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# Migrants and Citizens: The Shifting Ground of Struggle in Canadian Literary Representation

NAAVA SMOLASH AND MYKA TUCKER-ABRAMSON

## Horizons of Canadian Literature

**T**HIS ESSAY JUXTAPOSES the discourse produced within the contemporary migrant justice movement, which critiques the material violence of the Canadian citizenship apparatus, with discourses in Canadian literary studies that base claims for cultural inclusion on the mobilization of citizenship rights. Both of these sites of knowledge production theorize representation and belonging in Canada; however, Canadian literary discourses tend to ground the struggle for equality in a naturalized vision of citizenship rights, while the migrant justice movement is founded on challenging the ethical validity of legal citizenship as a basis for inclusion. The existence of this analysis of the violence of legal citizenship structures troubles literary and cultural sites that assume a resistant discourse can be based on claiming citizenship rights. In juxtaposing these two discourses, then, we wish to call into question the implicit naturalization of citizenship rights as the basis for inclusion in the Canadian literary project. While important gains have been made within the field of Canadian literature through calls for greater inclusion of all citizens in the national imaginary, Canadian literature as a cultural and political project remains largely bounded by this horizon of formal legal citizenship.

To be clear, important and powerful work has been done using the discourse of citizenship. The insistence on citizenship as a category of resistance in Canadian literary studies was necessary at a particular theoretical moment, and it remains important today. In raising this critique, we wish to be careful not to conflate access to legal citizenship with access to cultural belonging within the national, particularly as blunt racisms have returned and even accelerated in public discourse (Chariandy 819). Instead, we wish to note that there is a new front to

the struggle for inclusion within the national imaginary. The struggle to win equality for racialized identities within the field of Canadian literary studies, and within the Canadian imaginary, has challenged and in many ways shifted the boundary of inclusion, but new exclusions have arisen as the state responds to and redeploys calls for equality. Thus, we argue that even as the exclusion of racialized citizens from the cultural imaginary remains a vital site of struggle, legal citizenship today constitutes the new horizon of contemporary questions of justice and of inclusion in the national Canadian imaginary. As Canadian literature scholars, a vital gap exists in our debates over Canadianness, an erasure that tests the limit of any category called Canadian literature or Canada; that is, legal citizenship.

Thus, we do not mean that possessing legal citizenship automatically confers social or cultural inclusion or belonging; it does not. As Will Kymlicka<sup>1</sup> notes, “There are many forms of cultural exclusion, and they interact with common citizenship in different ways. . . . Various other groups . . . have historically been excluded from full participation in the national culture . . . despite possessing the common rights of citizenship” (173). While being careful not to conflate citizenship with belonging, we would like to argue that the struggle over legal citizenship unfolds in specific ways that both overlap with, and differ from, the ways belonging and cultural inclusion play out for racialized citizens. In this way, legal citizenship status, and its increasingly ossified exclusions of people who live in Canada, operates both as a hard set of rights (or lack thereof), and as cultural exclusion; as we will explore, the legal and the cultural faces of citizenship status are mutually constitutive and intertwined. Although laws and cultural paradigms of belonging continue to shift, to give way and to ossify under pressure, their new forms are as unjust as the explicitly race-based legal exclusions of the past, and as the cultural-social exclusions of the present. Based in legal citizenship status and reaching deeply into the social and the ideological, these new exclusions are difficult to theorize because they are embedded in an existing discourse about inclusion and plurality that masks the “actually-existing”<sup>2</sup> realities of legal citizenship in the neoliberal state.

To illustrate, we would like to open by juxtaposing two statements that appear in a recruitment advertisement on the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) website. In its hiring call, CSIS states that it is an “equal opportunity employer” and simultaneously requires appli-

cants to be “Canadian Citizens” (CSIS). Discussions of equity hiring aside — for they are not the point of this article — the very possibility of this juxtaposition invites a question: how can these two statements coexist? What contemporary social reality allows citizenship status to remain the naturalized boundary of exclusion — especially in light of the hundreds of thousands of non-citizens who make their lives in Canada on a long-term basis? In questioning the naturalization that allows these two statements to coexist on the CSIS website, we wish to argue that while racialization and exclusion of citizens remains a very important concern, citizenship today constitutes one of the last frontiers (and we use that term consciously) of socially acceptable exclusion from the national imaginary, even as non-citizens form a large and expanding constituency within Canadian society. The simultaneity of these two movements, one of inclusion (of non-citizens) and one of exclusion (from citizenship rights), is not coincidental; their relationship represents the contemporary manifestation of state control over (largely) racialized and economically marginalized voices, identities, bodies, and cultural imaginings.

What might this growing legal “inclusive exclusion” mean for Canadian literary theory? From Susannah Moodie to Austin Clarke, immigration has always figured in the Canadian cultural and literary imaginary in changing ways. We do not mean to suggest that racialized exclusions, resistance to them, and representations of them, are somehow new or unusual in Canada. What we are looking at is the specific contemporary way in which Canadian texts, and constructions of the field of Canadian literature, negotiate the current — stepped up, expanded, and transformed — regime of Canadian neoliberal citizenship.

We open with an examination of how legal citizenship as the horizon of inclusion reflects and shapes the cultural field of Canadian literature, specifically in the multiculturalism debates exemplified in critical work by scholars such as Roy Miki and Smaro Kamboureli. We then turn to the concept of citizenship exclusions as they emerged in the first Immigration Acts. We offer an in-depth close reading of four early Immigration Acts to highlight the dialectical relationship between state production and literary production of identity categories within the national. We then turn to two examples of contemporary Canadian literature to show how our national literature points to, embodies, and

encapsulates the limits of our current moment in relation to cultural and legal regimes of citizenship. Our goal in formulating our argument both through law and literature is to highlight the ways in which we cannot fix social problems through narrative alone, because literature does not, in and of itself, or in isolation, effect change. Instead, the limits in literature can reveal the limits of the cultural milieu in which we live: these texts are helpful for the very reason that they express the constraints of our contemporary moment. Denaturalizing these narrative limits can help denaturalize social ones and thus inspire both narrative and material social change.

These critical and literary texts are constrained by neoliberal narratives of citizenship in the contemporary moment. We have chosen two texts, Anne Michaels's *Fugitive Pieces* (1996) and Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005), because they represent exactly the kind of limit we argue is endemic to Canadian literature's current dominant modes. On one end of the spectrum, *Fugitive Pieces* is a celebration of the narratives of Trudeau-era multiculturalism as neoliberalism would like us to remember it: rewritten, reconfigured, using the past as though it were the present. On the other end, *What We All Long For* offers an oppositional counterpoint to the celebratory narrative of Michaels. However, Brand's novel struggles to break out of contemporary restrictions, and in attempting to do so, it succeeds in pointing to the limits of how we can narrativize citizenship in the current neoliberal moment. Read against each other,<sup>3</sup> and alongside migrant justice critiques of legal citizenship, these texts indicate the ideological gap between actually existing neoliberal citizenship and the stories neoliberalism has made of our victories in the struggle for a more inclusive Canada. Aporias emerge in these texts: narrative moments that can't quite be resolved, and theoretical moments in which criticism can't quite hold together its logical and its moral claims. In exploring these aporias, we wish to foreground the mutually constitutive work done by legal structures and cultural production in naturalizing a fundamentally exploitative relationship between the state and non-citizens. Through this analysis, it becomes possible to denaturalize, and thus make apparent, the horizon of Canadian literary studies as it responds to the neoliberal state's production of a greatly expanded non-citizen identity within Canada's borders.

While authors and cultural critics have won crucial victories in including racialized and non-Anglo-European voices within the

English-Canadian canon and within the political discourse of Canada itself, concurrent changes to the state have reared new, rigid forms of exclusion — within the nation — that have engendered a crucial gap in critical and literary representation. Even as many victories have been won, and even as the definition of the national voice continues to be contested in literary and cultural production, the terrain in which we make claims has shifted under our feet. In noting the gap apparent in cultural representations of legal citizenship, we wish to argue that while Canadian literary debates and the national literary apparatus now regularly address issues of exclusion, the material structures of exclusion that are most urgent today are unable to be represented. Because the production of literature is itself embedded in notions of the nation, Canadian literary theory and production embodies this gap; in exploring these texts, we wish to bring into relief the important implications of greatly expanded migration policies and laws for our understanding of the limits of representation, narrative, and critique. We want to look at this gap between literary and theoretical representation, and contemporary legal citizenship regimes, a gap that makes it possible for our literature to represent exclusions from the world wars to the Trudeau era, or those in other countries, but very difficult to fully represent the most glaring contemporary modes of structural exclusion in Canada: precarious legal citizenship status.

Here, it appears useful to establish what we mean by the concepts *status* and *precarity*. In an immigration context, *status* refers to legal permission to live and work in the country. The notion of long-term *precarity* refers to various forms of “precariousness” that call into question simplistic binaries of “citizen/non-citizen” (Walia, “Increasing” 1; Goldring et al. 2007). Goldring et al. explain the meaning of this concept as follows:

Precarious status is marked by the absence of any of the following elements normally associated with permanent residence (and citizenship) in Canada: (1) work authorization, (2) the right to remain permanently in the country (residence permit), (3) not depending on a third party for one’s right to be in Canada (such as a sponsoring spouse or employer), and (4) social citizenship rights available to permanent residents (e.g., public education and public health coverage). (241)<sup>4</sup>

Forms of precarity include the 90,000 people per year assigned various categories of “temporary worker” status (Citizenship and Immigration Canada), a subjugated status that fills a particular labour market niche determined by the state, while denying citizenship rights and, increasingly, barring the path to eventual citizenship (Sharma, “On Being”), in a context in which basic human rights are contingent on citizenship status. Sharma observes in *Home Economics: Nationalism and the Making of Migrant Workers in Canada* that the number of migrant workers admitted annually that the state considers “destined” for eventual citizenship has inverted since the 1970s. In 1973, 57% of all workers entering the country were given landed status; by 2004, only 35% received landed status, while 65% of workers entering the country were not “destined” for eventual citizenship (117). In addition to these migrant workers on temporary employment authorizations, the concept of “precarious status” also refers to the social position of “non-status” (also referred to as “out of status” in Canadian law, and frequently as “illegal” in the popular media): the estimated 200,000-500,000 people (Goldring et al. 2009, 252) living in Canada who, having usually arrived on a short-term visa, stay on to create a life, work, have children, and form lasting relationships, but aren’t granted full legal protections by the immigration apparatus. Hence, they exist in a precarious state, rendered vulnerable to labour market exploitation. As Sharma, Walia, Goldring, and others observe, these forms of precarity are rapidly expanding under current neoliberal citizenship regimes. In the following section, we explore the ways in which these forms of precarity expose a vital limit in contemporary Canadian literary theorizing and representation.

### Expanding the Perimeter

Discussions of justice and equality in the Canadian cultural project have enlarged the boundaries of national culture to argue for the inclusion of racialized citizens’ theorizations, literatures, and aesthetic norms as Canadian. However, this fight for inclusion, germinated as it was in an earlier cultural and political landscape, hinges on attempts to claim a piece of Canada or to affirm the Canadianness of multiple racialized people and communities. We cannot underestimate the importance of critiques within this mode that have opened up space, and that continue to struggle, for non-white and non-Anglo-European voices and aesthetic practices within the English-Canadian canon. This canon, as is

well known, was originally built upon a cultural nationalist framework manifested, for instance, in Northrop Frye's 1965 "Conclusion" to the *Literary History of Canada* or Margaret Atwood's 1972 *Survival*.

Vital critiques challenged and expanded the reductive visions of "Canada" in that early canon. The critical recognition in the 1980s and 1990s of so-called ethnic anthologies point to emerging challenges and marked a period of profound shifts, and struggles over national literary and cultural identity, whose reverberations remain important. As Smaro Kamboureli writes in this period, "As the great number of ethnic anthologies and authors illustrate, ethnic literature is simply not emerging now; it is the critics who have just discovered it" ("Canadian" 13).<sup>5</sup> Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond's 1990 anthology *Other Solitudes* sought to "recall and revise" the designation of Canada as bilingual or bicultural, invoked by the title's reference to Hugh McLennan's *Two Solitudes*. This groundbreaking anthology sought to "challenge . . . a hierarchy of social and cultural privilege" in Canadian literature (2). Smaro Kamboureli's 1996 anthology *Making a Difference* reflected, and helped to produce, "the changed — and changing — state of cultural affairs in Canada" (*Making* xix), marking and helping contribute to a key moment in "Canadian literature's overhaul" (xiii). The 1994 Writing Thru Race conference broke open these questions, and fundamentally altered the way national literary culture could be understood. Meanwhile, Dionne Brand's 1994 *Bread out of Stone* foregrounds the relationship between Canadian culture and white European masculinity when Brand recounts her experience serving on a jury for the Governor General's Award for poetry (129). Roy Miki's 1995 essay "Asiancy"<sup>6</sup> critiques dominant assumptions about the "universality" of aesthetic norms by pointing to their basis in European literary aesthetics as taught through the traditional literary canon. He called into question the underlying assumption that Canadian aesthetic values should be grounded in white European literary traditions:<sup>7</sup>

Assimilationist assumptions, mostly unspoken, . . . and the ideology of white, male, European-based values still reigns in literary institutions, in granting bodies, and in decision-making areas of the publishing world. In a climate where difference is pressed into sameness, and where "universality" implies white perceptions . . . [publishing] still requires conformity to dominant representations, to socially determined "tastes," and to transparent literary expecta-



tions that govern what gets to be judged of “national significance” and “of consequence” — reinforced as they are by an elaborate system of awards, rewards, media privileges, canonization, and ultimately, institutionalization. (*Broken Entries* 109)

In addition to working to change the conditions of publication and reception for writers of colour and indigenous writers in Canada, the work to transform the Canadian literary canon was, and continues to be, deeply committed to the project of transforming the broader Canadian imaginary — and the material realities of the country — through changing the cultural landscape, the world of representations. This kind of expansion reshaped the Canadian canon to include writing by and about “other” Canadians who had been largely excluded from full participation in national dialogue about literature and Canadian culture. New identities were made publicly available through this critical and creative work.

In a discussion of W.H. New’s *A History of Canadian Literature* in her 1994 essay “Canadian Ethnic Anthologies,” Smaro Kamboureli puts her finger on an argument that was to provide the groundwork for a new generation of critics:

Despite his intention to destabilize what “Canadian” signifies, New’s examination of the Canadian literary tradition still succumbs to the pitfalls of a certain nationalism that does not leave much room for discussing seriously the contributions of “other” Canadians. (13)

We agree with Kamboureli. However, nearly two decades later, the “Canadian” invoked in the expression “other Canadians” used above has become a more complicated term with which to resist these exclusions. This argument was radical under a specific regime of exclusion, and is still important, in that racialized citizens continue to be excluded from full cultural participation. However, with the proliferating categories of precarious status in place today, in which increasing numbers of people are included in the country’s economic and social life without citizenship status, relying on this appeal to “Canadian” identity with its implicit core of legal citizenship rights naturalizes the state’s transformed modes of control. In so doing, it masks a new front to the struggle for equality for people of colour in Canada. As Cynthia Dewi Oka and Alison J. Ayers cogently observe, there is a need to “question the

progressive and solidaristic ethos of a nationalist politics based on the forcible exclusion and expulsion of increasing numbers of people” (46).

While the importance of these battles for equality for all citizens within the national imaginary cannot be underestimated, particularly since they are still ongoing, we want to foreground the ways in which, while working to expand the definition of what is “Canadian,” some of the best writing of the multicultural turn also inadvertently reifies and naturalizes “Canada” as a legal apparatus and as an entity of law and enforcement. In light of the state’s response to these calls for inclusion, and the neoliberal turn, these discourses have been redeployed to camouflage the growing exclusions and violence perpetrated by the neoliberal state and its legal citizenship bureaucracy. As literary theorists, we must grapple with the cultural implications of these legal shifts in the nation-state, as they relate to the growing non-citizen identity in Canada.

It has become increasingly apparent that as racialized subjects (from multiple, internally heterogeneous, different communities) were fighting for inclusion in this national identity, throughout the late 1980s and ’90s, the state was shifting under their fingers. Larissa Lai writes of this period as follows:

The state in which some of us were fighting for our rights . . . was changing its shape in the midst of and through that struggle. Just at that 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 neo-liberal state we have today. (121)

At the same time that a pluralist literary vision of Canada began to win key victories in the cultural sphere, the nation-state itself absorbed and redeployed this new, expanded multiculturalism for its increasingly neoliberal nation-state identity, internally and externally.<sup>8</sup>

In response to successful calls for equality, a shift was taking place — the shift that constitutes our focus here — in which this neoliberal turn pitted “Canadians” (identified here as those who possess legal citizenship status as well as those who sit comfortably within the ideological position of a “Canadian” identity) against a growing category of disenfranchised non-citizens: those with precarious legal status, including those in the growing legal category of non-citizen workers, who are

kept in a long-term borderland within the nation-state itself, situated on the lowest rungs of the economy, and kept in a state of permanent precarity.

These rapid shifts in the state apparatus have created a gap between the material realities of the state and contemporary discussions of the national, particularly in debates over justice within a Canadian literary context. Thus, in *Broken Entries*, in a discussion of Makeda Silvera's "Caribbean Chameleon," Miki stresses the injustice of "woman in black polka dot pantsuit" (126) being treated as an alien by border guards. In Miki's argument, her claim to fair treatment and inclusion is not, or not primarily, her humanity, or her time spent living on this land, or her hours of work, or her community ties, but the fact of her "having landed papers" (126). This naturalization of rights based on legal status, which was necessary as a form of claim-making in its cultural and political moment, risks reifying today the growing exclusions represented by contemporary citizenship regimes. Miki's argument, emancipatory with regard to an earlier regime, may mask the ways in which class, which traditionally bifurcated<sup>9</sup> the ways people could access citizenship (as, for instance, skilled or unskilled workers), now increasingly offers citizenship only to those with class privilege and denies it entirely to those without. If the "woman in black polka dot pantsuit" were returning to Canada today after her visit to Jamaica, all else being equal, she would most likely be doing so on a temporary work permit rather than with landed status, no matter how long she had made Canada her home.

Miki's *Redress* touches on these shifts to the nation-state that had already begun by the time of Brian Mulroney's famous 1988 apology, with the coming of the free trade agreements and the neoliberal revisioning of the meaning of Canada (323-25). Miki also explores these shifts, as well as the impact of the Japanese Canadian redress movement on other movements for redress of historical wrongs, in the interview "After Redress." However, these discussions do not follow that line of reasoning to its logical next step: to consider the cultural import of these new bureaucratic technologies of exclusion. The appeal to rights based on place of birth, which has become so vital to Canadian literature as a field post-redress, situates citizenship rights as a prerequisite for human rights, a claim that no longer makes sense in light of expanding modes of precarity. Miki writes that in order to become equal members of Canadian society, Japanese Canadians had to "read themselves into [the

Canadian] nation as ‘citizens,’” to “situate themselves in the narrative of nation-building . . . through the rights and responsibilities of citizenship” (323). Similarly, he writes of the terrible injustice faced by Japanese Canadians treated as enemy aliens — by specifically claiming rights “in this place of birth” (29). This mode of claim-making takes on new meaning in light of neoliberal state policy that prevents the children of long-term migrant workers from being born here, by preventing migrant couples from being together in Canada, even when individual parents work here as so-called temporary labour for years on end.<sup>10</sup> New state and capitalist responses to the same old desire for exploitable labour find ways to circumvent the “problem” of birthright for those the state today deems desirable for hard cheap labour, but undesirable for citizenship.

The categories that lead to eventual citizenship are shrinking and becoming more difficult than ever to use, while those that lead to work without citizenship have expanded significantly in the very period when Canadian citizenship was reinventing itself as race-blind. Sharma writes, “on the one hand, the Canadian government removed explicitly racist restrictions on immigration from the South in 1967 through regulatory changes. On the other hand, in 1973 the Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEAP) was introduced, which created a category of the non-citizen worker and thus served to deny some people access to Canadian entitlements while recruiting them to work in Canada” (“On Being” 428). The category of the non-citizen within Canada is produced through both legal and textual cultural imaginings, as Sharma observes in her analysis of parliamentary debates (“On Being” 427). Thinking with Sharma, and considering not only migrant workers but all forms of precarious status in Canada, we wish to argue that state practices are important not only in their direct material effects, but in their relationship to ideological complacencies and naturalizations that are mutually constitutive of laws and state policies. Claims made for justice and inclusion must now be understood in light of the kinds of traction they gain and give up within the state’s newer neoliberal paradigm.

In this neoliberal context, to resist injustice by mobilizing a discourse of birthright and status inadvertently ignores the mistreatment of the growing numbers of people who live in Canada without the protections of citizenship or even of landed status. These forms of precarity (Goldring et al. 2007, 2009) are an increasingly prominent mode of control (Walia, “Increasing”) within the contemporary state apparatus,

and are naturalized by the storying of racialized non-citizens as outsiders in the national imaginary. The category of the “migrant worker,” as Walia writes, meets the need of capital and justifies exploitation by situating non-citizens as less human than citizens (“Increasing” 15), while “exalting” and continually reproducing the very category of the citizen (Thobani 3). Capitalist modes of accumulation, and the exploitation facilitated by legal citizenship, rely profoundly on one another. In “Transient Servitude: Migrant Labour in Canada and the Apartheid of Citizenship,” Walia details this interdependence:

In Canada, migrant worker programmes involve being tied to the importing employer; low wages, often below the official minimum, and long hours with no overtime pay; dangerous working conditions; crowded and unhealthy accommodation; denial of access to public healthcare and employment insurance, despite paying into the programmes; and being virtually held captive by employers or contractors who seize identification documents. It is their temporary legal status that makes migrant workers extremely vulnerable to abuse. . . . Migrant workers thus represent the “perfect workforce” in an era of evolving global capital-labour relations: commodified and exploitable; flexible and expendable. . . . Canadian migration policy is the result of a perfected system of social control, containment and expulsion. (“Transient” 72)

Given our emphasis on citizenship rights, Canadian literary discussions must now grapple with the implications of this “actually existing” citizenship. Therefore, in addition to discussing representation of citizens racialized as “others” in Canadian nationalist narratives, we propose that denaturalizing representations of the non-citizen in Canada, taking the lead from the theorizing produced within the migrant justice movement, is urgently needed.

### **The Legal Production of Cultural Identities: The Emergence of Canadian Immigration Acts**

As we say above, Canadian literary criticism as a field urgently needs to respond to the precarious forms of citizenship status created by the neoliberal state. In this context, the theories and knowledge emerging from within the grassroots migrant justice movement are instructive, and bring any debate over who can claim Canada as their own into sharp relief — putting “Canada” itself into question. Canadian literary

criticism must now grapple with the growing precipice formed by the proliferation of legal categories of non-status and precarious identity through laws and programs such as the Live-In Caregiver Program, the Seasonal Agricultural Worker's Program, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Security and Prosperity Partnership, the Safe Third Country agreement, "Fortress North America" policies, as well as Western-led militarization and economic instability that displaces increasing numbers of people while hardening borders against human movement. To ground this analysis, we wish to observe the ways in which the border, in the form of Canadian Border Services Agency agents, or demands to produce identification or submit to late-night interrogations, follows people into school, work, shopping malls, and public streets (No One Is Illegal-Toronto, "Stop the Raids"), and into the homes, living rooms, and bedrooms (No One Is Illegal-Toronto, "Deportation Canada") of people with precarious status who make their homes in Canada. Though the details of how this legal social control takes place have taken on new forms, the ideological work of the Canadian literary apparatus today normalizes (and has the power to contest) contemporary relations of exploitation, as older representations did for older exploitative forms.<sup>11</sup>

The production of national narratives is both a cause and an outcome of the material apparatus of literary and academic publication and critique, which are in turn linked to the state apparatus. These modes of literary and critical production operate in a fraught relationship with state hegemony, and have done so ever since the early emergence of Canadian literature with its nation-building mandate. Thus, even as the boundary of Canadianness and Canadian literature expands, we must be careful to observe the new edges of, and within, the national, as it is shaped by state structures. The funding of the Canadian literary apparatus is instructive here. Not only are there citizenship requirements to access Canada Council and Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) funding, but recent changes to SSHRC funding structures are collapsing the already tenuous distinction between academic or cultural knowledge and state and corporate interests. For instance, in 2009 the government announced that 17.5 million in new money invested in SSHRC was earmarked for "business-related degrees" ("SSHRC," Government Invests"), and that the Canada Graduate Scholarship was being renamed the Bombardier CGS.<sup>12</sup> These changes

to critical and cultural funding structures need to be understood in the context of the immigration policies of the neoliberal state, which has greatly expanded the numbers and categories of people welcomed into Canada to provide cheap labour, while restricting or barring access to the path to eventual citizenship. This contemporary relationship is best understood in historical context.

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act has a long history in Canada, bound up with the history of legal citizenship and the production of national narratives. Viewing the early Immigration Acts as iterations or repetitions, designed to create a new reality and imprint or mark it upon the land and the people, brings into relief the ways in which the imaginative production of subject positions allowed this emerging state to assert its legitimacy. The very idea that certain human beings are legally deserving of what Giorgio Agamben would call a “political life” on the lands we call Canada is surprisingly recent. When the first Act Respecting Emigrants and Quarantine was passed in 1859 — which was, at the time, British law — a policy of free entry to Canada was, at least in theory, normalized. A close reading of the early Immigration Acts reveals that naturalized identities of exclusion emerged later than the notion of Canada, but before the idea of the citizen or the border were imagined in law. The idea that only some kinds of people should be able to land on these shores, or that we should have a border to govern and control movement of human beings, is thus relatively new, and the concept of the citizen, the border, and formal exclusion in a Canadian context is newer still. This very first Act Respecting Emigrants and Quarantine contains no absolute exclusions at all. Identity categories are mentioned only once: in an article that requires the captain to report the numbers of people sailing to Canada who are “lunatic, idiotic, deaf and dumb, blind or infirm, stating also whether they are accompanied by relatives able to support them” (art. 8). The obligation is only to report, not exclude.

Over time, the various iterations of this Act reveal themes of inclusion and exclusion, and — more importantly — of controlled inclusion of those hierarchized within the emerging state apparatus as more or less desirable for membership in the national imaginary. The Acts serve to create a system of knowledge that builds a social order, marking the physical land and the physical bodies of human beings subject to this emerging imaginary. In the period just before and after Confederation,

the period that saw enormous growth in the immigration apparatus and in the numbers of immigrants, this discourse was codified into legal narrative. The language of the Acts shifts over this period of profound transformation in the Canadian cultural landscape: the transition between 1866 “Emigrants” and 1910 “Citizens.” While Canada does not yet exist as a self-governing nation-state during this period, the idea of the national was emerging, shaping and shaped by these laws. The Immigration Acts helped structure emerging notions of the national, which would in turn have implications for the national literature and the state imaginary.

The first act to have a focus on “immigration” rather than “emigration” was the Immigration Act of 1869, which also contained no explicit exclusions but was rather focused on bringing settlers to Canada to secure the land base. The preamble to the 1869 Act clearly states its goals “concerning the settlement and colonization of uncultivated lands, as bearing on Immigration” (32); in other words, it was an attempt to bring people here, not exclude them. Reading the law in this way suggests that race exclusions are relatively new, not integral to the idea of Canada as it first emerged; the idea of Canada as an exclusive nation-state is thus not primordial, as it might sometimes appear — it is in fact quite recent and contingent. The initial law had few if any legal exclusions, in part, perhaps, because social exclusions were implicit rather than explicit, but in part, also, because the emerging state structure, expanded under Clifford Sifton’s time as minister of the interior (1896 to 1905), was influenced by the classical economic principle that free movement of people was required for the free market to function.

Concurrently, common sense might dictate that the idea of the citizen — once it did appear — emerged first, and that those deemed other emerged as a secondary function of citizenship. In fact, a close reading of the Immigration Act in its early iterations reveals that the explicit exclusions of “race” — so naturalized in the Canadian cultural imaginary of the first half of the twentieth century — emerge alongside and even prefigure the development of the language of “citizen” (1910 art. 2.f) “domicile” (1910 art. 2.d) or “border” (1910 art. 32). The 1906 Act — which does not contain any reference to “citizen” or “border” — already contains fourteen categories of “those liable to exclusion” (1906 art. 71), but no explicit category of inclusion, only a vague reference to “any person who has previously resided in Canada” (1906 art. 2).



Some of the seemingly race-neutral language of exclusion in the 1906 Act, such as the requirement for certain “classes” of migrants to possess set funds to enter, functioned as race exclusions in their application — again, before any such thing as a “citizen” existed — and companion laws such as the 1897 Alien Labour Act<sup>13</sup> or the 1885 (and later the 1923) Chinese Immigration Acts<sup>14</sup> did more explicitly the work that the Immigration Act engaged in more coded ways. Only in the 1910 Act do we see for the first time the two now familiar categories of “citizen” (2) and “person having domicile in Canada” (2) (a precursor to today’s “permanent resident”) as categories of inclusion; at the same time, the 1910 Act expands upon the 1906 categories of exclusion, and dedicates a full section to “Prohibited Classes” (4), even providing a subheading to that effect.

The first three Acts do not explicitly mention race: only in the 1910 Act does the word “race” (1910 art. 37) first appear, as a discretionary measure allowing exclusion based on possession of an unspecified amount of money related to the “race” of the immigrant; this Act contains the first rounds of some of the most infamous and virulent race laws, those mainly concerning racialized British subjects from India who legally had the right to travel anywhere in the British Empire: the continuous journey regulation (1910 art. 38.a, 39),<sup>15</sup> the prohibition of those deemed “unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada” (1910, art 38.c), and a reference to the Chinese Immigration Act (1910 art. 79), which was then in force. While several exclusions were, thus, already established by the 1869 and 1906 Acts, these were carried out without recourse to any reference to the “border” (1910, art. 32), which only appeared in the 1910 Immigration Act after Sifton instituted physical border checkpoints along the ossifying Canada-United States border to control immigration by road and rail. Canada only gained the right to formally assign citizenship in the 1940s, long after these exclusions were already present. The Acts, viewed as iterations, thus indicate two important things: first, that the early establishment of the national imaginary — which was more contingent than today’s naturalized national narratives might suggest — had no legal exclusions, and second, that once categories of legal inclusion emerged, they relied profoundly on their other, rather than existing as independent categories of identity with primordial right to this land. The Acts, thus, established hegemony over the land they marked and helped legitimize

the emerging national imaginary as they naturalized the idea that only certain kinds of people should be allowed to come to this land. This legal imagining occurred through the creation and proliferation of legal identities that would profoundly shape the cultural imaginary. This reading reveals the ways in which immigration law has always created cultural categories of identity, and thereby played a mutually constitutive role in the production of culture itself. This history is also one of the production of categories of management, categories that are now rapidly transformed and expanded as precarious citizenship identities proliferate.

Categorizations by race, nationality, ethnicity, or ‘favoured nations’ were removed from the Immigration Act in 1967, and the points system was soon introduced to take its place; today, formally neutral immigration categories exist, such as the “Skilled Worker” category, “Family” class, and “Investor” and “Business” classes, but formal equality does not equal substantive equality (Abella).<sup>16</sup> In the years since the 1967 Act was enacted, and increasingly with the passing of the 2001 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, categories of precarity have both shifted and proliferated. These include a growing “range of precarious, or less-than-full, [citizenship] statuses in Canada” — that rely on the “*legal production of illegality*” (Goldring et al. 2007, 4; emphasis added). As Anna Pratt writes in *Securing Borders*, with the shift from a liberal to a neoliberal state, discourses about refugees are also now entangled in a “nexus” of “crime-security” (2). This is not just the case with refugee claims, but marks a shift in the entire discourse around immigration and citizenship itself. This legal shift produces new cultural categories and new terrains of cultural struggle. From the 1970s to the present, we have seen a period of rapid expansion and transformation of legal categories of inclusion-exclusion through a shift in emphasis to criminality and risk.

The language of “crime-risk” is just one of the ways in which the proliferation of categories of precarious citizenship has naturalized itself. In *Home Economics*, Nandita Sharma discusses the rapid expansion of the NIEAP (117). The expanding categories of precarity in Canada mean that any discussion of Canadian identity must now grapple with the reality that non-citizens, denied the usual human and social rights associated with citizenship, constitute a permanent, state-produced feature of the cultural landscape. These expanded categories of the perma-

ment non-citizen within the nation-state cannot be read separately from the supposedly expansive cultural citizenship of Canada and Canadian literature. In other words, while the definitions of Canadianness assumed in Canadian literary and critical contexts may appear to be constantly expanding and opening, they also mask new and growing exclusions. Read together, these expansions and contractions tell a different story about Canada than the welcoming liberal narrative: a story about increasing the categories of culture available for consumption, and the bodies available for labour, but not about increasing rights or access for those thus excluded, whether from social institutions (health care, unemployment insurance, legal eligibility for arts council grants), or cultural ones (narratives and storytelling — and actually receiving arts council grants, publication, promotion of cultural work).

Keeping this new landscape in mind, it becomes vital to examine the contemporary ideological interplay between legal structures and cultural production. The point is not just that new exclusions exist, but rather that laws produce cultural categories, and the literature that inscribes those categories within the national imaginary then helps naturalize those laws. Therefore, it is vital to explore the interplay between the laws that make possible a permanent temporary category of people who live with “precarious status” within Canada, and the field of Canadian literature as it is institutionally practiced, in understanding the meaning of “Canadian” identity. Examples within Canadian literary theory that do grapple directly with, and attempt to challenge, legal citizenship may reproduce this exact tension. For instance, *Speaking in Tongues: PEN Canada Writers in Exile* contains a piece that directly challenges ideologically naturalized assumptions about Canadian compassion that shape and limit the knowable discourse. However, this challenge comes from one of the contributors, and not from the introduction, foreword, or afterword, which reproduce naturalized assumptions. The single line in the apparatus of the book that deals with “actually existing” legal citizenship status — “To its credit, the government of Canada has offered citizenship and passports to these and other threatened writers when other countries would not” (Helwig 7) — reifies the gratitude script that circumscribes migrant existence within Canada. One piece, by Martha Kumsa (Kuwee Kumsa), an Oromo woman born and raised in Ethiopia, challenges this naturalized gratitude script, by describing

the Janus-faced role of Immigration Canada, who welcomed Kumsa but refused her husband:

Oops! Did I say Canada? A slip of the tongue, I guess. Confusion. A long passive silence, and then a timid voice comes out of me: sometimes Canada *is* Ethiopia. I'm not sure you like my translation. . . . I look up and see angry clouds gathering on your face, and fear consumes me. Fear of your wrath, of the rage that will rain down on me, of the rumbling thunder that will batter me, of the fuming crater that will open up, of the lava that will engulf my soul. Hold on! I want to swallow my words back. (94)

This piece eloquently expresses the silencing effect of the naturalized narratives of Canadian compassion and cosmopolitanism. Arguably, in negotiating ideological terms with the state, the apparatus of this anthology makes space for the critique contained within Kumsa's piece. Taken this way, the book can be viewed productively as symptomatic of the "possible" in the current moment. The relationship between the author's words in this chapter and the framing apparatus of the book is indicative of the very constraints to which we wish to call attention.

### New Narratives, New Exclusions: Two CanLit Case Studies

These limits, thus, are not only present in the theory, but also inform the limits of the national imaginary itself, as expressed and shaped by literature. For this reason, we turn to two critically acclaimed Canadian novels — Anne Michaels's *Fugitive Pieces* (1996) and Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* (2005) — both expressly concerned with questions of migration. These novels represent opposing edges of the multicultural turn and aim for very different ends. Whereas Michaels's book casts Canada as a safe haven, neutral of political content, Brand's book takes the politics of the Canadian nation-state as its object and challenges them explicitly. However, both novels reveal a similar limit, and it is this limit we take as our subject of inquiry.

*Fugitive Pieces* begins from the assumption of a certain cosmopolitan ease of immigration. Michaels's Toronto is a space of memory and archaeology, "a city built in a bowl of a prehistoric lake" (89), but it is itself a politically neutral space — a physically safe space that Jakob can occupy post-Holocaust. There is no discussion of his getting in, of the process of entering, or of his citizenship. Instead, Toronto, operating

metonymically as Canada, is marked by food and consumption, even if this consumption of the new culture contains elements of loss and “despair” (91). Jakob experiences Canada through his “first Canadian meal: buttered toast and vegetable soup” (90), and Athos buys his first “Canadian cigarettes — Macdonald’s” (90). Canada is a matter of consumption and choice; legal structures that constrain or permit entry are outside the narrative. Part of this silence surrounding the process of entrance is Athos’s class position. He can enter Canada because he is a professor, because he knows Griffith Taylor — a character based on the historical British geographer who set up the geography department at the University of Toronto. Michaels’s explanation for Jakob’s arrival is telling in its vagueness: Jakob and Athos arrive “because the Torontonian Wright went south with Taylor and Debenham; because Debenham was stationed in Salonika; because of salt — Athos and I found ourselves on a boat to Canada” (82). Elided in this movement from political to metaphoric history are the material reasons and explanations behind the bifurcated movement of people — why Athos and Jakob are able to move fairly easily into Canada as Canadians with papers (and middle-class Canadians at that) and why so many can only move here as non-citizens. Race and whiteness, of course, are part of this silence. As an Ashkenazi Jew, Jakob occupies whiteness in Canada with its attendant benefits. Given the context in which the first part of the book is set, however, we never figure out how Jakob — one of the stowaway Jewish refugees of the Holocaust, who were infamously discriminated against in Canada’s “none is too many” entry policies during and after the war, has any legal status in the first place once he arrives in contemporary Canada. After crossing his first border hidden under a Greek man’s coat, what papers does Jakob acquire in order to enter Canada, or even to leave Greece? The novel is not able to address these questions because of its investment in the metaphorization and geologization of history and suffering. It is because of “salt” that they can enter Canada, but it is also because of their class position, their connections to Britain, their whiteness, and their connections to the university that the doors of citizenship are opened up to them. This seemingly innocuous expository moment is fundamental to the entire text, because it is this moment that explains away what would otherwise be a much larger question: how do refugees enter Canada in the first place?

The second part of this silence comes from a deeper, more complicated place: Michaels's image of Canada. For a book so focused on the politics of a geography of movement — from Athos's study of Nazi archaeology to his comparisons of geology and humanity, in which he “analyz[es] social change as he would a landscape; slow persuasion and catastrophe . . . [and] constructs his own historical topography” (119), to the gorgeous and painful meditations on trains, transportation, and the Holocaust — it is peculiar that more attention isn't paid to the movement and transformation that occurs between Canada and Europe. Instead of mapping a political shift, *Fugitive Pieces* retreats into a (geologically) temporal space of past and present. While this is a meaningful and important commentary on trauma, it is also a politically complex transition. Europe and the Holocaust are the old, Canada is the new, and Jakob attempts unsuccessfully to connect them. Trapped in his traumatic past, he cannot, and neither can the text. The Holocaust becomes a primordial wound and Canada becomes a place of newness and healing. Canada is “a crayon, when everything [elsewhere] had been written in blood” (248). This conflation forces both the Holocaust and Canada into ahistorical and ultimately purely symbolic roles. Instead of the issues of racism and nationalism which do connect the histories of Germany and Canada (in different but still significant ways), Michaels retreats into mythological gestures toward atrocity, geology, and human history — abstracted and, ultimately, insufficient. Both the reality of Canada and the reality of the Holocaust are forced outside of human history: the novel becomes an ahistorical meditation on loss.

On the other end of the multicultural turn lies Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, one of the very few contemporary Canadian novels that explicitly explores the underside of the current movement of refugees and non-status people across national borders. Like Michaels's main character, Brand's refugee, Quy, comes from a place of atrocity — Vietnam in the 1970s. Unlike in Michaels's novel, Quy's story is not one of salvation, either within Vietnam or in Canada. Brand's story is explicitly concerned with issues of citizenship, migration, and labour. *What We All Long For* is populated by the immigrants and workers who have, to varying degrees, “made it” in Canada; in this way, it is the perfect contemporary multicultural narrative. Sharp, political, with an explicit focus on the connections between migration, labour, and Canada, Brand's novel represents the best of the multicultural turn.

It is not content to stay within the boundaries of Canada as refuge; instead, it offers us a challenge to these narratives through the character of Quy. Quy is connected to Canada by his estranged family — his lost brother, Binh, gains contact with Quy partway through the book — and he is connected to the novel's narrative structure as the brother of one of the book's protagonists, Tuyen. Although Quy exists in Canada, his relationship both to the narrative of the novel, and to Canada, is tenuous, held together only by the thread of his alienated relationships to his family members, including Tuyen. He exists both in Canada and in the novel's narrative structure, but all of his roles are bracketed; his right to be here is as tenuous and segregated as his role in the narrative.

*What We All Long For* keeps these strands of narrative apart. The novel jumps between the narrative of Tuyen and her friends — Canadian citizens exploring lives as artists in Toronto — and the narrative of Quy, the long-lost brother, who thus paradoxically occupies the centre of the novel, and the margins of belonging in the narrative. Tuyen's family represents the classic immigrant narrative — one that is both critical of Canada's immigration system, and ultimately accepting of its possibilities for the next generation:

Tuan [Tuyen's father] used to be a civil engineer in Vietnam, Cam [her mother], a doctor. When they arrived in the promised land, the authorities would not ratify their professional documents, and Cam became a manicurist in a beauty salon near Chinatown while Tuan unloaded fruit and other produce from trucks to the backs of stores on Spadina. (65)

Tuyen lives both the social freedoms and alienations of the second generation as a queer artist. Her brother represents the material possibilities of the immigrant dream: he is a rich MBA who drives a beamer. They represent two axes of the immigrant dream of self-actualization and a better life, and their story simply can't touch the story of Quy, even once his narrative brings him to Canada as an adult. When these narratives attempt to touch one another, disaster ensues. At the novel's end, Carla's brother, Jamal, drives out to Richmond Hill with friends to kill some rich people; they see Quy in Binh's Beamer, and they attack him:

His mouth is full of the brittle, rusty taste of blood, and the sky looks like the sea that first morning on the *Dong Khoi*. And he leans his head as he had over the side of the boat, longingly, and

Bo and Ma are finally running out of a doorway, running toward him, and the road between them is like water, and they both grab him as they should have and his mouth splits open and all the water spills out. (318)

The novel thus ends with Quy on the border of life and death, of legality and illegality, of Canada and away, neither child nor adult, on the other side of the mythical “waters” that represent borders. He is in that space of permanent exclusion; he has escaped deportation but can’t arrive within the narrative. This inability to cross the social border of his exclusion is foreshadowed by Tuyen’s misgivings about Quy earlier in the novel; despite the moving ending, there is no doubt in Tuyen’s mind that Quy does not belong in Canada, due to the novel’s portrayal of Quy with a taint of crime and violence. The novel thus leaves readers — through narrative empathy with Tuyen — with no doubt that Quy can never fit either within Canada or within this narrative: he simply can’t arrive across that water. In this way, Brand’s book is able to register the ideological transformations of the neoliberal citizenship system, even if *What We All Long For* is unable to critique it: Quy is figured as a “legitimate” refugee, but he is also a criminal. He thus constitutes the worst miasmatic fantasies of the contemporary ideological regime, with its increasing emphasis on crime and risk.

While, as Kit Dobson suggests, Brand’s novel turns from the national to the urban and thus the four main characters “suggest in various ways that actively transgressing against borders, while maintaining an openness toward difference and the future, might enable new webs of social relations to form” (96), these options are only available to the four friends because of their citizenship status. This option is never available to Quy, who lacks papers and therefore lacks an identity. The only place he can go is into this in-between space — not in or out of Canada, not in or out of life, and, perhaps more symbolically, not in or out of the narrative. It is important to note that Quy’s story always remains on the border of *What We All Long For*, and it is no coincidence that the story ends when that boundary breaks down, or, perhaps more accurately, fails to break down. What Brand’s text ultimately points to is the contemporary limit of Canadian representation: citizenship status. At the same time, this representation of the non-citizen as extraneous or even dangerous to Canadian society also points to the gap between narrative critique and law: the legal structures that control citizenship are por-



trayed as structures whose sole purpose is to keep people *out*, when in fact the laws serve as much a role of constraining and controlling people by letting them *in* to fulfill state needs. Quy himself is represented as a figure readers may actually want kept out; he is not a likable character and is represented as extraneous — even dangerous — to the multiple societies he inhabits. Thus, while readers are invited to be sympathetic about the processes that have made Quy who he is, we are also encouraged to have some sympathy, in this instance, for the project of detention and deportation, which naturalizes the idea of “legitimate” and “illegitimate” migrants. This is both a moralizing of the state and of the deportation system, and also a profound misrepresentation of contemporary neoliberal Canada. Despite neoliberal rhetoric about keeping out so-called undesirables, increasingly, the state is in fact structured to invite a circumscribed entry, to control the ways people can enter, work, and live in national space, to fulfill economic desire for an exploitable workforce. Reliance on the labour of non-citizens across sectors in both the production and service industries suggests that, on the contrary, non-status people are not extraneous at all, but are foundational to the Canadian nation-state project, in all of its manifestations.

One of the central conundrums literary theory faces stems from the need to find alternatives and possibilities within narrative; one of the central tropes of Canadian literary criticism is this act of finding narrative fixes to social problems. As Stuart Hall observes in “Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies” (1992), “Culture will always work through its textualities — and at the same time . . . textuality is never enough” (271). While, like the “possibilities” Dobson finds in *What We All Long For*, this focus on textual remedies comes from an admirable place of imagination and activism, we must also recognize the limits of narrative and the ways in which narratives are inscribed in ideological systems, based on the specific goals of naturalizing states and denaturalizing alternative social formations. Replacing states with cities is not enough. A city is always embedded in repressive state structures, and existence in cities is still circumscribed by state laws. Cities may be where those of us with papers live out cultural experiences of transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, or multiculturalism, but the ability to physically be in a Canadian city as a legally existing entity is always circumscribed by state systems of immigration and borders.

The argument that narratives open up new possibilities and imaginings of “Canada” is still trapped within the old nationalist logic: so long as it is rendered broader, more inclusive, and more accepting, the argument goes, “Canada” can still be the acceptable container for our notions of community. There are also very real practical implications to working to build and protect an institutional space for Canadian literature. But this land is not just Canada, and people can want to live here without wanting to be part of “Canada.” Canada is a state apparatus, not land, and these limits of citizenship are a literally unspeakable boundary in the national imaginary. How could it be any other way? Pointing out this limit challenges the very foundation of Canadian literature as that which encompasses, and promotes, the literature of a nation-state. It is not just that these two novels don’t go “far enough” and that migrant voices need to be included; instead, these narratives cannot go any further because of the ways in which literary narratives are tied up in narratives of nation.

### Conclusion: Why the Nation-State?

While we have had space here to discuss only two examples, what the wider range of Canadian literature dealing with migration, cultural contact, and citizenship reveals — for instance, David Chariandy’s *Socouyant*, Neil Bissondath’s *On the Eve of Uncertain Tomorrows*, Bharati Mukherjee’s “The Management of Grief,” Larissa Lai’s *Salt Fish Girl* — is found precisely in the way it bumps up against and articulates the limits of our current moment. What makes Michaels and Brand — two very different writers with very different politics — so illuminating for us is that their texts force the reader to push up against these limits from two opposing perspectives. Whereas *Fugitive Pieces* implicitly raises the question of the conditions that allow Jakob to pass over so easily, *What We All Long For* asks the reverse question: under what conditions could Quy and his family have been successfully reunited in Canada?

Our point, then, is not that these texts are in some way insufficient, but rather that they highlight the gap between the actually existing state and the current ability of some of our best literature to represent the state’s citizenship regimes. However, the aim should not, and cannot, be to have literature or culture “correct” this gap. *Fugitive Pieces* could no more adequately show the inequalities in Jakob’s crossing (compared with that of others) than *What We All Long For* could create the narra-

tive conditions for Quy and his family's unification. The long history of genre criticism points to the impossibility of fixing social problems by changing narrative resolutions. While creative work can delegitimize and call into question state violence by creating spaces of critique and resistance through literary and textual production, the creation of texts is always limited by the material production of those texts. There is a real danger in underemphasizing material production and reproducing the too postmodern and anti-materialist position that creating texts that are critically acclaimed as emancipatory is coterminous with creating social change.

In light of the neoliberal state's redeployment of narratives of citizenship to generate new and growing exclusions within Canada, what would it mean for our national literature and literary critique to take seriously the migrant justice movement's theorizing of resistance to legal citizenship exclusions? In asking what it might look like for us to engage seriously with the analysis generated from the migrant justice movement, we also want to foreground the dangers in extracting a subjugated critique from the material context that produces it. Roy Miki's words come to mind here: in "After Redress," he speaks of "the distance between academic knowledge and social injustices" (83), observing that "knowledge production remains troublesome because of its lack of accountability in most institutions" (82). Thinking with Miki, we want to ask, rather than how we can make space for these voices, what it would look like for our field to foster direct "accountability" to the movements that are producing these new discourses that so productively trouble the naturalized category of the citizen.

Considering where and how our texts are used both inside and outside academic space, and paying attention to what other non-academic work we do to give back in the ways community organizers tell us are actually helpful — giving money, time, and labour to the movements we write about whether they use our research or not — are equally important. Yasmin Jiwani writes of the potentials and pitfalls this negotiation entails, concluding that despite the risks, academic research can be engaged ethically:

The legitimizing power of academic writing, access, and institutional resources can be harnessed in the interests of social change even though such attempts are amenable to cooptation by those in power. Nonetheless, as potential sites of intervention, such struc-

tures of legitimation as the academy are a useful and resourceful site for those committed to social change, especially in terms of challenging or contesting national mythologies. (*Denial* xvi)

The “institutional resources” available within academic spaces in particular can be shared and offered, without strings, to community organizers “identified” (to return to Miki’s observation) “with social movements outside the university’s jurisdiction” (*Broken Entries* 162). In addition, “invoking,” as Jiwani proposes, “the voices of those who endure these realities daily” (*Denial* xvii) is necessary to respect the knowledge produced by those who have direct understanding, both of the violence of the state and of the myriad forms of daily resistance to it that are currently being theorized and undertaken. Furthermore, the production of social critique is strongest if it is grounded in, and grows alongside, other modes of challenging power.

Within the realm of the textual, we can develop awareness of the material limitations that are usefully displayed in the narrative limitations of these texts, to note the ways literary production and critique are bound up, for better or for worse, in national narratives. Our goal in writing this essay is to draw attention to these limits, and, in that way, to direct attention to the need for accountable approaches to material change. Stuart Hall writes of this “tension that all textual practices must assume: [to respect] the necessary displacement of culture, and yet [be] always irritated by its failure to reconcile itself . . . with other questions that cannot and can never be fully covered by critical textuality in its elaborations” (284). Thinking with Hall, we wish to observe that the production of emancipatory texts requires a commitment to institutional and social transformation, and it is this impulse that we should push for as we work toward and honour these possibilities and potential legacies of Canadian literature.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The four citizenship rights that Will Kymlicka discusses, rights that build social integration within “differentiated citizenship” (168) in democratic countries, are useful here: in addition to the traditional civil, political, and social citizenship rights considered necessary for national integration with differentiated citizenship, Kymlicka proposes a fourth, cultural citizenship (174), in which “minority” cultures maintain and develop their cultural identity, in turn transforming the dominant culture, rather than merely being “tolerated” within it.

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to Jeff Derksen for suggesting the term.

<sup>3</sup> For this reason, we chose them over the many other possible works available. There are a number of important works we could have analyzed, such as Austin Clarke’s *The Meeting Point* and Sky Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Café* among others; the two texts we chose were ideal because they are emblematic of two moments in the multicultural turn as expressed in the Canadian novel. Similarly, Brand’s *In Another Place, Not Here* offers one of the finest and most politically challenging portrayals of the Canadian state and its attacks on immigrants. However, we view this work as a notable exception rather than as representative of the Canadian literary landscape’s grappling with questions of citizenship. For somewhat different reasons, we have chosen not to include the work of Rohinton Mistry, because we are dealing specifically with representations of Canada in Canadian literature, while Mistry’s books — which are indisputably Canadian — are by and large not set in Canada. We have chosen these two texts because they are emblematic cultural artefacts, symptomatic of the range of ways in which current modes of structural violence and the contemporary expansion of neoliberal citizenship regimes can be socially articulated.

<sup>4</sup> In this paper, we draw on two different versions of Goldring et al. The first version is cited as “Goldring et al. 2007,” the second as “Goldring et al. 2009.”

<sup>5</sup> Kamboureli writes of this “first wave”: “Canadian ethnic anthologies, which began appearing with great frequency in the early 1980s, constitute the first consistent compilation of ethnic literature. Just a few examples of anthologies that illustrate the manifold and complex ways in which ethnicity is represented, as well as the ambivalent relations between official multiculturalism and ethnic literary discourse, are: *Harvest: An Anthology of Mennonite Writing in Canada 1874-1974*, edited by William De Fehr et al. (1974); *PaperDoors: An Anthology of Japanese-Canadian Poetry*, edited by Gerry Shikatani and David Aylward (1981); *Hispanic Canadian Literature*, a trilingual anthology edited by Diego Marin (1984); *Other Voices: Writings by Blacks in Canada*, edited by Lorris Elliott (1985); *A Shapely Fire: Changing the Literary Landscape*, edited by Cyril Dabydeen (1987); *Transplanted Lives: Dutch-Canadian Stories and Poems*, compiled by Hendrika Ruger (1988); *Italian-Canadian Voices*, edited by Caroline Morgan DiGiovanni (1984); *Chilean Literature in Canada*, a bilingual anthology edited by Naín Nómez (1982); and Yarmarok: *Ukrainian Writing in Canada since the Second World War*, edited by Jars Balan and Yuri Klynovy (1987)” (“Canadian” 14-15).

<sup>6</sup> This essay was republished in his 1998 *Broken Entries*; it is this version cited here.

<sup>7</sup> As Miki observes, at the time, the older and already very established writer Dorothy Livesay could intend her poetic radio play “Call My People Home” as a “documenting” of the Japanese Canadian expulsion — yet Japanese Canadians were not yet invited to shape the public narrative as full members of Canadian society and Canadian literary production. Livesay, Atwood, and others, however well intentioned, at the time, envisioned Japanese Canadians as “others” within the polity (as “Japanese” rather than “Japanese Canadian”), granted limited space only when their stories made sense within already dominant cultural dialogues.

<sup>8</sup> In this period, while small presses were either shut down or swallowed up by conglomerates, and independent bookstores were losing out to Chapters/Indigo, the tropes of multiculturalism, identity, and diaspora became increasingly accepted and celebrated. This nexus of big business and cosmopolitan nationalism is most clear in the Giller Prize's emergence and its subsequent partnership with Scotiabank (Scott and Tucker-Abramson 14). The "Canadian values" that the Canadian nationalist left were fighting for, and the "value" of ethnic diversity that early critics of the explicitly racist white nation-state fought for before that, were swallowed up and spat out as the market values of multiculturalism. These values were espoused and exploited by partnerships between capitalist publishing conglomerates, booksellers, and the Scotiabank Giller Prize.

<sup>9</sup> Thank you to David Chariandy for this insight.

<sup>10</sup> A typical example is the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP), which does not allow the spouses of migrant farm workers to come with them to Canada, and which requires workers to return to their home countries for four months each year in order to deny them residency in Canada — even though these workers live in Canada for up to eight months out of the year, in many cases returning to the same employer each farming season for years or decades (Walia, "Transient": Paz, "Harvest").

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of the continuities between today's migrant labour practices and historical forms of slavery and indentured servitude, see Harsha Walia's "Transient Servitude: Migrant Labour in Canada and the Apartheid of Citizenship."

<sup>12</sup> Bombardier's achievements in the press release were listed (in order) as his building of a snowmobile prototype in 1922, which later became a commercial snowmobile and then a military vehicle that transported "snowbound troops during the Second World War"; his invention of the Ski-Doo; and the development of Bombardier Inc. into the fields of "aero-space and transportation technologies" (SSHRC 2007). The only other information given was that his family created the Bombardier Foundation in 1965, which funds "colleges and universities, as well as charity and relief organizations" and that he was honoured with a postage stamp in 2000 (SSHRC 2007). This nexus of invention (Bombardier the inventor of the snowmobile), business (Bombardier the founder of a massive company), military (the use of Bombardier's inventions for WW I), education and culture (Bombardier's family creation of a foundation), and nationalism (Bombardier as national symbol through his face on a stamp) conveys enormous symbolic meaning transmitted within this seemingly simple act of naming. SSHRC's Bombardier is the neoliberal nation builder, responsible for the military, economic, and cultural construction of the current neoliberal nation-state. He is its imaginary. Bombardier's internationalism comes in the form of military trade and efficient business travel; its source of multinational capital is the business of defence and border control. This simultaneous blurring and hardening of borders is key to the Canadian neoliberal project.

<sup>13</sup> The Alien Labour Act made it "unlawful for any person, company, partnership or corporation, in any manner to prepay the transportation, or in any way to assist or encourage the importation or immigration of any alien or foreigner into Canada . . . to perform labour or service of any kind in Canada" (art. 1).

<sup>14</sup> The 1895 Chinese Immigration Act imposed a head tax of \$50 on Chinese immigrants (art. 8). The head tax was increased in subsequent years, and then the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act banned immigration by "people of Chinese origin or descent" (art. 5) except those who fell under the categories of merchant, diplomat, or foreign student, or those who were granted "special circumstance" by the minister of immigration. (art. 5)

<sup>15</sup> On January 8, 1908, an Order-in-Council was approved that "required any immigrant arriving at a Canadian port to come on a continuous journey from his or her country of origin" (Buchignani and Indra 23). While on the surface this regulation applied equally to all, its express purpose was to ban immigration from India to Canada despite people

from India's ostensible right to travel anywhere in the British empire as British subjects. As Buchignani and Indra note in *Continuous Journey: a Social History of South Asians in Canada*, "The Canadian government moved immediately to restrict [South Asian] immigration further. It pressured the CPR not to accept South Asians as passengers from Hong Kong to Canada [and] forced the CPR to stop issuing through tickets" (25). The Canadian government rendered the regulation effective specifically against people from India by "pressuring steamship companies not to provide a Canada-India service" (Johnson 4-5). The one steamship company that ran this route soon cancelled the only direct line, which meant that a "continuous journey from India to Canada simply could not be made" (Buchignani and Indra 23). This regulation, which was incorporated into the 1910 *Immigration Act*, resulted in several important challenges, including the famous incident of the *Komagata Maru* (Kazimi, *Continuous Journey*; Johnson 42; Buchignani and Indra 55).

<sup>16</sup> The points system, whereby potential immigrants apply to come to Canada as skilled workers, implements a formal equality whereby people are evaluated based on factors such as their education level; access to funds considered necessary for establishment (at least \$9,420 for an individual, and up to \$23,994 for a family) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Application for Permanent Residence: Guide for Provincial Nominees"); whether they speak English or French, and how well; whether they have a trade or profession in one of the classes deemed needed by the country on the "National Occupation Classification" list; recent full-time work experience in Canada; family already in the country; or a letter indicating a job offer.

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