogance.

in “Canada” we bring to the class as community of learners, many of whom are not Canadian. The responses run the gamut from humorous (“Flannel”) to reflexive (“Possibility”) to descriptive (“Cold”), but with few exceptions and only slight variation, they are always remarkably consistent, and bound to a few key words: “Peaceful,” “Accepting,” and *always* most prolifically, “*Multicultural.*”



Figure 1: Word cloud generated by students in ENGL110: #Canada150+, UBC, 2017. (Credit: From the author’s personal collection).

That multiculturalism signifies at the centre of Canada’s narrative this exercise generates strikes exactly nobody in the class as surprising. In *White Civility*, Daniel Coleman discusses multiculturalism’s enmeshment in Canada’s national identity, and how it can thus “come as something of a shock to White English Canadians ... that the policy which is so widely believed to represent the high achievement of Canadian liberal civility has come under fire from the very people it supposedly protects and includes in the civil sphere” (7). Surely this is often the case. It’s been my experience, though, that the students in my classrooms approach the promises of multiculturalism with a great deal of skepticism, and with either a theoretical or profoundly experiential awareness of the distance between its ideals and the lived realities of many Canadians. They are savvy enough to assert “multiculturalism” as Canada’s defining feature while maintaining an ironic distance from any confident claims of its success. What *does* usually come as something of a shock—and not only to

“White English Canadians,” but to students of all kinds—is the complex, contested relationship Indigenous peoples and nations have with Canadian multiculturalism. They are surprised that Indigenous peoples are in many ways legally and politically excluded from those Canadians the multiculturalism policy “supposedly protects and includes in the civil sphere” (“I thought multiculturalism meant everyone?”); and that many Indigenous peoples and writers resist being subsumed within the multicultural mosaic (“Who wouldn’t want to be included?”).

Their surprise is not born from want of the kind of intellectual acumen required to grasp complicated cultural and political ideas (which they possess plentifully), but from a kind of sanctioned, systemic educational illiteracy with respect to what Deanna Reder euphemistically calls “the basics” of Canadian public policy, Indian administration, and Indigenous cultural history: “I can never take for granted that students have ever read a text by a Native author or have even a simple understanding of ‘status Indian’ or the Indian Act of Canada. Even the most elementary of literary conversations is hampered by this lack of basic information” (Fagan et al. 34). Something that motivated my research in this project was what I understand as a similar lack of understanding about the “basics” of multiculturalism as a policy. Indeed, like my students, I myself had come to understand multiculturalism as an intrinsic, albeit problematic, component of “Canada,” though without a rigorously historicized understanding of its political and policy history, its material influences in the political economy of the cultural histories I study, or its relation to settler-colonialism and Indigeneity. I turn now in Part 1 to historicize and analyze some of these basics, beginning with how the multicultural mosaic became settled in this place of nationalist prominence in Canada.

PART 1: POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Introduction to Part 1: White Civility, Settler Colonialism, and the Literary Project of Canadian Multiculturalism—A Proto-Political History of the Mosaic

According to the mosaic principle, Canadian society is characterized by a tolerance for ethnic and cultural diversity quite unlike other countries, and especially unlike the United States. The mosaic conjures up an image of a society in which different groups live amicably side by side, each appreciating the characteristics and contributions of all the others. In the past thirty years, we have turned this metaphor into a widely accepted description of Canadian reality. We have become so used to it that we seldom wonder where it originated.

—Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory, and Canadian History* (2002)

Multiculturalism is indigenous to Canada.

—Gary Anandasangaree, MP, House of Commons, 20 May 2016

The history of multiculturalism in Canada is a project of cultural and literary endeavor as much as government practice. I mean this not only in the familiar sense that Canadian literature has always responded to its broader political contexts, or that the writing and its study have traditionally played conspicuous roles in substantiating or contesting various ideas about nation—including multiculturalism—though both of these ideas certainly underlie my thinking. More specifically, literary writing and cultural critics have played a formative role in constructing and popularizing metaphors like the “mosaic” that paved the discursive path for the political project that metaphor has come to symbolize. Pierre Trudeau declared multiculturalism as state policy in 1971; and, for important reasons I examine in Chapter 1, his name, along with his particular philosophy of liberalism and approach to Canadian federalism, is indelibly linked to its public ascendance in Canada. But he invented neither the term nor the approach to managing diversity that would become embodied in multiculturalism’s bureaucratic institutionalization. Long before it was made ubiquitous in the official pedagogy of successive Canadian governments, the “mosaic” rose to prominence in the interwar period as a public ideal in largely cultural and academic arenas, including in the work of some prominent figures in the history of Canadian letters. Canadian multiculturalism and Canadian literature have long overlapped or as nation-building projects. Both are constituted by the history of settler colonialism, and thus

implicated in the nation's real and imagined relationships to indigenoussness and Indigenous peoples. I want to start here by tracing back these relations in some of the historical, cultural, political, and philosophical antecedents of Canadian multiculturalism as a literary project.

Nationalism and the “Problem of Canadian Diversity”

While Canadian literature may have “arrived” as a discipline during the “CanLit Boom” of the 1970s, to use Nick Mount’s recent framing of the field’s coming of age, its roots in cultural nationalism extend back to the nineteenth century. English Canadian literary nationalism and the early writers who advocated for the necessity of a viable, distinctive Canadian literary culture drew inspiration from the transplanted European ideals of Romantic philosophy, and a concomitant belief that national literatures support cultural unification and affirm the political status of nation-states. A number of studies preceding this one, including Jonathan Kertzer’s *Worrying the Nation* (1998), Robert Lecker’s *Keepers of the Code* (2013), and Margery Fee’s *Literary Land Claims* (2015), have tackled the enduring legacy of Romantic literary nationalism in Canada, and the longstanding energies devoted to what Carl Ballstadt summarized in 1975 (amidst the “CanLit Boom”) as the central concern amongst most critics of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: to solve “the problems of Canadian literature and what ought to be done to overcome them in the cause of the creation of a distinctive literature” (xxxix). Among these social, political, and economic problems facing the construction of a distinctive national culture in a settler-colony such as Canada has been what Richard Day calls the “problem of diversity”²⁴ in his *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity* (2000). As Daniel Coleman has shown in *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* (2006), a great deal of cultural labour throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries worked to support the dominant national self-image of Canada in relation to an ideal of whiteness and Britishness. In such a context, diversity is

²⁴ To be clear, Day does not see diversity as a problem, but uses the phrase to refer to the ways diversity (racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, Indigenous) has historically been approached by the state as a “problem” in need of classification for the purposes of ultimately solving, often violently. As with the “Indian Problem,” I use these terms with reference to their emergence from discursive formations that have been produced historically within dominant Canadian rhetoric, and with awareness of their problematic ascription of “problems” to be solved.

“problematic” to the extent that it challenges what Day calls the “fantasy of unity” and idealized coherence of the modern colonial nation-state, leading to the many “solutions” enacted through state policies designed to manage and discipline diversity in order to achieve that coherence (4).

European nationalist thought held that literature expressed the distinctive characteristics of a nation constituted by a people unified on their land by a shared culture—ideals that did not travel to Canada without difficulty. The counter-Enlightenment upsurge of cultural nationalist ideology in nineteenth-century Europe, inspired by the Romantic historicism of German philosophers such as Johann Gottfried Herder and Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, turned primarily to organic and ethnocentric models of bounded community to promote nationalism based on affinities between nature and culture: a mutual language, mythology, religion, language, and history shared by the people and cultivated in longstanding proximity to their native land. Romantic nationalism gave rise to grand narratives of national history subtending the political formation of nation-states, and often created sharp divides within European societies that were previously multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural. Despite the attractiveness of this philosophy to the colonial nation-building project of consolidating an English Canadian national literature aligned to an Anglo-centric national identity, its tenets, as Kertzer notes, have always been “ill-suited to the heterogeneity of Canadian life” (161).

Any claims to cultural unity or “distinctiveness” in Canada must inevitably grapple with, among other “problems,” layered histories of colonization and global immigration, linguistic diversity and a prominent Anglophone/Francophone divide, and the pervasive threat to political and cultural sovereignty posed by Canada’s enduring imperialist ties—both old (to England and France, primarily) and new (the risk of Americanization). “And then,” as Fee writes, citing Thomas King,

there are the “inconvenient Indians” and their prior and continuing presence in the land the newcomers claim as their own (King, *Inconvenient*). A hallmark of Canadian nationalist literary criticism (and that of other settler nations) has been its flexibility in negotiating multiple contradictions, as becomes clear in its treatment of Indigenous peoples . . . These contradictions explain some of the strange qualities of imaginary Indians, who flicker in and out of public view. (*Literary* 4)

In 1884, the critic John Logan addressed the “national infancy” (115) of the young Dominion and expressed concern that Canada’s colonial status marked a limit to any future claims to a distinct Canadian literature: “I doubt not but the day will come when ... we will produce a great writer, or even great writers; but will they be founders of a ‘distinctive literature’? I think not, unless they write in Anglo-Ojibbeway, and educate a nation to look upon Nana-bo-john as a Launcelot or a Guy of Warwick” (117). What Logan mourned was that settler Canada, in its “civilized arrogance,” had failed to “amalgamate” with the existing Indigenous cultures to produce a national tradition with a richness comparable to that of European nations, but nevertheless uniquely Canadian.²⁵ His elegiac lament for a distinctly Canadian mythology that would never be was supported by another myth, the colonial belief that Indigenous cultures themselves had already disappeared: “We have not amalgamated with the native and woven the woof of our refinement in the strong sinuous web of an aboriginal religion and tradition. ... [W]e are here now, and they are gone” (116). Without a “strain of native blood” to root a national culture in its place, Canada, for Logan, would be unable to fuse its growing diversity into a viable nation: “We are gaining the whole world and losing our own soul. Individuality, almost nationality, is being lost” (116).

Less pessimistic promoters of the cause understood Canada’s diversity as the very possibility of forging a new nationality and new literature on new lands. After emigrating from New England and arriving in Canada in 1857, Thomas D’Arcy McGee, the Irish Catholic reformed anti-colonial revolutionary, coupled cultural diversity enthusiastically to nationalism, seeing in Canada the promise of a country capable of negotiating differences and avoiding the “intolerant nationalism” he perceived in the US (“Mental Outfit”). The Canadian literature he advocated for, like the Canada he envisioned, would need to be “national in its preferences, but catholic in its sympathies” (2). While “we may not be

²⁵ These sentiments repeat in Canadian literature, such as in Douglas LePan’s poem “A Country Without a Mythology” (1948) and later in Northrop Frye’s criticism. In the *Literary History of Canada* (1965), Frye argued that Canadian writers struggled to turn “a country without a mythology into the country of mythology, ending where the Indians began” (839).

able to form a literature purely Canadian in identity,” he acknowledged, “we can gather from every land, and mould our gleanings into a form, racy of the new soil²⁶ to which it is adapted” (“Canadian” 42). Such a “mental outfit” for the nation and its literature would require the “younger minds of the dominion” to transcend Old World religious and ethno-nationalist allegiances and amalgamate the best of their transplanted traditions “with a wholesome and hearty zeal for doing something in their own right, on their own soil” (“Mental Outfit” 7). To find its sense of place, a distinctive Canadian literature would thus take as its central theme the landscape. “There is a glorious field upon which to work for the formation of our National Literature,” wrote McGee in 1858: “It must assume the gorgeous coloring and the gloomy grandeur of the forest” and “the grave mysticism of the Red Man” (“Protection” 44). McGee wrote his Canadian ballads to sing the lyrics of a history native to Canada and its soil, utilizing what had been in Ireland a popular anti-colonial form for nationalist poets, who themselves were inspired by the Romantic historicism of Herder and German cultural nationalists. His songs imagined “savage” Indians into the landscape, and into his ballads of the explorers and missionaries who brought civilization to Canada’s wilderness and Christianity to the Indigenous “lost children of Adam” they encountered (*Ballads* 16). As Katrin Urschel notes, McGee’s poetic nationalism, once a decolonizing strategy in Ireland, became an indigenizing move in Canada, used to “efface Aboriginal culture and centre white Canadians as the new Natives” (50).

Romantic nationalism was a powerful motivating force supporting the institutionalization of Canadian literature for more than a century after Confederation. As Fee argues, until relatively recently, many critics and writers working toward a distinctly Canadian literature produced variations of the story that “Indigenous peoples would vanish, should vanish, or already had vanished” (2). Patrick

²⁶ “Racy of the soil” was the epigraph to the Dublin newspaper the *Nation* (1842-1848), established by the nationalist Young Ireland group and edited for a time by McGee. Writers and activists in Young Ireland used the terms “racy” and “raciness” frequently to describe the condition of being deeply rooted in Irish cultural history. See Aaron Schneider’s “Total Men! Literature, Nationalism, and Masculinity in Early Canada” for a fuller discussion of McGee’s links to Young Ireland and its influence on his ideas about Canadian nationalism (Chapter 1, especially).

Wolfe claims that “settler colonialism is inherently eliminatory” (17), with replacement as its objective. This eliminatory ideology marks not only Canada’s history of literature, but that of other narrative institutions, from anthropology and history to politics and law. The colonial scripts of such nationalist fantasies, marked variously by appropriation and disavowal of (often imaginary) Indians, articulated Canadian identity in ways that helped to naturalize the powerful work of state policy and legislation designed to make Indigenous peoples disappear. The assimilatory Gradual Civilization Act (1857), the Indian Act (1876), and the policy of enforced residential schooling are particularly stark examples of the settler-colonial structure of a Canadian nation-state whose efforts to “continuously restrict and diminish membership in Indigenous societies,” Bonita Lawrence argues, have been geared toward a “‘final conclusion’—the elimination of Indigenous peoples *as* peoples” (“*Real*” 16). “Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question,” stated the poet and Indian Affairs administrator Duncan Campbell Scott in 1920. What Scott and many other Canadian politicians called Canada’s “Indian Problem” is unique in this respect to the broader “problem of Canadian diversity” precisely because of the violently eliminatory logic of its solutions, as the presence of Indigenous peoples *as peoples* challenges Canada’s tenuous claims to national sovereignty, land, and also literature. The 1969 White Paper on Indian policy proposed to embrace Indigenous peoples as individual citizen-subjects, while finally solving the “Indian Problem” by eliminating Indigenous peoples’ collective rights and legal status. Indigenous peoples, who were supposed to vanish but never did, made it abundantly clear to Trudeau that they were not interested in disappearing into the fabric of Canadian liberalism.

Two years later, Canada’s approach to managing the problems of diversity took a new direction. Trudeau’s 1971 White Paper policy of multiculturalism helped shift ideas about national culture in Canada for the first time towards an official embrace of pluralism. As I will show in Chapter 1, multiculturalism, as it was conceived as policy by the first Trudeau administration, was supposed to signal not only a turn away from the aggressively assimilationist government policies that preceded it,

but also the death of Romantic cultural nationalism, to be replaced by official recognition and government support of all national cultures in Canada. The move away from official promotion of an English Canadian ethnonationalism (always in tense partnership with French Canada) was, on one hand, an outcome of the particular social circumstances of Canada during the late 1960s, which, as I elaborate in Chapter 1, converged to make a new approach to Canadian diversity policy both publically favourable and politically expedient. On the other, it marked the fruition of a genealogy of social and political discourse on national identity that was already firmly entrenched, and deeply colonial.

Throughout the twentieth century, the “mosaic” had gradually arisen to challenge the hegemony of British supremacy in Canada, and by the 1960s was becoming broadly accepted, as Daniel Francis writes in 2002: “As Canadian society became less and less ‘British,’ the mosaic increasingly seemed to be not just an accurate description of reality but an actual prescription for the way Canada ought to be, until today it is as unthinkable to deny the worth of the mosaic as it was to deny the racial superiority of British civilization seventy-five years ago” (87). Indeed, when Trudeau rose in the House of Commons on October 8, 1971, to outline the government’s response to the final volume of the report of the B&B Commission, he helped consecrate this belief. Arguing that multiculturalism presented the most logical solution to the problem diversity poses to national unity, Trudeau introduced the policy by adopting a passive voice that placed the nation-state as the recipient of a political ideal with an imposing agency of its own: “A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework *commends itself to the government* as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians” (45, my emphasis). Since the 1970s, multiculturalism—broadly understood as the recognition, acceptance, and promotion of diversity—has been embraced as the state’s official discourse of nationalism (the basis of shoring up unity and collective identity), such that a contradictory “multicultural nationalism” now forms the dominant expression of national self-definition. In contemporary Canada, the politically novel argument that cultural diversity could create national unity made by Trudeau is now fixed in mainstream discourse. Speaking in parliament in 2016

on the subject of Tamil Heritage Month, for example, Liberal MP Gary Anandasangaree turned to Trudeau's legacy and the "bold action" of his multiculturalism policy to declare a series of nationalist clichés: "Except for indigenous peoples, all of us in Canada have come together in this great country from around the world"; "In Canada our diversity makes us stronger ... it is diversity that unifies us"; and, "Multiculturalism is indigenous to Canada."

How, then, did multiculturalism become claimed as "indigenous" to Canada? And how has Canada negotiated its claims to an indigenously multicultural society vis-à-vis Indigenous peoples themselves? Part 1 analyzes these and other questions through a sustained interrogation of multiculturalism's initial development and subsequent evolution as an official state policy (Chapter 1), before turning to examine some of the material effects of this policy on Indigenous print-cultural production in the 1970s (Chapter 2). In the remainder of this extended introduction, my interest is in showing how the mosaic emerged as a model of diversity and liberal Canadian civility in a body of what Daniel Coleman calls "proto-multicultural" writing (*White* 182). Doing so gives history to the utter void of Indigenous recognition Harold Cardinal was responding to in 1969 when he challenged the emerging Canadian "mosaic," and establishes the early genealogy of multiculturalism's discursive production whose contemporary iterations I take up in subsequent chapters.

Romancing the Mosaic

The "mosaic" metaphor was actually coined by an American writer, Victoria Hayward, in her 1922 travelogue *Romantic Canada*, illustrated with photographs from her companion Edith Watson.

Documenting their journey from Atlantic to the Pacific and their encounters with Canadian lands and peoples, the book aimed to provide "the story of Canada in the romance of its simple industries simply accomplished," following the "highways and by-ways" of the "faraway and little-visited territories of the Dominion" across the wild "hinterland" of Canada as they saw it lurching into modernity (xi).

Searching out Romance in ethnographic accounts of the Maritimes, Labrador, Hudson Bay, "Old Quebec," and modern Ontario, they find themselves confronted with it in full force in central Canada,

at the nexus of “the east and the west, the great north and trailing south, the old and the new, the Indian, the French and the English—the great epic of fur and afterwards that of wheat” (191). It is here that Canada’s “symbolic character” voices itself truest, and can be found “how many and varied are the ears that have heard the magic call” of the “New Word” (185). Hayward pauses in the Prairies to celebrate the “sturdy character” of “New Canadians,” those “foreigners” from “widely separated sections of Old Europe” —“Icelanders, Poles, Ukrainians, Austrians, Finlanders, Swedes, Bukowinians; and how many others?”— who had arrived after the Anglo-Celtic and American “pioneers” (186). The motley architecture of Western Canada appears to Hayward as a reflection of the nation’s ethnic and religious diversity, “a mosaic of vast dimensions and great depth” (187).

In his Introduction, the American anthologist E.J. O’Brien offers up *Romantic Canada* as heartening evidence of a uniquely Canadian “wise tolerance and appreciative catholicity” where diversity is embraced rather than assimilated: “In Canada, the Scottish Highlander, the Acadian, and the Doukhobor, for example, have not been compelled to abandon their memories. The life of their forefathers has flourished when transplanted to a new soil” (xiii). What Hayward’s pen and Watson’s photographs had arrested were the “beautiful racial traditions which have survived in Canada and flourished, which the passion for conformity to a provincial process of standardization has crushed in the United States” (xiii). The text is steeped in the romanticizing and patronizing rhetoric of tourist reportage; indeed, the “mosaic” was part of what made the backwoods and wheat fields of Canada exotic and Romantic to these American travellers. As was “the Indian,” who is visible “all through Canada,” but positioned spatially *outside* and always temporally *behind* the new mosaic and Canada’s laudable diversity, a “romantic figure of the atmospheric background” (218). Indigenous peoples feature prominently in Hayward’s travelogue,²⁷ but only as stylized figures of literary Romance—“As a

²⁷ Chapters such as “The Abenaki Basket-Makers” and “The Indians of Alert Bay” intersperse entries on “Labrador,” “The Prairie,” and so on, alongside Watson’s ethnographic photo-documentation (“An Eskimo Grandmother,” and other nameless figures). In one remarkable photo from Ontario, looking across the Grand River to capture a “view” of “the

Figure, the Indian is a Synopsis” of history passing into modernity—rendered in tropes as Vanishing or Noble Savages: “He is still and always will be a page from the tome of the simple life, retiring before the advance of that form of society which involves living indoors” (218). *Romantic Canada* thus brings the Canadian mosaic into relief for the first time against a background of disappearing Indians in a text whose westward movement generically replicates an imperial expansionist narrative.

It is an enduring irony that the mosaic, which would become a pillar of (anti-American) Canadian nationalism, was metaphorically gifted by US writers—writers who believed *Romantic Canada* itself was an important gift to the project of establishing a distinctive Canadian literature. O’Brien framed it as a text that “provided this literature with its just setting,” and as a literary companion piece to the salvage ethnography of Marius Barbeau, whom he argued was among those “conferring a new literature upon Canada and adding rich chapters to her imaginative history” (xiii). By removing “the Indian” from the Canadian mosaic, *Romantic Canada* was thus also participating in the indigenizing discourse of Romantic nationalism already well-established in Canadian letters.

Designing the Mosaic

Barbeau collaborated in the 1920s with the prolific author, folklorist, and Canadian cultural advocate John Murray Gibbon, a founding president of the Canadian Authors’ Association (CAA) who perhaps did more than anyone to popularize the “mosaic” in Canada’s public. In 1926, Kate Foster had been the first Canadian writer to adopt the metaphor explicitly to advance a model for managing immigrant diversity in her *Our Canadian Mosaic*. Foster argued the “mosaic” model was “essential in nation-building” (141), and catalogued 17 different immigrant “races” in Canada for their desirability, arguing that “[p]rospective immigrants should be selected preferably from British stock or from among the more readily assimilable peoples of Europe” (9).²⁸ But it was Gibbon who, in his 1938 Governor

Mohawks,” there is nobody discernable in the image, which effectively erases from the landscape the very peoples it purports to capture (“View from His Britannic Majesty, George III’s Chapel to the Mohawks, near Brantford” [176]).

²⁸ *Our Canadian Mosaic* was prepared as a review of Canadian immigration for the YWCA’s Dominion council. For Foster, the mosaic presented a model to accommodate limited differences that was overwhelmingly assimilationist—the mosaic was seen as a workable concept that best addressed Canada’s “great need” for “Limited Selective Immigration” (9).

General's Award-winning book, *The Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation*, brought the metaphor to the mainstream. Gibbon proffered a "mosaic" of "racial types" in order to "preserve for the future Canadian race the most worthwhile qualities and traditions that each racial group brought with it," urging against the "blend[ing] into one type" he saw of "our neighbours in the United States [who] are hurrying to make every citizen 100 per cent American" (vii). Following Foster's taxonomic model, Gibbon's *Canadian Mosaic* charts an ethno-history of Canada's "racial types"—their group traits, folkloric and cultural traditions, national origins, patterns of settlement—premised on a belief that race determined moral and physical character, and thus suitability to Canada's environment.²⁹

Like Barbeau, Gibbon (1875-1952), born in Ceylon to Scottish parents, was trained as a folklorist at Oxford, where both were influenced by the cultural nationalism of the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century English folk revival. The establishment of the English Folk-Song Society in 1898 (the year Gibbon finished at Oxford) was inspired by the Romantic historicism popularized in Germany by Herder, and was itself a reactionary movement against the growing cultural influence of German classical music in England. Folk song and poetry, understood as the "primitive" expression of a national people (the *Volk*), spoke to common ancestry and gave voice to the national soul (see W. Wilson). The folk revival in England, whose key proponent would become Cecil Sharp, sought to restore an English nationalism those like Sharp believed to be corroded by industrialization and an increasingly cosmopolitan urban life resulting from England's status as an imperial centre. In folk music could be salvaged a more authentically English, rural, and grassroots antidote to the cultural contaminations of modernity, a communal voice united by the "subtle bond of blood and kinship" (Sharp 136). While drawing on ethnonationalist philosophy, however, the folk revival in England developed within the intellectual movement of Fabianism and the more inclusive, collectivist

²⁹ "If we are to understand the Canadian people, we must know more than just the geography and scenery of Canada, and the customs and habits of the Canadians. We must also study their racial origins" (vii). For Gibbon, "race" signified national or ethno-religious origin (e.g., Irish, French, Balkan, Scandinavian, "the Hebrew").

aspirations of its democratic socialism. Thus, while committed to the Romantic ideal that folk history provided a basis for national identity, the revival held that folk culture could be used not only to show “the unique aspects of a nation, but could also be used to bring people of different cultures together in mutual appreciation” (McNaughton 16). As Janet McNaughton argues, this moderate position would become particularly attractive to those like Gibbon and Barbeau returning to Canada and turning their attention to the folk traditions of a multi-ethnic and rapidly growing immigrant population.

Much of Gibbon’s career was spent as a European publicity agent for the Canadian Pacific Railway, where he collaborated with Barbeau to put on a series of folk festivals at CPR stops across Canada, including the famous “Folksong and Handicraft” festivals at the Chateau Frontenac in Quebec and the “Indian Days” celebrations in Banff. These festivals were designed not only to promote railway tourism, immigration, and Western settlement, but also Gibbon’s deeply pluralistic vision of Canadian society—goals he saw as “intimately linked” (Dawn 119). As Gordana Lazarevich notes, the CPR festivals were invested in more than publicity but in the idea of “nation-building—that the arts and cultures of Canada can serve as unifying elements and as a means of communicating across cultures” (6). Gibbon’s nationalism was thus culturally pluralistic and relativist, premised on the notion that Canadian identity would be forged by retaining the best of the national cultures that arrived in Canada and could survive. A distinctly Canadian culture and “future Canadian race” would emerge in the admixture of diverse ethnic traditions that *Canadian Mosaic* hoped to preserve and promote:

Whether Time, the artist, will ever design and create a masterpiece out of the Canadian scene remains for a mythical judge in some remote future to decide. All we can do today is to collect and separate and perhaps ourselves fabricate the tesserae or little slabs of colour required for what that artist seems to have in mind as a mosaic. The foundation is provided by the geography and climate of this northern half of the North American Continent. One contribution which we can deliberately make is to discover, analyze and perfect the cements which may best hold the coloured slabs in position. (413)

While inclusive by design, Gibbon’s vision of the “mosaic” conjoined the ethnographic ideal of pluralist cultural preservation (to “collect and separate . . . slabs of colour”) to prevailing Social Darwinist ideas of immigrant suitability to “the geography and climate” of Canada—a point reinforced

by his title's explicit linking of the "Canadian Mosaic" to the *Making of a Northern Nation*.³⁰ His classification of racial groups to be "preserved" in Canada was ultimately hierarchical, and limited to those traced through European migration best suited to make up the multi-ethnic mosaic of the future. Indigenous cultures, while key to Gibbon's promotion of Canada through the CPR, were not imagined as part of the masterpiece he saw being painted in Canada by the artist of history. Indeed, Indigenous peoples remain for Gibbon, quite literally, pre-historic to the new mosaic³¹: "The Canadian race of the future is being *superimposed on the original native Indian races* and is being made up of over thirty European racial groups, each of which has its own history, customs and traditions" (vii, my emphasis).

Three years after Gibbon's *The Canadian Mosaic*, the prodigious translator and literary scholar Watson Kirkconnell, also a CAA charter member and twice national president, published *Canadians All: A Primer of Canadian National Unity* (1941), a mass-produced pamphlet prepared during World War II for the government's Nationalities Branch. Kirkconnell was an early and influential advocate for "ethnic" Canadian literature. Among his many translation works, he wrote the ethnic literature section of the *University of Toronto Quarterly* annual "Letters in Canada" issue from 1937-1965, reviewing roughly 70 Canadian books per year written in neither English or French (see J. Woodsworth).³² *Canadians All* sought to extol the political values of liberal pluralism in Canada against the perceived threats of fascism and communism, and Kirkconnell's folk history of immigrant groups created an early template

³⁰ Gibbon's racial determinism echoes, for example, that of Canada First proponent Robert Grant Halburton's 1869 *The Men of the North and Their Place in History*, in which the new Dominion of Canada is imagined as a "Northern nation inhabited by the descendants of Northern races": "As British colonists we may well be proud of the name of Englishmen; but as the British people are themselves but a fusion of many northern elements ... we must in our national aspirations take a wider range, and adopt a broader basis which will comprise at once the Celtic, the Teutonic, and the Scandinavian elements, and embrace the Celt, the Norman French, the Saxon and the Swede, all of which are noble sources of national life" (2).

³¹ Indigenous peoples crop up mostly in the background of Gibbon's cataloguing of various European settlements, with the exception of one sustained and telling anecdote, in which he compares the likeness of a "Stoney Indian" to the reconstructed bust of a "Cro-Magnon" man by American anthropologist J.H. McGregor at the Museum of Natural History: "He looks very much like a Stoney Indian, and whenever I meet one particular Stoney Chief at the time of the Indian Days at Banff, I think of this Cro-Magnard and feel tempted to say 'Hello, old man, here we are again!'" (1).

³² Along with his other important contributions to Canadian letters, Kirkconnell also founded Canada's Humanities Research Council (predecessor to what is now the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council).

for the kinds of state-sponsored ethnic catalogues that later became widespread with the arrival of official multiculturalism.³³ In *Canadians All*, Kirkconnell “tells the story of the peoples of Canada and points to a road for us to follow towards permanent unification of all our groups into one strong, resolute nation” (Foreword). He added to the popular “mosaic” metaphor that of the “mixing bowl” to describe “the richness of the national amalgam” (7), advocating for a “unity” that is not necessarily “uniformity” (11). “But who are the Canadians” of *Canadians All*, Kirkconnell asks? “Well, at least 98 percent of us are transplanted Europeans. . . . Europe sent their colonists across the seas; and today 200,000,000 descendants of these European nations inhabit the two Americas, along with a few Indian survivors, a few Asiatic immigrants, and some negroes brought in from Africa” (5-6). Kirkconnell’s catalogue expanded Gibbon’s to include non-European “Asiatic” and “Jewish Canadians,” but Black and Indigenous peoples remain outside the mosaic and Kirkconnell’s “story of the peoples of Canada.”

World War II is thus an important but often under-recognized context for multiculturalism’s early development. For both Gibbon and Kirkconnell, the “mosaic” (or “mixing bowl”) was not only the progressive model vis-à-vis the American “melting pot,” but also an ethical repudiation of the eugenicist approach to racial cleansing then occurring in Europe. Kirkconnell’s *Canadians All* was essentially propaganda for the Nationalities Branch of the Department of War Services, which circulated hundreds of thousands of copies across Canada. Its Foreword frames the work of knowing and appreciating diversity as a bulwark against the threat of “Nazi underground warfare” at home, given that “[i]ntrinsically, a nation like Canada, whose population comprises many races and creeds, is perfect ground” for such attacks. Its intention was thus to thwart the threat of *disunity*, in part by appeasing public concerns that the loyalties of European immigrants might lie elsewhere. The war effort is taken by Kirkconnell as a grand unifying event that demonstrates how diverse Canadians are “united in their adherence to the cause of Canada and the British Empire” (17), thus aligning the

³³ Richard Day draws out the links between Kirkconnell’s *Canadians All* and later multicultural catalogues of Canadian ethnicity like the government’s *Canadian Family Tree* series, which I touch on in Chapter 1 (see Day, 146-76).

promotion of pluralism at this time explicitly to state allegiance and patriotism. Yet while both Gibbon and Kirkconnell denounced Nazism and racial/ethnic cleansing, they also largely adhered to the same classifications and biological definitions of race that enabled it. Gibbon's ideas about race and racial development, in particular, were clearly bound to the popular science of eugenics, and *Our Canadian Mosaic* self-consciously adopts the same categorization of European "races" used in Nazi Germany.

The proto-multiculturalist positions seen in the Canadian texts of Foster, Gibbon, and Kirkconnell are part of a longer history of popular writing dedicated to defining and solving the "problem" of Canadian diversity, whose most infamous antecedent is likely J.S. Woodsworth's *Strangers Within Our Gates* (1909). Woodsworth sounded the alarm of a "mixed multitude" being "dumped into Canada by a kind of endless chain" of immigration, and articulated the "problem" of diversity as one of "weld[ing] this heterogeneous mass into one people" (203). Utilizing immigration statistics and social sciences research to produce a taxonomy of racial and ethnic types according to their assimilability within Canada, *Strangers* maps a list of origins that starts with "Immigrants from Britain," and follows a trajectory roughly east and south across the nations of Europe, before finally arriving at "The Orientals" and "The Negro and the Indian," the latter grouped together "because both stand out entirely by themselves" from "the *ordinary* white population" (190, emphasis mine).³⁴ Later texts like *Our Canadian Mosaic*, *The Canadian Mosaic*, and *Canadians All* each, with variations in degree and method, adopted Woodsworth's ethnocentric template, but began recasting the threat to national unity Woodsworth saw in Canada's coming "hordes" as an opportunity to advocate pluralistic cultural retention for Canadian nation-building and unification, though in highly bounded and selective terms. As Foster remarked of the mosaic, "as in other art, design is of paramount importance" (141). These designs—all of which were seen as highly progressive in their times—were premised on hierarchies of

³⁴ Woodsworth acknowledges that the "Indians" are not immigrants, but believes they have become "strangers" to Canada nonetheless: once "proud autochthones; now they are despised natives; aborigines, yet outcasts; belated survivors of an earlier age, strangers in the land of their fathers" (192).

human types arranged by categories of race, ethnicity, and nationality, operating alongside racialized conceptions of time, civilization, and progress, in order to classify more and less desirable “types” or “stocks” of Canadian whose privileged model was British (above all English) and white. In doing so, they helped establish what Day describes as a “set of generic features that have come to dominate thought, writing, and practice regarding the problem of Canadian diversity” (8) that prefigured the official development of multiculturalism in the 1970s. A common feature in all of these early texts is the complete absence of Indigenous peoples in the ideal Canadian mosaic. In defining acceptable types of difference that could be preserved to expand, without disturbing, Canada’s English, white hegemony, they also continued the work of a settler nationalism that, as in Hayward’s *Romantic Canada*, needed Indigenous peoples to vanish for the mosaic to rise as a new “indigenous” national mythology.

White Civility, Multicultural Nationalism

Daniel Coleman discusses some of these proto-multicultural texts in *White Civility*, where he shows the colonial conventions by which “white normativity” was maintained and reproduced within Canadian literary culture between 1850 and 1950. Coleman’s work is an important precursor to this study because it helps clarify how closely the nascent discourses of immigrant accommodation and multicultural tolerance in the mosaic’s discursive production were being drawn along the lines of a genealogy of Canadian white supremacist belief that was longstanding, widespread, and culturally pervasive, but always fragile and inherently ambivalent. The structural contradiction of white civility is that it consolidates itself relationally, through opposition—civility needs its binary negative, savagery³⁵—and in disavowal of the violences done in its name that produce, solidify, and maintain such distinctions. It thus requires a “vigilant policing of [its] borders, even when those borders are being conscientiously expanded and liberalized” (22), as they were in these early mosaic models.

Coleman’s study gestures toward what he calls “multicultural civility” (8) to suggest

³⁵ Emma LaRocque (Plains Cree Métis) elaborates on the “Civ/Sav” dichotomy and its dehumanizing history in relation to Indigenous peoples in Canada *When the Other Is Me* (39-46). See also Roy Pearce’s formative *Savagism and Civilization* (1953).

contemporary liberal multiculturalism has now become the dominant ideological expression of this long tradition of white civility in mainstream Canadian discourse. The extent to which contemporary “multicultural civility” is reducible to “white civility” remains largely a supposition in Coleman’s study, whose focus on late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Canadian literature predates the arrival of “official” multiculturalism after this period. Indeed, *White Civility* leaves off at a historical period when the political economy of culture broadly and literature specifically were being transformed by significant state interventions in the production of national culture that helped pave the way for the growing institutionalization of both Canadian literature and official multiculturalism: the Massey Commission (1949-51), the Fowler Commission on Broadcasting (1955), the O’Leary Commission on Publications (1960-61), and, most pertinent to this project, the Laurendeau-Dunton B&B Commission (1963-69), which resulted in Trudeau’s 1971 multicultural policy. Thus, whereas Coleman sets out to show how literature by white Canadians “shape[d] popular views *in advance* of the pedagogies of the state” (36, original emphasis), it is clear that “multicultural civility,” as it has risen alongside official multiculturalism, must be understood more explicitly as state pedagogy—one that literature and writers have at times advanced or been looked to for validation, but have also deeply contested.

The unprecedented state interventions in Canada’s cultural industries in the postwar period were inspired by the ideology of Romantic nationalism,³⁶ but also helped to reformulate the traditional relationship between cultural nation and political state. Concerted patronage of the arts following the Massey Commission meant that literature was no longer merely an organic voice of “the people,” but a product of the state and its economic investments in national culture as political instrument to buttress Canadian identity. As Paul Litt has argued, the Commissioners, and in particular the Anglophone cultural elites among the culture lobbies they heard from, struggled with the problem of diversity, and

³⁶ As the CAA’s briefing cited in the Massey Report states, for example, “The inarticulate nature of the average Canadian’s patriotism results from the lack of a native literature commensurate with Canada’s physical, industrial, scientific and academic stature, and with the proved character of its people” (224).

required a “definition of nationalism that qualified the Romantic ideal of cultural unity with the liberal principle of toleration,” conjoining “Canadian nationalism with liberal humanism” (112). Biculturalism was deemed necessary to “tolerate” because French Canada was an “accepted fact based on a historic and necessary accommodation,” but, as Litt notes, “there seemed to be no reason why new immigrants should not assimilate” (113). Still, it is clear that the ideal of “unity in diversity” later adopted by Trudeau shaped the rhetoric of the Massey Report and its articulation of a “national tradition of the future”: “Through all the complexities and diversities of race, religion, language and geography, the forces which have made Canada a nation and which alone can keep her one are being shaped” (4); “Many national groups are preserving their own traditions and blending them skilfully into a Canadian pattern ... Such groups by their very existence show the diversity within our unity” (67); “Our need is therefore the greater for a suitable display of those records ... [which] help us to realize that the diverse history of this land of scattered peoples may be in itself a bond of union” (323). Despite such rhetorical postures, the Report made no direct recommendations for the patronage of “ethnic” arts. And the brief section on “Indian Arts and Crafts”—included primarily because it “affects the well-being” of “people who *once* played such an important part in the history of Canada”—declared outright that the “death of the true Indian arts is inevitable” (238, my emphasis). The “impact of the white man with his more advanced civilization and his infinitely superior techniques” had irreversibly destroyed an authentic “Indian way of life,” and with it a future for authentic Indigenous culture. Labelling contemporary Indigenous arts as “artificial” and “degenerate” provided a rationale for asserting their irrelevance to Commission’s mandate to make recommendations based on the Canadian “national interest” of encouraging “institutions which express national feeling, promote common understanding and add to the variety and richness of Canadian life” (xi) The gross irony is that the very presence of Indigenous peoples becomes for the Commissioners evidence of their cultural demise and irreparable fall from a colonially-constructed authenticity. Thus the “national tradition of the future” might confidently express a culture native to Canada without needing to accommodate the arts of Indigenous

peoples, which the Commissioners relegated to history.

As I examine in detail in Chapter 1, the ubiquitous ideals of white Canadian civility that inform the hierarchies of identity expressed in the emerging political and cultural discourses of the mosaic certainly shaped the idea of Canada that the B&B Commission worked to consolidate. It attempted to solidify an equal partnership between the English and French “founding races,” granted peripheral recognition to “other ethnic groups,” and left Indigenous peoples out of the picture entirely. The 1969 White Paper was also a major manifestation of white civility, premised as it was on the belief that the root of Indigenous peoples’ marginalization was not settler-colonialism, but their exclusion from a particular model of liberal Canadian citizenship whose universal extension would grant access to the full privileges of Canadian society. Coleman’s is an indispensable study for its tracing of the deep roots of such colonial beliefs that keep returning in new forms alongside the “whole range of injustices” that “must repeatedly be forgotten if White Canadians wish to sit comfortably with their claim to multicultural civility” (8).³⁷ Part 1 of this project thus in some ways begins where Coleman’s leaves off by picking up some of the historical threads of that ideology’s Canadian history, whose logics are deeply woven into the literary and political discourse from which multiculturalism emerged.

Settling the Garden

“Multiculturalism” first entered official political debates in Canada in the mid-1960s as part of the legacy of John Diefenbaker’s Progressive Conservative leadership (1957-1963). Diefenbaker, raised in Saskatchewan and of German and Scottish ancestry, was the first (and remains the only) prime minister with a surname that is neither British nor French in origin. An advocate for civil liberties, he had been a progressive supporter of expanding Canadian national identity through his “One Canada” policy,

³⁷ The obvious contradictions of such claims to civility are clearly evident in this genealogy of the mosaic when we consider, for example, that Kirkconnell’s *Canadians All* and its celebration of Canada’s “mixed salad” unity during World War II appeared the very same year Japanese Canadians began being forcibly removed to internment camps after Pearl Harbour. Coleman calls attention to such injustices—most significantly, Canada’s history of Indian policy and residential schools administration—by turning to Theo David Goldberg and Cornell West, who have theorized such paradoxical civility as constitutive to the violence of post-Enlightenment liberal modernity itself.

which sought to displace the nation's dominant Anglo-centrism (as well as special concessions to Quebec and francophone Canadians) in favour of guaranteeing individual citizen rights. Together with passing Canada's first Bill of Rights in 1960, Diefenbaker extended the franchise to Status Indians, and he was a political supporter of the individual rights of Indigenous peoples, who, like many immigrants, he saw as overlooked in national debates framed primarily by biculturalism. As Christa Scholtz notes, though, "neither he nor his cabinet were comfortable with the collectivist nature of Indian land [and] rights agendas" (47), which his Indian Affairs administration felt would "retard the process of Indian integration" (Leslie 308) within Canadian citizenship. Nevertheless, one way Diefenbaker showed his support for minority groups—whose vote helped bring him to office—was with senate appointments. In 1958, he made James Gladstone (Blackfoot) the first Indigenous senator, and in 1963 he appointed the first Ukrainian Canadian, Paul Yuzyk, known by some as the "father of multiculturalism."³⁸

In 1964, Yuzyk used his first speech in the senate, later printed as "Canada: A Multicultural Nation," to advocate for multiculturalism and contest the bicultural terms of reference of the B&B Commission then underway, which he argued neglected "the joint contributions of the various ethnic groups of the third element to the Canadian way of life" (27). The British and French may have been "senior partners" in Confederation, he argued, but Canada had evolved from "paramountly British-French, with a substratum of Indian and Eskimo cultures, to multicultural, with the immigration of many European and some Asiatic peoples" (23). Yuzyk critiqued Canada's history of colonization and expressed sympathy with Indigenous peoples, "natives of this land long before the coming of the French and the British," with whom he aligned the mostly Central and Eastern European immigrants constituting Canada's "third element." Yet his speech was primarily concerned with demonstrating the importance to Canada of "European peoples [who] were invited to this country by the government of

³⁸ This is the title of the 2017 commemorative book printed "in recognition of the pioneering legacy of the late Senator Paul Yuzyk, for his role as a nation builder in changing the face of Canada, and for his prediction that Canada would become a role model for multiculturalism in the world."

Canada to settle the vast wilderness” (25). Arguing that the settlement and resource development of the West had been achieved by Europeans who “brought civilization to vast areas hitherto uninhabited” (25), Yuzyk worked to elevate the status of the “ethnic groups” in part by showing their contribution to the colonial project of nation-building, including its “civilizing” mission and the development of Canada’s ostensibly “uninhabited” lands.

Ten years before Trudeau accepted the recommendations of the B&B Report and made multiculturalism official policy, Diefenbaker had outlined an alternative conceptual metaphor to both the “mosaic” and the “melting pot” in a 1961 speech delivered at Winnipeg to celebrate the contribution of Ukrainians to Canadian settlement:

I liken Canada to a garden ... A Mosaic is a static thing with each element separate and divided from others. Canada is not that kind of country. Neither is it a ‘melting pot’ in which the individuality of each element is destroyed in order to produce a new and totally different element. It is rather a garden into which have been transplanted the hardiest and brightest flowers from many lands, each retaining in its new environment the best of the qualities for which it was loved and prized in its native land. (Diefenbaker 27)

Diefenbaker saw this novel amalgamation as the basis of a “new nationality” or “new Canadianism,” a “blend in terms of full equality of many racial and national stocks, fused by a common geography, economy, standard of living, and social and political institutions” (27). The metaphor of the nation as a garden of immigrants retaining the best of their own “native lands” in the new soil of Canada proposes something of a liberal revision to the Romantic model of ethnonationalism. That is, it bridges the “organic” tenets of the German cultural nationalist tradition with the history of civic nationalism developed in Western Europe, wherein the nation-state exists as a collaborative democratic institution chosen by individuals united in their differences by a shared commitment to common laws and values. Herder, in fact, frequently turned to the same metaphor in his own writing, comparing individual nations to diverse flowers growing organically from their land.³⁹ While the state would ideally unify a

³⁹ As Sonia Sikka notes, this was Herder’s “favourite botanical metaphor: the world as a garden in which plants grow in harmony with one another, forming a beautiful and peaceful whole, but remaining in their separate spots” (246). It was also used by Gibbon well before his *Our Canadian Mosaic*. His 1923 speech to the Empire Club on “Canadian Letters and the New Canadian,” originally titled “European Seeds in the Canadian Garden,” makes an argument like Diefenbaker’s.

distinctive national culture, Herder was also a relativist and cultural pluralist, and imagined the ideal of a world of multiple distinct nations, each “tending its own plot in the garden of humanity” (Sikka 87). The Canadian garden Diefenbaker proposes here, however, works to reimagine the state itself as multinational—Canada itself as a garden of humanity, the world transplanted at home, a mosaic of national flowers “fused” with “root upon a soil” (27) and cultivated by the landscape of its “new environment.”

I conclude with this metaphor of the Canadian mosaic as a living garden because it contains the seeds of what I call *multicultural nationalism*, a term I use to describe the state-sanctioned reinvention of Canadian nationalism around cultural pluralism as a tradition widely understood as organic to Canada. The settler-nationalist logic of this metaphor lies in its ambiguous elision of the peoples, cultures, and nations already existing on the “soil” long before the diverse Europeans who arrived and transplanted their own “native” traditions to cultivate something distinctly Canadian. As we will see, this is a logic whose colonial ideology is deeply rooted in the institutional formation of official multiculturalism, resulting in the many ambiguities, contradictions, and erasures of Indigenous peoples upon which the political and cultural histories of multiculturalism rests.

Chapter 1: In/visible Minorities: Indigenous Peoples and Canadian Multiculturalism in the Contexts of Policy, Law, and Philosophy

I found myself ... wondering about the connections forged (and not) and the relationships conceived of (or not) between official multiculturalism and Aboriginal policies as perceived by a government and general populace.

—Ashok Mathur, “Cultivations, Land, and a Politics of Becoming” (2011)

Indigeness is *not* ethnic difference; it is both cultural and political distinctiveness, defined by land-based genealogical connections and obligations to human and nonhuman bonds of kinship.

—Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee), “The Necessity of Nationhood”

The issue of the First Nations—their land claims, languages, and cultures—provides another dimension entirely, so violent and deep that the state of Canada dare not even name it in the placid language of multiculturalism.

—Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation*

Have Indigenous peoples now become “a part of the Canadian mosaic” in its contemporary political institutionalization, as Harold Cardinal asked in 1969? Or, put differently, does Canadian multiculturalism include or officially recognize Indigenous peoples? Yes, but also no. Or, it all depends.

This chapter is, at first, an attempt to historicize and contextualize some of the key policy, legislative, and philosophical contexts of multiculturalism’s “official” political history in Canada that give rise to such equivocation in response to this straightforward question. Because it’s a question that the state has answered ambiguously, that provokes a range of responses from Indigenous peoples themselves, and that requires attending to significant political shifts in the history of Indigenous-state relations, federal Indian policy, and multiculturalism’s politics over time and across discursive spheres, clearly defining the positioning of Indigenous peoples within Canadian multiculturalism is an unruly task that refutes absolute answers. As I will show, Indigenous peoples were obscurely omitted from the policy framework of Trudeau-era multiculturalism in the 1970s, explicitly excluded from the 1980s legislative framework of the Multiculturalism Act, and reduced to the position of sub-state “national minorities” by the prominent political philosophers of multiculturalism in Canada. While no longer erased from the “mosaic” explicitly, Indigenous peoples have remained what I call *in/visible* minorities in contemporary multiculturalism: appropriated into narratives of a longstanding tradition of Canadian

diversity, but conceptually unaccountable within the subject positions of “ethnic,” “ethnocultural,” and “racial” or “visible” minority as these categories have become institutionalized via multiculturalism and its diversity politics. Closely analyzing this in/visibility and how it is produced in political discourse helps to reveal the concerted disavowal of settler-colonial history by which multiculturalism has become politically manifested as a tradition “native” to the Canadian nation-state and its self-definition. At the same time, the state’s various attempts to obscure this disavowal and account for Indigeneity within multiculturalism’s history have often subsumed Indigenous difference *as* “ethnic” difference, shaping constructions of Indigenous political subjectivity through policy and cultural funding as a strategy of managing diversity. Tracing these convoluted histories is crucial to this project because they have come to bear upon not only mainstream social conceptions of Indigenous peoples in Canada, but also the critical modalities of multiculturalism’s discourses as they have shaped Canadian literature as a cultural institution, including the political economy of literary production.

Introduction

I will start with two short examples that help to illustrate some of the ambiguities that confront any binary response to the question I’ve opened with as a heuristic:

1. In the near five-decade history of official multiculturalism in Canada, the first and only time the federal government has explicitly addressed the question of Indigenous peoples’ “inclusion” in a policy-oriented publication was in 1991, in the aptly titled booklet *Multiculturalism: What is it Really About?* Published by the then-newly established Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship three years after the Multiculturalism Act (1988) became legislation, and at a time when multiculturalism was being debated in Canadian headlines, the booklet sought to provide straightforward answers in plain language to a series of basic questions about multiculturalism and its relation to national unity—questions that reflected the hopes and anxieties being expressed by the Canadian citizenry. The three-part response to question seven—“Does Multiculturalism Include Canada’s Aboriginal Peoples?” (19)—reads:

- The multiculturalism policy is for all Canadians, including Aboriginal peoples.
- Many of the issues to which multiculturalism responds—racism, understanding different cultures, and preserving culture—concern Aboriginal peoples.
- The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* explicitly recognizes the special status of Aboriginal peoples.

The first point's universal inclusion of Aboriginal peoples within a multiculturalism for *all* Canadians is quickly qualified by the second point's reversal of perspective: "many" cultural and social aspects of multiculturalism are of "concern" to Aboriginal peoples themselves. The final point then explicitly affirms the special relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the federal government as an ostensibly integral component of the answer, but, without explaining the meaning of "special status" or its significance to multiculturalism in terms of law or policy. The brief explication that follows goes on to summarize these points by reiterating that "Multiculturalism programs work with Aboriginal peoples on issues of concern to them," though with a notable caveat: "However, many of their political, social, and economic concerns are beyond these programs. Other federal government departments have policies and programs designed to deal with these issues" (19). The "however" that conjoins but also contradicts the state's affirmation of Indigenous *inclusion* with its recognition of Indigenous *difference* or *exception* is a sign of the double-bind placed here on Indigeneity in relation to multiculturalism. Multiculturalism of course must include Indigenous peoples in Canada because multiculturalism is for all Canadians. *However*, Indigenous peoples have unique legal status that must be recognized and their "issues," "dealt with" by the Department of Indian Affairs, exceed the mandate of multiculturalism policy as it relates to other Canadians. Yes and no.

2. In 1976, the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism (CCCM; later renamed the Canadian Ethnocultural Council), an advisory body established to provide the Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism ongoing input related to Canada's then-nascent multiculturalism policy, held its Second Canadian Conference on Multiculturalism in Ottawa. The conference theme was "Multiculturalism as State Policy," and proceedings focused on topics such as Francophone and

Anglophone views, studies of non-official languages and minority attitudes, and the American perspective on Canadian multiculturalism. Given that the political concerns of Indigenous peoples had been overlooked in the CCCM's recommendations published previously in the report of the First Canadian Conference on Multiculturalism (1973), Clive Linklater (Saulteaux), then Vice-President of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), was given the opportunity to make a "Special Presentation" on behalf of the NIB Executive at this second conference. The declaratory opening words of his speech announced a stark contrast to the conference's debates on Canadian cultural pluralism: "From time immemorial our forefathers have lived on this land. This is our land. This is our home" (175). Linklater's address focused primarily on Indigenous title to land, colonial dispossession and Indigenous survival, and assertions of separate status within Canadian confederation, premised on Indigenous nation-based sovereignty and evoked through the language of the treaties: "We declare and proclaim that as we have always been nations of Indian people or Indian nations; and as we remain distinct nations of Indian people or Indian nations; that it is our desire and intent to continue existing as nations of Indian people or Indian nations for as long as there is time in this land, and '*As long as the sun rises, the grass grows, and the water flows*'" (176).

Perhaps anticipating a disjuncture felt by his audience between his assertions of Indigenous sovereignty and the conference's policy deliberations focused on immigration, integration, language, and Quebec, Linklater closed with a short statement titled "*Relevance to this Conference.*" In it, he addressed Canada's emerging multicultural policy debates in the form of a challenge:

Before the coming of the Europeans and other recent immigrants, our tribal forefathers lived a multicultural and multilingual existence, and still do to this day. You are recently discovering for yourselves a fact that has existed in this land since time immemorial. As the indigenous peoples of this land who live today in a minority situation, we declare our intent to continue to exist as Indian peoples. ... The intent of European immigrants is to exterminate, to terminate, to dispossess, to extinguish and alienate us from our lands and to make us beggars, strangers and outcasts in our own lands. But for yourselves, you now seek to establish a nation with a multiplicity of races, cultures, and languages. You would leave us, the indigenous owners of this land, out of such an arrangement. We consider such an action to be immoral, illegal, unethical, unChristian, undemocratic and contrary to all the values and mores you profess to believe. ... We hope your societies have the strength, the resilience and the will to withstand the continued

existence of our Indian peoples as distinct members of a Canadian multicultural and multilingual nation. (177)

Recasting the Anglo-French majority itself as an immigrant population, Linklater's rhetoric ironically deconstructs some of the basic assumptions inherent to Canada's new multicultural project, including both its supposed newness and the ethos of its emergence as liberal policy within Pierre Trudeau's Just Society of participatory democracy. Importantly, though, Linklater's claim is not that multiculturalism is irrelevant to Indigenous peoples, but that Indigenous interests have been *excluded* from the public dialogues shaping it as policy. His challenge to Canadians, like that of Cardinal's in *The Unjust Society* years earlier, is that a multiculturalism worthy of its name must include the "original owners of this land" within its "arrangement" as "distinct members of a Canadian multicultural nation," the key word being "distinct."

While these two examples speak to discrete moments in the history of Canadian multiculturalism and reflect widely discrepant positions of annunciation—official state discourse in the former, Indigenous political activism in the latter—they arrive at the same central contradiction historically characterizing the position of Indigenous peoples within Canada's multicultural politics, and at the conceptual limits of "culture" itself as a category of diversity politics vis-à-vis Indigeneity. Indigenous peoples are undeniably part of the cultural pluralism to which the Canadian polity has made commitments through multiculturalism; but Indigenous peoples and nations also hold unique legal and constitutional relationships with the Canadian state that exceed the jurisdiction of strictly cultural politics, and that flow from sources other than the state. As neither a founding nation in the political self-fashioning of the colonial state nor an immigrant ethnocultural minority group, Indigenous peoples have historically fit uneasily within Canada's legal, procedural, and conceptual multicultural framework. And more recent history has done little to resolve these tensions. In a 2000 article on "Multiculturalism at the Millennium," Enoch Padolsky flagged resurgent Indigenous nationalisms and increasingly robust

claims to self-determination as among the most pressing concerns for the future of Canadian multiculturalism. His questions continue to resonate presciently:

Are the First Nations separate from the social articulation of Canadian multiculturalism, or should they (do they want to) be included within some general comprehensive version of Canadian diversity, no matter how loosely? Given that ... they are already frequently included in anti-discriminatory, ethnic and race relations, and other inter-minority discourses, how are the “national minority” characteristics of Aboriginal communities that [Will] Kymlicka outlines to be reconciled with those demographic and discursive factors that argue for multicultural inclusion? This is a question that ultimately only Canadian Aboriginal peoples can decide because it bears directly on their self-conception within a Canadian national context. At the same time, the way that the First Nations are conceptualized with relation to multiculturalism will also have important national implications, given their historical and current significance in the articulation of Canadian society and nationhood. (154-55)

Leaving aside for a moment the question of whether or how to reconcile arguments for and against Indigenous peoples’ inclusion within multiculturalism, Padolsky’s thoughts here, like Linklater’s above, remind that multiculturalism in Canada is not simply a top-down, unilateral discourse of the state. If the answer to the question posed at the start of this chapter is objectively both “yes” and “no,” “it depends” also on who’s providing the response. How Canada conceptualizes Indigeneity within its multicultural politics and how variously situated Indigenous peoples and nations conceive themselves within Canadian multiculturalism are two related but very different questions.

For its part, the state has often turned away from the explicit erasure or non-recognition of Indigenous peoples traced in my Introduction to Part 1 through the proto-multicultural “mosaic,” instead incorporating Indigenous peoples within its public articulation of Canada’s diversity strategically in order to promote and justify a nation-building project of multiculturalism that ultimately remains highly ambiguous toward Indigenous peoples themselves in terms of law or policy. Major policy documents and ministry publications have consistently reiterated a historical narrative of Canadian cultural pluralism that presents contemporary multiculturalism as the natural inheritor of pre-colonial Indigenous diversity. As one of many such examples, *Multiculturalism: Being Canadian* (1987), a booklet produced by the Brian Mulroney Conservative government to promote the Multiculturalism

Act prior to its legislation, situates the present within a longer “tradition of diversity” to show that multiculturalism has “been a fact of Canadian life for centuries” (3):

Cultural and racial diversity have existed in Canada since long before the 16th century, when the first European settlers arrived to join Aboriginal people in the northern half of a vast continent. Aboriginal society was multicultural and multilingual. Today, multiculturalism, which is the recognition of the cultural and racial diversity of Canada and the equality of Canadians of all origin, is integral to the country’s social and economic well-being. It has given us a civilized framework within which our diverse population lives together in harmony and respect. (3)⁴⁰

The recognition of historical Indigenous cultural diversity is here appropriated to legitimize both the Canadian multicultural “fact” and the new policies and law for “the equality of Canadians of all origins,” self-fashioned through a rhetoric of respectful civility that neatly elides the ongoing history of Canadian Indian policy and legislation designed to assimilate and terminate those same Indigenous cultures in the name of “civilization.” In this scenario, Indigenous history helps to legitimize the assertion that multiculturalism is in some ways indigenous to Canada, a truly native and distinctively Canadian approach to living together in “harmony and respect.”

In a variation of this recurring theme, an Indigenous past is imaginatively linked to Canada’s multicultural present through the frame of immigration. For example, “Immigration: Key to Canadian History,” the Introduction to the 1979 edition of *The Canadian Family Tree: Canada’s Peoples* published by the multiculturalism directorate of the Department of the Secretary of State, opens by casting Indigenous peoples not as autochthonous but as immigrants to Canada: “Canadians are a nation of immigrants or descendants of immigrants. Even the native peoples of Canada descended from the immigrants of prehistoric times” (1). Entries for “Amerindians,” the “descendants of the original

⁴⁰ In *Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic*, a 1987 report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism addressed to legislators with recommendations for the Multiculturalism Act, multiculturalism is presented as “An Issue Defined in History” with origins in “A Primordial Cultural Diversity” (13). “Cultural diversity characterized the earliest societies,” as “Aboriginal peoples speaking a diversity of Algonkian tongues were spread across the breadth of North America. Others speaking Iroquoian languages lived in the lower Great Lakes–St. Lawrence River region” (13). From the Inuit in the north to the “rainswept coasts of the Pacific slopes,” a “crowning diversity” of languages and cultures is documented—until the moment European colonizers arrived, which, according to this euphemistic historical account, “inevitably intensified cultural diversity” (13). *Multiculturalism: What is it Really About?* (1991) also begins with the “Historic Reality” that “Canada has been multicultural from the beginning. When European settlers first set foot on North America, they found several Aboriginal groups with diverse, rich cultures, who spoke many languages” (3).

immigrants of the continents of America” (14), and “Inuit,” who “[l]ike all Canadians ... were originally immigrants” (116), thus appear in *The Canadian Family Tree* alongside the English, French, Irish, Haitians, Chinese, and Ukrainians in the state’s compilation of the 78 “ethnocultural groups *that have come to Canada*” (ix, my emphasis). Rendering Indians and Inuit as ethnic immigrants here mobilizes Indigenous history in support of two further multicultural claims: first, to reflect the primary universal pillar of the state’s official, liberal definition of multiculturalism, “we all have an ethnic origin” (*MBCM* 87); and second, to horizontally flatten questions of uneven power and discrepant temporalities of inhabitation amongst the diverse “ethnic” groups now living on lands called Canada under an encompassing and mutual identity as “immigrants.” The settler-nationalist logic here is self-evident: if we are all equally ethnic and all equally immigrants, then any one group’s difference or unique claims to land and rights become subordinated within the universalism of these shared conditions. And this is a logic whose weaponization persists into the present. In 2017, Canada’s Governor General David Johnston proudly declared on CBC Radio that Canada is a nation of “immigration, going right back to our ‘Indigenous people,’ who were immigrants as well, 10, 12, 14,000 years ago” (“GG’s”).⁴¹

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that Indigenous voices in terms of scholarship and political activism have been relatively uninterested in the policy and political debates over multiculturalism’s official institutionalization that have otherwise featured prominently in mainstream Canada’s public discourse. The state’s strategic incorporation of Indigenous peoples within an official narrative of cultural diversity, steeped in the language of equality, dignity, civility, respect, harmony, support, and recognition, runs counter to the lived reality of many Indigenous peoples’ political and social exclusion and inequality. Such exclusions, legislated in the Indian Act and shaped by an apparatus of more than two centuries of colonial policies designed, as Jo-Ann Episkenew summarizes, “to make Indigenous cultures disappear” (8), make celebrations of Indigenous culture within state multiculturalism dubious

⁴¹ Johnston publically walked back the statement two days later and affirmed Indigenous peoples as “the original people of this land” at a ceremony honouring Indigenous community leaders at Rideau Hall.

at best. Indeed, significant catalysts of Indigenous cultural resurgence, social activism, and political intervention in the formative multicultural era—the White Paper (1969), the *Calder* case (1973), or the recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights in the Constitution (1982), for example—have had seemingly little to do with multiculturalism. Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua further explain the relative dearth of Indigenous academic engagement with multiculturalism in terms of the “discomfort and ambivalence of many Aboriginal people when official policies and discourses of multiculturalism and immigration obscure Native presence and divert attention from their realities” (135). The future-oriented challenge posed by Clive Linklater in 1976, of differentiating the distinct rights of Indigenous peoples from those of settler and immigrant populations within multicultural Canada, is reframed here in terms of the historical incapacity of liberal multiculturalism to account for colonialism in its various commitments to cultural diversity and antiracism. Hence multiculturalism subsumes Indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups within a common discourse of cultural difference that renders invisible the politics of Indigenous nationhood and the specificity of Indigenous historical and legal relations with the colonial state. Thus, while Indigenous peoples—or more accurately, the *idea* of Indigenous peoples as simplistically historical rather than complex and multidimensional peoples in the present⁴²—have often been invaluable to the state’s authenticating a narrative of multiculturalism as a tradition of diversity native to Canada, Indigenous peoples themselves have often viewed multiculturalism as variously ineffective, irrelevant, or injurious to the project of decolonization.

My approach to official multiculturalism in this chapter, and the need I assert to further engage and critique the material and discursive infrastructure of its political ideology, begins from three basic premises. First, that multiculturalism, broadly conceived as a state-driven political project, was not designed to facilitate the decolonization of Canada or to support the political aspirations of Indigenous

⁴² Here I am referring to what Gerald Vizenor (Minnesota Chippewa) calls “varionatives,” or what Thomas King refers to as “Dead Indians” (as opposed to actually living or “legal” Indians), a projection of settler culture’s desires and ideas about (usually locked-in-history) authenticity (see King, *Inconvenient*; Vizenor, *Fugitive*).

peoples; indeed, even a cursory glance at the history I've limned in this introduction reveals that the primary work of multiculturalism has been to minimize or make unnecessary any radical reappraisal of Canada's colonial history, and thus multiculturalism needs to be understood as a technology of settler-colonial governance. Second, that, as Jennifer Simpson, Carl James, and Johnny Mack (Nuu-chah-nulth) suggest, "[a]ny discussion of racism and colonization in Canada exists in a context in which multiculturalism, as a state-sanctioned, widely disseminated approach to racial difference in Canada, has broad and far-reaching power" (286). This power is not only exercised by the state through the apparatus of policy and law, but circulates hegemonically in national discourse in which multiculturalism has come to shape how Canadian identity is conceived, including by managing the conceptual parameters of self-fashioning and the ways subjectivity is made legible in the public sphere. Thus, while multiculturalism may be ancillary to the project of decolonization for Indigenous peoples or nations, it is decidedly not inconsequential to the ways Indigeneity is imagined into Canada—and, as I argue in this project, into Canadian literature—which is a primary means by which its function as an apparatus of colonialism exerts its power. And third, that any attempt to shift the discursive power of multiculturalism that has become so thoroughly naturalized in Canada as to obfuscate the appearance of its construction requires a critical lens lowered from the broad macro-political level of narrative history to engage systematically with the specific material and discursive spheres in which multiculturalism has developed. I agree with Simpson, James, and Mack when they state that

Multiculturalism provides ready responses to even the mention of the need for an anti-colonial or anti-racist critique. The most central of these responses, which individuals and institutions articulate in a variety of ways, is that colonialism in Canada does not exist. It is this claim, and the intricate set of ideological parameters on which it rests, with which the [anti-colonial project] must contend. Alongside articulation of the need for an anti-colonial approach and the possibility of anti-colonialism, educational resources ... must make visible the architecture of multiculturalism at discursive and material levels, its faulty construction, and its real consequences for how we live. (287)

This chapter thus aims to provide a type of multidirectional retrospective analysis of Canadian multiculturalism that makes visible its "architecture" in relation to Indigenous peoples, including its

“faulty” colonial construction and its “real” consequences, particularly as they relate to cultural production. Such an analysis will lend material support to better distinguishing, but also complicating, the amorphousness of the “multicultural ethos” Sam McKegney and other scholars claim has coded the uptake of Indigenous writing in Canada. More broadly, however, my investment in unpacking these contexts speaks to a simpler theoretical motive that is also the central argument underwriting this chapter’s work: a rigorous and thoroughly historicized critique of Canadian multiculturalism responsive to Indigenous sovereignty requires careful and specific attention to the critical and political intersections between the genealogies of multiculturalism and Indigenous-state politics. Decolonizing multiculturalism entails being able to account for Indigenous peoples within multiculturalism’s colonial history and politics, as understood by both the state and by Indigenous peoples themselves.

The goal of this hefty chapter, then, is to map these intersections through three distinct but mutually informing discursive fields that help facilitated a broadly historical perspective on multiculturalism’s evolving political institutionalization: (1) policy, (2) law, and (3) philosophy. The first and longest section brings Pierre Elliott Trudeau’s initial 1971 policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework into dialogue with its key antecedents—notably, the B&B Commission and the Canadian Centennial commission—and also with federal Indian policy at that time to examine these intersections at the moment of multiculturalism’s formation as a policy. Reading these policy histories in relation will involve an ideological interrogation of how the Trudeau administration’s approach to the “French Fact,” the “Indian Problem,” and the demands for recognition of “other ethnic groups” essentially revolved around a similar problem central to liberal political philosophy: how to address the notion of special status for groups vis-à-vis a commitment to equal rights for individuals. Moreover, unpacking the state’s approach to conceiving (or not) of Indigenous peoples within early policy development usefully establishes the ambiguities that continue to characterize the relationship between Indigeneity and multiculturalism, notably with respect to the institutionalization of “ethnicity” and later “visible minority” as state categories of difference. I then turn to the period in the 1980s that would see

the entrenchment of both multiculturalism and Aboriginal rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Constitution (1982), as well as the legislation of the Multiculturalism Act in 1988. These events during the heyday of multicultural social policy-making introduced key legal distinctions that differentiate Indigenous peoples from other Canadians in relation to multiculturalism. The final section considers the more recent theoretical critiques of multiculturalism and “cultural” recognition presented in the work of Indigenous political philosophers, notably Dale Turner (Anishinaabe) and Glen Coulthard (Dene). This section will outline Indigenous critiques of liberal philosophy and what Charles Taylor described as the Hegelian “politics of recognition” operating at the centre of multiculturalism with respect to substantially altering colonial structures of domination.

In localizing discussion within these three discursive fields, my aim is not to take up an exhaustive analysis of Canadian multiculturalism, nor is it to suggest that these fields exist in isolation. Indeed, as I show, it is impossible to understand the policy of multiculturalism without establishing its liberal philosophical roots, for example, or to interpret the Multiculturalism Act divorced from the policy history that preceded it. These sections therefore represent discrete threads of an interwoven web of discourses that have over time come to embody the “official” relationship between Indigenous peoples and multiculturalism in Canada since the late 1960s. As such, their roughly chronological arrangement—from policy to law to philosophy—is crucial for establishing the evolving historical contexts of this relationship, though they also overlap conceptually as fields in decidedly non-linear ways. The result is an at-times unwieldy methodology involving dates, anecdotes, policies, commissions, figures, legal documents, and literature review, which combine to produce what Craig Womack calls a contextual “period piece” intended to “evoke some kind of feeling for the events occurring” rather than theorizing in the abstract (“A Single” 7). Like Womack’s multifaceted effort to situate the emergence of Indigenous literary criticism in the US alongside parallel developments in the policy sphere, my historical unpacking of multiculturalism and Indigenous politics in Canada here

works at multiple registers to “create a theoretical milieu that has the sense of a story unfolding, a history of ideas, rather than philosophy in a timeless vacuum” (7).

In asking whether Canadian multiculturalism includes Indigenous peoples, then, this chapter is not interested in declarative answers, either affirmative or negative. Rather, the stakes here involve attending to the positions served by, and material outcomes of, different responses to this question in various contexts and historical periods. Unpacking these histories is an expansive task, in part because it involves negotiating multiple fields that have often been viewed as distinct, a reality reflected in the elision of critical concerns with Indigeneity within critical scholarship on multiculturalism generally. Canadian diversity policies geared at either English-French relations or the integration of immigrant populations are largely managed separately from Canadian Indian policy, in what Will Kymlicka describes as distinct “vertical silos” of government administration (“Ethnocultural” 41). In turn, social, cultural, and political interrogations of these state projects have tended to follow what Lawrence and Dua call critical practices of “segregation.” When conceived as separate projects, critical multiculturalism and sovereignty-focused critiques of Indigenous-state relationships may elide the sites where such fields of inquiry overlap and become entwined in complex ways—particularly via multiculturalism, which operates at the conjunction of the three vertical “silos” of diversity policy. Lawrence and Dua argue “a need for scholarship that ends practices of segregation” and ask, for example: “How did the [the multiculturalism policy in 1971] connect with Canada’s attempt ... to pass the White Paper [1969] to do away with ‘Indian’ status and Canada’s fiduciary responsibility to status Indians?” (136).⁴³ Here I extend this line of intersectional questioning and expand its purview to tackle the range of discourses operating under “multiculturalism” and its vicissitudes over half a century. And

⁴³ For accuracy, I have amended this quote, which in the original reads: “How did the passage of the Multiculturalism Act in 1969 connect with Canada’s attempt, in the same year, to pass the White Paper ...” (136). The Multiculturalism Act was passed in 1988, and the original policy to which Lawrence and Dua refer was tabled in 1971, not 1969. My intention is not to nitpick or critique the question, which I quote to acknowledge its salience. Rather, these errors are reflective of the lack of political specificity and historical accuracy that often pervades critiques of multiculturalism, which this chapter (including all the errors it doubtlessly holds which will need future correcting) hopes to counteract.

because the literary interventions in the chapters that follow all speak to this history—links which I have attempted to flag, in a cursory way, throughout—the policy, legal, and philosophical contexts taken up here provide an interdisciplinary grounding for this study as a whole.

1. Multiculturalism's Development as Policy

It is difficult to constrain the late 1960s and early 1970s contexts in which official multiculturalism became policy in 1971 to a singular, causal narrative. The years surrounding Canada's centennial celebrations in 1967 saw a renewed interest in national history in the formulation of a post-colonial and self-consciously non-American national identity. Civil rights movements, anti-poverty activism, Red Power, feminism, the post-war discrediting of "race" and rise to prominence of an international human rights discourse, an influx of non-European immigration, and militant Quebec nationalism all demanded that such introspection unfold with a reconsideration of English-Canada's traditional position as the de facto centre of that national history. Explicit assimilation was no longer viewed as a progressive solution to the question of national unity, and the election of Trudeau's Liberal government in 1968 ushered in commitments to a more consultative approach to national policy-making as part of his "Just Society" vision of participatory liberal democracy and federalism. Moreover, as Sally Weaver argues, the government's evolving approach to Indian policy and its century-long "Indian Problem" at this time, which would eventually result in the abortive 1969 White Paper, "took shape within the [same] framework of historical reassessment" (14) that gave rise to the Pearson administration's B&B Commission (1963-1969), the ensuing Official Languages Act (1969), and eventually, subsequent to the B&B Commission's recommendations, multiculturalism. Thus while multiculturalism's origins in the Trudeau era are often reductively framed as a politically expedient response to the Quiet Revolution or political pandering to the growing "ethnic vote," its roots, argues Michael Temelini, "weave back through a tangle of historical forces" that include not only global movements of immigration and postcolonial awareness, but also a related web of Canadian policy developments arising from the government's attempts to promote "a qualitatively superior alternative

to various contested images and forms of Canadian life” (46). This section traces some of the key threads of this web with particular attention both to how the state conceived of Indigenous peoples within its liberal policy developments, and to how federal Indian policy evolved alongside the emergence of multiculturalism.

In *Surviving as Indians*, Menno Boldt gives an overarching historical account of these intersections that provides a useful entry point. Boldt’s claim is that the federal government’s “abjuration of its historical policy of Indian cultural assimilation” during the post-White Paper moment of early multiculturalism materialized not as a commitment to Indigenous rights, but as a misguided and secondary “sidestream effect” of multiculturalism:

Until the 1960s the Canadian government considered cultural assimilation to be a progressive Indian policy. The subsequent change in this policy came not as a response to Indian interests, rights, needs, and aspirations, but as a sidestream effect of Canada’s policy of bilingualism and multiculturalism—a policy designed to serve the ‘national interest’ by conciliating Quebec separatists without offending other immigrant groups in Canada. Had the policy of bilingualism and multiculturalism been referenced to Indian interests, rights, needs, and aspirations it would have included the ‘original peoples’ as one of the ‘founding nations’ along with the English and French. It would not have lumped, as it does, Indians with ‘other’ immigrant minorities. (78)

Boldt’s overview is productive in the connections it draws between the “national interest” underwriting both federal Indian policy and federal multiculturalism. It also calls attention to the relatively peripheral position of Indigenous peoples within the government’s conceptualization of multiculturalism as a policy intended to accommodate the dual aspirations of the so-called “founding nations” and immigrant groups. Yet the claim that Indigenous peoples were, or have been, “lumped” together with “other” ethnic minorities under the government’s multiculturalism rubric demands greater scrutiny, and a good degree of historical and conceptual unpacking of the policy.

***“Neither the Indians nor the Eskimos”:* Multiculturalism and the B&B Commission**

Trudeau declared multiculturalism as state policy in parliament on October 8, 1971, in response to the B&B Report’s final volume, on the “Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups.” In his words:

It was the view of the Royal Commission, shared by the Government and, I am sure, by all Canadians, that there cannot be one cultural policy for Canadians of British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others. For although there are two official

languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly. (Canada, “Statement” 45)

A clear distinction is drawn here between a liberal discourse of equal citizenship, where all Canadian individuals deserve fair treatment, and a tripartite construction of groups under the terms “ethnic” or “cultural,” which would later become conjoined in the portmanteau sign “ethnocultural” deployed ubiquitously in multiculturalism policy-making into the 1980s. The “original people” are presented here as distinct from both “Canadians of British and French origin” and the third order (“all others”) of immigrant ethnicities to which the policy is formally addressed. The only other explicit reference to Indigenous peoples in the government’s parliamentary response to the B&B Commission came in the following statement, outlining the multiculturalism policy’s objectives in terms of new financial assistance to “other” ethnic groups:

In the past, substantial public support has been given largely to the arts and cultural institutions of English-speaking Canada. More recently, and largely with the help of the Royal Commission’s earlier recommendations in Volume I to III, there has been a conscious effort on the Government’s part to correct any bias against the French language and culture. In the last few months the Government has taken steps to provide funds to support cultural-educational centres for native people. The policy I am announcing today accepts the contention of the other cultural communities that they, too, are essential elements in Canada and deserve Government assistance in order to contribute to regional and national life in ways that derive from their heritage yet are distinctly Canadian. (45)

Again, “native people” here are positioned outside the policy’s formulation of both the Anglo and French linguistic majority *and* the “other cultural communities” in question (“they, too”). The creation of new multicultural programs to assist the latter is juxtaposed with the already existing support for the former two, notably the government’s endorsement of certain French linguistic and cultural support following the B&B Commission’s prior recommendations. How the already-existing limited support for “cultural-education centres for native people”⁴⁴ fits within this temporal distinction between old and new cultural policies is ambiguous. It emphasizes that existing provisions for the “original peoples”

⁴⁴ Trudeau is referring here to Native Friendship Centres and other Indigenous organizations, a point I address in detail later, but the phrasing is ambiguous enough that there are chilling echoes of the still-operating residential schools system.

should properly be understood as distinct from the “substantial” and “correct[ive]” support vis-à-vis the B&B Report’s recommendations for English and French Canadians, respectively, but also serves to distinguish Indigenous peoples from the new policy implemented to assist the “other” ethnic communities. Cultural support for Indigenous groups is thus articulated through a dual logic that constructs Indigenous peoples as both supplemental to *and* discrete from multiculturalism, occupying a puzzling fourth space between the two “founding” colonial nations and immigrant ethnic groups.

This paradoxical construction can be understood in part because the discourse of diversity through which Trudeau introduced multiculturalism reflected the language and categories used in the B&B Report itself, in which Indigenous peoples were deemed outside the commission’s terms of reference entirely. The B&B Commission was struck by the Pearson Liberal government to examine “the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada” in order to create recommendations for consolidating the Canadian nation-state “on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada” (xxi).⁴⁵ The commissioners’ specific interpretation of how these terms relate (or rather, do not) to Indigenous contributions to Canada appear in a brief aside within the “General Introduction: The Key Words of the Terms of Reference” of Book I:

We should point out here that the Commission will not examine the question of the Indians and the Eskimos. Our terms of reference contain no allusion to Canada’s native populations. They speak of “two founding races,” namely Canadians of British and French origin, and “other ethnic groups,” but mention neither the Indians nor the Eskimos. Since it is obvious that these two groups do not form part of the “founding races,” as the phrase is used in the terms of reference, it would logically be necessary to include them under the heading “other ethnic groups.” Yet it is clear that the term “other ethnic groups” means those peoples of diverse origins who came to Canada during or after the founding of the Canadian state and that it does not include the first inhabitants of this country. (xxvi)

⁴⁵ The discourses of “race” and “ethnicity” become conflated here, differentiating “two founding races” from “other ethnic groups.” The commissioners ultimately rejected a racial classification of English/French Canada, which they account for as follows: “In our view the reference to the two ‘founding races’ or ‘peoples who founded Confederation’ is an allusion to the undisputed role played by Canadians of French and British origin in 1867, and long before Confederation. The word ‘race’ is used in an older meaning as referring to a national group, and carries no biological significance” (xxi). The shift away from “race” to “national” or “ethnic” in the commission’s proceedings is indicative of the government’s efforts to classify differences amidst a broader international turn from biological understandings of race following World War II.

Indigenous culture is, confusingly, deemed neither here nor there, and is thus omitted from the Commission's report and recommendations. The question of why it should appear so "obvious" that Indigenous peoples "do not form part of the 'founding races'" of Canada derives from the commissioners' interpretation that "the reference to the two 'founding races' or 'peoples who founded Confederation' is an allusion to the undisputed role played by Canadians of French and British origin in 1867, and long before Confederation" (xxii). While Indigenous-Crown agreements had existed "long before Confederation," including in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the treaties, the Commission located the written foundations of the nation's laws and governance in the BNA Act, which asserted the dominion's undisputed legal jurisdiction over "Indians and Lands reserved for Indians."

Thus, the commissioners' justification for this omission of Indigenous peoples from "founding" status is that "it was not the Government's intention ... to have the Commission undertake long studies on the rightful status of the Indians and the Eskimos within Canadian Confederation" (xxvi). Such a study is deemed best undertaken within the jurisdictional silo of the Department of Indian Affairs, an argument previously established in the *Preliminary Report* of the B&B Commission published in 1965: "Indian cultures ... are less integrated in the life of the Canadian community than any other group. Their position and future prospects would have to be the object of special study" (22). In arriving at this rationale in the *Preliminary Report*, it was not only the perceived failure of Indigenous peoples to assimilate themselves into Canadian biculturalism that made them "special" and peripheral to the Commission, however. The temporality of "Indian" and "Eskimo" groups in Canada presented a conundrum to the concept of "founding nations" in the Commission's terms of reference. The "unique position" (49) of the "First Canadians" (128, my emphasis) is seen as a "special problem brought into sharp relief by the concept of two founding peoples" (49). Indigenous peoples could not be "founding" nations because they pre-dated the arrival of Europeans and the founding of colonial Canada traced to the BNA Act, but they also sat uneasily within the "other" cultures because the Commission's "terms of reference refer to the 'subsequent' contribution made by

the other cultures” (187). Historical antecedence thus set precedent for a conceptual double exclusion—the Indians were too pre-historical to be part of the official history of the modern nation-state, and also too overwhelmed by the “relentless march of North American industry and technology mov[ing] into territories once exclusively their own” (50) presently to make *subsequent* contributions.

The explanation for not including the contributions of Indigenous peoples in the B&B Commission are expressed succinctly in the *Preliminary Report's* chapter on the concept of “Two Societies”: “In this conflict which divides the two societies by setting them against the other, Indians and Eskimos are in a position apart” (129). In Book I of the Report, the commissioners do note their paternalistic “duty to remind the proper authorities that everything must be done” to “assist the survival of the Eskimo language and the most common Indian dialects,” as well as “to help the native populations preserve their cultural heritage, which is an essential part of the patrimony of all Canadians” (xxvii). The *Preliminary Report* was also careful to show that the Commission had “found great sympathy in ‘white’ audiences for the plight in which Canada’s two indigenous peoples [Indian and Eskimo] find themselves,” noting how “impressed” they were by the “unanimity” of this position amongst white Canadians (50). In summary, however, tackling Canada’s “Indian Problem” was seen in Book I as beyond the mandate of the B&B Commission: “The integration of native populations into Canadian society raises very complex problems. The process of integration calls into question the very nature of the traditions and customs of native society” (xxvi). As the record of a commission working toward recommendations primarily in the cultural sphere, the report’s recognition of the historical challenges posed by Indigenous politics to definitions of “founding nations” and “other ethnic groups” thus becomes the first basis for its omission of Indigeneity from deliberations about the future of Canadian culture. Clearly less an oversight than an active process of disavowal, this erasure involved a series of rhetorical and conceptual rationalizations that supported the Commission’s arrival at the “logical” conclusion to be drawn from its terms of reference.

Also implicit in the report's interpretation is that the "very nature" of Indigenous culture, framed above as important to Canada in a merely patrimonial sense, places it outside the parameters of relevance to a study of *contemporary* Canadian cultural diversity. The perceived incongruity of Indigenous cultures with the Commission's mode of inquiry becomes clearer in the Introduction's definition of "other ethnic groups:"

This brings us directly to that part of our terms of reference instructing us to take into account "the contribution made by the other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada." There are several possible interpretations of this statement. In the broadest sense of the term "culture," the sheer fact that men [*sic*] came from elsewhere to take part in building the country has contributed to our cultural enrichment. When they arrived, their essential concern was to continue the work of carrying civilization into the thinly populated areas. By settling the country they helped to lay the basis for Canada's cultural growth. (xxv)

Thus Indigenous societies prior to settlement were implicitly uncivilized and without culture, inasmuch as culture is construed as a product of the civilizing mission of colonization. The "frontier was not a rich soil for the arts and letters," and the cultivation of Canadian culture in a "humanistic sense" began properly when the "traditions preserved by the sons and daughters of the early settlers combined with the artistic sense, the talents, and the skills of later immigrants to add new dimensions to literature, music, and the plastic arts in Canada" (xxv). The racist colonial logic of this position had been articulated more explicitly in a confidential summary report prepared by the Commission's research and liaison officer following a consultation meeting with the Indian and Eskimo Association in 1964: "The Canadian Indian's cultural problem is completely different than any of the other groups. This problem fundamentally starts with the fact that the Indian culture was not designed for western civilization" (qtd. in Haque and Patrick 32). As Eve Haque argues in her analysis of the B&B Commission's public consultations, despite the fact that several Indigenous groups pressed the commission to account for them, "in order for the commission to maintain the social cohesion of the bicultural and bilingual white-settler nation, its rationale for excluding Indigenous groups from its consideration had to be based on their pathology and exceptionality" (128). The final report's exclusion

of Indigenous views was thus justified through both an implicitly pathological view of primitive and pre-modern Indian “culture” and a shirking of the complexities posed by the larger “Indian problem.”

According to the terms of the B&B Commission that led to multicultural policy, then, Indigenous peoples are considered neither founding nations in confederation’s “equal partnership” nor accountable within the study’s inquiry into the “contribution” of “other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada.” Indigenous cultures were summarily seen as not yet having made, and not being capable of making, such contributions. From the perspective of the Commission’s mandate on cultural “contributions,” the Report actively reproduces well-worn colonial tropes of tragic and vanishing Indians. As I noted in the Introduction to Part 1, the Massey Report had more than a decade earlier declared that “true Indian arts” survived “only as ghosts or shadows of a dead society” (240) based on a similar colonial logic. Importantly, however, the terms of identity and diversity established in the B&B Report resonated beyond the mostly cultural sphere of the Massey Commission’s work. As the conceptual progenitor of Trudeau’s policy, the B&B Report represented a significant step in the government’s attempts to rationalize and construct differentiated discursive categories of “official” identity grounded in conceptions of culture and ethnicity that would become further institutionalized with multiculturalism. And within this inherited terminology, Indigenous peoples were unaccountable. It’s here that understanding Trudeau’s approach to the politics of culture and ethnicity is key to seeing multiculturalism’s historical intersections with policy aimed at the “Indian Problem,” a concern avoided in the B&B Commission entirely.

Liberal Multiculturalism: Trudeau, the “Indian Problem,” and the “French Fact”

The strong linkage between language groups and identitarian conceptions of culture and ethnicity upheld by the B&B Commission provided another justification for the non-recognition of Indigenous peoples within the Report’s terms of reference. According to a two-volume research report prepared by sociologist Frank G. Vallee and published in 1966 as part of the Commission’s formal inquiry, entitled *Indians and Eskimos of Canada: An Overview of Studies of Relevance to the Royal Commission on*

Bilingualism and Biculturalism, “One reason that we cannot consider the people of Indian and Eskimo ancestry as an ethnic group equivalent, say, to the French-Canadian, English-Canadian, Ukrainian-Canadian, and the like, is that there is no one language which serves as a symbol of distinctive identity at the national level” (qtd. in Haque 124). In the Romanticist tradition of ethnic nationalism to which the Commission remained philosophically indebted, ethnic groups (and thus ethnic nations) derived their unity in part through their linguistic homogeneity. Thus the diversity of languages and heterogeneity of nations subsumed within the constructed categories “Indian” and “Eskimo” made these categories problematic as signifiers of a distinctive “ethnicity” in that term’s increasingly official formulation. As Eve Haque argues, this position “not only saw the linguistic diversity of the Eskimo and Indian communities as a barrier to their unity as an ethnic group, but it also reinforced the dominance of English and French, since they were deemed the *lingua francas* for these communities” (125). The Trudeau administration’s Official Languages Act (1969) would consolidate this dominant bilingualism, but Trudeau’s views on the relationship between language, ethnicity, and culture differed from the Commission’s in significant ways that were central to his political transmogrification of dominant biculturalism into official multiculturalism.

This reinvention needed to be justified in such a way that no ethnic or cultural group of citizens was other than equal, “other than Canadian,” as Trudeau put it—a significant hurdle considering the dual realities of both the French Fact and the Indian Problem. If the diversity of Indigenous languages cast the Indians and Eskimos as lacking “distinctive” cultural or ethnic identity at the “national level” for the B&B Commission, French language, and thus distinctive French ethnicity, had already become elevated to official status at the national level by 1969. In terms of the Indian Problem, the Hawthorn Report’s (1966-67) scathing analysis of Indian Affairs had recently rejected assimilation based on the distinct “ethnic” status of Indigenous peoples, arguing that the loss of Indigenous languages through forced “integration . . . leads inevitably to the loss of their own ethnic identity and cultural traditions” (37). The Hawthorn Report recommended policies for maintaining special Indian status with renewed

socio-economic support that would make Indigenous peoples “citizens plus” rather than “citizens minus.” Citizenship status differentiated on the basis of ethnicity conflicted with ideals of equal citizenship held by Trudeau, who was working toward a new Indian policy the same year in which he faced the questions of inequality presented by other ethnic minorities from Book IV of the B&B Report. The policy solutions he eventually proposed to reconcile both the “French Fact” and the “Indian Problem” with the larger question of national unity would be remarkable similar, in concept if not in efficacy, and need to be understood in terms of how the politics of language and ethnicity fit within his particular brand of federalist liberalism.

Trudeau’s claim that “although there are two official languages, there is no official culture” as a basis for Canadian multiculturalism has been oft-scrutinized as contradictory in its dislocation of language from culture, despite the close connection drawn between the two throughout the B&B Report.⁴⁶ The relationship between language and identity is where Trudeau’s ideal of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework departed most obviously from the B&B Commission’s design to consolidate official biculturalism. Multiculturalism essentially proposed a decoupling of bilingualism from biculturalism, the former being retained as the “framework” in which cultural pluralism might be officially supported. Trudeau’s reworking of the B&B Report’s terms of reference in this light is addressed specifically as one of two “misconceptions” arising from discussions of cultural diversity in the government’s official response to Book IV:

The distinction between language and culture has never been clearly defined. The very name of the Royal Commission whose recommendations we now seek to implement tends to indicate that bilingualism and biculturalism are indivisible. But, biculturalism does not properly describe our society; multiculturalism is more accurate. The Official Languages Act designated two languages, English and French, as the official languages of Canada for the purposes of all the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada; no reference was made to cultures, and this Act does not impinge upon the role of all languages as instruments of the various Canadian cultures. Nor, on the other hand, should the recognition of the cultural value of many languages weaken the

⁴⁶ In defining “culture,” the B&B Report argued that “It is a driving force animating a significant group of individuals *united by a common tongue*, and sharing the same customs, habits, and experiences” (xxxii, my emphasis). The report endorsed an understanding of “the strong bond between language and culture. Language is the most evident expression of a culture, the one which most readily distinguishes cultural groups even for the most superficial observer” (xxx).

position of Canada's two official languages. Their use by all of the citizens of Canada will continue to be promoted and encouraged. (Canada, "Federal Government's Response" 51)

Trudeau's defense of legislated and official protection of French and English language rights becomes distinguished here from the perceived "cultural value" of non-official languages. The movement away from biculturalism toward multiculturalism within a bilingual framework thus differentiated institutional and *political* group rights for French and English-speaking Canadians from the *cultural* rights of "other ethnic" Canadians (thus reinscribing power in the former), which Trudeau emphasized in terms of individual freedoms: "I wish to emphasize the view of the Government that a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework is basically the conscious support of individual freedom of choice. We are free to be ourselves" (46). Trudeau fundamentally opposed an understanding of ethnic identity based solely on allegiance to a "mother tongue" in favor of a liberal concept of individual identity, which he advocated as the basis of national unity:

A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the Government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help to break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies. National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions. A vigorous policy of multiculturalism will help create this initial confidence. It can form the base of a society which is based on fair play for all. ("Statement" 45)

For Trudeau, multiculturalism promised to cultivate solidarity and national unity⁴⁷ based on the individual's right to freely negotiate their affiliation to cultures of equal status without barriers of discrimination. To achieve these goals, the government offered support in the form of (1) assistance to cultural groups that demonstrate a desire to contribute to Canada and a need for support; (2) support to all Canadians in overcoming cultural barriers of societal participation; (3) promoting creative

⁴⁷ In Trudeau's vision it was also a means of distinguishing Canadian identity from the threat of Americanization and "the homogenization and depersonalization of mass society" (50). In the government's response to Book IV of the B&B Report, Trudeau suggests that cultural support might counter the erosion of cultural diversity he pinned on "the impact of industrialized technology, mass communications and urbanization . . . [from] the creation of a mass society—in which mass produced culture and entertainment . . . threaten to denature and depersonalize man" (49). See also the *First Annual Report of the Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism* for how the advisory body for multiculturalism policy interpreted cultural diversity and ethnic identities as a "wellspring" for this kind of national identity (5).

encounters and cultural exchanges to promote national unity; and (4) assistance to immigrants in acquiring one of Canada's official languages (Canada, "Federal" 51). The twofold objective was to remove discrimination based on cultural prejudice by making no culture "official" while assisting immigrant integration in Canadian society through linguistic assimilation into the official languages.

Multiculturalism as an alternative to biculturalism was thus an attempt to move Canada toward Trudeau's vision of post-nationalism that decoupled the ethnic or cultural allegiances of nation(s) from the auspices of the state and its official languages. Theoretically, multiculturalism was supposed to signal the end of Romantic (ethnic) nationalism, replaced by official recognition and government support of all national cultures in Canada. In this sense, multiculturalism was a logical extension and expression of the pragmatic liberal philosophy of rights-based individualism and federalist governance Trudeau had already expressed for some years in his political writing. "From a philosophical point of view," he argued in 1965 with respect to Quebec sovereigntist nationalism,

the aim of a political society is not the glorification of a 'national fact' (in its ethnic sense). A state that defined its functions essentially in terms of ethnic attributes would inevitably become chauvinistic and intolerant. The state, whether provincial, federal, or perhaps later supra-national, must seek the general welfare of all its citizens regardless of sex, colour, race, religious beliefs, or ethnic origin. ("Quebec" 4)

Trudeau's liberal nationalism was inspired more by the philosophy of Rousseau than the cultural nationalism of Herder; Trudeau's indebtedness to Rousseau is evident in his repeated references to *la volonté generale* as the basis of statehood in his political writing.⁴⁸ As a policy that placed the cultures of ethnic "others," who had demonstrated a "will to exist," on par with those of the founding nations now as two of many unofficial cultures, multiculturalism could act as a counterbalance to both the ethnic nationalism of Quebec sovereignty movements Trudeau so forcefully resisted as well as the Anglo-Canadian cultural chauvinism he saw such movements reacting against. While at this time Indigenous politics in mainstream Canada had not yet been infused with a similar discourse of

⁴⁸ See his essay "Federalism, Nationalism, and Reason," in which he repeats variations of the assertion that the "the foundation of the nation is will" (187) several times (184, 187, 195). See Gairdner on Trudeau's links to Rousseau.

“nationalism,” Trudeau’s position on the status of Indigenous peoples as distinct and separate—either as claimed by Indigenous groups or as federally imposed by Indian Act legislation—followed suit. Special status of any kind based on ethnic identity was for Trudeau not only impractical and dangerous to federalism, but illogical and unjust for the equal status of individual citizens.⁴⁹

Trudeau’s call to “rational” federalism was hostile toward what he viewed as the violent emotion of post-colonial ethnic nationalisms propelling a dialectical chain of domination and subjugation that “keeps bursting into flame all over the planet” (“New Treason” 161). His defense of official bilingualism thus stemmed more from a pragmatic response to both the French “fact” of contemporary Canadian society and the “will to exist” of other ethnic groups as a method of consolidating the Canadian state rather than an assertion of either French or English ethnic superiority. His disagreements with the notion of a nation-state in the Herderian tradition—the conjunction of ethnic nationalism with the role of the state in Canadian federalism—were articulated succinctly in his trenchant critique of the Quebecois secessionist movement, “New Treason of the Intellectuals” (1962): “It is not the concept of *nation* that is retrograde; it is the idea that the nation must necessarily be sovereign” (151). Trudeau viewed the flexibility to delegate powers to the provinces inherent within federalism sufficient to make special or separate status for Quebec both pointless and economically debilitating. Multiculturalism within a bilingual framework in this sense guaranteed the protection of the French language as a bureaucratic imperative while, at least theoretically, de-privileging both French and English cultures within a state defined by its commitment to individual citizens’ freely navigating their many ethnocultural allegiances rather than by its commitment to any one of them. What he

⁴⁹ Not everyone working in Indian Affairs agreed with Trudeau’s position on special status. Sally Weaver’s analysis reveals these internal debates in Indian Affairs throughout the 1960s and in the development of the White Paper. However, those who argued for continued special status often did so *not* because the Indian Act was an (imperfect) safeguard against assimilation—the argument put forth by Indigenous peoples—but because they felt Indians had not yet been assimilated *enough*, and that the management special status enabled provided a means to that end. Arthur Laing, Minister of Indian Affairs prior to Chrétien, articulated this position while in his previous position as Minister of Northern Affairs: “The prime condition in the progress of the Indian people must be the development by themselves of a desire for the goals which we think they should want” (letter to Gordon Robertson, 19 Oct. 1963; qtd. in Weaver 48).

envisioned was a “multi-national state” that would “reject the bellicose and self-destructive idea of nation-state in favour of the more civilized goal of polyethnic pluralism”; and he believed Canada—French Canada, specifically—was ideally suited to embracing this option, given, in his view, “aggressive nationalism” had never truly imposed “a crushing predominance” without compromise upon “national minorities” like Quebec (165)

Multiculturalism’s answer to the French Fact thus reiterated the liberal logic of the White Paper’s solution to the Indian Problem formulated at roughly the same historical moment. Indeed, as Sally Weaver argues, Trudeau’s stance against secessionist sovereignty and ethnic nationalism in his approach to the French Fact was “a potent force in the formation of Indian policy” developed after his coming to political power at the end of the 1960s (53). Weaver’s analysis of the back-channel ministerial debates over the 1969 White Paper shows how “[o]fficials frequently referred to ‘the prime minister’s position on the French and special rights’ as they weighted certain proposals and tried to anticipate the possible reception these might receive in the Prime Minister’s Office” (53). Thus, although the relatively insular historical development of federal Indian policy within the Department of Indian Affairs suggests the White Paper and multiculturalism emerged discretely as policies, they in fact intersect significantly through Trudeau and his views on federalism, French Canadians, and the threat nationalist sovereignty movements posed to Canadian unity. When viewed together as complementary policies, the 1969 White Paper can be understood as a key antecedent to multicultural policy in its liberal formulation of equal citizenship rights as a bulwark against group rights and special status.

Trudeau’s political writings rarely broached the topic of Indigenous peoples, though Indigenous nations at times become analogues for the logical impracticality of settler claims to geopolitical sovereignty in his views on Quebec nationalism: “Now here is something for Quebec’s Separatists to sink their teeth into: if there is any validity to their principles they should carry them to the point of claiming part of Ontario, New Brunswick, Labrador, and New England; on the other hand, though, they would have to relinquish certain border regions around Pontiac and Temiskaming

and turn Westmount into the Danzig of the New World” (“New Treason” 159). His critique of the “weak hot-house culture” and “ghetto mentality” (“Quebec” 23, 42) of Québécois ethnic nationalism are perjoratively cast through the rhetoric of a “Wigwam Complex”; “counter-revolutionary” secessionist leaders and the “powerless *petit-bourgeois* minority afraid of being left behind” by modern economic and industrial progress are described as primitive “kings and sorcerers” who “want to make the whole tribe return to the wigwams by declaring [Quebec’s] independence” (“Separatist” 211). Cultural protections on the basis of separate status of ethnic groups were incongruent with Trudeau’s strong modernist liberal approach to culture and society, phenomena he viewed as needing to remain viable on their own as part of the general will within the cosmopolitan exchanges of global migration. If heritage cultures were to become lost or outmoded, this was the price to pay for the benefits of the individual freedoms, equal citizenship, and industrial and economic progress afforded by the state in his strong liberal and federalist political philosophy.

Trudeau’s views on Quebec nationalism would be transposed to Indigenous peoples in strikingly similar ways in the Liberal Government’s 1969 *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy* submitted by then-Minister of Indian and Affairs and Northern Development Jean Chrétien. The assimilatory White Paper proposed to eradicate Indian Status, abolish the Indian Act, and dissolve the federal department of Indian Affairs, transferring its responsibilities to the provinces, all based on “the simple reality that the separate legal status of Indians and the policies which have flowed from it have kept the Indian people apart from and behind other Canadians” (4). The proposal came as a shock to Indigenous leaders because it entirely ignored their concerns over land, rights, and treaties raised in the extensive consultation process, as well as the recommendations for maintaining special status in the *Hawthorn Report* that had initiated the policy-making process in the first place. Much is made in the White Paper about the “burden of separation” (9) and the “road of different status” having “led to a blind alley of deprivation and frustration,” because it is a “separate road, [which] cannot lead to full participation, to equality in practice as well as theory” (6). The opportunity of equal citizenship is

presented in terms of a bold “choice” that “Indian people must be persuaded, must persuade themselves” to make: “another road for Indians, a road that would lead gradually away from different status to full social, economic and political participation in Canadian life. This is the choice” (4). While this choice is framed magnanimously in the White Paper as a gift, a choice previously unavailable for Indigenous peoples,⁵⁰ the language in which it is presented mirrors the choice Trudeau had been imploring French Canadians to make for years: “French Canadians must really want it; that is to say, they must abandon their role of oppressed nation and decide to participate boldly and intelligently in the Canadian experience. It is wrong to say that Confederation has been a total failure for French Canadians; the truth is rather that they have never really tried to make a success of it” (“Quebec” 31). In Trudeau’s view, the government’s responsibility was to ensure conditions of non-discrimination, equality in access to the economic and industrial benefits of the state, and individual freedoms that made special status and sovereignty unnecessary for French Canadians *and* Indigenous peoples.⁵¹ In fact, Chrétien and Trudeau drew such parallels by stressing empathetically their minority position as French Canadians to argue against prolonging the conditions separate Indigenous legal status in their

⁵⁰ Though prior to Diefenbaker’s administration, enfranchisement (voluntary or involuntary) resulted in a loss of Status, and, based on the Indian Act, Indigenous women who married out no longer had Status as well.

⁵¹ Trudeau’s commitment to individual freedoms argued for the limited role federal policy could play in guaranteeing cultural survival. Policy could only provide the context of equality in which societal cultures would survive or not, depending on their ongoing relevance in the modern present. In speaking to fellow French Canadians, he argued that the “political culture of French Canadians will be what they decide to make it” (“Quebec” 34); that ensuring cultural continuance “is not a matter of preserving ancient ways as fossils,” but of assisting individuals to “stimulate our language and culture so that they are alive and vital, not just fossils from the past” (30). Similarly, the White Paper encouraged Indigenous peoples to cultivate their cultures by “[r]ecognizing their value is not a matter of preserving ancient ways as fossils, but of ensuring the continuity of a people by encouraging and assisting them to work at the continuing development of their inheritance in the context of the present-day world” (13). While the White Paper’s rhetoric casts Indigenous peoples and cultures as already fossilized in ways Trudeau’s thoughts on the French do not, it places the same emphasis on individuals to make themselves relevant in the context of the liberal state: “A policy can achieve no more than is desired by the people it is intended to serve. The essential role of the Government’s proposed new policy for Indians is that it acknowledges that truth by recognizing the central and essential role of the Indian people in solving their own problems. It will provide for the first time, a non-discriminatory framework within which, in an atmosphere of freedom, the Indian people could, with other Canadians, work out their own destiny” (24).

public dialogues with Indigenous political organizations throughout the White Paper consultation processes.⁵²

French-speaking and Indigenous peoples in Canada were thus made roughly analogous and logically interchangeable in Trudeau's liberal politics despite their vast historical and material differences as heterogeneous groups vis-à-vis colonial history, in part because Trudeau's approach to governance was decidedly ahistorical, if not *anti*-historical. The White Paper blames not only special status, but a villainous "history" for the social and economic disadvantages of Indigenous peoples. "History" emerges as an almost personified entity, one that the policy disavows with no shortness of syrupy lament: "The weight of history affects us all, but it presses most heavily on the Indian people. *Because of history*, Indians today are the subject of legal discrimination. ... *Because of history* too, Indians look to a special department of the Federal Government for many services that other Canadians get from provincial or local governments" (9 my emphasis). "Indians are the product of history" (2), though in the White Paper this is a history of colonization abstracted from conditions of the present that the state viewed itself as neither complicit in creating nor responsible to remedy. Such blatant disregard for Canada's colonial past and present was not only an easy justification of the state's unwillingness to honour the treaties in offering a benevolent new alternative to the evils of "history," however. It was also entirely consistent with the limited place of history in Trudeau's political philosophy. "The first rule of politics," he claimed in 1968 with respect to Quebec's constitutional

⁵² Weaver transcribes the "standard delivery" of Chrétien's opening address at consultations as follows: "Being from a minority group in this country, I understand what it is to be a member of such a group. There are many problems but there are a lot of virtues too. We have to be proud to be members of a minority group because our background becomes important and you the Indian people of Canada have to be proud to be Indian because you were here a long time ago... I know that you are Indians and you are proud of being Canadians and I am proud of being French-speaking and a Canadian" (62). In his response to the Alberta Indian Association and National Indian Brotherhood's rejection of the White Paper in 1970, Trudeau emphasized that he prioritized Chrétien's appointment in developing the new Indian policy, describing him as "a young minister who also belonged to a minority in Canada and who had no prejudices and who honestly didn't think he was up to the job, but who had the courage and determination and who had no vested interest" ("Statement" 1). In continuing to advocate against special status, even as he assured the Indigenous leaders that White Paper policies would not be pursued, Trudeau emphasized a shared position of Indigenous and French peoples in Canada: "In the case of the French in Canada I, as a French Canadian and Mr. Chrétien, and others, we say the way to be strong in Canada is not to be apart but to be equal to the English" (4).

debates, “is to start with the given facts. The second is to take stock of the real relationship between forces that may soon divide or unite the existing political factors. . . . [P]olitics cannot take into account what might have been” (“Quebec” 8-9). Trudeau would appeal to this same presentist pragmatism in 1969, defending Indigenous peoples’ opposition to the White Paper by arguing that “[w]e can’t recognize aboriginal rights because no society can be built on historical ‘might have beens’” (qtd. in Henderson 5). His “Just Society” was one of “justice” in and for the present; as such, the government was responsible neither to history nor to claims of *injustice* from Indigenous peoples extending from it. In a 1969 speech on the proposed White Paper and treaty rights given in Vancouver, Trudeau said:

If we think of restoring aboriginal rights to the Indians, well what about the French who were defeated at the Plains of Abraham. Shouldn’t we restore rights to them? And what about the Acadians who were deported—shouldn’t we compensate for this? And what about the other Canadians, the immigrants? What about the Japanese Canadians who were so badly treated at the end or during the last war. What can we do to redeem the past? I can only say as President Kennedy said when he was asked about what he would do to compensate for the injustices that the Negroes had received in American society. “We will be just in our time. This is all we can do. We must be just today.” (“Remarks” 4)

With respect to the rights of French Canadians and the survival of their culture and language, Canada’s present demographics and configurations of power made protection in the form of special or separate status largely redundant: “Their survival is already assured. French is spoken in Quebec by an ever increasing number of persons. If one discounts *the possibility of genocide or some major cataclysm*, it seems certain that in this part of North America French will continue to be spoken regardless of what happens to the constitution.” (“Quebec” 30, my emphasis). Harold Cardinal denounced the White Paper as “nothing better than genocide” (1) of this kind in its abrogation of the federal government’s historical and ongoing responsibilities to Indigenous peoples’ rights and the treaties. Writing in 1969 after the Official Languages Act, Cardinal also clearly spelled out the false equivalency between Indigenous peoples and French Canadians as homologous minorities: “There is one big difference. The Quebecois have Quebec and are politically powerful” (120).

Cardinal critiqued a “Just Society” polity based solely on present conditions of “power, numbers, and strength,” and mocked the Official Languages Act as a bicultural linguistic “treaty” (120) privileging French and English, despite Trudeau’s commitments to egalitarianism and dismissal of treaties with Indigenous nations.⁵³ Yet for Trudeau, legislative protection of French had less to do with privileging special group rights or founding nations than it did with striking a pragmatic political bargain (and thus one reinforcing the status quo) based on current social realities, a near-sighted, politically motivated position that required divorcing present power dynamics from colonial history. His ideas on the relationship between language and power expressed in 1968 articulate his views on the limited role of history in the state’s brokering of claims from “ethnic” groups:

Historical origins are less important than people generally think, the proof being that neither Eskimo nor Indian dialects have any kind of privileged position. On the other hand, if there were six million people living in Canada whose mother tongue was Ukrainian, it is likely that this language would establish itself as forceful as French. In terms of *realpolitik*, French and English are equal in Canada because each of these linguistic groups has the power to break the country. And this power cannot yet be claimed by the Iroquois, the Eskimos, or the Ukrainians. (“Quebec” 31)

The political rationale behind an institutional *realpolitik* of official bilingualism and the *cultural* politics of multiculturalism “within a bilingual framework” can be gleaned here, along with the place of Indigenous peoples within such an arrangement as Trudeau imagined it. Because he did not take seriously Indigenous and treaty rights (they are historical “might-have-beens”) to land, and because a critical mass of population supported no one Indigenous language, Indigenous peoples exist within the horizontal arrangement of power alongside Ukrainians and other ethnic minorities unable to “break the country.” His anti-historical treatment of Indigenous status in the White Paper had essentially reframed legal and political Indigenous difference simply as ethnocultural difference, which neither deserved nor benefited from special treatment in his politics.⁵⁴ Thus, whereas for the B&B Commission, the separate

⁵³ “Perish the thought that the French Canadian should be accorded special treatment as a member of a founding nation. The [White Paper] policy asserts that all Canadians are the same” (*Unjust* 121).

⁵⁴ The White Paper makes this clear in suggesting that “Services ought not to flow from separate agencies established to serve particular groups, especially not to groups that are *identified ethnically*” (15, my emphasis)

status of Indians and the complex “Indian Problem” made it both difficult and unnecessary to account for Indigeneity, Trudeau’s Just Society was premised on liberal ideals that had no place for separate status and legal Indians (and thus an “Indian Problem”) at all.

The Supreme Court’s split ruling in the Nisga’a land title case (*Calder v. British Columbia*, 1973), establishing the legal validity of Aboriginal title, would force Trudeau to significantly reconsider this assumption four years after proposing the White Paper. In the meantime, however, the White Paper had become a wholesale political failure, igniting a groundswell of political organization and opposition from Indigenous activists. It was retracted in a rather candid statement from Trudeau at the presentation of the “Red Paper” (titled *Citizens Plus*) by the Indian Association of Alberta (IAA) and the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) in June 1970: “I’m sure that we were very naive in some of the statements we made in the paper. We had perhaps the prejudices of small ‘l’ liberals and white men at that who thought that equality meant the same law for everybody. ... But we have learnt in the process that perhaps we were a bit too theoretical, we were a bit too abstract” (“Statement” 2). While clearly acknowledging such failings in the policy, he did take notable exception, however, to one particular objection in the Red Paper: “I must say that in some of your response to our policy paper there are some things which I don’t like and I may as well tell you quite frankly. When we ... say there should be a positive recognition of the unique contribution of Indian culture to Canadian life. Well, this is said in all sincerity. It is not meant, you know, in a hypocritical way” (2). The Red Paper had countered this claim by arguing in unequivocal terms that “[t]he only way to maintain our culture is for us to remain as Indians. To preserve our culture it is necessary to preserve our status, rights, lands and traditions” (194). While it is difficult to see Trudeau’s remarks as less than hypocritical in this respect, they are illustrative of the dissociation between the ethnocultural and material-political spheres in the liberal philosophy guiding his policy decisions. Cultures could be given positive recognition, sincerely, without attention to *realpolitik*.

This meeting took place at the same time that the report of Book IV of the B&B Commission on “other ethnic groups” was being hotly debated following its public release just weeks earlier in April 1970. The October Crisis followed four months later, one year after the Official Languages Act was given royal assent in late 1969. As Richard Day claims, at this historical juncture, “[s]omething had to be done to solve the ‘problems’ of the French, the Immigrant, and the Indian once and for all. This something was called ‘multiculturalism’” (187). While this rings true to a certain extent in the symbolic context of a refashioning of national identity at a critical period of Canada’s historical reassessment, it greatly exaggerates Trudeau’s position on multiculturalism in relation to the Indigenous peoples. As a policy initiated to offer modest assistance to “other” ethnic groups for the purposes of protecting the rights of individuals to freely negotiate cultural identities within the Canadian context, multiculturalism was not designed to support Indigenous peoples specifically nor to alter the political administration of Indian Affairs through the Indian Act. In rescinding the White Paper, Trudeau closed his speech to the NIB and IAA with a less conciliatory statement on the prospects of forming a new solution to the century-old “problem,” which he argued was not really Canada’s to solve: “We’re in no hurry if you’re not. You know, a hundred years has been a long time and if you don’t want an answer in another year, we’ll take two, three, five or ten, or twenty—the time you people decide to come to grips with this problem” (5).⁵⁵ The political relationship between the state and Indigenous peoples would continue to take shape as it had, primarily within the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

The 1971 policy of multiculturalism, however, demonstrates lessons learned from the White Paper over the political shortcomings of an overly “theoretical” and “abstract” commitment to “small ‘l’ liberalism.” Indeed, Trudeau reportedly spent more time on Indian policy than any other government issue during his first year as prime minister (Cairns 52), and multiculturalism spoke to new

⁵⁵ In a television interview in March of 1970, Trudeau reportedly stated that if the White Paper were to be rejected, “We’ll keep them in the ghetto as long as they want” (qtd. in Comeau and Santin 10). Which shows that he had no conception of any value that could be attached either to Indigenous culture or to the treaty relationship, seen as sacred by elders (see Cardinal and Hildebrandt), “keeping” all of the power and none of the responsibility with the state.

recognition that a difference-blind or neutral citizenship approach to equality was limited in addressing group's claims for recognition of unequal citizenship status. On one hand, the small operating budget and limited assistance given to cultural groups under multiculturalism as it was initially conceived meant, in practice, very little change to the status quo of government administration. In his speech to parliament introducing the policy, Trudeau notes that "some of the programs endorsed or recommended by the Commission have been administered for some time by various federal agencies. ... These programs will be revised, broadened, and reactivated" (46). Yet, on the other hand, public recognition and official support of distinct ethnic or cultural groups, however limited, and restricted to those groups that demonstrate "a capacity to grow and contribute to Canada" (50) in the interests of national unity, represented an important philosophical shift from the purely procedural civic liberalism in Trudeau's established approach to policy, which had previously imagined the state having no business in the ethnic or cultural bedrooms of the nation. The ideals of equality were to be achieved through an affirmative policy designed around supporting a mosaic of identities drawn around the basis of ethnocultural identities, and the material effects of this shift included the state's intervention in subject production based on who or what constituted an "ethnic" group requiring support. As noted previously, though, what this meant for Indigenous peoples was left ambiguous in the policy's official introduction, which positioned "native people" as neither founding nations nor immigrant minorities.⁵⁶ Any cultural assistance provided to Indigenous groups would require a further reworking of the inherited reference terms of the B&B Report, which had drawn clear distinctions between Indigenous peoples and the rest of Canada in its concept of "ethnic groups."

⁵⁶ In detailing the "Policy Objectives in the Federal Sphere," the government was also adamant that cultural support was not intended to foster what Trudeau had previously called a "wigwam" complex: "The Government has made it very clear that it does not plan on aiding individual groups to cut themselves off from the rest of society. The programs are designed to encourage cultural groups to share their heritage with all other Canadians and with other countries, and to make us all aware of our cultural diversity" ("Federal Government's Response" 51).

“Making the ‘Indians’ Ethnic”: Multicultural Funding

Whether or not Indigenous peoples could be quantified within the emergent political categories of “ethnicity” or “ethnocultural” was a question being addressed in other political arenas as well. The “special” status of Indigenous peoples’ within the rebranding of Canada through the mosaic model of diversity had also been a pressing question of policy for the Pearson Liberal government prior to Trudeau, particularly vis-à-vis the image of Canada projected to the world in the Centennial celebrations of 1967. As Myra Rutherdale and Jim Miller note in analyzing the Indian Pavilion at Expo ’67 in Montreal, “The question of where [First Nations] belonged, inside or outside the nation, was one that Expo organizers and Canadians themselves were forced to come to terms with” (150).

A policy recommendation paper on “Participation in Canada’s Centennial by People of Indian Ancestry” (1964) reveals these anxieties around the “fundamental question” of whether the government’s Centennial program could “claim to really project the Canadian image in all its aspects” without special treatment of Indigenous peoples: “Even if this group could be lumped in with the rest of the citizenry and left to their own devices in mounting a program of participation, it is assumed that such an official stand on the part of the Centennial Commission would be politically unacceptable” (Cormier 1). The crux of the issue for policy making was how to justify the “special” status of Indigenous peoples in light of the political pressure produced by growing visibility of Indigenous socio-economic marginalization; the “strong body of public opinion” calling for “special attention to the Indian ‘problem’ would make such a stand extremely unwise, if not impossible” (1). Thus “special” status at this point in time, as it would later be for the Trudeau administration, had less to do with respect for the treaties or Indigenous rights than with accounting for the embarrassing economic gap between Indigenous peoples, “wards” of the state, and the rest of the nation, given the optimistic vision of Canada to be projected during the Centennial. Indeed, for policy, it was deemed “dangerous” to “declare the Indian group a special group” (2). Separatist developments in Quebec during the 1960s

meant terms like “special” were politically and ideologically loaded; what was needed was a “rationale, and a good one, for dealing in a special way with anyone [sic] group in Canada” (2).

The rationale eventually developed required distinguishing the needs of Indigenous peoples as distinct from other “ethnic” minorities and the Anglo-French majority, and appealed to pathology in ways similar to the B&B Commission. However, whereas the B&B Commission distinguished Indians by their perceived cultural incongruity with “Western civilization,” the Centennial policy rationale turned to deficiencies in Indigenous social structure and organizational governance that were deemed to be preventing the “Indian group” from “construct[ing] a world of its own”:

The Indian group cannot be said to belong to the mainstream of Canadian society nor can it be said that they possess, as a group, the set of identified goals, identified needs and the pattern of organizational practices and techniques necessary to make them a functional and competitive group within the larger society. It can be said that the Indian group stand in a world in which it cannot participate in an effective way and has not been able to construct a world of its own which would produce realistic aspirations and the social dynamics to fulfill these aspirations. No other group in Canada finds itself in such a position. This is a situation peculiar to the aboriginal people (Metis and Eskimo should be included in this category). Looking at the problem from yet another angle, we find the people of Indian ancestry neither belonging to the two “founding” groups nor to the “third area” of Canadian society. They could constitute an ethnic group in the functional sense but they have not reached the level of organizational structure (European style) that would make it possible for government to deal effectively with them through the same approach as would be effective with other ethnic groups. (3-4)

The concluding sentence here marks another difference from the B&B Commission, which was unable to consider Indigenous peoples as an “ethnic group equivalent” at the “national level” due to the heterogeneity of Indigenous languages. For the Centennial programmers, Indigenous peoples at this historical moment—before the formation of politically robust national organizations such as the NIB—cannot constitute an “ethnic” group inasmuch as they lack a “European style” organization in the bureaucratic form of the state’s likeness that would “make it possible for the government to deal effectively” with their claims. Traditional forms of Indigenous governance are implicitly not “functional” within the “larger society,” and the pathologizing assessment of this failure of political organization “peculiar” to Indigenous peoples alone adheres to what Dian Million (Tanana Athabascan) calls the prevalent “anomic” framing of Indian subjectivity in Canadian bureaucratic

discourse, which rationalizes “an analysis of Indian malady without attributing it to Indian policy” (163). Of course, the Department of Indian Affairs had historically fought precisely the kind of “organizational structure” deemed necessary but missing here, and Section 141 of the Indian Act had effectively made such organizing illegal until 1951.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the project of attempting to justify “special” Indigenous funding for the Centennial program was to outline how the “Indian group” might be dealt with in the same way as other “ethnic” groups in the “functional sense.”

After rejecting a number of possible avenues of administering Centennial funds, including through the churches, the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada,⁵⁸ the federal Centennial Grants Program, and the logical channel of the Department of Indian Affairs—as “[b]asic to all [these] aforementioned arguments is the real fact that Indians are very hostile to having programs organized and implemented for them by a third party” (7, original emphasis)—the proposal was that funding should be given to the newly formed National Indian Council (NIC), which became the NIB in 1967.⁵⁹ The report clearly doubted the capability of the NIC as a bureaucratic institution, and expressed anxieties over its organizational future; yet the NIC was seen to most closely fit the ideal of a “fully representative Indian voluntary organization, speaking for all Indians in all regions in Canada” (8). Further,

What is of basic concern here is that the NIC is committed to the “Canadian ideal” and will cooperate. There is no guarantee that the Indian organization which would replace the NIC, in the event of the latter’s demise, would be friendly or constructive. Surely this must be important to the Government of Canada at a time when the country is in a state of crisis over its past inability to reconcile the divergent cultural and regional demands which arise out of the pluralistic character of our nation. (9)

The Indian “fact” is here linked pressingly to the broader questions of national unity and cultural pluralism within the “crisis” of historical reassessment defining the politics of the time. Funding the

⁵⁷ In 1844 the federal government outlawed potlaches and other ceremonial gatherings with socio-political significance. When political organizing increased in the 1920s, Section 141 was added to the Indian Act in 1927, making it illegal for Indians and bands to hire lawyers or pursue claims against the state without consent. Million’s analysis of the anomic condition frequently attributed to Indigenous peoples is based on sociologist Émile Durkheim’s definition of *anomie* as “a state of social disorganization brought on by a lack of, or insufficiency of, social rules” (163).

⁵⁸ The Indian-Eskimo Association was a national advocacy group comprising Indigenous and non-Indigenous members.

⁵⁹ The pan-Indian NIC was founded in 1961 and collapsed in 1967, splintering into the Native Council of Canada (representing non-status Indians and Metis peoples) and the National Indian Brotherhood (representing status Indians).

NIC becomes justified as a proactive investment in cultivating a unified “ethnic” Indigenous organization in the “functional” sense, and a workable channel in place of the “unmanageable” situation of “being vulnerable to all demands emanating from all and any Indian group” (8). Eva Mackey usefully describes this material process of government intervention as “[m]aking the ‘Indians’ ethnic” (73), or transforming Indigenous peoples into “political clientele” through the organizational structure of an ethnic group: “because until that point the ‘assistance’ of the benevolent state would not be ‘managed’ by them. Defining Native people, and accounting for their difference and marginalization, became part of the process of managing them” (75). So, while Indigenous people during this period immediately preceding multiculturalism policy occupy a fourth space outside the two “founding” nations and behind other minorities, justification for funding Indigenous groups in a similar vein to “ethnic groups” was being rationalized on the basis of conformity to manageable political infrastructure. Indian status would remain distinct from ethnic groups legally, but Indigenous organizations would begin to receive funding “ethnically.”

This scheme developed in the mid-1960s made the administration of new multicultural funding for existing government programs relevant to Indigenous peoples. Programs established to implement the multiculturalism policy were initially delivered through the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State (DSOS).⁶⁰ The role of the Citizenship Branch had previously been the “development of inter-group and inter-regional understanding throughout Canada and encouragement, at the local level, of fuller participation by all ethnic groups and community activities” (DSOS 1967, 7). “Indian integration,” which focused primarily on Indigenous peoples transitioning from reserves to

⁶⁰ From 1950-1966, Citizenship, as well as the Indian Affairs branch, were housed in the Department of Citizenship and Immigration. See Bohaker and Iacovetta’s comparative analysis of citizenship programs for immigrants and Indigenous peoples at this time, “Making Aboriginal People ‘Immigrants Too.’” Following the Government Organization Act of 1966, Immigration became part of Manpower and Immigration, responsible for the “economic integration of immigrants,” while the DSOS was charged with responsibility for immigrant “integration in the greater Canadian community” (DSOS 1967 7). The function of the DSOS had been substantially altered to include responsibility for citizenship and cultural programs in five areas: “(a) citizenship; (b) elections; (c) State ceremonial, the conduct of State correspondence and the custody of State records and documents; (d) the encouragement of the literary, visual and performing arts, learning and cultural activities; and (e) libraries, archives, historical resources, museums, galleries, theatres, films and broadcasting” (1967 5).

urban areas, was one of its nine program areas. Between 1966 and 1971, and after the election of Trudeau in 1968, DSOS operations shuffled significantly. The DSOS annual report for the 1971-72 period in which multiculturalism became policy describes “a year in which the Department has undergone major restructuring in most areas. It has also been one in which the development of policy has been stressed, with major developments relating to museums, publishing, youth, native peoples, and citizenship participation.” The restructuring of the Citizenship Branch, in particular, reiterates the language of Trudeau’s multicultural policy. The Branch,

which was originally formed to help immigrants integrate into Canadian society, has amended its definition and now has five main objectives: encouragement of full participation by all citizens in Canadian society; the reinforcement of Canadian identity and unity; the encouragement of cultural diversification within a bilingual framework; the preservation of human fundamental freedoms; and the development of meaningful symbols of Canadian sovereignty. (5)

Within the five new program areas, “Citizens’ Cultures”⁶¹ administered the new Multicultural Program, which involved making grants to ethnic groups and immigrant organizations, undertaking research on ethnic histories and non-official languages, and coordinating the multicultural activities of the federal cultural bodies. Its objective was to “encourage the development of a society in which individuals and groups have an equal chance to develop and express their cultural identity as an integral part of Canadian life” (5). At the same time, a new parallel directorate, “Native Citizens,” was established to “enable the native people of Canada to develop and maintain their culture and identity while sharing fully in the benefits of Canadian society” (5).

The key distinction between the Native Citizens Directorate developed under the umbrella of multiculturalism and the previous program areas aimed at “Indian integration” was a new and financially substantial commitment to provide “core” funding for provincial and national political associations of Indian, Métis, and Inuit peoples. For example, in 1968, a total of only \$175,000 in grants was administered to Indigenous organizations. By 1972, the first year of the Native Citizens

⁶¹ By 1974, Citizens’ Cultures had been renamed as the Multicultural Program.

Directorate established with multiculturalism, core funding increased to \$5,205,000; by 1975, spending had doubled again to \$11,398,427, now supporting three national organizations “representing the three sectors of native life in Canada”—the NIB (Status Indians), the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (Inuit), and the Native Council of Canada (non-Status Indians and Métis peoples)—as well as 30 provincial and regional organizations (1975, 36). By this time, the Native Citizens Directorate had also expanded to include a Native Communications Program (1974) to support multimedia Indigenous communications societies, primarily in print and radio. Indigenous groups were now being funded as representative “ethnic group equivalents” in the “functional sense” through the workable channels of infrastructure first supported through the Centennial program and now more substantively under multiculturalism.

In Chapter 2, I explore how this new core funding influenced the production of Indigenous print culture and the literary arts in important, though generally overlooked, ways. For the present purposes, however, it’s worth noting some of the ironies emerging from this new multicultural “ethnic” funding of Indigenous associations. The substantial increases in financial assistance through multiculturalism were in some ways a realization of White Paper objectives. In fact, the White Paper had proposed exactly this type of new cultural support through the DSOS, and the rhetoric of “heritage” cultures first articulated in the White Paper prefigures the language of multiculturalism:

Rich in folklore, in art forms and in concepts of community life, the Indian cultural heritage can grow and expand further to enrich the general society. Such a development is essential if the Indian people are again to establish a meaningful sense of identity and purpose and if Canada is to realize its maximum potential. The Government recognizes that people of Indian ancestry must be helped in new ways in this task. It proposes, through the Secretary of State, to support associations and groups in developing a greater appreciation of their cultural heritage. It wants to foster adequate communication among all people of Indian descent and between them and the Canadian community as a whole. (14)

In this sense, the new funding should not be understood as magnanimous assistance based on a newly enlightened shift in government attitudes to Indigenous peoples. Cultivating a more robust network of Indigenous associations with organizational structures conducive to receiving state funding was a further strategy of devolving responsibility for Indian Affairs from the federal government, a prime

motivation for the White Paper. Moreover, the Native Citizens Directorate initially interpreted its core funding as providing mostly “cultural” benefits geared at greater citizen participation, as outlined in the White Paper. The 1972 DSOS annual report describes Native Citizens as a group of programs “designed to enable the native people of Canada to develop and maintain their culture and identity while sharing fully in the benefits of Canadian society” (5). These objectives place Indigenous peoples within the terms of cultural support provided to “all Canadians” defined in multiculturalism. Thus, multiculturalism funding provided an analeptic institutionalization and covert rationalization of certain structural components of the publically rejected Indian policy.

However, while the goals of this new multicultural funding were mostly compatible with the White Paper objectives, the way Indigenous peoples actually used this money was a different story. The core funding and increased communications between national and provincial Indigenous associations facilitated robust organization for political lobbying toward the advancement of Indigenous rights in the post-1971 years at levels previously unattainable. By 1975, following the *Calder* case and the Trudeau government’s reevaluation of the whole question of Indian rights, the Native Citizens Directorate had revised its self-description in a rhetorical shift away from the objectives of preserving heritage cultures and civic participation within Canada, reflecting the evolving political climate: “The Native Citizens Directorate was established to assist native people to define and achieve *their* place in Canadian society by providing *them* with the resources to identify *their* needs and actively undertake *their* development” (36 my emphasis). Thus, Indigenous peoples, while not “ethnic groups” proper, were being funded *as* ethnic groups, and marshaling those resources to assert the rights and title that distinguished their claims from the depoliticizing discourse of ethnicity in a multiculturalism that could not account for their difference.

Categorizing Difference: Ethnicity, Race, and the Invisibility of Indigeneity

In its policy design, then, multiculturalism has ultimately positioned Indigenous peoples ambiguously vis-à-vis the terms “ethnicity” and “ethnocultural” functioning ubiquitously since its origins. Shifting

perspective from policy analysis to a more legal and discursive plane, however, nowhere is this categorical confusion more clearly illustrated than in the “Glossary of Key Terms” in *Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic*, the report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism commissioned in the 1980s to provide a comprehensive overview of multiculturalism policy in order to arrive at a firm legislative basis for the Multiculturalism Act. The list of “working terms” (87) used to facilitate the policy deliberations is remarkable for the attempt it makes at articulating a complete and stable discursive foundation for the various terms of difference operating within multiculturalism, and for its paradoxical positioning of Indigeneity within these constructions.

The entry for “Ethnicity” is the shortest of *MBCM*’s glossary of 31 terms, defined simply as “ethnic origin,” a category which in turn is central to the definition of multiculturalism as a whole:

MULTICULTURALISM: Recognition of the diverse cultures of a plural society based on three principles: we all have an ethnic origin (equality); all our cultures deserve respect (dignity); and cultural pluralism needs official support (community). (87)

As the first, universal principle of multiculturalism, “ethnic origin” is further defined as follows:

ETHNOCULTURAL/ETHNIC ORIGIN: Cultural, national or racial origin of a person. Every Canadian has an ethnic origin. (The use of the word “ethnic” as a noun e.g. “an ethnic” or “the ethnics” is generally a slang term and is sometimes considered derogatory. “Ethnic” as an adjective is generally acceptable.) (87)

The chain of signification here slides the definition of “ethnic” origin into the tripartite “cultural,” “national,” or “racial” origin, of which only the category of “race” receives further explication. As Day notes, that neither “cultural” nor “national” are “key” terms suggests “we are left to assume that these origins would be detected, in the traditional Herodotan way, through such signs as skin colour, clothing, mode of government, and so on” (189). “Race” is deemed less self-evident:

RACE: Working term to describe the *ethnic origin* of peoples defined on the basis of certain common physical features. Examples are Whites or Caucasians, Blacks, Chinese or South East Asians. (87, my emphasis)

A contradictory “but definitely *working* circularity” (Day 190) emerges here: ethnic origin is defined as a product of both racial and national origin, and “race” in turn describes a people’s “ethnic origin” (or in the example of “Chinese” and “South Asian” above, national or continental origin). As Day concludes,

this Möbius strip of terminological confusions is entirely instructive, of both the arbitrary construction of discursive identity categories and the “state’s attempt to find an ‘acceptable’ language in which to express the will to problematic categorization of Others” while institutionalizing diversity (190).

For an evolving multicultural policy that throughout the 1980s was increasingly revamped toward anti-racism, however, these paradoxical slippages and elisions in terminology had particular import for multiculturalism’s discursive positioning of Indigenous peoples. For example, in its policy recommendations for the new federal Department of Multiculturalism, *MBCM* is forceful that “race relations policies must be an integral component of any Canadian multiculturalism policy. The Department, through its Race Relations Directorate should expand its abilities to *remove overt and systemic discrimination* and coordinate the work of other departments and agencies which attempt to do so” (50, my emphasis). The key new term in need of definition for matters of race relations is thus

SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION: Unintentional, institutionalized discrimination. For example, hiring procedures or entrance requirements may have the unintentional effect of excluding various minority groups. Also referred to as “institutional” racism. (88)

If “minority groups” are the subjects of systemic or institutional racism, and race is linked with ethnicity, it would then be necessary to know what counts as an ethnic or racial “minority” group:

MINORITIES: The following working terms facilitate discussion and analysis of minority issues.

Ethnocultural minorities: Canadians with origins other than Anglo-Celtic, French or Native.

Ethnocultural majorities: Canadians of Anglo-Celtic or French origin. While neither group constitutes a numerical majority, this is a working term which also considers the relative power and influence exercised by these groups in society. (88)

“Native” people are first mentioned explicitly for the purposes of exclusion (“other than”) from the category of “ethnocultural minorities”; but they are also purposefully omitted from the Franco/Anglo-Celtic “ethnocultural majority.” This is of course confusing, given the very definition of multiculturalism starts from the premise that we *all* have an “ethnic origin.” As neither a majority nor minority ethnic group, where, do Indigenous peoples fit?

Native Peoples: Canadians from the Native or Aboriginal groups namely, Indians, Inuit and Metis. (While Native peoples are numerically minorities there are other government policies which address their needs.) (88)

What the parenthetical aside makes clear is that the difference between a “numerical” (or demographic) minority and an “ethnocultural” minority is a policy distinction. As minority groups, Indigenous peoples are therefore abstracted from the discursive construction of “ethnocultural” itself within the pseudo-legal framework of multicultural policy. Put otherwise, while Indigenous peoples *are* minorities, they are not technically *multicultural* minorities.

A similar occlusion arises with respect to race. While “race” and “ethnicity” are sometimes circular concepts in the terminology, the specificity of “Anglo-Celtic” and “French” in the construction of “ethnocultural majorities” differs from the wider “Whites or Caucasians” in the definition of “race,” which makes room for certain white, but non-Anglo-Celtic, groups within the term “ethnocultural minority” (e.g., German, Italian, Ukrainian). Racial difference in multi-culturalism policy is thus distinguished from ethnocultural difference primarily on the question of colour and “visibility,” a term that becomes synonymous with race in the definition of “Racial Minorities”:

Visible Minorities/Racial Minorities: Canadians who consider themselves partially or fully *of origins other than European or Native* and are visibly identifiable as such. They are usually identified as persons who trace their origins to Asia, Africa, South and Central America and the Pacific Islands. (88 my emphasis)

While Indigenous people are technically *numerical* minorities, and obviously *visible* minorities within the racial taxonomies of the white settler nation, “Native” here is placed alongside “European”—read: white, implicitly unmarked⁶²—as the racial majority against which racial minorities become “visibly identifiable.” “Native” people are therefore minority subjects, but subjects with neither ethnicity nor visible race as conceptualized in the policy. Within the terms and discursive constructs defining the policy discussions entered into to form the legislative basis of official multiculturalism, Indigenous peoples quite literally vanish in the language, disappearing as *invisible* minorities.⁶³

⁶² See Denise Ferreira da Silva’s *Towards a Global Theory of Race* on white, Western subjectivity’s “transparency” in modernity.

⁶³ Of course, the complications don’t end here. For Indigenous communities where kinship and relations determine membership rather than phenotype or race, many people are Indigenous but not necessarily “visible” minorities.

2. Multiculturalism's Institutionalization as Law

Mainstreaming Multiculturalism

The attempts at comprehensive categorical distinctions in *MBCM* need to be considered in the context of multiculturalism's evolution from its origins in 1971 to the 1988 Multiculturalism Act the Standing Committee was working toward. The federal government was not merely hoping to expand and clarify the loose policy framework introduced by the Trudeau administration, but also to arrive at a language commensurate to multiculturalism's evolving institutionalization as a concept with statutory bearing. In its first two decades, multiculturalism policy had transitioned from a series of programs offering limited cultural assistance for ethnic minority groups toward a more rights-based concept viewed as important to inter-group relations within Canadian society generally. In her analysis tracking the government's annual reports of multiculturalism's administration, Laura Moss describes the early 1980s as a period when "celebrations of cultural events are juxtaposed with issues of race and [when] anti-racism and social concerns begin to eclipse artistically cultural issues" (44). *MBCM* emphasizes the extent to which these shifts had in part demanded a more formal legal framework for multiculturalism in its transition from a policy "dedicated to cultural preservation" to one "seek[ing] to ensure social, economic and political equality for Canadians of all cultural and racial origins" (xi). The 1971 policy was by this time viewed as "marginal" (xii), "clearly insufficient and out of date," lacking "the ability to respond to the needs of today's multicultural society" (xi), needing "clear direction," and woefully underfunded: "Acceptance and support of Multiculturalism is carried out more in a fringe or peripheral sense. The mainstream of Canadian society and institutions have yet to be 'multiculturalized'" (*MBCM* xii).

The "needs of today's society" here reflects the state's recognition of substantial shifts in Canada's racial demography resulting from the immigration reforms of the late 1960s, a change that can be traced in a concerted discursive re-alignment away from "ethnic" or "ethnocultural minorities" toward "visible minorities" in official state rhetoric. A Special Committee Task Force on Visible Minorities was struck in 1984 under the Minister of Multiculturalism and released its influential report

Equality Now! to the House of Commons, which “propelled the policy of multiculturalism into the public arena for debate” (Lewycky 65) and consciously incorporated anti-racist institutional reform into an expanded definition of what multiculturalism should achieve. This emerging emphasis on the intersecting concerns of race relations and structural equity is perhaps most clearly reflected in *Mainstreaming Multiculturalism in Canada: Challenges and Opportunities* (1984), the report of the Committee on the Future of Multiculturalism in Canada, which turned a critical eye toward the transition of state multiculturalism “from a culture-oriented policy to one aimed at redressing inequities in the social, political, and economic sectors of society”—a transition that “has not been an easy or truly successful one with respect to changing systemic, structural, and institutional prejudice and discrimination” (13): “So long as multiculturalism is seen to emphasize ethnic and cultural diversity alone, it cannot address the problem of prejudice and discrimination as it affects, for example, those who are victims of racism” (12). Institutional reform and concerns with equity, characterized predominantly in terms of race relations, were thus correlative objectives defining the state’s push to “multiculturalize” the Canadian polity. The specific direction to achieve this recommended by the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism was the creation of a distinct Department of Multiculturalism and an official Multiculturalism Act (Bill C-93, “An Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism in Canada”). The latter became legislation in 1988, six years following multiculturalism’s inclusion in Section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms within the newly patriated Canadian Constitution.⁶⁴

“Mainstreaming” multiculturalism—a key verb in the policy’s administration in the late 1980s as it shifted from the Trudeau Liberals to the Progressive Conservative government of Brian

⁶⁴ Section 27 of the Charter stipulates that the “Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.” The interpretative nature of the clause does not so much guarantee “multiculturalism” as a citizen right but instead makes a provision determining how the Charter rights should be interpreted in jurisprudence by the courts. Because of its loose definition and supplemental function to the individual rights directed at equality and non-discrimination defined in other Charter sections, according to constitutional scholar Peter Hogg, Section 27 represented “more of a rhetorical flourish than an operative provision” (qtd. in Small 199). It did nothing to describe what the government should actually *do* to effect the “preservation” or “enhancement” of multiculturalism, which is one reason why the substantial policy evaluations leading toward a Multiculturalism Act were deemed essential.

Mulroney—was, in this sense, not only a legislative priority, but a deeply pedagogical undertaking, requiring the (re)education of public institutions specifically but also the Canadian public generally. The royal assent of the Multiculturalism Act represented a substantial, if not highly symbolic, declaration in the name of guaranteeing “the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins,” and of “recognizing” and “promoting” the “understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity” (Canada, Multiculturalism Act). Multiculturalism was moving from a fringe policy with limited assistance for preserving cultural diversity to the heart of official Canadian national identity—a move that required promoting and preserving the policy itself as much as the freedoms of those individuals and communities the Act ostensibly represents. This was particularly so given the ascendant visibility of multiculturalism within national politics coincided with its increasingly contentious position as a policy subject to scrutiny from ideological positions across the political spectrum. The all-party consensus that had initially greeted Trudeau’s 1971 White Paper steadily eroded with the rise to power in national politics of the conservative Reform Party and its explicitly anti-multicultural platform of right-wing populism. Moreover, the neoliberal creep of economic policy throughout the 1980s and 1990s, eventually combined with a recession in 1990, saw an appetite for smaller government and austerity to combat deficits, eroding public spending on culture specifically and the welfare state generally. At the same time, mounting critiques of multiculturalism from the political Left, as a policy failing to deliver on the ideals of social justice it promotes, resulted in a great deal of cultural organizing and activism across racialized communities labouring for equity-oriented action within mainstream Canadian cultural and political institutions. Thus, multiculturalism’s expanding institutionalization in the public sphere took the form of a contentious political debate at the centre of which was the question of accountability, though conceived in often radically different ways.

Speaking from her experience as a writer and activist in this era of multiculturalism’s “mainstreaming” during the late 1980s and early 1990s, Larissa Lai reflects on the conundrum of the

time: “Just at the moment when it looked possible that the voices repressed by the old (not-quite) democratic state might be admitted into that old (not-quite) democratic state, the old (not-quite) democratic state began to morph into the neoliberal state we have today” (“Community” 121). An emblematic federal policy text that captures both the nationalist mainstreaming of multiculturalism and its increasingly neoliberal dimensions is the 1987 booklet *Multiculturalism: Being Canadian (MBC)*, mass-produced by the Mulroney government and designed to publicize the Multiculturalism Act (1988) prior to its passage into law. *MBC* adopts many platitudinous statements about national unity and “strength in diversity” inherited from the Trudeau-era Liberals, while emphasizing with confidence the extent to which these values had now become

more than Canadian ideals; they are Canadian realities. Multiculturalism has evolved as a powerful bonding agent for Canadians, as well as an expression of our fundamental belief system of values. It helps unite us and identify us, while at the same time allowing every element of our society to retain its own characteristics and cultural heritage. (9)

This growing confidence is further reflected in the text’s explicit positing of the Multiculturalism Act as a flagship moment to promote the nation’s unique approach to diversity as a leveragable commodity to enhance Canada’s international attractiveness and competitiveness in global trade; historically a “Canadian creation,” multiculturalism is now a “Canadian export” (3), and thus the new policy mantra introduced by the Mulroney government: “Multiculturalism Means Business” (27). The pedagogical goal of mainstreaming multiculturalism by “selling diversity,” to use the title of Yasmeeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel’s book on the subject, was thus both an international and *intranational* project: multiculturalism was something Canada was attempting to capitalize upon by marketing globally, but its divisive politics also needed selling at home as well.

Literary writing and publishing played an important role in both dimensions of this project, and was increasingly seen by the government as a crucial part of multiculturalism’s ability to serve as the “powerful bonding agent for Canadians” described by Mulroney above. In 1978, the multiculturalism directorate established its Writing and Publications Program (WPP), which I examine more fully in

Chapter 3. The WPP operated until 1996 with the goal of financially supporting “ethnic” literature in order to publicize Canada’s cultural diversity and thereby promote multiculturalism and its acceptance within the mainstream public (see Young). The government’s publicizing of the WPP’s work, whether in its annual parliamentary reports on multiculturalism’s administration or in the numerous guides and catalogues it published to itemize and promote the literature the program financially supported, was undertaken with the belief that fostering public awareness and making “multicultural” literature widely accessible to readers and educators would “contribute to a deeper understanding and appreciation of Canada’s multicultural nature” (Canada, *Literary Publications*). It’s within this context that the category of “multicultural literature” gained currency Canadian literary publishing as well, and would become pedagogically institutionalized in the study of Canadian literature with the publication of texts such as Oxford’s influential *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990), a WPP-funded anthology and the subject of this project’s Chapter 4.

What is important to note for my overview in this chapter, however, is that this literary program was not designed to financially support the production of Indigenous literature specifically, given its recourse to the policy definitions of “ethnic” and “visible minority” as categories I have outlined above, to which Indigenous subjectivity remained largely invisible. Moreover, by 1990, the neoliberalization of federal cultural expenditures had brought a close to the Secretary of State’s core funding of Indigenous political organizations that Trudeau-era multiculturalism had ushered in under the aegis of “ethnicity.” The roughly \$3.5 million DSOS budget for Indigenous communications in the Native Citizens Directorate was axed entirely from the 1990 Conservative federal budget as part of wider cuts to cultural spending under the emerging conservative ethos of economic austerity. While the operating budget for federal multiculturalism programs actually *increased* throughout the 1990s, it was steadily diverted “away from core operational funding of groups in favour of grants for specific projects” as an attempt to make cultural spending more “accountable,” as Frances Abele has shown. Part of this shift toward accountability was a renewed focus on spending to assist projects for members

of “multicultural” groups—that is, ethnic, racial, or religious minorities—that “support[ed] the symbolic order of Canadian identity,” and decreasing support for “groups which promote rights of other collectivities, notably women and Aboriginal peoples” (Abele 183). Thus, the shifts in cultural funding as a form of management reveal the late 1980s and early 1990s as a period wherein some of the ambiguities surrounding the state’s approach to Indigeneity within the 1970s “ethnic mosaic” era of Trudeau’s multiculturalism became clarified and distinguished; as multiculturalism was being mainstreamed in, Indigenous peoples and cultural spending were being defined out.

The two key legislative documents in the transition toward the federal institutionalization of multiculturalism as a rights-based concept—the Constitution and the Multiculturalism Act—also introduced legal distinctions that further differentiated Indigenous peoples from its mandate. If, as I have argued, Indigeneity proved difficult to categorize, and at times invisible or irrelevant, within and between the categories of “ethnic minority” and “founding nation” central to multicultural policy and its key antecedents, political developments between the government and Indigenous activists during the late 1970s and early 1980s resulted in significant legal reconfigurations of the terms of this relationship. Indeed, largely as a result of the political activism from Indigenous organizations mobilized in response to the White Paper’s (failed) unilateral rejection of “special status” under the terms of liberal citizenship, the 1970s became a period of what James Sákéj Youngblood Henderson (Chickasaw) calls “extraordinary transformation” (37) between the state and Indigenous peoples: “In a little over a decade, the perseverance and competencies of First Nations leaders and lawyers had displaced an official governmental policy proposal of termination of the special status of First Nations to a policy of recognition of Aboriginal and treaty rights as an essential part of the Constitution of Canada” (36). This transformation also created the legal conditions by which Indigenous peoples would become *formally* excluded from the legal provisions afforded by the Multiculturalism Act, despite its self-fashioning as a law for “all” Canadians.

After the Supreme Court's decision in the *Calder* case, and the subsequent reversal of the Trudeau administration's overtly dismissive approach to Indigenous land rights, Indian Affairs tabled a *Statement on Claims of Indian and Inuit People: A Federal Native Claims Policy* in 1973 aimed at negotiating comprehensive claims settlements in non-treaty areas of Canada. Throughout the 1970s, significant lobbying from now politically robust and federally funded Indian provincial and national organizations continued to press the rights and title of Indigenous peoples in Canadian political arenas, including the "Indian Control of Indian Education" policy in 1972. At the same time, the federal government in turn had progressively pursued policies of devolving administrative responsibility over Indian Affairs to tribal and reserve governments under the political aegis of "self-government."⁶⁵ The landmark event in 1982 was the "recognition" of "existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada" in Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act.⁶⁶ Together with the rise of nation-centric discourses emerging with the vernacular of "First Nations," the constitutional guarantees to "aboriginal" (Indian, Inuit, and Métis) peoples in Section 35(1) drew new and significant distinctions between Indigenous peoples and other minority Canadians. As John Borrows suggests, "Aboriginal peoples occupy a special place in Canada's constitutional framework: they are not just another culture or minority group. Section 35(1) ... protects the existing culture, practices, and traditions of Aboriginal peoples ... [and] safeguards Indigenous peoples as one of the country's founding political and legal groups" (*Canada's* 129). By the time of the Multiculturalism Act's 1988 royal assent, then, legal and political arrangements

⁶⁵ As Long, Little Bear, and Boldt note in 1982, while the government had pursued variants of self-government since the 1970s as alternatives to traditional Indian Act politics, this strategy of devolving autonomy was never really about devolving authority. The objective was to ease the financial and administrative burden on Indian Affairs without requiring alterations to the underlying legal relationship: "Importantly, the intent of the proposed legislation is to *delegate* parliamentary authority to the Band level, not to *substitute* Indian authority for parliamentary authority" (192).

⁶⁶ "Recognition" is here misleading because of the "existing" nature of Aboriginal rights (existing long before the Constitution). The verbiage of "recognizing" also frames Section 35(1) as a (generous) accommodation on behalf of the state when in reality Aboriginal rights were not part of the government's original plans for patriation. It was only after a widespread activist campaign, across Canada and eventually to England, by Indigenous peoples that Aboriginal rights made its way into the constitutional discussions initiated by Trudeau. While the legal complexities of the largely undefined "existing aboriginal and treaty rights" are beyond my scope here, see *Treasures or Empty Box? Twenty Years of Section 35* for less positive responses than Borrows' I discuss below. I return to "recognition" politics later in the chapter.

between the state and Indigenous people had shifted markedly from the time multiculturalism became policy in 1971. Legislators would have to frame the Act within these terms and distinctions.

Legislating Exception: The Multiculturalism Act

In his reading of the Act, Vijay Mishra argues that the key “lies not so much in the section dealing with the definition of the Multicultural Policy of Canada, but in the preamble to it, in which the rights of individuals and communities are said to be self-evidently enshrined in the Canadian Constitution itself” (*What* 24). A series of eight “whereas” clauses in the preamble situate the Act within existing legal frameworks: established Constitutional guarantees (e.g., equality under the law, non-discrimination, individual freedoms, aboriginal rights, the existing “multicultural heritage of all Canadians”); existing legislation and conventions (the Official Languages Act, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Citizenship Act, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination); and the government’s position that it already “recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society” through its existing multiculturalism policy designed “to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada.” In Mishra’s reading, then, the Act primarily serves a “supplemental function” or an “amplification of those fundamental human rights” rather than announcing something new, as multiculturalism is situated primarily within the previously established liberal rights and freedoms guaranteed by the state (24). This argument foregrounds the highly symbolic nature of the Act for which it has at times been critiqued, a reading that is supported to some extent by the rationales provided by the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism in its recommendations for the Act’s creation. Various options had been considered for amending existing laws, such as the Citizenship Act, to reflect Canada’s official commitments to multiculturalism; but such options, while feasible in concept, were ultimately rejected: they “would be ‘lumping’ multiculturalism in with other important aspects of citizenship” and “would not serve the need to give this policy its rightful symbolic place” (*MBCM* 76). Based on the strong views expressed by

“ethnocultural minority groups” in consultation, and on the Committee’s view that a “true” commitment to Trudeau’s vision of multiculturalism within bilingualism required elevating the former as law alongside the latter, their recommendation concludes: “The symbolism of, and the message sent out by a separate Act should not be underestimated. If multiculturalism is appended to another Act ... or dealt with piecemeal ... the historic opportunity to give multiculturalism its full importance and influence will be missed” (77).

Notwithstanding its significant symbolic function, however, the language of the Act introduced key new divisions between its legal mandate and Indigenous peoples—distinctions that, following the letter of the law, are in fact quite *literal* rather than symbolic. In the “Interpretation” section that opens the Act proper and clarifies its key terms, “*federal institution*” is defined as any government institution “established to perform a governmental function by or pursuant to an Act of Parliament” (such as the Multiculturalism Act); but, notably, “does not include” the territorial governments or “any Indian band, band council or other body established to perform a governmental function in relation to an Indian band or other group of aboriginal people.” This specific citing of Indian band(s) and “aboriginal people” is, in fact, the only direct reference to a particular group of “people” in the entirety of the Act, marked here solely for the purpose of exclusion of Indigenous people from the institutional and legal responsibilities of multiculturalism. (English and French are represented linguistically, while “ethnocultural minority groups” go unspecified). No explanation is found within the Act itself for this prohibition. Critics of Canadian multiculturalism such as Smaro Kamboureli have thus duly critiqued the exclusionary clause as “textually ambiguous,” as whether Aboriginal peoples “are excluded because the aboriginal peoples are not deemed part of the Act’s pan-Canadianism, or because they deserve ‘distinct’ treatment, given their aboriginal claims and rights” remains unclear (*Scandalous* 216). However, the answer is arguably closer to both/and than either/or. The federal institutions exempted from the Act’s mandate of ensuring equity and respect for diversity are those responsible for the administration of the Indian Act, and thus the Multiculturalism Act maintains the legal distinctions that separate

Indian Affairs from “pan-Canadianism”; moreover, this distinct status is affirmed in the key legal clause based in the Constitution and acknowledged in the Act’s third preamble: “AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada recognizes rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada.”

Interestingly, the draft of the Act proposed by the Standing Committee in *MBCM* makes no mention of Aboriginal rights or Indigenous peoples specifically, either in its preamble or in the language of its powers and functions. This suggests that the exemptions introduced in the Act are specifically legal,⁶⁷ though the relative absence of Indigenous concerns in the policy deliberations informing the Act indicate this legal distinction largely reflects a conceptual one. In fact, in the entirety of the published record of the Standing Committee’s consultations and recommendations, the question of how the new Multiculturalism Act might be interpreted in relation to Indigenous peoples is hardly broached, reflecting the interpretive weight of the working definition of “Native Peoples” discussed earlier that notes “there are other government policies which address their needs.” In the section of *MBCM* dealing with the role of other governmental departments and agencies in relation to the proposed new Multiculturalism department, the Standing Committee blithely recommends that Indian Affairs and Northern Development “should not fail to make the connections between native affairs and multiculturalism where appropriate” (118). What “appropriate” means is undefined, but the past work of the Canadian Ethnocultural Council in its capacity as an advisory body to the Multiculturalism Directorate is given as an example: improving “efforts to increase communication” with Indigenous organizations “on *issues of common concern*, such as employment equity and Heritage Language retention. Further, the [Council] supports these organizations on *fundamental issues* such as land claims and self-government” (118 my emphasis). A distinction is thus drawn between issues of “common concern” pertinent to multiculturalism—cultural concerns (heritage languages) and anti-discrimination (equity)—

⁶⁷ The Standing Committee reiterates that its draft framework for the Act “proposes the *issues and ideas* that should be included in the Act—rather than its actual wording,” which should “be undertaken by lawyers with background and experience in human rights legislation” (77, my emphasis; 82).

and “fundamental” issues such as self-government and specific Aboriginal and treaty rights now recognized in the constitution. “Self-government” emerges as an operative term again, vaguely, in the only one of the Committees’ 44 recommendations for multicultural policy specifically related to Indigenous peoples: “The Standing Committee recommends that special attention be given to creating an environment in which aboriginal self-government could develop” (39). These conceptual distinctions between the cultural, anti-racism, and equity concerns of multiculturalism policy and the more *fundamental* issues of Aboriginal rights and self-government underscore the legislative connection between Aboriginal exclusion from the Act and its third preamble recognizing the constitutional “rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada.” Indeed, while the text of the Act itself is ultimately obscure on this matter, in its interpretation by the federal departments responsible for multiculturalism the link is made more explicit. For example, the 1992 Annual Report on the operation of the Multiculturalism Act notes:

In recognition of the principles of Indian self-government and the policies of constitutional development in the North, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act does not apply to the territorial governments or to organizations that perform a governmental function in relation to Aboriginal people. Since most of the activities of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development focus on Aboriginal people and the territorial governments, these activities are not included in the department’s annual report under the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. (82)

Thus the relationship between the Act’s exclusionary clause and its recognition of Aboriginal rights is less textually ambiguous than it initially appears: the former emerges from the latter, and serves to maintain the historical distinction/apartheid between Indian Affairs and Canadian citizenship rights.

As law, then, multiculturalism has little to do with Aboriginal rights, title, and self-determination—those “fundamental” concerns still governed by the Indian Act and the Constitution, and that in fact exclude federal institutions responsible for Aboriginal affairs from the mandate of the Multiculturalism Act. In its evolution from a cultural policy to a legal institution with a broader social justice mandate, multiculturalism has in this way introduced distinctions and exclusions that, on one hand, have worked to clarify its previously undefined and often invisible positioning of Indigenous

peoples, but on the other have introduced new and still-unresolved ambiguities or uncertainties in this relationship. For example, the constitutional definition of “Aboriginal” employed in the legislation raises the question of how multiculturalism relates to non-Status peoples—a question bound-up in legal definitions still being worked out in the Supreme Court. Moreover, similar concerns arise for those Indigenous people who do fall within the legal definition of “Aboriginal” and are thus excluded from multiculturalism’s anti-racist programs and equity protections, and for funding programs designed to support creative culture (such as the now-defunct Writing and Publications Program). In a 2008 report prepared by Will Kymlicka to provide a human rights overview and “state of multiculturalism” for the Department of Canadian Heritage, “Relating Multiculturalism to Aboriginal Peoples” is identified as one of its key unresolved “research themes” moving forward (“Current”). As the report notes, growing populations of urban Indigenous peoples live daily life alongside immigrant and other settler Canadians, and “while constitutionally speaking they may fall under different laws and regulations, the practical reality is that they often share public services and public space” (20). How multicultural policies designed for “visible minorities” extend to Indigenous peoples excluded from the very definition of “visible minority,” for instance, provides an example in Kymlicka’s report of how, with respect to Indigenous peoples, “the challenges of racism are not necessarily captured in [multiculturalism’s] inherited terminology” (20).

Moreover, the legality of inclusion/exclusion also relates to how variously situated Indigenous peoples conceptualize themselves within the Canadian legal context underwriting the social articulation of multiculturalism in the national sphere. For those who view the Act as another legal consolidation and further extension of liberal ideals that make little room for Indigenous modes of governance, theories of rights, and sovereignty, that federal Aboriginal Affairs and tribal governments are not subject to the Multiculturalism Act may in fact be a welcome development; yet for others who value its potential to provide a legal framework for anti-racism, equity, and cultural protections, such exclusions may be invidious. As it relates to Indigenous peoples, multiculturalism as a law has therefore drawn

significant new incongruities between, on the one hand, the politics of Indigenous rights and self-government, and on the other hand, multiculturalism's mandate within the social sphere and a narrower view of "culture" previously operating in its early years as policy. Yet as J. Anthony Long, Leroy Little Bear (Blackfoot), and Menno Boldt argued during the mid-1980s policy shifts toward Indigenous self-government, "[f]or Indians, self-government is inextricably linked to the achievement of self-determination and the preservation of the Indian cultural heritage" (189). Preserving living cultures and the geo/political right to self-determination are mutually informing principles. The government's "recognition" of Indigenous rights, however, becomes the very basis for its interpretation of the Multiculturalism Act's exclusion of Indigeneity, and thus reframes these interwoven principles in terms of a mutually exclusive legal dualism. The questions posed by the intersections of multicultural law and Indigenous rights are therefore whether or how policies for the equitable and cultural protection of "all" Canadians can or should extend to Indigenous peoples whose constitutional rights and status under the Indian Act locate them outside this mandate.

These are questions that in many ways extend beyond the discrete realm of multiculturalism politics toward the broader relationships negotiated between Indigenous peoples and the polity of colonial Canada for which the Multiculturalism Act was a highly symbolic statement of liberal ideals. The annual reports of the operation of the Multiculturalism Act often foreground such wider institutional connections by introducing the Act as one representative piece among Canada's many commitments to diversity within "a larger legislative framework that includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act,⁶⁸ the Citizenship Act, the Employment Equity Act, the Official Languages Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act" (2014-15 7). Conspicuously absent from such a list of "diversity" laws is, of course, the Indian Act, not only

⁶⁸ Access to human rights protection under the Canadian Human Rights Act was not available to Indigenous peoples living or working in reserves until 2008, an exclusion also based on the Indian Act's shielding from CHRA's application.

because it strikes in the face of the multiculturalism's congratulatory rhetoric of equity, but also because its omission strategically obfuscates the still exceedingly relevant place of exclusionary Indian legislation that contests the Multiculturalism Act's putative pan-Canadian universalism.

3. Multiculturalism as Liberal Political Philosophy

The legal and policy dimensions of Canadian multiculturalism have materialized as practical commitments to a liberal ideological paradigm of colonial governance. The complex and at times contradictory negotiations at the core of multiculturalism and its relation to social justice—between individual and group rights, equality and special status—exist also at the centre of liberal political philosophy, and so predate the institutionalization of multiculturalism by centuries. Thus, while its philosophical underpinnings are not entirely new, multiculturalism has emerged as a mode of governance in Canada and throughout the West during the second half of the twentieth-century as a particular manifestation of this tradition in response to new challenges posed by the massive demographic shifts of global migration between, and increasingly within, (post)colonial nation-states. As the previous sections have argued, Trudeau's multiculturalism policy in 1971 was not merely a strategic posturing for ethnic support or a response to the Quiet Revolution—though invariably it was those too—but also a clear articulation of his philosophical liberalism that imagined how individual “cultural freedoms” might best be protected within an ethnically “neutral,” post-national confederation. For this reason, Hugh Donald Forbes argues that Trudeau was not only a skilled and strategic politician; he was also “the first and remains the most authoritative theorist of Canadian multiculturalism” (39). Political philosophers in Canada since Trudeau, however, while remaining largely faithful to his liberalism, have attempted to work through both the contradiction of “multiculturalism within a bilingual framework” and the demands for recognition from minority communities that exceeded Trudeau's philosophical rejection of special status and group rights.

Most prominent among these theorists have been Canadian philosophers Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor, whose theories of “multicultural citizenship” and the “politics of recognition,”

respectively, have become influential to the political philosophies of multiculturalism both in Canada and globally. The philosophical dimensions of multiculturalism are also where Indigenous scholarship has most often engaged, and indeed pointedly critiqued, the settler-colonial underpinnings that have defined Canada's commitments to diversity. As policy and law multiculturalism has dealt with Indigenous peoples largely in terms of exception or exclusion, but its operative logics as a governing ideology—liberal equality, minority accommodation, and political recognition, for example—have in various spheres come to incorporate Indigeneity within its social articulations and philosophical solutions to national diversity. In this regard, the work of political theorists Dale Turner (Anishinaabe) and Glen Coulthard (Dene), responding directly to Kymlicka and Taylor, respectively, are particularly instructive. Their critiques overlap in a shared commitment to asserting Indigenous sovereignty, rights, and nationhood that exceed and exist independent of the state's limited recognition of minority "cultural" rights. They differ in how these objectives might be achieved, gesturing toward alternate future pathways of resistance and resurgence.

Multicultural Citizenship and "White Paper Liberalism"

Will Kymlicka has produced an extensive body of political-philosophical writings over three decades that speak to his self-professed efforts as a "foot soldier" on behalf of liberal multiculturalism (*Odysseys* 7). Several core concepts expressed succinctly in his influential *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (1994) guide his theoretical framework, which at its core shares much with Trudeau's fundamental liberalism, while attempting to rework Trudeau's belief that the liberal state can present itself as a neutral context in which freely associated cultures negotiate. Kymlicka perceives this as a blind-spot of liberal democratic governance based on an "idealized model of the polis" (2) and a fundamentally misguided belief that a universalized discourse of "human rights" can adequately address the power asymmetries that marginalize minority groups: "The idea of responding to cultural differences with 'benign neglect' makes no sense. Government decisions on languages, internal boundaries, public holidays, and state symbols unavoidably involve recognizing, accommodating, and

supporting the needs and identities of particular ethnic and national groups” (3). Recognizing that Canada is *not* a neutral context, and that the group rights of some (e.g., official bilingualism, institutions built on majority values) are always already privileged in liberal states, Kymlicka argues that a “comprehensive theory of justice in a multicultural state will include both *universal rights*, assigned to individuals regardless of group membership, and *certain group-differentiated rights* or ‘special status’ for minority cultures” (6, my emphasis). Thus “special status” is not antithetical to liberalism for Kymlicka as it was for Trudeau, but rather a central component of it, though only insofar as “certain” protected group rights extended to minority groups remain compatible with the liberal freedoms of individuals within both minority groups and the larger polis. His argument hinges on a strong defense of the important role of states in protecting “societal cultures,” defined largely by national origins and in terms of language and history. For Kymlicka, cultural membership provides the foundations of personal autonomy and the individual’s ability to pursue the good life, and thus “the liberal value of freedom of choice has certain cultural preconditions” (76) that require protection.

His theory of multicultural citizenship builds on a schematic distinction between “‘multination’ states (where cultural diversity arises from the incorporation of previously self-governing, territorially concentrated cultures into a larger state) and ‘polyethnic’ states (where cultural diversity arises from individual and familial immigration)” (6). These categories of internal differences within the state arise from settler-colonialism (multinational) and immigration (polyethnic); and correspond to differentiated sets of citizenship rights for “national minorities” in multinational states and “ethnic groups” in polyethnic states—the former based on historical claims, the latter on concerns with equality. National minorities, such as Québécois and Indigenous nations, have stronger claims to group rights and “various forms of self-government to ensure their survival as distinct societies,” whereas immigrants, defined as ethnic groups, seek recognition “not to become a separate and self-governing nation ... but to modify institutions and laws of the mainstream society” in pursuit of accommodation and integration (11-12). Kymlicka sees federalism as an ideal mechanism for delegating powers of self-

government to national minorities through the provinces (e.g., Quebec) and to an emerging Indigenous “third order of government . . . carved out of both federal and state/provincial jurisdictions” (30). Canada thus becomes a privileged exemplar for practical application in Kymlicka’s theorization, not only because it is both multinational *and* polyethnic, but because its already existing diversity policies largely reflect his theory of differentiated citizenship rights: “Canada, with its policy of ‘multiculturalism within a bilingual framework’ and its recognition of Aboriginal rights to self-government, is one of the few countries which has officially recognized and endorsed both polyethnicity and multinationality” (22).

Kymlicka is thus an advocate for Indigenous rights to self-government and land. However, his philosophy necessarily restricts these rights to their role in sustaining “societal cultures.” Indigenous rights are compatible with Kymlicka’s liberalism only inasmuch as their redistribution by the state guarantees the preservation of equal cultural conditions in which individual autonomy might be pursued within the societal cultures of Indigenous nations, and so there are limitations:

One could imagine a point where the amount of land reserved for indigenous peoples would not be necessary to provide reasonable external protections, but rather would simply provide unequal opportunities to them. . . . In the real world, of course, most indigenous people are struggling to maintain the bare minimum of land needed to sustain the viability of their communities. But it is possible that their land holdings could exceed what justice allows. (110)

Indigenous rights are therefore also proportional to the conditions of equality for other cultural groups—conditions managed by the state’s power as arbiter of justice. (Tellingly, the question of what amounts of land reserved for *Canada* are “unequal” or unreasonable goes unasked.) Dale Turner argues that this is a “weaker form of Aboriginal sovereignty because the rights of Aboriginal governance are recognized only to the extent that they do not trump the sovereignty of the Canadian state” (66). Turner’s main critique of Kymlicka’s multiculturalism centres on his argument that a theory of rights granted to Indigenous nations as minority groups by the state fundamentally and ahistorically misrecognizes the meaning and source of Indigenous rights and sovereignty.

For Turner, Kymlicka's theory of multiculturalism is an improvement on, but ultimately an extension of, the Canadian state's ongoing political and legal practices that he terms "White Paper liberalism." This paradigm continues the 1969 White Paper tradition of presenting political solutions to the problems facing Indigenous peoples—often with well-meaning liberal intentions—that are nevertheless hostile to Indigenous sovereignty as understood by Indigenous peoples. These magnanimous political "peace pipes" follow a similar pattern inasmuch as they regularly fail to

1. address the legacy of colonialism;
2. consider that indigenous rights are a *sui generis* form of group rights and not merely a class of minority rights;
3. question the legitimacy of the initial formation of the Canadian state; and
4. acknowledge that any workable 'theory' of Aboriginal rights in Canada must include the participation of Aboriginal peoples. (15)

His specific critique of Kymlicka's theory of multiculturalism broaches all four of these shortcomings, particularly the premise that the Canadian multinational state presently comprises the *incorporation* of *previously* self-governing Indigenous national minorities. That the formation of Canada did not extinguish historically intact Indigenous rights to self-government challenges the state's unilateral claim to Indigenous *incorporation* and demands a "radical shift in our understandings of historical interpretation, political sovereignty, and most importantly, Aboriginal peoples' place in the Canadian state" (60). For Turner, such a shift that might redress the first three ideological failings of "White Paper liberalism" can only emerge from the more procedural fourth point, which would require the voices of Indigenous peoples actually being sought and heard in the state's deliberations on Indigenous affairs. Kymlicka's theory of multiculturalism fails to encompass the historical legitimacy of Indigenous sovereignty and misrecognizes Indigenous rights as cultural rights precisely because it "does not require the participation of Aboriginal peoples to determine the content of their 'special' rights" (70).

Turner's critique of Kymlicka speaks to the core philosophical difference between theories of multicultural rights grounded in liberalism and Indigenous rights flowing from *sui generis* political sovereignty and nationhood. Minority group rights, however robust or differentiated, and rationalized

through limited redistributions of state power designed to supplement and retrofit current inequalities, fail to address the root political history of colonization conditioning such inequalities, as well as Indigenous forms of sovereignty that emerge from histories other than the state's. For Turner, however, Kymlicka's theorization of differentiated multicultural citizenship, despite misrecognizing Indigenous rights, "at least makes room for Aboriginal peoples to speak for themselves. This is an important first step for liberalism, but it is only a first step" (69). Turner's larger political project is to advocate a solution to the fourth pillar of White Paper liberalism—namely, increasing Indigenous participation in the state's political deliberations in order for governments to better recognize the legitimacy of Indigenous forms of sovereignty as theorized by Indigenous peoples. And for this reason, Kymlicka's multiculturalism is not to be abandoned.

A pragmatic Indigenous political philosophy begins for Turner with recognizing the rather "unjust" imperative that Indigenous intellectuals will be forced to assert their sovereignty in forms intelligible to the Western European history of ideas and within its political arenas (9-10). In fact, Turner quotes from Kymlicka's work to define what he calls "Kymlicka's constraint," a "profound reality check" (58) for Indigenous peoples that despite decades of activism,

For better or worse, it is predominantly non-Aboriginal judges and politicians who have the ultimate power to protect and enforce Aboriginal rights, and so it is important to find a justification of them that such people can recognize and understand. . . . [O]n the standard interpretation of liberalism, Aboriginal rights are viewed as matters of discrimination and/or privilege, not of equality. They will always, therefore, be viewed with the same kind of suspicion that led liberals like Trudeau to advocate their abolition. Aboriginal rights, at least in their robust form, will only be secure when they are viewed, not as competing with liberalism, but as an essential component of liberal political practice. (Kymlicka, *Liberalism* 154)

To this end, Turner advocates for a division of labour within critical Indigenous philosophy. The split would be between those who continue developing philosophical theories of sovereignty within Indigenous epistemologies, and an intellectual class of "word warriors" to make political inroads by reconciling such knowledges within forms of political discourse familiar to the liberal state (7). The latter would theoretically ease the historical oppression of "Kymlicka's constraint" that has barred the

former from entering the normative discourses of Indigenous-state relationships. For Turner, then, liberal multiculturalism as a theory of minority rights cannot in itself create conditions in Canada for renewing such relationships on more just terms. By advancing a limited position for Indigenous rights and self-government in the state's practices of diversity, however, it may provide "an important first step" in what Len Findlay has termed the "long march to recognition" (247).

The Politics of Recognition and Indigenous Resurgence

Recognition politics operate at the core of multiculturalism as a theory of justice between majority and minority cultures. Canada's multiculturalism policy of 1971 emerged in part due to demands for recognition by "other ethnic groups" left out of biculturalism and bilingualism, particularly Ukrainian and Polish Canadian activists. Recognition is also the key verb mobilized throughout the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which "*recognizes* the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society." Mishra goes so far as to argue that "all substantive multicultural theory ... is a series of footnotes to the politics of recognition" as theorized by Charles Taylor. And since the late 1980s, recognition discourse has increasingly characterized Canada's state-Indigenous political relationship. Aboriginal rights were formally "recognized" in Section 35(1) of the Constitution. After the failed Meech Lake Accord and the armed standoff between the Canadian military and Mohawks of Kanesatake at Oka (both in 1990), growing public recognition of the tense Indigenous-state relationship led to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in 1991, which cast an emergent discourse of "reconciliation" squarely within the politics of recognition. The 1996 Report of RCAP consistently turns to the language of "recognition," and presents "mutual recognition" between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians as the first of four principles for "The Way Forward," to "repair the damage to the relationship and

enter the next millennium on a new footing of recognition and respect.”⁶⁹

The infusion of recognition politics with discourses of Indigenous-state reconciliation continuing since RCAP follows parallel movements toward redress and reconciliation that since the 1980s have supplemented the project of multiculturalism in Canada’s relationship with other minority groups. Beginning with the Mulroney government’s redress settlement for Japanese Canadian internment reached in 1988 following the Multiculturalism Act—negotiated through extraordinary activist efforts from the National Association of Japanese Canadians, in fits and starts, with the Minister of Multiculturalism—a series of settlements and government apologies have formally “recognized” the historical claims of various constituencies.⁷⁰ As Pauline Wakeham argues, “the emergence of reconciliation as a dominant discourse has prompted a retooling of the logic of official multiculturalism of the 1980s and ’90s” (211). The politics of redress and reconciliation, while not “official” multiculturalism policies per se, are a “species of multiculturalism,” according to Matt James, “characterized by a difference-conscious focus on group disadvantage” (224) and “hence as forms of ‘the politics of recognition’” (227). Recognition politics within discourses of reconciliation are thus a sphere where the state’s project of multiculturalism has widened to encompass demands from Indigenous peoples largely excluded from official multiculturalism policy and law. Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s court-mandated official apology on behalf of the Canadian government for residential schooling, which worked to encapsulate colonial violence within the genocidal history of the

⁶⁹ The full text of this section reads: “*Recognition*: The principle of mutual recognition calls on non-Aboriginal Canadians to recognize that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants and caretakers of this land and have distinctive rights and responsibilities flowing from that status. It calls on Aboriginal people to accept that non-Aboriginal people are also of this land now, by birth and by adoption, with strong ties of love and loyalty. It requires both sides to acknowledge and relate to one another as partners, respecting each other’s laws and institutions and co-operating for mutual benefit.”

⁷⁰ These politics of recognition, reconciliation, and redress have emerged in Canada alongside a proliferation of such movements internationally, a post-War and postcolonial phenomena Jacques Derrida famously articulated as a contemporary “globalisation of forgiveness” (31). Canadian multiculturalism’s expansion toward this reconciliation paradigm is thus not unique, but within the broader context of such parallel events as South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the UN’s declaration of an International Year of Reconciliation in 2009. See Wakeham; and also Henderson and Wakeham’s collection *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress*.

schools alone and thus close that “sad chapter” of Canada’s colonialism,⁷¹ is a case in point. His short speech reiterates variations of the phrase “The Government of Canada *now recognizes* . . .” seven times in its effort to promote “reconciliation and resolution of the sad legacy” of the schools (AANDC, my emphasis). Clearly, then, recognition is not only operative within the official politics of multiculturalism in Canada, but, to use Seyla Benhabib’s words, has become a “master concept for reflection upon what appear[s] at first sight to be a disparate array of sociocultural movements and struggles” (50).

For Charles Taylor, recognition is vital primarily as political pre-emption of, and solution to, its opposites—non-recognition or misrecognition. Dominant societies that withhold recognition to minority groups or, following Frantz Fanon, “mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves” (25), degrade those marginalized groups and society as a whole: “Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need” (26). Central to Taylor’s philosophy is the close link between recognition and the politics of identity, which he understands through its “fundamentally *dialogical* character” (31). Mutual recognition is constitutive of individual identity and “a person’s understanding of who they are, of their fundamental characteristics of a human being” (25). These psycho-social dynamics of recognition also occur in an “intercultural context” (42) for Taylor, who, like Kymlicka, argues also for the crucial part played by cultural affiliation in the processes by which individuals arrive at their identities. The politics of identity, culture, and recognition all circulate within “what is today called the politics of ‘multiculturalism’” (25), which presents a particular challenge to the liberal roots of modern Western European nation-state democracy. The cultural politics of identity for Taylor demand ethical recognitions of *difference* that contest “difference-blind” liberalism premised on the universal discourse of equal and individual rights. Like Kymlicka, he opposes a neutral understanding of the state, and argues against a “form of the politics of equal respect, enshrined in liberalism of rights, that is inhospitable to difference” because it

⁷¹ See Mackey, “The Apologizer’s Apology” for a critique of Harper’s statement. Only one year later, Harper touted Canada’s diversity and the fact it has “no history of colonialism” at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh (Wherry).

universalizes its own ideological particulars and is “suspicious of collective goals” (60). To this end, he agrees that in circumstances where the integrity of minority (ethno)cultures is in question, certain groups—e.g., “Indian bands and French-speaking Canadians”—require special accommodations in law and policy to ensure cultural survival (40n16).

The larger philosophical challenge of reconciling liberalism with the politics of difference, however, is to first recognize that citizens belong to cultures that “call[] into question our own philosophical boundaries,” and then to “deal with their sense of marginalization without compromising our basic political principles” (63). Herein lies the proactive and psychological value Taylor ascribed to recognition politics in moving beyond simply legislating certain accommodations that create conditions in which cultures might better survive for themselves: “the further demand we are looking at here is that we all *recognize* the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their *worth*” (64 original emphasis). Such a demand, for Taylor, necessarily takes the form of a “*presumption* of equal worth” (72), as he stops short of arguing for recognition without limits. Cultures worthy of recognition cannot undermine fundamental “rights to life, liberty, due process, free speech, free practice of religion, and so on,” which should be understood as unassailable, even where special group accommodations in the form of “privileges and immunities . . . revoked or restricted for reasons of public policy” are justified (59). This is why recognition must take the form of an evaluative *presumption*, “a stance we take in embarking on the study of the other,” whose different cultures may then be tested in terms of their equal *worth* (72).

Taylor’s “us” and “them” is, in philosophical terms, a rhetorical oscillation between the universal (Western, liberal) and the particular (the identity politics of difference), but it also clearly places him within the “us” of Anglo-Canadian cultural hegemony.⁷² Here Taylor’s philosophical indebtedness to Hegel and his dialectical understanding of recognition between the Master and Slave

⁷² For a detailed discussion of Taylor’s use of pronouns, see Bannerji, *Dark Side of the Nation*, particularly pp. 134-37.

clearly marks the disproportional allocation of power in the politics of recognition between the state and its multicultural “others.” The dialectic of identity emerges through demands for recognition directed upward to the state, which in turn may recognize the worth of others according to its criteria of evaluation. Taylor acknowledges this reality, which he defends not by contesting its normative dimension or by suggesting liberalism holds the capacity for neutral judgment; rather, he argues that the moral consequence of an *authentic* presumption of equal worth is that it would by necessity involve transformations in “our” ways of being through the dialectic of *mutual* recognition. Multiculturalism thus becomes “a willingness [for “us”] to be open to comparative cultural study of the kind that must displace our horizons in the resulting fusions” (73).

While Taylor’s empirical focus is largely French Canadians and Quebec, it is clear that Indigenous cultures pass the “worth” test of his recognition politics and thus deserve cultural protections. However, Taylor’s philosophy, like Kymlicka’s, also rests squarely within the four shortcomings of Turner’s “White Paper liberalism,” particularly inasmuch as the operative Hegelian “us/them” dialectic maintains the legitimacy of the state as power-broker in arbitrations of accommodation. For Glen Coulthard, “the logic informing this dimension—where ‘recognition’ is conceived as something that is ultimately ‘granted’ or ‘accorded’ a subaltern group or entity by a dominant group or entity—prefigures its failure to significantly modify, let alone transcend, the breadth of power at play in colonial relationships” (29-30). Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks* presents a sustained critique of Taylor’s recognition politics from the perspective of Indigenous nation-based sovereignty, and shares a number of similarities with Turner’s critique of liberal multiculturalism. Namely, that Taylor’s philosophy maintains the colonial state’s unilateral assertion of sovereignty over the rights of Indigenous peoples on their lands; fails to question the normative status of the settler state as *the* “legitimate framework within which Indigenous peoples might be more justly included” (36); and accommodates group rights in limited terms of “cultural” survival that involve a “displacement of questions of Indigenous sovereignty and alternative political economies by narrowly conceived cultural

claims” (19-20). Thus while state-directed “redistribution schemes” of recognition politics may alter the *intensity* of colonial domination, they leave intact its “generative structures,” notably the colonial state form of dispossession and capitalist accumulation in Coulthard’s Marxist critique (35).⁷³ These arguments focused on the preservation of historical asymmetries of power come together in Coulthard’s work to outline what he calls the *structural* problem with recognition politics.

Coulthard also focuses on the *subjective* or psychological dimensions operating within the “hegemonization of the recognition paradigm” (4) defining Indigenous-state relationships, particularly in the post-White Paper era marked by the Canadian government’s turn to reconciliation and away from explicit policies of assimilation. This subjective dimension is arguably more central and radical within his wider project of “rejecting” recognition politics because it involves a pointed critique of the way he sees Indigenous peoples as having internalized the politically ineffectual logic of recognition in anti-colonial activism. Turning to political claims advanced by, amongst other examples, the Dene and the Assembly of First Nations, Coulthard argues that “recognition” is not only the operative vernacular in state-directed discourse, but also now “the dominant expression of self-determination within the Aboriginal rights movement in Canada” (2). Fanon’s anti-colonial psychology informs Coulthard’s critique of what he terms a “‘psycho-affective’ attachments to these circumscribed modes of recognition” in Indigenous politics, a move that requires reformulating Charles Taylor’s (mis)reading of Fanon in “The Politics of Recognition.” For Taylor, Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* is the example *par excellence* of the oppressive danger “misrecognition” poses to distorting the “self-image” (65) of subaltern subjects in the identity politics of colonial subjugation. Coulthard turns to Fanon’s reading of Hegel in *Black Skin, White Masks* to reframe the psychological violence of colonialism not solely as racist *mis*-recognition, but also as it operates more coercively within the colonial terms of *mutual recognition* in the Master/Slave dialectic. In Coulthard’s re-reading of Fanon, Indigenous subjects who

⁷³ This is also Coulthard’s critique of Nancy Fraser’s argument for corrective redistribution in the so-called “recognition versus redistribution” debates influentially broached in the critical dialogue between Fraser and Axel Honneth.

recognize themselves in the state's governing regimes, and come to identify with its limited forms of recognition, are therefore no longer self-determining actors or "creators of the terms, values, and conditions by which they are to be recognized" (39). This type of attachment, for Coulthard, is one reason why claims formulated in the dialogic of mutual recognition have led to minimal political advancements restricted to the terms of what the liberal state is willing to recognize. It is also why Coulthard finds it important to maintain the ardent focus on subjective "identity politics" found in Taylor's theory—for which it has often been critiqued as immaterial on *structural* terms—as part of a dual subjective/structural anti-colonial politics.

This subjective dimension is where Coulthard's theorization ultimately depart most significantly from Dale Turner's. For Turner, political inroads depend on "word warriors" making Indigenous political philosophy *recognizable*, and thus legitimate, to the state—an intellectual and political project to which a robust theory of multiculturalism that grants substantive minority rights may serve as a starting point. Coulthard, however, argues that such a politics of mutual recognition will inevitably reproduce the structural and subjective conditions that Indigenous political activism should seek to transcend. He thus calls for a "*resurgent politics of recognition*" as a form of subjective Indigenous *self*-recognition, an "alternative politics of recognition" oriented not around attaining state recognition but "Indigenous peoples empowering themselves through cultural practices of individual and collective self-fashioning that seek to *prefigure* radical alternatives to the structural and subjective dimensions of colonial power" (18). Like the work of theorists such as Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Anishinaabe), Audra Simpson (Mohawk), and Taiaiake Alfred (Mohawk), Coulthard's rejection of colonial recognition is conjoined with a critically self-reflexive politics of resurgence, whose intellectual energies and embodied decolonial practices assert instead the regeneration of Indigenous nations and modes of governance.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ While I have presented Coulthard's and Turner's work in opposition here, as Coulthard does in *Red Skin, White Masks* (45-47; 178-79), their projects are not necessarily antithetical, but instead vary in terms of where emphasis is placed in the division of (intellectual) labour of critical Indigenous political philosophy. See Coulthard 179, especially.

Conclusion: Between Culture and Politics

Returning then to this chapter's opening heuristic—the question of whether Indigenous peoples have been “included” in Canadian multiculturalism—the political actor with power to “include” in this formulation is implicitly the state, and as such my analysis has tended toward unpacking what Himani Bannerji calls “multiculturalism from above” (6), particularly in its early years as policy when multiculturalism was not a primary cite of contention for Indigenous critiques. For Harold Cardinal in 1969, the rise to prominence of the “mosaic” model of Canadian diversity was not viewed as necessarily antithetical to the struggle for rights and title; rather, Cardinal, a “word warrior” in Turner's sense, saw the mosaic as a model to be leveraged in petitioning the state for recognition of the unique place of Indigenous peoples in Canada. After near five decades of multiculturalism, that Indigenous peoples have variously contested or rejected its philosophical models of “inclusion” or “incorporation,” and that the state has variously elided or excluded Indigeneity within its official articulations of policy, reveals multiculturalism's inability to reconcile the distinctness of Cardinal's metaphorical “red tile” with the state's “mosaic” and its recognition of *cultural* diversity.

This chapter has worked to document the major fluctuations of this inclusion/exclusion dynamic as they have taken shape over time in various discursive and material spheres that reflect how multiculturalism's commitments to Indigenous peoples have evolved alongside the legal and political dynamics of Indigenous-state relations. As we have seen, it would be erroneous to claim that multiculturalism was ever conceived as a political solution to the government's perceived Indian Problem. In this sense, if the rise to prominence of multiculturalism in the social articulation of Canadian identity since 1971 has subsumed Indigenous peoples within its vernaculars of ethnicity and claims to “all Canadians,” such depoliticizing inclusions require significant and material re-articulation, particularly within contemporary discourses of *nation-to-nation* reconciliation and resurgent Indigenous politics of nationalism. Indigenous political thinkers, taking a wider philosophical view of multicultural politics—liberal citizenship, or the politics of recognition—foreground the irreconcilability of

normative multicultural governance schemes with respect to the rights and sources of Indigenous political sovereignties. Yet, multiculturalism as a political theory grounded in liberal philosophy also has distinct policy and legal histories in Canada that intersect with Indigenous politics in complicated ways and that have affected how Indigenous subjectivity is conceived within Canada's wider politics of diversity, even among Indigenous people and organizations. As I examine in more detail in Part 2 of this project, these histories have come to bear on the critical modalities of Canadian literature as institution, and for this reason, need to be considered carefully for the ways Indigenous cultural production is shaped by the politics of multiculturalism. I want to conclude here by summarizing the ground covered in order to arrive at the core conclusion to be drawn for this study moving forward.

In terms of policy, Indigenous peoples were an incommensurate anomaly that failed to fit firmly in theories of state and social order in the frameworks of diversity and terminologies established by the B&B Commission to which multiculturalism was first addressed. While the "Indian Problem" was very much a concern for the Canadian government during the 1960s moment of nationalist historical re-assessment, various disavowals and rationalizations, in tandem with existing laws (e.g., the Indian Act) and legal agreements (e.g., the treaties) between Indigenous peoples and the state, made Indigenous peoples "special" and "separate" from both the category of "founding nations" and the emergent institutionalization of "ethnocultural" identity. These rationales turned to pathology and the impossibility of homogenizing heterogeneous "Indian" and "Eskimo" peoples for justification: Indian cultures were too incompatible with Western standards, Indian languages were too diverse to be representative of a coherent "ethnic" group, and the Indian Problem too complex for the Commission's cultural considerations. Further, the class divide between Indigenous and other Canadians as well as the lack of nationally representative organization and administration made the "Indian group" inassimilable within managerial strategies designed to support other "ethnic" groups. Thus, while the state has subsequently promoted the *visibility* of Indigeneity by appropriating Indigenous history into narratives of longstanding "indigenous" multicultural diversity in Canada,

Indigenous *peoples* themselves have largely been *invisible* in the discursive construction of ethnicity and identity operative within multiculturalism.

The policy of 1971 announced by Trudeau, however, reworked the B&B Commission's terms of reference to divorce the hard politics of bureaucratic bilingualism from the softer "cultural" politics of ethnic diversity. Multiculturalism reflected, amongst other things, Trudeau's hostility to cultural nationalisms, claims to sovereignty, and "special" treatment of minority groups based on ethnicity, which he extended to both French Canadians and Indigenous peoples. The "special" status of French made official with bilingualism was expedient not based on French ethnic privilege, but on the political power of the francophone majority in Quebec to break the country. Because Indigenous peoples held no such power in Trudeau's presentist interpretation of historical rights, Indigenous groups required no such special treatment within his liberalism. The White Paper effectively misrecognized Indigenous difference as ethnic difference rather than national or historically rooted legal difference, and thus proposed support for Indigenous heritage cultures uncoupled from concerns expressed by Indigenous peoples over claims to sovereignty and land, which were to be rejected. After the failed White Paper was rescinded, the new multiculturalism policy represented no substantial shift in the Trudeau administration's position on the Indian Problem—the question of "separate" status remained to be resolved within the auspices of Indian Affairs. However, while cultural support for Indigenous peoples was ambiguously positioned as supplemental to the objectives of multiculturalism policy for "other ethnic groups," the policy's distinction between "cultural" support and the *realpolitik* of bilingualism and liberal governance meant that limited funding for Indigenous cultures was conceivable—indeed, compatible within the objectives established in the White Paper. What resulted was a strategy of funding Indigenous groups *as* ethnic groups under multiculturalism, a project undertaken by the Native Citizens Directorate within the Department of the Secretary State that administered the new multicultural program. Here, then, is the central ambivalence of multicultural policy in relation to Indigenous peoples: Indigenous political difference has never been accountable within its terms of

“ethnicity” or visible difference, but financial support to preserve Indigenous cultures has at times been extended to Indigenous organizations and associations as *ethnic minority equivalents*.

As Indigenous-state politics reformulated in terms of rights, land claims, and self-government into the 1980s, so too did multiculturalism. As a law, the Multiculturalism Act officially recognized Indigenous and treaty rights under Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, and for this reason formally excluded Indigenous peoples from the legal mandate of multiculturalism. Thus, those political complexities informing the ambiguous position of Indigenous peoples as “ethnic” minorities in earlier policy developments—special status, Indian Act legislation—were made explicit with the Multiculturalism Act. In this sense, the Act’s legislation of multiculturalism is less ahistorical than the policy outlined by Trudeau in its recognition of Indigenous rights and separate status that had since 1971 become constitutionally entrenched. Yet whereas the original multiculturalism policy enabled monies directed at cultural support for “ethnic” groups to flow to Indigenous organizations in ways that problematically divorced the spheres of Indigenous cultures from *realpolitik*, the exclusion of Indigenous peoples based on this same distinction raised new concerns. For example, over how anti-racism policies developed since the 1980s account for racism directed toward Indigenous peoples who remain invisible to multicultural law in terms of race. The legal exclusion from multiculturalism premised on the political recognition of Indigenous rights thus draws a formal distinction between Indigenous peoples and other Canadians that in many social/cultural spheres may not exist in daily life.

What has distinguished multiculturalism as law in *practice* from multiculturalism as policy, therefore, is the same binary distinction that conjoins these spheres *conceptually*, which has also been the subject of Indigenous philosophical critiques of multiculturalism: in relation to Indigenous peoples particularly, multiculturalism has imposed a false and seemingly irreconcilable separation of “culture” from “politics.” As law, multiculturalism excludes Indigenous peoples from its social and cultural mandate for “all Canadians” in recognition of political difference, despite the fact that Indigenous peoples presently share in the social and cultural life of Canada and its public institutions, and remain

differentially regimented within the body politic of Canada through the Indian Act and as a result of long histories of colonial subjugation. Conversely, the history of multiculturalism policy programs has included Indigenous peoples by reframing political difference as ethnocultural difference—that is, supporting limited “cultural” endeavors through channels similar to non-Indigenous groups and conducive to state management. Multiculturalism may therefore only recognize and support Indigenous “cultures” construed in an epistemologically narrow sense and divorced from politics, because the latter contests the sovereignty of the state.

This dislocation of culture from politics is what Sam McKegney identifies multiculturalism’s distortions of Indigenous nations as cultures, as “shards” within the “mosaic,” that have subsequently informed the critical treatment of Indigenous literatures in Canada (“Beyond” 412). Yet, as this chapter has shown, in terms of the political history of multiculturalism’s institutionalization, this claim is perhaps too inflexible to account for the evolving relationships between Indigenous peoples, state multiculturalism, and cultural production. At the moment of its origins, Canadian multiculturalism did not so much “reimagine” Indigenous nations as cultures within the mosaic, but rather disavowed and failed to imagine Indigenous peoples and nations entirely. Moreover, the material support that *did* flow to Indigenous associations through multiculturalism policy was effectively mobilized by Indigenous peoples themselves as part of the nationalist politics of 1970s Red Power activism, the literary history of which I turn to now in the following chapter. As law, though, multiculturalism has in fact formally *excluded* Indigenous peoples, a point that becomes central to my analysis of multicultural anthologies in Part 2. These shifting material and political histories of multiculturalism are thus the interdisciplinary contexts that inform this project’s literary analyses in the following chapters.

Chapter 2: Black and White and Red All Over: *Nesika*, the Indian Press, and “Multicultural” Core Funding in the 1970s—Re-Reading the Renaissance

“If Aboriginal people were not going to fade into the sunset, then the government would assign them a place in the country’s political landscape similar to that held by other ethnic and cultural groups. Like other minority groups, they would not be considered one of the founding nations, and they too would slip under the umbrella of multiculturalism, ... receiv[ing] funding to sing and dance and highlight their cultures as an integral thread in the colourful fabric of Canadian society.”

—Armand Garnet Ruffo (Anishinaabe), “Where the Voice was Coming From”

“AlgonkinAssiniboineAthaapaskanB
eaverBellaCoolaBeothukBlackfoo
tCarrierCaughnawayaCayuyaChilk
atChilcotinChipewyanCreeCrowDe
lewareDogribEskimoFlatheadFoxG
rosVentreHaidaHareHuronIllinoi
sIroquoisKickapooKitwancoolKoo
tneyKoskimoKutchinKwakiutLake . . .”

—Wayne Keon (Ojibway), “Heritage” (1972)

In a personal reflection written in 2014, Tomson Highway recalls that when he enrolled at the University of Manitoba in 1970, “there was no such thing as Canadian literature. At least there wasn’t in the public mind. If it did exist, few knew about it” (55). This all changed for Highway when he picked up Margaret Atwood’s 1972 *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*. “I was astonished. Here, all of a sudden, were writers such as Susanna Moodie ... Sir Charles G.D. Roberts, E.J. Pratt, Frederick Philip Grove, Sinclair Ross, Gabriel Roy, Al Purdy, Earl Birney, Sheila Watson, Margaret Laurence, James Reaney, Robertson Davies, the names came out one after the other after the other. I was astonished” (56). Simply knowing that a community of writers in Canada existed whose stories were local in setting and production was enough to raise a “voice inside [him] that said: ‘if they can do it, maybe I can, too’” (57). As for Indigenous literature, however, Highway recalls that if “as recently as forty years ago, there was no recognizable body of work by Canadian writers, as recently as thirty years ago, there was no Native literature in this country. There were, perhaps, five or six books that had made a dent on the national consciousness, so few that one can practically count them on the fingers of one hand” (57). Among these he includes Harold Cardinal’s *The Unjust Society* (1969), Maria

Campbell's *Halfbreed* (1973), Beatrice Culleton (Mosionier)'s *In Search of April Raintree* (1983), and earlier poetry from E. Pauline Johnson and Louis Riel. This “handful of intrepid revolutionaries” had “against all odds” managed to “write their own novels, the most British of narrative forms, their own plays, own books of poetry, own books of non-fiction in the form of biography, autobiography, history, and social and political analysis” (57). Yet, “five writers writing a century apart does not make a literature or a movement” (56). This movement would come only after the 1970s, when the “floodgates opened. The sparks that Riel, Johnson, Campbell, Culleton, and Cardinal had lit burst into flame. And out of that flame came an entire industry ... Out of that flame came this voice that is now heard not only clean across the country but clean around the world” (57). At the core of this chapter is an exploration of the political contexts and material conditions that contributed to the emergence of this Indigenous “voice” in Canada—both a “literature” and a “movement”—beyond that handful of texts Highway cites, and which have become associated with the post-White Paper Indigenous literary “Renaissance.”

Highway's personal narrative provides a useful starting point for this chapter's re-reading of the Renaissance for a few reasons, particularly inasmuch as it captures his exposure to literature in the context of the university classroom and reflects a familiar institutional construction of contemporary Indigenous literary history in Canada. It situates the emergence of Indigenous writing in relation to two key historical contexts: first, the nationalist, post-Centennial cultural politics of Canada and the institutionalization of Canadian literature as a “recognizable” discipline during the early 1970s—the same period in which multiculturalism became official policy in Canada—and second, the 1969 White Paper. In his words, “there are those ... who say that Native literature was born as a reaction to this threat, that this was the spark that lit the flame” (58). The groundswell of Indigenous literary production that followed the White Paper is often characterized similarly according to the combustible political climate of the era. Greg Young[-]ing (Cree) recalls that “an explosion of Aboriginal literature followed the upswing of Aboriginal political organization and resistance” in the late 1960s and early

1970s (162); Penny Petrone notes the “1970s heralded a phenomenal explosion of creative writing by Indians” (*Native* 112). Such accounts are also reflected in Canadian literature’s institutional narrative of contemporary Indigenous literature’s emergence in relation to public policy and political activism. For example, in Eva-Marie Kröller’s introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature* (2004):

The decisive event was the 1969 White Paper on Indian policy ... The effect of the White Paper was to galvanize Native leaders and writers into opposition: Harold Cardinal published *The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada’s Indians* the same year and began work with Duke Redbird on the “Red Paper” in response to the government document. Maria Campbell’s *Halfbreed* followed in 1973, Lee Maracle’s *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel* in 1975, Beatrice Culleton Mosonier’s *In Search of April Raintree* and Penny Petrone’s anthology *First People, First Voices* in 1983, and Jeannette Armstrong’s *Slash* in 1985. (11)

A direct correlation is here, as elsewhere, drawn between the White Paper, the resulting upsurge of Indigenous political consciousness, and an outpouring of book-length publications by Indigenous writers—the “intrepid revolutionaries” Highway cites as blazing the trail for a new literary “industry.” There is good reason for such historical accounts. It is difficult to overstate the level of social opposition and renewed political organization mobilized in resistance to the White Paper, as I explored in the previous chapter, or the profound significance of best-selling books like Cardinal’s and Campbell’s to the history of Indigenous writing in Canada. However, the type of cause-and-effect chronology recounted here that links the publication of Indigenous monographs to post-White Paper resistance tells a literary history that is narrowly limited in the kind of textual production it privileges, and which neglects some of the specific material conditions that made Indigenous cultural expression and political activism mutually informing endeavors at this time. Asked otherwise, if, as Highway suggests, the White Paper was the “spark” that eventually lit the “flame” of Indigenous writing, what kind of kindling was on the ground to help fuel the fire?

When Highway recalls the lack of a “recognizable body of work” of “Native literature” at that time, “Native literature” importantly signals not a long history of verbal arts, but a disciplinary field of literary production legitimated by popular interest or academic study—those books that “made a dent on the national consciousness.” A wider Indigenous “narrative tradition” (56) that Highway primarily

associates with orature, but which also includes written memoir, testimonial, speeches, pamphlets, political essays, and traditional stories, have historically been overlooked by what Petrone calls “the purist attitude of Western literary critics towards literature that does not conform totally to their aesthetic criteria” (5). *Survival* helped make Canadian literature a “recognizable body of work” because it amalgamated a body of extant letters that fit such aesthetic and generic criteria under a self-consciously nationalist rubric. Atwood included a chapter on “Early People: Indians and Eskimos as Symbols” in the writing of white Canadians, but concluded that Indigenous literature had not yet been written. That Indigenous writing was absent from her study “for the simple reason,” as she would later explain, “that [she] could not at that time find any” (“A Double-Bladed” 243) is telling in terms of what counted, of what was (has been) “recognizable,” as Indigenous literature according to the values consolidating Canadian literature during its growth as a discipline. Atwood’s study is primarily a study of books—anthologies, individually authored books of poetry, and the novel, a genre privileged in the post-Massey Commission period of literary nationalism when Canadian writing became studied and taught as Canadian literature.⁷⁵ Hartmut Lutz, discussing Indigenous writing in Canada during this same 1960s and early 1970s period, notes there are “no literary monographs, no novels or published plays, which would require an extended period of writing undisturbed by the social and economic interruptions in ‘a room of one’s own’” (“Aboriginal” 54). Those titles that bucked the trend—like *The Unjust Society* and *Halfbreed*, as well as early collections of poetry like Rita Joe’s *Poems of Rita Joe* (1978) and a select few socio-political books⁷⁶—were those that became “recognizable” in part because they spoke to a mainstream, white audience. Cardinal sought to raise the “buckskin curtain of indifference,

⁷⁵ The prominence of the novel in the early institutionalization of Canadian literature, linked to the establishment of the New Canadian Library series by McClelland & Stewart in 1957, was a subject of the “canon debates” circa 1990 between Robert Lecker, Frank Davey, Tracy Ware, and Lorraine Weir, amongst others. See Lecker’s “The Canonization of Canadian Literature: An Inquiry into Value” in *Critical Inquiry* (1990), and Davey’s critique of Lecker’s conception of “canon” as “academic, humanistic, and focused on fiction” (673); see also Janet Friskney’s chapter “Canonical Conundrums” in her *New Canadian Library: The Ross-McClelland Years, 1952-1978*.

⁷⁶ These would include, for example, Cardinal’s *The Rebirth of Canada’s Indians* (1977), as well as Waubageshig’s collection *The Only Good Indian* (1970), Howard Adams’s *Prison of Grass* (1975), and George Manuel’s *The Fourth World* (1974).

ignorance and, all too often, plain bigotry” (1) dividing Indigenous from settler peoples; Campbell similarly imagined a broad Canadian audience: “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 dreams” (8). These books made a “dent” in Canada’s “consciousness” in part because they were intended by their authors and publishers to do so, and succeeded.⁷⁷

Pedagogy and politics were indivisible projects for works like these, voiced both inward to Indigenous readers and outward at the implied audience of a mainstream Canadian “you,” speaking hard truths from personal experience and “exposing the rot in the foundation of the Dominion,” as Jo-Ann Episkenew puts it (*Taking* 77). In her introduction to *Writing the Circle* (1990), Emma LaRocque (Cree/Métis) notes that the Canadian literary establishment’s appetite for less “polemical” Indigenous stories in the 1970s would subsequently see a “noticeable turn to soft-sell Native literature. Personal narratives, autobiographies, children’s stories, legends, interviews with elders, cultural tidbits, and ‘I remember’ sorts of materials” (xvii). LaRocque nevertheless understands these “soft sell” works as political projects of resistance because they continued to assert and establish the validity of Indigenous narratives and aesthetics against a tide of “suppression, misinformation, and stereotypes” (xvii). Her critique is instead directed at the “white Canadian response to and use of this literature” (xvii) found in scholarly and popular reception at the time more interested in cultural recognition and sympathetic liberal appreciation of folkloristic “stories” than attuned to decolonizing politics or reimagining aesthetic assumptions over what counts as literary. For Sam McKegney, this form of humanistic consumption is part of the multicultural coding of mainstream audiences’ responses to Indigenous writing in the 1980s, where “the act of reading [is] a gesture of solidarity with the oppressed that recuperates the reader’s benevolent self-image,” thus implying “no further personal or systemic change

⁷⁷ The publishing history of *Halfbreed* at McClelland & Stewart recently brought to light by the archival research of Deanna Reder and Alix Shield is an important reminder of the role of censorship in how these narratives were curated by mainstream publishers whose distribution made national reception possible. See their “I Write this for All of You” for an account of M&S’s excision of Campbell’s description of her rape at age 14 by RCMP officers from the original manuscript.

is necessary” (“Beyond” 412). From a literary historical perspective, the still-prevalent narrowing of 1970s Indigenous writing to a handful of autobiographical monographs participates in this liberalizing pattern by isolating individual texts and experiences, not only from the collective aspirations defining their political critiques, but from the webs of writing communities from which they arose.

The title of LaRocque’s essay, “Here Are Our Voices—Who Will Hear?” harkens, like Highway, to what has been called a “coming to voice” in these cutting trail works of Indigenous literature following the White Paper, and moreover to the power asymmetries determining how such voice(s) were accounted for (or not) in Western critical paradigms.⁷⁸ Yet as Armand Ruffo argues in his aptly titled “Where the Voice was Coming From,”⁷⁹ books alone tell an incomplete story of this coming to voice—and a potentially misleading one, inasmuch as perspectives privileging the book imply that the genres or mediums of publishing most recognizable to mainstream critics in Canada were also those most popular in the Indigenous communities from where the voice was coming: “Although this situation may have been the case for trade publications, to obtain a complete picture, one has to turn to the myriad magazines and newspapers that Aboriginal people were producing themselves. It is here that one locates the majority of literary voices of the time” (171). Lutz further emphasizes that during the 1960s and early 1970s,

The absence of literary monographs by Aboriginal authors did not mean, however, that First Nations, Inuit, and Metis authors had nothing to say or that they lacked an urge for creative expression. Short tales from oral traditions, often illustrated by Aboriginal artists, journalistic reports, funny stories and an increasing amount of poetry appear scattered in tribal papers, newsletters, pamphlets and occasional publications outside the realm of the emerging Canadian publishing industry. Such texts came out unnoticed by the larger reading public, and to this day remain almost invisible and hard to come by. (54)

⁷⁸ As Gayatri Spivak has influentially theorized, the recognition of subaltern self-representation or “voice” often delimits speech according to what can be heard within the interpretive frameworks of the dominant discourse (3-5).

⁷⁹ Ruffo’s title self-consciously echoes (and answers) the question posed by Rudy Wiebe in his short story “Where is the Voice Coming From?” See also Sophie McCall’s chapter “Where is the Voice Coming From? Appropriations and Subversions of the ‘Native Voice’” in her *First Person Plural*.

The alternative forms of literary publishing and cultural production emerging *within* Indigenous communities and *for* an Indigenous readership were—and indeed continue to be—largely *unrecognized* in Canadian literary history because they circulated “outside the realm” of Canadian publishing and were “unnoticed by the larger reading public.” Because they remain relatively invisible to disciplinary history, they have never been considered trailblazing—indeed, they have rarely been considered. Yet it is precisely because the print culture Lutz and Ruffo refer to here was *not* widely adopted in the mainstream that it can be seen as vital to understanding the emergence of a Native literary “voice” in Canada, for this voice emerged and circulated within Indigenous communities that weren’t necessarily interested in speaking to the wider Canadian public. Atwood couldn’t find them because they weren’t in the places Canadian critics and readers looked to find writing—and this was the point.

This chapter turns specifically to one such medium: *Nesika* (meaning “Us” or “Our” in Chinook Jargon), the newspaper published by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) in the early 1970s. One among dozens of contemporaneous newsletters and magazines printed by provincial and federal Indigenous political organizations at the time, *Nesika* circulated widely within new networks of dissemination created by the growth of a substantial Indigenous press following the White Paper and the subsequent transformations of state cultural funding following official multiculturalism. Jeannette Armstrong has written about the significant influence of such media in creating what would come to be known as “Native Writing” north of the border, particularly in the genre of poetry:

Native alternative press broke the print barriers and limited Indian subjects set in mainstream press to speak for and about all kinds of social and political issues. New magazines like *The National Indian* (Ottawa, National Indian Brotherhood), *Indian Record* (Winnipeg, Indian and Metis) and *Nesika* (Vancouver, Union of BC Indian Chiefs) contained mostly political stories, but featured ‘poems’ of various calibres and attributes, bound together by the common thread of being engaged in speaking out. I read Native magazines voraciously, searching for poetry that spoke to me. A few Native poems surfaced in literary reviews and little magazines ... but mostly what was available to Native readers were Native newspapers and magazines. (“Four” xvii-xviii)

More than simply news media, newspapers like *Nesika* published reader-submitted poetry, short fiction, traditional stories, and book reviews, engendering a literary culture as part of their reporting on

pressing political issues such as land claims, constitutional activism, and matters of tribal governance. As Armstrong notes, such papers were “seminal in giving [their readers] the Native political information we craved while developing an audience for ‘Indian Writing’” (xviii). Yet this alternative and activist print movement has been examined infrequently, largely in communications studies, and not as a *literary* movement. The erasure of this body of work not only deforms mainstream understandings of Indigenous literary history, but also distorts Indigenous peoples’ understandings of their own literary achievements and history. This chapter works to reframe such perspectives, turning to *Nesika* with attention to how the creative, critical, and political writing it published enriches understandings of how a communal Indigenous literary consciousness participated in the era’s wider nationalist political consciousness raising. Doing so helps expand the narrative origins of post-White Paper Indigenous literary history in Canada beyond the book, and against the terms establishing what has come to be seen as “recognizable” literature. Asserting the vital literary significance of the archives of writing produced in forums such as *Nesika* to the political and creative energies animating its activist media thus continues the ongoing work of renegotiating the “literary” by attending to a history of Indigenous writing largely overlooked in the institutional memory of Canadian literature.

Importantly, because the literature I examine here was published by political organizations—the UBCIC in the case of *Nesika*—it also needs to be considered as “a product of the socio-political life of the period” (Ruffo 172). It is here, I argue, that multiculturalism becomes a significant and similarly overlooked aspect of the material contexts that shaped the development of these politics and facilitated the new networks of Indigenous cultural production and dissemination. The expansion in publishing by Indigenous organizations was largely catalyzed by “core funding” for cultural activities first made available after 1971 through the Native Citizens’ Directorate and Native Communications Program of the Department of the Secretary of State (DSOS). As I showed in Chapter 1, while the goal of these programs initiated under multiculturalism was to enhance civic participation in Canadian

society by treating “Indian” groups as equivalent to “ethnic” organizations, Indigenous groups mobilized this funding for the strategic political purposes of advancing self-determination and anti-colonial activism, and in doing so created forums for cultural production that made space for the literary arts within such activist politics. This material and administrative history is acutely pertinent in the case of *Nesika* and the UBCIC, which rejected DSOS core funding at a polemical moment in the Union’s history in 1975—a political move that severely affected its publishing. Thus, while this chapter is ultimately interested in examining the literary output in Indigenous newsletters like *Nesika*, it is framed by an analysis of the material conditions and political landscape of their appearance.

I have three goals here, then. First, and building from Chapter 1, to more clearly outline the shifts in federal Indian Affairs administration concomitant with the introduction of multiculturalism policy that marked the creation of “core” and “communications” funding for Indigenous political associations. This policy history influenced the production of Indigenous print media Canada-wide, which I theorize here as a literary movement. I then turn to the specific case of the UBCIC to provide a historical overview that situates its publishing activities, notably *Nesika*, within the Union’s politics and institutional history. After establishing these material and political contexts, I turn in the second half of this chapter to recover and examine the poetry within the pages of *Nesika*. This final section works to provide an overview of the forms and subjects emerging in the poems in *Nesika* throughout its print run, which are wide-ranging in theme and style, but collectively share common concerns with questions of identity, community, colonial dispossession, and a renewal of pride during a period of pan-Indigenous nationalist political activism. As a specific case study of the material and literary history of one publication within the larger communicative networks of the Indian Press, my reading of *Nesika* hopes to contribute to the ongoing recovery of Indigenous writing neglected by mainstream canons, and to provide a more grassroots perspective of the Indigenous literary Renaissance.

1. Multiculturalism and the Core Cultural Funding Model

Indian Administration and Interdepartmental Relations

When the DSOS reorganized under the first Trudeau administration and established its Native Citizens' Directorate, the new expansion of government services to Indigenous peoples beyond the strict silo of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) was a significant shift from the bureaucratic status quo of Indian Affairs. In 1966, the unflattering analysis of DIAND published in the first volume of the Hawthorn Report concluded that the "Branch has been possessed of a particularly inward-looking orientation ... reinforced by a grass-roots pattern of career mobility within the Branch which strengthened introspective tendencies" (369). The Report's indictment cast this as a historical problem unique to Indian Affairs, criticizing in particular an obstinate old guard of senior officials "prone to treat influential outside organizations which interest themselves in Indians on a spasmodic or permanent basis as well meaning do-gooders" (370).⁸⁰ One of the main failings of Indian Affairs in developing programs or policies that might adequately redress the socio-economic gap between Indigenous peoples and the rest of Canada was "the failure of the Branch to constitute itself into a powerful intragovernmental spokesman for its clientele" (369). "Clientele" is of course a euphemistic description given Indians were treated legally as "wards" of the state and historically denied the federal franchise. The fact that DIAND was not accountable to its "clientele" like other civil service branches that "dealt with full citizens" or "white Canadians who possessed the vote" is part of what the Hawthorn Report attributed to its particularly authoritarian culture.

⁸⁰ "As a consequence," the Report notes in a sharp excerpt, "there evolved a mystique of Indian administration which laid great stress on field experience as a basis for knowing the Indian; by extension this implied that Branch personnel who possessed this experience were in touch with 'mysteries' which outsiders could not comprehend. Since outsiders had not shared this special experience of administrative contact which was the basis for understanding Indians, and since Indians were excluded by virtue of their dependent status, the Branch presumably saw little need or justification for seeking external allies. The result was an inward looking parochialism, a partly self-chosen isolation from the overt political system of voters and politicians and the internal political system of the bureaucracy with its competitive struggle for funds and personnel. As a consequence the Branch failed to carve out for itself that minimum position of power and influence in the federal government which was a prerequisite for the successful implementation of a progressive Indian policy" (369).

In the late 1960s, DIAND had established both a Community Development program and a new Cultural Development Division in efforts to reduce what the government perceived as Indigenous peoples' dependency on federal administration, and to promote social and economic rejuvenation. The rhetorical rationale for the latter program closely resembled the discourse of support for cultural endeavors that would become ubiquitous under multiculturalism: "The Cultural Development Division of the Branch is responsible for the operation of programs to assist Indian communities and individuals to discover, retain, promote and project their distinctive cultures" (DIAND 16). Funding literature was part of this program's mandate, particularly in the North, where the "literature development" branch of Cultural Development helped fund and distribute some important works of Inuit writing, including Markoosie's *Harpoon of the Hunter* (1970).⁸¹ Yet DIAND deemed the success of these programs as limited, and they became a point of contention within the branch in the years prior to the White Paper. As Sally Weaver shows, resistance stemmed largely from DIAND senior officials:

The young and enthusiastic community development workers, who were committed to changing the traditional ways of Indian Affairs management, inevitably clashed with the authoritarian Indian agents on the reserves. The purpose of these workers was to inspire self-determination and confidence in the communities, at the same time lessening the dependence on branch superintendents. Some bands achieved a sense of self-determination which predictably led the superintendants to view the workers as disruptive forces. (28)

The grassroots focus of young community development workers conflicted with the unilateral authority accustomed by senior officials in DIAND, who were hoping to alleviate the government's bureaucratic responsibility in Indian Affairs but resented the threat that Indigenous self-determination represented to the status quo power arrangements.⁸² The White Paper's proposed solution was to abolish federal Indian Affairs entirely, transferring Indian administration to the provinces and

⁸¹ Markoosie's book is often referred to as the first Inuit novel. It was first published serially in Inuktitut in the newsletter *Inuttituut*, which was also published with the assistance of the literature branch of DIAND's Cultural Development Division. At the time of writing, a collaborative team of researchers including Julie Rak, Heather Igloliorte, Armand Ruffo, Keavy Martin, and Warren Cariou have begun working on a SSHRC-funded project on this under-studied topic, "Government agents, literary agents: Inuit books and government intervention, 1968-1985."

⁸² According to Walter Rudnicki, then Chief of Social Programs, Welfare Division of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, one senior DIAND official claimed of the Indian community development program "It was the stupidest thing we ever did" (qtd. in Weaver 29). See Weaver 24-29 for a more detailed account of DIAND programs at this time.

mainstreaming federal programming for Indigenous peoples within government departments responsible for services to all Canadians. Following its rejection, though, the Trudeau administration's extension of multicultural funding for "ethnic" minorities to Indigenous groups via the Citizenship Branch required Indian Affairs to establish new intra-governmental, inter-departmental arrangements.

The Native Citizens Directorate began providing assistance to Indigenous organizations in 1971 as part of the DSOS's new mandate to expand funding under the multicultural framework. In a March 1971 letter to Robert Stanbury, then DSOS Minister responsible for Citizenship, Indian Affairs minister Jean Chrétien wrote to establish a committee that would determine how best to enter into a new cross-departmental funding arrangement with Indigenous associations. Clearly, the recent failure and public embarrassment of the White Paper was a source of worry for DIAND entering into a new inter-departmental venture, as Chrétien expressed in his letter: "I want to emphasize my concern that the procedures adopted should not result in divergent policies and approaches which might embarrass the government in its dealings with native associations and native peoples generally. If such difficulties were to arise again, I do not see how we could continue with the division of responsibility as outlined in this letter" (1). Chrétien noted that funding for Indigenous associations fell into two categories: (a) support for specific programs designed for Indigenous associations (such as the Community Development program), which would continue to be carried out by DIAND; and (b) "support for basic administrative operations, often called 'core' funding," which Chrétien was prepared to agree to centralize through the DSOS, since it had been providing limited support to Indigenous associations as "ethnic" groups since the time of Canada's Centennial (1-2), as outlined in the previous chapter. A Subcommittee of the Interdepartmental Committee on Indian and Eskimo Policy was subsequently formed to develop a "core funding" model to be substantially bolstered by the DSOS.⁸³

⁸³ The Sub-committee included members from DIAND, DSOS, and other departments in consultation with representatives from federal and provincial Indigenous associations.

“Core” Funding and the Politics of Recognition

The Report drafted by the subcommittee worked from the premise that “viable, adequately-funded associations have the capacity to develop program and project proposals according to the agenda and degree of interest of native people themselves” (Subcommittee 1). With recognition that government-developed administrative programs had been historically unsuccessful and usually resented by Indigenous peoples and communities for whom they were designed, “core” funding sought “to enable the native citizens of Canada to organize their own opinion and to develop program proposals of imminent concern to themselves” (2). The definition of “core” included financing for staff salaries, office costs, travel expenses, professional services (e.g., legal), and meeting expenses; together, “[f]unds for the organization, operation and support of an association headquarters for the purpose of providing a management and operational unit to conduct affairs of the association” (4). Included in the “core” model was an allotment for communications workers,⁸⁴ seen as vital to the core project given adequate communication “assure[d] the presence of the associations in the local communities” (12).

The “core” model centralized through the DSOS was, on the one hand, innovative, not only because it meant that the federal purse strings for Indian Affairs were no longer held all but exclusively by DIAND, but because funding flowed to both Status Indian federal and provincial associations (e.g., the NIB, the Union of Ontario Indians, the UBCIC) *and* non-Status (e.g., the BC Association of Non-Status Indians), Métis (e.g., Métis Association of Alberta), and Inuit (e.g., the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada) groups in a fairly equal fashion, with additional but more modest support for Native Women and Native Youth associations, as well as Friendship Centres. In fact, DIAND had been rejected as the administrator of core funds on the basis that its mandate derived from the Indian Act’s strict regulation of identity made it an inequitable branch for supporting Indigenous peoples conceived now as a wider

⁸⁴ A funding scheme for salaried communications workers was calculated on a per capita basis of one worker per 6,000 people in the Indigenous population of a given province.

ethnic group. Thus, the multicultural framework shifted the political construction of Indigenous identity via state cultural funding that expanded the historically circumscribed legal definition of Indian.

On the other hand, the new core model was met with contention by some Indigenous groups, particularly in provinces where multiple associations were placed in a position of competing for funds. A DSOS memo reporting the events of a “core funding” meeting with the Union of Ontario Indians documents an “issue that consumed much of the energy of the assembly” arising from a letter sent by Chief Delisle of the Indians of Quebec Association. Namely:

The case that the intervention of the Secretary of State in the affairs of Indian people under its Core and Communications Programmes was a divisive attempt by the federal government to wean the Indians away from the Department of Indian Affairs and to force them to deal directly with other departments of the Federal government as do other citizens. This, Chief Delisle thought, would have the effect of attenuating the heavy responsibility that D.I.A.N.D. ought to carry on behalf of the Indian people of Canada and also was an underhanded way of implementing the White Paper recommendations of 1969. (Lumsden 2)

Moreover, the government’s stance was that tensions between the three major Indigenous associations in Ontario—the Union, the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, and the Grand Council of Treaty Three—stemmed from the fact that the “Union failed to come to grips [*sic*] with the real issue facing its future; that is, who represents the Indian people of Ontario?” (2). The state’s recognition politics in its financing of Indigenous organizations thus made the question of “representation” contentious. While the government’s intention was to cultivate funding structures for groups equivalent to ethnic minorities at manageable scales of provincial and federal representation, the long histories of discrete forms of Indigenous governance, colonially forged legal distinctions of Indian identity, and the emerging politics of regional and coalitional Indigenous organizations inevitably pitted groups against one another in competition. The government’s position was not to involve itself in

these jurisdictional disputes, noting that Indigenous groups should work them out on their own, thus absolving responsibility for issues resulting mostly from its own imposed policies and scarce resources.⁸⁵

Despite these tensions, DSOS funding began flowing in 1971. For large provincial associations such as the UBCIC, the core model provided a significant influx of capital and human resources, particularly in the area of communications. For example, in the 1970-71 year prior to multiculturalism and the new core and communications workers model, the UBCIC had received just \$75,000 through DSOS; in 1971-72, this amount expanded six-fold to \$448,000, which included nine full-time salaried staff communications employees. Communications societies such as the large Alberta Native Communications Society also received substantial financial commitments, which in 1974 became part of the new DSOS Native Communications Program providing specific funding to various Indigenous communications and multimedia societies Canada-wide. With secure and renewable annual funding to cover not only office costs and supplies, meeting expenses, and the creation of dissemination networks, but also research the areas of law and land claims, Indigenous associations were better financed than at any point in the history of the Canadian federation to organize and communicate.

2. The Indian Press and Indigenous (Literary) Nationalisms

Media and Message

Core funding was used to create new print publications and subsidize existing media being produced by national and regional/provincial organizations to convey information to their various constituencies. What became known as the Indian Press was made up largely of tabloid or broadsheet newspapers and magazines, published anywhere from weekly to quarterly, and with various levels of circulation amongst Indigenous readerships. Among the publications disseminated at this time from

⁸⁵ The information package sent to Indigenous associations explaining core funding addresses jurisdiction as follows: “[I]t is anticipated that the native associations represent all the native people of a province, a territory, or, in the case of the Inuit people, a region. The possibility however, does exist, that another native association could claim jurisdiction over part or all of the constituency claimed by another ... In that event, the government would hope that such competing associations would agree among themselves as to how the funds allocated for the native people of that region would be divided” (“Introducing Core” 5).

political associations, Friendship Centres, and Communications Societies were *The National Indian* (the National Indian Brotherhood), *New Breed* (The Metis Association of Saskatchewan), *Nesika* (UBCIC), *The Forgotten People* (Native Council of Canada), *Wawatay News* (Wa-Wa-Ta Communications Society), *Kanai News* (Alberta Native Communications Society), *Tekawennake* (Woodland Cultural Centre) *Micmac News* (Union of Nova Scotia Indians), *Yukon Indian News* (Ye Sa To Communications Society), *The Native Perspective* (National Association of Friendship Centres), *The Toronto Native Times* (Native Canadian Centre of Toronto), and *Tawow*, published by DIAND with an Indigenous editorial team.⁸⁶

Indigenous communities had of course been exchanging news, political matters, and texts long before this moment. Yet, as Ruffo argues, the irony of the explosion in media across Canada at this time was that multiculturalism funds had provided an “opportunity to communicate with one another to an extent hereto unheard of and inadvertently gave [Indigenous peoples] a national perspective on their dilemma; they saw collectively that they were a people who had been cut off from the political power structure and shut out of the nation building process” (175). Under the same rubric that sought to give recognition and funding for ethnic minority cultural development and civic participation in the Canadian body politic, Indigenous peoples were creating communicative networks that augmented and catalyzed resurgent anti-colonial nationalism at a historically divisive moment following the White Paper. In *The Unjust Society*, Harold Cardinal suggested the ability of mass mediated communications technology to foster such mobilization at a national scale:

Oppressed peoples’ awareness grows more quickly in the times in which we live, as does the knowledge that no one any more has to remain supine and take a beating, whether from another person, from some agency or from circumstances. Our people read newspapers; we listen to radio and we watch television. We have automobiles and can be in a traffic jam in the

⁸⁶ This is by no means a comprehensive list, and while multicultural core funding was a significant turning point in the Indigenous press history in Canada, the funding, publishing dates, periodical frequencies, and editorial objectives of each publication are unique. Enn Raudsepp’s review suggests that prior to 1970, roughly forty “Native’ publications” were being published, usually by the government or non-Indigenous groups; after 1970, “a further 191 ‘Native’ publications” appeared, roughly half of which were Indigenous-published, “indicating a pronounced trend toward self-determination in the field of communication” (194). Shannon Avison has provided a more comprehensive material and historical breakdown of thirteen prominent newspapers in her media studies thesis, “Aboriginal Newspapers: Their Contribution to the Emergence of an Alternative Public Sphere in Canada.” See also Demay for a historical overview of the Native Communications Program.

city as quickly as many suburbanites. In spite of the extreme tardiness of our education, we are no longer isolated, not as people. Perhaps not to quite the extent that the urbanite is but, nonetheless, just as surely, we are part of Marshall McLuhan's global village. (91)

Cardinal is not only countering the false dualism between "authentic" Indigeneity and urbanization or modern technological literacy, but drawing a crucial link between medium and message in anti-colonial struggle. He emphasizes the advantages "[t]oday's communications systems bring us, just as they bring you" in making visible activist struggle at local, national, and global scales, in "learning from others about the forces that can be assembled in a democratic society to protect oppressed minorities" (91). In theorizing the landscape in which Indigenous writing emerged *en masse* in the 1970s, I emphasize here how the communicative networks and literary forums in print media forged by political societies through core multicultural funding were similarly influential in bringing the literary and political message of post-White Paper Indigenous nationalism in conversation with its medium.

Importantly, publishing in English enabled this kind of national perspective. Amongst the various regional and provincial publications produced by and for heterogeneous Indigenous peoples and language groups, none published exclusively in an Indigenous language. Some published in English and French, and others published in both English and an Indigenous language, such as *Wawatay News*, which printed in both English and Oji-Cree syllabics.⁸⁷ Beth Cuthand (Cree), who worked as both an Editor and Communications Coordinator for the Union of BC Indian Chiefs' *UBCIC News* in the late 1970s, spoke at the "Women and Words" conference (1983) about the strategic importance of Indigenous peoples writing in English to speak across nations and languages: "Maybe one of the most valuable gifts the colonizers gave us was the English language so that we could communicate with each other. I fully believe that we can use English words to Indian advantage and that as Indian writers it's our responsibility to do so" (53-54). Cuthand's rhetoric of the "gift" of linguistic colonization is

⁸⁷ See Raudsepp for a breakdown of publication statistics for 19 prominent Indigenous media publications to 1985.

intentionally (and intensely) ironic, but nevertheless affirms the social and political utility of writing in English as an activist strategy to connect diverse Indigenous audiences at broad scales.⁸⁸

The limited attention these media developments have received in scholarship has largely focused on how DSOS funds and expansions in communications programming contributed to Indigenous resurgence in the public sphere of political participation. In their retrospective analysis of funding and program developments in the 1970s emerging from multiculturalism, Yale Belanger et al. note the relative success of DSOS funds in creating organizational groundwork that enabled “a substantial capacity for Aboriginal engagement in the public policy process,” and establishing the present infrastructure of Indigenous political organizations (39). Shannon Avison’s analysis of several print publications emerging at this time positions Indigenous newspapers as a critical counter-voice to the exclusionary mainstream mass media, exploring their role in the production of an alternate “Aboriginal public sphere.” Avison’s study provides a much-needed intervention in Canadian communications studies that have all but ignored the Indigenous press. Her focus is primarily on a Habermasian reading of the Indigenous “public sphere” as a socio-political, counter-discursive space of collective public opinion formation and influence in Canadian politics. Thus Avison analyzes Indigenous newspapers, as media circulating outside the mainstream press, for the extent to which they created “legitimate positions” of Indigenous public opinion to “influence those who still exercised political, social, and economic power” (3), namely the Canadian state.

While Avison’s theorization of an alternative public sphere is useful to conceptualize the print page as a space of formulating opinion and enacting social identities outside the mainstream gaze, I am more interested in thinking through how Indigenous newsletters spoke to the communities they were produced to serve rather than in gauging their *counter*-discursive influence upon the Canadian

⁸⁸ See also Episkenew, who argues that the capacity to create community through writing in the colonizing language is “simultaneously a political act and an act of healing” (*Taking* 12-13).

government. Moreover, the literature appearing in the Indigenous press has been largely overlooked in media studies—an oversight that speaks to certain disciplinary parameters that dislocate the “cultural” realm of expressive culture from the “political” work of journalism. In light of the significant space literary arts held in these Indigenous newsletters themselves, such elisions work to discount the political function of literary writing in forming publics and political opinion. Moreover, in the years prior to the establishment of Indigenous-run publishers such as Theytus Books (1980), the Gabriel Dumont Institute (1980), or Kegedonce (1993), the access and legitimate forums for Indigenous writing created by the Indian Press countered systemic prejudices not only in mainstream media, but also in literary publishing. While the marginalization of Indigenous writing in publishing “had the effect of silencing the Aboriginal Voice” and allowed “a rash of non-Aboriginal writers to profit from the creation of a body of literature focusing on Aboriginal peoples ... based on ethnocentric, racist and largely incorrect presumptions” (“Aboriginal” 165), as Greg Younging argues, Indigenous print media provided forums for writing to develop and circulate independent of mainstream expectations.

In arguing that the Indian Press can be understood as a literary movement, the type of broadly conceived Indigenous “nationalism” invoked in political accounts of early 1970s activism requires critical nuancing. Indigenous activism in opposition to the White Paper, and within the international currents of both Red Power and global decolonization, took shape in nation-specific international forms. National and provincial organizations such as the NIB and UBCIC brought Indigenous nations together—in sometimes tenuous and politically contentious coalitions—in order to harness the lobbying power of a unified political voice in the Canadian national sphere. The less explicitly political orientation of Friendship Centres in urban communities and the wide reach of Communications Societies also published a “voice” defined by solidarities and connections between multiple nations at various scales of local and regional organization. In a historical moment defined in settler-colonial society by a zeitgeist of Canadian cultural nationalism, the growing networks of Indigenous

sovereignist activism were moving toward what Deena Rymhs describes as “a different cultural nationalism”—perhaps more accurately conceived as Indigenous *nationalisms*—a “reconceptualization of national identity” that “recover[s] distinct tribal histories at the same time as it remains invested in intertribal alliances, or what is colloquially known as pan-Indigenous identity” (231). Nipissing poet Wayne Keon’s 1972 “Heritage,” included in excerpt as an epigraph to this chapter, captures this interplay between alliance and distinction. Its listing of 82 Indigenous nations on Turtle Island retains capitalization as a marker of differentiation while eliding spaces, offering a compounding verbal/visual expression of a “Heritage” at once conjoined as singular and distinguishable in its particularities.

The danger of presuming a pan-Indigenous nationalism is in levelling those distinct contexts. While Armstrong notes that the writers in Indigenous newsletters at the time were “bound together by the common thread of being engaged and speaking out” (xvii), Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm (Anishinaabe) reminds that blanket critical assumptions of “shared values” and “common histories and experiences with colonizing governments” often lead to generalizations that make pan-Indianism a self-fulfilling, homogenizing rubric; however, “along with this cautionary note,” suggests Akiwenzie-Damm, “we should not underestimate the power of the bonds of shared experience. . . . [T]hese bonds are powerful and can unite people from Greenland to Zimbabwe to Brazil to Hawaii in a way that treaties and government negotiations never have” (“Says” 15). In shifting the scale of critical idiom from individual author and text to the polyvocal medium of Indigenous newsletters, a genre that Michael Taylor describes as “collectivist” and “co-national” in orientation, such solidarities based on shared experience that extend beyond and between Indigenous peoples and nations shift to the forefront of literary analysis. Indeed, as print texts produced by coalitional organizations circulating widely and capitalizing on the utility of mass mediated communications technologies, the writing in the Indian Press reflects a period of Indigenous literary expression in Canada that was in many ways pan-Indigenous in scope, particularly in terms of its material histories of production and dissemination.

This is not to suggest that all writers and all newsletters were saying the same thing. In theorizing the Indigenous literary history of the Northeast, Lisa Brooks (Abenaki) argues for critical attention to a “historically and spatially specific intertribalism” that can be distinguished from “pan-tribalism that assumes a unified concept” of Indianness (“Digging” 253). Such a contextually rooted intertribalism considers the actual relationships between peoples, communities, and places, attending to the national specificities of individual authors but also taking into account long-standing traditions of cultural exchange and “a continuous attempt to build and maintain communication and relations” (253). For Brooks, these modes of communication and relation take shape not only in the material circulation of written texts, but between writers themselves, within “networks of writing Indians” (254) defined by historically specific political and social spaces of interaction and community. Brooks’s emphasis on the common objectives of diverse writers at certain times and certain places—which emphasizes exchange without negating national specificities and the realities of conflict and difference—provides a framework for approaching the writing that proliferated in individual periodicals in Canada within the wider Indigenous “nationalist” political climate of the time. Moreover, because the spaces of exchange created by newspapers like *Nesika* were in many ways inextricably linked both materially and politically to the specific Indigenous associations and organizations publishing them, such intertribal dynamics require attention to the unique political contexts of their production. Thus, before surveying the poetry published in *Nesika*, it is crucial to contextualize the place of publishing within the UBCIC’s institutional history.

3. The UBCIC and its Print Publishing: A Brief Institutional History

Unity and the Question of “Unity”

Unity was the title of the bulletin first published by the UBCIC after its establishment in 1969. The Union had formed out of opposition to the White Paper at a BC all-chiefs band council in Kamloops in November of that year, consolidating what would become the most politically powerful provincially

representative organization of Status Indians.⁸⁹ Its primary objective since inception has been protecting title and rights to unceded land in BC through land claims research, first in response to the White Paper, and since the early 1970s by presenting unified opposition to the federal government's modern treaty process. In 1971, the UBCIC's "Brown Paper" response to the White Paper, "A Declaration of Indian Rights: The B.C. Indian Position Paper," would form the basis of its land claims position. *Unity* was first printed primarily as an information bulletin to convey news from the Union to Indigenous people province-wide, and its title struck at the question of "unity" that would inform much of the political contestations embroiling the Union in its early years. As Sarah Nickel (Tk'emlupsemc) argues, the "drive for pan-Indigenous unity was not new" in BC (19); Indigenous peoples in the province "had long valued political unity as a strategy against settler policies" (41), though the particular circumstances of White Paper opposition in an era of emerging multiculturalism enabled new possibilities for organization and infrastructure (20). While it quickly became the most powerful Indigenous organization in BC, the UBCIC emerged by coalescing a diverse political landscape defined by multiple extant activist associations, including the Native Brotherhood of BC—which had been publishing its newsletter *The Native Voice* since 1946 (see Jamieson)—the North American Indian Brotherhood, the Indian Homemakers' Association of BC, and various tribal councils, such as the Nishga⁹⁰ Tribal Council headed by Frank Calder. Moreover, as an association advocating on behalf of Status Indians, the question of whether the federally funded BC Association of Non-Status Indians (BCANSI), which had formed contemporaneously, should have a voice in the

⁸⁹ Though not the first. Nickel traces the history of pan-Indigenous political organizing in BC since the 19th century. The Allied Tribes of British Columbia had united in 1916 to pursue land claims in response to the McKenna-McBride hearings, but disbanded in 1927 when the Indian Act outlawed legal representation for the purposes of pursuing claims against the government. Nickel's recent *Assembling Unity: Indigenous Politics, Gender, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs* is an essential study on the UBCIC's institutional history and political antecedents, adding to Paul Tennant's earlier work *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989*, particularly Chapters 12 and 13. For more condensed summaries, see Tennant's "Native Indian Political Activity in British Columbia, 1969-1983," and also Hanson.

⁹⁰ My own use of "Nisga'a" reflects the current transliteration commonly used by Nisga'a peoples.

Union was a consistent point of debate. The history of the UBCIC's publications and cultural production is in many ways a reflection of its changing political history within this landscape.

Unity's inaugural issue in September, 1970, announced the publication's objectives in an editorial entitled "UNITED WE STAND: DIVIDED WE PERISH." It described the bulletin's purpose to convey news from developments on the UBCIC's political mandate, and provided an account of the new Union's formation. Against a past of "adopting the white man's ways" of governing "on the basis of artificial boundaries," the "simple beauty" of the UBCIC is presented as "the structure and government natural to the Indian people [which] has united the leaders of the local governments on a province-wide scale. Nothing could be more natural; nothing could be more simple, yet it took 100 years of learning by mistakes ... to make it a reality" (Tyndall 4). The first issue also set the mandate for *Unity* as more than just a vehicle for political news. The wider cultural objectives are laid out in the work envisioned by Publications Director Donna Tyndall (Kwakwaka'wakw): "Her aim is to make this magazine a worthwhile project—not just a 'newsy newsletter,' but a vehicle of strength which will do much to accomplish our basic aims—the true 'UNION' of our people and the upgrading of all Indian life" (Tyndall 5). Tyndall describes this process through a personal narrative:

I was raised in a non-Indian society, as my father left the reserve before I was born. I remember when I was a little girl being made to feel deep embarrassment at the word "Indian." What a terrible thing this is! Our children (and all our people) must walk tall and proud in our "Indianness." I can see everywhere the winds of change among our people ... we are regaining our pride in our heritage and in ourselves. ... Once we are a united people, strong and sure of our worth, then we can succeed in improving our ways of life—we will have good schools for our children, jobs for our men, and recognition from the non-Indian society. (5)

As a "vehicle of strength" and more than a "newsy newsletter," *Unity* was envisioned as part of a wider project of restoring pride in "Indianness" its publication availed outside the images of the "Indian" in non-Indian society.

The "winds of change" Tyndall describes are given a different metaphorical expression in the first short poem published by *Unity*, appearing at the bottom of the last page of this first issue. "The

Snow,” by Bill Bell,⁹¹ speaks to an “awakening” from something “very much like winter” that “has swept over us through four seasons”:

We do not suffer from the cold
Yet we suffer in many ways
We suffer from lack of land
Lack of progress and independence
You might say we had a long sleep
Like the bear does in winter
But the snow is melting slowly
And we are awaking (15)

Like the bear emerging from beneath the whiteness of snow and “gain[ing] power to overcome our sleepy habits” (15) in Bell’s poem, the second poem published in the subsequent issue of *Unity*, “Standing Tall,” by Ronald Coombes, speaks of renewal rooted in and emerging from the land. The poem begins with “the fading forest / Once standing tall / Aged by a century / Now growing small,” before shifting to “look to the Indian / Once standing tall / Aged by a century / Just learning to crawl” (5). The rhyming scheme grows from “small” to “tall” toward a “new century,” a “beginning for brothers all” to “hear the call / Of the mighty Indian warrior standing tall,” and connects past to present and future generations with the image of a time “again with forest tall / Little Indian baby in cradle / Will rock but never fall” (5). Both of these early poems embody the optimism of Tyndall’s vision of *Unity* as source of “regaining our pride in our heritage and in ourselves,” speaking toward the future from the perspective of a present gathering strength in forms of historical rebirth.

By its third issue in the spring of 1971, *Unity* was still struggling to find funding, and to promote the Union’s objective of “unity.” An editorial titled “UNITY DEFINED IN INDIAN” negotiates the Union’s pan-Indian mandate by rooting “unity” in Indian identity:

Unity will mean different things to different people, but it should have a specific meaning to Indian people.

“It means the difference between preservation and deterioration.”

“It means the difference between knowledgeable independence as Indians or being drawn into the grey fringes of a society, ignorant of the Indian and his culture.”

⁹¹ Whenever possible, I have tried to indicate the national membership for poets whose work I quote in this chapter, though in some cases the extent of genealogical research required for such attribution is beyond my scope.

“It means the difference between demanding with the dignity of our heritage, our rights or meekly accepting the appeasement of those who seek to rob us of our heritage.” (Charles 4)

Such political assertions of survival, unification, and collective pride in a heritage that colonial Canada remains “ignorant” of despite measures of “appeasement” resonated specifically in the cultural context of BC in 1971, the year of the province’s centennial of its joining confederation. *Unity* mobilized its platform to print a scathing letter by Tyndall to the BC Centennial Committee that functioned as a de facto book review of the province’s *It Happened in B.C.: A Pictorial Review 1871-1971*, which celebrated Simon Fraser’s “discovery” of BC and omitted Indigenous contributions to the province:

Why is the official celebration of B.C.’s entry into Confederation ignoring the First Citizens again in their commemorative book? If we are to be ignored in this obvious and insulting way, why then do Centennial Committees across the province call upon Indian people to add ‘colour’ to their celebrations? We have seen the white society try its very hardest to stamp out the last remaining vestiges of our culture and our pride in ourselves as Indian people. That we have managed to survive, and keep our culture alive also, is something for which we should be most highly commended. Yet we are still ignored except when we can help the white society in their various money-making schemes—including the one called Centennial Celebration 1971. How is your committee prepared . . . to make amends for years of neglect, indifference, and apathy? How are you going to make Centennial ‘71 meaningful to our people? How indeed, are you going to give us something to come out and sing and dance about? (Tyndall “Comment” 11)

Tyndall’s questions mount a critique of Indigenous erasure from the state’s formulation of history and expose the hypocrisy of superficial celebrations of Indigenous culture, prefiguring critiques of the “song and dance” tokenism of Canadian multiculturalism that would become prominent in the 1990s.⁹²

A full-page photo of Tsleil-Waututh Chief Dan George appeared on the cover of this same issue, which printed an article following Tyndall’s centennial critique that declared March 11, 1971 “Chief Dan George Day” in Vancouver, the “day chosen by the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs to officially recognize the contributions made by Chief Dan George in changing the public image of the Indian people” (Len Maracle 14). The issue closed with a full transcription of Chief Dan George’s famous “Lament for Confederation” (1967) together with a reprint of Ronald Coombes’ poem “Standing Tall” from the previous issue. The “Lament” is given a wry new title, “Indian Centennial

⁹² See Moss, “Song and Dance No More,” especially 44, for a concise overview of such critiques in the Canadian context.

Song,” and its closing lines, “So shall the next hundred years be the greatest in the proud history of our tribes and nations,” resonate thematically with Coombes’ poem of centenary renewal, from the Indian “[a]ged by a century” to a vision of “a century ahead / As a beginning for brothers all / To stand again so proud and tall” (14). In the immediate context of the publication’s political focus, then, the national message of Chief Dan George’s anti-colonial oratory becomes rearticulated within the specific regional and contemporary climate of BC’s centennial. In this example, the literary voice of *Unity* offers a response to Tyndall’s political call on the government to “give us something to come out and sing and dance about.” At the same time, however, both “Indian Centennial Song” and “Standing Tall” redirect the energies of Tyndall’s outward petition directed at colonial Canada through expressions of cultural renewal from within. Here it is not only writing itself that functions to express political imagination, but the utility of print to remediate the orature of George’s song in response to new political contexts. Indeed, the “Lament” concludes with such a promise: “Oh God! Like the thunderbird of old I shall rise again out of the sea; I shall grab the instruments of the white man’s success—his education, his skills—and with these new tools I shall build my race into the proudest segment of your society” (14).

Nesika: “*The Voice of BC Indians*”

Literary writing was still relatively sparse in the early issues of *Unity*, which published infrequently and primarily to convey information from the UBCIC’s all-chiefs’ meetings. Moreover, the Union’s funding restraints limited *Unity* to just six published issues between 1969 and 1971.⁹³ The substantial DSOS core funding under multiculturalism that began in 1971, however, resulted in a period of immense growth for both the Union and its publishing. The UBCIC established a dedicated Land Claims Research Centre in Victoria, and in the fall of 1972 began publishing on a monthly basis its new paper

⁹³ The question of funding was cited as a central priority from *Unity*’s inauguration, as “[t]o further any worthwhile work towards our goal, money is needed” (Tyndall 5). The UBCIC had rejected a grant from the BC provincial government’s First Citizens’ Fund, not only because it was inadequate, but because it was to be “handed out ‘piece-meal’ to individuals and organizations who must go ‘hat-in-hand’ to ask their ‘great white fathers’ for a gift” (“First Citizens” 11). The key issue was that decisions on spending would be made by the government rather than the Union, and that sustaining core costs wasn’t part of the funding, which was designed to support individual projects. The lack of control over financial administration was seen as both insidious and as setting a dangerous precedent in conflict with the Union’s ideals of self-determination.

Nesika, a plural/possessive pronoun framing the collectivist subtitle, “The Voice of BC Indians.”

Produced out of Union headquarters in Vancouver’s Kitsilano neighborhood, *Nesika* continued *Unity*’s mandate to spread UBCIC news throughout the province. Yet core funding for office costs and salaried communications workers resulted in a much broader editorial scope and vision, as well as an entirely revamped aesthetic. Issues were no longer concise printed bulletins but polished, tabloid-style newspapers, usually ranging 16-20 pages, and with articles written either in-house, by a network of correspondents from bands province-wide, or clipped from the mainstream press.

The headline story on the cover page of *Nesika*’s inaugural issue documented the UBCIC’s presentation of its land claims position paper, “Claim Based on Native Title,” to the federal government in Ottawa earlier that summer in July. The two-part framing headline declared “A Question of an Unpaid Bill ... Land Claims Presentation Made!,” split above and below mirrored images of a bureaucratic face-off between UBCIC leaders and NIB president George Manuel, on one side, and Trudeau, Chrétien, and other federal cabinet ministers on the other. The UBCIC’s dealings with the federal and provincial governments on land claims would remain a primary news focus throughout *Nesika*’s run, but the more ambitious scope of the newspaper as “The Voice of BC Indians” meant that Union affairs were supplemented with all sorts of news and information relevant to the daily life of Indigenous peoples in BC: topics ranged from political news about fisheries bans, mining development, federal Indian Affairs, band governance, and Union Executive leadership; to more quotidian news items and local stories from all corners of the province; to reporting on cultural events, sports, and the arts. Political cartoons, creative editorials, and lively forums for reader-submitted letters made *Nesika* a writerly medium not just of news dissemination, but of conversation, debate, and dissent amongst its broad community of readers.

"NESIKA"

(Chinook meaning "US")

THE VOICE OF B.C. INDIANS

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FREE TO ALL REGISTERED B.C. NATIVE INDIANS
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A question of an unpaid bill . . .



FACE-TO-FACE: Ending years of research and some frustrating postponements, Indian leaders, left, were finally able to confront the federal government in an effort to have the B.C. land claim question settled. This was the scene on July 6 of this year in Ottawa when members of the Chiefs' Council of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs formally presented "Claim Based on Native Title" to Prime Minister

Trudeau. George Manuel, a B.C. Indian who is president of the National Indian Brotherhood, acted as Master of Ceremonies during the presentation and accompanied Mrs. Kathy Tenesse, Sam Mitchell, Howard Wale, Ron Seymour, Forrest Walkem, Heber Matland, Philip Paul, Victor Adolph, Delbert Guerin, Sam Dougie, Stan Stump, Harry Dickie, Nelson Keitah and George Clutesi. Prime Minister Trudeau

was flanked by Indian Affairs minister Jean Chretien, External Affairs minister Mitchell Sharp, Justice minister Otto Lang, Veterans Affairs minister Arthur Laine, Urban Affairs minister Ron Basford, and MP Len Marchand and Senator Guy Williams, both Indians from B.C. About 100 other Indian leaders and band members witnessed the historical presentation. (Staff Photos)

Land Claim presentation made!

OTTAWA (Staff) — Although B.C. Indian people realize they will never get the province back from the whiteman, their leaders have demanded that they at least be compensated for losing the land.

This demand was made on July 6, 1972, in Ottawa when the Chiefs' Council of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs confronted Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau and members of his cabinet in an impressive presentation.

As about 100 other Indian chiefs and councillors from B.C. and some leaders from other provincial organizations looked on, the Chiefs' Council formally presented a claim on behalf of all registered Indian people of B.C. for compensation to the federal government.

"Claim Based on Native Title", a well-documented page booklet which outlines the Union's case, was handed over by Mrs. Kathryn Tenesse to Prime Minister Trudeau, who promised to study the claim.

YOUNG AND OLD

While Mrs. Tenesse, a member of the Chiefs' Council from the Kootenay-Okanagan District, was representative of the province's native women, four age-groups were symbolized during the presentation.

Mrs. Tenesse, in her twenties, was accompanied by nine-year-old Victor Guerin of the Musqueam Band; Chief Victor Adolph, in his late forties, of the Fountain Band, and Sam Mitchell of Lillooet, who is 82 years of age.

Although there were those who felt the presentation was made at the wrong time, U.B.C.I.C. leaders termed the day a historical one for all Indian people in B.C.

Indeed, the land claims question was one of the very reasons the

Union of Chiefs came into being in 1969 during a meeting in Kamloops

RECEPTIVE, BUT . . . But, while the Prime Minister appeared receptive to the B.C. delegation, he was quick to mention the protest of the presentation which had been lodged earlier by Frank Calder.

Calder, the first Indian person elected to the B.C. legislature and a chairman representing the Nishga Tribal Council, had sent a telegram to Trudeau claiming that the Union's presentation was an attempt to sabotage the Nishgas' own land claim case which is currently being studied by the Supreme Court of Canada.

However, spokesmen for the Union denied this charge, claiming that the Nishgas' case was being heard before a court of law while the Union's bid for compensation was being made to the federal government.

And, there was the matter of the Union not actually being responsible for the date of the presentation. While the Union had sought a meeting date with the Prime Minister many months previous to July 6, it was the Prime Minister himself who settled for that date.

NEEDS STUDY

Mr. Trudeau, whose government has apparently taken a second look at its white paper policy issued in

1969, declined to comment specifically on the paper presented to him by Mrs. Tenesse, saying that it would have to be studied and that any comment made by him or other members of his government at that time might prejudice the Nishga case.

Basically, the claim calls for compensation for loss of ancestral native rights, which Union leaders claim is due since the land in B.C. was never formally forfeited, as in other provinces, through the signing of treaties.

Compensation was demanded for hunting and fishing, timber and

mineral, and riparian and off-shore rights, with a five per cent a year interest of the rights taken.

Apart from that, however, no actual figure or price tag was outlined in the brief. In fact, even though present day land values are calculated to be much higher than they were when the province was taken over by the white settlers, the Indians of B.C. are prepared to accept settlement based on land values as they were back then.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE? While Mr. Trudeau would not comment on the brief until it is studied, he expressed interest in

what future plans the Indians of B.C. have made for themselves.

"What is important to me here is that it is a claim against the past but does not say anything of your views of the future."

"Supposing the claim is settled in a way that is fair and just — what then? Would the Indians become Canadians like everyone else? Would you want to continue having the Indian Act?"

Chief Heber Matland of Kitimat, a member of the executive committee of the Chiefs Council of the

(Continued on Page 2)
See "COMPENSATION"

AS RESULT OF QUILT INQUEST:

Better RCMP treatment?

VANCOUVER — Indian leaders reluctantly accepted the jury's decision from the second inquest into the death of Fred Quilt, but many were of the opinion that as a result the RCMP would begin to treat Indian people with more respect regardless of their status.

Chief George Watts, council member of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs from West Coast district, said: "From now on the police will think differently while dealing with Indian people. From now on the public generally is going to be very suspicious of the RCMP, but more important perhaps is the fact that the members of the RCMP will be aware that Indians won't allow themselves to be mistreated. . . . Ordered by former Attorney

General Leslie Peterson on the ground of "a substantial potential conflict of interest" involving two members of the jury at the first inquest in Williams Lake, the second inquest did not establish the cause of death of the 55-year-old Chilcotin Indian.

Referring to the two native people on the six member jury of the 13-day hearing in Kamloops, Chief Watts said: "To stand up and say they were wrong would be to condemn . . . our own people. It is only unfortunate that more evidence couldn't have been produced as to the cause of Mr. Quilt's death."

THOROUGH EXAMINATION

Victor Adolph, chief of the Fountain Band in the Lillooet district, agreed that the jury's

verdict must simply be accepted, saying: "We will just have to accept the fact that the jury made this decision. . . . It was a very thorough examination."

"The judge certainly went out of his way to make sure that it was a fair inquest and that the jury was just," said Chief Adolph who had attended most of the hearings.

Judge D. F. McNeill, presiding as coroner, questioned all witnesses to ensure none had any connection with the RCMP, the Quilt family, the Anahim or the Stone reserve.

"I guess the jury came out with the only decision it could render," said Chief Forrest Walkem of the Cook's Ferry Band who had also

(Continued on Page 7)
See "QUILT"

Figure 2: Cover page of the first issue of *Nesika*, September 1972.
(Credit: Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs)

"NESIKA"

The Official Monthly Publication of the
Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs

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The official voice of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, this publication is intended for the use and pleasure of all native people in this province. While the Union encourages all contributions such as reports, viewpoints (letters to the Editor), poetry, etc., we reserve the right to edit all contributions. Letters to the Editor must bear signature of the writer, and viewpoints expressed therein are not necessarily those of the Union.

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EDITORIAL

In a word . . . HELP!

How often have you picked up a newspaper, read the contents and then thought about your own versions of stories on certain issues?

How often have you read newspaper articles — particularly those about Indian people — and discovered that the facts were either badly misconstrued, so as to create nothing but confusion, or were not contained in the stories at all?

And, how often have you wished you had a chance to report on events and issues knowing that the existing papers probably not consider your efforts as being worthy of space?

A number of times? Well, perhaps it's time you did something about it.

Though this editorial is intended as an introduction to the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs' official voice, it is also somewhat of a plea in hopes that the readers themselves will come forth and take an active part in determining the paper's contents.

In other words, what we have in mind is a job of editing and layout by us, and perhaps thousands of writing jobs by the people this newspaper intends to serve — our members at the band level.

To us, and hopefully to you, this is only common sense.

Although we have a number of plans in mind for the paper, such as the setting up of a district correspondents' network, we will welcome — and expect — regular contributions from each band, whether they be reports of events, activities and meetings, or viewpoints on various issues.

Besides carrying these reports from the reserve and district level, we also intend to present a viewpoint on issues in each monthly edition.

However, in keeping with the policy of the Union, this newspaper at no time intends to vow any sort of political support to individuals, parties and organizations.

We intend to deal with issues as they arise and though we expect controversies to flare up from time to time as a result of our viewpoints, we will always attempt to deal with each issue as fairly as humanly possible.

You will no doubt notice that this first issue does not contain too great a selection of items, beyond the land claims presentation report, the report on the second inquest into the death of Fred Quilt and reports about a few recent happenings.

For this we sincerely apologise.

In coming issues, we will be attempting to print something for everyone, including items for children, the sports-minded, our native women and our senior citizens.

But, in order to do this, we need your assistance. And so, in a word . . .

HELP!

Cowichan fair attracts many

DUNCAN — In spite of rainy weather competitors and visitors flocked to the 165th opening of the Cowichan Exhibition for a three-day livestock and agricultural display. Organizers said that enthusiasm is such that they expect this year's attendance to top the figure of 17,000 last year. Added attraction were the Totem Tones, magician Carl Hemeon, the Jerry Gosley Smile Show, and folk dancing. Former Lt.-Gov. George Pearkes opened the fair.

DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS?

Laughable, but not funny

By Victoria Daily Times

Among the many importations from the United States which Canada could do without, high on the list must be the Ku Klux Klan organization which for decades has been notorious in the neighboring country for its intolerance, vicious violence and all-round undeniability. No less reprehensible (deserving censure) even though it is only a pathetic farce based on the anti-Negro movement in the early Southern states, is the group which some misguided "ward" in Alberta seeks to bolster by initiating a British Columbia branch.

The organization's main objectives apparently are white racism, and Protestantism to the

exclusion of all other religious beliefs.

The addition of support for the monarchy and a strong nationalism are not likely to fool anyone as to the real intentions of the group — if indeed there is more than a paltry handful of faithful behind the self-styled leader.

Publicity regarding the intentions of the Alberta shadow to extend into British Columbia has understandably roused the concern of native Indians, who presumably would be among the first to experience discrimination from the KKK. They would, of course, be followed by almost every Canadian, no matter what his

color, race or creed, for it is inconceivable that more than a tiny nut fringe of humanity would be attracted by such nonsense.

Attorney General Peterson has said that he will use his powers to block the organization from obtaining a foothold here by incorporating as a society.

Resort to the provincial bill of human rights should be sufficient. If not, there are other means at his command. But the surest method of keeping this psychiatric oddity in limbo where it belongs would be for the public, wherever the idea surfaces, to scoff it out of existence. As Mr. Peterson says, "We can get along fine without it."

Klan not welcome but has its rights

Kamloops Daily Sentinel, Aug. 21

The Ku Klux Klan may well be an undesirable organization which draws its support from the lunatic fringe.

But it should have the same rights in British Columbia as any other organization.

The KKK is talking of seeking to incorporate in B.C. and Attorney-General Leslie Peterson is talking about forbidding incorporation.

His attitude that the Klan is an organization not wanted in the province and that it stands for principles decent Canadians abhor

is admirable. But it should not go so far as to forbid the Klan entry.

Mr. Peterson is stretching the human rights bill a long way to imply it forbids societies such as the Klan.

The bill gives equal rights to all persons. The Klan might well stand in opposition to that principle, but, as long as it abides by the law, has done no wrong. By forbidding the Klan entry, Mr. Peterson would deny it the rights given other organizations.

Furthermore, he would be setting a dangerous precedent. Because the majority object to what the Klan stands for, Mr.

Peterson feels safe in stopping it. But what if he were to object to the Rotary, Elks or Knights of Columbus as an organization? Should he also have the right to refuse them incorporation?

If the people of British Columbia have no liking for the Klan, they will have no part of it and the organization will die for lack of support.

But that is the reason it should not exist, not because the attorney-general does not like it.

The Klan may not be welcome, but democracy demands that it be given the same right as any other organization.

Something happening in your area? Let us know. We need news about births, deaths, weddings, band elections and meetings, sports activities, potlatches, rodeos, pow-wows, cultural and educational projects — in short we need news! Write and tell us what's happening and what you think about it. Help make this paper your paper. Regular correspondents will be paid for their articles.

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Figure 3: Page 3 of the first issue of *Nesika* showing editorial and masthead.⁹⁴
(Credit: Union of BC Indian Chiefs)

⁹⁴ The cartoon is by Willard Ahenekew (Plains Cree), then a full-time reporter and cartoonist for the *Saskatchewan Indian*.

Nesika's first editorial set the tone for this kind of forum by presenting “a plea in hopes that the readers themselves will come forth and take an active part in determining the paper’s contents”:

How often have you picked up a newspaper, read the contents and then thought about your own versions of stories on certain issues? How often have you read newspaper articles—particularly those about Indian people—and discovered that the facts were either badly misconstrued, so as to create nothing but confusion, or were not contained in the stories at all? And, how often have you wished you had a chance to report on events and issues knowing that the existing papers probably not consider your efforts as being worthy of space? ... Well, perhaps it’s time you did something about it. ... [W]e will welcome—and expect—regular contributions from each band, whether they be reports of events, activities and meetings, or viewpoints on various issues. (“In a Word” 3)

The goal was to “print something for everyone, including items for children, the sportsminded, our native women and our senior citizens. But in order to do this, we need your assistance. And so, in a word . . . HELP!” (3). Note that the select use of possessive personal pronouns (“our native women” and “our senior citizens”) constructs the editorial “voice” of *Nesika* as implicitly young and male, and potentially paternalizing. While women were prominent amongst the editorial staff, reporters, and creative contributors to *Nesika*, the masculinist editorial voice here is rhetorically illustrative of the male-dominated arena of UBCIC and other Indigenous executive politics at the time.⁹⁵ While much of the coverage in *Nesika* reflects these gendered politics, the strong representation of women in the literature it published, which I turn to shortly, suggests that poetry and other forms of creative expression were discursive arenas wherein women’s and children’s voices were key to its print culture.

Reader-submitted poems began appearing in *Nesika* by its second issue in October, 1972. While poems weren’t printed in every issue, they began appearing in greater frequency over time. By mid-1973, some months were publishing full-page spreads dedicated to poetry, and several short poems often appeared in any given issue. The project started with *Unity* to provide a “vehicle of strength” to

⁹⁵ Nickel notes that the “patrilineal Indian Act and masculinist Indigenous political frameworks limited women’s political involvement and the Union reproduced this exclusion by relying on the male-dominated chief and council framework” (86). Her gendered analysis of the UBCIC’s history notes that women’s political engagement was often limited to unpaid or non-professional gendered labour (86). The effects of residential schools are also noteworthy here, given its patriarchal influence severely undermined the overt political authority of Indigenous women in many communities.

restore pride in “Indianness” against the stereotypes of non-Indian society thus took a more explicitly journalistic and writerly shape in *Nesika*, now seen as an intervention/alternative to mainstream media, specifically. The voice of BC Indians was not envisaged as the partisan voice of the UBCIC specifically, but of a collaborative “voice” dependent on the collective writing of Union staff and *Nesika* readers. And creative expression—notably poetry—was a mainstay of this voice from the beginning.

Rejection of Funding: Self-Determination and the Politics of Refusal

Nesika has been described by the Union and historians as one of the UBCIC’s most successful initiatives in its early years.⁹⁶ By August 1973, the paper’s subscription base had grown “from nothing to seven thousand in less than a year” (Wilson 1), and by 1975 it was reaching enough subscribers to warrant printing 11,000 copies per month (“DON’T APPLAUD” 2). Subscriptions were free to all “Registered BC Native Indians,” and \$3 per annum for “others.” Core funding alone could not cover the costs of this print run, though, and *Nesika* had in fact planned to publish twice-monthly if contributions permitted. Some revenue was generated through advertising, with ads appearing from retail businesses and even recruitment listings from the federal government and the RCMP. *Nesika* also started a “Nesika Publication Fund” that solicited financial contributions from registered bands and Indians. In November, 1973, *Nesika* published a letter from activist Alfred Recalma (Qualicum), a Status Indian who was also a paying subscriber, as a way of promoting such contributions:

I read all Indian papers I can afford to buy, cut out clippings which just pile up until there is no more room and then they have to be discarded. Sometimes, I think we have lost our pride going cap in hand for money to run our paper. We were once a proud race, with backbone. Let us now have our own paper with our own money. We may fall; but remember we can—must—always rise again. (“Native peoples” 11)

The paper’s response presents seventy-year-old Recalma as “truly an inspiration” for “the young who may be searching for something to believe in. Those who heard and are now responding to the call to have *Nesika* subsidized even only half-way by Indian people themselves are the men and women who,

⁹⁶ See, for example, Vera Manuel (3), as well as Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics* (165).

throughout the histories of nations, build, strengthen and renew people's spirits" (11). Thus while *Nesika* was viewed as a success by the Union and its readers, tensions had emerged over whether the paper could be viewed as self-determined when its funding derived from non-Indian people.

These concerns about self-determination and unity expressed at the micro level in *Nesika* mirrored the broader political climate surrounding the UBCIC at this time. The Nishga Tribal Council, which represented both Status and non-Status Nisga'a peoples and was pursuing its own land claims case, had withdrawn from the Union in its early years over objections to its centralized bureaucratic approach in dealing with the federal government. Moreover, in the early 1970s the BCANSI had initiated its own position in the province's land claims negotiations, which some UBCIC leaders viewed as oppositional to the Union's advocacy on behalf of Status Indians, and opinions in both the BCANSI and the UBCIC were split as to whether the two associations should merge. By 1975, there was growing disquiet throughout the province with the UBCIC's slow progress on its land claims objectives, and frustration amongst delegates that its proportionately well-paid and federally funded leadership were increasingly disconnected from the grassroots activism of the peoples the Union was founded to represent. The culminating event for these frustrations was the UBCIC's seventh annual assembly at Chilliwack in 1975, which, according to Paul Tennant, "took on a life of its own. ... The assembly became a political and cultural revival meeting of profound emotive significance to many of those taking part" ("Native Indian" 116). A motion passed with near-unanimous resolution to reject all funding for Status Indians at all levels of government, including DSOS core funding. The BCANSI similarly rejected all government funding shortly after. According to Vera Manuel (Secwepemc-Ktunaxa), daughter of then-NIB President and future UBCIC leader George Manuel, "It is ironic that this would be the last united stand, around this issue of rejecting government funding, that the people of British Columbia would make under the title of the UBCIC; thereafter the idea of unity that the organization had struggled so valiantly for, would become a thing of the past" (7).

Without funding to sustain core costs, both the UBCIC and BCANSI closed offices and laid off employees, and the Union experienced political backlash from Status Indians in BC now faced with losing the basic educational and welfare funds that leadership had rejected. Eventually, the UBCIC reopened a new headquarters at Coqualeetza in the Fraser Valley, though support for the Union executive had diminished among Indigenous peoples in BC. Provincial Indigenous politics became less centralized, with the formation of new band and district tribal councils operating at more local levels.⁹⁷

Manuel reflects on the consequences of the 1975 rejection under the ideal of self-determination:

It soon became evident that this act of rejecting government funding was at worst, a bad move, and at best, extremely premature. The people were nowhere near ready for such an undertaking. ... [In retrospect] it made people conscious of how much control over Indian peoples' lives the government held by their ability to control that flow of dollars into the community. And if self-determination and sovereignty, terms often mentioned in the discussions of land claims and aboriginal rights, was ever to be achieved to the point where Indian people were able to not only survive, but to thrive, this insidiously destructive dependency would have to stop. (9)

The corollary to this decision in terms of this chapter's focus on literary publication, however, is that the forum for writing established in *Nesika* also stopped as a result of the rejection, at least in the robust ways the newspaper had operated from 1972-1975.

The May, 1975, issue of *Nesika* was reduced to only four pages, dedicated to conveying the news from the UBCIC resolution to reject state funding. The editorial masthead included a new emboldened message in capitalized font, "KEEP NESIKA ALIVE," claiming: "While we will continue to publish, we must now rely on your support. ... The *Nesika* staff has been reduced to just two ... We ask for your continued support in the form of submissions from the community level. Until more settled times, we ask that you bear with us" (2). The precarious future of the newspaper described by the editors appears in sharp juxtaposition to the celebratory reports of the rejection from the annual assembly in this short issue, which included photos of AIM singers and speakers from the Chilliwack

⁹⁷ Under the leadership of George Manuel in the late 1970s, and after returning to government funding structures, the UBCIC would continue to play a vital activist role in the spheres of Aboriginal rights and title, including the Constitutional Express campaign in 1981 during the patriation of the Canadian constitution as the Constitution Act (1982).

meeting, and declared June 25, 1975 as “Independence Day,” a day honoring Custer’s last stand, the tabling of the White Paper, and now, the independence of BC Indians from government funding. A staff-written article, “From 1969 to 1975 the Movement is Born,” describes the optimism of the newspaper’s workers in militant terms as part of the wider Indian “movement”: “As we go to press, a small army of volunteer workers have been typing, addressing, bundling and mailing information bulletins. Some of you are long-haired, sporting beads and AIM-embroidered jackets. Others are older and more conservative. But all are part of ‘the Movement’” (2). However, the publishing future of *Nesika* was substantially affected. Between May and September of 1975, just three short issues were published, now jointly with the BCANSI, and by October, the BCANSI had taken over publishing completely. Issues eventually could only be typeset, printed, and distributed when sufficient funds had been raised, and only nine appeared from the end of 1975 to *Nesika*’s last edition in June of 1977.

Moreover, creative writing and the literary arts all but disappeared from *Nesika* following the summer of 1975. This was due not only to the paper’s lack of funding and reduced page count, but to the newly politicized editorial policies it began to promote. By the end of 1975, *Nesika* was no longer “The Voice of BC Indians,” but “A Journal Devoted to the Land Claims Movement,” a shift in title that emblemizes its renewed publishing mandate. A series of editorial commentaries on the direction of *Nesika* appear in the issues following the Chilliwack meeting in 1975 that align the newspaper with the UBCIC’s recalibrated energies exclusively in the area of land claims. Editors of the July 1975 issue state that “It is our intention in this paper, to trace the path that many native people are taking, trying to find the way of our grand-fathers—so that our grandchildren will walk that path again,” a path of “freedom, independence, self-reliance and unity” (“Editorial Policy” 3). Yet this “unity” resulted in a different newspaper than *Unity*, which had been seen as a “vehicle of strength” and “not just a newsy newsletter,” and the earlier *Nesika*, which had printed “something for everyone”:

In addition to rejecting all government funding, the native people of this province ... have stated their sole interests to be the settlement of the land claims issue and the freedom,

independence, self-reliance and unity of the Indian people. In accordance with these concerns, this newspaper will, from this time on, print only news that directly relates to these issues. . . . There are a number of things this paper has done in the past and will not be doing in the future. We will no longer print advertising from either government, or commercial ventures. Also, we will no longer print news of other native organizations unless they are working for the independence of Indian people and the settlement of the land claims issue. (3)

The October 1975 editorial notes further that

In the old B.C. (Before Chilliwack) days, the NESIKA paper was a mixed bag of unrelated items with no philosophy and no editorial backbone. It seemed that whatever the mailman delivered to the office was printed, and included notices of job opportunities in native organizations from across the country, scores from soccer tournaments, wedding stories, and incredibly enough, advertisements asking natives to join the R.C.M.P! At that time, the paper operated on a budget that must have been close to \$50,000, which was partly funded by the Secretary of State. The paper had a full-time staff of 3 or 4 people.

The philosophy of the new NESIKA paper . . . [is] to work exclusively on land claims, aboriginal rights, and the freedom, independence and self-reliance of Indian people, that those would be the only concerns of the paper, and the often frivolous practices of the past would not be repeated. (“Whatever happened” 1)

It’s unclear whether poetry disappeared from *Nesika* because financial precarity made it a secondary concern, because readers stopped submitting it, because it was seen as a “frivolous” practice, or some combination of the above. But with the rejection of core funding and realigned focus of the newspaper on Politics (big-P)—a move animated by an anti-colonial commitment to self-determination—a significant forum for the literary “voice” of Indigenous peoples in and beyond BC was ultimately lost.

4. “It Sounded Like Us”: The Poetry of *Nesika*

In March of 1975, two months before the rejection, *Nesika* published its final full-page poetry spread. “Reflections,” by Okanagan poet Gordon Williams, is the first of its five short poems. In terse, blank verse lines of four to five beats, the poem creates a sense of its speaker’s internal struggle within the politics of the Red Power movement. The speaker is

Nearly someone
 most of the time
mostly escaping
 into the shadows
that just about kill
 and cannot hide
the backward glance
 to Cornwall 69— (4)

The “backward glance” to the Cornwall Bridge blockade of 1968-69 evokes a history of cross-border activism visible within the “shadows,” which are both a source of escape and also life threatening. “Do I ... should I ... have to ... / look for my heart / at Wounded knee,” asks the speaker, a charged reference to Dee Brown’s recently published *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1970) and the events south of the border at Wounded Knee two years prior in 1973. The speaker weighs whether it would be better to hand over to an unnamed “you” his recovered heart,

Or could I sink
The Columbus boat
And kill Custer again
Just so
I can get
My right ... (4)

The internal conflict of the speaker torn by two extremes, “Nearly someone,” is between submission and resistance, conciliation and violence, linked to a history of colonialism via the poem’s “backward glance” that connects the AIM movement in the present to the moment of European contact. The final lines pose the poem’s ultimate question as a meditation on the strains of anti-colonial struggle: “is it easier / to move an ice age / or turn into stone” (4), reflecting the speaker’s sense of being caught between the prospects of either fighting for glacial change or resignation to becoming “stone,” politically hardened, fossilized. Williams’s “Reflections” on the AIM movement are somber, particularly given the Red Power optimism seen in the pages of *Nesika* in the spring of 1975. His speaker in some ways prefigures the political narrative of Jeannette Armstrong’s Okanagan protagonist, Tommy Kelasket, in her novel *Slash* (1985), who reflects similarly on the false choice imposed by colonization: “[T]hey only give us two choices. Assimilate or get lost. A lot of us are lost” (49).

Armstrong recalls the first time she came across a “small collection of coffeehouse poems by fellow Okanagan Gordon Williams”:

For me, his poems mirrored a Native experience of the 1960s while, at the same time, ... influenced by beat, free verse forms, and the minimalist writings of then obscure but now famous non-Native coffeehouse poets I was reading. Although no large collection of his poems

has ever surfaced, he had a following on the west coast. I believe Gordon's writing influenced the development of Native writers reading and writing what I then called resistance poetry and which began to appear in all small circulation Native news bulletins in the late 1960s. (xvi)

I raise Armstrong's thoughts on Williams here not to speculate on a direct thematic or writerly influence between "Reflections" and *Slash*, but rather to give a sense of how the otherwise unpublished writing found in newspapers like *Nesika* circulated influentially for Indigenous audiences. Armstrong recalls "small poems scattered like gems here and there in the pages of mimeographed Native flyers and bulletins," once reading a poem by Skyros Bruce (Mahara Allbret, Tsleil Waututh) and "being so utterly thrilled with the beauty of her poem that I searched for flyers from everywhere to read her work" (xvii). The forums for writing created by these widespread newsletters in turn engendered a readership for such writing and an appetite for creative expression within the politicized climate of the time. Access to Indigenous arts made possible by the media networks of the late 1960s and early 1970s influenced Armstrong's writing in ways that mainstream literature and literary representations of Indians couldn't because, as she reflects with profound simplicity, "It sounded like us" (xvi).

Occasional Poetry

While it is beyond my scope to give a comprehensive account of the many dozens of poems published in *Nesika* (a bibliography of which I've compiled and included in Appendix A), my goal in this section will be to give a sense of their range of forms and subjects, as well as some of the shared interests and common themes. Like Gordon Williams, the majority of the writers in *Nesika* are what Armand Ruffo has called "occasional poets," a term he uses in two senses to describe the relatively unknown writers publishing in periodicals across Canada: "First, the important event or occasion they are writing about is their own lives as Aboriginal peoples surviving the twentieth century. And, second, the majority of the writers in the periodicals wrote poetry only occasionally and infrequently" (184). In the first sense, much of the occasional poetry appearing in *Nesika* might be considered what Emma LaRocque has termed "protest literature" inasmuch as it variously "speaks to the process of our colonization:

dispossession, objectification, marginalization, and that constant struggle for cultural survival expressed in the movement for structural and psychological self-determination” (xviii).

The very first poem published in *Nesika* was “Another Time Than Ours” by another Okanagan poet, Ben Abel, appearing in the December 1972 issue. The poem thematizes colonization as an experience of “time,” evoking a lament for life now lived “Within that rush of linear time,” trapped in the “escapist dream” of “clock work time / Which marches to the beat of the minutes / The hours. The onrushing and vanishing years” (12). Such objective, metaphysical thoughts on the industrialized time of modernity, “Necessary as a tool. Deadly as a master,” are bookended by the use of personal pronouns in the opening and closing stanza, which present a speaker yearning for an alternate conception of time that “mechanized work took ... away from us.” The poem opens with the speaker remembering a prior sense of time “Which we have forgotten that we need. / We dare not hope to make it our own,” which in the last lines is glimpsed again beyond the “machine” of linear time:

So a kind of panic route.
And we are old so soon. And we are done.
And we hardly had time to live at all.
But under the frown of clock work time.
Which claims the world.
We place our experience out in an eternity.
Beyond the years. And beyond the stars.
Not out there did the other time. (12)

The personal pronouns invite a direct, elegiac reading that juxtaposes an Indigenous epistemology of time against the colonization of Western industry: it’s “our” time that “we have forgotten we need” and can no longer “make our own,” overrun by linear time “which claims the world.”



Figure 4: "Another Time than Ours" by Ben Abel, October 1972 issue of *Nesika*.
 (Credit: Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs)

Such a reading becomes decidedly more complex, however, with knowledge that “Another Time Than Ours” is a found poem, one that reproduces, in an almost untreated way, excerpts from the opening chapter of sociologist John Collier’s popular 1949 illustrated book, *Patterns and Ceremonials of the Indians of the Southwest*, titled “In Another Time Dimension than Ours.” In the chapter from Collier—Commissioner of Indian Affairs from under Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the architect of Roosevelt’s “Indian New Deal” through the Indian Reorganization Act (1934)—Indigenous ways of understanding time become a Romantic, pre-modern antidote to the speed of “clockwork time”:

Indians have much that we know we need. And they have one possession, the most distinguishing of all, which we have forgotten we need. Rather, perhaps, we dare not hope to make it our own. That possession is *a time sense* different than ours, and happier. Once our white race had it too, and then the mechanized world took it away from us” (15).

Abel’s poem, which retains the personal pronouns but does not acknowledge *Patterns and Ceremonials* as a source, thus enacts a complicated appropriation of Collier’s ethnographic account of an Indigenous “time sense.” Abel’s speaker at once agrees with Collier’s condemning of colonial “clockwork time,” but at the same time assumes Collier’s melancholic perspective from within that same Western epistemology, fusing Collier’s “white race” with contemporary Indigenous experience that Collier presents idealistically as a corrective. For Collier, “the Indians will gainsay us” against the mechanization of time, whereas for Abel’s speaker, “the maker will gainsay us”—a single-word revision

that is the most substantial alteration in this found poem, and which also evokes the most dramatic distinction between the conflated identities entangled intertextually by the poem's "us." Whereas Collier's salvation for the fallen white race is found without, in the "Indian," Abel's speaker resists the imposition of "clockwork time" while offering hope for autonomous spiritual reconnections: the final line reminds that the "other time" is "Not out there," can still be made "our" own. By assuming Collier's voice and conjoining the "white race" and "Indian" in a shared persona, Abel suggests that while Indigenous peoples may have come to identify with colonizing Western epistemologies, the spiritual renewal imagined here may also provide alternative ways of being to benefit both societies.

What appears as a simple poem thus becomes multifaceted, particularly in consideration of the literary and print circulations informing its production. Abel is here both reader and writer, subversively repackaging a popular book of ethnography on US Southwest Indigenous peoples by an American writer/politician in a poem now published for an audience of largely Indigenous readers in BC. As the first poem to appear in *Nesika*, it is a compelling example of the how the act of writing—and the opportunity to write for an audience—becomes one of empowerment, what Akiwenzie-Damm calls "fight[ing] words with words" to combat the imposed renditions of Indigenous peoples by settler society (24). Short poems were an ideal vehicle for such writing in a periodical like *Nesika* given their formal flexibility and compressed scale allow for complex ideas to be conveyed concisely on the page.

Armstrong recalls how the first time she heard Duke Redbird's (Ojibway) poetry on the radio was an enabling experience for understanding how the genre of poetry could be both utilized and Indigenous. She realized the potential of "poetic form as a way to distil into symbolic imagery a perspective coming from our common experience of being Native in Canada," themes that "resonated with us and yet were 'presentable' because they were in a poem" ("Four" xvi). Exposure to the creative works of writers like Redbird, Chief Dan George, and Gordon Williams enabled

others to consider what else might be presented in this malleable yet compact form, while drawing on a familiarity with oral delivery and a common subject. I saw it as a way to get

through to an audience, and voice what mattered to us as subject. Not unrequited love and romance, not longing for motherland, not taming the wilderness nor pastoral beauty, nor driving railroad spikes nor placing the immigrant self, but our own collective colonized heritage of loss, pain, anger and resistance, and our pride and identity as Native. (xvi-xvii)

The majority of poetry appearing in *Nesika* takes up these latter topics—loss, resistance, pride and/in identity—that “mattered” in ways that subjects in poetry from the English/Canadian tradition didn’t, and in poetics that were similarly less interested in the formal standards and experimentation of Western aesthetics. More important was its capacity to “get through to an audience,” and poetry within a communicative medium such as *Nesika* became a way of linking speaker and listener/reader.



Figure 5: Poetry spread in May 1973 issue of *Nesika*
(Credit: Union of BC Indian Chiefs)

The poetry section in the May 1973 issue of *Nesika* provides an illustrative cross-section of some of these poetic currents that run throughout the newspaper. Overwhelmingly, the message of the occasional poets in *Nesika* resonated with the objectives first laid out by Donna Tyndall in *Unity* that saw the medium as a “vehicle of strength” for future generations to restore pride “in our ‘Indianness.’” Each of the seven poems in this issue deal with themes of loss, survival, identity, and pride, and each delivers its message from a first-person perspective that either implicitly or, usually, explicitly invokes dialogue with a collective audience addressed as “you” or “we.” “Listen,” by Lelan Shaffer, asks its listeners to hear the “longing cry, / For this sorrow and shame, / Has wounded the soul of a people” (15). The short poem, which is doubled in translation into Squamish orthography, shifts from an inter/personal dialogue to encompass the “earth and sky” who are “not silent” and “listen” too, expanding the communicative imperative of “listening” to account for other-than-human kinship and the land’s agency. Three poems from Margaret Woods, “I am an Indian,” “To be an Indian,” and “Let Us Be Proud,” all engage with questions of identity, pride, and injustice. The simple rhyming scheme of “To be an Indian” is at times humorous: “To be an Indian isn’t so bad / As a matter of fact it has become quite a fad” (15). But Woods also questions her ability to be a “true Indian,” given her language loss and cultural disconnection: “my hatchet needs sharpening,” and “my beads are lost, my blanket but a rag” (15). Such questions over authenticity are not merely defined by the speaker’s sense of self, though, but also by what the first stanza highlights as the “Traditionally” construed notions of what it means “To be an Indian,” and the poem’s focus on how Indigeneity is “regulated” by external expectations. The final stanza is thus both an affirmation of the poem’s message to “build for a future / We’ll not regret,” but also a more ambiguous questioning of how cultural revitalization is bound to the “restricted” representations of “true” Indian’s circulating as tropes in popular media: “My feet with soft moccasins will I clad / Then maybe walk happily into the sunset like a movie I’ve seen / Is it restricted? Like my life has been?” (15). “I am an Indian” is a more declarative and polemical “plea /

Of injustice and prejudice,” though it closes on a call to collective solidarity and self-determination:

“Let the decisions pertaining to our lives be our own/There is power in unity, let us not be alone” (15).

“Let Us Be Proud” presents a heartfelt message to “Future Indians” to “consider not your heritage / A troublesome cloud. / Let us be proud” (15). Woods wrote the poem “for all the students who board out,” presumable in residential schools or foster care, “to encourage them to try and help themselves to find and live in peace and understanding with their fellow human beings,” and the refrain of collective pride in each stanza follows compassionate teachings in resilience: “Child, be not afraid, wipe away those tears / Stand straight and tall, let not your head hand bowed” (15). Yet the caring message of Woods’s poem for children becomes striking when considered in context on the page. Immediately opposite is “Hold your Head High,” written by thirteen-year-old Peggy Terry, which delivers a similar message written by a “Future Indian” in the form of a poem that adopts the voice of an elder speaking similar words of pride to an “Indian child”:

Don’t ever think you’re a disgrace
Because you’re of Indian race.
Keep your head high, always keep a smiling face
Be proud of what you’re always going to be.
Never forget your language, culture and your people.
We are Indian, you and me. (15)

The intergenerational perspective of both poems instills a healing message that resonates not only with traumatic dislocations of residential schools, but within the context of the “Sixties Scoop”⁹⁸ that also circulates discursively through the pages of *Nesika*. Editorials and letters on the deplorable state of provincial child welfare practices recur throughout *Nesika*, as do regular print ads from the government, social welfare organizations, and churches soliciting foster care for Indigenous children.

⁹⁸ A term coined by Patrick Johnston in his report *Native Children and the Child Welfare System* (1983) in reference to the forced removal of Indigenous children to foster care resulting from amendments to Section 88 of the Indian Act in 1951 that shifted federal control of Aboriginal health and welfare to the provinces. Though as Suzanne Fournier and Ernie Cray (and many others) note, the term is misleading as child welfare policies have continued the “scoop” to this day (88).

In apposition to these contexts, Terry's poem is an imaginative, creative intervention, adopting a parental voice that gestures to resilience between generations and amongst young reader peers.

Indeed, in light of *Nesika's* editorial vision as a vehicle of strength for young generations to newly imagine Indigenous futures, it's remarkable how much of its poetry was written not only *about* children but *by* children and young adults themselves, who were integral to its literary voice. In the July 1972 issue, for example, an article was published reporting on the executive organization of a Youth Group under the Hesquiat First Nation band council in Nuu-chah-nulth territory. Alongside this story about youth involvement in band governance appear three poems sent by Hesquiat students in the sixth and seventh grades. "Daydream," from seventh-grader Rufus Charleson, offers a short meditation on the simple pleasures of fishing. It begins by establishing the speaker's location on the water, building familiar sights and sounds through the movement of active verbs toward the harvesting of salmon, and a conclusion that draws the physical setting into an emotional exclamation of fulfillment:

Orange-red skies,
Calm, bluish sea,
Gliding boat,
Ringing bells,
Squeaking gears,
Dressing sockeye;
I feel happy
Fishing! (11)

"Daydream," like most of the poems published by children in *Nesika*, would hardly qualify as "literary" writing based on the normative values brought to the academic study of "literature" in the Western tradition. Yet, as Armand Ruffo suggests, for writers publishing in periodicals at this time "with little or no formal training" what mattered most "is what the poem is saying—more than how it says it" (182). The simplicity of "Daydream" is its assertion of a deep relationship with the ancestral territory and economies that have sustained Hesquiat ways of being for millennia—a relationship that the poet's repeated use of participle verbs works to frame within the present, continuous tense. Such a simple expression becomes more deeply layered and politically affirmative within the print context of *Nesika*,

where reporting regularly focused on provincial fisheries bans and the political challenges of coastal nations attempting to assert their ancestral rights. As former Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council member Michelle Corfield explains in the context of a more recent legal battle, salmon fishing “is the source of our origin stories, and the bases of our lives and land use. Fishing is about who Nuu-chah-nulth people are in all contexts—cultural, spiritual, economic, and social” (Mertl). A poem expressing joy in fishing becomes, in this sense, a regenerative cultural practice, and an imaginative, affirmative alternative to the discourse of battling limited state-defined rights appearing in the newsletter’s political reporting.

Similarly, “Heritage,” by sixth-grader Agnes Charleson, recalls the echoes of drums and deerskin rattles “Reminding me of our days,” “Beating drums around the fire, / Stamping feet on pebble ground, Haunting chants of elder’s choir” (11). Yet whereas “Daydream” and “Heritage” imagine the self in relationship with land and tradition, “Contrast,” by seventh-grader Jean Charleson, gives voice to a child’s fears and anxieties of dislocation from these relations. The poem begins “Mid mountains and sea, sky and / tree, / My Indian spirit is free,” presenting the speaker’s feeling of security in life on the land: “Fleet as a deer, / Keen as a cougar, / no one to fear.” The “Contrast” comes with “A change of scene...I’m city / bound; my spirit restlessly looks around” (11). The once confident voice becomes a “frightened bird / Closed in by concrete walls,” finally asking the listener to

Understand then
my longing for forest peace,
For cedar-scented air and sea
breeze. (11)

The poem’s operative urban/rural “Contrast” is at one level thematic, conveying the speaker’s experience of city life as disconnected from spiritual and emotional kinship ties to land and community; in the context of Western poetry, however—poetry these children were undoubtedly exposed to in schools, residential or otherwise—it also forms a profound “contrast” to the urban/rural thematics of a haunted, primitive landscape in colonial North America that Atwood called “Nature the

Monster” in her “handbook” to Canadian literature that same year (41). It’s not the wilderness that haunts here, but the garrison of the city—its “concrete walls” and distance from community.

The significance of these poems by children, however, extends beyond concerns with content and form to broader considerations of the historical contexts of their writing and dissemination. Ruffo stresses two important realities that conditioned the very presence of such poems. First, despite that very few of the poets appearing in the *Indian Press* gained critical or popular attention, “it is apparent that each of them, at one time, felt compelled to share with other Aboriginal people their thoughts and emotions about what it was like to be Aboriginal in Canada” (183). In this sense, the “act of writing” itself should be understood as an “act of resistance, an act of re-empowerment” (33), as Janice Acoose (Anishinaabekwe-Métis-Nehiowé) notes; an act of affirmation and of Indigenous presence in the face of colonial erasure that Daniel Heath Justice (Cherokee Nation) has described as the “decolonizing imperative” (150) of Indigenous literary expression. Second, that in “sending their poems to these periodicals, the poets knew that the readers of their work would most likely be other Aboriginal people, often their own families, friends, and communities” (Ruffo 183). Considering these poems not simply *as* poems but as contributions produced for and submitted to a wider print medium established to circulate within an audience of Indigenous readers shifts emphasis strictly from literary production to include dissemination and reception as similarly political acts. In other words, while the act of writing was a political move, so too was the act of *reading* and participating in the networks between audience and writer made available through new print media. Forums like *Nesika* not only created space for the work of a young generation of writers, but also provided new opportunities for children and other readers hungry to hear voices from their own communities to find that writing, and in turn imagine themselves as producers of literature that would find audience and be read.

Council passed a resolution letting non-residents to vote

(Continued from Page 1)
election, La Rue said: "Norman La Rue has returned home."

He added that he had been given a place to stay with a resident family on reserve on "room and board basis" on December 13, and he intends to keep on living on reserve.

La Rue claimed that the last election was the first to be carried out strictly under the Indian Act. He further claimed that previously non-resident members were allowed to vote, and the band council had even passed a resolution allowing off-reserve band members to vote.

La Rue said that although he lived for a number of years outside the reserve, he is a member by blood. His father, Eli, was the last of the hereditary chiefs and served for 24 years. Two of his uncles have been chiefs.

La Rue questioned the tardiness of the protest when there was "plenty of chances" during the nomination of candidates.

La Rue ran for election reportedly charging that the previous administration was "undemocratic."

Asked to explain, La Rue said that "Band affairs were not benefiting people equally."

He cited the case of housing, pointing that 12 homes do not have inside plumbing and are not properly heated while some others have two garages and bay windows.

Jack Homan, the DIA district superintendent, said that his office is "doing the best it can to resolve the issue."

Homan said he knows that the protagonists have sent their petitions to Ottawa.

Citing opinion on a similar case, Homan said: "If the minister has any doubts, he'll decide on setting up another election."

In a previous news report Homan said that the Indian Act is vague about residency on reserve. Because of this, off-reserve people were allowed to vote when they signed affidavits saying they intended to live on the reserve permanently.

These affidavits are now being challenged by supporters of chief Gottfriedson.

NIB, Mardi Gras sponsor German tour

VANCOUVER (Staff) — At least eight dancers headed by Vancouver War Dance Club president Ernie Philip will join a group that will tour and perform in Germany in January and February under the sponsorship of the National Indian Brotherhood and the International German Mardi Gras Society.

Beside Philip the dancers are Mark Point, Victor Pierre, Ray Peter, Clara Jack, Sophie Lezard, Alec Scaplock, and Philip Little Chief.

Three other dancers, Glen and Norton Eaglespeaker and Dalla Price, may also join the tour.

The group from the west will join 10 dancers from the plains and 10 from the east, the Governor General's Foot Guard Brass Band, and a dance corps of 18 Canadian-German cultural group.

Omer Peter, NIB vice-president

Village selects Nisgaha carver

PORT EDWARD — Norman Tait of the Nisgaha tribe has been selected by the village council to carve the Heritage Totem.

The 36-foot pole will be 36 inches at the base and taper up to 18 inches at the top, where Thunderbird sits.

The Killer Whale, the Grizzly Bear, K'san or the Split-Man, and the Beaver will be represented on the totem.

Tait designed the pole for the project sponsored by the village council under an LIP grant.

The 30-year-old carver has just finished a project for the Centennial Museum in Vancouver.

Band gets agricultural loan for expansion, flood control

DUNCAN (Staff) — The Cowichan Indian Agricultural Co.

He said the band has begun building up the river banks and



GAIL SPARROW

Young lady started writing poems at 15

VANCOUVER (Staff) — Gail Sparrow started writing poems at age 15.

In this issue two of those poems she wrote appear. Her poems reflect her optimistic outlook for Indian people in the future.

Gail wants to learn as much as she can so she can help her people develop their potential and ability, and she looks forward to seeing them in the professions — medicine, dentistry, law, social work, and so on.

She is taking a recreation leadership course at Vancouver City College.

Her interest in people has led her to travel to places in the U.S., including Utah where she finished her high school.

For a while she attended Brigham Young University but left to come home to Vancouver. Gail plans to return to the University next fall.

As recreation director for Musqueam, Gail is in charge of the summer program for children organizing camping, boating, hobo parties and other activities that stress unity and understanding.

She plays tennis and basketball with a native girls' basketball team in Musqueam.

Judge allows more "cons" than "pros"

OTTAWA — The Supreme Court of Canada, through Judge Ronald Martland, has agreed to allow 12 Indian organizations to present arguments on the Lavell case when the appeal is heard.

These organizations represent Canada's 225,000 Treaty Indians.

The organizations are: National Indian Brotherhood, Manitoba, Yukon and Northwest Territories brotherhoods, Six Nations Bands of Indians, Indian Association of Quebec, Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, Federation of Saskatchewan Indians.

Union of Ontario Indians, Union of New Brunswick Indians, Indian Federation of Alberta, and Union of Nova Scotia Indians.

Judge Martland reserved decision on applications from groups which want to present arguments in support of Mrs. Lavell.

These organizations are: Alberta Committee on Indian Rights for Indian Women, Edmonton Business and Professional Women's Club, Canadian Federation of University Women, and Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of

Poetry

Listen Before I Die

My last days are near
There are many things I fear
Please listen to my plead
Spread my message like a seed.

My bow has been broken
Our language is rarely spoken
My moccasins are old and worn
And my teepee is shred and torn.

O, what can I do
Deep down inside I'm so blue
All our young are brown skinned whitemen
We are now overgrown by the whitemen.

We will never be the same again
But an Indian I'll always remain
And for my people I cry
Until the day I die.

—GAIL SPARROW

The Indian

The Indian stands tall with pride
His skin colour he does not hide
He is a man of great strength
Bringing his race out a great length.
The Indian once owned many a land
Now has only a reserve which in only room
to stand.
The whiteman stole more and more each day
And claimed he did so in a legal way
Even though the Indians' skin is brown
and not white
He will always love his people and put up
a good fight.
The Indian is now coming back stronger than ever
Will the whiteman do the same again?
No, never!!!

—GAIL SPARROW

My Grandfather

I dedicate this poem to my grandfather Chief Titus Nisyoik.
His Indian name is Men Ay Eskoke. I hope he likes
this poem that I have written—M.W.

My grandfather is old.
He knows of stories of which many have not
been told.
Although his hair is not very grey
He has seen many changes from his day.

My grandfather is old.
He is a Chief, and his value cannot be measured
in gold.
He makes his own snowshoes, for hunting
when the snows gets deep.
And for the laces, the moose hide he'll keep.

My grandfather is old.
He'll tell legends which will fascinate you
as they slowly unfold.
Of his Heritage he is very proud.
His wisdom is heard and everyone listens
though his voice isn't loud.

My grandfather is old.
Wrinkled, yet spry, quiet yet bold.
He is a hunter, trapper and a fisherman.
Can you surpass him? See if you can!

—MARGARET WOODS

Slave Band member goes up to the top in music world

EDMONTON — Harry Rusk, a from tuberculosis in the Charles

Figure 6: Feature on Gail Sparrow from January 1973 issue of *Nesika* (Credit: Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs)

For example, the January 1973 issue of *Nesika* featured and short article spotlighting the work of Gail Sparrow (Musqueam), who would later become active in Musqueam politics and Chief during the 1990s. The piece highlights her educational successes and community leadership, and foregrounds the "optimistic outlook for Indian people in the future" in her poetry (10). Beside the article, two of

Sparrow's poems appear, "Listen Before I Die," and "The Indian." The former is far from optimistic, voiced from the perspective of a speaker nearing the end of life:

My bow has been broken
Our language is rarely spoken
My moccasins are old and worn
And my teepee is shred and torn

O, what can I do
Deep down inside I'm so blue
All our young are brown skinned whitemen
We are now overgrown by the whitemen. (10)

The lament over colonization in this poem is immediately contrasted by the opening line of the following poem, "The Indian stands tall with pride." Focusing on the same concerns of cultural loss and colonial dispossession, "The Indian" concludes with an alternate message of resurgence: "The Indian is now coming back stronger than ever / Will the whiteman do the same again? No, never!!!" (10). Individually, these poems are discrete in their tone and respective views of the future; in combination, though, they offer a multifaceted sense of the young poet's conflicted perspective on a present that is simultaneously bound to histories and gathering strength. For the dying speaker in the first poem, colonization and loss of language mean things "will never be the same again," yet the power of language in poetry is mobilized in the second to assert a declaration of collective renewal.

The speaker's critique of "brown skinned whitemen" in Sparrow's "Listen Before I Die" is indicative, too, of the critical impulse in many of the poems in *Nesika*. Far from uniformly declarations of pride or celebratory accounts of political, social, and spiritual revival, the collective output of poems in *Nesika* becomes an expression of the diversity of lived experience, and often the conflict and struggle involved in imagining forms of renewal in the complex social realities of the present. "The Half-Breed," a short poem by Sonny Wilson, provides a particularly critical juxtaposition to the unifying pride in "Indianness" seen throughout *Nesika*. Wilson voices the "hunger" of a "Half-breed," a "chickadee in no-man's land" who finds himself "Hoping for help from *disunity* / Searching for the rain of truth / To wash away the ugliness / On the street of brotherhood" (13, my emphasis). Several

poems by Wah-zin-ak, a Stó:lō woman and AIM activist, explore these difficulties in terms of relations of kinship and accountability. “Straighten Up” is addressed to “Brother,” interweaving affirmations of emotional commitment with a series of questions about a man’s violent and destructive behaviour: “You know I love you / Why do you act this way? You make me hurt inside / Making me cry and worry so. You fool” (11). In “A Time to be Strong,” Wah-zin-ak’s speaker gives solace to “Sweet sister / So lost and alone” in the form of a letter, closing with words of support and solidarity: “Do what’s right sister, / What you feel in your heart / Don’t let anyone hurt you / Or let anyone get you down / Take care” (7). In these poems, the work of building community is imagined not as an outward political project but as examining accountability and the distances that need traversing within communities, prompting readers to reflect on gendered violence and the responsibilities of being good brothers or sisters. Thus the space created by papers like *Nesika* was used as a space of writing both for and to communities, raising critical concerns about how the politically affirmative project of decolonization might be imagined also as a restorative project of rebuilding relations.

Speaking from unique positions, then, the poetic voices in *Nesika* suggest the creative capacity of writing to both address the realities of the present and imagine alternative futures. The final poem I will turn to from an “occasional” poet, “Ingenika,” by Robin Toma, a Sekani-Cree woman from the Athabaskan northern interior of BC, offers a salient example. “Ingenika” provides a deeply situated account of the poet’s connection to Tsay Keh Dene territory around Ingenika, a community at that time enduring enormous dislocation after the recent construction of the W.A.C Bennett Dam on the Peace River.⁹⁹ While the poet describes herself as “Footloose and fancy free” and “living a nomadic life without a care,” she juxtaposes her roaming with a detailed description of the landscape of

Ingenika, my people’s Shangri-la
 Uncrowded, untamed and lit
 Only by the sun and moon,

⁹⁹ This dam is “Site A” of the hydroelectric development project whose Site C, further downstream, is now in development and the subject of ongoing legal/activist challenges from Treaty 8 First Nations, local residents, and other allies.

Tough, hard and raw
My return is never too soon. (6)

“Ingenika” articulates the speaker’s desire for a “return” to Ingenika from somewhere distant: “Across the miles / I hear the call, / The lure of the wilds” to the Finlay and Parsnip rivers then being engulfed by the dam’s massive reservoir lake: “Here’s where I’m from” (6).

While Robin Toma is not a familiar name in literary circles, an article about her had been printed by the Canadian Press and circulated widely in 1972, titled “Only 22, but seen it all: May lick hospital, jail life by writing.” The biographical sketch describes Toma, who had been separated from her family at a young age first through hospitalization due to tuberculosis and then by residential schools, in a life lived through a “series of institutions, jail, probation, even the mental hospital at Essendale, B.C., after a suicide attempt” (41). Toma describes her first return home at age 14: “It was like a wonderland to me, having been raised behind walls all the time. Outside was just a different world. But I couldn’t fit back in. I couldn’t remember the language, the customs, the legends. I couldn’t make bannock, and I didn’t know from nothing about curing hides, making moccasins and drying meat” (41). She further recalls that her parents had been ashamed by her education—that she could read and write, but had no proficiency in the traditional knowledge and skills that sustained life in Ingenika. Toma thus ran away from home again, living the “nomadic life without a care” expressed by her speaker in “Ingenika,” though a life also involving abuse and repeated institutionalization.

The article features a photograph of Toma in a hospital bed in Edmonton working on her writing, which Toma describes as a source of strength and a means of “be[ing] something more than just an Indian with an education” (41)—a phrase with complex, multiple valences given her account of the shame she describes having encountered in her community based on her “education” in residential schooling. The portrait of the poet painted by the Canadian Press is sympathetic in the liberal sense but overtly pathologizing, even patronizing in its celebration of what the gift of Western education and the technology of literacy offers her damaged Indian subjectivity. It also provides a stark contrast to how

Toma represents herself in *Nesika*. In an essay accompanying “Ingenika,” Toma describes the “psychological undermining” of her people’s growing alienation from their land and her own struggle to maintain kinship ties to the region being transformed by colonial resource development:

[E]ach time I return, I see the long arm of progress greedily clutching more land and its resources. I dread to see what has occurred in my absence ... Someday I shall re-return and find my Shangri-la erased completely by politics, law, and greed for gain. In some ways, the ancestral spirits in me aren’t really dead. I am preparing myself for that “certain” day. That day when my people and I lose touch with the land. (“The Brief Light” 8)

The poetic “return” in “Ingenika” thus becomes a creative strategy of restoration, an imaginative return to land and communal relations set against dislocations foisted on her by colonial institutions and capitalism’s “long arm.” Poetry becomes, in this case, a means for Toma to write herself home.

Wider Currents of Literary Community

While the majority of writers were “occasional” poets, some more familiar names appear throughout the pages of *Nesika*. For instance, two poems sent from Nova Scotia by Rita Joe (Mi’kmaq) appear in the June, 1973 issue. In the decade before her *The Poems of Rita Joe* (1978) was published, Joe sent her writing to newspapers across Canada in the Indian Press, most notably in the *Micmac News*, where she had a monthly column titled “Here and There in Eskasoni” that she used to tell traditional Mi’kmaq stories. She describes the experience of having her first poem published in a local Mi’kmaq newspaper: “They printed it, and, oh, I got such feedback—I got letters and fan mail and people wrote to the newspaper and commented on my writing. So I wrote more stories and poems and articles” (*Song* 102). For Joe, forums like the *Micmac News* provided not only an outlet for writing, but something like a positive feedback loop between audience and creative expression that inspired her to continue producing and disseminating her poetry. Her two poems published in *Nesika*, and unpublished in any of her books of poetry, speak to some of the wider currents of these creative relationships.

Commemoration of the death of Pauline Johnson

VANCOUVER — Sixty years ago, Canada lost one of her better known native poets when Emily Pauline Johnson died of tuberculosis in this town.

And, according to her wishes, she was cremated and her ashes spread at the base of Siwash rock in Vancouver's Stanley Park.

Her memory is far from dead, though, as this recent message from her home reserve shows:

"Greetings from Chief Richard Isaac and the Six Nations Council of the Six Nations Indian Reserve in Ontario through the students of St. John's College, Brantford, Ontario.

"May we join with you in the commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee of the death of E. Pauline Johnson who was born on the Six Nations Indian Reserve in Ontario and died in your fair province."

Born in 1862, she was educated by private tutors and later at the Brantford Model School.

While on a visit to England in 1894, she published her first book of poems, "The White Wampum" which was well received.

Other books she published include two books of poetry; "Canadian Born" and "Flint and Feathers", and, two fiction; "Shaganappi" and "The Moccasin Maker."

Her father was George Henry M. Johnson, a full blood Mohawk chief and her mother was Emily S. Howells, an Englishwoman.

Many of her poems such as "The Song My Paddie Sings" are familiar to many generations of Canadian school children.

Run-away success at Fraser Valley Chautauqua Days

CHILLIWACK — Indian arts, crafts, and industry were a run-away success during the 10 days of Chautauqua in mid-May.

The Indian displays included blankets, most of which were made by Indian people of Chilliwack Valley; two canoes; beadwork from Chilliwack and Vancouver Island; carving; leatherwork.

Among those who exhibited works is artist Andre Redman from Ontario who has settled in the Fraser Valley.

The displays were co-ordinated by Irene James and Mrs. Theresa Jimmie.

Mohawk golfer visits B.C.

Joe Horn, a Mohawk Indian from Quebec, is unique in the Canadian golf tour. Not because he is the only full-blooded Indian playing tour golf but because he doesn't have any illusions about making it rich in golf tournaments.

"I don't expect to do that well on the tour," he admits. "I need much more exposure to competition."

In Vancouver recently to take part in the \$15,000 Peter Jackson B.C. Open, Joe said that he plans to divide his working years between golf and working as an iron worker on the tall skyscrapers in New York.

The self-taught golf rookie says his philosophy in working as high off the ground as 60 storeys is that

Chief Dan George

He was born in the year 1899, on the corner of Canada, by the sea. This man who lives for the rights of our people, a spokesman dependence free,

That being an Indian is a privilege, that time cannot erase, Being widely known across the country, whose words continue to amaze, It is the same as long as Canada shall be, Good people, help yourselves, help your race, and be free, This man loves his country, never dismissing his beloved land, Living the same as always and the proud feeling to be a man, He's seen more than most, lived long, and will live ages more, Loving Burrard Reserve No. 3, along Vancouver's shore, He's never had much money, what he earned, given it away, To someone less fortunate, than he is, for his is made that way, His love for animals never exceeding his love for humans, This dignity he has brought his people, the Canadian Indian, Dan George has met famous people, been to their homes to see, But he's happiest at his simple cottage, at Reserve Number 3, Time for him is expressed as one straight line, A man not with many words, but he that hears, miss not one, His famous speeches though truthful, will be there always, This is the man better known as "old lodge skins" on film, In the famous role, "Little Big Man", having acted to the best of his skill, He's made us proud just to be men, identities not lost, Because of this humble quiet man, whose life I never knew, Just someone I heard about and seen the rugged face so true, It is as they say, erosions of time have made it beautiful to see, An Indian in this modern age, a man searching for new destinies.

By Mrs. Rita Joe, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

Chief Thunderbird

Chief Thunderbird of Tsartlip Reserve, Baptiste Paul born was given this name, Wrestling his profession, countries and people to serve, Onto great fame, He saw many Lands, served many races, Was presented to Queen Mother Elizabeth, Winning hearts and her graces, Loving his profession, a natural celebrity As his love for people, states quite clearly Caring deeply, Remembering tales of where he's been, Telling of miles of orchid fields, Of what he's seen, Where ever he went, as an Indian he shared, In a match main event, wrestling a fame Some people thought him wild, unnamed Sometimes letting out a war whoop, Exciting his fans Part of entertaining Indian, drawing crowds, Then a sad inevitable happened, Injuries at last came, Now his memories stand of a man too good, No man to fill his moccasins, Or where he stood, I know not this man, just what I read, But being from this land, and as a Indian Being himself a legend, I serve him this memorial, So a memory will stand as a great Canadian.

By Mrs. Rita Joe, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

Why did he change?

Why Did He Change? Why . . . the question is asked, By his people, his brother, What brought upon his evil? What makes him hate? His mind dizzy with fire-water.

Why the change? Not long ago, a little boy, Now a man, With a hurt pride, He's an Indian.

And we ask Who taught the hate? Who gave us your so-called faith? God! Is there one for us? He made you, me . . . and . . . him . . . He's an Indian.

The change was you . . . If there was love . . . he would love, If there was brotherhood . . . he would be your brother, If there was kindness . . . he'd learn to be kind, Judge him not by his colour, Judge him like a man, Let everyone unite . . . as one.

Debbie Fortier, Age 16 North Thompson Band, Chu-Chua, B.C.

Poetry O Wounded Knee

Dedicated to my dear friend, Chief Dan George, in Peace, Love, and Brotherhood

I am a person, A living human being, Look not upon my shadow, My flesh is to be seen. Mighty thunder voiced to be, Changing wind of Wounded Knee, Gather strong our spirits be, Voice of thunder, O' Wounded Knee.

We are a people, A Part of this creation, Give back the Pride and Honour, We had once as a nation.

Mighty thunder voiced to be, Changing wind of Wounded Knee, Gather strong our spirits be, Voice of thunder, O' Wounded Knee. By Lelan Shaffer, c 1973.

A E S T' E K W E L E S H K W E N T' K W S H E N (O' WOUNDED KNEE)

St'eImex chan, Ayne'xw i'7imesh ste'Imexw, Haw shevw n'lihes tin k'nikin'xni kw'akw'ch tewx, Tin shlikw na wa exw'fawiz.

Ili'm i'ninyaxa7n7a enkwe'ten na na7, Yiyelke'n spali'm ti'a Est'e'kwelesh Kweni'kwshen, Ke'xwen i7i'm ti welh ay'ne'xw chet, Nakwe'ten ti'a ininy'a'xa7n A Est'e'kwelesh Kweni'kwshen.

St'eImex chant, Esk'ek'u' ti na xi'tem, Ka'natsuis kya kwe'tsi mets'enti'n menal'a'nen chet, Wat7 i7p'is fat kwi'nachu'xw tims' kwi hiy' u'xwumixw.

Ili'm i'ninyaxa7n7a enkwe'ten na na7, Yiyelke'n spali'm ti'a Est'e'kwelesh Kweni'kwshen, Ke'xwen i7i'm ti welh ay'ne'xw chet, Nakwe'ten ti'a ininy'a'xa7n A Est'e'kwelesh Kweni'kwshen. Translation from English to the Squamish language by Louie Miranda.

You are my brother

You Are My Brother Are you my brother? Have you the heart? If you shall be, Can you look at me, And smile? Or turn away in shame?

For shame you shall feel. Your heart, not within. You are my brother. I feel for you, as all the others. I look down upon you, As a man, Not a symbol. Let kindness rule your heart. Let us unite as one family. You are my brother. My father's son.

Debbie Fortier, Chu-Chua, B.C.

My impressions

My Impressions Me, I am an Indian. In which I'm very proud to say! I bead and knit. Oh how I love the Indians' way, The Indians' way of life.

Now . . . most whites, They don't want to stop and think, To them we're no good and can't achieve. We're drunks and barely on the brink. Now this I can't believe!

I am human! I have feelings and the ability The ability to learn the things that I must I won't hide any hurt or appreciation. I hope to have the courage to accept the challenge And help keep our traditional fires burning.

We are trying and we're succeeding, But most important we have got to be willing! To accept one another Without being hateful or distrustful!

Charlene LaFortune, Westholme, B.C.

Figure 7: Poetry spread in June 1973 issue of Nesika (Credit: Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs)

Whereas *Poems of Rita Joe* centres on Joe's experiences of exclusion and abuse, combatting stereotypes in her characteristically measured tone and emerging from a distinctively Mi'kmaq epistemological and linguistic context, her poems in *Nesika* are songs of praise for Indigenous performers local to the West Coast, and also for a BC readership. "Chief Dan George" honours the Tselil-Waututh artist and poet, famous Canada-wide as a film star but who for Joe is a "man who lives for the rights of our people, a spokesman dependence free" (8). The poem speaks from Joe's present

position as a writer in one corner of the country to the Chief “born in the year 1899, on the corner of Canada, by the sea,” praising him for “the dignity he has brought his people, the Canadian Indian”:

He’s made us proud just to be men, identities not lost,
Because of this humble quiet man, whose life I never knew,
Just someone I heard about and seen the rugged face so true,
It is as they say, erosions of time have made it beautiful to see,
An Indian in this modern age, a man searching for new destinies (8)

His literary celebrity, and the imaginative distance traveled by Joe to praise a man “whose life [she] never knew,” are both, interestingly, mirrored in *Nesika* when shifting focus from the poem to its appearance on the printed page. “Chief Dan George” appears alongside an article commemorating the diamond jubilee of the death of Mohawk poet E. Pauline Johnson/Tekahionwake, born on the Six Nations Reserve on the Grand River in Ontario and inurned in Vancouver’s Stanley Park.

Similarly, “Chief Thunderbird” is a memorial poem for Jean Baptiste Paul, the internationally famous wrestler and hereditary Chief of the Tsartlip First Nation in Saanich territory on Vancouver Island, who had died in 1966. Joe honours Chief Thunderbird for winning fame and loving his people as much as his career, “Exciting his fans” internationally but always “as an Indian”:

I know not this man, just what I read,
But being from this land, and as a Indian
Being himself a legend,
I serve him this memorial,
So a memory will stand as a great Canadian. (8)

In her autobiography, Joe says that when she started writing, she “would write a story about someone I admired and send it to the paper. I learned to write in a loving and honourable way about people ... Most of the time, I would write about someone who moved me” (*Song* 108). Both of her poems in *Nesika* are stories of this type, acknowledging the national influence of West Coast celebrities like Chief Dan George and Chief Thunderbird as models and sources of pride that moved an emerging poet in Nova Scotia to pick up a pen and write. As a forum of publishing that facilitated these kinds of cross-national conversations, *Nesika* was in turn not only a venue where Joe could write to honour her

subjects for an audience of their communities, but also a space where Indigenous readers in BC could access the early work of one of the most inspirational Indigenous poets in Canada.

In early 1975, just before the publishing of *Nesika* was disrupted by the UBCIC's rejection of funding, a creative column began appearing from Gilbert Oskaboose (Anishinaabe), a writer and journalist from the Serpent River First Nation in northern Ontario whose work appeared across the Indian Press. Known simply as "Oskaboose" in *Nesika*, his first column took the form of a satirical "quiz" created in response to the fact that "[s]ince 1492, when our fair land was first 'discovered' by a wayward Italian, Indians have been the subject of endless detailed studies, questionnaires, quizzes, etc. ad nauseum" (3). The comical "QUIZ FOR INDIANS – by an Indian" includes questions like:

3. The term 'Kemo Sabe' means:
 - (a) Gimme the salve
 - (b) Elementary, my dear Ranger
 - (c) you! Whiteman; or
 - (d) @#&&%# you! White man; or
 - (e) none of the above (3)

The humorous deconstruction of stereotypes in the "Quiz" was followed the next month by "The Welcome," a short narrative that the *Nesika* editors describe as keeping with Oskaboose's sense of social justice in combination with humour: "If you're a product of residential school you'll see," suggests the editorial introduction (3). The opening lines of "The Welcome" begin:

I saw it coming, but I really couldn't believe it was happening. The Blackrobe's open hand came up, drifted through a lazy semi-circle, and exploded violently in my face. The blow slammed me, dazed and shaken, into the rough cloister wall and blood spurted from my nose and mouth.

"Hindian lankquitch iss verboten; you will not speek hit again." (3)

"The Welcome" is based on Oskaboose's experience being delivered to Garnier residential school as an excited young boy hungry for knowledge and the "magic" of Western education. It recounts his fears of leaving his father to the moment of meeting a Jesuit priest at the school gates, who the boy mistakes as a "Chief" on account of his flowing robes and noble appearance. The story's final words return to the violent "welcome" he receives in its opening: "Not wishing to show my own small fears,

nor to appear overly eager to meet him, I moved slowly forward, and in my most solemn voice extended the traditional Ojibway greeting for strangers. I saw the Blackrobe's open hand come up..." (3).

Oskaboose's short residential school narrative long pre-dates the publication Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen* (1998), which opened mainstream attention to the horrors of residential schooling, and also Basil Johnston's *Indian School Days* (1988)—also focused on Garnier Residential School—which, despite Johnston's decision not to reveal the sexual violence of his own experiences,¹⁰⁰ “helped mobilize a collective response to these institutions” (Rymhs, “A Residential” 58). Indeed, it is difficult to imagine “The Welcome” being published at all in the mainstream press in 1975, let alone as a funny story. Oskaboose's short narrative is at once more violent but also more explicitly humorous than the Johnston's relatively measured *Indian School Days*, both mocking the German-accented Jesuit priests who become caricatures of false nobility, but also bookending the circular narrative by foregrounding the visceral experience of physical abuse. Johnston's memoirs that became *Indian School Days* were originally published in the late 1970s in another Indigenous newsletter, *The Ontario Indian*, and according to Johnston were intended not to “empower” anyone” but to “amuse the readers” of that newspaper, “to make people smile, chuckle, chortle, guffaw...” (qtd. in McKegney, *Magic* 272). Yet if the humour in *Indian School Days* was ultimately accessible, if not uncomfortable, for white readers, Oskaboose's narrative couples emotional pain and violence with humour in ways that, as the editors of *Nesika* note, require first-hand experience of residential schools to share in the laughter. Kristina Bidwell notes that Indigenous writers use humour not only as a coping mechanism for survival, but for its social function that can both complicate and consolidate, or “shore up,” community (Fagan, “Teasing” 25). The particular community that Oskaboose speaks to here is again “national” in scope,

¹⁰⁰ Johnston later explained this decision and elaborated on his experiences in the school not represented in *Indian School Days* in his 2007 foreword to Sam McKegney's *Magic Weapons: Aboriginal Writers Remaking Community After Residential Schools*.

writing from Northern Ontario to readers in BC with shared experience of the violence of residential schools. In 1988, when the schools had been largely phased out and mainstream Canada had begun the unfinished project of recognizing and reckoning with their legacy—and the same year *Indian School Days* was published—Oskaboose submitted “The Welcome” to a short story contest in the *Toronto Star*, and won. That both Johnston and Oskaboose published their narratives years earlier in the Indian Press, however, exemplifies how publishing mediums run for and by Indigenous peoples allowed writers to communicate subjects unavailable, perhaps unimaginable, in mainstream literary channels at that time.

Conclusion

This chapter began with the question of how the political and material conditions following the White Paper contributed not just to a groundswell of Indigenous writing by individual authors, but to the formation of an Indigenous community of writers. As a case study of one publishing medium within a widespread and alternative Indigenous press arising in the early 1970s, *Nesika* and provides a way of understanding these conditions beyond a familiar and more restricted literary history that frames the Indigenous literary ‘Renaissance’ in Canada primarily in terms of the book. To be clear, this is not to argue for a revisionist historical analysis that discounts the profound impact of a book like Campbell’s *Halfbreed*. Daniel David Moses (Delaware) has echoed many Indigenous writers in Canada by calling Campbell the “Mother of Us All.”¹⁰¹ In a collaboratively authored article focusing on the critical reception of *Halfbreed*, Moses’s maternal expression is framed as one of literary kinship—of connection and community between Indigenous writers who have envisioned a “shared activity and purpose with Campbell” (Fagan et al. 267). Against critical idioms that have focused predominantly on questions of identity and colonization in Campbell’s work, for Indigenous writers, the real “influence” of *Halfbreed* has been not only its model of “resistance,” but “its ability to connect Aboriginal people together”

¹⁰¹ Hartmut Lutz attributes this statement to Moses in a headnote to his interview with Campbell (41) and in discussion with Lenore Keeshig-Tobias (83) in his book *Contemporary Challenges: Conversations with Canadian Native Authors*.

(268). These scholars view this literary kinship as an example of Lisa Brooks's notion of a historically specific "intertribalism" based on communication and relations that take shape not only in the circulation of written texts, but between writers themselves in particular social and political contexts.

Further expanding the literary history of the Indigenous literary Renaissance to account for the influence of those forums of exchange that emerged from the alternative Indigenous press enables a wider view of the networks of writing that created spaces of literary community. Brooks's literary historical work argues that the "texts of the [US] northeastern Native tradition emerged from within [an] indigenous space of exchange, not, as is often portrayed, from displaced Indian individuals reflecting on the state of their lives in relation to the colonial world" (254). While the same is certainly true of Indigenous writing across Canada, criticism has overwhelmingly focused on the influence of individual authors and texts rather than the traditions of exchange and communication from which such texts emerged. Moreover, as Ruffo reminds of the growing Indigenous literary "voice" in Canada during the post-White Paper era, "Creativity doesn't just happen. It had been there all along just waiting to be expressed and shared in whatever language was available" (190). What the flow of funds to Indigenous political organizations under multiculturalism following the White Paper helped establish were material conditions in which new print forums of exchange could emerge as sites for creative expression to be communicated and shared, rapidly and widely, regionally and nation-wide.

Yet the emergence of such writing from the specific political histories of organizations such as the UBCIC raised questions about how literary and political communities formed in relation. The poetry discussed in this chapter points to a multifaceted relationship between the political organizations established during an activist era of wide-scale Indigenous nationalism—organizations in some cases built on governance defined by structures of unity rooted in differentiated identities—and the writing produced within the print culture arising from this movement. Armstrong notes that

these papers were instrumental in engendering a literary movement parallel to or perhaps occurring as one of the vehicles in the 'Indian Movement.' Certainly such works allowed access

to subjects not in the common texts of immigrant literatures. I think now that the political inclination of such publications almost totally influenced the subject matter of this 'Indian Writing,' though at the time I believed that freedom to write and publish such 'resistance' writing was the reason such magazines were in print. ("Four" xviii)

In *The Unjust Society*, Harold Cardinal argued that the purpose of creating robust provincial and national Indigenous political organizations was not only to more effectively and pragmatically mobilize in response to threats like the White Paper, but also in "restoring and revitalizing a sense of direction ... The white man in the last century has effectively killed the sense of worth in the Indian ... The political organization must be the core of an effort to redefine the word *Indian* in such a way that our people can begin to develop a positive sense of identity" (139). Certainly, these objectives of pride and renewal were at the forefront of the UBCIC's publications, made explicit in *Unity's* initial mandate as a "vehicle strength" for readers to take pride in their 'Indianness.'" And while much of the poetry appearing in *Nesika* resonates with these political objectives, the forum of diverse creative writing it created for conveying the unique experiences, cultural expressions, and discrepant subjects of variously situated Indigenous peoples attests to the fact that the writerly exchange in *Nesika* is not simply reducible to its medium's political mandate, or with any homogenizing claims to pan-Indian identity in writing. Just as the UBCIC's "unity" was challenged by non-Status Indians and disaffected tribal governments in the early 1970s, poets in *Nesika* provided critical perspectives on the "Indian Movement," or articulated diverse subjects such as love, family, loss, and broken relationships that reflected the full range of creative responses to individual and communal Indigenous subjectivity at a heady political moment.

The specific case of *Nesika* and its history with the UBCIC should thus be understood as just one historically, spatially, and politically specific example of the networks of intertribal exchange occurring in dozens of similar publications contributing to the rise of Indigenous writing across Canada. In BC alone, *The Indian Voice*, the newspaper published contemporaneously by the BC Indian Homemakers' Association (BCIHA)—the first Indigenous provincial women's association—suggests the discrepant motivations and conditions of production characterizing such publishing media. In her

examination of political and journalistic writing in *The Indian Voice*, Patricia Barkaskas argues that the BCIIHA's print activism imagined "community" in ways that contested the male-dominated politics of the UBCIC, focusing on gendered critiques of representation and the limitations of "Indianness" imposed particularly on women and children excluded by Indian Act definitions of identity. While both women and children published literature regularly in *Nesika*, a comparative analysis of these two newspapers would productively investigate how the creative writing in both publications contributed to the literary and political voice of 1970s Indigenous activism in BC. An immense archive of writers and their political, creative, and critical writing remains to be recognized in the ongoing work of recovery.

The emergence and then near disappearance of creative writing in *Nesika* also points to a significant but unexamined intersection in the histories of multiculturalism as state policy and Indigenous literature in Canada. As the next chapter will show, individual Indigenous writers received very little support through multicultural programs developed in the late 1970s aimed at supporting the literary arts specifically, because Indigenous peoples were largely invisible within multiculturalism's mandate to preserve and enhance the cultural contributions of "ethnic" immigrant Canadians. Yet the core funding for Indigenous organizations established under the Trudeau administration's early multiculturalism initiatives represented a substantial material shift in the capital arrangements between the state and Indigenous peoples. Although this funding was modelled on support for "ethnic groups," intended to foster civic participation and ease the federal government's administrative responsibility to Indigenous peoples, it was effectively mobilized by Indigenous peoples themselves in support of anti-colonial nationalism and self-determination in spheres of public policy, law, land claims, and communications, including through literature. In a 1995 article, Margery Fee asked "What Use is Ethnicity to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada?" to question whether "ethnicity," as a category of identity "used" either to conceptualize Indigenous identity in Canadian political discourse or as a concept "deployed" by Indigenous writers themselves, had any utility to Indigenous anti-colonial struggles for

liberation. For Fee, at that time, ethnicity was not particularly “useful,” given Indigenous politics were most often framed through discourses of collective nationhood, citizenship, and sovereignty:

“Ethnicity, although obviously relevant at many levels, is not useful in political negotiations to a group primarily interested in constructing a pan-Aboriginal nationalism that focuses on what these peoples have in common, rather than on their ethno-linguistic differences” (268). This is true, to the extent that ethnicity has little bearing on political/legal debates over land and rights. But it has been my contention that the history of Indigenous print like *Nesika* and other communications media whose publishing was largely supported by ethnicity-oriented multicultural policy developments suggests a strategic utilization of ethnicity in support of constructing precisely this kind of pan-Indigenous nationalism.

As Shannon Avison argues, the irony of this arrangement was that unlike the mainstream press, which operates in most cases at financial arm’s-length from the government and political institutions it covers, “the example of Aboriginal newspapers was extraordinary since these newspapers were being supported materially, and in most cases were completely dependent, on the same authorities that they hoped to influence through the formation and dissemination of public opinion” (132). The history of the UBCIC provides a stark account of the realities of this funding relationship, as the rejection of core funds in 1975 motivated by the *political* objective of self-determination and a politics of refusal, severely affected a robust forum of literary expression and *cultural* self-determination.

In Avison’s analysis, the tight link between the Indian Press and its government funding structures resulted in the “feudalization” of the mass mediated Indigenous public sphere by the state that supported its emergence. From a strictly political perspective, this may have been the case. While the core model made significant new funding available for organization and communication under the umbrella of multiculturalism, the shifts in policy never altered the underlying arrangements of power and administration in the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state—nor were they intended to do so. Yet clearly, the legacy of such sites of creative expression extend beyond their

specific political histories, and should also be understood in terms of the networks of exchange they created and the enduring influence of publications like *Nesika* that connected a growing community of writers in ways previously unavailable. I am here reminded of the argument made by M NourbeSe Philip: “Multiculturalism may have been a cynical ploy by Liberal politicians to address the balances of power in Canada, but the creativity and inventiveness of the people in being able to turn to their advantage policies that may not have their interests at heart can never be underestimated” (“Signifying” 10). The literary history of the Indian press is a compelling reminder of how the creative agency of the people can transform the objectives of policy on the ground and in praxis.

PART 2: POLITICAL ECONOMY, PEDAGOGY, REPRESENTATION

Introduction to Part 2: “The Powerful but Subtle Cement” for the Mosaic

A national literature is an essential element in the formation of national character. It is not merely the record of a country’s mental progress: it is the expression of its intellectual life, the bond of national unity, and the guide of national energy.

—Edward Hartley Dewart, “Introductory Essay,” *Selections from Canadian Poets* (1864)

Literature, of course, represents an essential element of a nation’s heritage. For Canada to have a truly Canadian culture, our literature must be multicultural in its inspiration, in its products, in its study, and in its growth.

—*Cultures Canada*, Newsletter of the Multiculturalism Directorate, Secretary of State (1984)

“Here are our voices: Who will hear?”

—Emma LaRocque, Preface to *Writing the Circle: Native Women of Western Canada* (1990)

My first epigraph, written by the Irish Canadian Methodist minister Edward Hartley Dewart in his introduction to the first major anthology of Canadian literature, is among the most oft-cited quotes in the history of Canadian letters. As Gordon Roper summarized over a century later in *Read Canadian* (1972)—a different landmark of nationalist literary criticism published just after the Centennial, the year Margaret Atwood published *Survival*—Dewart’s is a “classical argument for the need of a national literature to help build a sense of national identity” (210). Despite the sermonic gravitas of its imperative rhetoric, Dewart’s argument is indeed classical, a succinct expression of the close linkage between literature and nation subtending the Romantic philosophy that dominated his time. By 2003, Adam Carter would note the “undeniably discredited, atavistic ring” to Dewart’s words in the context of a postmodern, postcolonial, and multicultural Canada, where the belief that a “national character” could be found in Canadian literature appears “outmoded,” a relic of the “Romantic period, of which we have now divested ourselves” (6). My second epigraph, published in 1984 in *Cultures Canada*, the newsletter of the Department of the Secretary of State’s multiculturalism directorate, is from an article promoting the directorate’s Writing and Publications Program (WPP), the federal grants program initiated in 1977 and designed to support multicultural literature specifically. Its

author is uncredited, and to my knowledge it has not been cited anywhere. That it could have been written by Dewart, if not for some twelve decades of historical distance, points to the durability of longstanding beliefs about the political function of literature in relation to nation-building that dominated Dewart's time—beliefs that the federal government shared and mobilized through cultural funding programs like the WPP in order to promote national multiculturalism.

Part 2 routes this dissertation's political and literary inquiry into the history of multiculturalism and Indigeneity in Canada primarily through an examination of the genre of the anthology. By way of introduction to the interlocking set of concerns with political economy, nationalist pedagogy, and collective representation I bring to the genre in this section, I want to use these epigraphs to think through the development of what I call *multicultural literary nationalism* in Canada. In the following three chapters, I examine the institutionalization of multiculturalism within the discipline of Canadian literature in the 1980s and 1990s, and in particular within the institution of the national anthology as a mode of disciplinary production. In Chapter 3, I explain why the story of multiculturalism's growing visibility and critical ascendancy in Canadian literature is one that can't be told without attention to the understudied genre of the anthology. In Chapters 4 and 5, I turn to examine the representation of Indigenous writing in two formative "multicultural" anthologies of the 1990s: *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990) and *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* (1996). In Part 2, then, my attention turns from the political history of multicultural nationalism and the effects of multiculturalism policy on the material *production* of Indigenous literary arts in Canada during the early Trudeau-era—at which time Indigenous literature was not regularly considered "Canadian," or considered, period—towards mapping a historical perspective of the evolving *construction* of Indigenous writing as "multicultural" Canadian literature, particularly within the national anthology as a collective form. If, as I have argued to this point, the state's approach to bureaucratically managing Indigenous difference during the early years of multiculturalism participated in a process that Eva Mackey

describes as “making the ‘Indians’ ethnic,” Part 2 turns to the anthology in order to ask what part Canadian literary study has played in making Indigenous literatures “multicultural.”

Before shifting in time and genre, I will briefly summarize some of the threads from Part 1 that I pick up in what follows. In Chapter 1, my historical overview of multiculturalism through the lenses of policy, law, and political philosophy mapped the ambiguities and politics of colonial disavowal through which liberal multiculturalism evolved “officially” and became central to Canada’s national identity while obscuring Indigenous sovereignty. As I argued, Indigenous peoples have been largely “in/visible” minorities in multiculturalism’s official history, a political process that in the early years of multicultural policy-making involved misrecognizing and reframing Indigenous difference as ethnocultural difference, and supporting limited “cultural” endeavors through channels similar to those developed for immigrant groups deemed conducive to state management. In Chapter 2, and following the money, I examined some of the publishing in Indigenous newsletters that was largely supported by ethnicity-oriented multicultural policy, arguing not only for the relevance of this literature and its recovery to an expanded understanding of Indigenous literary history, but for the material significance of multicultural policy to the conditions of its production. Yet, if the poetry in newspapers like *Nesika* helps us to understand “where the voice was coming from” (Ruffo), I will use my third epigraph, and Emma LaRocque’s question posed in her preface to *Writing the Circle*—an important early anthology of Indigenous women’s writing—as a shorthand for the void of mainstream recognition of Indigenous literatures in Canada that existed into her time of writing in 1990. As W.H. New put it that same year, in the title of his editorial introduction to *Native Writers and Canadian Writing*, Canadian criticism was still very much “Learning to Listen” to Indigenous voices, if they were heard at all.

The year 1990, as I show in Chapter 3, is a particularly significant moment for both the history of Indigenous literature and the history of multiculturalism’s institutionalization in the field of Canadian literature. As Indigenous writers began receiving mainstream recognition and Indigenous

literature as a discipline achieved a nascent institutional legitimacy, the discourse of multiculturalism gained critical currency in Canadian literary studies in the years surrounding the 1988 Multiculturalism Act. The 1990 publication of *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions*, the first explicitly “multicultural” anthology of Canadian literature, and a text published with a grant-in-aid from the multiculturalism directorate’s WPP, is a formative moment in this history of multiculturalism’s institutionalization. “The writing of Canada’s ‘other’ cultures first became visible through the creation of subgroup literary anthologies” (“Criticism” 259), states Donna Bennett, and the publication of the many so-called “ethnic” anthologies that helped create this visibility is part of the complicated legacy of state multiculturalism’s funding interventions in the field of publishing. In Chapter 3, I examine the political economy of this legacy and the gradual “mainstreaming” of multiculturalism in the anthology form as part of a broader literary historical inquiry into the national anthology genre’s Canadian history.

Part of that chapter’s work is to underscore how the canons of Canadian literature produced and reproduced in mainstream national anthologies remained ideologically yoked to nineteenth-century Romantic ideals of cultural nationalism that, transplanted to the settler-colonial context of Canada by anthologists like Dewart, have been profoundly hostile to both Indigenous and multicultural difference. Indeed, as an urtext of English Canadian literary nationalism, Dewart’s *Selections* would seem an unlikely a point of entry for a discussion of either multicultural or Indigenous writing. In terms of its content, it is. As Alexander Hart notes, Dewart’s vision of a national literature was “determined by his Methodist, Anglo-centric, Upper Canadian perspective,” and the poetry he gathered in his anthology as evidence of Canada’s maturing civilization was written exclusively by white writers, predominantly by men, and entirely in English. In short: “His was a monocultural, not a multicultural, point of view” (311). And his selections, intended to verify the nation’s existence through its literature and to cultivate local interest in what he called “indigenous literary productions” (x), included no Indigenous-authored writing. Pressing the “claims of native literature” to be made in Canada (x), Dewart was also staking a

literary claim to Native land on behalf of Canada, as Margery Fee argues in *Literary Land Claims*. Fee turns to the erasure—whether literal or imagined—of Indigenous peoples and writing from such early anthologies as Dewart’s *Selections* and William Douw Lighthall’s *Songs of The Great Dominion* (1889) to show how the early collections that shaped Canadian literature’s formation participated in the colonial project by naturalizing settler self-indigenization in a “New” world in need of its own native literature. As I show in Chapter 3, the legacy of Romantic literary nationalism and the ethnocentric Anglo ideals upon which the idea of a “national character” has historically rested in Canada remained an influential ideological force in national anthologies during CanLit’s consolidation as a discipline in the 1970s, and indeed well into the 1990s. One of the reasons why the 1990 publication *Other Solitudes* represents a significant—albeit significantly contentious—intervention within this history is precisely because it sought to rethink the canon by turning to official multiculturalism in order to rearticulate the nation’s literature itself as “multicultural.”

Returning to my epigraphs, then: how should we read the remarkable similarity, but also the important distinctions, of these two statements, distanced as they are by more than a century, speaking to radically different social contexts, and spoken from very different positions of political authority? Certainly, the notion proffered by Dewart that a great literature could provide evidence of a nation’s existence—and that the anthology served as an ideal book genre to gather and materialize that evidence—was unique neither to his geopolitical context in Canada nor to the historical moment of his writing. Dewart’s conviction that a national literature could unify the people culturally and reveal Canada’s distinctive characteristics was inspired by the examples he glimpsed in those “older countries of the world”—in Europe, and America—where it was already “part of the patriotism of the people to honour and love” the “names of distinguished poets, enshrined in the national heart, [as] the watchwords of national union” (ix). “It may be fairly questioned,” he continued, “whether the whole range of history presents the spectacle of a people firmly united politically, without the subtle but

powerful cement of a patriotic literature” (ix). In Canada, Dewart’s argument had already been made years before *Selections* by literary nationalists such as Thomas D’arcy McGee, who in 1857 put it more simply in one of his editorials in *The New Era* pushing for the development of a Canadian literature—“no national literature, no national life” (“A National”). The same argument provided the rationale for greater state patronage of Canadian culture in the mid-twentieth century in the protectionist recommendations made by the Massey Commission, which reported in 1951 that “a national literature ... is the greatest of all forces making for national unity” (225); and it later motivated the cultural nationalism of much English Canadian thematic criticism and anthology production that supported the institutionalization of Canadian literature into the 1970s. The clichéd expression in *Cultures Canada* (“Literature, *of course*, represents an essential element...”) suggests the extent to which Dewart’s argument for the explicit connection between nation and national literature remained in the mid-1980s not an argument needing to be made at all, but a popular truism.

Still, that his argument might one day become a thesis for the Canadian government’s multiculturalism directorate would have been difficult for Dewart to envision. In 1864, a federal government did not yet exist in Canada, and neither had the word “multiculturalism” been invented. His belief was that the nation existed in advance of the state that might soon come to govern it, and that this nation could be located in—even *formed* by—Canada’s literature. For Romantic nationalists, the latter is part of what made possible the former. Literature, as the voice of the people, expressed the distinctive features of a national community and their shared ethnoculture; his faith as an anthology editor was that collecting and disseminating that voice would contribute to the process of unifying a nation that had yet to consolidate politically. By the 1980s, however, long after the Canadian state had established itself politically, nationalism in Canada had become officially multicultural, and the Romantic notion of an organic relationship between cultural nation and political state had been both amplified and transformed by significant state interventions and patronage of national culture. And, in

the work of its multiculturalism programs like the WPP, the government set out to actively cultivate a “multicultural literature” as the cultural embodiment of its own national political ideal. By this point in the evolution of state multiculturalism, then, the Canadian government had become firmly invested—both ideologically and financially—in the belief that literary writing and publishing played a crucial role in the promotion of national multiculturalism; and indeed, to the extent that at that time, in the lead-up to the Multiculturalism Act, multiculturalism becoming the privileged signifier of Canadian identity, in verifying it as the foundation of what Dewart called “national character.” In the distance between my epigraphs, then, not only had national culture become national *cultures*, but the location of culture had shifted—once the purview of the people, cultivating a “truly Canadian” multicultural literature had become a responsibility of the state.

In Chapter 1, I traced how federal multiculturalism’s priorities had shifted in the 1980s away from the so-called “song and dance” model of 1970s policy-making, designed to support heritage cultures and preserve ethnic diversity, toward a more systemic commitment to promoting equity within legislation and Canadian public institutions through anti-racist programming and public education. As I argued in that chapter, “mainstreaming” multiculturalism or “multiculturalizing” Canada—the government’s preferred verbiage—was not only a legislative priority, but a deeply pedagogical undertaking on the nation-state’s part, requiring the education of not only public institutions specifically but also the Canadian public generally. Multiculturalism had moved from a fringe policy with limited assistance for promoting the mosaic to the heart of official Canadian national identity—a move that required promoting the policy itself as much as the rights of those it ostensibly existed to represent. As it evolved and rose to prominence under the Mulroney government’s administration in the 1980s, multiculturalism became at once more visible—a key Canadian export and symbol of the nation’s distinctive approach to diversity on the global stage—and also more contentious—critiqued as an ineffectual, superficial policy from the left and as a threat to national unity by conservatives. The

funding of literature and other creative arts thus became a key part of the pedagogical project of promoting multiculturalism throughout the 1980s.

The similarity between my epigraphs is thus more than stylistic; it strikes to the heart of enduring beliefs about what literature can do in the political service of the nation. Whereas Dewart set out in his anthology to “rescue from oblivion some of the floating pieces of Canadian authorship worthy of preservation in a more permanent form” (vii), the multiculturalism directorate’s WPP funded literature based on a belief “that printed material stands as a permanent statement” of multiculturalism, and to “ensure that the nation’s diversity is properly reflected in this aspect [literature] of Canadian cultural life” (“Programme” 1). Prior to Confederation, Dewart’s argument was that Canadians with aspirations toward nationhood should take their literature seriously, inasmuch as the nation to be unified could be discovered in its writing. In 1984, the state’s position was that the existing “multicultural” nature of Canadian writing must now be seen as “worthy of serious consideration” and essential to expressing the nation’s distinctive “heritage”: supporting and promoting a diverse literature will move Canada “one step closer” toward multiculturalism’s “complete acceptance in terms of school and university curricula, and the world of publishing and books” (“Ottawa” 2). The subtle shift from national “character” to national “heritage” in these epigraphs is significant in this respect. The Multiculturalism Act, “An Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada,” was legislated to enshrine a policy that recognized “the multicultural heritage of Canadians” as an already existing ideal. The national character no longer needed to be “formed,” but rather to be *preserved, enhanced,* and widely recognized—literature could function as “the subtle but powerful cement” for promoting the mosaic.

In Chapter 4, I read Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond’s *Other Solitudes* as an anthology that manifests this state-driven ideology of multicultural literary nationalism, and with it the contradictory erasures of Indigenous peoples and colonial history manifested in statist multiculturalism

I outlined in Chapter 1. As a text that derives its definition of multicultural *literature* directly from multicultural *policy* and the discursive authority of the state, *Other Solitudes* intentionally excludes Indigenous writing from its collection. In doing so, it confronts what Scott Toguri McFarlane calls the “crisis of representation with respect to aboriginality” in the Multiculturalism Act, which, through its own specific exclusions of Indigenous peoples, “provid[es] a rationale for the operation of the liberal nation while at the same time obscuring a colonialist history of violence” (2).

It is an arresting fact of Canadian literary history that it was not until 1996, with the publication of Smaro Kamboureli’s *Making a Difference*, that a major national anthology of Canadian literature included any substantial representation of contemporary Indigenous writing. By drawing Indigenous writing into its critical multicultural framework, *Making a Difference* made a considerable intervention in the history of Canadian national anthology publishing I historicize in Chapter 3. It also produced a very different rendering of “multicultural literature” than that of its most proximate anthological antecedent, *Other Solitudes*. While these two formative anthologies announce a common objective in their adjectival conjunction of “multicultural” and “Canadian” to organize the literature they collect, their editorial strategies propose entirely discrepant approaches to Indigenous representation. They offer different soundings both of what Canadian multicultural literature *is* (or *was*), as envisioned by different editors at different times with unique political and pedagogical objectives, and of how Indigenous writing relates to that expanded definition of a national literature. Taken together, my close readings of these anthologies in Chapters 4 and 5 offers a genealogical perspective into how Indigenous literatures were being imagined (or not) into the representation of CanLit as that field was being reconceived as multicultural in the 1990s, into what literary multiculturalism has made visible vis-à-vis Indigeneity and what it erases along the lines of “cultural” difference, and how these two anthologies offer conflicting and conflicted responses to such questions that continue to resonate in the present.

Chapter 3: “Unity in Diversity” and the Anthology as Paradox: Canadian Canons, National Capital, and the Mainstreaming of Literary Multiculturalism, 1972-1990

Literary genres are mutable organisms. They cohere, unravel, and reform in the tides of history because they are dependent on the historical conditions of production and reception.

—Barbara Benedict, “The Paradox of the Anthology” (2003)

[T]he issue of representational schemata and values cannot be isolated from such interlocking grids as specializations, period divisions, nationalisms, Eurocentric critical biases inflected in “professional” publication outlets ... This would include the circumscribed locations of CanLit, still largely narrated through the historical projectile of (white) Anglo-European “settler” culture.

—Roy Miki, *Broken Entries* (1998)

Contemporary multicultural literature in Canada is community-based. In its development, the anthology has been employed as a political and aesthetic form to draw attention to collective cultural causes and to bridge the separation among writers with similar ethnic backgrounds. As a means of introducing emerging trends into the mainstream and embracing writing in different genres, anthologies gathered resistant voices from all ethnic quarters.

—Georgiana Banita, “Canons of Diversity in Contemporary English-Canadian Literature” (2008)

Despite the well-known role anthologies play in the politics of canon formation, in the manufacturing and distribution of literature’s cultural capital, and in the academic teaching of literature, they remain a relatively understudied book genre amongst literary critics.¹⁰² Joe Lockard and Jillian Sandell, writing in the American context, argue that the “discrepancy between the popularity of the form and the critical attention it receives suggests that anthologies are taken for granted as an unremarkable feature of the publishing world. Yet this ‘taken for grantedness’ also masks their political and literary effects” (227). Arguably, though, it is because of an intensified awareness of these very effects, particularly since the canon came under scrutiny vis-à-vis the politics of feminism and multiculturalism during the 1980s, that anthologies remain what Jeffrey Di Leo calls “second-class citizens of the academic world” (10) in terms of the interest they receive. The genre’s overt appropriation and recruitment of literature into

¹⁰² Though this has begun to change in Canada in recent years as literary studies have turned toward the history of CanLit as an institution. Robert Lecker’s *Keepers of the Code* (2013) and edited collection *Anthologizing Canadian Literature* (2015) have helped to consolidate these discussions, particularly of national English Canadian anthologies. Several important articles and chapters have appeared on anthologies in the contexts of gender (Gerson, “The Changing Contours” and “Anthologies and the Canon”) and “minority” literatures, including Asian Canadian (see, for example, Lai, *Slanting* [Chapter 3]; Chao, “Anthologizing the Collective”; Lew, “What Do We Have in Canon?”), Black Canadian (Clarke, “Let us Compare Anthologies” and *Odysseys Home*), Indigenous (Fee, “Aboriginal”; Goldie, “Fresh Canons”), and multicultural (Kamboureli, “Canadian Ethnic Anthologies” and *Scandalous Bodies*). I draw on many of these works in what follows.

editorial rubrics; the explicit *disciplinary* function anthologies serve in defining and delimiting the canons and field they are regularly produced to represent; their reflexively utilitarian appeals to marketability and curricular incorporation: these economic, ideological, and pedagogical conditions mark the modern teaching anthology's rather transparent relationship with the evaluative authority of the institutions in which it circulates as a commodity. Such allegiances make critics uneasy—even those who continue to use anthologies (if begrudgingly) in the classroom, or prefer not to and thus become their own anthologists by compiling custom reading lists to serve their syllabi—which helps to explain why anthologies are critiqued primarily for the part they play in the institutionalization and professionalization of literary studies. They are not regularly treated as “a theoretically interesting form” in their own right whose “potential for opening up discourse has yet to be sufficiently explored,” as Sarah Lawall makes the case in the context of anthologizing World Literature (47).

One of my primary contentions in Part 2 of this project is that the institutionalization of multiculturalism within Canadian literary studies in the 1980s and 1990s cannot be understood without attending to the material work of the anthology as both a literary institution and a book form—that is, to both its institutionalizing work as part of the disciplinary apparatus that supports literary study, and its unique generic possibilities as a collective vehicle of representation whose formal logic is, paradoxically, both plural and singular. Indeed, what makes the anthology theoretically interesting in the context of multiculturalism is that it's a genre whose historical emergence and ongoing pedagogical value is contingent on the ideal(ized) premise that a diversity of textual materials might become integrated and made legible as the unified expression of a particular literary tradition—a mode of production and re-presentation in which the political utility of its form as a collection is as instructive as the contents it collects. In Canada, as elsewhere, the anthology form has long been instrumental to the construction and preservation of canons in the service of consolidating a national literature. It has

also been among the most powerful tools to open up and revise that canon, a process in which the politics and policies of multiculturalism in Canada during the 1970s and 1980s are deeply enmeshed.

To plot a literary history in Canada through the anthology genre to the year 1990 is to wade into an ocean of cultural production flowing from multiple tributaries that converge in the torrents of a discipline undergoing a protracted sea change from its headwaters in Romantic nationalism.¹⁰³ The aquatic conceptual metaphors are not incidental. Contemporary anthology history and criticism in Canada has generally been split along two alternative “streams.” On one side, the “mainstream” history of national anthologies, conceived as pan-Canadian in scope, imbued with the traditional Western ideals of representing the best of a whole national literature, and associated with the canon-ratifying tradition of national-historical surveys published by wealthy academic presses like Oxford. And at the margins and backwaters of that tradition, a “sidestream” history of so-called “ethnic” and Indigenous anthologies, frequently published by smaller presses and with the revisionist principles of affirming literary communities historically excluded in anthologies of the ostensibly non-ethnic “mainstream.” The latter “stream” has been further conceptualized by critics as a succession of historical “waves”: a “first wave” of ethnic anthologies that began appearing in the 1960s and 1970s, organized around singular racial or ethnic communities (the first anthologies of Chinese Canadian or Jewish Canadian or Italian Canadian literature, for example); and a second wave of multiethnic and multiracial anthologies “bringing together writers of diverse backgrounds as representatives of Canadian multiculturalism,” as Neil ten Kortenaar puts it in the *Cambridge History of Canadian Literature* (558). The two most prominent books of this second “wave,” and those most responsible for the “mainstreaming” of multiculturalism within the anthology form, are the Oxford UP anthologies *Other Solitudes* (1990), the first “multicultural” anthology of its kind, and *Making a Difference* (1996). For Kortenaar, these anthologies

¹⁰³ As in the title of Archibald MacMechan’s *Headwaters of Canadian Literature* (1924), the Canadian literary historian’s imaginative journey “upstream” to the ideational springs of a national literature is a trope in much criticism infused with Romantic nationalist ideals, including Northrop Frye’s assessment in his Conclusion to the *Literary History of Canada* that Canadian writers are the “heroic explorers” who “have found their way back to the real headwaters of inspiration” (236).

are among the forces responsible for “mak[ing] the canon multicultural in the way it has so resoundingly become” (556).

This chapter attempts to navigate how the politics of multiculturalism and the political economy of multiculturalism policy in Canada manifest within the anthology up to 1990, a year I argue at the end of this chapter is a particularly conspicuous turning point in the Canadian history of both multicultural and Indigenous publishing. In Chapters 4 and 5, I offer detailed readings of these two formative “multicultural” anthologies of the 1990s that probe their particular politics of representation vis-à-vis Indigeneity and Indigenous writing. But the notion expressed by Kortenaar that these books collect writers “as representatives of Canadian multiculturalism” is worth immediately pausing over here, because it conflates their politics of literary representation with a representation of statist politics in ways that demand a great deal of further unpacking. For this reason, it is also an illuminating statement of just how thoroughly the national anthology form is interpellated by the nation-state as a referent and the ideological thrust of political nationalism, an association that has subtended a great deal of Canadian anthology production and can be traced to the anthology’s history in Romantic nationalism. What my historical analysis in this chapter attempts to provide is thus in an extended and proleptic introduction to the following chapters that helps to both theorize and historicize the conditions that give rise to the appearance of these field-shifting multicultural anthologies in the 1990s. What genealogies or “streams” of book publishing do they enter into? Why has the anthology played an overdetermined role in the institutionalization of multiculturalism within Canadian literary studies—the work of “making” the canon “multicultural”? What is it about the anthology form that lends itself to the literary representation of national multiculturalism?

Any cursory examination of the corpus of “mainstream” national anthologies designed to support the academic study of Canadian literature to the year 1990 would begin from a premise that is unlikely to be controversial, but bears repeating: it is a tradition constituted by the iterative production

of what Roy Miki calls highly “circumscribed locations of CanLit,” shot through with “the historical projectile of (white) Anglo-European ‘settler’ culture” (*Broken* 161). In different ways, the Oxford anthologies I read in the following chapters mobilized the rubric of multiculturalism to realign this tradition. Still, that it was not until 1996 and the publication of *Making a Difference* that a contemporary selection of Indigenous writing would appear in a widely used national teaching anthology raises a number of questions that help situate this chapter within a larger inquiry into the genre’s Canadian history: Why was this kind of recognition so profoundly belated? How have Canadian anthologies naturalized the construction of a national canon without Indigenous literature? To what extent have these settler-nationalist anthology histories shaped, or been shaped by, the pedagogical objectives of Canadian literature’s more contemporary institutionalization as an academic discipline?

1. De-Coding Anthology Criticism and History

Nationalism and the Literary “Mainstream”

An unprecedented boom in Canadian anthology publishing coincided with the publication of Atwood’s instantly best-selling *Survival* (1972). Nearly 500 anthologies in English appeared in the decade between 1970 and 1979, more than doubling the sum total of Canadian imprints published over the previous century since Edward Hartley Dewart’s 1864 *Selections from Canadian Poets*; that output would double again over the next decade and a half, with roughly a thousand more titles appearing by the time Kamboureli’s *Making a Difference* was published in 1996.¹⁰⁴ This remarkable explosion resulted from a confluence of factors that contributed to Canadian literature’s rapid institutionalization more broadly: namely, the cultural nationalism surrounding the Centennial; an expanded interest and new curricular demand for Canadian literature following efforts to make it a regular teaching subject in high schools and post-secondary institutions; and a robust injection of government assistance to the book

¹⁰⁴ These statistics are from Robert Lecker and associate editors Colin Hill and Peter Lipert’s *English-Canadian Literary Anthologies: An Enumerative Bibliography* (1997)—an invaluable bibliographic resource, though not without omissions (see, e.g., Clarke, *Directions* 21). See also Friskney for a useful historical breakdown of Lecker et al.’s bibliography.

publishing sector, primarily through the Canada Council's introduction of a block grants subsidy program in 1972, followed in 1979 by the Department of Canadian Heritage's Canadian Book Publishing Development Program (renamed the Book Publishing Industry Development Program in 1986). As part of this boom, pan-Canadian historical surveys, designed specifically for curricular use and published by the established professional and academic presses, were churned out with greater frequency. They contributed to the broader pedagogical project of defining and mapping a recognizably "Canadian" literature distinct from that of English and America that similarly animated the thematic literary nationalism of such critical texts as *Survival*, D.G. Jones's *Butterfly on Rock: Study of Themes and Images in Canadian Literature* (1970), Northrop Frye's *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (1971), and John Moss's *Patterns of Isolation* (1974).

For Robert Lecker, an anthology editor and arguably Canada's most dedicated commentator on the genre, the swelling stream of national-historical teaching anthologies at this time represents a continuation of the Romantic nationalist tradition begun in Canada by Dewar and his attempt to gather literature as an epistemological basis for verifying the nation. That the histories of Romantic nationalism and literary anthologization are interwoven and co-constituting in Canada (as elsewhere) is the central thesis of Lecker's *Keepers of the Code: English-Canadian Literary Anthologies and the Representation of the Nation* (2013), a sweeping historical analysis of nearly 200 anthologies from the nineteenth century to the present. Lecker argues that cultural nationalism is the "code" shared either tacitly or explicitly by Canadian anthologists, a thesis that is somewhat inescapably circular: all editors of national literary anthologies in Canada are essentially, if not often conflicted, Canadian nationalists, united by "a deeply rooted sense of nationalism that links them with their nineteenth-century counterparts; [their] selections ... are geared toward supporting, rather than challenging, conceptions of nation and national identity" (4). According to Lecker, anthologists, the central "keepers" of the code and the canon, have worked to construct national coherence by mapping "order on the wilderness" of Canada's literary

landscape, gathering selections with recourse to a unifying set of archetypes, myths, and symbols that “uphold the canon as a vital transubstantiation of Canadian culture” (19).

For Lecker, it was not until the 1990s, after the pressures of feminism, postmodern skepticism, and a cultural politics of difference, that a belated “breakdown of nationalist spirit” began to erode the code in the “face of increasing globalization and the impact of multiculturalism” (17). Two anthologies stand out in his history as books that seriously disrupted the nationalist underpinnings of canonical norms and “the aesthetics and ideology associated with what had once been a white-dominated textual community” (303). These are *Making a Difference*, which revealed that “anthologists had bypassed multiculturalism at a time when the government of Canada had ostensibly embraced its values”; and Daniel David Moses (Delaware) and Terry Goldie’s *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English* (Oxford, 1992), which presented a “Native tradition that had been virtually ignored by English-Canadian anthologists” (18). But it is Kamboureli’s multicultural anthology that “marks the end of canonical innocence,” replacing that innocence “with doubt about the idealized constructions of Canada that had informed the country’s national literary anthologies since the nineteenth century” (18). *Making a Difference* is, for Lecker, the “groundbreaking anthology that entirely redefined the twentieth-century Canadian literary tradition, and, by extension, the idea of the country itself” (302).

Lecker’s is a foundational and expansive study, particularly in its ambitious and far-reaching historical scope. Yet its panoramic view tends to narrativize the nation in terms of a linear and evolutionary literary history of anthology production shaped by the same desire to map national-historical coherence it analyzes in the objects of its study. Such a progressive approach to literary history becomes complicated if we substitute a critical lens wide enough to take in a more horizontal view of publishing history at particular moments, and more focused to examine the range of colonial assumptions upon which the ideology of nationalism in Canada rests, and which anthologies have powerfully naturalized. The notion that the 1990s mark the end of a previous “canonical innocence” of

national anthologies producing an almost exclusively white Canadian literature is certainly ironized by Lecker's own concerted attention to the political function of anthologies in relation to nationalism.¹⁰⁵ Yet this sense of a bygone innocence persists, conceptually and rhetorically, in ways that border on nostalgia for "a better time when the nation cohered, when a person did not have to wake up every morning and wonder what country he or she would be living in that day" (19). This mythical coherence is one that Lecker carefully shows anthologies have helped create. Though by locating its demise in the anxieties provoked by contemporary debates over diversity and the canon, what is often glossed over in *Keepers of the Code* are the long histories of representational violence toward subaltern literatures and subjectivities in anthologies that worked to construct such national ideals as a response to the settler-colonial anxieties of establishing a distinctly "native" Canadian literature—a political dimension of literary nationalism that is left implicit but unexamined in Lecker's notion of the "code." Thus, while mainstream CanLit anthologies have demonstrably been, until relatively recently, racialized overwhelmingly white, gendered predominantly male, and built largely around the erasure of Indigenous writing, the question remains: Why did these conditions come to mark the "idealized constructions of Canada" to begin with and thus come to normalize the intelligibility of such constructions as "innocent" into the 1990s? To understand why the redressing of these "ideals" in mainstream national anthologies such as *Making a Difference* was so profoundly belated in relation to the demographic constitution of Canada and the field of Canadian writing requires thinking through the ideological underpinnings that support both the anthology and the canon, and so ground the genre's historically constituted investments in the colonial project of nation-building.

Thus, Lecker offers a systematic account of a historical tradition that is not quite critical or historical enough to address the implications of the code it investigates. The Romantic "national

¹⁰⁵ Lecker is clear that "anthologies are never innocent collections" (3), but the notion of a foundational "innocence" or "ideal" nation called into question by political considerations of class or race, for example, recurs as normative (18, 96, 235).

convention” (a term from Fee, “Literary”) of anthologies presents itself as a self-evident covenant, explanatory of a generic contract with the nation developed in Europe and thereafter transplanted to the colony of Canada. At the same time, Lecker’s assertion that the appearance of multicultural or Indigenous difference in contemporary books like *Making a Difference* and *Native Canadian Literature* marks a radical departure from the anthology’s roots in nationalist ideology is, I argue, too inflexible to negotiate the mutability of nationalism in Canada and its ongoing implicatedness within the anthology form. It is a reading of literary history that distinguishes representational “diversity” from literary nationalism at the level of *contents* selected while overlooking not only Canadian nationalism’s investments in multiculturalism, but also the *formal* continuity of these mainstream texts with the canonical tradition of “national” anthologies they adopt. As I will argue more fully in my discussion of *Making a Difference* in Chapter 5, part of the authority informing the profound influence of these Oxford anthologies derives from their very keeping with a generic “code” legitimated as valuable by the literary institutions they are produced to support and valued as a pedagogical commodity by their academic publisher. Anthologies can expand what they collect without necessarily transforming the generic principles that inform their work as collections. Indeed, it is this formal continuity that makes these particular texts legible within the mainstream national anthology history Lecker studies.

Here the persuasiveness of Lecker’s broad argument that Canadian anthologies reflect fundamentally conservative national values lies in part with its tautological design. By limiting focus to those historically prominent texts envisioned as pan-Canadian in enterprise, intended to chronologically survey or thematically map the history of English Canadian literature, and primarily published by wealthy presses—what I’m referring to as “mainstream” Canadian anthologies—Lecker goes looking for representations of nation in self-consciously nationalist texts, and tends to find them. One of the key points his study helps to illuminate through the omissions produced by his principle of selection is that many anthologies have proliferated in Canada that *don’t* fit the “code-keeper” thesis, at

least not so easily. The Canadian anthologies that began appearing *en masse* since the 1970s published by smaller presses whose objective was other than representing the nation—what Lecker calls the “diversity of anthologies devoted to multiple ideologies and ethnicities”—remain “eccentric volumes” for his study, especially given they “did little to disrupt canonical representations of the nation in the major anthologies” (218). This latter point is true. But the immediate questions raised by such textual bracketing—“eccentric” in relation to whom?—temper the inflated rhetoric Lecker uses to present Moses and Goldie’s and Kamboureli’s books appearing on the scene, as if from a vacuum of difference, as the two texts responsible for challenging the canon vis-à-vis Indigeneity and multiculturalism. For Lecker, *Canadian Native Literature* is “the first collection of writing by Native Canadians,” period (302). (It is not, as I will discuss below.) Similarly, positioning Kamboureli’s collection of “other authors, other ethnicities, other otherness” as the text that finally broke the “code” bypasses not only *Other Solitudes*, but entire literary histories in anthologies organized around communities and traditions “other” than—and historically Othered by—the “Canadian” mainstream.

Ethnic and Indigenous Anthologies

Most of the books comprising the post-1970s boom in Canadian anthology production weren’t interested in tackling the question of how to define or represent Canadian literature; nor did their editors assume the customary solemnity and presumed cultural burden mantled by those working in Dewart’s tradition and attempting to answer it. Canada has a rich history of what Lorraine York dubs “quirky” anthologies—*Whale Sounds: An Anthology of Poems about Whales and Dolphins* (Dreadnaught, 1977), *Best Mounted Police Stories* (U of Alberta, 1978), or *100% Cracked Wheat: The Exciting New Saskatchewan Breakfast Cereal in Book Form* (Coteau, 1983), to name a few. More seriously, the 1970s and 1980s saw a critical mass of anthologies invested in what Travis DeCook calls “interventionary, politicized assertions of identity” (71) that confronted the mainstream tradition’s circumscribed national boundaries. These anthologies spoke to English Canadian literature’s hegemonic exclusions along lines of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, region, and language, adopting the anthology’s form of collective

representation to “assert the cultural legitimacy—and sometimes even existence—of specific communities’ writings” (DeCook 71-72). When, in 1972, Nipissing poet Wayne Keon, his brother Ronald, and father Orville gathered together their own writing (mostly Wayne’s) under the title *Sweetgrass: An Anthology of Indian Poetry* and printed it out of the small Algoma press in their Elliott Lake hometown in Ontario, they made such an assertion, producing Canada’s first “anthology” of Indigenous poetry. Hartmut Lutz calls this generic classification for *Sweetgrass* a “tongue-in-cheek” misnomer, given it suggests a “representational comprehensiveness which this Anishnabe family collection does not contain” (76). But it’s also an insistent title, in light of the historical absence both of Indigenous literary anthologies and of Indigenous literatures in Canadian anthologies. To compile the writing and call it an “anthology” makes a firm assertion that its contents demand recognition and reading according to the values traditionally encoded in that genre as a marker of literary worth.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the anthology form served a number of strategic ideological purposes alongside radical transformations in national politics and the cultural politics of Canadian literature. Some, like Oxford’s popular 1982-1983 teaching text *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, maintained continuity with a Romantic nationalist vision characteristic of the mainstream genealogy of national anthologies preceding it, adopting and reproducing established and highly restrictive canons. Others, as Larissa Lai argues in her analysis of Asian Canadian literary anthologies in the 1980s, performed a “counter-canonical” function, “presencing” various subjectivities, writing communities, and literary traditions regularly ignored by those “Oxford type” anthologies that “attempt to capture ‘the best of what has been thought and said,’ making all kinds of assumptions about whose cultural norms are central without acknowledging doing so” (*Slanting* 93). Prior to the Keons’ *Sweetgrass*, Kent Gooderham’s *I Am an Indian* (J.M. Dent, 1969) and Waubegeshig’s *The Only Good Indian: Essays by Canadian Indians* (New Press, 1970) were early multi-authored collections of prose writing by or about Indigenous peoples; *Many Voices: An Anthology of Contemporary Canadian Indian Poetry* (J.J. Douglas, 1977),

edited by David Day and Marilyn Bowering, was the first broad-ranging anthology of Indigenous poetry in Canada,¹⁰⁶ and the first of several important collections published by non-Indigenous editors: Robin McGrath's [Gedalof] collaboration with Alootook Ipellie (Inuit), *Paper Stays Put: A Collection of Inuit Writing* (Hurtig, 1981); John Robert Columbo's *Poems of the Inuit* (Oberon, 1981), two-volume *Songs of the Indian* (Oberon, 1983), and *Songs of the Great Land* (Oberon, 1989); and Penny Petrone's *First People, First Voices* (U of Toronto P, 1983) and *Northern Voices: Inuit Writing in English* (U of Toronto P, 1988). In the years before 1990, several anthologies edited by Indigenous women writers had appeared, including Maria Campbell's (Métis) *Achimoona* (Fifth House, 1985), a story collection created from the 1983 Native Writers' Workshop at Gabriel's Crossing; Beth Brant's (Mohawk) *A Gathering of Spirit: A Collection by North American Indian Women* (Women's Press, 1989¹⁰⁷); and Heather Hodgson's (Cree) *Seventh Generation: An Anthology of Native Poetry & Prose* (Theytus, 1989). The special Indigenous-focused issue of *Canadian Fiction Magazine* edited by Thomas King that later became short story anthology *All My Relations* (McClelland & Stewart, 1990) appeared in 1987, the same year as King, Helen Hoy, and Cheryl Calver's critical anthology *The Native in Literature: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives* (ECW).

An expanding corpus of so-called "ethnic" anthologies emerged at this time conterminously with the rise of official multiculturalism, collected and organized around categories of racial, ethnic, linguistic, or religious identities marked by their differences from English Canada. A cursory review of just some of the titles gives a sense of the quantity and multiple articulations of various "hyphenated" Canadian literatures taking shape within the anthology form: *Arab-Canadian Writers: Stories, Memoirs, and Reminiscences* (York, 1989), *An Anthology of Hispano-Canadian Writing* (Association for the Development of Hispanic Culture, 1987), *An Anthology of Ukrainian Poetry in Canada 1898-1973* (Ukrainian Writers' Association, 1975), *Canadian Jewish Anthology* (Canadian Jewish Congress, 1982), *Chilean Literature in*

¹⁰⁶ *Many Voices* does include a poem from Anne Cameron (under the pen-name Cam Hubert).

¹⁰⁷ The 1989 Canadian-published edition of *A Gathering of Spirit* was the text's third incarnation; it first appeared as a special issue of *Sinister Wisdom* (1983) and was printed by Firebrand Books (New York) in 1988.

Canada/Literatura chilena en Canada: A Bilingual Anthology (Ediciones Cordillera, 1982), *Fire on the Water: An Anthology of Black Nova Scotian Writing* (Pottersfield, 1991), *Harvest: An Anthology of Mennonite Writing in Canada 1874-1974* (Mennonite Historical Society, 1974), *Italian-Canadian Voices: An Anthology of Poetry and Prose (1946-1983)* (Mosaic, 1984), *Other Voices: Writing By Blacks in Canada* (Williams Wallace, 1985), *Many-Mouthed Birds: Contemporary Writing by Chinese Canadians* (Douglas & McIntyre, 1991), *A Meeting of Streams: South Asian Canadian Literature* (TSAR, 1985), *Shakti's Words: An Anthology of Asian Canadian Women's Poetry* (TSAR, 1991), *A Shapely Fire: The Caribbean in Canada* (Mosaic, 1987), *The Sound of Time: Anthology of Canadian Hungarian Authors* (Canadian-Hungarian Authors' Association, 1974), and *Unexpected Fictions: New Icelandic Canadian Writing* (Turnstone, 1989).

I offer lists of these titles and publishers, partial as they are, to afford some historical perspective on the publishing activity in anthologies of primarily English-language literature in Canada that continue to exist outside the institutional memory of mainstream “English Canadian” anthologies. These collections performed various forms of social and political labour, often in community contexts outside the academy (as their publishing by small presses and writers’ associations attests), that rarely keep with the kind of Canadian nationalist “code” Lecker describes. What they *do* share with mainstream Canadian anthologies, however, is not an anthological “code” but rather a *form*: the anthology as a generic vehicle within which to gather and disseminate often disparate texts as a unified collection, to name traditions and materialize literary histories, and to forge literary community across differences. Describing the emergence of “multicultural literature” in Canada generally, Georgiana Banita argues that the anthology has been “employed as a political and aesthetic form to draw attention to collective cultural causes and to bridge the separation among writers with similar ethnic backgrounds” (392). For Lien Chao, the anthology has served as a “manifesto” for announcing “the collective endeavour of Chinese Canadian writers” and “introducing an emerging literature into the current mainstream,” transforming the “silence” of canonical marginalization “into a resistant voice”

(147). The power to establish counter-canonical literary collectives and editorially control “voice” situates the potential for self-fashioning availed by anthologies within the broader cultural politics of Canada during 1980s and early 1990s; as a mode of literary and subject production, many “ethnic” and racialized anthologies appeared in concert with cultural organizing and activism, representing what Janey Lew describes as “community-driven initiatives to articulate ethno-national identity and activate social change” (14). In the context of the academy, Daniel Coleman and Donald Goellnicht similarly point to the significant labour performed by the genre in the “institutionalization of racialized Canadian literatures” in the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., “Asian Canadian,” “African Canadian,” “Native Canadian”), where anthologies helped forge a material infrastructure and “recognizable disciplinary apparatus” (14).

George Elliott Clarke, whose historical work since the late 1980s has often been devoted to compiling such an “infrastructure” for Black Canadian literature as a field of study, describes anthologies and other related book genres (literary histories, bibliographies) as a “prerequisite for the project of decolonizing sub-national and post-colonial literatures” in Canada (*Odysseys* 325). Of course, a similar decolonizing rationale had informed the energies and state funding devoted to establishing an infrastructure for a *Canadian* national literature, particularly in the years after the Massey Commission concluded that such a literature did not yet exist. The desire to forge Canadian literature as a post-colonial and distinctive national sub-discipline in English studies had inspired such efforts to count, compile, build, and publish a literary infrastructure as Reginal Watters’ massive bibliography *Checklist of Canadian Literature and Background Materials 1628-1960* (U of Toronto, 1959); the New Canadian Library republishing series (McClelland & Stewart, 1957–); the multi-volume, multi-authored *Literary History of Canada* (U of Toronto P, 1965); the founding of the literary journal *Canadian Literature* (1959); Carl Klinck and Watters’ *Canadian Anthology* (first ed. 1955); and the many academic national anthologies and reference works appearing since the 1950s and growing in number into the 1970s.

Thus, to plot a wider literary history through the anthology genre as one indicator of publishing

activity is to see that the voices neglected by these representatively “Canadian” works challenged the canon they had participated in (re)constructing relatively rapidly—that is, long before the 1990s—and at times directly. When Clarke published his anthology of Black Nova Scotian literature *Fire on the Water*, he prefaced the anthology with a “declaration” that it was “born of necessity: to witness words that once existed in invisibility. And it chastises those critics who looked upon this garden and saw only desert.” “If there is a subtle reason for its existence,” he continues, not so subtly, “it is to ensure that Africadians will never again be barred from anthologies of African-Canadian, Atlantic, and Canadian writing in general.”¹⁰⁸ A more horizontal approach to anthology history also helps to reveal the position of marginalization from the canon as a space of adjacency and exchange between and across various communities. Kamal Rostom edited and published *Arab-Canadian Writers: Stories, Memoirs, and Reminiscences* because the contribution of those writers “to the literary mainstream of this country” had been “overlooked” in mainstream Canadian anthologies, and credited as inspiration John Miska’s similar argument in his introduction *Anthology of Canadian-Hungarian Authors*. Miska’s immense enumerative bibliography *Ethnic and Native Canadian Literature 1850-1979: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Materials* (Microform Biblios, 1980) gathered entries of “ethnic” and “Native” writing together and made a profound, if largely under-recognized, statement about the existence of over 3,000 titles of writing in both official and non-official languages. While often triangulated by mutual exclusion from canonical anthologies that mark the affirmative labour of their editing as a historical imperative to assert ethnonationalist identities, the many “ethnic” and Indigenous anthologies of the 1970s-1980s appear also as expressions of affiliation, cohering in relation to one another as much the mainstream.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ “Africadian” is Clarke’s term to describe a particular Black Atlantic cultural history and identity in Canada (Africa + Acadia) rooted in eighteenth-century Loyalist migrations. See Rinaldo Walcott’s introduction to the second edition of his *Black Like Who?* for a critique of Clarke’s genealogical work as “an impossible desire to belong to the nation” (16).

¹⁰⁹ This is of course true of individual authors too. Wayne Keon’s poetry and his aforementioned *Sweetgrass*, for example, makes clear his personal and formal indebtedness to the phonetic orthography of queer experimental poet bill bissett.

Bonnie Hughes, extending Lecker's work, defines the 1980s as the beginning of a "pluralistic stage" in Canadian anthology publishing that displaced the genre's overtly nationalist and thematic stages of the 1970s. For Hughes, Canadian anthologists beginning in the 1980s "emphasized the diversity of Canada and viewed the multiplicity of voices and perspectives as an integral element of Canada's literature," reflecting "concern[s] with inclusiveness and diversity" that followed the ascendancy of multiculturalism as a literary critical concern in Canada (152). This, I would argue, is a broad periodizing claim that requires qualification, and a careful distinguishing between mainstream "national" anthologies and the wider field of Canadian literary production. In terms of the former, a "concern with inclusiveness and diversity" is not an accurate portrayal of Canadian national anthologies even into the 1990s, a point I develop later in this chapter. As for the latter, the pluralist groundswell of anthologies since the 1970s appears in retrospect less a reflection of Canadian anthologists' *concerns* with multiculturalism than an aspect of the policy's institutionalization within the sphere of publishing. All but three of the many "ethnic" and "Native" collections I have cited thus far published since 1978 (and many others I haven't) were funded in part or wholly with assistance from Canada's multiculturalism directorate, reflecting its expanding material affects within the political economy of Canadian literature. That the three that weren't—Maria Campbell's, Beth Brant's, and Heather Hodgson's—are those produced by Indigenous editors is, in turn, an indication of the Indigenous "invisibility" within the bureaucratic history of multiculturalism I outlined in Chapter 1.¹¹⁰

Multicultural Funding and Parallel "Streams": The Writing and Publications Program

From its creation in 1977 as one of the policy initiatives started by the Trudeau-era Liberals, to its conclusion in 1998 under the neoliberal austerity measures of the Chrétien-era Liberals, the multiculturalism directorate's Writing and Publications Program (WPP) was the primary mechanism through which federal multiculturalism supported literature specifically. Targeting what the state

¹¹⁰ The special edition of *Canadian Fiction Magazine* edited by Thomas King was supported by a grant-in-aid from the multiculturalism directorate, as was King et al.'s critical anthology *The Native in Literature*.

described as “historical or literary works that reflect the cultural diversity of Canadian society” (DSOS 1982, 17)—or what Judy Young, a former administrator of the program, terms “ethnic specific writing”—the WPP was an equity-oriented funding stream running parallel to the Canada Council and other mainstream arts institutions. Unlike the Canada Council, which technically operates its policies at arm’s length from the federal government and its budgetary appropriations, the WPP was administered through federal multiculturalism directly, and was thus a more hands-on form of cultural patronage and management. It awarded grants of up to \$5,000 to authors and \$7,500 to publishers to support the production of literary texts, translations, educational materials, and events like public readings and literary conferences. Its impetus was two-fold: affirmative action, and affirming multiculturalism as a national ideal. As Young recounts, the program developed from Trudeau’s commitment to assist cultural communities marginalized from Canada’s dominant Anglo-Franco public sphere to overcome barriers of access to literature’s political economy and promote cultural exchanges, with the belief that doing so would raise mainstream awareness and promote acceptance of multiculturalism. As I argued in the Introduction to Part 2, its ethos was multicultural literary nationalist—the state’s position was that literature could ideally serve as a “subtle but powerful cement” for the Canadian mosaic.

The WPP’s budget was never very large, particularly relative to the Canada Council’s.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, it made a substantial number of grants—over 1,600 in total—to writers and publishers who, according to former program officer Austin Cooke, “helped implement the [multiculturalism] policy in this important area of Canadian life” (44). Reflecting on the many successes of authors supported by multiculturalism during the 1980s “when minority writers were still outside the mainstream”—Josef Skvorecky, SKY Lee, M.G. Vassanji, Dionne Brand, and George Elliott Clarke,

¹¹¹ During the 1980s, for example, the Secretary of State’s total annual budget for multicultural arts programming, which included funding for the Performing and Visual Arts (PVA) program established with the WPP, was roughly \$2-3 million, less than half of which went to literary writing and publishing; by comparison, the Canada Council’s annual budget during that same period grew from \$44 million in 1980 to \$95 million in 1990. In 1990, the WPP and PVA programs were amalgamated into a single Creative and Cultural Expression program administered by the multiculturalism directorate.

among others—Cooke describes the WPP as “one of Multiculturalism’s most effective (if not the most effective) activities” in promoting the policy’s social-change mandate (44). Notably absent from these lists cited to highlight the program’s achievements are Indigenous writers, however, as WPP subventions largely adhered to the state-derived definitions of “multicultural” identity that excluded Indigenous peoples from the administrative categories of “ethnic” and “visible” (racial) minority.¹¹² By my count of the state’s published lists of subventions made through the WPP, roughly three dozen supported publications the directorate indexed as related to the subject “Native Canadian.” Of these, most were ethnic histories, “folk” stories, children’s literature, and language textbooks, and the vast majority were written *about* Indigenous cultures and peoples rather than *by* them; less than a dozen titles listed in the government’s *Resource Guide of Publications Supported by Multiculturalism* are identifiably Indigenous-authored texts.¹¹³ Lee Maracle describes her experiences with the multiculturalism directorate as follows: “I applied for a multicultural grant, thinking that we were a part of Canada, way back in the ‘70s, and they told me point blank that Aboriginal people are not part of multicultural funding” (52)—an experience that reflects the extent to which Indigenous people were not part of multiculturalism in its bureaucratic institutionalization.

Cooke’s suggestion that the writers who received support from the program helped “implement” multiculturalism is clearly contentious, and not only because many of the “multicultural” authors who received WPP funding were vocal critics of state multiculturalism in their work. It encapsulates how the production of minority writing assisted by equity-oriented programming can

¹¹² The deterministic power of these categories I outlined in Chapter 1 is widespread in Canadian legislation and cultural policy, and now structures the Canada Council’s own Equity Policy (2017). That policy defines “equity-seeking groups” as those that are either “culturally diverse,” “deaf and disabled,” or “official language minorities”; the Council’s definition of “culturally diverse” is in turn based on the definition of “visible minority” outlined in the *Employment Equity Act* (1986), which is the same as that used by the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism while developing the Multiculturalism Act in the mid-1980s. For the Canada Council, the terms “culturally diverse”/“visible minority” are used to “respectfully” identify racialized peoples: “Canadians of African, Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern and mixed racial heritages (mixed racial heritage includes one of the above groups) who have been historically disadvantaged as a group, and may experience discrimination based on colour and culture” (7), though not Indigenous peoples. The Council introduced its Indigenous “Creating, Knowing and Sharing: The Arts and Cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples” program in 2017.

¹¹³ Most notable for its lasting relevance today among these would likely be Basil Johnston’s *Indian School Days* (1988).

become strategically commodified as evidence of multiculturalism's successes—a way of appropriating literature into a narrative of state magnanimity that diminishes the larger forces shaping the literary field, including the creative talent and labour of “multicultural” writers themselves. Sheryl Hamilton has critiqued the WPP along these lines, arguing that the government's intentions were less to support minority artists than to invest in their literary works as multicultural “art objects”—representations of ethnicity that can be identified, evaluated, funded, counted, and then held up as evidence of multiculturalism and the success of its policy administration (16). Laura Moss notes that the kinds of writing funded by multiculturalism, particularly in the WPP's early years, tended toward the “celebrations of visible elements of culture” closely associated with the “song and dance” version of multiculturalism emphasizing folkloristic and superficial cultural exchanges (43). A scan of some of the funded titles, like *Cross Canada Cooking: Favorite Recipes of Canadians from Many Lands* (Hancock, 1976), and the citations used to frame these publications in the state's publicly circulated bibliographies, is illuminating in terms of what the government valued as “literary” multiculturalism: *Ethnic Folk Costumes in Canada* (Hyperion, 1979), wherein “Canada's cultural mosaic is presented through the costumes of the ethnic groups that still preserve aspects of their heritage in diverse parts of Canada” (27); *Zhao Zi You Xi (Word Games)* (Ottawa Chinese Language School, 1978), “Chinese crossword puzzles for children” (103); *Inuit Dolls: Reminders of a Heritage* (Canadian Stage and Arts, 1988), wherein “the ancient Inuit art of dollmaking is brought to life through colour and black-and-white photographs” to offer “a fascinating glimpse into Inuit life” (45); *A Room Full of Balloons* (Tundra 1981), a “[f]ictional account for children of the Black experience in Nova Scotia (80); or Rienzi Cruz's *Still Close to the Raven* (TSAR, 1989), which, like several other similar entries for single-authored texts, is simply “Poems by a Sri Lankan Canadian” (88). Overwhelmingly, these texts are positioned as ethnographic expressions of culture, easily packaged and consumed as in the vein of what Stanley Fish critiques as “boutique” multiculturalism, or what is known colloquially as “food-court” multiculturalism. The many anthologies

funded by the program are similarly presented by emphasizing the identity shared by their authors rather than anything about their literature. Bennett Lee and Jim Wong-Chu's *Many-Mouthed Birds* offers "Stories and poems by 20 contemporary writers of Chinese descent living in Canada" (56), and other collections are positioned as documentary of ethnic "history" or the "immigrant experience."

For Smaro Kamboureli, the predominance of anthologies among the literature funded by multiculturalism is suggestive of the genre's attractiveness to state ideology. As a collective form organized around identitarian categories, "ethnic" anthologies are capable of collapsing the many differences among authors and their unique literary expressions into an ostensibly coherent articulation of ethnicity to produce reified, static subject positions. In her reading of the many "first wave" ethnic anthologies appearing in the 1970s and 1980s, Kamboureli argues that the editorial strategies enacted by the editors of these anthologies can be read in turn as "complicit with the various policies that attempt to situate ethnicity inside certain parameters," noting a prevailing editorial tendency to value autoethnographic expressions of identity over "literary merit" as "the primary, defining element of ethnic writing" (*Scandalous* 151, 150). Despite the complicity Kamboureli sees in ethnic anthologies as a kind of literary folk festival, ripe for essentialist readings and state co-option, this essentialism can and did serve "strategic" purposes, as Larissa Lai (following Spivak) argues (*Slanting* 87). For subaltern literatures historically erased from the national imaginary, inhabiting state-legitimated categories can be a vital strategy toward securing an ontological viability and a stable position from which to speak, though such a "reclaiming" of Othered categories may ultimately re-inscribe rather than transcend the structural conditions that produce them in the first place.

Given the paucity of direct support offered through multiculturalism's WPP to Indigenous writing and publishing, debates over its efficacy are in some ways ancillary to my discussion here.¹¹⁴ Yet

¹¹⁴ For more on these debates, see the critical dialogue between Peter Li and Judy Young in their respective articles; Biles; Huggan and Siemerling; Hamilton; Kamboureli, "Black Angels"; McCormack; Moss, "Song and Dance"; and Stone.

even works that were not funded by multiculturalism in the 1970s and 1980s were entering a public sphere becoming increasingly determined and in some ways instrumentalized by its discourses. Robert Zacharias comments on the explosion of so many “first” anthologies of ethnic literatures all appearing within the decade and a half following Trudeau’s 1971 policy: “If individual anthologies can be taken to signal the existence or arrival of a given body of literature, a burst of such anthologies is clearly less reflective of a critical mass of literary production—is it really possible that all these communities simultaneously reached this point?—than of a new organizing principle in which such literature is suddenly valued” (39). Thus, the valuing of multiple “ethnic” literatures organized around the visibility of their appearance in so many anthologies can be understood as both enabled and circumscribed by the institutionalization of multiculturalism within the Canadian literary field. In turn, the binary of margin/mainstream structuring this visibility is inextricably tethered to the material effects of the policy itself within the political economy of Canadian publishing. As Peter Li argues in his incisive critique of multiculturalism’s role in Canadian arts patronage, the problem with “sidestream” programs like the WPP is not only that they are regularly *patronizing* in their often tokenistic approach to culture—ethnic cookbooks and folk histories contra the “high culture” supported by institutions like the Canada Council—but that they can reinforce, in the name of equity, the very hegemonic distinctions between dominant and subordinate arts cultures they ostensibly exist to redress. A parallel “multicultural” funding stream enables those “mainstream” institutions like the Canada Council to shirk their own responsibilities toward equity and institutional change. Young describes this “ethnic/mainstream” binary as a “conundrum” (100) at the heart the multiculturalism program’s objectives, which were in some ways contradictory in their attempts to “infuse some ‘ethnicity’ into the ‘mainstream’” of Canadian literature (99). The WPP targeted “ethnic” literature based on a normative distinction from what was conceived as mainstream “Canadian” literature, but with hope the Canadian public would come to see it as *not* distinct, simply “Canadian.” It wasn’t until after the passing of the

Multiculturalism Act in 1988 that the Canada Council, as a federally funded institution, was forced by law to become more accountable to diversity in its own hiring and adjudication policies, and that the WPP began realigning its efforts from targeting individual “ethnic” projects and toward a more institutional “multiculturalizing” of the literary mainstream itself.

The breakthrough moment of “mainstreaming” multiculturalism within the anthology would not come until 1990 with Oxford’s *Other Solitudes*. The first “multicultural Canadian” anthology of its kind, *Other Solitudes*, funded by the WPP, inaugurates a second “wave” of multi-ethnic anthologies that includes *Breaking Through: A Canadian Literary Mosaic* (Pearson Education Canada, 1990), *Home and Homeland: The Canadian Immigrant Experience* (Addison Wesley, 1993) and Kamboureli’s *Making a Difference* (Oxford, 1996)—teaching anthologies that responded to market demands for new materials and new Canadian curricula. The organizing principle of these anthologies is not any one particular ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural identity, but the bridging of diverse writers and communities under the “Canadian” category. And, in the case of both *Other Solitudes* and *Making a Difference*—the most influential in this wave given the distribution guaranteed by their academic publisher and their widespread integration into syllabi—under Canadian multiculturalism specifically. These texts worked to deconstruct the multicultural/Canadian or ethnic/mainstream binary conundrum by rearticulating the nation itself *as* multicultural. Thus, adopting the nation as their unifying referent, they insert the literary politics of multiculturalism into the national historical form of the English Canadian anthology.

Whose Anthologies are “Ethnic”?

The history of these early “ethnic” or “multicultural” anthologies vis-à-vis the mainstream canon is thus reflective of the conundrum structuring the political economy that often supported them. While they “mark the first concentrated unfolding of ethnic writing in Canada,” notes Kamboureli, they did so from the “Other side of Canadian literature’s cultural syntax” and its canon (*Scandalous* 131). The writing they collected and announced remained “virtually ignored” by the editors of mainstream

national anthologies designed to support the study of Canadian literature, and “made no dent in the canon either at that time or later” (133). When viewed from Lecker’s mainstream English Canadian literary history, they indeed present a body of “eccentric” collections, though not to the communities from which they emerged and whose audiences they regularly addressed. And while they spoke back to the mainstream canon, their publication by small presses and associations meant their circulation and community of readers was inevitably small. Indeed, their often self-consciously parallel positioning against the canon as marginalized literatures served what Kamboureli identifies as the “paradoxical function” of “ratify[ing] by default the very tradition that has disregarded ethnic literature” (134). That racial, ethnic, or religious diversity was not a serious consideration in the major “national” anthologies of Canadian literature in the 1970s and 1980s reflects the extent to which the nascent development of “multicultural literature” in Canada remained in a binary relationship with “Canadian”—parallel and supplemental, but not central or constitutive to the national field.

If this binary construct of mainstream/multicultural I have limned here through the genre of anthologies is viewed as just that—a construct, and a powerful one—it is one that multiculturalism’s arts-funding policies thus helped consolidate, but also one that has become pervasive in anthology criticism. Indeed, critical readings of anthologies often assume a fundamental distinction between mainstream “Canadian” and multicultural “ethnic” literatures that pivots on their contents and relations of power relative to the canon while obfuscating what these collections tend to share at the level of form and the politics of collective representation. For example, Larissa Lai correctly notes that the “fiction of transparent, one-to-one relationships” between identity and literature critiqued in “ethnic” anthologies by Kamboureli has long been “acceptable when put into the service of nationalist history” (95). That is, the Romantic nationalist ideal that Leon Surette describes as a quest to discover “the Canadian-ness of the literature written in this country” (17)—the distinctive “national character” anthologists have searched for since Dewar’s *Selections*, and the once idealized innocence of the white

canon described by Lecker—has historically traded in precisely the same fiction: that literature and collective (national) identity are intrinsically connected, and that the anthology is ideally suited to affirming that connection. Thus, for Lai, it is telling that critiques of “the non-coincidence of text and experience” becomes anxious in the context of multicultural challenges to the canon specifically, and only “when the nationalism expressed is a minor one” (96). Such minor (ethno)nationalisms reveal, by making explicit, what has been implicit to the mainstream tradition’s claims to nationalist coherence, which is the particularity of those texts and experiences it privileges in the name of “Canadian-ness.”

At the same time, Lai, while noting the strategic value of such problematic essentialisms for minor literatures, also draws a binary distinction between “canonical” anthologies of the “Oxford type”—“assembled with the high-minded and often xenophobic practice of defining a tradition” (116)—and “counter-canonical” anthologies of ethnic or racialized literature:

Counter-canonical anthologies, by contrast, fill another role. Their logic is one of both community and subject production, however fraught. Some of them recognize the instability of the racialized subject, but still contend that there is something worthwhile to be captured in the anthology form. Others reify community and identity positions in ways that make critics cringe, though this doesn’t necessarily negate the cultural labour they do. (*Slanting* 93)

Notwithstanding the real asymmetries of power, canonical representation, and institutional authority that give rise to this binary, I would argue that it is an oppositional construction that unfolds at the level of genre and what it is anthologies actually *do* or enable. On one hand, everything Lai ascribes to the logic of “counter-canonical” anthologies could be said to apply equally to “canonical” mainstream anthologies as well. On the other hand, as the literary history I’ve sketched here shows, “counter-canonical” anthologies are themselves invested in establishing traditions and canons as well, even as counter-canons whose evaluative criteria may not align with mainstream conventions.

The binary thus obfuscates the reality that the goal to reify a Canadian “tradition” and “values” in “Oxford-type” anthologies has also been invested in the fraught production of subjectivities, identity positions, and communities. As I will argue in the following section, this logic is not just implicit to the

mainstream tradition of apparently non-ethnic “Canadian” anthologies, but a defining feature of their Romantic nationalist labour regularly made explicit by their editors. The desire to collect a distinctive national literature has regularly been about affirming, as editors Bennett and Brown describe their task in Oxford’s *Anthology of Canadian Literature in English* (1982), what Frye called an “imaginative continuum” (xii) of communal and cultural conditioning in Canada; the national anthology, as Weaver and Toye frame their 1973 *Oxford Anthology of Canadian Literature*, has been conceived as a community-building enterprise that might “bring together even more Canadian readers and Canadian writers” (xiv). What distinguishes these “Canadian” anthologies from “ethnic” ones is that the subjectivities and communities consolidated by their editors, selections, and thematics often appear as if unmarked, self-evident, unhyphenated—“Canadian-Canadian.” The Canadian/ethnic binary thus furthers the notion, operative in multicultural discourse, that those anthologies seen as “canonical” and Canadian have not *also* been “ethnic” anthologies historically, confirming what Daniel Coleman calls dominant Canada’s “fictive ethnicity.”¹¹⁵—where Anglo whiteness “occupies the position of normalcy and privilege” (7).

At the level of their contents, it is thus possible to read the “multicultural Canadian” national anthologies that began appearing in the 1990s as initiating a turning point in these parallel anthology histories inasmuch as they mark the point of convergence between previously divergent “streams”—sidestream “ethnic” and mainstream “Canadian” literatures. However, the question that demands further scrutiny is whether such a “multiculturalizing” the mainstream constitutes any radical reimagining of the national anthology form. To further theorize and historicize this question, I want to consider how literary multiculturalism can be understood as a liberal extension of colonial discourses that have traditionally supported the genealogical production of the anthology as a genre and the adaptability of the Romantic nationalist “code” as it has been transplanted to Canada.

¹¹⁵ “Fictive ethnicity” is a term Coleman develops from Etienne Balibar “to describe the way in which a nation represents the narrative of its diverse peoples’ past and future as if they formed a natural community” (*White Civility* 7).

2. Unity in Diversity: Historicizing and Theorizing the Canadian National Anthology

The Anthology as (Multicultural) Paradox

That the anthology emerged in 1990s as a privileged book genre for redefining Canadian literature as multicultural is perhaps not surprising. The political project of multiculturalism has always rested on the paradoxical wager, first made “official” to statist nationalism by Trudeau, that collective differences could form the basis of national identity—a calculus captured in the formula “unity in diversity.” As Barbara Benedict argues, the anthology as a book genre is a formal paradox of precisely this sort:

The anthology is one work and it is many works. Inclusive and exclusive, communal and fractured, ... heteroglossic yet homogeneous, the literary anthology entails the activity of literary comparison and differentiation. ... [I]t [is] a form that presents—encourages—the perception simultaneously of difference and sameness: *différence*? (“The Paradox” 252).

Inherently selective, anthologies nevertheless advertise an ethos of multiplicity, presenting readers a diversity of literary content within an integrated form. Not unlike the politic of multiculturalism itself, they appeal to a participatory notion of inclusiveness in the liberal model—their contents are distinct, but equal—despite the impossibility of ever being fully representative and the politics of exclusion upon which their selections by nature cohere. When adapted to representation national literatures, their generic logic is thus conducive to expressing the unification of parts (individual author/text) and whole (bounded collection) in terms of the multicultural model of political society that Trudeau idealized by arguing that Canada offered a neutral “context” in which “every ethnic group has the right to preserve and develop its own culture and values” (“Government’s Response” 51). Or, as the government would define multiculturalism in 1987, an umbrella “concept” under which “diverse groups and communities are free to retain their respective identities while joining one another as equal partners in a united country” (*MBC* 3). The anthology is perhaps the genre *par excellence* for the construction of a literary “mosaic,” in which the national category functions as a “context” in both senses of the word: the setting or circumstance that makes the unification of disparate elements intelligible, and the weaving or joining together of parts into a whole, literally “with text” (*contextus*, connection).

In the humanist tradition, national anthologies enact a figurative encounter between reader and text that is roughly homologous to that between citizen and nation. In Lecker's assessment, for example, the anthology is a "symbolic means of experiencing the country" for readers—usually imagined as impressionable students presumed to "have little conception of nation" prior to the textual encounter—that is "formative in their developing sense of citizenship" (8). The operative analogy within the politics of multicultural representation is slightly different, and based on the ways national anthologies reinforce notions of liberal democracy in the figurative relationship they enact between individual author/text and edited collection. What the rubric of multiculturalism enables in this scenario is an expansion of the national category via a symbolic pluralization of literary citizenship within a form invested in determining who or what is (or isn't) representatively "Canadian."

While conducive to multicultural representation, however, this formal paradox—unity in diversity, whole yet fractured—is, as Benedict reminds, not a development specific to Canadian literature in the late twentieth century, but constituent to the anthology form itself. And it is a flexibility that has traditionally enabled the genre to serve collective representation of all kinds, including within the historical milieu in which the anthology emerged as a popular book genre in Western Europe alongside the rise of nation-states and emergence of national literatures. In *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, Friedrich Kittler argues that anthologies had already replaced the Bible in late-eighteenth century Germany as "the book that unified a culture" (Di Leo 7; see Kittler 144, 149). The focus of Benedict's *Making the Modern Reader* is the anthology's rise to prominence in the long eighteenth century and the role it played in creating a British literary tradition. At a time when mass print was transforming literature from an elite repository of cultural capital into a middle-class commodity, anthologies served the supply-side commercial market of printers and booksellers, on one hand, and the demand-side cultural market of a growing vernacular readership on the other, and in doing so changed how literature was disseminated and read. Collecting otherwise disparate writings in volumes that invited

reading for “communality,” “sociability,” and “civil exchange,” as Benedict puts it—over time, across authors, and between readers—became a way of experiencing and representing “the diversity of a plural society that simultaneously advertises communality and licenses divergence” (252). As collections of individual works re-presented in historical or political contexts not necessarily the same as their original production, anthologies invite forms of reading that downplay the particularities of author or text in favour of their shared relation to an organizing rubric—whether generic, thematic, historical, regional, or, most significantly to the development of English literature, national.

The genre’s ideological power is thus its ability to collect, re-contextualize, organize, and mobilize literature for editorial purposes marked by the contingencies and political expediencies defining the pedagogical objectives of the anthology’s production. Benedict argues that the communality afforded by the early literary miscellanies appearing in England at the turn of the eighteenth century was politically valuable in the context of a post-civil war polity still concerned with healing social divides, in which any individually-marked literary text was inevitably ideologically implicated (242). The appearance of “multicultural Canadian” anthologies in 1990s Canada is similarly reflective of the genre’s applicability and attractiveness as a form capable of embodying the social tensions of the national at a moment where it had become politically and pedagogically necessary to rearticulate the nation’s literature through a politics of difference. It is a container with the flexibility necessary to rewrite and reconstitute the cultural nationalist formation “Canadian literature” as the condition of difference implied by “multicultural” while retaining the unifying function of both the nation and the anthology characteristic of the Romantic nationalist “code” traced by Lecker.

Part of the paradox of anthologies, then, is that while they often purport to be *representative* in the literature they collect, they are also necessarily *inventive* in their historical arrangements and the kinds of communities they bring together. Anthologies in Europe thus emerged within the politics of nationalism and helped give material representation to vernacular national traditions of literature

retrospectively where they had not previously existed. In colonial Canada, beginning with Dewart's 1864 *Selections*, this process of unification was underway before the nation-state itself officially existed. "Unity in diversity" was indeed a nationalist editorial requisite for Dewart in his attempts to compile disparate authors and texts from a variety of sources in order to demonstrate that a national literature in Canada existed. As Carole Gerson argues, the editors who created the first Canadian anthologies had to "cast a wide net" out of sheer necessity, and operated on a "principle of inclusiveness" (150) commensurate to the project of collecting the tradition they sought to invent.¹¹⁶ Certainly, Dewart regretted the "tendency to sectionalism and disintegration" he saw as Canada's cultural condition and its endemic "political weakness" (x) relative to America and the nation-states of Western Europe; Canada's *disunity*, most notably the English/French cultural divide, was seen as an impediment to be overcome rather than the ideal grounds of national identity—an impediment he believed a strong national literature might offer a coalescing "counterpoise" (x). Despite the monoculturalism of his selections as they appear today, Dewart argued strongly against religious intolerance and a pernicious form of "liberality ... blinded by bigotry," preaching against "canonized prejudices" that might condemn otherwise "meritorious work" (xv). A national literature would help to unify the people, but it did not need to be peopled by a uniformity of texts or a homogeneous stock of Canadian authors.

Dewart's literary nationalism was more in line with that of his predecessor Thomas D'Arcy McGee, the Father of Confederation, seen by some as "Father of Canadian Literature" (Ballstadt), and the first "prophet of the concept of multiculturalism" (Cameron) for his advocacy of a Canadian national identity that made room for certain non-Anglo-Protestant ethnic and religious differences. The national literature McGee championed aligned with his vision of the "mental outfit" of the Canadian nation-state, and which I introduced in Part 1: "national in its preferences, but catholic in its

¹¹⁶ Gerson's sense of inclusiveness is primarily focused on gender. Early anthologists such as Dewart and Lighthall "drew in a proportion of women authors (30 percent) that roughly corresponded with their degree of publishing activities" (150), a trend that shifted in the modernist period when the canon consolidated by anthology editors became gendered much more predominantly male. See Gerson, "Anthologies and the Canon of Early Canadian Women Writers."

sympathies,” and open to hearing all cultures offering something to contribute (2). Dewart shared with McGee a belief that what Canadian authors had in common was a mutual relationship with their “New World” landscape. For McGee, a distinctively national literature would

assume the gorgeous coloring and the gloomy grandeur of the forest. It must partake of the grave mysticism of the Red man, and the wild vivacity of the hunter of western prairies. Its lyrics must possess the ringing cadence of the waterfall, its epics be as solemn and beautiful as our great rivers. We have the materials; our position is favourable; northern latitudes like ours have ever been famed for the strength, variety and beauty of their literature. (“Protection” 44).

The pluralist national literature of the future would spring up from the lands such diverse Canadians shared: “Come! let us construct a national literature for Canada,” wrote McGee in 1857, “neither British, nor French nor Yankeeish, but *the offspring of the soil*, borrowing from all, but asserting its own title throughout all” (2, my emphasis). The organic metaphor McGee developed was thus not unlike the one John Diefenbaker would use a century later to articulate his vision of multicultural Canada in 1961, not as a static “mosaic,” but as “a garden into which have been transplanted the hardiest and brightest flowers from many lands” (27). The etymological root of the literary “anthology” is in fact the Greek term for a gathering of flowers (*anthologia*). What Dewart implored his Canadian audience to consider was that the variegated “wild-flowers” of Canada’s wilderness were as “worthy of being enshrined” in the garlands of a national literature as the manicured gardens of England (xiv). In describing his editorial project as that of collecting “the floating pieces of Canadian authorship worthy of preserving in a more permanent form” (vii), he centred the anthologist’s curatorial process of gathering diversity as that of the landscaper, and the anthology’s canon-making form as instrumental to the process of actively cultivating the national unification on the soil he argued for. It was thus the editor’s task to gather and arrange the composite “floating pieces” into a complementary bouquet. Canada’s lack of cultural uniformity was regrettable, but Dewart nevertheless understood it as the reality of a “colonial position” generally “not favorable to the growth of an indigenous literature” (xiv).

In the settler-colonial context of Canada, this nationalist project of collecting and exhibiting

literature that worked to create early canons is also bound up—historically and methodologically—in the ideologies of discovery, classification, gathering, and consumption that animated the empiricist exploration and capitalist extractions of Empire. In her analysis of Pacific anthologies, Alice Te Punga Somerville (Māori) argues that “[t]he practice of literary collection is closely allied to the specific mode of European colonial expansion that was fanatical about collecting, categorizing, and cataloging plants, animals, ideas, materials, and people” (29). Thus, the literature collected in early Canadian anthologies not only catalogued colonialist encounters with a “New World” landscape, but commodified those encounters by gathering stories and lyrics and converting them into consumable volumes of material culture. While Dewart’s collection spoke specifically to a local audience and was printed by Montreal publisher John Lovell, William Douw Lighthall’s later, but similarly “pioneering,” *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada* (1889) was published in London by Walter Scott in the prestigious Windsor Series of poetry anthologies, intended as a follow-up colonialist companion to the anthology *Australian Ballads and Rhymes* (1888). Lighthall’s collection sought both to document a Canadian experience and to demonstrate the dominion’s literary chops as a proud colonial daughter to the imperial centre. In so doing he offered his English audience a portable (and affordable) compendium of the cultural artefacts of Empire—a kind of cabinet of literary curiosities in poems that exhibited encounters with the peculiarities of Canadian life and its wilderness. Within the book, claims Lighthall, positioning himself as the English reader’s guide on a canoe journey, “you may catch something of great Niagara falling, of brown rivers rushing with foam, of the crack of the rifle in the haunts of the moose and caribou, the lament of vanishing races singing their death-song as they are swept on to the cataract of oblivion...” (xx). For Lighthall, as it would later be for Victoria Hayward in her mosaic-inaugurating *Romantic Canada* (and many other texts), “The Indian” was a key ingredient in the “special flavour” of “the romantic life of the Colony.” In fact, compared to Australia, Canada’s Indians were superlative: “her native races were the noblest of savage tribes” (xxiii). *Were* in

the past tense, given the Indian, while ubiquitous to the Romantic atmosphere of the dominion, was understood as disappearing into “the cataract of oblivion.” Like John Murray Gibbon’s “mosaic of the future,” Lighthall’s eclectic catalogue invited readers to discover a national poetry that had already *superimposed* itself as native to the land, “drinking [its] inspirations and breathing them into song” (xxiv).

A literature unified on the land needed to be *of* the land. While Lighthall did include two poems from E. Pauline Johnson, Dewart’s *Selections* partook exclusively in the “grave mysticism of the Red Man” described by McGee, including by selecting the latter’s “The Arctic Indian’s Faith,” in which McGee appropriates a communal Indigenous voice—“We worship the Spirit that walks unseen / Through our land of ice and snow” (47)—to indigenize the ballad as a Canadian lyric tradition. Charles Sangster’s “The Red-Man—A Sonnet” makes its subject vanish more solemnly: “Whole tribes and races, gone like last year’s snow” become “like spectres passing down a vale / ... on their way / Towards some bourn where darkness blinds the day” (291). Dead or dying “Indians” could spring up as wildflowers of inspiration, but a literature conceived as “the offspring of the soil” needed to “asser[t] its own title” to the land, as McGee put it. Dewart concludes his introduction to *Selections* by framing the editorial process of gathering texts as akin to cataloguing natural resources as cultural commodities, adopting explicitly the metaphor of resource extraction. While lamenting Canada’s lack of native cultural tradition, literary history, or established canon upon which to draw—“the advantages of older countries” (xix)—Dewart nevertheless finds “ample compensation” for communion in the

inspiring spectacle of a great country, in her youthful might, girding herself for a race for an honorable place among the nations of the world. In our grand and gloomy forests—in our brilliant skies and varied seasons—in our magnificent lakes and rivers—in our hoary mountains and fruitful valleys, external Nature unveils her most majestic forms to exalt and inspire the truly poetic soul; while human nature—especially human nature in its relation to the spiritual and divine—still presents an *exhaustless mine of richest ore*, worthy of the most exalted genius. (xix)

Here, the attempt to unify the collection on the land and figuratively toil a literature distinctly indigenous to Canada begins from some decidedly transplanted European beliefs: in the Burkean sublime, where Nature and its “majestic forms” inspire great writing; in a Romantic idealism that

confers upon the mind's genius, whose highest expression appears in poetry, the power to distil from Nature a national "soul"; and in the imperialist legal fiction of *terra nullius*, where that "external Nature" is implicitly devoid of "human" Indigenous tenure, and by extension Indigenous cultural expression, prior to the settler poet's pristine encounter with Canada's "grand and gloomy" landscape.

The Anthology as Land Claim

In *Literary Land Claims*, Margery Fee traces how these Romantic nationalist ideals espoused by early Canadian anthologists became infused within the nationalist thematic criticism of Frye, Atwood, and other prominent critics who helped establish the academic discipline of Canadian literature in the 1960s and 70s. Such attempts to unify Canadian literature defined what made it distinct: namely, by mapping topocentric tropes related to the nation's natural landscape, characterized primarily as "wilderness," usually threatening, and frequently empty, without earlier inhabitants who might disrupt such narratives with literature of their own. "In this scenario," Fee suggests of the Romantic nationalist land claim, "Indigenous people conveniently vanish, leaving their land behind for new arrivals" (*Literary* 1). And yet, of course, they neither vanished nor stopped writing, though the anthologies and critical texts supporting the institutional study of Canadian literature in the 1970s, like Atwood's pedagogical "handbook" *Survival*, supported this myth by extending recognition to "Indians and Eskimos" only as they appear in the literature of white writers rather than as literary producers. Atwood clearly realized that it was easier for settlers to alleviate the tenuousness of their assertion of belonging in lands they claimed to have discovered by identifying with Indians as literary "symbols" rather than as the "real inhabitants of a land" (*Survival* 105). But to search out, listen to, or include the literary voices of those inhabitants would undercut the book's core nationalist argument that Canada's vulnerable colonial position made it the victim not only of the wilderness, but of cognitive and cultural imperialism—Canada the "exploited" nation or "oppressed minority"—and not a colonizer itself (31). The literary politics of post-colonial nation-building—of "surviving" as/in Canada, in Atwood's register—are in

this case structured on the ongoing colonial dispossession of the land's "real inhabitants," who only enter the national picture as "projections of something in the white Canadian psyche" (95).

How firmly settled is this land-claiming narrative in the nationalist history of Canadian anthologizing? It's illuminating to compare Atwood's claims about the absence of Indigenous writing in 1972 with her introduction to the popular 1988 *Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories*, an anthology she co-edited with Robert Weaver. In *Survival*, Atwood explained that "Until very recently, Indians and Eskimos made their only appearances in Canadian literature in books written by white writers" (95)—a dubious claim based on a restrictive definition of both "Canadian" and "literature," but also one that Atwood herself intimated would be difficult to sustain for much longer: "What the Indians themselves think is another story, and one that is just beginning to be written" (114). Sixteen years later, though, she repeats virtually the exact same point in nearly the exact same words in order to explain why no Indigenous writers could appear in her new anthology of fiction. Clearly mindful of the politics of representation that by the late 1980s were shaping debates over voice and the canon, Atwood's introduction offers a summary of the collection's demographic diversity, which concludes: "One last, sad statistic: in the stories presented here, Indians frequently appear as characters, but none of the stories is by an Indian or Inuit. I hope this situation will change, as Indian and Inuit writers *begin to claim their own territory through writing*" (xv, emphasis mine). Implicitly, then, "their territory" has already been "claimed" by the tradition of Canadian literature the anthology represents—a tradition that, in the case of this particular anthology, includes Hugh Garner's "One, Two, Three Little Indians," Margaret Laurence's "The Loons," and Rudy Wiebe's "Where Is the Voice Coming From?"

Coral Ann Howells correctly notes that Atwood's caveat about "the implied absence of Aboriginal writers in the mid-1980s would seem to reflect an editorial blind spot, given the publications by Jeannette Armstrong, Beth Brant, Basil H. Johnston, Wayne Keon, and Thomas King at this time" (26). This lack of perception, however, is certainly not Atwood's alone, but a historically constituted

kind of “sanctioned ignorance” (Spivak) congenital to a field of vision trained to see in particular ways and responding to a deeply ingrained, affective desire to be native to the land. It is part of the colonial ideology informing the nation-building “code” of anthology production outlined by Lecker, and the long afterlife of literary land-claiming theorized by Fee helps to explain how it became sanctioned in the first place. To understand how it persisted in mainstream national anthologies in Canada well into the 1990s, by which point the nation itself had officially embraced multiculturalism and many Indigenous peoples had powerfully “claimed their own territory in writing” (and not to mention in the courts), it is useful to further theorize the national anthology’s more contemporary relationship to the canon and the pedagogical institutionalization of Canadian literature.

3. Surviving *Survival*

Canadian Canons, National Capital

Let us briefly return to Atwood’s claim, with which I opened Chapter 2, that she couldn’t discuss Indigenous literature in *Survival* for “the simple reason that [she] could not at that time find any” (“A Double-Bladed” 243), and, for a moment, take it at face value. For if the absence of Indigenous writing from studies like *Survival* helps to illuminate the circumscribed Western values defining the “literary” within Canadian criticism during its consolidation as a discipline, as I argued in that chapter, it also brings into relief profound asymmetries in the material access to mainstream publishing at that time for Indigenous writers. As Deanna Reder and Jennifer Kelly note, Indigenous literary history in Canada has not only been shaped by neglect of longstanding Indigenous traditions of narrative culture not easily assimilable to canonical forms and genres of Euro-American literature (poetry, fiction, drama, the novel, etc.); even as Indigenous authors have “readily adopted these genres and integrated them into their respective traditions,” they have faced “varying (and often limited) opportunities to publish their work, depending on the political climate of the time and expectations of their readership” (1).

While Atwood’s expressed inability to *see* Indigenous literature in 1972, despite its existence, or to see the writing there as *literature*, can be critiqued in a number of ways—for its implicit aesthetic judgments,

discriminate research, or colonial ideas about authenticity,¹¹⁷ among others—it also raises straightforward questions about the material contexts of literary circulation at that time: Why couldn't she find it? Where is literature found? How does it enter fields of study and canons?

One answer to the first question is that it wasn't where she was looking as a reader, which was primarily in books published by mainstream or academic presses, especially anthologies.¹¹⁸ While critics of *Survival* have, understandably, focused overwhelmingly on Atwood the *writer* and the book's canon-shaping, gatekeeping legacy, *Survival* is, when viewed from the literary supply-side informing its production, as much a historical record of Atwood's exposure to the existing canon as student and reader of Canadian literature.¹¹⁹ In *Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation*, John Guillory argue that canons cannot be dissociated from how they manifest within specific institutional sites that determine "who writes and who reads, as well as what gets read, and in what contexts" (19). For Guillory, writing in the US context of the canon debates and so called "culture wars" of the 1980s and 1990s, the important institution in need of scrutiny vis-à-vis the canon is the academy and its pedagogical instruments—curricula and the syllabus, for example, as well as anthologies, whose tables of contents often served as the battle grounds of those debates.¹²⁰ As a kind of institution itself (see

¹¹⁷ Atwood asks herself why she hadn't included E. Pauline Johnson, and wonders if it was "because, being half-white, she didn't count as the real thing, even among Natives" ("Double-Bladed" 243). Johnson's place in Canadian anthologies will be touched on briefly later in this chapter, but see Fee, "Publications, Performances, and Politics," for a detailed analysis.

¹¹⁸ Atwood cites frequently from Oxford and McClelland & Stewart anthologies and from New Canadian Library texts.

¹¹⁹ Before answering *Survival's* central, nationalist question—"What's Canadian about Canadian literature, and why should we be bothered?"—Atwood makes the caveat that her study was never intended to be an "all-inclusive," "academic," or "balanced" account of the field, but rather a record of her consumption of its popular or public face: "I've taken my examples where I've found them, not through study or research but in the course of my own reading" (3-4). A student of Northrop Frye's at Victoria College at the University of Toronto, Atwood was a Victorianist by training. She explains in the introduction to *Survival's* second edition that the book was inspired in part by her efforts become familiar with Canadian literature when she had to teach it for the first time while filling in as a sabbatical replacement at York University in 1971.

¹²⁰ Interestingly, this is more true of the US context which Guillory addresses, where the discourse of multiculturalism was more localized to the context of education, than in Canada where multiculturalism is national policy. The "canon debates" in Canada unfolding in the critical exchanges between Frank Davey and Robert Lecker, for example, were not concerned with questions of racial or ethnic representation. Neither do these topics enter the essays in Lecker's collection *Canadian Canons* (1991), where diversity is framed primarily in relation to Quebec and francophone literatures. In Canada, the "canon debates" find a closer parallel in debates over appropriation of voice, in which the canon is of course implicated.

Re), the modern teaching anthology and other objects of the academy's pedagogy *institute*, by introducing and re-introducing ideologically and historically contingent articulations of a canon that, outside of such material locations, always remains an “*imaginary* totality of works” (30). The primary institution Canadian national anthologies have served, at least since the 1960s, is the Canadian Literature survey course common to Canadian English departments, whose curricular emergence is part of the legacy of cultural nationalism that helped consolidate the field as a distinct (sub)discipline of English. Whereas earlier trade publications into the modernist period had been aimed at a broader public of educated readers,¹²¹ by the 1970s, the primary market for national anthologies in Canada had become the classroom. Teaching anthologies thus participate in the process of constructing the value of Canadian literature as it is transmitted within such an institutional context specifically.

Guillory's intervention within multiculturalist critiques of the canon was to reject the democratic “electoral” analogy that understands canon-formation as primarily the work of powerful literary elites making (always biased) decisions about which books are better than others. This hegemonic “conspiracy of judgment” (28), whereby dominant aesthetic norms become masked as “universal” (read: Western) literary values—associated with the conservative defense of the canon and frequently the target of liberal critiques—forecloses a historical materialist understanding of literature's role in constituting cultural capital, in Pierre Bourdieu's sense. That is, an awareness of the social function of literature in transmitting particular cultural values within institutional locations that ensure the reproduction of those values by regulating which texts appear on syllabi, become anthologized, or, say, make it into pedagogical handbooks like *Survival* that make claims about which authors, texts, or themes are important to a particular tradition. For Guillory, the inclusion/exclusion debate over

¹²¹ Most influential in terms of the canon among these modernist collections was A.J.M. Smith's *Book of Canadian Poetry: A Critical and Historical Anthology* (U of Chicago P, 1943), which famously castigated the “native” (nationalist) Romantic tradition of Canadian letters, but did include roughly seventy-five pages of “Indian Poetry and French-Canadian Folk Songs” to open the collection. In this scenario, both “Indian Poetry” and French “Folk Songs” are situated evolutionarily in the quasi-anthropological position as oral precursors to Canada literature, prefiguring the more “literate” tradition of English Canadian poetry that develops into the contemporary “cosmopolitan” modernism Smith argued for.

equitable representation—whose democratic analog is that of expanded multicultural literary “citizenship” I evoked earlier—misses the mark; literary representation in the canon, while important, is not equivalent to the political power of democratic representation. And neither does the inclusion of formerly non-canonical texts guarantee any real redistribution of cultural capital or a radical reimagining of the canon’s function as a repository for the tenets sanctioned by its institutional construction. The particular contents of the canon can and do shift without necessarily altering its role as an ideological apparatus for the transmission of dominant values. In Guillory’s Marxian analysis, these tenets are class domination and the value of “literary” literacy as a bourgeois cultural commodity. In the context of colonization, Gauri Viswanathan has demonstrated that the English canon was shaped by its function in the pedagogical apparatus of imperial education designed to inculcate colonial subjects with British values, a tactic of colonial administration and the “civilizing” mission. In Canada, during the post-colonial nationalism of the 1970s, the canons consolidated by national anthologies developed vis-à-vis the dominant values of those academic institutions wherein they circulated to support teaching Canadian literature as a viable, discrete national field in the context of English studies.

In the Canadian literary context, Guillory’s Bourdieuan critique of the Western canon can be further refined to think through how the logic of cultural capital and the cultural labour of anthologies operates within the national field more specifically. By “field,” I mean the discipline as an area of study, but also, following Bourdieu, the particular social arena in which cultural capital is accumulated and whose unique set of rules organize and define how that capital is valued and legitimized. For Canadian anthologies invested in the project of naming and materializing a distinctive national tradition, the social value of literature has historically been tethered not only to the kinds of middle-class, Arnoldian moral and aesthetic “literary” values associated with the Western canon, but to the political and pedagogical value of representing “Canadian” literature as something that can be defined and evaluated. The cultural capital of literature manufactured and transmitted in Canadian national-

historical anthologies has thus been bound up primarily in the distribution of “national capital,” a term developed by Ghassan Hage in his study *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. For Hage, writing in the parallel settler-colonial context of a dominant whiteness at the centre of multicultural Australia, “national capital” is the currency shaping the subjective economy of national belonging—to have national capital is to be “recognised as legitimately national by the dominant cultural grouping within the field” (53). The “nationality” of members of the mainstream Anglo-white society is secured; they are born with national capital, whereas those marked as different by race, ethnicity, language, cultural practices, and so on must accumulate it by acquiring dispositions and characteristics sanctioned as “national” by the state and dominant society. Hage’s notion of national capital thus distinguishes the symbolic field of “belonging” from the right of citizenship: the latter is formal, legal, and binary—either possessed or not; the latter is based on recognition in the social field, where belonging or becoming “national” is often accumulative, and contingent on proximity (or assimilability) to a canonical type of national subject.

To adopt Hage’s concept of national capital to literary texts and the literary canon in Canada would help to conceptualize the distinction, for example, between “literature in Canada” (writing by anyone in Canada or by anyone who is Canadian) and “Canadian literature” or its familiar shorthand “CanLit”—a cultural formation defined by symbolic proximity to institutionally legitimated notions of a national literature to which “literature in Canada” may or may not belong. Thus, in the evaluative context of anthologization, it is not only that some writers and texts are deemed aesthetically “better” than others, but also more *national* than others. The fundamental question facing any editor constructing a national anthology of Canadian literature is this: What texts/authors are most valuable to representing, usually for the purposes of teaching, a corpus of literature selected under the rubric “Canadian”? In determining what is representatively Canadian according to the criteria by which that value is conceived and for which intended audiences, anthologies and their editors thus participate,

explicitly or tacitly, in the allocation of national capital to authors and texts. Their selections are inevitably based on the perceived social value of particular texts to that cultural nationalist formation, even when the objective is to open up that formation vis-à-vis inclusivity and diversity.

For the settler-nationalist field of CanLit in the 1970s, the lack of national capital extended to Indigenous and other racialized literatures is thus not simply a byproduct of the fact that the new anthologies designed to support the discipline inherited, and thus recirculated, historically delimited canons shaped by over a century of anthological production. Rather, it reflects the discipline's claims to nationality still tenuously rooted in colonialism and the same normative "fallback position" Richard Cavell characterizes as subtending Frye's work—where "White, British, and liberal was somehow never multicultural but, rather, just cultural" (87). The institutional formation of "Canadian literature" in national anthologies has always implicitly stood in for Canadian literature in *English*, an indication of the limited national capital extended to francophone. As Paul Martin argues in *Sanctioned Ignorance*, French writing has never really been part of the discipline's claims to being "national."¹²² A few "ethnic" texts did appear in Atwood's *Survival*, though only inasmuch as their "immigrant" narratives conformed to the settler-Canadian thesis of victimhood and confirmed the immigrant experience as that of a loser. For Atwood, that Canada was a mosaic and offered "no new 'Canadian' identity ready for [immigrants] to step into" (150) was part of the national lack she hoped to redress. The assimilatory American "melting pot" is actually held up in *Survival* as the positive example that Canada, a land without "ready-made ideology" or secured identity, could not seriously emulate. Ethnic writers are confronted with a false choice in Atwood's study: the immigrant can either retain an "ethnic origin" and further fragment the Canadian nation, or attempt to "wipe away his [*sic*] ethnic origin" and "sacrifice his past" to become "Canadian" and be "confronted only by nebulosity, a blank," and thus

¹²² The contemporary anthology that sought to redress this most explicitly was Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman's 1978 *Literature in Canada*, which included some French texts in translation, but was ultimately overshadowed in the marketplace by Bennett and Brown's *Canadian Literature in English* (1982). I touch on both texts briefly later.

“find only failure” (150). And for a field whose (post-)colonial investments were in constructing a distinct national tradition “native” to Canada, Native literature held little social value. Indeed, real Indigenous writing might bankrupt a project whose claim to autochthony is borrowed against the land’s “real” inhabitants, indebted to a line of colonial credit extended in literature since the nineteenth century and secured by the myth that Indigenous peoples did not write and would inevitably vanish.

“Our Native Literature” and Native Literature

Atwood of course did not create these ideas alone, nor was *Survival* by any means the last text to replicate them, though its success helped popularize their currency as pedagogically useful at a critical juncture in Canadian literature’s formation as a discipline. Carl Klinck’s foundational *Literary History of Canada* (1965)—whose encyclopaedic, academic account of Anglo-Canadian writing paved the way for *Survival*’s more popular study, and whose Conclusion penned by Frye provided the conceptual progenitor of Atwood’s “survival” thesis—has very little to say about Indigenous writers in its history of “Canadian” literature. (A category defined by Klinck, unironically in the discourse of his time, as referring to “whoever or whatever is native, or has been naturalized, or has a distinct bearing upon the native” [x]). In both the original 1965 and second 1976 editions of the *Literary History*, Indigenous cultural expression is mostly relegated to the short chapter on “Folktales and Folk Songs,” and exclusively to the past tense, a relic which enters Canada’s literary narrative through the salvage work of Western ethnographers.¹²³ The lone discussion of an Indigenous author comes in a two-paragraph overview of E. Pauline Johnson by Roy Daniells in his chapter on “Minor Poets,” but here it is Johnson’s celebrity status and her “Romantic view of life with the elements of the vast natural landscape” that are important rather than her work as a Mohawk author, or as an author, period. Johnson is less a poet or performer than “a symbol which satisfies a felt need” for what Daniells

¹²³ A sampling of Edith Fowke’s writing in the chapter on “Folktales and Folk Songs”: “Before the white man came to Canada our great plains and forests resounded to the chants of the Indians, and in the frozen north the Eskimos sang in their dance-houses during the long arctic night”; “Indian songs were very short and were usually made up of either a few words repeated again and again or of meaningless syllables” (166, 167).

describes as a distinctive “Canadian sensibility”: based on a colonial yearning “for fresh contact with primitive and unspoiled life, and on the continuing secret desire of all Canadians to reach back into an innocent and heroic world of wild woods and waters before the white man came and the guilt of conquests ... was incurred” (426). For Frye, too, Johnson and her popularity are indicative of “the kind of rapport with nature which the Indian symbolizes” within his “pastoral myth” of Canadian writers unified by a “search for the peaceable kingdom” in a hostile landscape. Like Atwood, Frye realized this myth needed imaginary Indians more than actual Indigenous peoples, who “have not figured so largely in the myth as one might expect” (840).

Looking at the national teaching anthologies appearing in the 1970s within the immediate historical contexts of their production, though, it is striking how the thematics and social values encoded in Atwood’s *Survival* become almost instantly reproduced. Robert Weaver and William Toye’s much-used 1973 *Oxford Anthology of Canadian Literature*, for example, bucks the historical survey norm of chronological arrangement in favour of thematic groupings to guide readers based on ideas popularized by *Survival*: “Alienation. The victim. Endurance. A hostile natural environment,” and also the “Native Indian” as it appears in settler literature, “the themes explored by Margaret Atwood in her arresting study of Canadian literature” (xiii). Catherine McLay’s *Canadian Literature: The Beginnings to the 20th Century* (McClelland & Stewart, 1974) explicitly markets itself as a valuable to students reading CanLit after *Survival*, but searching for the historical literature referenced in Frye’s *Bush Garden* often overlooked in contemporary-weighted anthologies (9). McLay heralds the anthology’s arrival at a moment in Canadian history “when interest in our native culture is at a peak,” opening with a quote from Atwood on the mimetic power of literature to produce a cartography of Canadian identity:

Literature is not only a mirror; it is also a map, a geography of the mind. Our literature is one such map, if we can learn to read it as *our* literature, as the product of who and where we have been ... For the members of a country or a culture, shared knowledge of their place, their here, is not a luxury but a necessity. Without that knowledge, we will not survive. (13; *Survival* 18-19)

As Fee argues of Atwood's national "we," here adopted by McLay in her anthology's exploration of "our native culture," it is one that "clearly excludes Indigenous people. The passage imagines a new map of an implicitly empty territory" (*Literary* 7). Fittingly, the anthology's first entry marks the birth of Canadian literature with "Nova Scotia: A New Ballad," published by *The Gentleman's Magazine* of London (1750) as a clarion call for the colonization of Canada. The song praises Canada as a bountiful land of unlimited resources ("There's wood, and there's water, there's wild fowl and tame") and unrestricted access: "No landlords are there the poor tenants to tease / No lawyers to bully, nor stewards to seize" (38). McLay did include some of E. Pauline Johnson's poems, though her bibliographic headnote is explicit that Johnson's work sits with Confederation-era contemporaries "despite her Indian inheritance" (387). Johnson's social standing, education, literacy, and cosmopolitan career mark her distance from authentic Indianness,¹²⁴ which the book's thematizing situates within the civ/sav binary as an antagonistic force in the heroic struggle between man and nature to be discovered in Canadian literature: a "conflict between civilization and primitivism for the soul of man" (26).

McLay's anthology is exemplary for seeing both the ongoing utility of Romantic nationalist historicism and the logic of national capital. In her introduction, McLay provides what Frye would call an explicitly "anti-evaluative" assessment of the "literary" or aesthetic qualities of early Canadian writing, associating notions of "the best which has been thought and said" instead with the established canons of British and American literature. Why, then, read and teach this Canadian literature?

When we look then at the literature which Canada has produced in its period as a colony and in the three and a half decades following Confederation, it is important to retain a perspective. These writers are not literary giants; we will look in vain for an undiscovered Keats or Arnold or Tennyson, an Austen or George Eliot. . . . But the literature of this period is important, not so much for its eminent artists, as for its *expression of the voice of a people, the record of our society and the world from the unique centre of vision which is Canada.* (14, my emphasis)

¹²⁴ For McLay, Johnson's Indigenoussness is consigned to an identity she may have "declared" without living: "Although she declared a love for native customs, Pauline grew up in very different circumstances to those of most Indian girls" (386).

The aim of anthologization is thus not to demonstrate the existence of a *great* literature, but the existence of a distinctly *Canadian* literature, in keeping with the Romantic tradition that understands literature as the “voice of a people” and national soul.¹²⁵ Accordingly, the educational value of *reading* this literature is less tied to moral acculturation in the traditional, civilizing, Arnoldian sense than it is to the pedagogical function of settler nationalism within the post-Massey, post-Centennial, and indeed post-*Survival* context of the university for which the anthology is produced and circulates as evidence of national distinctiveness. If, as Guillory argues, the canonicity of “literary” works is determined primarily by the “vector of ideological notions which do not inhere in the works themselves but in the context of their institutional representation” (ix)—that is, how and why they are taught—then the settler-colonial locus of this vector is “our native literature” and the claims to autochthony it supports.

And this is a pattern that repeats across the major English Canadian anthologies of the latter half of the twentieth century. The 1955 first edition of Klinck and Watters’ *Canadian Anthology* (Gage) contained no Indigenous writing; neither did its revised 1966 and 1974 editions. Nor did Weaver and Toye’s 1973 *Oxford Anthology*, Desmond Pacey’s *Selections from Major Canadian Writers: Poetry and Creative Prose in English* (McGraw-Hill, 1974), or Lecker and Jack David’s *New Canadian Anthology: Poetry and Short Fiction in English* (Nelson, 1988). Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman’s sweeping *Literature in Canada* (Gage, 1978), a two-volume collection of 140 authors, spanning the diaries of Jacques Cartier to the poetry of Susan Musgrave, does include four poems from E. Pauline Johnson. Daymond and Monkman make no mention of Indigenous literary history, despite foregrounding their objectives to expand traditional notions of canonicity “in terms of contemporary attitudes,” adding more than two dozen French authors in translation and “includ[ing] secondary figures of importance to give a more complete understanding of the evolution of our literature” (ix). An unspecified reference to “[w]orks

¹²⁵ In *Survival*, Atwood frames her focus on texts rather than their authors’ biographies was to give the nation its own voice: “I’ve treated the books as though they were written by Canada, a fiction I hope you’ll go along with temporarily” (4-5).

originating in oral traditions”—excluded “since their special qualities and significance can better be examined within the larger context of folklore” (x)—sidesteps discussion of the orality/literature binary by reproducing it. In their 1978 expansion of the canon, Indigenous authors still remain outside the discursive “our” of “the evolution of our literature.”¹²⁶

Donna Bennett and Russell Brown’s two-volume *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English* (Oxford, 1982-1983)—which, at the time of its publication represented “the heaviest anthology of Canadian literature ever produced” (Lecker, *Keepers* 267)—didn’t include an entry from an Indigenous writer among its over 1,300 pages. In fact, its selections comprised only one writer of colour (Michael Ondaatje). A few poems from E. Pauline Johnson later appeared in the 1990 abridged second edition of Bennett and Brown (with Nathalie Cooke joining as co-editor); the reader is left to assume Johnson’s inclusion, along with new entries for contemporary writers Joy Kogawa, Fred Wah, Rohinton Mistry, and Dionne Brand, was part of the editors’ attempt at “reflecting not only the emergence of new figures but the continuing reassessment of the canon” (xvii). According to Cooke, though, these selections were influenced by Oxford’s request to “exclude some mainstream writers in order to include members of visible minorities” in the revised new edition (Cohen 182 n26), an indication that, in the context of this particular literary institution, the belated national capital extended to racially marked writing was being determined as much by the growing economic value of diversity in the educational market than by a critical “reassessment of the canon.” In the editorial apparatus of both editions of *Canadian Literature in English*, though, Indigeneity surfaces only in veiled references to the “attractions of primitivism” (xii) in narratives of colonial settlement, and insofar as it characterizes the Romantic quest for a “native” mythology to be found in Canadian letters: “As far back as Frances Brooke and Catherine Parr Traill, Canadian writers have expressed concern over the lack of an

¹²⁶ Unlike other anthologies, too, Daymond and Monkman’s *Literature in Canada* intentionally expands beyond poetry, fiction, and drama to include “the travel book, the captivity narrative, the newspaper sketch, the missionary report and the personal journal” (ix). Monkman later published *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English-Canadian Literature* (1981).

indigenous mythology and of a native stock of images, metaphors, and forms; but as readers we will discover, a literary mythology has been emerging for some time” (xii). In both the rhetoric of its introduction and the scheme of its chronological organization—from “(1) The first stirrings of a literary culture before Canada became a nation” to “(2) The emergence of a national literature” to “(3) The initial stage of literary modernism in Canada”—*Canadian Literature in English* works to verify the existence of an “indigenous” tradition produced in non-Indigenous writing, enacted by the reader’s figurative “discovery” on entering the anthology’s pages.

Sanctioned Ignorance, Necessary Disavowal, Parallel Sovereignties

Clearly, searching for the absence of Indigenous writing in Canadian anthologies is not very difficult; but neither is it my primary point here. Looking beyond these texts’ tables of contents to the ideological vector of their editorial motivations, what this history helps illuminate is the extent to which the construction of a literature “native” to Canada without Native literature remained into the 1990s a powerful and entirely learned convention of the national anthology as a genre. Lecker argues that every anthology is “the narrative record of a series of intense negotiations about literary value at a given historical moment” (*Keepers* 340). And, as their editors frequently attest, anthologies are always deeply conflicted, compromised, and often contradictory texts that by nature negotiate tensions and no small amount of what Laura Moss and Cynthia Sugars call “pedagogical juggling”: between inclusion and exclusion; between how individual writers represent themselves and how they become represented by the anthology; between the demands of the market and those of the communities (teachers, students, various reading publics) the anthology imagines itself addressing; between an ideal table of contents and what the material restrictions of publishing enable; between depth, breadth, and diversity of coverage along multiple considerations of history, region, and identity; between keeping or breaking with the canons they inherit; and between a commitment to literature’s often unsettling historical contexts and the present(ist) political and pedagogical imperatives of representation. That Indigenous literature did not significantly inform these multiple tensions for the major English Canadian teaching

anthologies until the last decade of the twentieth century is no error of history, though, and neither can it be chalked up to a succession of individual editors and publishers dropping the ball while juggling.

It is indicative, rather, of the ongoing reproduction of an extraordinary amount of inherited cultural/editorial labour that had gone into making the nonexistence of Indigenous literature seem natural within the conceptions of Canadian writing produced and transmitted through the form, even long after the official political narrative of nationalism itself had become liberalized and pluralized. Canons, while mutable, die hard, in part because they are self-replicating, but also because the judgments that determine their construction are implicated in the values of the institutions they support, upon which national disciplines and desires have been built and maintained against their undisciplining. If I have belaboured a singular point here—that the appearance of Canadian literature in national anthologies has been structured upon a mutually informing combination of symbolic appropriations of indigeneity and disavowals of real Indigenous literature—it has been to historicize these features inherited from the Romantic genealogy of Canadian anthology production and that come to bear upon the genre at the 1990s moment of multiculturalism to which I now turn.

Lecker's positioning of Moses and Goldie's 1991 Oxford anthology as the "first collection of writing by Native Canadians" can be explained in part because of how closely it aligns with that genealogy he studies, despite its collecting "a tradition that had been virtually ignored by English-Canadian anthologists" (*Keepers* 302). In the form of its chronological arrangement and in its title, Moses and Goldie's *Canadian Native Literature in English* closely approximates Bennett and Brown's *Canadian Literature in English*, constructing pan-Indian "Canadian Native" as a parallel "national" historical tradition comparable to "Canadian" (see Fee, "Aboriginal"). Parallel, but nevertheless distinct. Moses and Goldie frame their book as an introduction to a largely non-Indigenous readership—"provid[ing] a space in which Native writers can present to outsiders their view" (Goldie, xiii) and foregrounding "writing going on in this country that just doesn't get heard about outside the

country” (Moses; xii)—yet they understand “Canadian Native” as a “separate stream” that had not yet been, but might one day be, “subsumed by the mainstream” (xiv). Indeed, reflecting on his role as co-editor and the book’s institutional role in constructing a canon of Indigenous writing in Canada, Goldie acknowledges the anthology’s potentially problematic construction of a unified pan-Indian “national” category,¹²⁷ but argues that its “political expediency” made sense for asserting a “sovereign” canon:

[I]here remains an answer in general, which is the defeat of the canon.... [I]he “Canadianness” of the Natives can be linked to this and to the whole issue of Native sovereignty that became so prominent in the summer of 1990 [after Oka]. ... It is not unlike the balance between Canadian sovereignty and Native sovereignty. The larger entity is a given, part of the political structure we all share, whether or not we feel in any sense a participant in its shaping. The smaller, the Native sovereignty, is a necessity of principle, which must be accommodated in order for the larger to be morally viable. So with the canon. (“Fresh Canons” 383)

What is initially proposed as a “defeat of the canon” is, in this particular political analogy, a way of maintaining canonical borders and shoring up existing disciplinary boundaries. *Canadian Native Literature* was designed not to replace *Canadian Literature in English* and its delineation of a national “indigenous mythology,” but to exist beside its Oxford companion—institutionally, politically, and pedagogically. The “smaller” Native sovereignty/canon exists beside the “given” of a Canadian sovereignty/canon that can “accommodate” it without necessarily being altered by it. Indeed, in a similar vein to the recognition politics of Charles Taylor’s liberal philosophy I examined in Chapter 1, this form of accommodation is conceived here not only as a gift to be bestowed by the dominant colonial culture (a “necessity of principle”), but also serves to rehabilitate that culture’s ethical failings: recognizing a parallel Native canon offers moral “viability” to Canada and Canadian literature while keeping their imagined sovereignty intact, along with the ideological structures that have produced the very conditions displacing Native literature from “our native literature” in Canada.

¹²⁷ By contrast, in the introduction *All My Relations* published a year earlier, King explicitly resists positing “what might be called a pan-Native literature” (x), and landing definitively on “Native” identity altogether—rejecting race as a basis specifically. King instead thematizes the collection in terms of kinship and community. While it opens with a transcribed narrative from Harry Robinson that foregrounds King’s emphasis on the oral tradition, *All My Relations* does not attempt to approximate the national-historical survey model in the same way as *Canadian Native Literature* and its chronological arrangement. For a detailed analysis of the latter’s Romantic nationalist model, see Fee, “Aboriginal.”

4. Conclusion: Anthologizing Difference, Selling Diversity

The Year 1990

Bennett and Brown's *Canadian Literature in English* provides important context for my reading of the multicultural anthologies in the next chapters. It is also an Oxford imprint, and the dominant teaching anthology of Canadian literature throughout the 1980s and 1990s,¹²⁸ and the timing of its second edition in 1990 coincides with Oxford's publication of Hutcheon and Richmond's *Other Solitudes*. Also published by Oxford in 1990 was Penny Petrone's literary history *Native Literature in Canada: From the Oral Tradition to the Present*, the first book-length monograph on the subject of Indigenous literatures to appear in Canada. Petrone concludes her book by making an emphatic case for canonical inclusion: "The literature created by Canada's native peoples ... [is] part of our shared heritage. It is time we accepted them, and time too that we accept the literature they have infused [*sic*], as an integral part of what we call Canadian literature" (184). The same year, Canada's flagship literary journal, *Canadian Literature*, published its first special issue on Indigenous writing. Editor W.H. New made a similar argument to Petrone's, claiming that it was beyond time to recognize the contribution of Indigenous writers not simply to "tribal cultures," but to "the past and ongoing literary heritage of Canada as a nation. Recognition of the place of Native literature as an integral part of the Canadian cultural scene is one of the main goals of *Native Writers and Canadian Writing*." Along with Petrone's previous anthologies *First People, First Voices* and *Northern Voices*, her *Native Literature in Canada* and, two years later, Moses and Goldie's Oxford *Canadian Native Literature in English* helped create the material infrastructure for the study and teaching of Indigenous literature as a field in Canada. At the same time, the work of scholars such as New involved interrogating the "and" in his special issue's title that had previously kept "Native Writers" and "Canadian Writing" discrete.

¹²⁸ Russell Brown informed Lecker that *Canadian Literature in English* "has been Oxford's best-selling book since its publication" (*Keepers* 276). More quantitative data can be found in Paul Martin's survey of Canadian English departments in 1997-98, published and discussed in his *Sanctioned Ignorance: The Politics of Knowledge Production and the Teaching of Literatures in Canada*. Bennett and Brown's anthology comfortably tops the list of most frequently taught texts in Martin's overview of 128 syllabi of Canadian literature courses at this time.

“Learning to Listen,” the title of New’s editorial, was a call for recognition made to correct the ways that mainstream Canadian critics had mostly “learned to hear” (4) stereotypes that confirmed expectations: “Only when the margins participate more actively in the mainstream, by implication—effectively altering it—will the mainstream itself come closer to understanding Native experience, Native beliefs, Native perspectives on human relationships, the spirit world, and the nature of nature” (7). The mainstream/margin binary New evoked as a conceptual heuristic appears in retrospect as shorthand for a whole range of critical discourses at that time transforming CanLit studies, including those of postmodernism and feminism, the uptake of postcolonial criticism in Canada, and, as I traced earlier in this chapter, an emerging emphasis on ethnicity concomitant with ascendancy of multiculturalism. For New, a Commonwealth literature scholar by training who worked to widen nationalist ideas about Canadian literature in conversation with global postcolonial studies, multiculturalism had helped make “ethnic” writing “more visible to cultural commentators” in Canada, and had become central to “the ongoing critical attack on received definitions of literary canon” throughout the 1980s” (“Studies” 102). *Native Writers and Canadian Writers* emerged within the context of this multicultural discourse of ethnicity as one of a series of special issues New edited on “ethnic” or “hyphenated” Canadian literatures—Caribbean-Canadian (1982), Italian-Canadian (1985), Slavic and East European (1989), South Asian-Canadian (1992), East Asian-Canadian (1994), Hispanic-Canadian—many of which were published with financial assistance from the federal government’s multiculturalism directorate. Reflecting on the institutionalization of multiculturalism and ethnic studies within Canadian literature in 1990, New put it this way: “As with Native peoples, so with other ethnic minorities” (“Studies” 101). In 1990, New edited the fourth volume of *Literary History of Canada*, which, like his 1989 *A History of Canadian Literature*, shifted the narrative of Canadian literary history toward a more inclusive recognition of Indigenous and other minority writing. Coral Ann Howells locates New’s work as a literary historian and the year 1990 as “definitive moments” of change in which mainstream

literary critics began “redefine[ing] the nation, its heritage, and its literature in response to contemporary Canada’s changing versions of multicultural and post-colonial nationhood” (28).

The year 1990 also represented a significant turning point in the literary history of Indigenous anthologies appearing before Moses and Goldie’s. After Beth Brant’s *A Gathering of Spirit* and Heather Hodgson’s *Seventh Generation* were published in 1989, Jeanne Perrault and Sylvia Vance’s *Writing the Circle: Native Women of Western Canada* (NeWest) and Agnes Grant’s *Our Bit of Truth: An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature* (Pemmican) appeared in 1990, the same year Jeannette Armstrong’s En’Owkin Centre began producing *Gatherings*, a journal of creative and critical writing published by Theytus Books. And while the majority of Indigenous literatures—anthologies and otherwise—were still being published by Indigenous and other small presses like Theytus, Fifth House, Pemmican, NeWest, Press Gang, Talonbooks, and Women’s Press, 1990 was also a year when mainstream publishers and literary institutions began taking serious interest in Indigenous literary and critical writing. Along with Oxford’s publications, McClelland & Stewart printed Thomas King’s anthology *All My Relations*, the first Indigenous anthology published by one of Canada’s big publishing houses.

Moses and Goldie state in their introduction that they were “capturing things at a point when there [was] more than enough material to justify the project but at a point where no one ha[d] sifted through that material” (xii). They were also capturing things in the immediate wake of Oka, at a time when, as Warren Cariou (Métis) argues, Indigenous literature became a “marketing category” (580) and a marketable commodity for a global press like Oxford.¹²⁹ Goldie notes that their selections were informed in part by the “political value” Oka had created for the anthology and for individual texts like Lenore Keeshig-Tobias’s “After Oka—How has Canada Changed?” (xxi). Both the Oka crisis and the

¹²⁹ Moses wryly describes this relationship with Oxford as a *quid pro quo*: on one hand, “Oxford as a world-sized company would be a useful place to do one of these anthologies” (xii); on the other, that Oxford, a “symbol of empire,” would benefit from it—“Well, it’s only a symbol. I mean I feel sorry for those guys now. It’ll probably help them a bit” (xxii). The anthology, now in its fourth edition (with Armand Ruffo as editor), was clearly a timely investment for Oxford.

failure of the Meech Lake Accord made 1990 a year of heightened visibility for Indigenous political activism and assertions of sovereignty within the mainstream Canadian public sphere.

By the year 1990, debates over appropriation of voice and racial representation in Canada's literary institutions also gained the mainstream public's attention with high-profile conflicts that received national press coverage. At the Third International Feminist Book Fair (1988) in Montreal—boycotted by the Congress of Black Women of Concordia due to the exclusionary nature of the event's organization—Lee Maracle famously asked Anne Cameron, author of the best-selling *Daughters of Copper Woman* (1981), to “move over” and make space for Indigenous authors. The protest led by M. NourbeSe Philip over under-representation of Indigenous writers and writers of colour at the Poets, Editors, and Novelists (PEN) 1989 Congress in Toronto resulted in a famously heated confrontation with PEN's president June Callwood. In a number of political and cultural arenas, then, the national literary field was, at the turn of the decade, characterized by debates over what Gail Guthrie Valaskakis (Chippewa) describes as the “relationship between representation, appropriation and access, and the social and political formations which position people of colour and Native North Americans as other and unequal” (285). After the Multiculturalism Act in 1988, when debates over its political present and future were becoming prominent, 1990 thus stands out as a particularly decisive moment when the politics of both Indigeneity and multiculturalism became increasingly visible.

“Multicultural Canadian”: Cultural Capital and the Capital of Culture

Anthologies are material sites where, perhaps more transparently than other genres, the values of their scholarly labour and the interests of public readers that make them valuable commodities meet and so become mutually informing through the double-objective of pedagogy and marketability. Barbara Benedict asks, “do anthologies reflect or shape contemporary literary tastes?” and argues that they “always and inevitably do both” (*Making* 29). They repackage existing works in response to a particular demand, and in doing so inflect the ways in which those works might be read and understood anew.

What I have hoped to show in the brief historical overview of this chapter's final section is that the

year 1990 is a particularly complex moment where this dialectic between *reflecting* and *shaping* materializes in the emergence of “multicultural Canadian” anthologies.

On one hand, 1990 is a symbolic point of what could be considered a significant realignment of the economies of national capital informing the mainstream, settler-nationalist history of anthology production I have traced in this chapter. The publication of *Other Solitudes*, for example, alongside the appearance of new Indigenous anthologies from mainstream publishers, suggests the shifting critical concerns of Canadian literary study and a critical mass of multicultural and Indigenous writing that create a real demand for their appearance. On the other hand, their publication by multinational presses like Oxford is indicative of the growing *currency* of both multiculturalism and Indigeneity, and the economic value of their pedagogical rubrics. Indeed, the *legislative* re-branding of the nation as multicultural in the late 1980s was, as Abu-Laban and Gabriel argue in *Selling Diversity*, part of a marketing strategy increasingly leveraged by the federal government since the late 1980s to enhance Canada’s marketability on the global stage. Thus, under the Mulroney government’s tagline “Multiculturalism Means Business,” the policy was being promoted not only as Canada’s distinctive approach to nation-building, but also as one of its competitive advantage in selling Canada to the world. It’s within this neoliberal moment of selling diversity that the category of “multicultural” literature gains currency in the business of anthology publishing.

The “multicultural” national anthologies I turn to in the following chapters emerge, in this sense, at the site of a number of historical and political convergences: at the intersection of canonical “mainstream” and counter-canonical “ethnic” political motivations of anthologization, attempting to re-narrate Canada itself as multicultural; at a moment when the delimited national capital historically transmitted by the English Canadian literary anthology reorients around the capital of (multi)culture as a marketable commodity; and where the literary politics of multicultural representation confront and negotiate the representation of multicultural politics and its abjuration of Indigenous peoples.

Chapter 4: Multicultural Nationalism and the Kettle Logics of Colonialism: From a Representation of Politics to the Politics of Representation in *Other Solitudes*

[T]o meet Canada on the page is to come to the conclusion that multiculturalism is far better handled by writers of fiction than by writers of laws.

—Pico Iyer, “The last refuge: on the promise of the New Canadian fiction” (2002)

As Margaret Atwood wrote in *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, ‘we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here.’ This awareness is a fundamental part of the Canadian sensibility.

—Marion Richmond, “Preface,” *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990)

In Canada, where popular discourse re-imagines that ‘[w]e have a government who is unlike any government to have walked the face of the earth in its commitment to doing what’s right,’ Kettle Logic illustrates the disavowal and wish fulfillment implicit to the banality of settler discourse. ... In a country that insists on its ‘commitment to doing what’s right,’ illustrating the wish fulfillment and perverse logic that structures its discourse is one step in the movement towards decolonization.

—David Gaertner, “Colonial Kettle Logic: Settler Colonialism as Wish Fulfillment”

Introduction

The 1990 publication of *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* was a watershed moment in the institutionalization of multiculturalism within Canadian literature. For Smaro Kamboureli, *Other Solitudes* “inaugurated a decisive shift in the articulation of ethnic difference in Canada” in that, unlike the many “first-wave” ethnic anthologies preceding it, “it intended not to represent distinct ethnic groups, but to bridge their differences” (*Scandalous* 162, 133). A product of the Canadian publishing arm of Oxford, the academic press with then holding the lion’s share of the anthology market in Canada, and edited by Linda Hutcheon¹³⁰ with co-editor Marion Richmond, *Other Solitudes* was published in the immediate aftermath of the Multiculturalism Act’s legislation in 1988, the milestone event in official multiculturalism’s history the anthology takes as its *raison d’être* and responds to directly. It thus appeared with the mix of political timeliness and academic capital needed to become the “ground-breaking collection” it declares itself on its jacket, and it initially sold extremely well, particularly as a textbook in literature and ethnic studies courses (see Hutcheon, “Multicultural” 12).

¹³⁰ Hutcheon was then arguably Canada’s most renowned literary critic for her work on postmodernism in the late 1980s, notably *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), *The Canadian Postmodern* (1988), and *The Politics of Postmodernism* (1989).

Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn echo a broad critical consensus over the legacy of *Other Solitudes* by crediting it as a text that “heralded a decade of active publication of multicultural writing” in Canada (9). Indeed, the category of “multicultural writing” is one *Other Solitudes*, the first “multicultural” anthology of Canadian literature marketed as such, helped discursively construct. In naming the tradition it set out to represent, it undertook perhaps the most self-conscious attempt to delineate the constitution of literary multiculturalism to that point in Canadian literary study. The significance of Hutcheon’s lengthy 16-page introduction thus extends well beyond its traditional generic function of framing the collection for readers, doubling as an early and formative essay that reflexively attempts to theorize how, according to Hutcheon, the “institutionalization of multiculturalism in Canadian society ha[d] extended to its literature” (15). Re-articulating Canada and Canadian literature as multicultural involved some explaining, particularly so within the genre of the national anthology—a form whose mainstream genealogy, as we have seen, had traditionally been overwhelmingly tethered to producing and reproducing a predominantly white settler-nationalism. Of interest in this chapter is that *Other Solitudes* includes no Indigenous writing, which it positions outside the conceptualization of multicultural literature it derives from the official multiculturalism of the state and adopts as a strategy for opening up the canon and the nation. In this chapter I closely read its editorial framing and then some of the literature in its textual corpus, situating the book first within the critical debates it inspired, to outline the paradoxical patterns of colonial disavowal that consolidate the category of “multicultural literature” *Other Solitudes* constructs within the discourse of its time. While the absence of Indigenous writing appears to contradict the book’s affirmative politics of multicultural representation, it is in fact part of the political discourse of multiculturalism that stabilizes the anthology’s rewriting of literary nationalism.

“Multicultural Furor”: Scandal and State Pedagogy

The reception of *Other Solitudes*, arguably more than any other modern anthology in Canada, was characterized by remarkable and very public ambivalence. The wide recognition of the importance of

its intervention—as a text that consciously centred representation around concerns with ethnicity and race and shifted the grounds of Canadian literary study toward comparative multicultural pedagogy—has been met in kind by the tenacity of critiques it almost immediately elicited. It figures now more as a curious footnote in Canadian literary history, a text whose politics were deemed by most to be outmoded even when it was published. It is better remembered today for the debates it inspired over its complicitous relationship with state multiculturalism, critiques Hutcheon found so “vehement” as to warrant a public response in her 1996 chapter “Multicultural Furor: The Reception of *Other Solitudes*” (10). These criticisms, perhaps unsurprisingly, adhere closely to popular debates over multiculturalism itself in the early 1990s public sphere, and reviewers often approached *Other Solitudes* as proxy through which to evaluate the policy’s utility.¹³¹ Among his many criticisms in a scathing review for *Books in Canada*, W.H. New claimed that the multicultural rubric adopted by *Other Solitudes* promotes a fragmentation of national unity and thus “contributes by its very structure to the antagonisms that most of the fictions themselves seem to want to resolve.” In *The Globe and Mail*, Nazneen Sadiq described the anthology as “yet another sacrificial offering placed at the altar of the great god of multiculturalism,” arguing that categories like “writer of colour” and “visible minorities” *Other Solitudes* discusses are “among the most offensive terms to have emerged in the history of Canadian literature, and the attempt to entrench these as concepts should be curtailed” (C21). Viewed from historical perspective, many of the book’s early readers shared the critical perspective of Neil Bissoondath—expressed in his interview with Aruna Srivastava in *Other Solitudes*, and later expanded in his *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (1994)—that multiculturalism is a divisive policy that promotes national disunity by preserving differences “through a high-mindedness” that engenders “a kind of gentle cultural, ethnic, Canadian apartheid” (*Other* 315). What these critiques protested was not

¹³¹ Hutcheon’s “Multicultural Furor” and Kamboureli’s chapter on ethnic anthologies in *Scandalous Bodies* concisely outline a wider range of these reviews.

so much the literature in *Other Solitudes* or the diverse vision of Canada it sought to present, but the anthology itself and the ideological implications of its editorial alignment with the multiculturalism.

In a retrospective 1996 review published in *Mosaic*, Noreen Golfman distilled the ambivalence typifying much of the anthology's contentious reception. On one hand, Golfman applauds *Other Solitudes* as "one of the first publications to legitimize the inclusion of writings by authors outside the white mainstream of the Canadian literary establishment," and a text that still offers a "rich set of literary materials and helpful accompanying interviews." On the other, it is by 1996 already deemed a "once-fresh anthology" in design and intent, which now conspicuously

reveals its collaboration with the lethal institutionalization of culture itself. Not only does the book carry the publishing imprint of Oxford University Press, but the editors also offer their gratitude to the then Minister of State, Multiculturalism, Gerry Weiner, whose "assistance" one suspects had much to do with the handsome packaging and promotion of this prestigious text. That was then, in 1990—only a few Tory years ago—and this is now, leaving one to wonder whether today Hutcheon and Richmond might be inclined to take back their thanks to state-sanctioned multiculturalism, as well as their unfortunate title, *Other Solitudes*. (180)

Hutcheon, responding to her critics, suggested otherwise, explaining her intentions were to "open up debate" about the "problems of trying to construct a multiethnic and multiracial literary culture" at a particular historical juncture where Canada was attempting "simultaneously to articulate a totalizing national discourse of consensus and to make space for negotiated difference, so to speak, within that consensus" ("Multicultural" 10, 11-12). One of her aims was to show just how much of the canon of Canadian literature has historically been "written from the so-called margins of ethnicity": "There is an argument to be made that the canon in Canada has been, from the first, a creation of women and 'minorities'" (13). Put otherwise, the argument is that the canon has always-already *been* multicultural, though the fact that it had not been understood in these terms suggested to Hutcheon the need for an anthology to compile the evidence and rearticulate the national literature as such. The legislation of the Multiculturalism Act is a formative instance for Hutcheon of the "positive valuing of difference" characterizing "our postmodern world" more generally, and an opportunity to fundamentally re-align

the structures of centre and margin in Canada and make “room for other voices to be heard, voices that may not always have access to publication and thus to a general reading public as well as an academic one” (16). Its motivations for investing in state multiculturalism were thus broadly revisionist in terms of literary history and affirmative in terms of equitable representation.

A good deal of ink has been spilt by critics who, in the vein of Golfman’s assessment, have excoriated Hutcheon and Richmond’s anthology for its adherence to the celebratory pedagogy of official multiculturalism, including for its financial indebtedness to the state’s multicultural funding. None more than by Smaro Kamboureli, who, in a 1994 article subsequently expanded for her formative critique of multiculturalism in *Scandalous Bodies* (2000), argues that the editors of *Other Solitudes* perform a de-politicizing and “double legitimating act” in the service of official multiculturalism: “they endorse the sedative politics of the Canadian state’s appropriation of ethnicity, and they construct ethnicity as a normative identity” (162). Most critics of *Other Solitudes*—and of what Fred Wah calls “Linda Hutcheon’s multiculturalism” to metonymically reference a postmodern recuperation of the margin (“An Interview”)—have similarly targeted the text for its “domestication” of oppositional politics and its alignment with state in the services of an uncritical nationalism.¹³²

In this chapter I am not primarily interested in re-hashing the familiar terrain of these critiques and their motivation to reveal the anthology’s complicity with the state. I consider them well established, though often lacking close engagement with the contents of the book itself, if not also somewhat incontrovertible, given the text makes such an alignment clear in its very design. In fact, my reading here builds from a position that is in some ways the opposite, insomuch as I want to begin by taking at face value that which criticism of *Other Solitudes* has tended to castigate as scandalous: namely, its production’s indebtedness to the political economy of federal multiculturalism, and the authority with which it in turn invests in state discourse to dictate its politics of representation. That is, I read

¹³² This assessment is shared criticism by Beauregard, Daniel Coleman and Donald Goellnicht, Lew, and Sharpe.

these contexts not in an evaluative register as ideological flaws in the anthology's design, but as the material and discursive contexts that inform its publication and explicitly shape its politics of multiculturalism, and that need to be grappled with as such. These contexts help to illuminate the central ambiguity in the text's (re)conceptualization of Canadian literature as "multicultural" I analyze, and that has been all but absent from criticisms of its appropriation of ethnic and racial differences into a "totalized and totalizing heterogeneity" (Kamboureli 173), which is that *Other Solitudes* intentionally excludes Indigenous literature from its collection. Indeed, it is the anthology's recourse to the state pedagogy of multiculturalism and that produces this exclusion, which ultimately comes into conflict with its editorial ambitions to affirm the broad plurality of Canadian literature. Self-fashioning itself as an instance of applied policy, *Other Solitudes* thus replicates the "in/visibility" of Indigeneity within state multiculturalism's pan-Canadian address I outlined in Chapter 1. This absence in turn becomes structural to its mapping of multiculturalism's institutionalization within Canadian literature.

Categories and Concerns

In this respect, the book's title, if "unfortunate" in Golfman's reading, is also entirely consequential. A revisionist play on Hugh MacLennan's famous *Two Solitudes* (1945) and its designation of Canadian nationalism's historical French-English bicultural tensions, *Other Solitudes* also recalls in its title state multiculturalism's origins in the government's response to "Other Ethnic Groups" in Book IV of the B&B Report. The "multicultural" literature it collects similarly focuses on the "immigrant experience, racism, and ethnic diversity in Canada" (jacket) from writers marked as "other" than English, French, and Indigenous. To test what Hutcheon describes in her introduction as the "intersection of the tensions and the riches, the ideal and the ideology" (2) of state multiculturalism, it turns to the mimetic power of fiction (short stories or novel excerpts) from 18 first- or second-generation Canadian writers; each entry is accompanied by an author interview also conducted by "immigrants or the children of immigrants," selected as experts "particularly qualified to probe, to analyse, and to evaluate the

experience of the ‘other solitudes,’” as Richmond says in her Preface.¹³³ The anthology’s primary textual corpus of fiction and interviews is then followed by a final section of three interviews (but not writing) with Tomson Highway (Cree), Jacques Godbout, and Robertson Davies entitled “The First and Founding Nations Respond,” intended to provide perspectives on multiculturalism from writers positioned as qualified voices to speak for the Indigenous (Highway), French, (Godbout), and English (Davies) “nations.” Concluding the anthology, the legal text of the Multiculturalism Act is appended in full, “in order for readers to compare the stated policy with the rest of the volume’s testimony of its lived reality and literary inscription” (Hutcheon, “Multicultural” 12). State multiculturalism thus serves as the pedagogical frame through which *Other Solitudes* proposes “multicultural” literature be read, and materially frames the volume itself: it is bookended by the Act at its conclusion, and by its opening Acknowledgments, which highlight the financial aid of the Secretary of State’s multiculturalism directorate and the assistance of then-Minister of State, Multiculturalism, Gerry Weiner.

Adhering in its selections to state categorizations that exclude Indigenous peoples from the Multiculturalism Act’s policy and legislative mandate, the collection’s lone Indigenous voice, Highway’s, is therefore sequestered within the concluding interviews. Indigenous writers, by nature of their non-admission into the official body politic of state multiculturalism, are thus positioned—structurally and ideologically—beyond the body of “multicultural” literature as it becomes discursively represented by *Other Solitudes*. In light of Hutcheon’s affirmative intentions to foreground “voices that may not always have access to publication” or a readership in Canada, the ambivalence of this exclusion would rest primarily in the tension it enacts between the anthology’s foreclosure of visibility—its reproducing the historical erasure of Indigenous texts from Canadian literary anthologies

¹³³ Arranged chronologically by date of birth, the authors (and interviewers) are: Josef Skvorecky (Sam Solecki), Mordecai Richler (Marlene Kadar), Austin Clarke (Marion Richmond), Rudy Wiebe (Linda Hutcheon), Joy Kogawa (Magdalene Redekop), Katherine Vlassie (Karen Mulhallen), W.D. Valgardson (Judith Miller), Himani Bannerji (Arun Mukherjee), Matt Cohen (Mervin Butovsky), Michael Ondaatje (Linda Hutcheon), Marilú Mallet (Hugh Hazelton), Frank Paci (Joseph Pivato), Rohinton Mistry (Dagmar Novak), Dionne Brand (Dagmar Novak), Janice Kulyk Keefer (Jars Balan), Neil Bissoondath (Aruna Srivastava), Yeshim Ternar (Linda Leith), and Paul Yee (Geoff Hancock).

generally—and its opening to the possibility of Indigenous difference from literary “multiculturalism.” That distinctiveness is implicitly rooted in “national” difference vis-à-vis the discursive category “First Nations,” though, as we will see, that category serves a largely rhetorical function in *Other Solitudes*, which does not seriously broach the politics of Indigenous nationhood in multicultural deliberations.

Notably, only one of the anthology’s reviewers signaled this “omission” as an “error,” noting that, despite “Native writing [being] given pride of place in an interview with First Nation playwright Tomson Highway, the literature remains conspicuous by its absence” in a book whose stated intentions are to reveal Canadian literature’s diversity (Bhojwani 128). The decision is not explicitly addressed in Hutcheon’s editorial framing itself, though she would later explain it in an interview as follows:

I think [*Other Solitudes*] reflects a position that was shared by many at the time, in part because of the particular structure of the debates on Canadian bilingualism that had preceded it: in the historicized discourse of the time, there were (in order of arrival on the continent) the French and the English, and then there were—to use the language of the report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism—all the “other ethnic groups.” The native peoples had to wait for a much later Royal Commission to have their cultures recognized in any major way in these debates. This is why we chose to keep the focus on the “other ethnic groups” but to make sure we included a response to the issue in general from the other founding and first “nations.” I suspect we would construct such a book differently today, because the discourse has changed, though we would likely still aim to recognize historical difference and yet be inclusive (rather than divisive) and integrative (not assimilative).

There is a great deal that can be unpacked from this statement, particularly in terms of how it narrativizes Canadian identity historically in terms of a perceived “order of arrival,” which I will return to. For the moment, however, what is noteworthy here is how Hutcheon reads literature and the anthology’s representative function in a relationship to the nation-state that reimagines the cultural nationalist tradition long informing English Canadian literature’s institutionalization. For Romantic nationalists, as we have seen, literature comes from “the people” and expresses the cultural nation unified politically by the state. In Hutcheon’s approach here, the relationship is inverted—it is the state that dictates the cultural make-up of the nation according to which people and whose cultures (and literatures) are “officially” recognized in any particular historical moment. Thus, “in the historicized

discourse of the time,” Indigenous writing can be excluded from the anthology because—according to Hutcheon’s reading of history—Indigenous peoples had not yet had their cultures “recognized in any major way” by the state. From a critical perspective, this is of course a dubious claim and a shaky rationalization that, in taking its lead from the state, cops to the dominant discourse. For this very reason, though, it is illustrative of what I have called multicultural literary nationalism, precisely because it self-consciously shifts the location of culture from the people to the state, in whom *Other Solitudes* invests the power of national definition via cultural recognition.

Yet, while *Other Solitudes* includes no Indigenous texts, it is nevertheless very much *concerned* with Indigeneity, however: with its place in the narrative of Canada’s multicultural history the editors attempt to delineate; its relevance to the politics of race and ethnicity within Canadian multiculturalism in the book’s contemporary moment; its recurring materialization in the fiction and interviews from the “multicultural” writers the anthology collects; and, perhaps most tangibly, in the closing interview with Highway. In her brief gloss of that interview in her introduction, Hutcheon somewhat benignly states that Highway’s voice adds “another layer of historical complexity to the various questions” raised of multiculturalism across the anthology. At the same time, as the “first voice,” Highway’s presence “underline[s] the historical fact that what we now call Canada has always been multicultural” (3). Thus, it is not only the Canadian canon that has always been multicultural, for Hutcheon, but the nation itself, a “historical fact” based on the presence of Indigenous people whose cultural production is not “recognized in any major way” in the politics of multiculturalism. It is this apparent contradiction, and the editorial conundrums demanded to negotiate it, that my analysis engages.

I thus use “concern” in this sense for its dual connotation of both interest and unease,¹³⁴ as I argue that the *absence* of Indigenous writing in the anthology’s articulation of multicultural literature

¹³⁴ Hutcheon’s introduction emphasizes concern too: “The initial purpose of *Other Solitudes* was to break through what [Raymond August] has called the ‘protective shell of Canadian-style tolerance: acceptance without concern’” (1).

becomes anxiously overdetermined by the various ways *Other Solitudes* attempts to negotiate the real *presence* of Indigenous peoples in Canada's multicultural history. This presence marks a limit to what Hutcheon calls the "ideal and the ideology" of multiculturalism the anthology investigates (2), and thus a point of particular editorial concern for the book's nationalist investment in the representational authority of the Multiculturalism Act to offer a stable pedagogical referent for both the nation and a national literature. The tension that emerges is thus homologous to what Homi Bhabha has theorized between the "pedagogical" and "performative" dimensions of national narration; that is, between the prescriptive authority of dominant discourse to articulate people and cultural production as "historical 'objects' of a nationalist pedagogy," and the performative dimensions of lived experience and cultural signification that always exceed or subvert the nation's pedagogical address (*Location* 208). In *Other Solitudes*, the peripheral positioning of Indigenous peoples and literatures become an unreconciled supplement and "a problem of knowledge that haunts the symbolic formation of modern social authority" (*Location* 209)—in this case, the symbolic authority of multiculturalism to define both the nation-state and the nation's literature. *Other Solitudes* thus enacts the same crisis of representation of state multiculturalism itself: how to offer a unifying, inclusive vision of Canada that rests upon Indigenous exclusion and so disavows the colonial history upon which multiculturalism rests?

1. Framing Multiculturalism

"Official" Multiculturalism and its Other: Canon, Inevitability, Invisibility

Other Solitudes opens with a short preface from Richmond that immediately aligns the anthology's vision of literary multiculturalism with a narrative of Canadian history that culminates in the arrival of the Multiculturalism Act. "Fifty years ago," Richmond begins, "the term multiculturalism—as we understand it in Canada today—was unknown, and a book such as this would not have been considered an important literary endeavour." These opening words signal the mutually constituting dialectic between official multiculturalism and multicultural literature the anthology repeatedly enacts: the state sanctioning of the former legitimates the social and academic value of a "book like this" as an

“important literary endeavour,” and part of the anthology’s self-fashioned importance, in turn, is its literature’s ability to legitimize the narrative of multicultural maturity the Act symbolically ratifies.

Richmond continues by tracing this narrative of multiculturalism’s evolution to historicize the present moment in which the kind of writing collected in *Other Solitudes* has “gained an audience”:

Although from early times Canada has been a cultural mosaic, and early writers such as Frederick Philip Grove and Susanna Moodie before him have had a profound influence, our literature did not reflect this mosaic until the late 1940s, when, beginning with Jewish writers such as A.M. Klein, a new generation of writers looked to their cultural roots for inspiration. At that time Canada still consisted *officially* of only two separate peoples—the French (mostly in Quebec) and English (everywhere else); people of other ethnic and racial origins, however important their role in building this country, had to conform to the two official cultures. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act, declaring as its goal the preservation and enhancement of Canada’s multicultural heritage, was passed only recently, in July 1988. (emphasis original)¹³⁵

Richmond’s preface locates the arrival of both *Other Solitudes* and the Act as logical extensions of this narrative of Canadian progress from an “*officially*” bicultural nation to one defined by multiculturalism. Mirroring the B&B Commission, Indigeneity exists somewhere beyond the terms of reference of this prefatory narrative. Indigenous peoples may exist in the “early times” of the “cultural mosaic,” but remain implicitly “unofficial” to a multicultural history of writing from those “other” ethnic groups who took “their cultural roots for inspiration” and challenged Canada’s English-French dualism.

Hutcheon’s critical introduction similarly replicates this narrative when explaining the contemporary need to “recall and revise” the “idealistic optimism” of MacLennan’s famous title:

In 1945, perhaps, French and English were still the dominant ethnocultural groups in Canada; certainly the only people who could contest their historical claim to founding status were the indigenous native populations. Almost half a century later, however, the multiracial, pluri-ethnic nature of Canada is an undeniable reality. . . . With the cultural diversity that twentieth-century immigration has brought to Canada have come both cultural riches and social tensions that move far beyond bilingualism and biculturalism. When, on 12 July 1988, the House of Commons passed Bill C-93, ‘An Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada,’ it enshrined both an ideal and an ideology. This book investigates the intersection of the tension and the riches, the ideal and the ideology. (1-2).

¹³⁵ Citing Susanna Moodie as an early exemplar of the “cultural mosaic” in seems curious, given Moodie’s privileged status as a white British settler and the clear contempt she held, detailed in her *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852), for the Irish immigrants she encountered upon arriving in Lower Canada in the 1830s. It implicitly emphasizes Moodie’s own ethnicity and status as an immigrant, though, which works to support the notion that all Canadians are equally immigrants—a central thesis of *Other Solitudes* that I address below.

The “indigenous native populations” appear here in the past subjunctive mood of a hypothetical historical counterfactual (“the only people who *could* contest ... *were*”) to an imperialist biculturalism that retains its indicative status as the “dominant” foundations of an official Canadian identity, one that multiculturalism has since diversified. The more “*undeniable* reality” of Canada’s “multiracial” and “pluri-ethnic” constitution is traced through the riches brought by immigration, consigning Indigenous presence to the conjectural (implicitly *deniable*) “historical claim” it might have made to English and French Canada’s “founding status.” This is a political contestation the anthology neither theorizes nor historicizes in its unexplained alignment of the “First” and “Founding” nations together, outside the “multicultural” category. The conjunction is not traced, for example, through other nodes in Canada’s “official” legal or political history as a colony, such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763, a “founding” document which acknowledged Indigenous title and established the treaty-making process as a mechanism to assert British control of the lands now called Canada. Like the B&B commissioners who considered neither “the Indians nor the Eskimos” because it was simply “obvious” these groups “do not form part of the ‘founding races’” (xxvi), *Other Solitudes* similarly parenthesizes Indigenous peoples and writers from both Canada’s official history and the new politics of multiculturalism.

As Hutcheon further explains, *Other Solitudes* provides an opportunity to take stock of how this “official” narrative of multicultural progress corresponds with, even explains, the multiculturalization of the Canadian literary canon: “Inevitably, the institutionalization of multiculturalism in Canadian society has extended to its literature: writers with names like Ondaatje, Richler, Kogawa, and Wiebe are today as much part of the literary mainstream as are those named Atwood, Munro, Laurence, Findlay, Davies or Hodgins” (15). The sense of *inevitability* here assigned to a diverse literary mainstream parallels the editors’ rendering of official multiculturalism as a kind of national *fait accompli*, politically predestined based on their reading of Canada’s social history through the prism of immigration. Richmond’s preface concludes by turning to an oft-cited quote from Atwood’s *The Journals of Susanna*

Moodie that serves as a maxim reinforcing one of the editors' core theses: "we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here.' This awareness is a fundamental part of the Canadian sensibility." Hutcheon further expands upon the centrality of this "Canadian sensibility" rooted in immigration to Canada's historical origins, arguing that "the multicultural history of Canada is not a recent one" (10). In the section "Canadian History *as* Multicultural," Hutcheon strives to disrupt the myth that early immigrants to Canada were joining a "new' society in a New World" (10), dispelling the colonial fiction of "discovery" and *terra nullius*, but replacing it with a new one: multiculturalism is as old as Canada itself, and even predates the nation. What the first settlers discovered was not an empty land, but one whose "native peoples" were already "plural" and "multicultural" (10). In this way, multiculturalism becomes not only Canada's distinctive feature, but indigenized in Canada's history.

Hutcheon then delineates the waves of immigration that demonstrate the extent to which Canada and Canadian culture have always been constituted by "those who came from elsewhere" (10): the first European explorers and fur traders; the "British, American, German, Scandinavian, Russian, Polish, and, especially, Ukrainian" (10) immigrants who settled the West; the "rich racial and ethnic mix" of "Highland Scots, French Huguenots, Swiss Germans, Dutch, Joseph Brant's natives, [and] black Loyalists" who moved north following American independence; the arrival of "African blacks" in the seventeenth-century via the slave trade and, later, the Underground Railroad; and the centuries of global diasporic flows of racial and ethnic diversity to Canada from political and economic migrants or refugees seeking "opportunities for a better life," and primarily settling in metropolitan centres (11). These realities suggest to Hutcheon that Canada, from its beginnings as a nation, "was set up—historically and demographically—in such a way that the eventual formulation of something like multiculturalism might seem to have been *inevitable*" (10, my emphasis). Thus, the literary canon, like the nation-state, has transformed in kind as a product of this historical inevitability, whose contemporary realization is the institutionalization of national multiculturalism.

The work of the anthology, then, is less to radically reconceptualize the nation or its literature *as* multicultural, but rather—and like Bill C-93 itself, “An Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada”—to *preserve* and *enhance* a view of Canada and Canadian literature as always already multicultural. In this particular reading of literary and social history, it is the state that becomes the redemptive actor in transforming both the nation and the canon. There is little, if any, agency assigned to the political or cultural labour of those formerly “unofficial” people of “other ethnic or racial origins”—their writing, organizing, activism, and demands for recognition, for example—in effecting either the historical development of political multiculturalism or the diversification of the canon. Rather, these changes reflect the teleology of the Canadian nation and the long history of its evolving diversity that the Act consecrates: “Th[e] expansion of what is published—and thus, taught and read—as ‘Canadian’ is one of the most exciting and *productive results of multiculturalism* as both an ideal and a reality in Canada today” (15, my emphasis). It is Canada’s official re-definition from two solitudes to many, then, that facilitates an “expansion” of what is considered “Canadian” literature without need of fundamentally rethinking the historical function of the nation itself as a unifying framework or the anthology as an attendant nationalist form. What this stifles is the possibility of any oppositional or counter-canonical valence associated with the book’s “multicultural” literature. Indeed, in Hutcheon’s reading, this literature is a *result* of state multiculturalism itself, a claim deeply inflected by the political economy of the anthology’s own production and the financial support it received from multiculturalism’s Writing and Publications Program.

The separation of the “First and Founding” nations from the “multicultural” writing collected in *Other Solitudes* thus manifests distinctions in state policy that are at once ideological and material. From a purely economic and policy perspective, Indigenous writers, like English and French, are not the targeted recipients of programs supporting multicultural literature examined in the previous chapter, whose rubrics resorted to definitions of those “Canadians with origins *other* than Anglo-Celtic,

French or Native” (*MBCM* 88). Indigenous literature thus cannot be claimed among the “exciting and productive results of multiculturalism” *Other Solitudes* documents. Neither does the history of Indigenous peoples derive from “elsewhere” through the riches of twentieth-century immigration. Yet the anthology’s sidelining of the “First and Founding Nations” outside its “multicultural” corpus produces structural contradictions in light of the universal immigrant identity *Other Solitudes* ascribes to the “Canadian sensibility” of multiculturalism. Most obviously, perhaps, it schematizes the same distinction between the “two” and “other” solitudes the book claims multiculturalism deconstructs, revealing the fact Hutcheon works to refute—namely, that there exists a dominant literary culture apart from multicultural literature. “Multicultural” thus does not signify Canada or the literary canon in its totality, as it first appears to, but remains a discourse of ethnic and racial minorities constructed in relation to a mainstream that *Other Solitudes* argues, contradictorily, can no longer be considered the exclusive province of the English-French majority. Replicating the categorical invisibility of Indigenous peoples patterned by state multiculturalism, the position of the “First” nations in this dialectic between mainstream and “multicultural” literature remains ambiguous, and somewhat distinct. Alongside, but not part of, the dominant “two solitudes,” and outside the multicultural “others,” Indigenous peoples are another solitude, the “other” of both *Other Solitudes* and state multiculturalism.

This categorical invisibility abstracts Indigenous literatures from the affirmative politics of representation the anthology attempts to enact. The editors’ decision to categorize the fiction in *Other Solitudes* as “multicultural” rather than “ethnic” writing is explained as a calculated effort in this vein, intended to unwork the hierarchies supporting the popular belief that only “other” Canadians have ethnicity. Hutcheon traces the etymology of *ethnos* through its Greek roots (“nation” or “people”), which “should suggest that *all* Canadians are ethnic, including French and British; the fact that the word is *not* so used points to a hierarchy of social and cultural privilege that this collection wants to challenge” (2). Thus, all Canadians have an ethnicity, whereas “multicultural” designates those

minorities marked by their difference in social hierarchies that tend to make transparent the ethnicity of French and British Canadians. As Guy Beaugregard rightly notes, the anthology problematizes its own intentions to deconstruct these asymmetries inasmuch as it retains them structurally with the concluding section of interviews, which “provides a privileged space of commentary to representatives of the ‘Founding Nations’ ... to comment upon the ‘multiculturalism’ in their midst” (47). At the same time, though, the conflation of “First *and* Founding Nations” extends this space of presumed privilege to Indigenous writers, despite the massive hierarchies of power and Canadian institutional legitimacy elided by that uncritical conjunction. In terms of anthological representation, the absence of literature from the “Founding” nations in *Other Solitudes* suggests their already achieved canonicity—the secured place of those literatures as charter groups in the foundation of a national corpus now redefined as multicultural. This raises the question of whether this same security extends to literatures of the “First” nations, whose answer, particularly at this point in Canada’s cultural history, is clearly no.

This lack of Indigenous institutional representation is a reality Hutcheon is highly cognizant of, though the editors’ decision to exclude Indigenous writing from the anthology is one that is never addressed in the book itself. The categories of identity *Other Solitudes* adopts vis-à-vis the state’s historical construction of political subjectivity in policy thus normalize a disaggregation of Indigenous literature that appears peculiar to the book’s editorial praxis of enhancing the visibility of a broadly pluralist canon and a conception of multiculturalism as *native* to Canadian identity. To understand the reasoning of this apparent contradiction requires a closer inspection of how *Other Solitudes* negotiates Canada’s colonial history to secure the national coherence of its multicultural pedagogy.

“Our” Diversity as Multicultural Kettle Logic: History, Irony, Disavowal

Richmond’s invocation of Atwood and the spurious notion that “we are all immigrants to this place” locates the anthology’s literary politics of multiculturalism squarely within a unifying discourse of national identity whose subjective “we,” casually universalized to a “Canadian sensibility,” is clearly

inimical to Indigenous presence and amnesiac about colonial history. The normativity of this subject position is reinforced rhetorically across the introduction by Hutcheon's use of a discursive "we" that functions in ways similar to Atwood's, starting with an opening statement of positionality that identifies the editors as "two women with manifestly 'Anglo' marital surnames that mask Eastern European/Jewish [Richmond] and Italian [Hutcheon] backgrounds" (1). The plural first-person editorial voice thereafter blends into a pedagogical "we" that hails an implied reader within a shared field of immigrant identity, which shapes the meaning of claims such as Richmond's, for example, that the book aims "to explore the nature of *our* cultural diversity."¹³⁶ This is an operative "we" that serves two important rhetorical functions in the anthology's move toward nationalist multicultural coherence: it collapses distinctions of various ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural differences constituted by highly discrepant patterns of migration; and it consolidates that "we" within a history of settlement and nation-building that makes multiculturalism native to Canada as a kind of new "New World" myth. In the anthology's pedagogical address, then, it is not simply Indigenous writers, but Indigenous *readers* who remain implicitly outside its multicultural "we" and the particular "Canadian sensibility" it affirms.

The implications of this assumed basis of Canadian multicultural identity begin to shape how *Other Solitudes* works to address the realities of Indigenous presence and Canada's colonial history in conflicted, paradoxical ways. In the section of her introduction devoted to explicating the multicultural origins of Canada's history, Hutcheon puts her own, postcolonial spin on Atwood's axiom:

The history of Canada, *as it was taught to most of us*, is the history of immigration. It *also happens to be* the history of European colonialism and of native displacement and cultural erasure: whether, as Susanna Moodie felt, emigration from Britain in the last century was a 'matter of necessity, not of choice'—'an act of severe duty'—or whether it marked the imperial usurpation of lands already occupied *depends on whose history is being written—and read*. Whichever way the story is told, what we today call 'multiculturalism' figures prominently: all Canadians of other than native stock are originally immigrants from somewhere, and even the native peoples are and were plural—in other words, multicultural. (10, my emphasis)

¹³⁶ Hutcheon's introduction repeats claims such as "most of us can quite easily trace our origins or perhaps even our arrival from elsewhere" (4-5) that further consolidates how the anthology speaks to a Canadian readership through this "we."

The final line here trades in the same logic that has informed the litany of state multiculturalism policy and promotional publications I traced in Chapter 1, wherein pre-colonial Indigenous cultural diversity is mobilized to form continuity with “what we *today* call ‘multiculturalism.’” Hutcheon does not go so far as some of those government texts to position Indigenous peoples themselves as immigrants to Canada, however, and is careful to offer a caveat to Atwood’s (and Richmond’s) universalizing assertion of an immigrant identity (“all Canadians of *other than native stock*”). But the Indigenous history of lands claimed by Canada, along with the violent colonial history of that claiming, remains in a decidedly supplemental position (“also happens to be...”) to the history familiar to “most of us.” Hutcheon’s ultimate resignation to perfunctory equivocation—“Whichever way the story is told”—renders multicultural history narratively in terms of a binary between immigration and colonialism whose logic is disjunctive (either/or) rather than connective (both/and). The more difficult question of how we might understand those layers of migration that herald the “inevitability” of multiculturalism as not separate from, but settled upon, continuous with, or even constitutive of “native displacement and cultural erasure” remains critically unexamined. And indeed, conveniently averted by the fact that Indigenous peoples have always been “multicultural,” too. There is a potentially more productive move toward postmodern historiography, as well, in Hutcheon’s recognition of how such narratives of history become sanctioned in the act of being storied and shared (“written” and “read”). Such recognition opens to the creative possibilities of literature—Indigenous literature, for example—to tell a story of “multicultural” history other than that authorized as “familiar” by dominant discourse. Yet, the intentional omission of Indigenous writing from the collection itself, engendered as it is by that dominant discourse of multicultural history sanctioned by the state, makes this something of an empty promise whose pedagogical efficacy is limited to the reflexive mode of ironic recognition.

These frequent references to an Indigenous multicultural *history* that predates European immigration lead to a number of further ironic assertions about the difficulty of locating the origins of

multicultural *literature* in Canada. In the section on “Dilemmas of Diversity,” Hutcheon argues that “[t]here is no obvious place to start any investigation of the ethnocultural diversity that has created what we call ‘multiculturalism’ in Canada today—or, indeed, what we call ‘Canada’ today” (5)—a statement that seems to contradict the argument that it is Indigenous peoples who reveal “the historical fact” that “Canada has always been multicultural” (3). These ironies of history become more explicit, however, and more pressing, in Hutcheon’s discussion of the multicultural present, and specifically the realities of racism that persist despite the anthology’s cautiously celebratory valuing of the “positive possibilities” (9) of official multiculturalism. For Hutcheon, the literature and interviews in *Other Solitudes*—particularly the contributions and conversations with such writers of colour as Himani Bannerji, Neil Bissoondath, Dionne Brand, Austin Clarke, Rohinton Mistry, and Paul Yee—reveal that “sadly ... the single most significant factor in the response to multiculturalism in Canada today appears to be race” (7).¹³⁷ To expand upon this point, Hutcheon turns to Canada’s history of colonization to note that racism reaches far beyond the multicultural present, affecting Indigenous people significantly:

Racism extends not only to relatively new arrivals to Canada but to those who were here well before any European colonizers; yet this is something Canada’s idealistic multicultural ideology has not really addressed. Canada is not a new country; it is old, in both physical and cultural terms; it has been lived in by our native peoples for longer than it has been colonized. Yet our Euro-centric concepts of history more often than not fail to note this fact and thus condemn to silence the past of the land and its peoples. And for those silenced by this Euro-centrism, the cultural stakes are high. (8)

The possessive idiom “our native peoples” aside, this passage is illuminating for its transparency in revealing the inadequacy of the very statist multicultural rubric *Other Solitudes* adopts to offer an alternative to the historical amnesia of colonial racism that “sadly” persists. On one hand, Hutcheon recognizes the reality that racism affects both Indigenous peoples and more recent immigrants and people of colour, and that such racism is linked to longstanding histories of colonial erasure—both of which “Canada’s idealistic multicultural ideology has not really addressed.” On the other, while

¹³⁷ In her reading of *Other Solitudes*, Janey Lew sees Hutcheon’s frequent use of emotional appeals (like “sadly” in the quote above) as a rhetorical strategy “to construct an image of peaceful consensus around the idea of multiculturalism” (50).

acknowledging that “our Euro-centric concepts of history” may continue to “silence the past of the land and its peoples” for whom the “cultural stakes are high,” *Other Solitudes* effectively performs such a structural and ideological silencing in its exclusion of Indigenous literature from the anthology itself. The social labour performed by *Other Solitudes* thus works to re-inscribe, rather than intervene within, these colonial realities and their origins in Eurocentric concepts of history, with which state multiculturalism—however liberal, inclusivist, or longstanding—ultimately remains continuous.

The introductory framing of *Other Solitudes* thus steps a curious pedagogical dance around Indigeneity to the tune of what David Gaertner has called “colonial kettle logic.”¹³⁸ Derived from Freud’s theory of wish-fulfilment, colonial kettle logic accounts for the range of seemingly contradictory arguments settler-colonialism advances that tacitly work to obfuscate the history of Indigenous erasure these arguments are intended to deny. The circuitous “multicultural kettle logic” in *Other Solitudes* goes something like this: *Pre-colonial Indigenous diversity demonstrates that Canada was multicultural even prior to its beginnings; this Indigenous history is necessary for locating the retrospective origins of Canada as an always-already multicultural nation; these origins secure a continuous historical narrative of diversity whose evolution extends through immigration into the present; this continuous narrative makes the eventual political institutionalization of official multiculturalism an inevitability; an inevitable outcome this institutionalization is a multicultural canon of Canadian literature; this multicultural canon cannot include Indigenous literature because Indigenous peoples are not recognized by official multiculturalism based on their colonial relationship with Canada.* The absence of Indigenous writing in *Other Solitudes* thus supports the coherence “multicultural literature” through an ironic, paradoxical, but ultimately functional pattern of granting and withholding

¹³⁸ The term “kettle logic” is from Freud’s example in *The Interpretation of Dreams* of a joke about a man who borrows a kettle from a neighbour, breaks it, and then returns it while denying responsibility for its damage by making several claims: first, that he never borrowed the kettle at all; second, that he had returned it unbroken; third, that the kettle was already broken when he borrowed it. As Gaertner notes, while each claim on its own is “logically viable, offered together as part of a single defence they cancel one another out. As such, the sum of the whole confirms precisely what the borrower is attempting to deny: that he broke the kettle.” For Gaertner, the logic of settler-colonialism functions similarly through contradiction derived from a wish to become indigenous to the land while denying the violence of doing so through contradictory claims: “1. Colonialism never happened (*terra nullius*) 2. Indigenous people need to get over colonialism (forgive and forget); 3. Colonialism actually benefited Indigenous people (the ‘gift of civilization’).”

recognition whose logic remains deeply colonial and whose structure is disavowal. Indigeneity secures the mythical origins while also marking the political limits of both the editors' multicultural "we" and the expanded national ideal signified by the Multiculturalism Act—a limit the anthology acknowledges reflexively but ultimately reproduces structurally, repeating the colonial erasures multiculturalism would seem to deny in its universalizing address. While this appears paradoxical, it is less a glitch than a feature of state multiculturalism's relationship to colonial history. As Gaertner argues of colonial kettle logic generally, "the contradictions are not incidental to the debate; *the contradictions are the discourse.*"

This pattern culminates in the closing words of Hutcheon's introductory essay, where the anthology's pedagogical and material labour becomes linked most explicitly to a social-justice mandate rooted in the necessary work of creating spaces of literary self-representation for *all* Canadians. "To keep multiculturalism from becoming just a complacent cliché," Hutcheon concludes, "we must work to grant everyone access to the material and cultural conditions that will enable the many voices of contemporary Canada to speak—and be heard—for themselves. That is the purpose of this collection" (15-16). Yet if granting "access" is indexed by the voice afforded by literary representation—the primary means an anthology such as *Other Solitudes* might materially (re)distribute cultural and national capital, or alter those conditions of production and reception, of "speaking" and "being heard"—this purpose is not extended to those for whom Hutcheon suggests the "cultural stakes" are highest given the ongoing "silencing" of colonial history. This contradiction is not born of the kind of complacency with multiculturalism as a benign mode of liberal tolerance Hutcheon cautions against, but is constituent to the book's effort to actualize the Act that functions as its pedagogical hermeneutic.

2. Making Multiculturalism Real

Literary "Inscription": Testimony, Reality, Mimesis

Hutcheon explains that the full text of the Multiculturalism Act was appended to the anthology to enable readers a comparison of its policy ideals to "the volume's testimony of its lived reality and literary inscription" ("Multicultural" 12). "Testimony" and "inscription" are key terms here that code

the ways in which *Other Solitudes* instructs its audience to *read* “multicultural” literature vis-à-vis the official pedagogy of multiculturalism within a sociological, even empirical register. The “literary” qualities of representation become displaced by the ability of the book’s “multicultural fictions” and interviews to function as testimonial and empirical evidence of lived experience, as case studies of ostensibly transparent, (auto)ethnographic representation from the “other solitudes.” In fact, the question of literary *form*—so important to Hutcheon’s work in Canadian literary postmodernism—is not meaningfully raised in the introduction of *Other Solitudes*. The anthology’s bias toward realist fictional representation becomes an extension of its editors’ assertion that “this book is an exploration of the meeting-ground of experience and literary representation in individual writers” (4). Hutcheon cautions against the essentialist fallacy of granting individual authors “representative roles” (4) as literary spokespeople of their ethnic or racial communities. Yet *Other Solitudes* trades pedagogically in a mimetic fallacy that instructs reading for the “experiential” merits of multicultural *fiction*—which tacitly stands for multicultural *literature*—evading questions of genre (“What does multicultural poetry look like?”), specifically, but also of how literature mediates representation generally.

Indeed, for a *literary* anthology, the 16-page introduction to *Other Solitudes* has very little to say about literature. It maps “multicultural” literature against Canada’s socio-political history rather than Canada’s history of writing, reception, or criticism. Hutcheon gestures briefly to the frameworks of “postmodernism” and “postcolonialism,” but only as contemporary “phenomena” that help situate the politics of multiculturalism within a broader historical revaluing of the mainstream/margin binary:

I introduce those two ‘post-’ words here because the literary products of Canada’s multicultural ideology can be seen to partake in both phenomena. Their common valuing of the ‘different’ and what has been considered marginal over what is deemed central has marked a major shift in cultural thinking; their common use of rhetorical strategies such as irony and allegory ... has marked much Canadian writing. (9-10)

There is a collapsing of both “post” words here that belies the often contentious debates between postcolonial and postmodern theorists at this juncture in Canadian critical history (debates Hutcheon

played a large part in at the time *Other Solitudes* was published¹³⁹). But the more revealing slippage for understanding the anthology's politics of representation is that between narrative literature and the nation-state's narrative of multicultural history: texts become "the *literary products of Canada's multicultural ideology*" more than creative expressions of diverse authors writing from within (or against) that ideology. The editorial framing of *Other Solitudes* works determinedly in this way to instrumentalize writers and their writing as didactic with respect to the "undeniable reality" (2) of multiculturalism, constructing authors as literary informants and their fiction as reportage. Repeatedly, Hutcheon stresses an intention to examine "both the *lived* experience and the *literary* expression of multiculturalism," to show "not only how multiculturalism is *lived* but how it is *written into* Canadian life" (1, 6; emphases original). The book's privileging of short fiction—and mostly realist fiction that eschews the kind of formal play Hutcheon values in the postmodern—thus becomes an investment in the power of mimesis to *literally* inscribe multiculturalism into the national consciousness and offer a stable scene of representation with which to examine the multicultural reality of Canadian social life.

Other Solitudes is thus remarkably forthright, even adamant, in its intentions to keep with what Robert Lecker describes as the longstanding nationalist "code" of English-Canadian literary anthologies that turn to literature primarily as an epistemological and pedagogical basis for knowing the nation. Lecker calls this nationalist belief in the legitimating power of mimesis "making it real" ("it" being Canada), the title of his book on canon formation. He argues that canonical value in Canada has been underwritten historically by a strong conservative privileging of a "national-referential aesthetic" (4); that is, writing that either directly addresses the nation thematically or renders its social and physical geographies real formally. For Lecker, the rise of poststructural theory throughout the 1980s and 1990s, within the context of wider social critiques of both the canon and the nation, inaugurated a

¹³⁹ See the exchange between Hutcheon and Diana Brydon in their essays appearing in Ian Adam and Helen Tiffen's *Past the Last Post: Theorizing Post-colonialism and Post-modernism* (1991): Brydon, "White Inuit"; Hutcheon, "Circling."

shift in how anthology editors represent the nation in a period of increasing skepticism toward the enthusiastic Romantic nationalism of earlier anthologists. Contemporary Canadian anthologists have “gradually displaced the value of nationalism into the value of mimesis”—its “formal equivalent”—as “[m]imesis is the means by which critics [and teachers] affirm that the subject of their inquiry is real” (*Keepers* 9, 5). Despite their rejection of overtly nationalist and unifying thematics, Lecker ventures, contemporary anthologists have tended to retain a bias towards selections that *reflect* the nation and invite reading for it in ways that experimental or avant garde writing might confound.

While I challenged the applicability of Lecker’s nationalist “code-keeper” thesis across all Canadian anthologies in the previous chapter, his argument is particularly compelling in relation to *Other Solitudes* (a text he does not analyze), which wears both its nationalist and mimetic intentions quite explicitly on its sleeve. For Hutcheon, literary fiction becomes a site where the “extremes of ‘hype’ and cynicism” characterizing debates over multiculturalism are made “real and immediate” (4) for Canadian citizens: “The multiracial and multiethnic nature of this country *is made real to us*—is written into our consciousness of what it means to be Canadian—by Canadian writers” (5, my emphasis). Reading *Other Solitudes*, we need not ask, as Lecker does, whether its objective to make the multicultural nation “real” is hidden in the mimetic bias of its selections; the editors make this reflective capacity of fiction a constituent pedagogical motive for both representing and *reading* multicultural literature. They have less displaced the ideology of English Canadian nationalism into the value of literary mimesis than made the latter an overt facilitator of their multicultural literary nationalism. Like the Canadian state, *Other Solitudes* instead rewrites English Canada as multicultural Canada, the national referent—literally appended in the text of the Multiculturalism Act—their anthology works to render real.

The implications for Indigenous representation vis-à-vis the exclusion of Indigenous peoples from official multiculturalism are apparent in this scenario, and in keeping with the longstanding tradition of anthological erasure I have traced in the previous chapter. As Fee argues, if “Indigenous

people [are assumed not to] write literature, they cannot contribute to the map of the Canadian imaginary,” or even raise questions about how that map has been drawn (*Literary* 7). And, following Hutcheon’s argument in *Other Solitudes*, if literary representation offers “testimony” to multiculturalism’s reality—the means by which the lived experience of multiculturalism is “*written into* Canadian life” (6)—withholding representation can also write Indigenous experience out of Canadian multiculturalism altogether. In this way, the editorial exclusion of Indigenous fiction from *Other Solitudes* offers an ontological solution to the epistemological challenge Indigeneity poses to multicultural pedagogy in Hutcheon’s introduction: Indigenous experience is no longer a problem of knowledge because it doesn’t exist, at least within the fusion of “lived” and “literary” experience *Other Solitudes* documents to make multiculturalism real. Indigenous *literary* presence can only be inscribed in the anthology to the extent that it appears in the testimony of other “multicultural” writers.

Indigenous “Encryption”: Performance, Absence, Relation

Critics of *Other Solitudes* have tended to seize on Hutcheon’s privileging of the experiential in fiction for its potential to reify and essentialize ethnic subjectivity.¹⁴⁰ In *Scandalous Bodies*, Kamboureli sees Hutcheon’s editorial labour as complicit with official multiculturalism’s demand for transparent articulations of ethnic or racial identity as something stable and thus manageable, open to co-option. *Other Solitudes* uncritically “redefines the Canadian nation as a multiethnic nation” according to Kamboureli, privileging the same “postmodernist mode of ironic pleasure” she reads in the “sedative politics” of the Multiculturalism Act, where the “counter-history of minorities diversif[ies] the social imaginary without actually challenging it. Quite the contrary: ethnic differences are appropriated in order to enhance the dominant society’s cultural capital” (170). To the extent that it critiques the

¹⁴⁰ W.H. New, for example, critiques the book for its anti-“literary” qualities, denouncing the fiction in *Other Solitudes* as “more like animated sociology” (“Other”). While this sociological or (auto)ethnographic approach is often irksome to literary scholars and critics of multiculturalism, it is not necessarily so in the discipline of Canadian ethnic studies, where *Other Solitudes* circulated widely as a textbook. See Padolsky, “‘Olga in Wonderland’: Canadian Ethnic Minority Writing and Postcolonial Theory,” and Loriggio, “The Question of the Corpus: Ethnicity and Canadian Literature.”

anthology's editorial apparatus, I largely agree with Kamboureli's assessment. Hutcheon's intent is, as we have seen (and as she admits), to reflect, rather than to critically redefine, state multiculturalism.

However, Kamboureli's formative critique of *Other Solitudes* via Hutcheon's postmodern multiculturalism, while incisive, is ultimately focused almost exclusively on the book's editorial framing and meta-textual relationship to Hutcheon's theorization of the postmodern. The over 300 pages of literature and interviews collected in *Other Solitudes* open to the possibility that the creative writing and critical dialogue collected in the anthology might exceed or contest its editorial intentions. One of many examples is Himani Bannerji's interview with Arun Mukherjee that follows Bannerji's "The Other Family," a painful short story focusing on a child's experiences of racialization and desires for assimilation into "white" Canada. The interview consistently broaches resistance to the "ossificatory" (148) effect Bannerji views multiculturalism imposing upon ethnic and racial subjectivity, as well as official multiculturalism's tendency to "contain and marginalize" people of colour (146). "The very fact that this interview is a designated activity," notes Bannerji, "one day picked out of the everyday life of people like us who are daily perceived with so much disrespect, suggests to me that it is a way of 'managing' and subsuming us" (146). Bannerji thus explicitly aligns the interview, and by implication *Other Solitudes*, within this desire, and such contestation of the anthology's editorial intentions becomes part of the debate that structures its discourse. The dialectic between literature and editorial apparatus in any national anthology textualizes the "contest of narrative authority between the pedagogical and the performative" Bhabha defines as the constitutive double-speak of nation-narration (*Location* 148). Writers and their writing tend to make recalcitrant objects for coherent pedagogical inscription precisely because of literature's performative flexibility; part of the paradox of anthologies is that their selections invariably speak in complexities that refuse to accede to the stability of their rubrics.

Without discounting those critiques of the anthology's reifying editorial tendencies, I want to nevertheless argue, perhaps against that grain, for the importance of reading the fiction and interviews

in *Other Solitudes*—the “literary” and/as the “lived”—precisely for the value Hutcheon attributes to it. Namely, for how it invites reading for realist inscription—not of the Multiculturalism Act’s ideals, but of those everyday realities captured in the expression of authors as they negotiate the hegemonic social and political attitudes that shape the contexts in which they live and write. Such reading need not subsume creative expression to conformity with the mimetic multicultural values Hutcheon attributes to fiction. Rather, it involves attending to what Donna Palmateer Pennee elsewhere calls “the pedagogical necessity of reading closely the figurative dimensions of a work of [realist] literature as marks of history’s incorporation into the everyday-ness represented therein” (35). Though *Other Solitudes* contains no Indigenous writing, Indigenous presence flickers across its textual corpus, agitating its pedagogical sedations of colonial history and Indigenous experience. In both subtle and overt ways, these various citations work to “make real” some of the social relations that both the anthology and the Multiculturalism Act elide, reconfiguring the structural abstraction of “Indigenous” from “multicultural” Canada and revealing the colonial contexts in which multicultural writing takes shape.

Frank Paci’s “The Stone Garden,” for example, which presents the childhood narrative of young Marco Trecoci and his Italian Canadian friends who steal fruit from a garden, opens with a detailed description of “The Circle.” A collection of boulders serving as the gang’s usual meeting place, The Circle had been “excavated in making the gulley for the east-west line” in the West End neighbourhood of Sault Ste. Marie, whose industrial present Paci figuratively unearths:

You could sit on top of the boulders—all of them five feet high—and pretend you were on horses or on the high seats of a Grand Council. Over a year ago we had built our fort out of burlap and boards and corrugated tin siding over the boulders, but some older kids had wrecked it. Story had it that the Ojibway Indians had formed the circle in protest against Francis H. Clergue who had built the original paper mill in the 1890s over a vast Indian burial ground. The Indians and *coureurs de bords* [sic] used to portage the rapids at the lock site just south of the rapids where Clergue, an enterprising American lawyer, had built his vast industrial empire of paper mill, iron works, power and light plant, railways, mines, and steel plant. It was these industries that would eventually bring the Italians to settle in the West End, brought them at the turn of the century, later between the wars, and even later after the Second World War like my father. I didn't know that at the time, of course, but only learned it much later. (219)

For Paci, excavating the history of *The Circle* becomes a way of situating Italian immigration to Sault Ste. Marie within a historical pattern of industrial-capitalist development of Indigenous lands. Here, Indigenous history returns in the form of an urban legend (“Story has it...”), haunting the realism of the narrative present with those exhumed and “unsettled remains” of colonial settlement.¹⁴¹ There is an almost Gothic mode to this form of recognition, where Indigenous peoples appear narratively “as shadows or silhouettes—as spectres,” in Richard Day’s terms: “And, like spectres, their features, as well as the lands they ‘haunt,’ remain indistinct yet somehow troubling” (“BC Land” 5). There is no space here, as in *Other Solitudes* generally, for Indigenous literary self-fashioning—Indigeneity remains figured within the spectral trope of haunting, returning in this instance as multiculturalism’s repressed.

A similar, if not subtler and more complex, dynamic arises in Joy Kogawa’s “Obasan” (1978), the story that would provide the basis for her 1981 novel of that title. Following the death of her uncle that precipitates the narrative, Naomi Nakane imagines the mortal descent of Uncle’s last moments as a process of “growing top to bottom,” a reversal through recollection within a mind “rooted in an upstairs attic of humus and memory, groping backwards through cracks and walls to a moist cellar”:

Back to the fishing boat, the ocean, the skiff moored off Vancouver Island where he was born. Like Moses, he was an infant of the waves, rocked to sleep by the lap lap and “*Nen, nen, korori*,” his mother’s voice singing the ancient Japanese lullaby. His father, Japanese craftsman, was also a son of the sea which had tossed and coddled his boatbuilding ancestors for centuries. And though he had crossed the ocean from one island as a stranger coming to an island of strangers, it was the sea who was his constant landlord. His fellow tenants, the Songhee Indians of Esquimalt, and the fishermen, came from up and down the BC coast to his workshop in Victoria, to watch, to barter, and to buy. (88)

This passage, while brief, is significant in “Obasan” for signaling how Naomi traces her family’s genealogy and the diasporic memory of Japanese Canadian subjectivity in relation to not only Canada, but to Indigenous history. While the “Songhee Indians of Esquimalt” remain on the periphery of narrative and memory, their appearance indexes a historical reality of Asian-Indigenous relations figured here as “fellow tenants,” whose common “landlord” is the sea. This is a complicated rhetorical

¹⁴¹ See Sugars and Turcotte, *Unsettled Remains: Canadian Literature and the Postcolonial Gothic* (though Paci is not discussed).

gesture of recognition: it displaces a dominant reading of Japanese Canadian immigration solely in binary relation with the state—the most immediate and legible political frame Kogawa’s narrative of World War II internment invites—by making intelligible alternative and longstanding histories of relation and economic exchange with Indigenous peoples. At the same time, it articulates that long history through an indigenizing discourse of “tenancy” and belonging to the land (or in this case, the sea) that may problematically collapse distinct histories and epistemologies of tenure across discrepant, transpacific contexts. Despite—or perhaps because of—these complexities, Kogawa’s laden citation here, as Marie Lo has argued of Indigenous figures in Asian Canadian literature generally, “reconfigures Asian immigration within a colonial settler history”; and thus “illuminates the particularities of Asian Canadian racial formation” (96) that are not entirely reducible to the circumscribed “Canadian sensibility” of immigrant belonging by which *Other Solitudes* codes “Obasan” as multicultural fiction.¹⁴²

While mostly lacking in “real” Indigenous writers or peoples, then, *Other Solitudes* incorporates a number of “dead Indians” into multicultural literature, to use Thomas King’s term; literally deceased, in stories like Paci’s, but also the fictional simulacra of “authentic” Indigenous peoples found in “the stereotypes and clichés that North America has conjured up out of experience and out of its collective imaginings” (*Inconvenient* 53). In W.D. Valgardson’s loosely autobiographical “The Man from Snaefellsness,” the Icelandic-Irish protagonist’s experiences of ethnic discrimination in rural Manitoba are mediated by his memories of childhood days spent away from society “playing cowboys and Indians” with friends in the wilderness (126). Josef Skvorecky, when asked by Sam Solecki what he knew of Canada before arriving from Czechoslovakia, relays that his image of the nation was shaped by the “romantic details” of his childhood spent reading nature writing and “novels about mounties and trappers and Indians and Indian girls” (24). These references are ordinary, even unreflexive. But in

¹⁴² In the past decade, a growing scholarly conversation in Canadian and wider hemispheric studies has emerged around Asian-Indigenous relations in terms of literature and the politics of alliance. Kogawa’s *Obasan* and, more substantively, its sequel *Itsuka* (1993) have received critical attention in these conversations, though not this short story “Obasan.” Along with Lo’s article, see Iyko Day; Lai, “Epistemologies”; Phung; Wong; and Wong and Christian.

their ordinariness and accumulation they register the pervasive colonial binaries embedded in the banality of discourses defining the “immigrant experience” *Other Solitudes* places at the centre of multicultural identity. In the experiences of Valgardson and Skvoreky, the fraught dynamics of discrimination and assimilation are premised on an awareness of the ubiquitous images of the Indian upon which dominant discourse in Canada rests. Both authors reveal that part of their challenge of being “Canadian” is the process of negotiating or acquiring a distinctly colonial subjectivity.

The absence of any Indigenous literature that might represent *itself* in *Other Solitudes* is made most palpable in the author interviews, which frequently focus on the politics of representation shaping charged debates over appropriation of voice that dominated Canadian literary discourse at the time the anthology was compiled. Hutcheon’s interview with Rudy Wiebe, for example, wherein Wiebe aligns his experience being Mennonite in Saskatchewan as a shared sense of “displacement” with Métis peoples, becomes a platform for Wiebe to mount a lengthy defense of the liberal writer’s right—necessity, even—to imagine “the ‘Other’” (85). Conversely, Dionne Brand’s voice speaks in solidarity with the many Indigenous writers and critics imploring Canadians like Wiebe to “move over,” vehemently castigating the numerous and “destructive” “distortions of native life in interpretations by white writers”: “If any white writer feels that he has the right to interpret native life, the shame of those distortions should make him pause, blush, and halt in his tracks. No amount of liberal good will can erase this” (227). These debates were not localized to *Other Solitudes*, and the cross-talk playing out across its pages largely reflects broader conversations in which the book is historically embedded. What is perhaps most noteworthy about these exchanges when read in the context of this anthology, though, is that they make concern over Indigenous literary self-fashioning a central feature of the discourse of “multicultural” literature manifested in a book that excludes Indigenous literature. The debates over Indigenous literary “voice” in *Other Solitudes* take place in *place of* the literature itself, its absent signified.

Austin Clarke makes this spectral absence deeply felt in his interview, in which he is asked to comment, from his “lived” experience as a Barbadian immigrant and Black Canadian, upon Atwood’s claim that “we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here.” Clarke notes that it is rare for “a certain kind of Canadian” such as Atwood (i.e., white, Anglo) to assert themselves as immigrants, too, and sees this rarity as constitutive of the “tenuous claim” English Canada makes “towards superiority or possessiveness or sovereignty”: “the arrogance of possession, the arrogance of imperialism, the arrogance of mercantilism—which is a precursor to nationalism, and if you will pardon the expression, this is the arrogance of the white man” (68). At the same time, while critiquing this Atwoodian “Canadian sensibility,” Clarke also acknowledges his own implicatedness in it:

[I]t is easy for Canadians, and ... not only white Canadians but all Canadians—black, Italian, Jewish, Portuguese, Indian, from the East, that is—it is easy for us, without any guilt or remorse, to live in this country without acknowledging the presence of the founding race, and certainly without acknowledging the historical significance of the native people. So, to some extent, Atwood’s lines are very compelling. I consider it to be a weakness in myself, a vacuum in my education, an immorality, that I cannot say today, in 1989, that I know one Indian. (68)

Clarke’s admonishment of his self-described “immorality” is a reflexive acknowledgment of complicity in Canada’s settler-colonial project, and one that registers the colonial hierarchies that can impede upon the realization of decolonial solidarities between Indigenous peoples and “multicultural” Canada. Indeed, Clarke views his own lived experience as an example of just how uncomfortably “compelling” the denial of Indigenous presence at the heart of the multicultural sensibility *Other Solitudes* interrogates may be, even as the disavowals structuring that position become acknowledged.

These returns of Indigenous peoples and histories across *Other Solitudes* do different kinds of political work, ranging from trite recognition to substantive anti-racist political contestation. And reading for them does not recuperate a decolonial praxis from within the anthology where it doesn’t exist as a pedagogical aim. Rather, it illustrates that collectively, and often covertly, the realities inscribed by *Other Solitudes* produce a multicultural literary discourse that regularly refuses to overlook the real and symbolic violences of colonialism as they materialize in both mundane and penetrating

ways. These inscriptions make the anthology's void of Indigenous literary representation felt in spectral terms—a reality that is by no means innocuous, given the ghostly reminders and Dead Indians must be understood as constitutive of the indigenizing project of multicultural nationalism that requires Indigenous death or absence to make possible. Indeed, *inscription* variously reveals what Scott Toguri McFarlane describes as the *encryptions* of official multicultural discourse, staging the unassimilated excesses “‘encrypted’ in the body politic” (26) that performatively return to haunt the authority *Other Solitudes* invests in the state to name and discipline appropriate objects of nationalist pedagogy.

3. Conclusions and (Un)expected Resolutions

Yet Indigenous “voice” is not silenced from the collection entirely. “The First and Founding Nations Respond” appears near the end of the book, following the fiction/interviews and immediately preceding the text of the Multiculturalism Act, offering a bridge—both formally and conceptually—connecting the anthology's particular multicultural fictions to the Act's pan-Canadian declarations. They occupy a space that is therefore both supplementary and constituent—secondary to the articulation of multicultural literature but necessary to the project of representing multicultural Canada, wherein Indigenous peoples are, ambiguously, neither minority “multicultural” subjects nor majority “founding” Canadians. It's in this final section where Hutcheon's caveat that writers in *Other Solitudes* were not “meant to speak for any group as a whole” (4) becomes an untenable editorial conceit, given the appearance of three single voices explicitly positioned as respondents on behalf of their “nations.”

“The First and Founding Nations Respond”

And for the most part, these voices play to type. For Jacques Godbout, multiculturalism is a distraction from Quebec's struggle to protect of the French language (359). Robertson Davies assumes the part of conservative Anglo-Celtic patriarch resolutely in what can only be described as a bizarre and racist interview. Though he starts by balking at the suggestion he represents “a symbol of the British establishment in Canada” by claiming that in “the eighteenth century, I had some Red Indian ancestry”

(362), Davies proceeds to frame colonization in Canada as “the inevitable impact of modern civilization” upon “primitive” people “who have not advanced beyond the stone age” (364); to resent Canada being “exploited by the Indians” in demands for recognition in the present (“they’re working on our Calvinist sense of guilt”) (366); to describe multiculturalism and state support for marginalized communities as “hand-outs,” “guilty conscience,” and “babysitting people that cannot manage for themselves” (362); to argue that Anglo-Celtic immigrants and their descendants (like him) who were “Canadian” before the arrival of multiculturalism embody a more authentic struggle for cultural continuance (“We came here out of sheer necessity. Nobody paid us to stay Scots or English or Irish or Welsh” [363]); and to perpetuate the belief that Canada, as a Northern country, is better suited to Northern and Western European immigrants than “people who come from distant lands” (362).¹⁴³

In light of the anthology’s objectives to probe and even celebrate the ideals of multiculturalism, it’s worth asking what purposes are served by including an interview such as Davies’. As a mainstay of the English Canadian literary canon—“those named Atwood, Munro, Laurence, Findlay, Davies or Hodgins” (15)—that Hutcheon argues has already been transformed by the multicultural writers in *Other Solitudes*, Davies earnestly lampoons himself as an anachronism; the sincerity of his Red Tory faith in a history of white Canadian civility bounded along colonial borders of race makes self-evident the outmodedness of the kind of liberal tradition he comes to represent. Appearing after a book’s worth of literature and interviews dealing variously with questions of racial and ethnic diversity framed within the politics of multiculturalism, Davies is offered up—offers himself up—as literal “canon” fodder.

Read in the context of the concluding section of interviews, however, Davies’ eagerness to express forms of closed Canadian conservatism creates an especially dramatic juxtaposition with Highway’s interview beside it. Highway, rather *unlike* Davies (and, to a lesser degree, Godbout),

¹⁴³ The Social Darwinist links Davies makes between racial determinism and immigrant suitability in the North fall within that Canadian tradition I traced in the Introduction to Part 1, espoused Haliburton, Woodsworth, Gibbon, and others.

expresses nothing but excitement for the exchanges and cultural mixing characterizing contemporary Canada, for both himself and for Indigenous peoples more generally: “[W]hat I really find fascinating about the future of my life, the life of my people, the life of my fellow Canadians is the searching for this new voice, this new identity, this new tradition, this magical transformation that potentially is quite magnificent” (354). Given Hutcheon’s editorial framing—her assertion that there is validity to the notion that colonial Canada’s history is one of “a tolerant, welcoming nation” (11), with recognition that Indigenous history disrupts this narrative in ways multiculturalism has not substantively redressed—the “First” and “Founding Nations” respond in what may seem like counterintuitive ways. It is Highway’s Indigenous voice, rather than Davies’ or Godbout’s, that ultimately stands alone in doing legitimating labour on behalf of the multicultural ideals *Other Solitudes* sets out to test.

Highway’s selection as the representative voice of a (the?) “First Nation” is curious in the context of an anthology of “Canadian Multicultural *Fictions*” for more than one reason. Most obviously, in 1990, eight years prior to his first novel *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, Highway was not yet a fiction writer, making him the lone exception in the anthology in terms of genre. A number of Indigenous writers had at that time started to receive mainstream recognition for their fiction, including Jeannette Armstrong, Beth Brandt, Basil Johnston, Thomas King, Lee Maracle, and Jordan Wheeler, among others. Some, like Maracle, had been key participants in the debates over appropriation taken up in the interviews throughout the anthology, actively shaping mainstream cultural discourse and articulating a strong anti-colonial politics. Highway, by comparison, claims outright in his interview that he is “not a political person, by any stretch of the imagination” (355)—a debatable statement that is nevertheless made conspicuous by the interview’s ostensible purpose to respond directly to the politics of Canadian multiculturalism. Indeed, while positioned as a “First Nations” respondent, Highway identifies himself uncomplicatedly as “Canadian,” and is never identified by nationality within the anthology’s editorial or bio-bibliographic apparatus; he is simply a “native playwright” (3). Thus, while *Other Solitudes* makes a

categorical distinction between Indigenous and “multicultural” literature under the political aegis of “First Nations,” Highway’s self-declared apolitical stance, together with the elision of his Cree nationality, supports a discursive slippage between “First Nations” and a more reified pan-Indian “nativeness” conceived as a less politically or legally determined racial or ethnocultural group.

Curious, then, but also strategic. While not yet a novelist, Highway, then-Artistic Director at Native Earth Performing Arts (NEPA) and riding a wave of acclaim and recognition for his dramatic productions of *The Rez Sisters* (published in 1988) and *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing* (1989), had quickly become Canada’s foremost Indigenous literary celebrity. His inclusion in *Other Solitudes* as an already canonical literary voice, if not as a writer of fiction, is thus in keeping with Hutcheon’s intention to unwork the mainstream/margin binary by asserting that much of the Canadian canon is already multicultural, that “the Kogawas, Ondaatjes, Bissoondaths, Mistrys, and Riccis”—and Highways, it would seem to follow—“in their very diversity have been—and are becoming—as *defining* of what is Canadian as the Atwoods or the Findleys have ever been” (“Multicultural” 13). Highway had already accumulated a great degree of national capital, and his celebrity status as a famous Indigenous voice not only returns this capital to the anthology, but also supports the positioning of his as an authoritative voice on all things Native,¹⁴⁴ including his relatively glowing views on multiculturalism.

Highway’s conciliatory, often enthusiastic attitude toward Canada and Canadian identity makes his a particularly attractive voice for an anthology invested in the ideals of multiculturalism. Despite his own history as a residential school survivor and his career of advocacy for Indigenous artistic and cultural self-determination, Highway’s interview in *Other Solitudes* is emblematic of a longer and subsequent history of affirming Canadian national(ist) values. As Sam McKegney suggests, Highway’s “political positioning” has always been problematic among scholars of Indigenous literature; his often vocal praise for Canada and its politics of multiculturalism have made him a “difficult figure to situate

¹⁴⁴ See Jennifer Lee Covert’s dissertation “A Balancing Act: The Canonization of Tomson Highway.”

among ... Native activists who would self-identify as ‘anti-Canadian’” or assume “a ‘contentious’ posture in relation to the state” (*Magic* 141-42).¹⁴⁵ In his interview with Ann Wilson in *Other Solitudes*, for example, Highway repeatedly diverts a persistent line of leading questions prompting responses about the “violent dislocation” and forced assimilation of residential schooling (350-52). He responds instead by affirming the benefits of his Western education and musical training to his cosmopolitan life as an artist in Canada and overseas.¹⁴⁶ Whether we read such pacifying, even beneficent treatments of Canada in Highway’s public persona as praise for the nation-state, as a strategy of refusal to perform to the expectations of what Eve Tuck (Unangax̄) calls “damage-centred” Indigenous subjectivities, or as something in between, in the context of *Other Solitudes*, they endorse state multiculturalism’s ideals.

Debates over Highway’s less-than-contentious posture in relation to the state, particularly in the context of Canadian multiculturalism, have extended beyond his personal politics into treatments of his dramatic works as well.¹⁴⁷ However, Highway’s support for state multiculturalism is also informed by his experiences with government grants that dramatically altered the history of NEPA. McKegney, working to complicate the tendency to read Highway as in some way politically compromised, argues for the importance of realizing that Highway’s “praise” for multicultural Canada “is pointedly directed toward social manifestations of multiculturalism rather than specific political institutions” (141). But this is not entirely true. Speaking with Hartmut Lutz, Highway’s praise for the “multicultural mosaic” (*Contemporary* 94) is specifically directed toward the multiculturalism’s institutionalization within federal and provincial funding bodies that offered support for Indigenous performing arts. NEPA expanded dramatically in 1986 when its ongoing financial insecurities were

¹⁴⁵ In *Magic Weapons* McKegney summarizes Highway’s many public statements of admiration for Canada, including his declaration that the nation represents “a successful experiment in racial harmony and peaceful coexistence” (pp. 140-42).

¹⁴⁶ Asked about his memory of residential schools, for example, Highway responds: “It was like being in a wonderland” (351). He repeats the line “It was fabulous” several times in response to a series of related questions.

¹⁴⁷ Alan Filewod argues Highway’s work invite a depoliticized lens for non-Indigenous audiences to consume colonial history without registering complicity: “When critics rave about Highway’s work they translate it into a self-congratulatory discourse: See how sophisticated I am; I appreciate this work. See how *multicultural* we are; we honor this work” (23).

alleviated after receiving substantial core funding for the first time, guaranteed for five years, through Multiculturalism division of the Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. These funds enabled NEPA to move into its own offices, hire full-time staff—including Highway as Artistic Director—and ushered in the so-called “Highway Years” of its first successful productions, starting with *Rez Sisters* in 1986/87. Highway's personal investments in multiculturalism are thus not only in the creative exchanges, “magical transformation” (354), and cross-cultural “metamorphosis” (353) he lauds in *Other Solitudes*. They also reflect his perhaps uniquely positive experiences with the same multicultural funding apparatus that supported the production of the anthology in which he appears.

Beyond his talents and success as an artist, then, Highway is *exceptional* in ways that make him an appealing Indigenous respondent as the sole representative of the “First Nations” in *Other Solitudes*. As Kamboureli notes, “Hutcheon does not tell us how many ‘Ondaatjes’ or ‘Bissoondaths’ there are” that have entered the canon (*Scandalous* 164). Neither do we learn how many “Highways” exist, what alternative politics those voices might express, or how the multifaceted cultural expressions across a polyvocal community of Indigenous writers from different nations complicate the symbolic authority granted Highway's voice in *Other Solitudes*. For Hutcheon, Highway's inclusion positions the Indigenous “response” to multiculturalism as a happy surprise: “The first voice, that of native playwright Tomson Highway, poses new questions and suggests interesting, perhaps unexpected, resolutions which underline the historical fact that what we now call Canada has always been multicultural, that it has always negotiated the space between social tension and cultural richness” (3). Whether or not his contrarian revelations are in fact “unexpected” in the context of this anthology, they do offer necessary “resolutions” to the pedagogical *concern* over Indigenous representation I have traced here throughout *Other Solitudes*. Indeed, Highway's voice serves an explicitly *resolutionary* rather than critical function for the “Canadian sensibility” of the anthology's discursive “we” and its multicultural literary nationalism.

Chapter 5: ‘What’s an Indigenous text like you doing in a multicultural anthology like this?’ *Making a Difference* and the Pedagogical Complexities of a Shared Politic

It is only a matter of time before works of Aboriginal literature begin to appear regularly in anthologies of Canadian literature. Canadian Aboriginal literature is knocking on the door of the Canadian literary canon . . . The challenge scholars face is finding something to say about these works of literature when their context is often alien to them.

—Jo-Ann Episkenew, “Socially Responsible Criticism” (2002)

In anthologies and literature courses, contemporary multiculturalism includes Aboriginal writing, which came to prominence at the same time and obeys the same imperative of representation. However, there is an important political distinction to be made between Indigenous and multicultural.

—Neil ten Kortenaar, *The Cambridge History of Canadian Literature* (2009)

In the context of multiculturalism, the politics of incorporation stage the haunting of race—its very “otherness”—as encrypted within the institutional, cultural, and political bodies that ostensibly represent people of colour and First Nations people. The staging of “otherness” *within* the multicultural discourse . . . incessantly reveals the inadequate scene of representation in which “minority” writers/artists are always underrepresented. The goal of incorporation is the creation of occasions for the eruption of “other” scenes without claiming the liberal privilege of representing that scene.

—Scott Toguri McFarlane, “The Haunt of Race” (1995)

Introduction

I’ve placed the question in my title in scare quotes not because it’s rhetorical, but because it’s not truly my own—or at least not entirely. It belongs first to my students, who raised it in the classroom; and, more recognizably, it borrows from Roy Miki and his querying the incorporation of racialized writing within Canadian literary studies throughout the 1990s, particularly in the context of multiculturalism. The anthology in question is Smaro Kamboureli’s *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature*, published by Oxford in 1996 (rev. second edition in 2007). Unlike *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions*, the focus of the previous chapter and a text I have never used in the classroom, I have taught with *Making a Difference*, and this chapter developed from my own experience as an instructor. By way of introduction, then, I want to briefly recount that experience to help situate both this chapter’s titular question and my reading of *Making a Difference* that follows within this project’s broader historical querying of how multiculturalism has shaped the critical treatment of Indigenous writing in Canada.

1. Framing the Question

“What’s an Indigenous text like you doing in a multicultural anthology like this” paraphrases the question asked by students in a first-year Canadian literature course on “Contemporary Indigenous and Multicultural Literature,” for which I was a teaching assistant in 2014.¹⁴⁸ Our primary teaching text that semester was *Making a Difference*, an anthology that includes both “Aboriginal writers and writers of non-Anglo-Celtic backgrounds” (2)—later termed “indigenous and diasporic literatures” (xvi) in Kambourel’s introduction to the second edition—under the rubric of Canadian “multicultural” literature. The inclusion of Indigenous writers within this rubric never explicitly addressed in Kambourel’s critical introduction, which elsewhere carefully registers the political exclusions of Indigenous peoples from Canada’s history of official multiculturalism.¹⁴⁹ Over the semester, too, we had interrogated the “and” between “Indigenous *and* Multicultural” in our course title as a complex conjunction: capable of enacting productive cultural relationships, but also signifying important political distinctions, and guarding against the reframing of Indigenous nations as cultures within the multicultural mosaic. The question raised by my students thus arose from their own reading of the text in the context of these discussions, and eventually seemed to ask itself: If Indigenous peoples are not “officially” multicultural in the eyes of the state, as Kambourel’s introduction notes, and if Indigenous peoples and writers often resist incorporation within the discourse of multiculturalism, why were we reading Indigenous texts in an anthology of “multicultural” Canadian literature?

The seeds of this chapter were sown in part by classroom conversations that day about the politics of Indigenous representation within the pedagogical framework of literary multiculturalism, and within the “multicultural Canadian” anthology specifically. Some of those discussions revolved around the anthology itself as a book genre and educational commodity. (My cash-strapped students

¹⁴⁸ The primary instructor and designer of that class, in which I was responsible for a group of roughly twenty students, was Dr. Lorraine Weir, whom I offer my gratitude for her educational guidance and mentorship during my doctoral program.

¹⁴⁹ Kambourel notes that Trudeau’s “1971 policy [of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework] does not mention the First Nations peoples, and the 1988 [Multiculturalism] Act specifically excludes them” (11).

were not particularly keen on the hypothetical alternative of purchasing *two* anthologies, one “multicultural Canadian,” the other “Indigenous.”) A few students ultimately found the inclusion of Indigenous writing within both the “multicultural” and “Canadian” frameworks contestable. They pointed to examples from Indigenous literary criticism we had read to argue, as Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm does in critiquing the conceptual limits of “cultural difference,” that Indigenous peoples often assert themselves and their stories as “*fundamentally different from anyone else in this land, fundamentally different from Canadians*” (“We” 84, original emphasis). Others defended the anthology’s capacity to do what Larissa Lai elsewhere describes as “relational work” between writers from different communities—despite the potentially fraught “multicultural” framework—“simply by putting in proximity work that might not otherwise be associated, producing unexpected relations and ruptures and making community through difference as much as through sameness” (*Slanting* 94). Most quickly realized that the category “multicultural,” a ubiquitous term in Canada and thus seemingly natural, is in fact deeply constructed as it becomes applied to authors or texts, noting the anthology’s capacity to produce those constructions: *Making a Difference* (unlike *Other Solitudes*) includes Indigenous texts, for example, but (like *Other Solitudes*) no Francophone writing, consolidating “multicultural Canadian” as an Anglophone literature. What this suggested to my students is that “multicultural” Canada in fact has two national literatures, English and French, despite the reality that lands claimed by Canada are home to many more Indigenous languages and nations, and are thus not only multicultural, but *multinational*.

What these conversations centered on were the complexities of how the cultural and political intersect in literary representation under the sign “multicultural.” They kept returning to that unreconciled “however” in this chapter’s epigraph by Neil ten Kortenaar, who notes that Indigenous writing in Canada is often included within the pedagogical rubric of multiculturalism, but—*however*—“there is an important *political* distinction” between Indigenous and multicultural. One of my students suggested that for an anthology like *Making a Difference*, the problem (if there was one) was simply

semantic, and might be fixed by excising “multicultural” from the book’s subtitle. They proposed instead the more descriptive, less catchy *Literatures in English by Non-Anglo-Celtic and Indigenous Writers in Lands Called Canada*. We figured this wouldn’t sell—“multicultural” is both marketable in Canada and marketably Canadian for a global press like Oxford¹⁵⁰—but, more importantly, that it would alter the anthology’s political motivations. As Kamboureli documents in her introduction, *Making a Difference* emerged specifically from the contested cultural politics of multiculturalism during the mid-1990s when it was published, and sought to contest the belated recognition within mainstream Canadian literature of the diversity of writers the anthology collects who “animate some of Canada’s multicultural realities” (12). “*Canadian Multicultural Literature*. In some respects, one word too many,” Kamboureli notes of the word’s necessity in her title: “For Canadian literature is, should be thought of as, reflecting the multicultural make-up of this country. That I feel compelled to spell this out ... suggests that Canadian literature—Canadian literature as an institution—is still not as diverse as it should be” (1-2). Thus in *Making a Difference*, and very differently than *Other Solitudes*, the word “multicultural” is doing a great deal of *critical* work, including bringing Indigeneity into the “multicultural make-up” of Canada.

A fact of Canadian literary history that I was not aware of when speaking with my students in 2014, and which I documented earlier in Part 2, is that it was not until *Making a Difference* that a major national-historical teaching anthology of Canadian literature produced by a mainstream press included any substantial representation of contemporary Indigenous writing. Edited by Kamboureli—for whom the anthology would become a milestone publication in a career as one of Canada’s most influential critical voices in literary studies of ethnicity, multiculturalism, and postcolonial diaspora studies—

¹⁵⁰ The second edition uses the slightly revised subtitle *Canadian Multicultural Literatures in English*, presumably to reflect the collection’s Anglophone focus. Kamboureli notes the change in that edition’s preface, suggesting the commercial appeal of “multicultural”: “The title, different from yet similar to that of the first edition, is a result of the compromise reached between my publisher’s desire to keep the original title for marketing purposes and my intention to signal that what is at stake at this point of studying indigenous and diasporic writing is considerably different from what figured in the study of this literature ten years ago” (xvi). While I will occasionally refer to the second edition to note it changes, it’s because I’m interested in how multiculturalism “figured in the study of this literature” in the mid-1990s that I focus on the first edition.

Making a Difference presents itself as a corrective to the historical lack of “minority” representation within the institution of Canadian literature, assembling contributors who “all . . . , by virtue of their race and ethnicity, belong to the manifold ‘margins’ that the Canadian dominant society has historically devised” (2). Describing what motivated the book, Kamboureli positions it as both a “response to earlier cases of exclusion” (2) in literary anthologies as well as a critique of the politics of recognition and ethnic representation sanctioned by official multiculturalism—what she would later describe as a “sedative politics” (82) of containment in *Scandalous Bodies* (2000). It is an anthology that sets itself the ambitious, paradoxical, even (as Kamboureli admits) “preposterous” and “impossible” task of both “representing” multicultural literature and “calling into question representation itself” (2), at once “celebrat[ing]” multicultural writing while “chang[ing] our understanding” of what multicultural literature is (1). The incorporation of Indigenous writing, while not explained specifically, is thus part of the book’s critique both of prior anthology exclusions and the state’s politics of multiculturalism.

Adopting formal conventions of the Oxford-type national-historical teaching survey, *Making a Difference* comprises prose and poetry from 71 authors, arranged chronologically by birthdate, to provide readers a sense of the historical development of Canadian multicultural literature. This corpus of writing dates back to the 1920s and thus, as the anthology argues, long pre-dates the “official” multiculturalism of the late twentieth century: “Beginning with F.P. Grove and Laura Goodman Salverson, the first non-Anglo-Celtic writers to receive recognition in Canada, and including First Nations authors, this anthology belongs to the genealogy of Canadian literature, a body of writings that come from a variety of traditions that used to be kept separate from the so-called main tradition” (1). The five Indigenous authors and their texts that appear within this history are, in order of appearance, Beth Brant’s (Mohawk) story “This Is History”; Thomas King’s (Cherokee) “The One About Coyote Going West,” Jeannette Armstrong’s (Sylix Okanagan) poems “History Lesson,” “Magic Woman,” “Wind Woman,” and “Indian Woman”; Lee Maracle’s (Stó:lō) story “Bertha”; and Daniel David

Moses's (Delaware) poems "Admonition to an Ice Skating Child," "Paper," "The End of the Night," and "Bearwalk." They appear alongside the work of a diverse range of other writers, many of whom by the mid-1990s were already well known, like Grove, A.M. Klein, Joseph Skvorecky, Michael Ondaatje, Austin Clarke, Fred Wah, Joy Kogawa, Rohinton Mistry, and Nino Ricci; others were then emerging writers, such as Evelyn Lau, Yasmin Ladha, Ashok Mathur, and Hiromi Goto; and still others who were (and remain) less widely read and studied, such as Rienzi Crusz, Arnold Itwaru, Zaffi Gousopoulos, Ian Iqbal Rashid, and Corinne Allyson Lee. Indeed, it is both the gathering of this mix of "multicultural" writers and the centering of their writing within the genealogy of national literary history that, Kamboureli asserts, "makes this anthology of Canadian literature different" (1). While *Making a Difference* makes no mention of Hutcheon, *Other Solitudes*, or indeed any other anthology specifically in its introduction, it is difficult not to read the book as a corrective response to Oxford's first "multicultural" anthology, whose most notable critic was Kamboureli.¹⁵¹ And while scholars have variously acknowledged the significance of both anthologies in shifting comparative Canadian literary study vis-à-vis multiculturalism, a somewhat axiological historical narrative has come to define the relative import of *Other Solitudes* and *Making a Difference*: the former quite quickly fell into disfavor, and is now out of print; the latter, now in its second edition, has in fact made a difference.

Vital to Kamboureli's translation of both official multiculturalism and *Other Solitudes* is thus the imperative not only to extend recognition to Indigenous writing, but to make multiculturalism more accountable to Indigenous (literary) presence in Canada. In a contemporaneous 1995 essay titled "Technologies of Ethnicity" in the special issue of *Essays on Canadian Writing* on "Writing Ethnicity," Dawn Thompson articulates a similar kind of motivation to "rewrite" multiculturalism:

While the First Nations must be recognized as such—as sovereign peoples—their history as part of the ideology of multiculturalism (if not multiculturalism policy) remains. And in fact, if multiculturalism is to be rewritten, it must be enlarged to recognize (yet not to contain) First

¹⁵¹ During a personal spoken conversation in 2019, Kamboureli explained to me that the idea to compile the anthology was developed in part in conversations with her editors at Oxford about her critiques of the then-popular *Other Solitudes*.

Nations as well. ... I am attempting to counteract a tendency in Canadian literary and cultural studies that either treats First Nations literature separately, or, as is more often the case, avoids treating it at all. ... I am hoping that it is possible to work against both assimilation and ghettoization, by recognizing that the First Nations in Canada are not simply one ethnic-minority group among others, but a force that contributes to the multicultural narrative of this nation. (60-61)

The goal, at this particular historical moment, to “recognize (yet not contain)” Indigenous writing as a “part of the ideology of multicultural (if not multiculturalism policy)” is one *Making a Difference* shares. It hopes to enact a critical multicultural pedagogy that might redress the historical exclusions of both the state and the institution of Canadian literature by including Indigenous texts *within* an expanded definition of Canadian literature, while also working against nationalist assimilation and containment. This is, clearly, a complex critical project; one that—as Thompson’s parenthetical qualifications suggest—requires negotiating contradiction, and the paradox of both recognizing Indigenous *sovereignty* while affirming the necessity of including Indigenous cultural expression as “a force” within “the multicultural narrative of *this* nation.” My focus in this chapter is not only on the challenges of realizing such a project, but, in the case of *Making a Difference*, on how it runs up against the generic conventions of the national anthology form, and with it the pedagogical demands of articulating these complexities in a bounded text designed to facilitate the teaching of literature primarily to students.

Returning to my title, then, I should be clear that the question I’m focusing on was only one of many that inspired productive conversations in the classroom provoked by the anthology and its literature. While I engage *Making a Difference* closely and critically in this chapter, I do so as an instructor who has found it a generative teaching text with an excellent selection of writing and a robust editorial apparatus, and as a literary historian who acknowledges the book’s trailblazing work when it was first published in 1996. In Chapter 3 we saw how in Robert Lecker’s assessment, it is *the* anthology that broke with the Romantic nationalist “code” and “entirely redefined the twentieth-century Canadian literary tradition” (302). Kamboureli’s extended critical introduction is on its own a formative and oft-cited essay in multicultural literary studies, one that introduced many of the concerns with

representation that would later become elaborated in her analysis of multiculturalism and diasporic literatures in *Scandalous Bodies*. More recently, Karina Vernon has called for renewed attention to the “transformative” nature of *Making a Difference* and its multicultural intervention, “which offered a model for how to construct a CanLit that includes Black, Indigenous, and racialized perspectives” (16). What historical perspective avails me in this chapter is the occasion to return to this influential text in the context of some of the critical discourses of its time, and to work through this multicultural model to consider its implications for the teaching and reading of Indigenous literatures specifically.

In 1996, the year of its publication, Roy Miki gave a talk at the “Negotiating Boundaries” Canadian literature conference (later published in his collection *Broken Entries*), where he used his title to ask, provocatively, “What’s a racialized text like you doing in a place like this?” For Miki, the “place” in question—an oblique riposte to Northrop Frye’s positing of “where is here?” as the riddle vexing Canadian identity—is the discipline of Canadian literary studies. In particular, Miki’s question is oriented towards those “circumscribed locations of CanLit” including anthologies, journals, and other institutionalizing sites of disciplinary production, whose “representational schemata and values” (161) were then shifting from those that had informed Frye’s work. As I discussed at the end of Chapter 3, the “borders” of Canadian literature as a discipline had been interrogated throughout the 1980s and 1990s by not only a proliferation of racialized and Indigenous literary production, but the concerted anti-racist organization and coalitional activism between Indigenous, of colour, queer, and feminist writers and cultural workers. Miki’s question, and his work throughout the 1990s, marked a sustained interrogation into the conflicted politics of incorporation whereby formerly marginalized writing was quite rapidly becoming an object of “CanLit” study. His question thus marks an ambivalent double-signification. Rhetorically, it registers—while indicting—the overdue entry of racialized writing within “the customs house of canonical CanLit” (173). Interrogatively, though, it expresses an urgency to scrutinize the “escalating cultural capital for texts of colour and academic studies of such texts,”

particularly in the years after the Multiculturalism Act (1988), when an activist, oppositional politics of difference was emerging “hand in (contradictory) hand” with the “institutional management of ‘diversity’” (168). His question is thus one of *location*—the movement of certain racialized texts and writers from the margin to the mainstream—and of *labour*: of what kinds of work such texts are “doing” once “there,” of how they enter “CanLit” as disciplinary objects of knowledge or pedagogy.

So, my querying the “place” of Indigenous texts within *Making a Difference* is similarly invested in questioning how incorporation can produce valuable recognition but also function as containment, in asking what’s made visible and what gets erased along the lines of (multi)cultural difference, and examining how the anthology invites its audience to read Indigenous texts pedagogically as part of the genealogy of multicultural Canadian literature. Like the previous chapter on *Other Solitudes*—a key antecedent that I will occasionally return to comparatively—my approach here is both literary historical and analytical. I want to first situate the anthology within the context of its mid-1990s publication before entering into a sustained reading of the anthology itself, working through its editorial framing of multiculturalism and then considering how it inflects some of the Indigenous literatures it collects.

Anthologizing Thru Race: The Conundrums of Representing a “Shared Politic”

The primary conundrum my reading takes up is that *Making a Difference* is a collection which attempts to call representation and difference radically into question within a book form that is designed to facilitate the representation of Canadian literature as something coherent and teachable. I argued previously that in *Other Solitudes*, the elision of Indigeneity becomes a problem of knowledge that ultimately unsettles the colonial history of a multicultural nationalism it attempts to resolve as pedagogically stable. The conflict of Indigenous incorporation in *Making a Difference* follows an inverse logic, where the desire to critique multicultural nationalism becomes vexed by the generic impositions of the national-historical anthology whose canonical form it more closely replicates.

Compared to *Other Solitudes*, *Making a Difference* offers a more expansive, generically diverse, and longstanding historical tradition of multicultural literature, which includes the prose, poetry, and

orature of Indigenous writers. Working to unhinge “multiculturalism” from the stable scene of representation defined by statist pedagogy, it attempts to make space for what Scott Toguri McFarlane calls “the eruption of ‘other’ scenes” *within* multicultural discourse, “without claiming the liberal privilege of representing that scene” (26). *Other Solitudes*, too, is certainly invested in validating a *tradition* of Canadian multicultural literature, traced by its editors back to canonical Jewish writers of the 1940s such as A.M. Klein. But that tradition coheres less in the anthology’s literature than in the nation-state’s unifying narrative of multiculturalism, for which fiction becomes mimetic evidence of realization. It is less interested in *forging* a tradition, then, than in naming an already existing one—Canada and its literature have always-already been “multicultural,” for Hutcheon—and responding to the Multiculturalism Act, which provides the hermeneutical referent framing the text’s multicultural canon. Its interviews and overtly dialogical format require writers who are living, too, as spokespeople for multiculturalism’s “lived” and “literary” inscription, demanding more contemporary selections and thus an unavoidably bounded literary history. The stakes of *Making a Difference* are more critical and ambitious. Its resistance toward the state’s power to delimit what “multicultural” means for literature involves actively defining the tradition it attempts to represent in its chronological arrangement. What this necessitates is both a retrospective location of multicultural literature’s historical origins, and also some explanation as to the ties that bind its writers under the “multicultural” rubric it adopts.

If *Other Solitudes* presents itself as a direct response to (even result of) the Multiculturalism Act, I read *Making a Difference* as a text whose critical multiculturalism is more responsive to the complex affiliations and cultural activism forged by an emerging politics of racial difference in the years preceding its publication in 1996. The late 1980s and early 1990s was an important moment of community building between BIPOC cultural workers laboring to create spaces for dialogue and coalition-building across differences, often under what Larissa Lai recalls as the banner “First Nations writers and writers of colour” (“Other” 5). A number of anti-racist, community-oriented events and

conferences during this time—including (but not limited to) *Telling It* (1988), *In Visible Colours* (1989), *The Appropriate Voice* (1992), and, most publically, *Writing Thru Race* (1994)—had forged solidarities between marginalized artistic communities struggling to create room for self-fashioning not available within mainstream institutions. In her retrospective preface to the anthology’s second edition, Kamboureli describes how these and other events had “created a sharp awareness of what has been dubbed ‘identity politics’ (xii), coinciding with a resurgence of Indigenous sovereignty movements after the events at Oka in 1990. Kamboureli describes the time as critical juncture where “*difference*—understood in the contexts of both *indigeneity* and *multiculturalism*—took hold of the Canadian imagination with great force” (xii, emphasis mine). Increasingly, both the nation and the canon were being revealed as “volatile constructs,” and *Making a Difference* was compiled with what Kamboureli describes as a sense of urgency “to address the politics of representation” (xii) in Canadian literature responsive to racial differences, settler-colonialism, and the politics of identity.

The shift from “identity politics” to a cultural politics of *race* during this time of anti-racist activism has been examined with nuance by Monika Kin Gagnon in *Other Conundrums: Race, Culture, and Canadian Art* (2000). Gagnon reframes earlier civil-rights notions of identity politics—that is, the “self-identification of particular individuals and communities around a common identity category in order to make a political intervention” (22)—through the relational prism of “cultural race politics”:

A cultural politics of difference emerged from earlier identity politics and can be distinguished by a more articulated concern for representation and difference across different identity communities. As I use the term here, cultural race politics specifically refers to processes of self-identification and self-organization of Native artists and artists of colour into communities, with the goal of making interventions in the larger Canadian cultural domain. (22-23)

Her emphasis here is on a more processual understanding of how racial formations materialize in complex, often ambivalent negotiations of identity as they unfold relationally. The struggle of anti-racist organization in the cultural field at this time is not limited to Indigenous and of colour artists petitioning the mainstream for recognition and representation. Rather, Gagnon’s analysis foregrounds is a struggle with the politics of representation itself, and with the available terms of self-expression

through which difference might be articulated both within and *between* variously racialized communities.

“Multiculturalism” was the term at the forefront of the mainstream press’s explosive outcry over the Writing Thru Race conference in Vancouver. Significantly, though, it was not a term that its organizers in the Writers’ Union of Canada’s (TWUC) Racial Minority Writers’ Committee adopted to articulate the conference themselves. Michael Valpy, in his scathing *Globe and Mail* critique of the conference tellingly titled “A Nasty Serving of Cultural Apartheid,” charged TWUC with embracing a “multiculturalism turned cancerous—a cancer taking root in our schools and universities, taking root in our government bureaucracies, and threatening, at time of globalization of culture, the continued existence of a Canadian cultural identity” (A2). Valpy used his column to lionize Robert Fulford’s earlier criticism of the conference’s purported “no-white’s rule,” a reductive framing (and one not used by Writing Thru Race’s organizers) of the decision to limit the conference’s daytime sessions to self-identified First Nations writers and writers of colour. Fulford lamented an “old liberal pluralism” giving way to an Orwellian “new multiculturalism,” akin to “reinventing” South Africa’s apartheid in the conference’s assertion of group identities around racial categories (“George Orwell” C1). At the core of Writing Thru Race was in fact a firm critique of liberal multiculturalism for the inadequacy of its universalist approaches to pluralism under the mantras of inclusivity and diversity—the notion that we are all different, but equally so. The “exclusionary” policy of the conference’s daytime sessions, as McFarlane writes, “insisted that political leadership in anti-racist politics could only emerge by abandoning multicultural inclusionary paradigms” (28). In his own retort to Fulford in the *Globe*, Miki, the conference’s lead organizer, made no justification of multiculturalism. Instead, he articulated the systemic history of racist Canadian public policy that shapes the marginalization of people of colour—the Indian Act, the Chinese Head Tax, Japanese Canadian internment, among others. He argued that, in the context of a Canadian literary institution that was still demonstrably exclusionary, the space of a conference like Writing Thru Race was indeed radically *inclusionary* (“Why” A23).

The public uproar over Writing Thru Race, shaped as it was by reactionary right-wing commentators, made evident both the assimilative underpinnings of the “old liberalism” and the fragility of the particular vision of “a Canadian cultural identity” that Valpy and others felt the conference threatened. Yet at the fore of such vehement criticisms was not simply this perceived threat, but more importantly the expenditures of government funding and public “taxpayer”¹⁵² dollars to support it. The \$22,500 earmarked for Writing Thru Race by the Liberal government’s Department of Canadian Heritage then housing the federal multiculturalism directorate (as it does today), was eventually withdrawn after conservative Reform Party MP Jan Brown, like Valpy and Fulford, charged the conference organizers with “discrimination” and reverse racism against white people in the House of Commons. The conference proceeded with financial assistance of a last-minute fundraising campaign. *Making a Difference* thus appears at a time of increasing neoliberalization of culture, in which the institutionalization of racial differences in Canada’s cultural and academic spheres coincides with a shift from public support to privatization. Lai, also an organizer and participant in Writing Thru Race, articulates this shift with detail in her conclusion to *Slanting I, Imagining We*. Her analysis of the state’s hands-off attitude to anti-racism deemed politically incorrect, and its retreat from “social justice issues [in] the public forum” (220), is important for my discussion because, unlike *Other Solitudes*, which was published with a grant-in-aid from federal multiculturalism directly through the Writing and Publications Program (WPP)—the state’s “hands-on” program of multicultural investment—*Making a Difference* was not assisted financially by multiculturalism.

Thinking through the political economy of these anthologies’ production comparatively, then, there is a complex transition from the state-sanctioned promotion of multiculturalism via literature as a public good to an entrenchment of multiculturalism as an academic good and market commodity, here

¹⁵² McFarlane discusses the anonymous (implicitly mainstream, white) “taxpayer” constructed in these discussions, and critiques the liberal ideal of public money serving the national populace equally—a point made by Makeda Silvera while interrupting Pierre Berton’s speech on the subject at TWUC’s 1994 AGM: “We [people of colour] pay taxes too” (28-29).

for a press like Oxford.¹⁵³ Embedded in conservative critiques of public expenditure on Writing Thru Race is the notion that such a conference is acceptable only as a private venture—a fact ultimately realized by the securitization of the event’s finances through private donations, including from prominent (wealthy) TWUC members like Margaret Atwood and Pierre Berton. Thus what can be celebrated as increasing mainstream support for an expanded institution of Canadian literature coincides with a retreat from a strong commitment from federal multiculturalism to an anti-racist, equitable arts culture and national public. Indeed, the WPP, which had existed to support multicultural literature since the late 1970s, was folded by the Liberal government in 1998 as part of its move to austerity. As Laura Moss notes, “[f]ollowing the logic of the open market, the message was that since a diverse range of Canadian writers were now internationally successful, creative culture no longer required the financial support [from multiculturalism] it once did” (“Song” 53). What the creation of a conference like Writing Thru Race and the publication of an anthology such as *Making a Difference* both rejected is the notion that because some racialized writers had gained national attention and won literary prizes by the mid-1990s, “multiculturalism” could in some ways be considered an already-achieved public ideal. Indeed, the ideal itself was in some ways fading, as the debates over Writing Thru Race from both sides of the political spectrum illustrate.

The mainstream press and its anxieties over a “no-whites” policy thus pitted multiculturalism within a reactive discourse that framed Writing Thru Race in a reductive binary of “white” vs “non-white,” obscuring the conference’s intentions to discuss racial differences relationally and internally. Gagnon discusses not only the productive coalition of such discussions, but also the challenges of forging relations and community between Indigenous and of colour artists through the politics of race. The conference’s tense closing sessions “profoundly revealed the radically different ideological

¹⁵³ Kamboureli notes the anthology was supported in its early stages by SSHRC funding. Unlike the WPP, SSHRC operates at arm’s-length from the government that funds it. The comparison between these anthologies’ funding is thus between the state’s valuing of literature to explicitly promote multiculturalism (*Other Solitudes*) and the valuing of multiculturalism by academics as a state-funded research area (*Making a Difference*), and the different publics these programs serve.

positions” occupied by Indigenous writers and writers of colour “in relation to dominant culture and cultural organizations” (71). Christine Kim and Sophie McCall reflect on these differences as follows:

The difficulty of sustaining these affiliative politics to some extent reflect the radically different arguments the groups had with the Canadian nation-state: while community activists from a range of ethnic minority groups were demanding greater space *within* the nation, Aboriginal social movements were pushing *against* the government’s efforts to ever more closely incorporate their nations within institutional structures of citizenship and belonging. (5)

For Gagnon, these tensions made palpable that the “initial optimism” for creating a “shared politic” the conference had intended to facilitate amongst Indigenous writers and writers of colour would have to “give way to different, if more dramatically effective, crises of representation” (71).

The editorial challenge for a text like *Making a Difference* thus becomes how to enact such crises of representation and the relational complexities of a “shared politic” under the sign *multiculturalism*, and in the anthology form. Consider, for example, Coleman and Goellnicht’s critical assessment of the “multicultural” anthology in “Race into the Twenty-First Century,” their introduction to the issue of *Essays on Canadian Writing on “Race”* (2002). The genre is one they acknowledge as a “very positive institution” in Canadian literary culture,” but also castigate for “whitewash[ing] ‘race’ into a catalogue of depoliticized differences” under the “aegis of Canadian multicultural ideology”:

Few publications have done more for the promotion and dissemination of minority writers’ works than collections such as Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond’s *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990) and Smaro Kamboureli’s *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* (1996). But despite their undeniable achievement, their multicultural framework introduces its own limitations. In these anthologies, authors of Asian, African, or Aboriginal descent are included alongside authors of Czech, Mennonite, or Italian descent as if the differences of religious or cultural background are equivalent to those of “race.” Despite the laudable intention of the anthologists, in the words of Kamboureli, to enable authors to “speak with each other across boundaries that are marked by many differences” (1), the multicultural project of colour-blind inclusiveness shows how a “level playing field” for various kinds of difference tends to downplay the uniqueness of any specific difference. For the fact is that, in certain contexts, some differences are more different than others. (7)

I quote Coleman and Goellnicht here at length for a couple of reasons. Importantly, I believe their assessment of these anthologies as “colour-blind” projects is mistaken—a point I will elaborate later in this chapter. But their critical assessment is illuminating for how it articulates the challenges of

constructing in an anthology a multicultural “shared politic” at a moment when Canadian studies was realigning around the institutionalization of race. For this reason, I also find it a somewhat troubling critique in its hard-lining of racial difference. There is an implicit drive toward the disaggregation, even separation, of racialized literatures from those of “ethnic” or any other Canadian literatures here, motivated by a perceived need to move beyond false equivalences of multicultural “inclusiveness,” that leaves little room for the possibilities of alliance or creative exchange across variously situated authors or writing communities. It is problematic, in this scenario, for “authors of Asian, African, or Aboriginal descent” to appear in contemporary anthologies with authors of “Czech, Mennonite, or Italian descent.” As this argument applies to historical survey anthologies, there is perhaps a presentism that leaves open the question of how racialization functions as a product of dominant discourses that are historically contingent; the privileges of Canadian “whiteness” as a social construct rooted in Britishness have not always extended to other non-Western-European ethnic and religious groups (see Backhouse). It is also an argument that, if pushed to its logical limits even in the contemporary context, leads to agonizing, evaluative questions about comparative racialization—both across communities (are “Asian” and “Aboriginal” literatures then sufficiently equivalent to be anthologized together? Mennonite and Italian?), and within them (what internal diversities constitute the racial category “African Canadian” literature?).

As Lai argues, the “construction of communities around the idea of race creates a material positivity at the site of what we know to be a relational construct” (*Slanting* 86). The strategic potential of this positivity is the focus of Goellnicht and Coleman’s reading of what they call the “return of race” to Canadian literature in the 1990s—a “return” they see as a corrective to official multiculturalism’s discursive emphasis on “ethnicity.” At the same time, these categories are always embodied relationally, in dialogue with the national (white) mainstream but also across variously racialized communities. So, in the context of “multicultural” anthologization, the question becomes: how to acknowledge that

there are “different kinds of differences” within a historically arranged selection of diverse authors and texts in ways that don’t foreclose the possibility of reading relationally? This is the conundrum I want to unpack here as I turn to *Making a Difference* and its treatment of *Indigenous* difference. The dialectic it sets into motion is between, on one hand, its critical aim to destabilize the “sedative” politics of state multiculturalism that fixes stable categories of difference and excludes Indigenous peoples to support nationalist coherence; and on the other, its investment in the national-historical anthology, and that form’s ideological investment in the production of nationalist stability and continuity.

2. Making Multiculturalism Different

Framing and Representing Difference

The introduction to *Making a Difference*, much like *Other Solitudes*, argues that “multicultural” literature is not a recent development, that the “land we now call Canada was already multicultural, and multilingual, before the arrival of the first Europeans” (11). For Kamboureli, though, the history of Canadian multiculturalism is less a progressive narrative defined by inevitability than a “history that bursts at its seams,” “paradoxically one of plentitude and of disquieting gaps,” and ultimately “haunted by dissonance,” including Canada’s history as a colonizing nation (1). The task of editing and compiling thus becomes one of attempting to represent to these dissonances, of how to proliferate literary difference rather than containing it. This editorial concern is captured in the active, continuous-present verbal mood of the book’s title. “Making a Difference” evokes the critical “ethno-poetics” of Fred Wah and his persistent attempts to resist state multiculturalism’s appropriations, as Wah says, “so the grand intentions of meaning don’t get to name me before I do—Before I do any writing I always stop whatever I’m doing—Whatever I’m doing might make a difference—Make a difference” (158).¹⁵⁴ Difference thus puns on Derridean *différance*, signalling both the instability of language and the deferential play of representation, whose unstable, embodied, linguistic, and always partial nature

¹⁵⁴ Wah’s comments here come from an interview with Kamboureli cited in the headnote to his entry in *Making a Difference*.

Kamboureli emphasizes in stark contrast to Hutcheon's commitment to mimesis. Kamboureli explains to readers that it was her "questioning of representation" within the context of multiculturalism that prompted her editing: "No image, no story, no anthology can represent us or others without bringing into play—serious play—differing contexts, places, or people" (2). The anthology thus sets out to make *a* difference (effect change) by *making* difference—untethering "multicultural" representation from its "grand intentions of meaning." Compared with *Other Solitudes*, then, *Making a Difference* actively resists pedagogical inscription by proposing to cede representational authority to the performative instabilities enacted by the literature it collects, including the political disruptions Indigenous self-representation may pose to state multiculturalism and the nationalist coherence of its colonial disavowal. What inevitably impinges on this critical desire, however, are the pedagogical conventions of the anthology it adopts as a vehicle to make this intervention, where it is not only the curatorial work of editing that inescapably mediates representation, but the nation itself and the intentions of meaning that inflect the book as an anthology of *Canadian* literature designed to support teaching within that field.

This tension surfaces throughout Kamboureli's introductory essay, whose traditional function of lending coherence to the nation's literature—defining unifying themes, mapping literary-historical trajectories—it attempts to implode from within. Indeed, whereas in *Other Solitudes* fictional writing offers "testimony" to multiculturalism's reality as a unifying Canadian metanarrative, Kamboureli argues that *Making a Difference* is "testimony to the fact that we can no longer harbour the conceit that Canadian identity is homogenous" (10); evidence that "the inherited notion of a unified Canadian identity has only imaginative coherence" (9); that the "unity of Canadian identity is a cultural myth" (9). Repeatedly, the introduction rejects the Romantic nationalist "tendency to define Canadian identity in collective and unifying terms" (7), arguing against the national anthology's history of turning to literature "to define Canada as a cohesive nation, to invent a homogenous Canadian identity—an identity minus the identities of Aboriginal peoples, and later the identities of new immigrants" (8-9).

Kamboureli critiques this fictional “continuum” of “official” history—both literary and national—starting in the earliest attempts to “construct Canadian identity that is modeled after the image of the colonizers” (7): a “homogenous image of Canadian identity” as “a ‘white man’s country’” (9).

The critique of Canada as a “white man’s country” is worth pausing over in the context of this anthology and its selections based on marginalization from Canadian literature’s “so-called main tradition,” given roughly half the contributors to *Making a Difference* would likely be considered white (though non-Anglo Celtic) by its contemporary readers.¹⁵⁵ Many of these, too, from F.P. Grove to A.M. Klein to Irving Layton to Rudy Wiebe to Daphne Marlatt, as well as other writers of colour—Michael Ondaatje, M.G. Vassanji, Joy Kogawa, Thomas King, for instance—are already established in the “so-called main tradition” by 1996. For the purposes of the anthology, then, the marginality often ascribed to “multicultural” literature becomes “impossible to define in any stable way,” its “meanings shifting and variable, even provisional” (3), given the relational nature of “difference” against the mythical sameness of a coherent national identity that *Making a Difference* works to reveal as a colonial fiction. Yet if “multicultural” literature is impossible to define, how does it operate as the organizing basis for the anthology? In rejecting any desire to define Canadian identity in singular, unifying terms—including the kind of universal “Canadian sensibility” of immigration *Other Solitudes* maintains via multiculturalism—what ultimately comes to unify the literature in *Making a Difference* is the flexible category of “difference” itself. A common heterogeneity rewrites exclusionary homogeneity in a contradictory move toward “Disunity as Unity,” as Robert Kroetsch argued of postmodern Canada in 1985. In this way, the very process of disavowing stable metanarratives of nation—including that of the multicultural nation—begins to secure a new collective metanarrative rooted in difference; where,

¹⁵⁵ The only authors who would likely not be considered “non-Anglo-Celtic” (a term the anthology does not interrogate) are Daphne Marlatt, who was born in the settler-colony of Australia to British parents and spent her childhood in Malaysia, and perhaps Bill Schermbrucker, born in Kenya to a family of English, German, and Dutch ancestry.

“in some perverse way, the very falling-apart of our story is what holds our story together” (Kroetsch 22).

National Form as Container/Containment

Indeed, while it consciously works to subvert nationalist consistency with multicultural difference, the introduction inevitably works back upon itself to code difference within an central “narrative” that unifies its selections based on what its authors share: “The narrative that emerges from these [writers] is, then, one of contradictions, of differences. What is *consistent* is the anxiety many of these authors share about any homogenous image of Canadian culture” (6). This consistency thus consolidates not only in the paradox of mutual difference, but in the unifying assertion of “anxiety” difference makes against claims toward national unity itself. As Shannon Smyrl argues, Kamboureli here does not so much entirely “rethink the problem of a singular national identity” within the anthology “as she does refigure the nation *as* this concern” (26). Despite its reflexive resistance to the Romantic nationalism subtending the genre it inherits, *Making a Difference* ultimately retains some of that ideology’s paradigmatic features, including a strong link between the nation’s literary and political histories, and a search for something distinctly “Canadian” to be found even in a dissonant “multicultural” literature:

The literature in *Making a Difference* offers different soundings of the social and cultural body of Canada. Since its beginnings, the making of Canadian literature has coincided, in many respects, with the making of the Canadian state. Far from being a Canadian phenomenon alone, this overlap shows how *literature, like other cultural expressions, measures the pulse of a nation*. What might *be particularly Canadian*, however, is the kind of anxiety that has continued to characterize both what Canadian literature is and what constitutes Canadian identity. (6, my emphasis)

None of these claims, as I showed in Chapter 3, are entirely novel to the context of multiculturalism.

Editors producing national anthologies long before *Making a Difference* have asserted the coincidence of the “making of Canadian literature” and “the making of the Canadian state,” as early as Dewart in his 1864 *Selections from Canadian Poets*. And certainly, the “particularly Canadian” *anxiety* over national

identity arguably lies at the very core of the discipline's modern institutional foundations.¹⁵⁶ For Lecker, anthology editors searching for a Canadian identity in the history and themes of Canadian literature have always “expressed a deep-seated anxiety about their own desire to assemble a picture that refused to cohere” (*Keepers* 19). So, what does multiculturalism make different?

What Kamboureli locates as unique within the latest, “formative,” “multicultural stage of literary politics” as it has emerged alongside official multiculturalism is not a wholesale rejection of the attempt to discern a Canadian identity within a heterogeneous field of difference. Rather, it is “yet another new beginning” that demands a more expansive envisioning of who or what constitutes that difference, and also a making of difference as central to Canadian identity itself.

I believe that within this complex web of historical changes, cultural differences, and politics *there still remains the fundamental question of what constitutes Canadian identity*. But in the 1990s this question has been reconfigured, and, I think, irrevocably so. For we can no longer afford to think of Canadian identity in singular terms. . . . The recognition of cultural differences in the 1990s marks yet another beginning in Canadian multicultural history, the beginning of an attempt to understand how distinct identities can converge and dialogue with each other within Canada, how boundaries of difference must be repositioned—not in relation to the signs of ‘centre’ and ‘margins’ but in relation to new and productive alignments. *Making a Difference* is an instance of such dialogue. (12, my emphasis)

Thus *Making a Difference* is more closely aligned with the literary nationalist tradition of English Canadian anthologization than it appears in Lecker's reading, for example. The nation's contents may have been reconfigured by “the recognition of cultural differences” and multiculturalism—the “boundaries difference” repositioned—but not the form of the project itself. The core question of how Canadian literature reflects Canadian national identity remains, though the anxiety traditionally resulting in restrictive attempts to answer it has now become the answer itself. Rejecting the “imaginative coherence” of past attempts to distill an impossibly singular national identity from a

¹⁵⁶ The Massey Commission was formed to address this anxiety, defined by a perceived a crisis of national identity. Atwood's thesis about Canadian identity and victimhood in *Survival* centred on the “intolerable anxiety” (33) to be discovered everywhere in Canada's literature—Frye's vision of modern society was that of a repressive “anxiety structure” (*Modern* 86). Both characterized this anxiety as part of a Canadian identity whose colonial condition produced paranoid “schizophrenia” as a national state of mind needing to be overcome (Atwood, *Journals* 62; Frye, *Bush Garden* 134).

literary corpus whose differences refuse containment, *Making a Difference* asserts the anxiety of that refusal to cohere as Canada's distinctive multicultural identity, and as the thematic that unifies literary difference.

The irony of this paradoxical formulation—national identity in cultural differences—is not only that it was Trudeau's original statist formulation, but that its coherence is inevitably "imagined," too. Indeed, within the context of the anthology as a collection of "Canadian" multicultural literature designed to support teaching in that field, its national imagining is a formal necessity. If I am stressing here the extent to which *Making a Difference* participates in maintaining this national "code," it is not simply to emphasize the inevitable tautology of all national anthologies. Rather, it is to understand how *Making a Difference* enacts its own unreconciled anxiety produced in the recursive pedagogical impositions of the national form that its critical articulation of multiculturalism attempts to escape. This contradiction is one of competing anthological drives: the centrifugal push toward an expansion Canadian literary and away from official multiculturalism's power to name history and contain difference, in one direction; and in the other, the centripetal pull towards cohesion, consistency, and linear history demanded by the genre it adopts as a container to represent the nation's differences.

Thus, while Kamboureli rejects outright the kind of historical "continuum" of nationalist representation promoted by such anthologies as Oxford's *Canadian Literature in English*, the formal structure and technical apparatus of *Making a Difference*—its chronological arrangement by author birthdate, expository introductory essay, and bio-bibliographic headnotes—closely adheres to the historical survey model of Bennett and Brown's widely-used anthology. This similarity at once illustrates the commodity nature of the Oxford anthology as an adaptable curricular form within the institutional location it is designed primarily to serve— i.e., the classroom, and in particular, the Canadian Literature survey course. But it also raises the question of how counter-canonical aspirations can be realized through conventions of representation mimetic of the canon under critique. By nature

of its chronological structure, *Making a Difference* trades in the ideological production of a positivist, linear narrative of multicultural literary history characterizing national anthologies of the Oxford type. If the politics of multiculturalism have reconfigured the spatial dimensions of centre and margin, as Kamboureli suggests, the history the anthology nevertheless inhabits remains that of the nation-state. Its inclusion of Indigenous writing within this history, then, takes shape through what Miki elsewhere calls “an incorporative act that constitutes itself through the boundaries of representations made legitimate by disciplinary regulations and norms” (“Can Asian” 57). These are norms that work to circumscribe the representation of Indigenous writers and the ways their literature accrues institutional value within the anthology’s pedagogy, which remains formally wedded to narrating the nation.

These are tensions Kamboureli is certainly aware of, as both a critic and editor of anthologies. And one of the most productive aspects of her introductory framing is how refreshingly candid it is about the paradoxical irony of attempting to call representation into question within a form that by nature imposes confines. Such self-reflexivity is pedagogically useful in itself for communicating to students and making visible the strictures of representation that national anthologies often disavow in the name of producing cohesion. Nevertheless, there are limitations to its efficacy within an anthology that replicates the form it wants to critique. Kamboureli articulates this point incisively in her chapter on multicultural anthologies in *Scandalous Bodies* while critiquing Lecker’s scholarly collection *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value* (1990). Kamboureli points to *Telling It: Women and Language across Cultures* (1990) as an anthology that more successfully “thematizes difference without eliding either its complexity or the difficulties it raises” (158-9), comparing it with *Canadian Canons*, an “editorial project [that] fails to change the ideological and cultural systems” (161) it sets out to interrogate. The crux of the juxtaposition between these texts, however, lies not simply in their dissimilar investments in the canon, but in their discrepant approaches to the anthology. *Telling It*, collaboratively edited and authored by the Telling It Book Collective (SKY Lee, Lee Maracle, Daphne Marlatt, and Betsy

Warland), attempts to capture what Marlatt's introduction describes as a "meeting on fractured margins" between Indigenous women, women of colour, and lesbian women at the Telling It conference (Vancouver, 1988). In its published form, the collection is less concerned with contesting mainstream values or canons than in materializing relational contestation as the political value of its literary and critical discourse, representing dialogue and exchange in response to the unique contingencies of its production. This polyvocality is captured in the collection's mixture of crosstalk in poetry, stories, essays, conference proceedings, personal reflections, and transcribed audience interactions, all of which help "provok[e] a tension of thought, response, reaching, and listening rarely found in any document," as Erin Moure aptly puts it (41). Conversely, for Kamboureli, Lecker's *Canadian Canons*—despite framing itself as an investigation into Canadian literature's conservative canonical values—adopts the traditional conventions of a scholarly anthology, and thus "illustrates what happens when literary values are questioned while the edifice containing them remains intact" (*Scandalous* 159). Extending this line of critique to *Making a Difference* involves a similar querying of what happens when it adopts the edifice of those anthologies whose nationalist values it calls into question. It asserts, on one hand, a powerful, even (re)appropriative, and legitimating move for the purposes institutionalizing a multicultural canon by deploying a form recognizable to the discipline and adoptable to its existing curricular locations. On the other, this formal edifice inevitably disciplines how that difference is made legible within the field it enters as an object of knowledge.

Making Dialogue and Community

In *Making a Difference*, then, it is the pedagogical demands of the anthology itself, more than the statist pedagogy of the Multiculturalism Act, that *acts* upon its desire to realize "new and productive alignments" and how "distinct identities can converge and dialogue with each other" (12). For Kamboureli, collections such as *Telling It* make possible the production of relational knowledge in the performative representation of literary exchange across communities, disrupting the binarized notion of "solitudes" altogether. "In this context," Kamboureli writes (quoting Ella Shohat and Robert Stam),

“the word ‘multiculturalism’ has no essence, it points to a debate’ (Shohat and Stam 47). This debate takes the form of a dialogue between various cultural communities. Ethnic voices are no longer segregated ... ; they converge as they speak with each other, but—the most important element here—they do so without being reduced to sameness, as they often speak across each other as well” (*Scandalous* 161). The trope of discussion between writers is reinforced in *Making a Difference* as both a strategy of editorial representation and a method of reading multicultural literature, an alternative to margin/mainstream dualisms that reduce “minority” writing as supplemental to a centrist tradition:

One of my primary intentions has been to create a space in which contributors ... might dialogue with each other, without suspending differences. Through their poetry, their fiction, and their statements about their writing that are cited in the headnotes, this anthology enables these authors to speak with each other across boundaries that are marked by many differences. (1)

Thus, the editorial desire is to enact within the national-historical form the possibilities of communal dialogue and contested exchange found in a collection like *Telling It*. The latter, however, is collaboratively edited by its own contributors, and represents a specific conference setting: its “real” spaces where tense exchange took shape. Indeed, unlike even *Other Solitudes*, whose most unique formal feature as an anthology is its interviews—where writers do actually speak with and, often, across each other, disrupting the editorial drive toward multicultural stability—the “space of exchange” *Making a Difference* creates is in many ways imaginary, and staged retrospectively. Its conversations can only be orchestrated by the editor who curates its voices across historical and communal divides, and in turn by the audience who reads these voices comparatively. This is not to deny that *Making a Difference* can engender productive or provocative forms of reading for such dialogue and for the many complex relations, influences, debts, and exchanges across writing communities that overlap. As Margery Fee notes, the detriment of “parallel” ethnic, racial, or Indigenous anthologies—Moses and Goldie’s *Canadian Native Literature* in her analysis—is that they artificially separate “writers who are profoundly connected in their writing lives ... as if Native and Non-Native writers live in different worlds” (“Aboriginal” 138-39). They don’t, and the more expansive multicultural rubric of *Making a Difference*

allows us to read, for example, the work of Lee Maracle alongside a contemporary like SKY Lee, whose writing lives are, as *Telling It* itself exemplifies, interconnected in multifaceted ways.¹⁵⁷ At the same time, as a historical survey, it risks imposing a form of reading for dialogue, exchange, or affiliation across a chronologically delineated and retrospectively manufactured “multicultural” community of writers that in most cases has never existed other than for the purposes of the anthology itself, and whose members write in dramatically different contexts, often expressing radically different politics.

Barbara Benedict’s work is useful here as a reminder that the representation of difference within the anthology as a “conversational” genre is a longstanding historical convention of the book form itself. Part of the genre’s paradox is that it encourages reading for *différance*, “the enjoyment of sameness and difference” (244), by making space for dissensus and heteroglossia across multi-authored selections that nevertheless remain linked by their terms of selection to a “common enterprise”:

Even while anthologies advertise difference, they paradoxically assert similarity. Because of their cooperative means of production and multiple authorship, anthologies are material expressions of a kind of community, and their format also directs readers to understand them as vessels of a common enterprise, even while registering the independence of each author. (“Paradox” 242)

That community may correspond to the assumed positivity of an ostensibly natural sign—the nation, group identity, historical period, geographical region—or be created explicitly for the anthology itself (often it is both). But in either scenario, individual authors, short of withholding permissions or copyright, have very little agency in structuring the type of community-building work their writing enters into. In turning now to focus more specifically on the place of Indigenous literatures in *Making a Difference*, the questions become what kind of “multicultural” Canadian community it hopes to give

¹⁵⁷ The selection of “Bertha” for Maracle’s only entry in *Making a Difference*, rather than her “Yin Chin” (published in *Canadian Literature* in 1990, and appearing in Moses and Goldie’s anthology), is interesting in light of Kamboureli’s emphasis on writerly dialogue, given “Yin Chin” was written for SKY Lee specifically and explicitly thematizes the internalized racisms that can impede upon solidarity work. In the second edition of *Making a Difference*, though, Kamboureli substitutes Lee’s “Bellydancer: Level One,” appearing in the first edition, with the prologue to her novel *Disappearing Moon Café*, whose complex and contentious representation of Asian-Indigenous relations has more recently received critical attention.

expression to, what literary histories are constructed to represent it, and how it thematizes the literature it collects to pedagogically support reading for a “common enterprise.”

3. Expanding Multiculturalism: Different Differences and the Question of Nation

Kamboureli’s introduction produces an immediate slippage between “multicultural” and “minority” literature in its opening line: “*Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* at once celebrates what has been called minority literature and attempts to change our understanding of what minority literature is” (1). Shifting “multicultural” into “minority” quickly pushes “multicultural literature” away from statist definitions and toward a more general field determined primarily by relations of power. This dislocation helps facilitate the incorporation of Indigenous writing into the anthology’s genealogical production of *literary* multiculturalism, despite the politics of Indigenous exclusion at the level of state multiculturalism. The more flexible concept of “minority” literature, though, while rooted in ethnic and racial difference from demographic (white, Anglo-Celtic) “majority,” slides too into the spatial metaphor of “marginality”: “*Making a Difference* attempts to question representation in a number of ways, perhaps most significantly by challenging the concept of minority. All the contributors, by virtue of their race and ethnicity, belong to the manifold ‘margins’ that the Canadian dominant society has historically devised” (2). “Minority” literature, construed in terms of marginality, is thus contingent, historically determined, and produced through any number of oscillating spheres—demographics, but also the shifting histories of Canadian political society, literary publishing and reception, and institutional representation, for example. These contingencies begin to explain the internal diversity of the anthology’s variously situated minority/multicultural writers:

[A]ll these and other related issues argue persuasively to one conclusion: that the concept of marginality has no inherent meaning in itself ... Minority literature, then is nothing more than a construct, an expression of the power and literary politics of any given time. This is why we see in *Making a Difference*, for example a writer like Lee Maracle alongside a writer like Michael Ondaatje. ... Difference, then, is always a matter of intensity, and is weighed differently in different historical moments. (3)

Maracle and Ondaatje make for an illustrative and complex pairing to exemplify the contingencies of “power and literary politics of any given time,” given they are both racially marked writers publishing in roughly the same historical period but have careers that reflect vastly discrepant experiences with, for example, (Western) education, professionalization, class, and access to publishing and the Canadian literary economy.¹⁵⁸ For Kamboureli, these discrepancies reflect the inconsistencies and provisional degrees of “difference” that variously inflect multicultural literature, exemplifying her “counterreading” of the standard valence of the minority/majority binary—a point she makes by ultimately arguing that multicultural literature is *not* “minority” literature at all: “Multicultural literature is not minority writing, for it does not raise issues that are of minor interest to Canadians. Nor is it, by any standards, of lesser quality than the established literary tradition” (3).

Clearly, the definition of “multicultural” literature is difficult to pin down in *Making a Difference*, which is in fact one of its primary critical objectives. The question becomes, then, how these different kinds of difference become articulated relationally, and what kind of critical or pedagogical work the pairing of authors like Maracle and Ondaatje does within these sliding scales. On one hand, it casts Maracle and Ondaatje as literary equals; Ondaatje’s well-established talent and cultural capital raises that of the collection’s other “multicultural” writers less established within the mainstream canon, and helps prove Kamboureli’s point that multicultural writing is not a special interest project, but a body of literature of the same “quality” as the mainstream canon. On the other hand, it raises the kind of “level playing field” readings across “different kinds of differences” that Goellnicht and Coleman contest in their critique of *Making a Difference*. While their concern is the depoliticization of “race,” it can be

¹⁵⁸ These discrepancies are discernable in the publication histories of the stories collected from these authors in the anthology. Maracle had to self-print “Bertha,” her first short story, as a chapbook and sell it on the street in the 1970s; it went unpublished for twenty years until appearing in *Sojourner’s Truth* (1990) because its female protagonist, an alcoholic, drank too much, according to the publishers who rejected it (Maracle, “Today” 5). Ondaatje’s *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987), excerpts of which form his entry in *Making a Difference*, was published by M&S in 1987 and nominated for the Governor General’s Award, which by 1996 he had won twice for poetry (*Collected Works of Billy the Kid* in 1971, *There’s a Trick with a Knife I’m Learning to Do* in 1979) and once for fiction with *The English Patient* in 1992, which also earned the Booker.

extended here as well to Indigeneity and colonial history. Such differences are born out in complex ways when reading Maracle's story "Bertha" alongside the excerpts from Ondaatje's *In the Skin of the Lion* selected to represent these writers' work, respectively. Ondaatje's novel, a touchstone of Canadian postmodern literature, works to foreground the forgotten histories of European immigrant labourers who helped build Toronto's capitalist infrastructure, producing a more expansive, deeply aestheticized, class-conscious, and multicultural allegory of Canadian nation-building. In "Bertha," Maracle's unadorned prose captures the devastating, interwoven results of colonial dispossession, patriarchal religious education, and capitalist expansion in the coastal Pacific Northwest community of its eponymous protagonist. Bertha, a residential school survivor, struggles to maintain continuity with the traditional knowledge she is shamed into forgetting, and ultimately dies as an alcoholic working at a fish cannery in Prince Rupert. Both stories are invested in revisiting Canada's past to examine how the politics of class, race, and in "Bertha" particularly, gender variously intersect as structures that oppress peoples and histories, though their political stakes are very different. For Ondaatje, historiography becomes a space for (re)inserting into the dominant story of Canada's development a wider cast of characters who, to quote from Dionne Brand's more recent Toronto novel *What We All Long For*, "sit on stolen Ojibway land but hardly any of them know it or care because that genealogy is willfully untraceable except in the name of the city itself" (4). Maracle's story illustrates the colonial dimensions of that very (hi)story of nation-building itself: the missionary priests who stripped "woman-power" from Bertha's community, the "endless stream of accommodating traders [who] paddled up the river to fleece the hapless converts" (347), and the imposed infrastructure and labour conditions of the cannery. Canada's development is what dislocates Bertha from her land, language, and education: "Bighouses were left to die," along with laughter, knowledge, and "Stories, empowering ceremonies," which became "pagan rituals full of horrific shame" (347).

I agree with Goellnicht and Coleman, then, that multicultural “difference” as a shared rubric may elide the particularities that make those differences different, though I disagree with how their argument is applied to *Making a Difference* specifically. The important point, I would argue, is not so much that it is inappropriate for writers of different Indigenous, racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds to be anthologized together, as Goellnicht and Coleman assert against the false “equivalences” of “race.” Rather, it is how the anthology registers these “multicultural” differences and instructs us to *read* for them in ways that are both aesthetically and politically accountable to the writing itself. Contrary to their critique of *Making a Difference* as a “multicultural project of colour-blind inclusiveness” (7), Kamboureli is profoundly aware of the politics of race, a concern which visibly permeates the book’s critical-editorial apparatus and also much of the literature it collects, whose authors write often explicitly from and against locations of racialized difference.¹⁵⁹ However, with reference to Indigeneity as a category of difference that intersects with but also extends beyond the (multi)cultural politics of race, what both *Making a Difference* and Coleman and Goellnicht’s critique of it make discernible is the intangibility, at that particular moment, of the politics of Indigenous nationhood. That is, Canada and its history persist as the de facto context where the representation of literary multiculturalism—even a critical multiculturalism attuned to the politics of race—plays out. The collective anxiety over Canadian identity that lends pedagogical coherence to *Making a Difference* leaves little space for reading Indigenous writers as other than *Canadian*, for reading “Bertha” as other than “part of the continuum of Canadian history” that “persists against the gaps that mark official Canadian history,” as Kamboureli glosses the story in her introduction (8). Here, Canada’s margin/mainstream binary *Making a Difference* works to deconstruct along the lines of race elides critical

¹⁵⁹ Clear examples would include the entries for Lillian Allen, Dionne Brand, George Elliott Clarke, Hiromi Goto, Roy Miki, Rohinton Mistry, M. Nourbese Philip, Makeda Silvera, and Shyam Selvadurai, among others.

negotiations with literary differences that operate outside or alongside Canada's racial politics and extend to, for example, differences in epistemology, cosmology, law, and narrative tradition.

The introduction is careful to signal Canada's history as colonial, and to mark the exclusions of Indigenous peoples from the legislative and policy history of state multiculturalism's development, which "did nothing to realign the colonial ideology of official history" (10). Yet there is no related discussion of the Indian Act, the treaties, Aboriginal rights, land claim negotiations, nor any other political conditions of historical or ongoing Indigenous-Canada relations that begin to account for the complexities of those multicultural exclusions. Or the real resistance of many Indigenous peoples and writers to multicultural incorporation within expanded definitions of a Canadian body politic. In the historical moment of its production, and with its goal of inserting Indigenous writing into the nation-state's literature, *Making a Difference* makes leaves open the question of Indigenous nationhood or sovereignty—whether political, intellectual, or cultural—and how it might inform the reading of Indigenous texts within a Canadian multicultural framework. While "Bertha" certainly writes against "official Canadian history," it also speaks through and beyond Canada to an Indigenous audience to revitalize community through knowledge and story—a distinction Maracle has made by stating simply, "I don't write back, I write home" (qtd. in Shackleton).

Distinctiveness vs Essentialism

Indeed, nation-based Indigenous difference is in some ways antithetical to the text's counterreading of Canadian literature. The introduction asserts that a central motivation of the anthology is to redress the "tokenistic" recognition regularly assigned to the authors it collects by "considering the contributors to this anthology as *Canadian* writers, and not as representatives of cultural groups" (3, my emphasis). Of course, this implies that "Canadian" is not also a "cultural group." But more specifically, the difficulty with this move as it is applied to all "multicultural" literature is that it elides the position of an author like Jeannette Armstrong, for example, who argues that Indigenous writing must be considered "distinctive" from Canadian literature precisely because that writing has roots in the oral traditions of

nations that are not Canadian, but Indigenous (see Armstrong, “Aboriginal”). This distinctiveness emerges in the poetry collected for Armstrong’s entry in the anthology. Whereas the oft-anthologized “History Lesson” writes back to colonization directly and is in some ways more readily intelligible within a postcolonial framework of Canadian multicultural literature, poems like “Wind Woman,” in which the speaker “know[s] how the trees talk” (283) and is in turn taught by them, are more concerned with writing home. That is, they emerge from the epistemologies of Okanagan oral tradition that informs Armstrong’s writing and the relationships with land in which culture (including contemporary poetry) remains inextricably embedded. The complex pedagogical challenge *Making a Difference* enacts in its resistance to essentialism, then, is how to make room for readings that remain attentive to Indigenous literature’s “distinctive” tribal-, national-, or culturally specific features within an anthology that explicitly refuses to treat individual writers as “representatives of cultural groups.”¹⁶⁰

It’s crucial here, from my historical perspective, to attend to the kind of critical discourses available for the study of Indigenous literatures in the moment of the book’s publication. The critical turn that would later consolidate around Indigenous literary nationalism was by the mid-1990s ascendant, but by no means established within the institutional study of literature (in Canada or elsewhere). The insistence on Indigenous literary inclusion in *Making a Difference*, at this time, is invested primarily in recognition and visibility, in critically widening historically narrow versions of “Canadian” literature. What is interesting about Kamboureli’s introduction, from this historical vantage, is that it engages Armstrong’s own early interventions in Indigenous literary criticism—specifically the Editor’s Note prefacing her critical anthology *Looking at the Words of Our People* (1993)—to explain the need to affirm “multicultural” literature as part of the history of *Canadian* writing, and so to avoid an alternative organization based on, say, communal affiliation. For Kamboureli, rejecting an arrangement based on

¹⁶⁰ In *Scandalous Bodies*, a book focused on non-Indigenous “ethnic” and “diasporic” literatures, the comparative “multicultural critical idiom” Kamboureli theorizes centres on “historical modalities of hybridity” (23) in diasporic writing, promoting a “mastery of discomfort” and a “shuttling between centre and margin while displacing both” (130). This postcolonial method is intentionally hostile to any “sovereignty of identity” (149) that would “freeze” (38) ethnic writers.

group identity or cultural taxonomy is rooted in a critically oriented, anti-essentialist position within multiculturalism's politics. This position resists the "tendency to read multicultural literature through the racial or ethnic labels affixed to its authors" (4) that stereotypes and reduces authors to metonyms for entire communities, and which Kambourelis critiques in *Other Solitudes*.¹⁶¹ To explain her rejection of reading through such "labels," Kambourelis turns to the "First Nations" label as a case in point:

By implying that there is a specific essence, say, to the writing of First Nations authors, labels prematurely foreclose our understanding not only of the complexity inherent in individual communities but also of the various ways in which authors position themselves within their cultural groups and the Canadian society at large. As Jeannette Armstrong has written, "First Nations cultures, in their various contemporary forms, whether an urban-modern, pan-Indian experience or clearly a tribal specific (traditional or contemporary), whether it is Eastern, Arctic, Plains, Southwest or West Coastal region, have unique sensibilities which shape the voices coming forward into written English Literature." (4; [Armstrong 7])

There is a complicated slippage here between Kambourelis's refusal to assign a "specific essence" to writers vis-à-vis their cultural communities and Armstrong's more positivist assertion, as a writer who locates herself within a particular "tribal specific" Okanagan tradition, of the distinctive, "unique sensibilities" shaping Indigenous writing. Certainly, Armstrong's words lend support to Kambourelis's anti-essentialist approach to a general category of "First Nations" writing, given the internal diversities of such writing Armstrong explicates. As these words appear in her own anthology, however, Armstrong's assertion of the "unique sensibilities which shape the voices coming forward into English Literature" immediately becomes the basis for a literary nationalist assertion that directly challenges the pedagogical incorporation of Indigenous writing within the discipline of English (and thus such colonial-nationalist sub-disciplines as "Canadian literature") precisely because of its "unique sensibilities," which demand responsiveness to cultural specificity:

In that sense, I suggest that First Nations Literature will be defined by First Nations Writers, readers, academics and critics and perhaps only by writers and critics from within those varieties of First Nations contemporary practice and past practice of culture and the knowledge of it. I suggest that in reading First Nations Literature the questioning must first be an acknowledgment and recognition that the voices are culture-specific voices and that there are

¹⁶¹ For a later elaboration on this same critical and pedagogical tendency in Canadian literary criticism (particularly postcolonial criticism), see Laura Moss's "Between Fractals and Rainbows of Truth: Criticizing Canadian Criticism."

experts within those cultures who are essential to be drawn from and drawn out in order to incorporate into the reinterpretation through pedagogy, the context of English Literature coming from Native Americans. (Armstrong, "Editor's Note" 7, my emphasis)

To acknowledge, as Armstrong argues, that Indigenous literatures are "culture-specific" is not entirely reducible to the more insidious form of racial essentialism Kamboureli rejects. Rather, in the context of the anthology's collection and the pedagogical function of its introduction, such acknowledgment poses the question of how we are to read Indigenous difference within a comparative, Canadian, multicultural framework that does not prematurely assimilate Indigenous literature into Western critical paradigms, and so makes space for locating writers within the epistemological and narrative traditions of myriad nations that do not derive entirely from the continuum of Canadian multicultural history.

"An Allegory of Literary History": Locating Multicultural Origins

One of those Western critical paradigms Armstrong has critiqued is that of literary history itself, whose traditional privileging of genres and forms deemed "literary" has overlooked long histories of Indigenous verbal and written arts: "Contrary to the predominant view, Aboriginal literatures are not 'emergent' Canadian literary voices arising as a result of Aboriginal peoples' literacy in an official language and their introduction to Canadian literature" ("Aboriginal" 180). If Indigenous nationhood poses particular challenges to multicultural incorporation within the *spatial* arrangement of literary differences in *Making a Difference*, related complexities also extend to its *historical* (re)construction of multicultural writing. For if *Making a Difference* is not organized based on communal affiliations to avoid the pitfalls of an essentialist pedagogy, chronological arrangement of the national survey is neither ideologically benign nor divorced from the impositions of linear time and its flattening effects on the complexities of articulating relational histories. Kamboureli first addresses this decision as follows:

My intention to represent Canadian multicultural literature while questioning the label of minority attached to it has led to my decision to organize the contents of this anthology according to the birthdates of authors. This arrangement, I believe, affords the reader a historical overview while, at the same time, dispelling the notion that multicultural writing is only a recent phenomenon. (5)

Kamboureli is rightly critical of the tokenistic add-on model that collects a select few contemporary writers as multicultural flavour to a historical canon that remains otherwise undisturbed. The chronology of the national survey form thus helps realize this counter-canonical, historical perspective, and productively so. Kamboureli then follows by suggesting that critical multiculturalism challenges the power to devise *all* boundaries that determine how cultural difference becomes represented, including historically: “In my selection process I was guided by the belief that multiculturalism disputes certain kinds of representation, the kinds that are built around the principle of sameness, of cohesiveness, of *linear development*” (5, my emphasis). The contradiction here is again one engendered by form, and one Kamboureli clearly articulates: “Any anthology that intends to offer a historical overview can only function as an allegory of literary history, can only map out yet another narrative path by which we can enter that history” (5). This is true, though it is precisely the historical survey’s function to name its own literary history, making the production of linear development not simply an unavoidable necessity, but a constitutive function of its pedagogical and ideological work. So, how—or perhaps more accurately *when*—does Indigenous writing enter this particular allegory of multicultural literary history?

The first entry is from Beth Brant and her 1991 short story “This is History,” appearing about one-third of the way into the anthology’s over 500 pages. “Multicultural” Indigenous literature, then, is decidedly *contemporary* literature in *Making a Difference*, though Kamboureli makes clear in her introduction that the rich “cultural heritage” of Indigenous peoples has been “systematically ignored” by “the official history of Canada” the anthology seeks to redress (8). No anthology can be comprehensive in its coverage.¹⁶² But the absence of any Indigenous writing from *Making a Difference* prior to that published in the decade leading into its production is not entirely attributable to unavoidable gaps, the contingencies of securing permissions, or the material limitations of space. It is

¹⁶² Despite that they are regularly marketed as such. The back-cover copy frames *Making A Difference* as “the first comprehensive anthology of ethnic and aboriginal writing in Canada.”

instead linked more to the question of how *Making a Difference* traces the origins of multicultural writing, a vexing but ultimately necessary editorial task for all historical anthologies. As George Elliott Clarke writes in the context of anthologizing African Canadian literary history, the editor is always “stuck with the problem of having to declare a genesis wherever he or she feels best able to set this ‘debut’ (while remembering—strictly—that all such origins are never fixed)” (43). At the outset of the introduction to *Making a Difference*, Kamboureli sets the “debut” of multicultural literature as follows:

What makes this anthology different is its gathering together of both poetry and fiction by authors who come from a wide range of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. *Beginning with F.P. Grove and Laura Goodman Salverson, the first non-Anglo-Celtic writers to achieve recognition in Canada, and including First Nations authors*, this anthology belongs to the genealogy of Canadian literature, a body of writings that come from a variety of traditions that used to be kept separate from the so-called main tradition. (1, my emphasis)

This framing is compelling, particularly in its placing of Grove at the start of Canadian multicultural writing. To position Grove as “the first non-Anglo-Celtic” writer “to achieve recognition in Canada” in an anthology inclusive of Indigenous writing is, perhaps most obviously, a dismissal of E. Pauline Johnson, as either a writer widely recognized in Canada (and beyond) or a Mohawk writer. This omission is particularly notable when considering, as I showed in Chapter 3, Johnson regularly served as the lone Indigenous voice in the mainstream English Canadian historical survey anthologies predating *Making a Difference*. Moreover, Grove, while non-Anglo-Celtic, is one of the most anthologized writers in the history of Canadian literature, which makes the claim that he inaugurates a “body of writings” that have been “kept separate from the so-called main tradition” somewhat dubious.

What is noteworthy from a literary historical view here is that “multicultural” literature begins with those first writers to “achieve recognition.” This framing suggests less a counter-reading of the canon than a shift in canonical emphasis to foreground ethnicity: Salverson and Grove here are no longer simply the CanLit writers of Prairie fiction they have been traditionally, but the Icelandic (Salverson) and Prussian-born, German-national, self-styled-Swedish (Grove) immigrants that “multicultural” literature helps makes intelligible. The imperative of historical representation is thus less

to extend recognition to previously un-recognized writing nor to decolonize the Eurocentric terms that have traditionally coded what counts as “literary” in the construction of literary history. The incorporation of only recent Indigenous writers within this already established tradition—bracketed by the subordinating clause, “and including First Nations authors”—is thus reflective of the sheer groundswell of Indigenous writing since the late 1980s that brought mainstream recognition, but also of a certain continuity with mainstream ideas about literature that had kept Indigenous writing largely invisible to mainstream audiences until that time. In *Making a Difference*, Indigenous literature begins with Brant and thus becomes, to use Craig Womack’s compelling metaphor, a multicultural “branch” grafted genealogically onto an already mature “trunk” of ethnic or immigrant Canadian writing (*Red* 6). For Womack, “Tribal literatures are the tree, the oldest literatures in the Americas,” a point he makes explicitly not assert more “inclusion” in a diversified colonial canon, but to argue that an Indigenous canon predates those of the nation-state (7). In *Making a Difference*, while the history of Indigenous *people* is a crucial reminder that Canada’s multicultural history is deeply colonial, and—as in *Other Solitudes*—that lands called Canada have been “multicultural” long before the first settlers arrived, the anthology ultimately includes and invites reading of Indigenous *literature* as only recently “emergent.”

Grove is a complicated writer to posit as the genesis of “multicultural” literature, beyond his place in the “main tradition.” Like J.M. Gibbon and Watson Kirkconnell whom I discussed in Part 1—the latter who did much to publicize Grove’s position as a writer—Grove was among those early Canadian literary figures who espoused a tolerance uncommon in his time for non-British immigration and an early vision of Canada as a mosaic. These sentiments took shape in his fiction, populated largely by industrious European immigrants settling and cultivating Canada’s West, but also in his voice as a public intellectual. In his popular speaking tours across Canada, Grove tackled Canadian identity by critiquing British supremacy, arguing for a Canada that valued integration of Europeans. In his speeches “Assimilation” and “Canadians Old and New” in the 1920s, later printed in *Maclean’s*, he

weighed in on debates over immigration to argue for a new multicultural “federation” of races and “peaceful intercourse” in Canada: “Federation ... is merely another name for what I have just now called peaceful definition of the races against each other—races which have learned to consider each other as being of equal value and which, therefore, are willing to consider each other as having equal rights” (“Assimilation”). Grove argued Canada had an chance to model this peaceful co-existence of races (a term in his time meaning both nationality and colour), though with limits: “Ultimately they may blend; perhaps in the course of millennia; perhaps not till the white race as such is forced to close its fronts by the menace held over it by a colored race; merging its national quarrels in a common enmity” (“Assimilation”). Like Gibbon’s “mosaic,” Grove’s multicultural federation welcomed “newcomers” and “foreigners” so long as they were white Europeans, his case aimed at Anglo Canada to embrace “members of all white nations to come and to make their homes among them” (“Canadians” 169).

Certainly, Grove’s vexed position within the history of multiculturalism—which includes his own complex ethnic history and adopted identity¹⁶³—illustrates Kamboureli’s argument that difference and marginality are always historically contingent, particularly when read from the anthology’s present and the anti-racist context of its editorial framing. Yet it is not only Grove’s biography and essays that make him a problematic progenitor of a multicultural literary community that includes Indigenous writers, but his literature itself; particularly in light of the anthology’s desire to counteract the historical erasure of Indigeneity from a colonial Canada that saw no “inherent value” in the “presence, cultural differences, spirituality, and languages of the Aboriginal peoples,” whose land “was deemed to be ready

¹⁶³ In *Scandalous Bodies*, Kamboureli offers a similar “allegory” of ethnic literary history in her first chapter, dedicated to Grove. Her explanation there can be usefully read alongside *Making a Difference*: “Although my study is not offered as a chronological survey of Canadian ethnic literature, beginning with Grove is crucial because of the historical perspective it affords my overall argument. This does not mean that I posit Grove as *the* origin of Canadian ethnic literature. ‘The term origin,’ [Walter] Benjamin tells us, ‘is not intended to describe the process by which the existent came into being ... Origin is an eddy in the stream of becoming’ (1977, 45). It is through this sense of origin...that I would like to examine what the case of Grove can tell us about ... diasporic writing in Canada.” Notable here is that “ethnic literature” becomes “diasporic literature” in the final sentence—a slippage that occurs in *Making a Difference* as well, and which I will address shortly.

for the taking” (7). The short story from Grove that opens the literature in *Making a Difference*, “The First Day of an Immigrant,” follows Niels Lindstedt, Grove’s protagonist from *Settlers of the Marsh* (1925), as he arrives to Canada and settles near a small Prairie town. Niels finds work at a “prosperous farm, a very symbol of harvest and ease” (17) in an otherwise empty countryside, where only “a clump of willows breaks the monotony of the prairie landscape” (18). Like much of Grove’s fiction, “First Day” captures the tense mixing of settler “foreigners”—Scandinavian, German, and Russian immigrants in this case—with the Anglo-Celtic “Canadian type” (22) as they co-exist and cultivate lands that are always, explicitly or implicitly, empty. As Terrence Craig notes, “aboriginal Canadians were ignored completely in [Grove’s] fiction, where Canadian history begins with the first turning of the sod by a white pioneer” (59-60). In the very first pages of the anthology’s writing, then, Grove’s fiction, as the beginning of “multicultural literature,” narrativizes the kinds of Indigenous erasure *Making a Difference* argues that multicultural literature helps reveal as a white colonial fiction.

The absence of any historical Indigenous literature in the selected writing or a critical overview of literary history in the anthology’s introduction does little to re-write this history, though the inclusion of contemporary versions of creation stories in Brant’s “This is History” and King’s “The One about Coyote Going West” does help to forge pedagogical links with longstanding oral, spiritual, and epistemological traditions. Nevertheless, the particular allegory of literary history created here invites readers to interpret such contemporary Indigenous authors as members of a “multicultural” literary tradition that begins with Grove. Positioning Grove as a precursor to Thomas King, for example, whose work frequently emerges from the cultural history of Blackfoot lands and peoples in the Alberta Prairies, makes for a tenuous supposition of multicultural community. (King’s Coyote story certainly offers a humorous juxtaposition in this sense with Grove’s fictional versions of the imperialist dictum “Go West, young man, and seek your fortune...”). It also demonstrates the complexities of multicultural difference as a decolonial comparative framework for reading the work of Indigenous and

non-Indigenous writers, as such difference is often made not only in shared marginalization from mainstream Canada, but in discrepant relation to the multicultural framework itself.

Diasporic Readings: “This Is History” and the Postcoloniality of Multiculturalism

These complexities are perhaps made most discernable at the conclusion of the anthology’s introduction, which thematizes the collection by turning to diaspora. As a critic of anthologies, Kamboureli has cautioned against the dangers of thematization as pedagogical motive complicit in raising essentialist expectations about ethnic writing (*Scandalous* 151). Yet thematic framings serve an important generic function within any anthology’s technical apparatus and enable editors to encourage a particular pedagogical approach to reading, which for *Making a Difference* becomes the hybridities and movements of diaspora. This diasporic turn within the anthology intimates, and indeed helps establish, a broader postcolonial turn toward diaspora studies in Canadian literary criticism—a turn precipitated in part by an imperative to rearticulate the nationalist discourse of multiculturalism in response to globalization. What Kamboureli would later characterize as the “elsewhereness” of Canadian literature in *Trans.Can.Lit* (2007) is something *Making a Difference* subtly gestures toward in its Table of Contents. Authors are listed by birthplace rather than, for example, nationality, race, religion, or other collective categories: e.g., “A.M. KLEIN 1909-72 (Ratno, Ukraine),” “JOY KOGAWA b. 1935 (Vancouver, BC),” “HIMANI BANNERJI b. 1943 (Bangladesh),” “FRED WAH b. 1939 (Swift Current, Saskatchewan),” “THOMAS KING b. 1943 (Oklahoma),” “DANIEL DAVID MOSES b. 1952 (Six Nations Reserve, Ontario).” What this framing reveals is that roughly half of the multicultural authors are originally from elsewhere. Locating by birthplace thus complicates the notion of “Canadian” and any hyphenated categories—Joy Kogawa is not a “Japanese Canadian” or “Asian Canadian” writer

here, but a Vancouver writer. Conversely, Thomas King is not Cherokee (as he is presented in Moses and Goldie's Oxford anthology, for example), but an Oklahoman and American.¹⁶⁴

Following the national anthology convention of using the introduction to “map” the book's terrain for readers as a kind of guide, Kamboureli writes:

Reading through the poetry and fiction of the seventy-one authors in this anthology is indeed taking a journey. . . . Much of the writing in *Making a Difference* involves actual travel, the kinds of departures and arrivals that accompany people of any diaspora. Diaspora—the dispersal of a people around the world—necessitated as it is often by major historical upheavals, carries along with it seeds from the original land that help the people on the move and their descendants to root themselves in the new place. The experience of displacement, the process of acculturation or integration, the gaps between generations, the tensions between individuals and their communities—these are some of the themes that inform diasporic literature. (13)

I quote this particular passage at length because it marks a significant shift in the anthology's discursive construction of “multicultural” literature, which by the end of the passage has become “diasporic literature.”¹⁶⁵ Diaspora, as both a way of defining multicultural literature and a method of reading it, thus emerges as a unifying thematic responsive to the multiple movements of multicultural difference.

Kamboureli's map provides a useful summary of how diaspora might be read in/to much of the collection's writing: the Jewish diasporic experience of Klein, Rachel Korn, and Irving Layton; the immigrant narratives of Harold Sonny Ladoo or Arnold Itwaru; the overlapping genealogies of language in the poetry of Jamila Ismael and Dionne Brand; the transnational tensions of identity in stories from Shyam Selvadurai and Ashok Mathur. Race and racialization are also thematized as central concerns of diasporic/multicultural literature, in the writing of Roy Miki and Himani Bannerji, for example. The collection's Indigenous writers appear at the end of this thematic journey, however, as set apart entirely from the anthology's thematics of diasporic experience, as authors “who write from a

¹⁶⁴ King was actually born in California (metro Sacramento). His father was from Oklahoma. The source of the error here is unclear, but it functions to frame King as rooted in US Indian Country by birth.

¹⁶⁵ In *Scandalous Bodies*, Kamboureli's epistemology of ethnicity overlaps with diaspora. There is no clear distinction between “ethnic” and “diasporic” in *Scandalous Bodies*, where these terms are at times used interchangeably. Kamboureli notes that she intentionally “refrained from joining the ongoing debate about the semantic and political differences between diaspora and ethnicity as concepts; although they are different, their genealogies overlap, and I have decided to work with their intersections rather than to offer definitions that could at best be provisional” (xiv).

diametrically opposed experience: the knowledge of not having been separated at all from their lands, but having been systematically denied the right to their places and cultures” (15, my emphasis). Like all thematic mappings, there is some generalization here in claiming that the anthology’s Indigenous authors have all been systematically denied access to their cultures, which often inform and resonate profoundly in their writing. Nevertheless, Kamboureli is usefully flagging for students and pedagogues an tension between multicultural and Indigenous literary studies, anticipating critical debates between studies of diaspora and Indigenous nationhood that would not emerge for more than a decade later.¹⁶⁶

How, then, does *Making a Difference* reconcile this opposition in its pedagogical mapping of Indigenous literatures within, or *against*, the multicultural thematics of diaspora? The concluding lines of the introduction offer an answer, yielding the lengthy critical essay’s last words to Beth Brant:

The writing of Beth Brant, Daniel David Moses, Thomas King, Jeannette Armstrong, and Lee Maracle ... is a reminder to other Canadians that we have all been travellers, that, somewhere in our personal or familial histories ..., we all belonged somewhere else. And what is most pertinent about this reminder is that the first foreign travellers who came here came under the pretence of coming to an empty land. At the end of Beth Brant’s creation story, “First Woman touched her body, feeling the movements inside. She touched the back of Mother and waited for the beings who would change her world” (15).

Kamboureli’s remarks are not unlike Hutcheon and Richmond’s invocation of Atwood’s “we are all immigrants to this place even if we are born here” in *Other Solitudes*—particularly in the repeated discursive “we” (“*we* have all been travellers,” “*we* all belonged”) that aligns the book’s implied reader with the immigrant-settler diasporic subjectivity of its editor. Yet whereas the absence of Indigenous writing in *Other Solitudes* consolidates that “we” as normatively Canadian, *Making a Difference* turns to Indigeneity here precisely to unsettle that position’s universal claims, though the oppositional us/them framework nevertheless maintains that position’s coherence. What is “most pertinent” about

¹⁶⁶ Kamboureli’s oppositional rendering here is not unlike Diana Brydon’s argument that “concepts of diaspora reach their limits in claims to indigeneity” (“Time” 23), though scholars of Indigenous literatures have more recently argued for the utility of placing diaspora in conversation with Indigenous sovereignty and nationhood. See Kim, McCall, and Singer for a useful summary of these debates, and McCall’s chapter on “Diaspora and Nation in Metis Writing” for her theorization of a “diasporic-Indigenous-sovereigntist” approach. See also Coleman, “Indigenous Place and Diaspora Space.”

Indigenous writing, in this context, is that it reminds “us” of Canada’s colonial history. The pedagogical value of Indigenous literature is thus primarily its ability to provoke further questioning about claims to both homogenous Canadian identity and the politics of diasporic belonging—those Canadian anxieties *Making a Difference* offers as the consistency unifying multicultural writing as a national literature.

Put otherwise, the anthology asks its audience to read Brant’s “This is History” as a story whose importance in this multicultural collection is its ability to destabilize Canada. Such a reading places Indigenous writing within a restrictive deficit model that delimits literary value primarily to its postcolonial valence, asking what it affords a counter-reading of Canadian history. But moreover, Kamboureli’s concluding lines also perform what I would argue is a misreading of Brant’s text itself, aligning the generalized “we” of settler Canadian subjectivity somewhat seamlessly with those “beings who would change [First Woman’s] world” in ways Brant’s story resists. Elided in this editorial framing, which privileges settler-colonial history over the text’s unique expressive politics, is Brant’s particular re-interpretation of the Haudenosaunee creation story of Sky Woman and First Woman, which she narrates from a Mohawk oral tradition that “This is History” also powerfully critiques. In closing my discussion of *Making a Difference*, I want to briefly read Brant’s story within the context of its framing to draw out some of the implications of this discussion and return to my titular question of what an Indigenous text such as “This Is History” is *doing* in an anthology like this.

As the first Indigenous writer and text appearing in *Making a Difference*, Brant and “This is History” immediately make felt the absence of E. Pauline Johnson, or any other early writing to help place Brant within the traditions she not only locates herself within, but helped actively cultivate through her work as an editor and organizer in the 1980s. A Bay of Quinte Mohawk and self-identified lesbian feminist, Brant traces her literary lineage not through Canada, but through a community of Indigenous women writers beginning with Johnson, whom, as a Mohawk, Brant has repeatedly drawn upon as a “spiritual grandmother” (*Writing* 7). “This is History” orients itself toward tribal community

in its opening words, too, which preface the story with a short dedication to fellow Mohawk feminist Donna Goodleaf. The story extends these Indigenous feminist relations and queer affiliations upheld in Brant's life and writing into the fertile relationship between Sky Woman and her daughter First Woman, inserting queer Indigenous love and feminist agency into the heart of worldly creation.

In the opening lines of the story, Sky Woman is marked as “different” from the other Sky People by her “curiosity” and “peculiar trait[s]” that make her “an aberration, a queer woman who asked questions, a woman who wasn't satisfied with what she had” (108). Queer signifies doubly here and locates difference within sexuality, specifically, for Sky Woman, who descends from the clouds to the Turtle's back, gives birth to First Woman, and creates the world in an image of their love and through the expression of their erotic desire: “They laughed together and made language between them. They touched each other and in the touching made a new word: love. They touched each other and made a language of touching: passion. They made medicine together. They made magic together” (111). Sky Woman ages and eventually dies, her heart buried and body distributed to corners of the world by First Woman, who at the end of the story learns of the impending pregnancy Kambourelī cites in her introduction. Sky Woman's voice speaks to First Woman from the moon:

Inside you are growing two beings. They are not like us. They are called Twin Sons. One of these is good and will honor us and our Mother. One of these is not good and will bring things that we have no names for. Teach these beings what we have learned together. Teach them that if the sons do not honor the women who made them, that will be the end of this earth. (112)

Brant's version ends before the arrival of the Twin Sons that usually concludes the traditional story, a choice that maintains the women's relationship at the centre of creation.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, unlike other versions that present the Sons as embodiments of good and evil in terms of general morality, in “This is History,” this morality is linked specifically to their respective alignments with patriarchy—to the Sons' dissimilar capacities to honour matrilineal creation and respect the knowledge and power

¹⁶⁷ See Gingell, “Social Lives” for a summary of many contemporary print versions of the Sky Woman oral narrative.

expressed in the relationship of Sky Woman and First Woman. While the arrival of the Sons can be read within the historical context of imperialism and settler-imposed norms of gender defined by racist heteropatriarchy, a reading of “This is History” from inside the cosmologies and traditions of Mohawk storytelling also frames the threat of the bad Son as the threat of destructive patriarchy within Indigenous community itself. As Brant says in *Writing as Witness*, “homophobia is the eldest son of racism and one does not exist without the other. Our community suffers from both—externally and internally” (77). Sky Woman is ostracized for her queerness by the Sky People long before the birth of the First Sons, whose coming arrival marks the intimation of this history repeating itself in worldly and world-destroying ways that First Woman’s queer language of creation as yet has “no words for.”

The point here is that to position this arrival as primarily a reminder that all of “us” in Canada once came from elsewhere delimits the complexity of Brant’s multifaceted text within the oppositional postcolonial-diasporic framework of multicultural literature Kamboureli thematizes. The question of how to read Brant’s as a *Mohawk* story within *Making a Difference* thus emblemizes the crisis of representation Indigenous nationhood poses to incorporation within the multicultural Canadian national-historical imaginary more generally. For “This is History,” the interpretive stakes of this crisis return as a pedagogical question: *whose history is this?* Certainly, Brant’s story can be read within the continuum of Canadian literature as colonial allegory, a narrative that unsettles Canada’s multicultural history by marking a reminder of EuroWestern arrivals and impositions—including the impositions of gender and heteronormative sexuality. But such a reading fails to account for the ways “This is History” integrates within its implicit critique of colonization the complexities of queerness and patriarchy within the Mohawk community. That is, it is about much more than teaching “us” about Canadian colonialism. As Mark Rifkin argues, in Brant’s work, the “‘we’ and ‘us’ refer to members of Indigenous nations,” and her creative writing provides a “counterpoint” to the notion that “Indians

serve solely as a source of inspiration for articulating minoritarian sexual and gender identity” within the colonial nation-state, “rather than as participants in their own embattled nations” (238).

4. Conclusion: “How Shall We Read These?”

So, back to the question I started with: what *are* Indigenous texts doing in this anthology? Around the time my students asked me that question in 2014, I had the opportunity to participate in a conference on Indigenous literary pedagogy, “Approaching Indigenous Literatures in the Twenty-First Century: How Shall We Read These?” (SFU). (*That* titular question playing reflexively on Helen Hoy’s early critical monograph, *How Shall I Read These? Native Women Writers in Canada* [2001]). The conference was organized for Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars to discuss pedagogical strategies that might be “responsive and responsible to Indigenous peoples and communities and mindful of Canadians’ shared history under colonialism” (“Approaching”), conversations that included workshops for two new Indigenous anthologies then in their planning stages (since published by Wilfrid Laurier). I was part of a group of scholars and students in a workshop for an anthology of short fiction. While the workshop was designed for those in the field—i.e., those who might use the book in the classroom—to discuss individual selections, the conversation about authors and texts eventually turned into a questioning of the anthology form itself. Many of its conventions, particularly chronological literary history and genre definitions (including “fiction” and “short story”), were discussed as impositions, requiring Indigenous literary arts and oral traditions to be made legible within Western terms that much of the “literature” we were discussing fit within uneasily. The anthology (now published as *Read, Listen, Tell: Indigenous Stories from Turtle Island* [2017]), underwent an organizational re-imagining in part as a result of these discussions—a point editors Sophie McCall, Deanna Reder, and David Gaertner note in their Introduction. The final product in this case is a text organized around neither chronology nor genre, but by theme and core critical concepts deemed important for teaching: “concerns at the heart of Indigenous studies, such as the relationships between story, land, language, identity, and community;

the politics of genre and narrative tradition; the relationship between word and image ... ; the continuities between oral and written forms of expression; and the role of nation-specific critical approaches” (McCall et al. 2). As an emerging scholar and teacher interested in anthologies, it was certainly an eye-opening experience to witness and participate in the kind of spirited debates and competition of ideas that rest behind any anthology, given the sense of coherence and stability these texts assume once bound, printed, and put into students’ hands. It also prompted me to think more carefully and critically about how the anthologies and syllabi I’d encountered as a student, and taught to my own students, shaped how Indigenous literatures are positioned in the Canadian classroom.

Back in my own class, at the end of our semester—with these conversations in mind, and thinking ahead to this dissertation—I returned to the question and asked my students to reflect on how *they* felt the book invited them to read these Indigenous texts *as* multicultural, Canadian literature. Most were (perhaps unsurprisingly) fairly equivocal. While they wished for a clearer overview of some of the political, legal, and literary-critical complexities as to why the multicultural framework extends uneasily to Indigenous authors or texts, they felt the anthology provided an interesting selection of contemporary writing, and delivered on its intentions to show the important contribution of this writing to contemporary literature in Canada. And I agreed—though the emphasis on *contemporary* Indigenous literature is one way the anthology’s particular multicultural rubric shapes how it invites teaching and reading.¹⁶⁸ Still, the research on Canadian anthology history I’ve undertaken in this project has only underscored how transformational *Making a Difference* was at the time of its publication, when

¹⁶⁸ This remains largely true in the anthology’s 2007 second edition, though its “origins” extended back before Grove, to a selection of “Fugitive and Non-Fugitive Slave Narratives” by Black writers (Sophia Pooley, Reverend Alexander Hemsley, Francis Henderson, Mrs. Francis Henderson), after which comes E. Pauline Johnson’s “A Squamish Legend of Napoleon” from *Legends of Vancouver*, followed by Grove’s “First Days.” As part of the extensive revisions in this edition to reflect new writing published in the decade after 1996, Daniel David Moses’s poems were cut, as were some of Armstrong’s poems (“History Lesson” and “Indian Woman” remain). The contemporary range of new Indigenous writing was made more expansive with new entries for Tomson Highway (“My Canada”), Alooook Ipellie (“Love Triangle”), Marilyn Dumont (“Letter to Sir John A MacDonal,” “Still Unsaved Soul,” “The Devils’ Language”), Armand Ruffo (“Poem for Duncan Campbell Scott,” “Power,” “At Geronimo’s Grave,” “Detour”), Warren Cariou (“Remembering Clayton”), selections from Gregory Scofield, and Richard Van Camp (“Sky Burial”).

both the dominant teaching anthology (*Canadian Literature in English*) and the first significant “multicultural” anthology (*Other Solitudes*) contained no Indigenous texts, while the first mainstream Indigenous anthology (*Native Canadian Literature*) was designed for courses supplemental to the kind of Canadian literature course Kambourelli’s anthology offered a new alternative. When it appeared in 1996, the multicultural rubric Kambourelli introduced made the significant case that Indigenous writing, and a queer Mohawk creation story like Brant’s “This Is History,” was important literature in Canada, and helped facilitate its teaching as such. I believe it’s possible and indeed necessary to recognize the metamorphic nature of this argument and what it helped make visible, while still critically interrogating the particular impositions that the “multicultural” and “Canadian” framing produced as well.

In the context of a national discipline like Canadian literature, the question of how Indigenous literatures fit—become represented, taught, and studied—is one that extends well beyond the 1990s and the particular “multicultural” genre I’ve been analyzing in this project’s final chapters. In part, I would suggest, because the kind of argument for inclusion made by *Making a Difference* and facilitated by the multicultural rubric it employs was so successful. Part 2 of this dissertation has been concerned primarily with anthologies, and for many different reasons I’ve discussed, anthologies make exceptionally easy fodder for critics. I myself have spent a great deal of time critiquing in these chapters, though this close engagement has in many ways been motivated by a need to take these anthologies seriously. That is, to engage them critically within the contexts of their production as indexes of wider values at specific historical moments in the institutional histories of multiculturalism and Canadian literature, and to read them closely as collections in ways reviews and literary histories tend to gloss. Nevertheless, I am aware of the tendency of scholars to critique without providing solutions. One of the reasons I have dwelled in the paradoxes, inconsistencies, and limitations of these anthologies is because, in often forthright and vulnerable ways, their editors’ work of expanding Canadian literature via multiculturalism helped make visible many of the conundrums that Canadian

literary studies still faces, particularly in terms of how Indigenous literatures are taught and studied in ways that might be responsive to Indigenous peoples and communities within a national discipline rooted in a history of colonialism that implicates all. The struggle to find appropriate “cultural grammars” (Kim, McCall, and Singer) to negotiate these relations is ongoing, though much has changed since the turn of the millennium. My work in these chapters has been not to show what these relationships *might* be, but what they *have* been at these particularly formative junctures. I am of course interested in what they are now and could be, which I now turn to think through in my conclusion.

Conclusion: Re-Examining Old Relationships

The fact that official policy must, by simplifying issues, construct or reconstruct binaries is why every culture needs literature.

—Donna Bennett, “Getting Beyond Binaries” (2005)

Since the passing of the Indian Act in 1876, Canada has been in the business of ... determining our lives—and lands—for us. Where we could go, what we could do, how our lineage could pass down to new generations, what we could name ourselves, what we could teach our children, what ceremonies of ours we could legally engage in. All of it was dictated to us in this racist document. ... Meanwhile, politicians trumpet “multiculturalism” as a defining Canadian value with straight faces. If you’re starting to feel like this is an episode of *The Twilight Zone* as narrated by the Mad Hatter, welcome to the wild world of Indian politics.

—Alicia Elliott (Tuscarora), *A Mind Spread Out on the Ground* (2019)

In CanLit, there is no “before” the trouble. ... Like the country its writing is supposed to reflect, CanLit is supposed to be tolerant, liberal, a place where we can imagine our future together. Recent events in CanLit underscore that this is not the case. It has never been the case. *CanLit is in trouble, and it is the trouble*. How do we stay with it, and make new kin?

—Hannah McGregor, Julie Rak, and Erin Wunker, *Refuse: CanLit in Ruins* (2018)

The limits of cultural recognition have long been contested by Indigenous peoples and writers. In 1892, E. Pauline Johnson asked, skeptically, whether the “Indian” was being imagined into Canadian literature simply “to lend a dash of vivid colouring to an otherwise tame and sombre picture of colonial life” (5). The question she posed then to mainstream white writers could just have easily been asked during any of the more recent episodes of cultural appropriation resurfacing in Canadian literary culture: “Do authors who write Indian romances love the nation they endeavor successfully or unsuccessfully to describe? (5). In 2013, more than four decades after Harold Cardinal challenged Canada to deal with Indigenous nations as politically distinct “red tiles” in its new multicultural mosaic, Sarah Hunt (Kwagiulth) describes Canada’s ongoing unwillingness to support Indigenous peoples’ demands for political justice with the same enthusiasm it extends to their cultures. For Hunt, celebrations like National Indigenous Peoples Day welcome Indigenous peoples into Canada “as dancers, singers, and cultural artifacts,” reframing culture’s expressive politics “as celebrations of Canada’s multicultural history”:

This vision disempowers Aboriginal peoples' struggles to gain sovereignty, to settle land and resource disputes, and to define ourselves not as subjects of Canada but as citizens of our own nations, on our own terms. Defining our cultural traditions as merely part of Canada's history takes away their political significance as our systems of law, governance and identity. This is no coincidence, as the federal government would obviously not encourage a day to support the recognition of Indigenous nations as sovereign entities. ("National")

This vision is structural to a Canadian politics of misrecognition that multiculturalism has helped make "official" in the public sphere, dislocating Indigenous culture from politics and thus obfuscating the colonial violence at the formation of the multicultural nation-state. To treat Indigenous culture as politically expressive, embedded in Indigenous epistemologies, and continuous with enduring *national* traditions is to disrupt the "tame and sombre picture of colonial life" of Canadian *cultural* pluralism.

I have shown in this dissertation how the state-driven project of multiculturalism, now widely understood as Canada's distinctive, organic, even "indigenous" national feature, has settled itself on Indigenous lands by variously expunging or containing Indigenous difference through strategies of managing diversity that at their core disavow the politics of Indigenous nationhood and sovereignty. I have shown how this multicultural nationalism has roots in colonial thought that extend back in literary and political discourse long before multiculturalism became official policy, and thus how that policy materialized as an extension of the settler-colonial project of nation-building. I have also shown how the multicultural *literary* nationalism of the state's patronage of culture has transmuted within the Canadian literary field in ambivalent ways. At times, the political economy of this policy history and its limited forms of cultural recognition have materially stimulated the production of new Indigenous writing and critical expansions of narrow nationalist histories of Canadian literature. Yet the visibility and politics of inclusion availed by this recognition have tended to make invisible the expressive politics of Indigenous nationhood within a multicultural Canadian literature.

The circuitous routes I've taken to elaborate the colonial history of multiculturalism in part reflect the disturbingly recursive nature of colonial history in Canada. While writing this dissertation another Trudeau became Prime Minister, touting diversity and making grand statements about the

need for Canada to reconceive its approach to Indigenous-state relations, while consistently failing on those commitments and reproducing the *realpolitik* of capitalist colonialism. Pierre Trudeau's own "Indian Problem" problem was that he sought unilateral solutions to complex conundrums produced by colonial history without actually listening to Indigenous peoples like Cardinal he had invited to the table to consult. Justin Trudeau rose to office at the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, asserting that Canada's "most important relationship" is with Indigenous nations (see Mas). His capitalization on the rhetoric of "reconciliation" has been mostly devoid of the work of transforming relations that is the responsibility of listening to *truth*. Such distortions of reconciliation manifest when "consulting" becomes pretext for insulting, breaking promises, and extracting Indigenous bodies to open the state's gateways for extracting of resources.

So too do these patterns repeat in Canadian literature's relations with Indigenous peoples and stories. The uncanny return in 2017 of debates over cultural appropriation following Hal Niedzviecki's "Appropriation Prize" editorial in *Write Magazine* is one example of how the settler's privileged assertion of rights to Indigenous property (including culture) persists. For many Indigenous artists and activists, 2017, and the nationalist context of Canada 150 celebrations of the state's Sesquicentennial, was an especially vital moment for renewed resistance to Canada, and for refusing Canadian literature's politics of misrecognition. In *Refuse: CanLit in Ruins* (2018), a crucial textual archive and response to these latest ruptures, Hannah McGregor, Julie Rak, and Erin Wunker explain that "CanLit as an industry and cultural formation" has always been bound to "the history of Canada as a settler-colonial nation-state" (12). It has thus always been a site of feminist, anti-colonial, anti-racist, and indeed critical multicultural struggle as well. As I write this conclusion in the summer of 2020, there is once again renewed, widespread anti-racist social justice activism, consolidating around the Black Lives Matter movement, but extending into complex relations of solidarity and alliance between BIPOC activists and cultural workers across Turtle Island that are part of this history too. It is not that nothing has

changed in “CanLit.” But what the current state of the field makes clear is that considering old debates settled is always a privilege of the settler imaginary. So I want now to bring this political and literary history of multiculturalism into the unsettled present, and then conclude by thinking about the future.

Post-Multicultural Canada?

Alicia Elliott describes the perplexing reality of Canada’s espousal of multiculturalism alongside the continuing violence of colonial policy as like something out of *The Twilight Zone*. As Nikos Papastergiadis notes, though, multiculturalism itself increasingly appears to have “slid into the twilight zone of a zombie concept” (1) in much cultural theory and Western nation-state politics. In the contexts of mass migrations (both voluntary and involuntary), transnational cultural flows, and political and economic globalization, national multiculturalism has become for many, like the nation itself, an outmoded analytical category, “dead long ago but still haunting people’s minds” (Beck 80). In Canadian literary studies, too, multiculturalism has seemed to slowly pass into the graveyard of a very near disciplinary past. The 2007 publication of *Trans.Can.Lit: Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature*, for example, and the influential work of the TransCanada Institute generally, argued the need to rethink the nationalist foundations of “CanLit,” a movement in part away from multiculturalism and the moribund nation-based frameworks it had produced for conceptualizing literary differences. In her preface to *Trans.Can.Lit*, Smaro Kamboureli situates its intervention at “a moment when the multicultural idiom had become normative but was being challenged by the immediacy of diasporic and transnational politics in our daily lives” (xii). Rinaldo Walcott describes a sense that the discipline seemed to be “memorializing” the moment of multiculturalism’s “obliteration” as a “central and important category of Canadian literary studies” (“Against” 19) as it moved beyond the nation.

It is notable that the growing critical disaffection with the category of the “nation” in Canadian literary studies after the millennium coincides with the consolidation of nationhood and literary nationalism as resurgent anti-colonial methodologies in Indigenous studies. Literary nationalism asserted the necessity of, and has created valuable space for, critical conversations centred on

Indigenous worldviews and nation-specific epistemologies. Lee Maracle, the only Indigenous contributor to *Trans.Can.Lit*, made clear that Indigenous peoples and their stories remain “the rock upon which the place and privilege of each member of the Diaspora rests” (59)—“Diaspora” for Maracle meaning all those non-Indigenous newcomers in Canada, who relate with one another and to colonial history in very different ways. What Maracle emphasized was the unfinished work of grappling with the colonial foundations constituting relations between Indigenous and Canada, Indigenous and Canadian literatures. Multiculturalism has always been, and still remains, a part of that “tangled web of colonial being” Maracle then compelled Canadianists to pull apart “thread by thread,” watching “as each thread unfurls, untangles, shows its soft underbelly, its vulnerability, its strength, its resilience, its defiance, its imposition, its stubbornness,” in order to “rediscover” (68) new relationships.

In the political sphere, the zombie-like status of multiculturalism since the millennium, and particularly since 9/11, as new pernicious binaries coalesced around Islam and the West, was marked by a public distancing and declarations of its failures in many Western nation-states, often appearing in the discourse of “crisis.”¹⁶⁹ While debates persist over what comes “after” multiculturalism, notes Will Kymlicka in narrating its ostensive “rise and fall,” there is “surprising consensus that we are indeed in a ‘post-multicultural’ era” (97). The global “crisis” of multiculturalism suggests to many theorists that the term’s usefulness has expired, though these largely European claims require careful tempering in the Canadian context, where multiculturalism remains legally, ideologically, demographically, and imaginatively entrenched.¹⁷⁰ Canada was not among the various Western democracies to retreat from

¹⁶⁹ The “crisis” of multiculturalism in Europe, appearing in the wake of such events as the Rushdie affair and the assassination of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh (2004), reached a breaking point in 2010-2011, when, in a period of four months, heads of state including David Cameron (Britain), Angela Merkel (Germany), and Nicolas Sarkozy (France), as well as Spain’s ex-Premier Jose Maria Aznar, publicly declared the failures of multiculturalism in their nations. Australia’s former prime minister John Howard similarly attacked it in Australia for its excessive accommodations and failures to integrate immigrant minorities as part of his wider critique of multiculturalism’s dangers to the global “Anglosphere.”

¹⁷⁰ As Kymlicka has noted, the public distancing in political discourse from the taboo “m-word” in Western states has been more of a rhetorical retreat than a radical reform of liberal policies premised on multicultural citizenship, which to a large extent have remained intact. See Kymlicka, *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future*; and Kymlicka and Banting. The currency the term still has in Canada is revelatory of its continuing symbolic import and utility in nationalist thought.

multiculturalism in the decade of backlash following 9/11. Rather, the governments of Stephen Harper during this period continued to tout the ideals of multiculturalism publically while significantly reforming its bureaucratic operations in support of a conservative neoliberal agenda: prioritizing the economic integration of immigrants, revitalizing symbolic Britishness and military patriotism in ideals of Canadian citizenship, and de-prioritizing anti-racist policy-making and cultural spending.¹⁷¹

For many Canadians who continue to experience this status quo as one of racial injustice, there is perhaps a different crisis in multiculturalism—what David Chariandy describes as a crisis of ongoing displacement of belonging in the nation: “We have erred in assuming that the ideal of multicultural citizenship could entirely assuage the painful, affective legacies of diasporic displacement and racialization, or else adequately address the *material* obstacles towards security, social acceptance, and dignified labour that many visible minorities in Canada continue to face” (Chariandy 828). Such crises of displacement and disaffection have tended to remain largely unnoticed in the mainstream Canadian public, though, whose nationalist investment in multiculturalism and belief in its achievements often foreclose critical discussions of its limitations and failures.¹⁷² Indeed, since the election of Donald Trump as US President in 2016, and with the rise across Western politics of far-right, populist, white ethnonationalist, anti-multicultural conservatism, multiculturalism has returned with some prominence to its historical role of subverting Canadian nationalism in public discourse.

“Why You Can Thank Multiculturalism for Canada’s Strong Population Growth,” a 2017 *Globe and Mail* article penned by the award-winning author and journalist John Ibbitson, is one emblematic example. Commenting on the results of Statistics Canada’s 2016 census, Ibbitson addresses “[s]keptics of multiculturalism” specifically while lauding Canada’s population growth. He finds in the census

¹⁷¹ Yasmeen Abu-Laban calls this “reform by stealth,” a pun on the fact that both Harper and Jason Kenney, his Minister of Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism, were elected to parliament first as members of the Reform Party, which sought to eliminate multiculturalism. Her chapter of the same title provides an excellent summary of the symbolic and material transformations of multiculturalism under the Harper Conservatives. See also Moss, “Song and Dance.”

¹⁷² Christine Kim takes up the affect of such displacements of multiculturalism in her *Minor Intimacies of Race* (10-11).

evidence of that “magic mix of high levels of immigration and multicultural diversity” unique to Canada, “glad tidings” for which Canadians should thank official multiculturalism and the “decades [of] enlightened government” responsible for its administration. The article pits Canada’s growing multiculturalism against other Western nations to emphasize the economic benefits of immigration. Canada has avoided the “trap” of segregation into “resentful ethnic enclaves” in “xenophobic” Europe, because immigrant “integration” can only be successful when “settling” takes place where a “native population [*sic*] honestly embraces multiculturalism.” Canada’s multiculturalism thus needs vigorous defending in order to avoid the fate of Europe and our neighbours to the South, given Trump’s “efforts to close American borders and minds” from diversity.

This is a classic example of Canadian nationalist boosterism that extolls the country’s virtues relationally and by negation: we are better because we are not America. Characteristically, too, its unabashed zeal—Ibbitson opens by declaring the census proves “Canada is the most blessed place on earth”—masks the strategic erasures of a more troubling reality whose forgetting is necessary to such confidence.¹⁷³ Nowhere in Ibbitson’s account is the disquieting data the census presented about Indigenous peoples’ dramatic socioeconomic disadvantages in terms of poverty, living conditions, and education. These stats add to already well-known and longstanding evidence of deep inequalities produced by centuries of colonial policy and systemic racism that manifest in, among other issues, water insecurity, overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, and the vastly disproportionate number of Indigenous women and girls who go murdered and missing in Canada. The perverse irony of Ibbitson’s multicultural celebration of population growth here is both telling and striking, given the census figures also clearly demonstrate that self-identified Indigenous peoples are by far the fastest

¹⁷³ Here I am drawing on Ernst Renan’s articulation nation-state nationalism as an ideology structured on historical amnesia with respect to its originary violence.

growing Canadian demographic, outpacing the non-Indigenous population by four-to-one.¹⁷⁴

Such claims are entirely continuous with a history of multicultural nationalism that regularly neglects the politics of Indigeneity while celebrating diversity and asserting the civility of Canada's "native-born" society. And certainly, they misrepresent the lived realities of many of those same "new" Canadians upheld as statistical evidence of the nation's generous accommodation—those ignored by the universal "You" of Ibbitson's "Why *You* Can Thank Multiculturalism," who are also the presumptive "we" who may sincerely claim Canada as "the most blessed place on earth," for which "our" gratitude is owed to the state. What *is* new here, and what I suggest needs to be considered within the present historical context specifically, is the argument that an achieved ideal of multiculturalism "must always be defended," even for a conservative critic like Ibbitson. As he urges contra the US example of Trump, "Every day we must make the case for a more multicultural Canada." And Ibbitson is not alone. In a contemporaneous article for *The Walrus*, "Canada in the Age of Donald Trump: What It Means to Be the Last Country on Earth that Believes in Multiculturalism" (2016), contrarian cultural commentator Stephen Marche makes a similar case. Even Michael Valpy, erstwhile critic of multiculturalism as a "cancer," has done an about face. Writing again in the *Globe* in 2019, Valpy, who charged the "multiculturalism" of the 1994 Writing Thru Race conference with re-enacting Apartheid, questions why race-relations and immigration still remain at issue in Canadian politics. To do so he looks back to 1994, apparently forgetting his own position at the time:

People such as renowned novelist Neil Bissoondath [and Valpy himself] argued that multiculturalism—diversity—was gravely eroding Canadian identity. A generation later, the evidence is that Mr. Bissoondath was wrong. Attachment to ethnic groups is declining precipitously, national identity has remained strong, immigrants quickly adapt to Canadian values, opposition to immigration is half what it was in the early 1990s, ... The country shows

¹⁷⁴ While the topic beyond my scope here, the census and its science of statistical demography are of course problematic, and not only for Indigenous peoples, though these problems take shape in unique ways peoples in terms of state-defined administration of Indigenous identity. See Chris Anderson's "The Racialisation of 'Metis' in the Canadian Census," and the introduction to Fleischmann et. al. Many Indigenous people refuse to participate in the census as an assertion of sovereignty, one of many complications of its analysis, though the 2016 census results are clearly illustrative of larger trends.

every sign of having solved the postmodern riddle of diversity that has torn Europe and the US apart. (“The Contradictions”)

The case from these critics vis-à-vis multiculturalism’s future is clear: more of the same. This seems a novel Canadian twist on the discourse of “crisis” long harrying multiculturalism. That is, if in other parts of the world multiculturalism has been declared failed based on the perception (real or imagined) that *it is not working*, in Canada today, at least in the press and public imagination, there is a renewed urgency to uphold the existing multicultural order precisely because *it is already working as it should*.

Let me be clear: while Canadian multiculturalism offers no solution to the political work of decolonization, I would not advance as preferable the toxic and viscerally public bigotry of right-wing nationalism currently embodied in the Trump presidency, and very much present in neoconservative Canadian politics. Indeed, one of the insidious ways that Canada’s multicultural nationalism delimits the political imaginary and stifles decolonial solidarities is by reducing the status quo to a binary choice: either keep the current multiculturalism that makes this “the most blessed place on earth,” or fall into the trap of xenophobic nationalism. If discourses of multiculturalism such as those I’ve briefly traced here are at all indicative of public sentiment, as critics we should maintain vigilance against complacencies with a cultural and political history that continues to manifest in returns to multicultural citizenship as the necessary and only viable option. No, Canada is no more “post-multicultural” than it is post-colonial. Indeed, multiculturalism remains one of the primary ideological paradigms through which Canada’s present history of settler-colonialism is validated and valorized in the present.

CanLit at the Kitchen Table

Decolonizing multicultural Canada will take much more than literature and its study. Important work in the fields of Indigenous political science, law, and jurisprudence offers alternative models for constitutional federalism and nation-to-nation politics that would begin to undo what James Sákéj Henderson calls the same old “colonial calculus” (*Jurisprudence* 229). Len Findlay argues that literary scholars in Canada would do well to integrate this legal thought into critical and pedagogical practices

as a form of “*sui generis* solidarity,” by which “new distributions of authority and responsibility, indeed new knowledge systems” might emerge in and beyond the academy (“Long March” 247). Such critical interdisciplinary may help the undisciplining of Canadian literary studies beyond the nation-state model—and would require Canadianists to learn from conversations in Indigenous studies.

Yet, despite being economically, ideologically, and culturally embedded in the colonial history of the multicultural nation-state, Canadian writing, criticism, and the institutions where these practices take shape are not reducible to it. And as Donna Bennett notes in my epigraph above, literature and its study offer ways of thinking outside the strictures and reductive binaries of public policy. In 2015, the Indigenous Literary Studies Association (ILSA) was formed to create a new institutional framework for the study of Indigenous Literatures in Canada specifically. The creation of ILSA and its emergence from the annual Aboriginal Roundtable of the Canadian Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (CACLALS) was responsive to a need for a new table and speaking place outside the postcolonial study of multicultural Canadian literatures that had historically provided “a safe place,” though not always a “perfect fit” (“Announcing” 10). It is also, to me, emblematic of broader inter/disciplinary shifts underway as Indigenous literary and cultural studies in Canada continue to consolidate outside the category of “Canadian” that had historically housed it and where community had been built, in both fraught and productive ways. Yet these vital shifts need not entail the end of old relationships, but should compel instead Canadian literary scholars to think about alternative forms of learning, collaboration, literary community, and new exchanges across fields. As the ILSA council urged, “The birth of ILSA calls upon us to re-examine our old relationships, not with the goal of abandoning them but rather to determine how we will relate in the future” (10).

It is my hope that his dissertation has contributed to this necessary project of critically re-examining old relationships so as to better understand how new and better ones might be built. The questions posed by ILSA’s formation, for example—“How will we continue as both friends and equal

partners? How can we collaborate?” (10)—are still pressing. In *Refuse*, McGregor, Rak, and Wunker outline the many troubles of “CanLit,” and ask: “How do we stay with it, and make new kin?” (22). Kinship is not a benign language through which to articulate the future possibilities of Canadian literature, particular in a collection that so clearly illustrates the extent to which relations with that institution have been, for many Indigenous writers and scholars (and many non-Indigenous people too), repeatedly appropriative and abusive. For this same reason, it is a provocative and potentially generative way of conceiving of relational futures. It brings into relief the active work and obligations demanded to build these relationships, and the accountability necessary for maintaining them in healthy ways. To think in terms of kinship also presumes a principled intellectual, critical, and reflexive engagement with Indigenous epistemologies often embedded in Indigenous literatures and their study.

Kinship is not only relational, but dynamic—a verb, as Daniel Heath Justice argues, rather than a noun: “not about something that *is* in itself so much as something we *do*—actively, thoughtfully, respectfully” (“Go Away” 148). And neither is it reducible to rigid binaries of inclusion and exclusion, as Dallas Hunt (Cree) argues: “Just as we can ‘make kin,’ there is also the possibility (or necessity) of losing kin as well. And yet, this is not an either/or process, as one can possibly do both (make kin and lose them), while simultaneously thinking of the larger effects these relational projects can have” (170). As I reflect on this project, I am reminded of just how much the politics of multiculturalism—and thus my own analysis of its history—is reproductive of discourses of “inclusion” (and its synonym, exclusion) that operate through these either/or binaries, and which presume the authority of the nation-state and colonial power in Canada to “recognize” and “include.” To do the work of kinship and conceive of reciprocal relationships with Indigenous creative and critical voices would demand thinking through the politics of recognition differently and reciprocally: How is *Canada* recognized within the cultural communities of Indigenous nations? What would it mean for Canadian literature to understand itself as included (or not) within Indigenous literature and its study?

Such questions might help the work of building alternative foundations for critical relations. They would require those of us working in Canadian literature to not only continue reckoning with the history of a discipline that has regularly failed in its kinship obligations, but to take seriously the prospects of losing kin, and respecting when recognition is rejected or refused by Indigenous writers and critics exercising sovereignty. They would reframe the politics inclusion that so often characterizes the goal of making Indigenous space at the Canadian literature table, and instead bring CanLit to the “kitchen table”¹⁷⁵ of Indigenous dialogue and knowledge. Such conversations would no doubt be frank, and not necessarily aimed at reaching consensus. But if entered into with an openness to learning and listening with respect, such conversations would be the necessary starting place for understanding how Canadian and Indigenous literatures might speak to, with, and across one another differently.

Michelle Coupal (Algonquin) argues that “CanLit is arguably irreconcilably settled on Indigenous literary territory,” and that in the Canadian literature classroom, “the two wor[k] best together when they revea[l] the fissures dividing settler and Indigenous cultures. Reconciling the two should not be the goal.” Cheryl Suzack (Batchewana First Nation) similarly notes “the dilemma Indigenous difference” often poses to Canadian literary studies, and suggests that difference “may be better served by celebrating its disharmonies and lack of fit rather than incorporating Indigenous difference as an ambiguity that ultimately gets left behind” (402). I agree that the goal of pedagogy or criticism should not be to reconcile these many differences. Yet I worry that emphasis on the divisions and “lack of fit” may only reproduce histories of critical neglect of Indigenous literatures, and work to further consolidate the asymmetrical power of a Canadian/Indigenous binary that colonization created and story can help us imagine otherwise. There is an alternative to treating Indigenous difference as an “ambiguity” that doesn’t quite fit at the Canadian table, which is the harder work of listening to

¹⁷⁵ The “kitchen table” is discussed by many Indigenous scholars as an alternative space of dialogue to that of the academy and its conventions, and elaborated by Lisa Brooks in her afterword to *American Indian Literary Nationalism*.

conversations happening at other nations' tables and learning from Indigenous storied intellectualism. This kind of learning may take some unlearning, and comes with the possibility (even probability) of making mistakes, being accountable to them, and engaging reflexively and with humility in conversations about critical practices as part of wider, dynamic dialogues about making good relations.

How these complexities are negotiated will have significant implications for the way the Canadian literature and its multicultural diversity is communicated in various institutional contexts. From the broad-scale pedagogical, anthological, or literary-historical spaces I have analyzed in this project, where versions of national literature are still produced, to the everyday practices of various scholars in their criticism, reading, teaching, or editing, among others. How will Indigenous writing be positioned (or not) in the plural cultural field of Canadian literature without delimiting the "cultural" and appropriating Indigenous expression into a project of nation-building? What realignments are needed to avoid restricting the complex agency of Indigenous writing to the deficit model of a spectral supplement whose primary function is to "unsettle" the multicultural nation? Is it viable to negotiate, under the national rubric "Canadian," the discrepant parallels of competing sovereignties, the plural epistemologies or cosmologies, and the often competing political aspirations of multiple literary nationalisms that characterize the manifold Indigenous and non-Indigenous expressive traditions in lands called Canada? These are just some of the questions that now manifest within Canadian literature after decades of multicultural recognition. And they are the kinds of persistent queries, traps, and contradictions I find myself returning to as an emerging scholar and educator in that field.

I close with questions here rather than prescriptive solutions to these problems of "CanLit" studies, in part because I am uneasy with the discursive premises of this familiar rendering of our critical present. Studying the history of multiculturalism in Canada has certainly reinforced for me the dangers and violences that have attended attempts by those (often well-intentioned white people like myself) who presume to offer solutions posed by the "problems" of Canadian diversity and difference.

Moreover, the cultural construct “CanLit” that is so often reproduced as a monolith is in reality a network of oscillating and often dissenting communities whose conversations at times overlap and at others conflict, often with radically different ideas about what constitutes “CanLit,” its underlying constituencies, or its principles. To the extent that “CanLit” exists, and for the time continues to persist, in the broad institutional sense, it does so within these many contradictions it embodies as a colonial discipline settled on Indigenous lands now uncomfortably attempting to undiscipline itself. This is not necessarily a problem to be (impossibly) solved but a reality to continue reckoning with, though not by reconciling differences and disagreements. The notion of a CanLit community unified in its diversity, one that might adequately represent all and the symptoms and surpluses of colonialism that exceed it, has always been a fiction, and a fiction whose imagining—invariably cast as a necessary good—has almost always at its heart been a form of violence. This fiction is part of what Richard Day calls the quixotic “fantasy of unity” that has always propelled Canadian nationalism, even multicultural nationalism, framing both “the problem of diversity” and its many solutions via deficient recognition on the nation-state model (4). The grip of this fantasy in Canadian literature is that it casts disunity as inevitably destructive rather than potentially generative. The very painful ruptures and disunity so palpable in this time, and that will undoubtedly continue in “CanLit,” indict our present as a moment of necessary historical reckoning, and of losing kin. It may also signal the beginnings of a necessary traversing of the fantasy of “our” unity, and the kind of desire for national wholeness historically embodied in metaphors like the multicultural mosaic. The mosaic has always been rigid, shallow, static, inflexible, uneasily superimposed on living lands, bodies, and stories, and thus fragile. It is perhaps now broken, but our relations and ruptures run deeper, and will continue to split apart and become woven together in dynamic, multifaceted, difficult ways. The work of building new kin will require learning and listening differently, and reimagining CanLit beyond recognition.

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Appendix: Preliminary Bibliography of UBCIC-published Poetry, 1970-1977

The following bibliography lists poems and selected other narrative works (e.g., short stories) in newsletters published by the Union of BC Indian Chiefs from 1970-1977 during the print runs of *Unity* and *Nesika*. Entries are arranged chronologically by date of publication. Any additional identifying information related to authors (e.g., age, location) and texts (e.g., author's notes, reprints, notes on translation) have been included in brackets. Note that *Nesika* twice published consecutive issues with the same volume and number: the issues for November 1974 and December/January 1974-1975 are both printed as vol. 3, no. 10; and the issues for February and March of 1975 are both printed as vol. 3, no. 12. Since 1977, the UBCIC has published the newsletters *UBCIC News* (1977-1980), *Indian World* (1979-1983), and various other information bulletins and papers. The UBCIC's print archive has recently been digitized and made accessible through the Digital Collections online resource section of the Union's website (ubcic.bc.ca/ubcic_digital_collections).

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[Reprinted in *Unity*, vol. 1, no. 3, Feb-Mar. 1971, p. 14]

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[Translation into Squamish done with the assistance of Louis Miranda].

Woods, Margaret. "To be an Indian." *Nesika*, vol. 2, no. 5, May 1973, p. 15.

Terry, Peggy ["Age 13, Penticton, B.C.]. "Hold your Head High." *Nesika*, vol. 2, no. 5, May 1973, p. 15.

Woods, Margaret. "I am an Indian." *Nesika*, vol. 2, no. 5, May 1973, p. 15.

---. "Let Us Be Proud." *Nesika*, vol. 2, no. 5, May 1973, p. 15.

[Accompanying Author's Note: "I wrote this little poem for all the students who board out. I hope to encourage them to try and help themselves to find and live in peace and understanding with their fellow human beings. —M.W."]

Joe, Rita [Cape Breton, Nova Scotia]. "Chief Dan George." *Nesika*, vol. 2, no. 6, June 1973, p. 8.

[Reprinted in *Nesika*, vol. 2, no. 8, Aug. 1973, p. 7.]

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[Translation from English to the Squamish language by Louie Miranda. "Dedicated to my dear friend, Chief Dan George, in Peace, Love, and Brotherhood."]

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