TOWARD A RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL HISTORIES

TOWARD A RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL HISTORIES: RETHINKING CANADIAN MEMORY, HISTORY AND SUBJECTIVITY THROUGH MEMOIR

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction..........................................................................................................................1

*Mapping the Project: Argument and Chapter Outlines*...........................................7

Chapter 1- Normative "Canadian-ness": The National Imaginary and its Discursive Representation....................................................................................................................13

*Cultural Memory and Nation Building*..................................................................16

*Exploring the Canadian Imaginary: Home, Belonging and History*.....................21

*Literary Canons and Naturalized National Identity*...............................................28

*"Canadian" Voices: The CanLit Canon and its Pedagogical Influence*................32

Chapter Two- Canadian "No-bodies": The Politics of Witnessing Silenced Indigenous Histories in Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*...........................................................................45

*The Politics of Witnessing Indigenous Histories in Maria Campbell's Halfbreed: Negotiating Ongoing Colonial Legacies in Canada*..............................................55

Chapter Three- "A Wordless Word": Normalized Racism and Silent Testimony in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*...............................................................................................................77

*Joy Kogawa's Challenge to Normalized Canadian Racism*...................................84

*Bearing Witness to Silent Testimony: Apprehending Unspoken Traumas in Joy Kogawa's Obasan*...................................................................................................99

Chapter Four: Pedagogical Implications for Teaching and Studying "Other" Histories in Memoir.............................................................................................................................109

*Rethinking Curricular and Classroom Approaches*.............................................113

*The Politics of Bearing Witness*...........................................................................123

*A Pedagogy of Feeling: Breakage, Community and Response*............................125

Works Cited......................................................................................................................133

**Introduction: Toward a Recognition of National Histories: Rethinking Canadian Memory, History and Subjectivity through Memoir**

During the 2013/2014 school year, I was a teacher candidate in Brock University's Faculty of Education program. In this program, I taught three different elementary classes and was excited at the opportunity to fulfill my childhood dream of making a difference through education. In my first teaching placement, I was tasked to teach a grade seven history unit on British North America, which was largely focused on the War of 1812. This unit included one curriculum expectation that indicated that the experiences of non-British peoples be taught in schools. The expectation read, "describe the different groups of people (e.g. Black Loyalists, slaves, indentured servants, Iroquois allied nations, Maritime Loyalists) who took part in the Loyalists' migration and identify their areas of settlement" (55). Only a "possible" selection of racialized subjects for teachers to focus on is mentioned here. None are mandatory, nor is the expectation itself (which is an outlier from the others focused on the development of early "English Canada"). The expectation also goes on to state that these "different" groups of people can be studied in relation to their role in Loyalist or British migration patterns in what was then British North America. As a teacher candidate who had, the year prior, focused my Bachelor of Arts with the elementary teachable subjects of English and History, I had decided that I would be dedicated to teaching students non-dominant perspectives. I took an advanced course in post-colonial literature in my fourth year, which inspired me to begin thinking about the silenced voices in Canadian history and the colonized peoples who are constituted as inherently inferior to European races. When I was assigned the history unit, I had a pre-conceived notion that I would teach history in a way that was non-Eurocentric, and challenge the idea that racialized subjects in Canadian history were insignificant or inferior. My dreams of teaching such a unit were disrupted when I looked at the curriculum documents from which I was required to teach (as a Bachelor of Education candidate). I spoke with my associate teacher at the time, who, in his laissez-faire approach to my learning, was supportive of my idea and suggested that I spend a lesson on Tecumseh's role in the War. It was a place to start, I had thought, and I set about compiling educational resources on the Shawnee Chief in order to begin to plan my unit. Each resource, however, had to do with Tecumseh's relationship with members of the British army. I struggled to find resources that had to do with Indigenous peoples as their own subjects, or about Indigenous peoples' exploitation during the war effort (after which they were left out of land negotiations).

It seemed that, officially, I was expected to teach a British-centered history unit to my group of eleven and twelve year olds. I was both frustrated and disheartened by this seemingly unavoidable fact. Though I was able to use the university's access to archival resources and compile my own unit that allowed me to shift the focus onto Indigenous peoples, as well as Black Loyalist soldiers and their specific experiences, this is not a reasonable undertaking for any full time teacher who does not have the time or resources to create alternate units such as this. I also quickly learned that other subjects, especially language arts, were also taught based on curriculum expectations that do not *require* the teaching of perspectives often silenced by dominant, Eurocentric worldviews. The closest to this that I saw were media-literacy units, in which students learned to consume information with a critical awareness of its potential biases. However, the awareness of bias was not extended to the information that was taught to them in the classroom. If students are consistently learning about Canada from privileged perspectives, and further, if their knowledge itself is based upon that of Eurocentric ideologies, notions of Canadian identity and belonging are limited.

It is frightening that the "othering" of Indigenous, immigrant and other racialized subjects in the nation throughout history is still prevalent in Canadian social and political systems today. As I write this project in 2015, there are over 1,000 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada, the stories of whom are silenced by a government which still refuses to make significant efforts to change the conditions under which their bodies are objectified and de-valued. In 2014, the United Nations reported that the Canadian government's treatment of Indigenous peoples was "insufficient" to making changes to unresolved claims and issues in Indigenous communities, and closing the increasing gaps in well-being between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. At the same time, racialized Canadian subjects, especially immigrants, are treated as perpetual foreigners to the nation. Bill C-24 allows the government to designate Canadian immigrants and multi-national citizens as second-class citizens, with precarious rights to citizenship should they be convicted of a federal offense, and Bill C-51 "protects" Canada against Islamic "terrorists" like ISIS, sparking increased anti-Muslim and anti-Islam sentiments in the public. Zunera Ishaq, for example, fought a drawn out battle against a ban on her wearing a niqab during her citizenship oath, on the grounds that it is "anti-women" and "unacceptable to Canadians."[[1]](#footnote-1)

This project argues that the ongoing objectification, exploitation and silencing of racialized subjects in Canada stems from Canadian education, which perpetuates an exclusive notion of "Canadian-ness" as being white, Anglophone and Eurocentric through the privileging of these voices in its educational curriculum. As I have noted above, the curriculum positions the teaching of different Canadian cultures and histories *in relation to* British knowledge, histories, and subjects. Therefore, though Canada claims to be multicultural, its education systems frame racialized subjects as "others" in a nation founded by Britain. Change in these systems is imperative if Canada's cultural memory is to reflect a truly multicultural stance. Therefore, I consider the productive potential in introducing the teaching of texts that offer multiple perspectives on Canadian history and delineate the historical experiences of those that are deemed other by the dominant perspective. As a passionate advocate of the productive potential of education, I see in the teaching and learning of marginalized histories and memories the potential to work toward the recognition of Canadian histories-- one that bears witness to the many voices that make up Canada and acknowledges the post-colonial systems of privilege that silence voices deemed "others" in the larger national meta-narrative.

My goals in this project make it important for me to situate myself in a conversation about privilege, silences and silencing, race, and colonial legacies. I write this project from the perspective of a white, cis-gender woman whose own education has been largely framed by the same Eurocentric and Western ideologies that I critique here. Understanding the different ways my gender, race, class, and sexuality intersect is important. As a woman, I must understand my position in relation to other women who occupy a space of gendered subordination, while acknowledging intersections of race, class and sexuality. I am white, and as a person whose race is privileged in Canada I must bear witness to the racism existing in the nation, but acknowledge that I will never truly understand the experiences of racism. I have also had the economic privilege of attending post-secondary education in an institution where my voice is valued, and it has been important for me to reflect on the intersecting racial and economic factors that have contributed to this. Further, as a cis-gender and heterosexual female I must acknowledge my limitations when approaching the stories and voices of subjects with other gender identities or sexualities. Understanding my own position in relation to the voices in the texts I study is important in ethically approaching those stories from my varying positions of privilege, difference, connection and subordination. This also means that I am critically reflective of the ways that I fit within the systems of privilege that are described by the authors, and can approach an analysis of the texts from this reflective place.

Finally, before continuing it is essential for me to reflect on the implications and limitations of my use of language in this project. First, I have chosen to study voices from particular marginalized groups in Canada: Métis, through Maria Campbell in *Halfbreed,* and Japanese Canadians, through Joy Kogawa in *Obasan*. My reasons for choosing these voices are that they give a more broad scope of the different subjectivities in Canada. But I also want to acknowledge that this project is also limited in that there are intricate differences between the experiences of different cultural groups in Canada. I do not wish my focus on two individuals and their experiences to privilege those voices over others, and I believe that all voices and histories should be deemed "memorable" in Canada. I would also like to make note of my use of the word "marginalized" in this paragraph to describe the groups from which I study authorial voices. The term "marginal" or "marginalized" presupposes a "dominant" group from which a separation has occurred, and it is logically this dominant group which determines its own normalcy in relation to the "difference" of marginalized groups. Therefore the term itself speaks to the ways that a white, Eurocentric "norm" in Canada determines the constitution of Métis and Japanese Canadian subjects as "marginal" in the nation. This makes the term problematic, even as it allows me to speak to the problems inherent in the normalized language used in Canada today. I acknowledge the limits of this term and use the term to draw attention to these linguistic systems that privilege the white voice.

I also want to acknowledge the limitations in the language I use in this project to speak of authors and their peoples. By using the term "Japanese Canadian," I do not want to suggest that this group of people are somehow "less" Canadian. Instead, I use the term as an identifier of a group that has a unique history of trauma and displacement in the country of Canada—whose experiences do not apply to all of those who identify as "Canadian." This also applies to my use of the term "Indigenous peoples" to describe First Nations, Inuit and Métis groups in Canada. "Indigenous" is a generalizing term that encompasses each of the three aforementioned groups in Canada, and I wish to acknowledge the limitations in this generalization as the experiences of different nations vastly differ. When speaking of particular groups or individuals, I will specify their Indigenous nationality. However, I will use the term "Indigenous peoples" when speaking of the many different Indigenous nationalities in Canada. Similar to my use of the term “Japanese Canadian,” the term "Indigenous” indicates an acknowledgement of a group of citizens who have a unique heritage and history in the nation.

Finally, through my analysis of written memoirs in English as a way of rethinking Canadian cultural memory, I do not wish to imply that memories or histories are *only* valuable if they are written down. There are voices in other languages and modes of knowledge that I cannot access. Many histories are also passed on through oral tradition. In fact, the two written memoirs I have chosen for my analysis in this project incorporate oral histories in the narrative development. Ethically approaching the voices, histories and subjects in this project therefore requires a reflection on my own limitations, and the limitations of this project.

**Mapping the Project: Argument and Chapter Outlines**

This project explores the productive potential possible of introducing memoirs detailing alternate Canadian histories into Canadian classrooms. I consider the memoir as offering a space that allows a rethinking of Canada's cultural memory. By reading marginalized voices and generational silences in two Canadian memoirs as testimonies of varying Canadian histories, this project will challenge normative ideas of Canadian identity and history. Specifically, my work will focus on Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* and Joy Kogawa's *Obasan.* I argue that memoir as a form of literature can, in particular, facilitate the breakage of silences in a way that opens up a larger breakage from the systems that perpetuate silencing. Gillian Whitlock’s *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit* suggests that the memoir occupies a distinctive space in autobiographical writing, and it is characterized by writers who "seek to make themselves a part of history" (Buss qtd. in Whitlock 135). I argue that both Campbell and Kogawa take up the project of writing themselves into history in their texts, as they give Métis and Japanese Canadian centered histories of Canada that counter a Eurocentric meta-narrative of history. Campbell and Kogawa's texts, for example, challenge the processes of truth making in history that silence inconvenient or dissenting voices. Campbell and Kogawa's texts not only disrupt these normative and problematic practices of historical narrative making, but construct their own alternate histories that either voice or draw attention to untold lives. Memoir in particular allows this because it does not claim to be universally true, but the individual stories are still truthful and can represent stories otherwise outside of our schemas of knowledge.

Memoir as a genre also disrupts normative processes of historical narrative making, as history writing often depends on the construction of truths in a linear time progression that shows progress from past to present. A memoir is a text that tells a history from the perspective of an individual- it does not assume complete historical truth, but breaks from those certainties by telling the true narrative of an individual's life. It can also break from a linear time progression that forces, again, assumptions of certainty in history. Kogawa, for example, uses metaphorical and non-linear language to merge pasts with presents and disrupt those processes of history making. Campbell's text, too, directly disrupts historical meta-narratives. In the beginning of her text, she juxtaposes a Métis-centered history of the Rebellions with that which is transcribed into history books. In doing so, she challenges the processes of historical narrative making that privilege the written word over oral histories as the source of truth. She also makes evident to readers the inherent biases that exist in meta-narratives, as these are constructed by privileged subjects whose voices are given authority over “others.”

My first chapter, "Normative 'Canadian-ness': The National Imaginary and its Discursive Representation," examines the constitution of Canadian cultural memory based on a historical narrative that privileges a European, colonial perspective. The chapter particularly considers the ways that literature informs notions of collective Canadian memory. Walter Benjamin's theory that discursive realities are dependent on art that is considered "reproducible," and Benedict Anderson's emphasis on literary capitalism and the construction of nationalism are useful here, as the chapter will consider which Canadian literary publications are deemed reproducible, and whose voices are considered intelligible. I will interweave a discussion of Paul Martin's criticism of Canadian universities for teaching mostly Anglophone texts in CanLit courses (*Sanctioned Ignorance*) along with a consideration of texts by Cynthia Sugars, Eleanor Ty and Laura Moss that offer a more culturally and historically expansive look at Canadian literature. Astrid Erll and Jan Assmann's theorizations of cultural memory and nation building will guide my examination of the construction of "shared heritage" in Canada, focusing on a consideration of the voices contributing to ideas of "Canadian heritage." Building on these studies, I will consider how much of "popular" Canadian literature has come from Anglophone and Eurocentric perspectives, nationally rendering those cultural memories "memorable" and leaving others "forgettable." Ultimately, the chapter argues that CanLit's privileging of Anglophone, Eurocentric and colonial voices contributes to notions that these subjects are the true inhabitants of Canada, and delegitimizes the citizenship and belonging of Indigenous, immigrant, migrant worker and refugees in the nation.

Chapter two, "Canadian 'No-bodies': The Politics of Witnessing Silenced Indigenous Histories in Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed,*" focuses specifically on the ways Indigenous peoples are treated in meta-narratives of Canadian history. I study how Indigenous bodies are rendered "no-bodies" in the Canadian imaginary, through their positioning as "others" in Canadian politics under the Indian Act and the ways their bodies can be objectified and commoditized under a dominant, white gaze. By framing the chapter with the narrative of the estimated 1,181 missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, I aim to give an alternate Canadian narrative that privileges Indigenous voice. Maria Campbell's testimony about her experiences as a Canadian and Métis woman illuminates the difficulty faced by many Indigenous peoples in Canada to define and understand their identity. The chapter argues that Campbell's personal accounts of her traumas are pervaded by the often silenced, collective experiences of Indigenous peoples. Bearing witness to the silenced histories that call for recognition, in Campbell's words, can allow for the acknowledgement of those constituted as "others" in the Canadian imaginary. Campbell's direct acknowledgement and criticism of normative practices of history writing, opens a space to challenge meta-narratives of Canadian history that privilege white, colonial voices.

Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, studied in Chapter 3, also disrupts normative practices of historical narrative making. The chapter, titled "'A Wordless Word': Normalized Racism and Bearing Witness to Silent Testimony in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan,*" focuses on how *Obasan,* in narrating Japanese-Canadian experiences surrounding the internment during and after World War Two, counters normative ideas of Canadian history. In her non-linear language and merging of English and Japanese in the text, Kogawa disrupts notions of truth-telling in historical writing and creates a space within her text wherein both English and Japanese subjectivities belong in Canada. Similar to my study of Campbell's text, I argue that the reader is called to bear witness to Kogawa's testimony for the ways that it can offer alternate, more expansive ideas of Canadian history. This chapter places emphasis on the role of silence in *Obasan,* as Kogawa's account of the silenced experiences of Japanese Canadians requires a reader to bear witness to that which is left unsaid, and apprehend experiences outside of the normative boundaries of recognition. The chapter reads the "silent testimonies" in *Obasan* as breaking "convenient" national silences in Canadian historical narratives that facilitates the positing of Canada as inherently benevolent and multicultural.

My final chapter, "Pedagogical Implications for Teaching and Studying 'Other' Histories in Memoir", consolidates my discussion of Canadian literature and its relationship to notions of Canadian historical narratives and cultural memory by exploring the ways productive change may be facilitated by studying "other" histories in the classroom. Working from Diana Brydon's question "How are TransCanadian histories carried forward? How does change happen?" (1), I will interweave works focusing on transformative pedagogy from bell hooks, Laurie Kruk and Cynthia Sugars to consider the ways in which the classroom might be conceptualized as a space wherein boundaries of race, language, and culture are crossed. I argue that creating this space, which Kruk conceptualizes as a "meeting place" between peoples, requires an acknowledgement of one's own positioning and privilege when encountering an "other" both in the space of a classroom and in literature. The chapter argues that taking up a project of bearing witness to silenced histories and voices in texts taught in the classroom can allow teachers and students to conceptualize Canada as a space that harbours connectedness rather than difference. Integrating memoir into the classroom that gives alternate voices and histories, such as those of Campbell and Kogawa, can facilitate the opening of a pedagogical space wherein the productive potential of bearing witness is opened. The chapter concludes by arguing that teachers must encourage students to engage in a continual practice of estrangement from the self, in order to bear witness to the testimony of an "other." Doing so, this project ultimately argues, can open a space in which histories deemed "forgettable" can be remembered, and a more expansive notion of Canadian identity or belonging can be embraced.

**Chapter 1- Normative "Canadian-ness": The National Imaginary and its Discursive Representation**

O Canada Our Home and Native Land (The Canadian National Anthem).

We cannot begin to combat everyday racism in Canada until we unearth, rather than suppress, the history of White Supremacy and colonial racism that are fundamental to the establishment of Canada as a nation (Daniel Coleman, *White Civility* 8).

The opening lines of the Canadian national anthem, “O Canada” beg a critical response that questions "whose" home is being spoken of, and what the words "native land" imply, given the violent colonial histories of this country. The words "Our Home" imply that there is a sense of belonging to the nation that is felt by the singers of the anthem. It also furthers an idea that there are naturalized ideas of who belongs and who does not within the national space. "Native land" legitimizes this idea by implying that the belonging of particular subjects is naturalized and part of a long history, as the word "native" implies an inherent belonging to the space. This word creates? an interesting paradox, however, in respect to whom it refers to in the context of the anthem. Presumably, the singers of the anthem include any and all Canadian citizens, many of whom are descendants of colonizers who are not native to the land in the same ways Indigenous peoples are. This delegitimizes Indigenous peoples' as the "first" peoples of this land, while simultaneously perpetuating a narrative that situates Canada as a country born out of European arrival. I frame this first chapter with the national anthem because of the ways it offers a representation of the mimetic relationship between the discursive world, particularly art, and collective memory or identity. How does a song, sung with national pride and thought to be representative of the Canadian imaginary, inform notions of home or homeland, belonging, and national identity? And, further, whose voices are represented in the Canadian national anthem, whose are revered, and whose are silenced?

Following Astrid Erll's assertion in *Memory and Culture* that memory is a "fundamentally political phenomenon with strong ethical implications" (4), in this chapter I will trace the ways that cultural memory and national history are theoretically conceptualized, and reinforced by a discursive world, made up of literature and art, that facilitates remembering. Specifically, I will examine the Canadian literary canon as a facet of Canadian art that informs notions of Canadian-ness. Whose voices make up Canadian literary discourse, and how has this contributed to collective notions of history and cultural memory in Canada?[[2]](#footnote-2) I will explore these questions by closely examining the ways that literary discourse informs collective notions of nationhood, belonging and identity. I assert that individual conceptions of identity are tied up with notions of collective nationhood and national belonging. These nationalistic ideas contribute to, and are informed by, literary discourses that influence language, notions of belonging and constructions of history. Supporting, and moving from, the notion that national imaginaries are dependent on constructions of "others," I ultimately argue that in Canada, ideas of national identity and belonging exclude those on the periphery of white, Anglophone and Eurocentric identifiers. This reading of "normative" Canadian-ness is based on a study of the Canadian canon as it relates to constructed histories and privileging of canonical voices. This stems from Canada's history, and current as a colonized nation and is reinforced by widely circulated voices in Canadian literature that are identified as being within the borders of Canadian belonging. As Paul Martin explains in *Sanctioned Ignorance: The Politics of Knowledge Production and the Teaching of Literatures in Canada* defining a single "canon" is impossible, as it is always in a state of change. However, I consider a CanLit canon to include commonly taught texts in the university setting, as the post-secondary institution is considered an intellectual authority that determines which texts are "good", and students' notions of Canadian identity are derived from the texts they are exposed to in the educational setting.

In order to disrupt discriminatory and exclusionary notions of Canadian identity, I look to the histories and voices of subjects deemed "other" in Canada. Maria Campbell's memoir, *Halfbreed*, speaks of her life as a Métis woman who struggles to reconcile her identity as an outsider to "Canadian" society and as a "nobody"[[3]](#footnote-3) in the Canadian legal system. Her story has particular resonances today, as the Canadian government continues to deny a public inquiry into the abductions and murders of an estimated 1,181 Indigenous women. Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* details the experience of being a racialized, immigrant body in Canada, and, in particular, reflects on the forced internment of Japanese Canadians during World War Two. Kogawa’s novel calls into question past and current normalizations of state racism. The two texts analyzed in this project both challenge the normalized constitution of Canada as being a country that is founded, and maintained, on the principles of multiculturalism and tolerance. They ask readers to re-think Canada, and Canadian history, in a way that acknowledges colonial pasts and systemic, government sanctioned racism. In doing so, the potential to recognize a more broad scope of Canadian identity is opened, as acknowledging these pasts can legitimize these marginalized subjects' belonging in Canada.

Further, both *Halfbreed and Obasan* have been widely distributed in Canada's public literary sphere and are taught in university courses. Yet a critical examination of these texts' popular production in Canada is also telling, as Paul Martin concludes in *Sanctioned Ignorance* that marginalized authors' works often occupy a niche position in Canadian schools as "cultural" texts. Therefore these texts become secondary to a Canadian canon that privileges white, canonical authors or are taught on the basis of their difference. Both *Halfbreed* and *Obasan* offer a study of the ways Canadian literature can facilitate change, but are still limited by their framing in Canada as "other" than the norm.

**Cultural Memory and Nation Building**

To consider notions of Canadian identity and the embodiment of traits that are normatively considered to "belong" in Canada, I begin by examining the ways collective memory relates to nationhood. Erll conceptualizes cultural memory as the collectively constructed creation of a shared heritage (13). Though Erll traces thinkers working through notions of history, memory, identity and culture from the early 20th century, I will work from Jan Assmann's use of the term “cultural memory” in 1995 as fundamentally encompassing the relation between memory, culture and society (129).[[4]](#footnote-4) Assmann defines cultural memory by a number of characteristics, which will provide a basis for my analysis of Canadian cultural memory and national identity formation. First, cultural memory facilitates a socially relational "concretion of identity", wherein a group awareness is derived from shared notions of "unity and peculiarity" (130). Notably, this identity is often premised upon geographical boundaries, like those of a nation or neighbourhood. National identity, then, is formed based on perceived shared characteristics that are identified on a basis of difference from other characteristics. This creates a rhetoric of "us" and "them" often determined by visible racial or cultural difference, which is obvious from the Campbell and Kogawa texts that I discuss in the following chapters. Indeed, Assmann writes that cultural memory manifests itself "through a kind of identificatory determination in a positive ('We are this') or in a negative ('That's our opposite') sense" (130).

Second, Assmann asserts that the formation and maintenance of cultural memory exist within its "capacity to reconstruct" itself based on present cultural circumstances. This is because contemporary situations give relevance to cultural memories (130). Assmann’s views are confirmed when we consider the ways that changing immigrant demographics contribute to differing notions of national belonging in Canada. For example, the potato famine in Ireland in the late 19th century gave way to high numbers of Irish immigrants fleeing to Canada, resulting in the perpetuation of the supremacist group the "Orange Order" which conducted anti-Irish Catholic riots. By the time of the Second World War, the Irish Catholics were racially assimilated into white Canadian culture, and racism was directed toward Japanese-Canadians for Japan's involvement against the Allies in the war. Regardless of their legal belonging in the nation as official citizens Japanese Canadian citizens were excluded from their national rights on the basis of race.

Assmann specifies that the formation of cultural memories as tangible referents or objectified, "communicated meanings" results in their "transmission *in the culturally institutionalized heritage of a society*" (130, emphasis original). The institutional reinforcement of cultural memory is buttressed by writing, "pictorial images"- visual media- and ceremonial rituals, all of which create a "specialized practice" through which cultural memory is maintained and transmitted. The singing of the national anthem, for example, is such a kind of "specialized practice" in Canada that transmits its national memory. For this project, I am most interested in educational institutions and the ways that they teach, transform or maintain practices of cultural memory, especially in relation to the notion of a Canadian literary canon.[[5]](#footnote-5) If pedagogical spaces are integral, even central, in maintaining and teaching cultural memory, the material deemed "teachable" becomes an indicator of cultural memory or national identity. Therefore, a critical look at the voices that make up this discursive world is imperative, as literature deemed canonical takes up pedagogical space and this literature comes from similar privileged voices in Canada. As a result, students are learning that some voices have more authority than others and developing notions of Canadian identity and history that align with those privileged perspectives.

Finally, Assmann connects cultural memory and identity:

The relation to a normative self-image of the group engenders a clear *system of values* and *differentiations in importance* which structure the cultural supply of knowledge and the symbols. There are important and unimportant, central and peripheral, local and interlocal symbols, depending on how they function in the production, representation and reproduction of this self-image. Historicism is positioned firmly against this perspectival evaluation of a heritage, which is centered on cultural identity. (131, emphasis original)

The connection between notions of cultural memory and collective identity or belonging is evident in the way that a group's "self-image" is informed by the cultural memories held by its members. Importantly, there is a differentiation in value made here between different types of knowledge and memories. Assmann calls this privileging of particular cultural values a "perspectival" theorizing of heritage, in which heritage based on cultural identity is malleable depending on privileged knowledge or practices. Again, these notions inevitably involve inclusion in and exclusion from a group identified by shared culture, memory and history that is deemed "important", "central" and "local." Assmann completes his theorization of cultural memory with the assertion that the relationship between culture, memory and history remains static. And this relationship is characterized by ideas and practices that are based on privileged knowledge, while other types of knowledge remain in the peripheries. The Ontario curriculum, for example, prescribes that in grade seven, students make "meaningful explorations" into colonial Canada (135). Upon closer look at the curriculum expectations, the primary focus of such explorations seems to be teaching students significant events in colonial Canada that resulted in the shift of power from French to English (139). An Indigenous perspective on colonialism is an afterthought, included in the italicized, possible teaching approaches for teachers. The teaching of this perspective is not a requirement. The "Native Studies" curriculum document, similarly, does not indicate that the violent colonial dispossession inflicted on Indigenous nations by European colonizers be taught to secondary students.[[6]](#footnote-6) "Through its cultural heritage", Assmann states, "a society becomes visible to itself and to others. *Which past* *becomes evident in that heritage* and *which values emerge in its identificatory appropriation* tells us much about the constitution and tendencies of a society" (133, emphasis mine).[[7]](#footnote-7) Judging from current curricula in Canadian schools a Eurocentric past is evident in the nation's heritage.

A nation's heritage often becomes represented and legitimized as public memory through spaces that commemorate events and ideas that make up the nation's history. Public memory, according to Edward Casey, depends on "stability of place" in order to be created and maintained, as these spaces harbour collective memories as physical representations of public memory. One might think, of the geography of a nation holding particular memories in respect to heritage of certain groups or cultures, and the sense of home and belonging the physical space of the nation evokes. Or, in the more contained sense that Casey describes, monuments, cities, parks, etc. can all hold these memories as the physical representation of the collective memories that make up the conceptual idea of "nation." Pushing further, I consider literature to be a similar public, physical object that holds, maintains and transmits these memories.[[8]](#footnote-8) Canonical texts in particular preserve, memorialize and transmit public memories that construct a historical narrative. When history comes from the inherently privileged perspective of a canonical text, the ideas memorialized as public memory are limited in scope. This is because only canonical authors are rendered legitimate in public spheres, and their voices are dominant in constructing history delegitimizing in the process those voices who remember "other" events and histories.

**Exploring the Canadian Imaginary: Home, Belonging and History**

True patriot love, in all thy sons' command [...] God keep our land [...]

In this line of the Canadian national anthem, the religious - references to God - and patriarchal - "sons"- reflect the nationalism of the historical period that the anthem was written. Citizens of Canada are referred to as "sons," a use of language that is exclusionary based on gender, and that has been opposed in recent decades with proposals for change from feminist groups. The reference to God in this historical context also gives legitimacy to Christianity and its followers. This delegitimizes non-Christians as being unworthy of "patriot love" in what seems to be a manifestation of extreme nationalism. The word "love", a representation of extreme emotion, is being ascribed here to the national space or the national family. This positions other "patriots" as objects of love, as belonging to a national family. One can, then, understand the opposing affective feeling of "hate", which would presumably be prescribed to those who fall outside of a national "family" of patriots.

The national anthem therefore reflects “ideal” imaginaries of Canada, and characterizes who qualifies as a Canadian citizen. "Our land," a phrase that assumes the ownership of Canadian land by its citizens, then extends to produce those who have rights to Canadian soil, and those who do not. Of course, this line in the anthem is especially ironic when one considers the violent dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land by colonial powers, a history that makes up current ideas of Canadian land rights, as Indigenous peoples have rights over only reserve land. I would like to consider, then, the phrase "our land" as it relates to notions of home, belonging and the emotional response that is often associated with ideas of "homeland." These ideas are associated with "belonging" according to conventional definitions of "homeland," and are therefore central to this study of national imaginaries and cultural memories that influence ideas of belonging. "Home," I suggest, can become simultaneous with the word "nation." Constructions of "us" and "them," then, stem from the making of national subjectivities that naturalize the belonging of particular groups within the "homeland" and expel others.

Nandita Sharma's ideas are particularly helpful when considering Joy Kogawa and Maria Campbell's memoirs, which detail the experiences of racialized bodies who are denied "belonging" in the nation based on their constituted subjectivity as "other" than a citizen. Sharma explains that ideas of "nation" and "home are maintained by nationalist practices that allow those who qualify as national subjects to feel that the state affirms their own "homey" belonging in the nation."[[9]](#footnote-9) This affirmation justifies the differential treatment of the "other" who does not comply with national subjectivities (4). Here, it is evident that constructions of "home" are closely tied with ideological schemas of nationalism. Sharma explains this phenomenon by deconstructing the word "homeland." She writes that "home provides a conceptual bridge between modern notions of family and nation, so much so that [...] the nation is understood to be a 'magnified version of the family and the circle of close friends" (7). By equating biological or natural ideas of identity to the nation through use of words such as homeland, conceptions of self and "other" come to depend on membership, or exclusion, in a "national family." Sharma is careful to explain that this national family is characterized by desirable characteristics based on preconceived ideologies about "*race, gender* and *class*" (4). In this way, the foreigner, the immigrant, the migrant worker, and the Indigenous subject are given the status of an "other."

A "homeland" is formed through common characteristics, which imply that particular individuals "naturally belong" (10)--a process described by Sharma as "ethnicizing," or the rooting of culture to a place. For Indigenous subjects, their constitution as "other" in a space wherein their roots extend much further than those of European descent is certainly ironic. The othering of Indigenous peoples in Canada stems from their violent displacement from the land during colonization. This displacement naturalized the notion that European settlers had rightful claim to the land, and therefore "belonged" on it. Indigenous peoples were instead allocated reserve land by Britain, and "granted" status rights through the Indian Act, which normalizes the idea that they are visitors in, or wards of, the white, benevolent state. Here, one can see the production of the "other" through the establishment of ethnicized borders and "naturalized" homey identity within such borders. One can also determine the political agenda to obtain power over land, behind such hegemonic constructions of otherness. Sharma explains that the process of colonization and the naturalized belonging of white subjects in Canada rendered Indigenous peoples "homeless." Japanese Canadian citizens experienced a similar homelessness during World War Two, when they were expelled from their homes in Western Canada to internment camps and their properties and belongings were claimed and sold by the Canadian government.

Reinforcing the viewpoint that those of cultural and racial difference are "others," writes Sharma, allows for the naturalization of xenophobia, of racism, and of the ideologically "pure" nation (11). In other words, the political push toward national sovereignty, or the protection of a "homeland" conceptualized by shared cultural heritage, gives way to a "phobia" of the other. In turn, it becomes normalised and seemingly necessary to "protect" the homogeneity of the national family against foreign and domestic others whose identities do not fit the hegemonic mold that has become the norm for the nation. "We stand on guard for thee," preaches the national anthem, with white bodies falling within the designated "we" and racialized bodies as the threat. The expelling of Japanese Canadians from their homes, for example, was legitimized by deeming Japanese Canadian subjects a threat to the homes of naturalized citizens. Consider the Canadian census taken every five years by Statistics Canada, which maps the Canadian population according to varying criteria. Its National Household Survey compiles information on ethnicities and visible minorities in Canada. According to its website, Statistics Canada defines "visible minority" as "persons who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour and who do not report being Aboriginal" (2011). "Visible minority" is a common identifier, then, used by official sources in order to differentiate racialized bodies from white bodies. To whom, one might ask, are visible minorities "visible"? Why are visible minorities of many differing ethnicities grouped together by this blanket term, similar to the term "Indian" which homogenizes the racialized Indigenous body and generalizes any number of distinct Indigenous groups? Are these groups against whom Canadians must "stand on guard?"

When these generalizations are legitimized by the government, discrimination against such racialized others in everyday life is not only tolerated, but normalized. In *Exalted Subjects: The Making of Race and Nation in Canada,* Sunera Thobani writes that the white subject is constituted as a citizen, while two other groups of Canadians - "Indians" and immigrant groups - are delegitimized as "others" in the nation. "The governance of these subjects/objects," Thobani writes, "has been organized through state policies and popular practices, producing certain subjects as exalted (nationals), others as marked for physical and cultural extinction or utter marginalization (Indians), and yet others for perpetual estrangement or conditional inclusion as supplicants (immigrants, migrants and refugees)" (6). This project will explore such experiences of discrimination in chapters two and three, which will look at the racialized experiences of Indigenous peoples and Japanese Canadians in the nation.

Evidence of such a narrative in Canada is seen in the recent and vehement opposition to Zunera Ishaq's wish to wear her niqab during her Canadian oath of citizenship. Though the Supreme Court of Canada overturned the government ban in February 2015, the original ban and public sentiment surrounding it give a telling picture of Canada's treatment of racialized subjects. Conservative MP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Larry Miller, recently commented on the niqab debate, saying "If you are not willing to show your face in a ceremony that you're joining the best country in the world, then frankly, if you don't like that, stay the hell where you came from" and, he continued, "I'm so sick and tired of people wanting to come here because they know it's a good country and then they want to change things before they even really officially become a Canadian" (*National Post*).[[10]](#footnote-10) The language used here--particularly the words "you" or "they," which distinguish targets of the comments as being other than "we" or "us"--clearly constructs the immigrant as "other." Miller's comments also indicate that "becoming Canadian" requires the adoption of behaviours deemed "Canadian," which as Martin, Fee and others suggest, considering the country's "bilingual" or "bicultural" origins excludes the very "multi" cultures that it preaches acceptance to. More telling is that such comments come from an elected government official with a privileged voice within the Canadian government; one that has discursive authority and therefore shapes a national consciousness. Indeed, Miller suggests that he speaks for most Canadians who share his view. It becomes increasingly clear, given these statements, that a critical re-examination of Canada as a multicultural "mosaic" is in order.

In Chapter four of *Exalted Subjects*, titled "Multiculturalism and the Liberalizing Nation," Sunera Thobani traces the ruse of multiculturalism in Canadian law in recent decades. Thobani examines Canada's Multiculturalism Act and gives a compelling reading of the ways that official discourses of multiculturalism give way to the systemic privileging of whiteness. In Canada, a nation symbolizing "respect for diversity and pluralism" (143), racism is disguised by immigration and multiculturalism policies which naturalize the nation as "white", and distinct cultural groups as points of "difference" that are accepted by the "benevolent" white subjects. Thobani explains, "With whiteness coming to signify tolerance, a willingness to change and a cosmopolitan sensibility, people of colour could be tied all the more readily to cultural parochialism, authoritarianism, essentialism, and intolerance" (155) and, further, the Multiculturalism Act defined those of "*non preferred races"* as immigrants, through their cultural and linguistic differences (157). In this way, individuals of colour in Canada become "ideologically" defined as "immigrants" regardless of their place of birth because of the recognition of "cultural difference" encoded into Canadian law. Here, a narrative that positions whiteness as inherently benevolent, tolerant and progressive legitimizes the racist view that "other" cultures' traditions are backward. Therefore, Canada, naturalized as the benevolent "white" nation, becomes perceived as the parental "host" to such subjectivities. Immigration and multiculturalism acts, then, reinforce notions of white superiority while designating "visible minorities" based on difference from whiteness. I suggest that a look at the voices that make up a Canadian literary canon can allow an understanding of naturalized discrimination, which acts as an ongoing record of exclusionary Canadian history and cultural narratives.

**Literary Canons and Naturalized National Identity**

With glowing hearts we see thee rise,  
The True North strong and free!

A notion of Canada as the epitome of northern wilderness and exploration has long been considered a trait of the nation. This is also a common theme in canonical Canadian literature, including the Canadian national anthem, which indicates that Canada is the "True North." In *Imagined Communities,* Benedict Anderson traces the concept? of literary capitalism, suggesting that it is the literary world- as it relates to language- that invents notions of "nation." He argues that the technological advances of print and publishing have contributed to the transmission and legitimization of cultural memories derived from literature. This happens largely through the spread and normalization of common languages that first allowed peoples of middle to lower classes to conceptualize shared ideas of nation through writing (46) or, apprehend the world in new ways, making it "possible to 'think' the nation" (22).

Anderson finishes his discussion in *Imagined Communities* with an examination of the national "narrative" as it depends on notions of memory and forgetting. Of course, here is a direct connection to cultural memory studies and the critical question I am asking of Canadian history: Who gets remembered? "All profound changes in consciousness," concludes Anderson, "by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesia. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical contexts, spring narratives" (204). Anderson continues by drawing an analogy between an adult's memory of childhood, and a nation's memory of its past. Memories of a distant past are only brought into being by artifacts of that past: a photograph from one's childhood, for example. These artifacts then narrate and maintain a consciousness of identity: "because it cannot be 'remembered', [therefore it] must be narrated. [...] the narratives of autobiography and biography flood print-capitalism's markets year by year" (204).[[11]](#footnote-11) In other words, the artifact of literature maintains and perpetuates narratives of national history that then influence conceptualizations of national identity and heritage.

Buttressing Anderson's notions of nationhood and discourse is Walter Benjamin's "Art in the Age of Technological Reproducibility." Benjamin, too, considers the implications of the persistence of narratives produced by art. Working from his idea that that popular exposure to art is dependent on its reproducibility, Benjamin considers how reproduction allows for the repurposing of art to achieve particular interpretations, which results in the shaping of discursive reality in that exposure to publications is controlled. In order to be influential, art must be deemed valuable and therefore reproducible by those with authority. As he writes, "*The technological reproducibility of the artwork changes the relation of the masses to art. The extremely backward attitude toward a Picasso painting changes into a highly progressive reaction to a Chaplin film"* (1064, emphasis original). Benjamin is interested in the nuanced ways that art, as a political tool, can be framed in the public sphere to achieve particular ends. Technological advances have allowed art to be reproduced through different frames of history and meaning. These have powerful effects, as Benjamin concludes, proving the malleability of discourses that inform public perception and thought. Art and literature, then, can in turn frame the national subject. Particular kinds of art are legitimized as being valuable, and are then made accessible to the masses. This means that certain voices are transmitted, and certain biases become normalized as authorized voices construct and perpetuate them. The national subject is therefore framed within and by the processes of national narrative-making through reproduced art and literature.

Judith Butler's *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* consolidates these ideas, as she considers how Arab subjects are dehumanized by their framing within American nationalist discourse. Butler calls into question the structures that produce and maintain normative schemas of recognizable life, explaining that bodies are socially ontological, in that their beings are "exposed to social crafting and form" (3). Her study of the United States's framing of the Arab subject as "barbaric" as a way to legitimize violence against those subjects can be likened to the WWII dehumanization of Japanese Canadian subjects in Canadian discourse, whose rights as citizens were stripped on the basis that they were a threat to the "human" citizen. Evidently, the framing of subjects in a discursive world result in particular social interpretations. This begs a critical look at the malleability of history as an artifact.

The government of Canada constructs such a malleable history through its authoritative voice. According to Canada's 2002/2003 “Report on the Operation of The Canadian Multiculturalism Act,”

Diversity has always been a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society. From the beginning, more than 50 different Aboriginal peoples with their own unique languages and cultures interacted with each other throughout Canada. They were later joined by Europeans and people of African and Asian descent, all of whom helped to build the Canada we value today. (173-4)

Here, by using the word "joined," colonization's violent dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land, forced assimilation into "civilized" society resulting in the decimation of Indigenous cultures, and the ongoing racialized othering experienced by Indigenous peoples are ignored. Such phrasing also discredits Indigenous claims to Canadian land as the original inhabitants, as according to Thobani, it posits Indigenous peoples as only a part of the different "cultures" that made up Canada (174).

Hayden White's essay "The Historical Text as a Literary Author" takes such manipulated histories into account by conceptualizing history as a narrative construction. White argues that the historian, through choices of language and framing of an event, constructs a narrative. History and literature then, are inexorably intertwined. This is contrary to commonsensical public conceptions of history as being truthful. If history is conceptualized as "literary artifact," one can rethink the way that exclusionary cultural memories normalize "us versus them" mentalities rooted in national histories, and critically examine the way that literature and art in the public sphere have contributed to what Anderson would call a "national narrative." David Lowenthal cautions against the normalization of history as "truth" and explores the repercussions of adopting notions of heritage based on historical difference. Lowenthal asserts that ideas of shared heritage rooted in history influence the "lauding [of] our own legacies and excluding or discrediting those of others, [subsequently] commit[ing] ourselves to endemic rivalry and conflict" (41).[[12]](#footnote-12) If this is true, a rethinking of Canadian history to align with White's ideas is necessary. It is evident that the discursive realities of citizens of a nation influence notions of belonging, and these discourses are comprised of literature, art and history that inform ideas of cultural memory. Anderson and Benjamin's theories of literary discourses, and how these discourses inform, and are informed by, notions of nationhood and belonging, therefore will help me to trace Canadian literary discourses in the chapters that follow.

**"Canadian" Voices: The CanLit Canon and Its Pedagogical Influence**

The unstated pact between teachers and anthologizers rested on the tacit sharing of the canon as an epistemological base. Literature was about knowing the country. (Robert Lecker, *Keepers of the Code* 9)

Literature fills a niche in memory culture, because like arguably no other symbol system, it is characterized by its ability - indeed tendency - to refer to the forgotten and repressed as well as the unnoticed, unconscious, and unintentional aspects of our dealings with the past [...] literature actualizes elements which previously were not- or could not be - perceived, articulated, and remembered in the social sphere. Through the operation of selection, literature can create new, surprising and otherwise inaccessible archives of cultural memory: Elements from various memory systems and things remembered and forgotten by different groups are brought together in the literary text. (Erll 153)

In my third year of my Bachelor of Arts degree at Brock University, I took a class entitled "Contemporary Canadian Literature." The course description indicated that the class would examine texts by Canadian authors that stem from the centennial anniversary of Canada in 1967 and included topics such as "ecocentrism, postmodernism, multiculturalism and small press experimentation."[[13]](#footnote-13) The course's claim to offer texts in these areas was exciting to me, as I had spent many classes reading the literary criticism of European men and the poetry of the Romantics. The bulk of the course focused on authors like Margaret Atwood and Armin Wiebe, who wrote on the popular "pioneer" Canadian trope. Upon reflection, today, I regret not having taken more of a critical stance on the notions of Canadian-ness that were inadvertently taught to my peers and me in this course. Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*, which I will revisit in this project in an attempt to atone to not having done it justice in my third year, was the only substantial piece of writing from a non-white author, and seemed to simply fit the multicultural "niche" indicated on the course description. Though Campbell’s memoir was accompanied by Thomas King's short story "Borders," the course did not include lectures on Canada’s violent colonial histories or its legacies that pervade Campbell and King's writing. The course also entirely excluded racialized immigrant, migrant or refugee voices.

How Canadian literature is taught in pedagogical spaces is important to this conversation because histories are passed on to generations of Canadian citizens through their educational curriculum. Robert Lecker's *Keepers of the Code: English-Canadian Literary Anthologies and the Representation of Nation* suggests that there is a mimetic relationship between the teaching of English Canadian literary anthologies and the constitution of nationhood or national identity in Canada. Anthologies of Canadian literature "influence the ways in which students understand literature, and especially when it comes to courses devoted to national literatures, they provide a particular rendition of the country [... through] the collected writers who are brought together into a quasi-community speaking on behalf of the country" (6). Anthologists are "keepers of the code" - that is, their choices of thinkers, authors and texts to place in an anthology uphold and perpetuate a particular construction of Canadian-ness. "The canon", as I quote above, "[is] an epistemological base" (9). The "being" of Canadian identity is derived from the voices that "speak on behalf of the country" through their inclusion in the English Canadian anthology.[[14]](#footnote-14) If my experience in a Canadian literature class is any indication of the privileged voices that speak for Canada, it is easy to conceptualize the likening of whiteness and Eurocentrism with "Canadian-ness." If privileged voices in English Canadian anthologies, or on CanLit courses, are white and Eurocentric, then notions of Canadian identity will follow this same profile.

Given the problematic ways that “canonical” literature informs ideas of Canadian identity and history, it is unsurprising that a narrative of Canadian history silences particular voices and delegitimizes their belonging in the nation. In her comprehensive study of national literatures in North America, Sarah Corse provides a look at the way that popular and canonical literature influences Canadian nationalism. A Canadian literary canon, argues Corse, was unevenly split based on linguistic and cultural divides between English and French speaking communities. She writes, "the historical and persisting tension between pan-Canadian and francophone nationalisms [federalism versus Quebec separatism] has meant that the relationship between canon formation and nation- building has been enacted at what is, at least officially, the *sub*national level" (45). Further, Corse explains that, as a result of the federalist ideologies maintained by English speaking Canada[[15]](#footnote-15), "the nationalist project of *Canadian* (rather than Quebecois) canon formation has also been predominantly English Canadian" (49). Here, Corse speaks to the reality that the word "Canadian" has become associated with the English speaking community and excludes, to an extent, French speakers in Canada. Canonical literature taught in Canadian literature classes, then, would be comprised mostly of English authors. This gives a unilateral notion of Canadian identity based on this limited perspective, and was the reality in my own experience in a Canadian literature classroom.

Corse's detailed analysis of the Canadian canon is useful for my study of the ways that notions of Canadian identity and history have been informed by canonical Canadian literature in the pedagogical space, as she examines the literature deemed “canonical” by Canadian universities. Corse studies course syllabi from various Canadian universities to obtain the most commonly taught texts. She then examines each text for common characteristics to draw conclusions about the perceived national identities that are transmitted through the authorial voices and reader interpretations. Her analysis of the Canadian canon includes, most often, authors such as Margaret Atwood, Alice Munro, Sinclair Ross and Margaret Laurence- voices generally limited in racial difference.[[16]](#footnote-16) Corse's study of the institution as a core part of the creation and maintenance of a Canadian canon is fascinating, and her focus on education’s crucial role in maintaining a canon gives me a basis to suggest that the classroom is the space in which witnessing “excluded” histories is most productive.

Paul Martin, similarly, explores the institution’s role in privileging particular literary voices in his book *Sanctioned Ignorance.* I am fascinated by his analysis of the institution's role in maintaining and perpetuating exclusionary notions of Canadian-ness, which will serve as a point of reference for this project. By conducting a broad study of the literatures taught in universities across Canada, Martin examines the practices and structures that have influenced choices of course syllabi, instructional approaches to texts, and the interrelated motivations and effects of these practices on and from Canadian cultural memory. His comprehensive study led him to compile lists of most commonly taught texts and authors[[17]](#footnote-17), similar to that of Corse.

Martin's overwhelming problem with the treatment of literature in Canada is that the term "Canadian literature" has become synonymous with English-language texts. Those texts written outside of the English language are placed in categories of literature other than "Canadian," such as Quebecois literature. For example, many of the professors interviewed asserted that to understand Canadian literature, a student must be well versed in British and American literature because these, especially the former, constitute the heritage of Canadian writing (244). Still others voiced that they did not teach translated texts and "First Nations" literatures because they had little to no experience in those fields, or had been discouraged from using translated texts (245). Even further, Martin summarizes the responses he received from professors when asked "whether they felt 'the need or a pressure to represent various cultural, ethnic or language groups in [their] syllabus'" (157). His findings were that, though many professors did voice that this was a goal for them, they admitted that this was difficult to achieve given the overall historical scope of Canadian literature they felt the pressure to cover. As a result, texts coming from a perspective of racial or ethnic difference often occupied a single, niche space on the syllabus.[[18]](#footnote-18) The inclusion of literatures from Indigenous authors was also limited, with reasons for this being a perceived lack of written literatures from these authors, especially in French speaking institutions (158). This evidently does not account for the largely oral traditions in Indigenous ways of knowing. Finally, this gap is suggested to represent the colonial view that Canada's roots lie in Britain, so any attempt to construct or teach a literary "tradition" or "pattern" in Canadian literature requires the exclusion of the indigenous voice (159).

These findings are troubling, as Martin and Corse’s work theorizes that institutional approaches to a Canadian canon and other literatures predetermine the ways Canadian literatures are conceived by readers. This is due to the way that the institution is generally considered an authority on what are considered "good" texts and therefore contributes to the shaping of literary discourses in Canada. In other words, the literary voices included in educational institutions are likely to be privileged in a public space (59). Martin writes that "the university assure[s] the continued consecration of those works already part of its canon, but it also establishes the framework necessary to allow future works (and previously overlooked past works) possessing similar qualities to be included almost seamlessly into the same canon" (59). Therefore the educational institution not only reinforces the canon, but influences its construction with their instrumental role in determining which "qualities" in the literature are valuable.

The ethical implications of a pedagogical space which privileges particular voices are clear, in that the system described by Martin is inherently limiting. As Martin asserts in his analysis of his data, the "valued qualities" of literature, according to many Canadian professors, limit racial and ethnic perspectives in literature. These limiting qualities in turn make up the canon and influence cultural memory that is based on literary discourses that privilege white, Anglophone and Eurocentric authors. When educational institutions play such a role in perpetuating exclusive notions of national identity, heritage and belonging, one can conceptualize the motivations behind contemporary and historical issues of individual and state racism, discrimination and violence.[[19]](#footnote-19)

Though both Corse and Martin give detailed looks into the historical contexts that led to Canadian nationalism and the canon, it is important here to acknowledge the limitations of their studies as they relate to my project. I am troubled most particularly by a disproportionate focus, in both studies, on French and English Canadian histories and their authors' contributions to the Canadian canon. This excludes, most obviously, the histories of Indigenous peoples in Canada who inhabited the land centuries prior to being displaced during colonization, and whose histories were violently devalued, commoditized, appropriated and erased in order to privilege Eurocentric ideologies. It also excludes, or does not acknowledge to the same extent (as Martin’s work somewhat does) many generations of immigrant, refugee or migrant worker communities in Canada, who make up a large portion of the population yet are still required to forget their histories in favour of the constructed Eurocentric heritage of Canada. For example, though Corse includes Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners* as one of ten canonical novels for analysis, she does not, in her analysis, provide a reading of the text's delving into Canada's problematic treatment of Métis communities. Martin’s work studies the ways that cultural texts are positioned in relation to “canonical” texts in Canadian literature courses, but much of his focus is placed on the ways English and French authors are framed in Canada.

Understanding the limitations of framing issues in Canadian literature courses as bicultural is important to my project. In a nation that claims to accept and embrace all cultures and perspectives, a narrative that privileges French and English subjects as the original citizens of Canada is problematic as it delegitimizes the belonging of other subjects. Benedicte Mauguiere's *Cultural Identities in Canadian Literature*, a text that gives a more expansive look at popular Canadian literature and the national identities represented in those texts, still arguably privileges French and English voices. Mauguiere structures her text to include both French and English languages, which disrupts the association described by Corse with English speaking populations and Canadian-ness, but continues the privileging of these voices. In some of the essays included in this collection, French Canadian populations are posited in positions of subjugation and are likened to immigrants (2). Though this speaks to an important feeling of "otherness" experienced by French Canadians as a result of the privileging of Anglophone populations in Canada, it does not always speak to the already privileged position held by French Canadians as participants in the colonization and assimilation of Indigenous peoples.

That being said, the text does not wholly ignore this issue and essays such as Karin Beeler's "Ethnic Dominance and Difference: The Post-Colonial Condition in Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel, A Jest of God* and *The Diviners"* take up the stance that Canadian identity depends on the plurality of subjectivities, voices and histories. Beeler's essay traces the changing relationships between characters of European heritage with those of Indigenous and immigrant backgrounds. All are Canadian citizens and deserving of a voice. This expanded notion of Canadian subjectivity is important in the sense that it broadens the scope of "Canadian-ness"[[20]](#footnote-20) and could perhaps allow an ethical embrace of Canada's constitution as being multicultural, though one cannot ignore that hierarchical structures still exist within this broadened scope.

Thobani's criticism of a Canadian narrative that legitimizes Canada's "foundations" as a bicultural and bilingual nation is also helpful in working through the limitations of this narrative, and of a canon that represents mostly these "opposing" sides. Though biculturalism has moved to official multiculturalism, thinking about Canadian history as foundationally bicultural and multicultural subjects as "others" simply legitimizes European subjects as the most "real" citizens of Canada and blatantly ignores the histories of violent colonization (156). Thobani, here, makes an important connection to the silenced cultures and histories that went into these normative visions of white, Eurocentric, bicultural Canada as "host" to "multi- cultures." As she writes, "[multiculturalism's] appeals for tolerance enabled a national amnesia regarding inconvenient histories" (154), in that, when tolerance becomes the "norm," intolerant behaviour is displaced onto small groups of "radicals," denying the racist role of the Canadian government in history. Canada is a settler state: land colonized by European settlers who displaced, assimilated, and silenced the indigenous peoples who inhabited the land centuries prior. The constructed history of Canada seems to begin *after* this point in time, erasing the histories of indigenous peoples for the salvation of the colonial project.

Important works including those by Cynthia Sugars, Eleanor Ty and Laura Moss seek to study works by Canadian authors of many cultures and perspectives in order to constitute an alternate Canadian canon that allows readers to acknowledge a more expansive range of voices who speak on Canadian experiences. The first volume of Laura Moss and Cynthia Sugars's two-volume anthology of Canadian literature, for example, offers a narrative of the colonial encounter in Canada from both Indigenous and European perspectives, allowing readers to critically examine the constitution of the Eurocentric history of colonialism as historical truth. Similarly, the second volume includes texts that bring up the difficult politics of recognition surrounding Indigenous and immigrant communities in a "multicultural" Canada.

Other works that encourage critical thought about Canadian meta-narratives of history are Laura Moss's edited text, *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature,* and Cynthia Sugars and Eleanor Ty's recent *Canadian Literature and Cultural Memory*. Essays in Moss's text force readers to confront the violent histories that fundamentally formed Canada by persistently asking, "Is Canada postcolonial?" Sugars and Ty also contest "History" by offering a broader scope for the study of Canadian canonical literature. The authors conceptualize canonical works as "sites of amnesia" (12) in order to examine different ways certain histories are ignored within the scope of Canadian literature. To combat the processes of silencing that create "amnesia" in canonical words, Sugars and Ty engage with "diasporic and Indigenous re-membering[[21]](#footnote-21)" (12), promoting active engagement with histories, memories and voices. As Sugars and Ty remark in their introduction,

Running through all of these topics is the underlying point that memory must be conceived not as a harmonious scene of transmission but as the site of struggles between competing perspectives [...] Memory approached from this perspective constitutes one of the most powerful cultural locations where these often competing perspectives are brought into active engagement with one another (12).

A fundamental element of this engagement is that readers are required to refrain from imposing normative memory and ideology onto these memories. Responding and engaging requires the reader to be silent; to *listen*- and then ethically respond. This project also seeks to contest racialized national subjects, marginalized cultural identities and exclusionary national imaginaries by engaging with silenced voices and histories.

By considering the memoirs of Joy Kogawa and Maria Campbell, this project seeks to contest exclusionary Canadian histories, cultural identities and exclusionary national imaginaries. As Astrid Erll and many other thinkers argue, literature is the medium through which challenges of such ingrained and normalised ideologies can be achieved. Moss, Sugars and Ty's texts are indicative of a contemporary movement of studying literature with the *goal* of acknowledging previously silenced or devalued voices of racial and ethnic difference in Canada, which this project also seeks to do. Further, I suggest that memoir or autobiographical literature in particular have the capacity to make these acknowledgements known, and especially, when taught in pedagogical spaces, students themselves are implicated in those histories and called to *respond[[22]](#footnote-22)* to silenced voices. Perhaps, individual biographies detailing alternate Canadian histories can contest what Anderson calls the national biography. In order to make an ethical conceptualization of Canada as a nation, then, we need to consider the ways that silenced voices are writing themselves into Canadian histories. Paul Martin dedicates his text to not only illuminating the problematic structures that have influenced the ways Canadian literature is taught using a limited scope, but argues that in the pedagogical space there is also the possibility to begin to rethink the structures around us. Drawing from and furthering Martin, Moss, Sugars and Ty's work, in the next two chapters I will trace the ways that Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* challenge limited ideas of Canadian-ness and Canadian history. I will then examine the ways that the pedagogical space is held *responsible* to *respond* to such voices, facilitate a critical examination of such texts, and call students to bear witness to "othered" subjectivities. It is in this space, I suggest, that an ethical address of the other and a rethinking of Canadian identity, history and belongingness to represent plurality and multiplicity is made possible.

**Chapter Two - Canadian "No-bodies"[[23]](#footnote-23): The Politics of Witnessing Silenced Indigenous Histories in Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed***

The great tragedy [...] is the tragedy of not being heard when they called out for help, not being heard when they reported someone missing. That silence is part of the ongoing trend of mainstream society saying to Aboriginal people that they don't count; it joins the resounding silence of the other tragedies which Aboriginal people have lived through at the hands of other Canadians - the residential school system, the large-scale removal of Aboriginal children from their families in the 1960's, the ongoing marginalization and racism. It is that silence which needs to be broken. It is that silence which the Sisters in Spirit initiative aimed to break by documenting the stories of these women as mothers, daughters, sisters and friends (The Special Committee on Violence Against Indigenous Women 3).

Less than a week after she was reported missing on August 9, 2014, Tina Fontaine's lifeless body was pulled from Winnipeg's Red River in a body bag. Fontaine, an Ojibwa from the Sakeeng First Nation, was only fifteen. The finding of Fontaine's young body renewed national calls for federal inquiry into the estimated 1,181 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada, a number that demonstrates a vast overrepresentation of Indigenous females as victims of violence compared to other women in the nation. For instance, according to Statistics Canada, Indigenous women are three times more likely to be victims of violent crimes, and according to the RCMP, they are four times more likely to be murdered. Despite this ongoing issue in current Canadian society, Prime Minister Stephen Harper quickly dismissed Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities' calls for action. On August 18, 2014, merely days after Tina Fontaine was found murdered, Harper spoke at Yukon College on the matter: "It is clear that there was been very fulsome study of [...] these particular things. They're not all one phenomenon. We should not view this as a sociological phenomenon. We should view it as a crime" (CBC, 2014). In other words, the Prime Minister claims that there has already been "too much" study into "these particular things," a phrase conveniently used to avoid naming the violence perpetrated on the victims. Further, these are presented as isolated crimes in Indigenous communities, not outcomes of long lasting colonial legacies that normalize violence against Indigenous bodies. According to Harper, there are no systemic or sociological issues surrounding race that contribute to the highly disproportionate numbers of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Given Harper's statements, it is no wonder that the government has continually failed to undertake meaningful action on this matter, and that real change to stop such cycles of violence has not become a possibility.

These current events and issues for Indigenous communities in Canadian legal systems indicate the disturbing "othering" that occurs on the basis of race and ethnicity in Canada. Harper's blatant denial that there is systemic and sociological racism in the nation that results in the devaluing of Indigenous women's bodies is indicative of the ways that Indigenous voices are silenced. These denials of the colonial legacies that exist in Canada show the damaging ways that "master narratives" of Canadian history privilege the white, settler voice over all others.

This chapter explores the ways that Indigenous voices and subjectivities are treated within Canadian narratives of cultural memory, identity and belonging and, later, considers how Maria Campbell's memoir *Halfbreed* disrupts these narratives by voicing silenced pasts, and forces the reader to bear witness to ongoing colonial traumas that bear claim on the present. I suggest that Campbell draws attention to the "alternate" Canadian histories that include Indigenous groups, whose current existence in Canada has been built on ignored truths of trauma, violence and displacement. Through Campbell's work, unfinished colonial histories make claims on the contemporary reader to bear witness to silenced voices.

When taking the role of a witness to silenced histories, one must consider the ways that these histories can manifest themselves in meta-narratives of history. Dipesh Chakrabarty's "Minority Histories, Subaltern Pasts" questions the discipline of history for the ways in which its progressive, linear notions of historical thought legitimizes a "master narrative." Chakrabarty is critical of contemporary historical practices that acknowledge "minority" histories, or histories alternate to a master historical narrative, as he argues that these acknowledgements simply place alternate voices within a master narrative that claims to embrace multiculturalism. These "minority histories", rather than causing ruptures in a master historical narrative, simply supplement it by being translated into the same languages and modes of historical representation as the dominant discourse. As a result, silenced histories come to acknowledgement only through the means of a dominant narrative that posits "other" pasts as simply supplementary stories that voice different "beliefs" (24). "When we do 'minority histories' within the democratic project of including all groups and peoples within mainstream history," explains Chakrabarty, "we both hear and then anthropologize the Santal [and other minorities]. We treat their beliefs as just that, 'their beliefs.' We cannot write history from within those beliefs. We thus produce 'good', not subversive, histories" (24-5). We see this kind of "good" minority past being constructed in the government statement quoted in Chapter 1, which presents Indigenous peoples as peacefully "joining" with European colonizers and immigrants of African, Asian and other descents. This history incorporates the minority voice within the master narrative, but this incorporation is problematic as minority histories are manipulated to fit within a colonial narrative of white benevolence and civility.

Acknowledging the limitations of the incorporation of minority pasts within majority historical narratives can facilitate a breakage in the master narratives themselves. Chakrabarty writes that the breakage in a master narrative, through a recognition of its limits, is the avenue through which the disruptive power of subaltern pasts can be accessed. According to Chakrabarty, subaltern pasts are those that resist historicization; they "represent moments or points at which the very archive [constructed ...] in order to bring the history of that group into a relationship with a larger narrative [...] develops a degree of intractability with respect to the historian's project" (21). This intractability refers to the ways that these histories fall outside of recognizable discourses that make up normative practices of history or historical thought. The modes of thought and voices that could represent these pasts cannot be represented within those systems of normative discourse, such as written language, published works, or notions of linear time or progressive history.

If one is to address that which is outside of normative bounds of knowledge, one must break from one’s own preconceived ideas of history and historical progress to apprehend an alternate way of knowing. As Chakrabarty explains, subaltern pasts "are like stubborn knots that break up the otherwise evenly woven surface of the fabric" (24). Subaltern pasts, those which exist outside of normative discourses of history, make evident the limitations of historicization and force a disruption of the ways one perceives history. These pasts, then, make claims on the present: they force one to break linear timelines of history and embrace the disruption of certainties about historical time and progress. I would like to examine the ways that silenced Indigenous histories can act as subaltern pasts in the Canadian meta-narrative. I consider Indigenous pasts to be subaltern, for the purposes of my project, based upon Chakrabarty's definition of subaltern pasts as those which cannot be historicized through normative practices of "history-making."

Sunera Thobani examines the colonial roots of history in Canada in order to represent and challenge the way that the Indigenous subject is framed in European discourse, and is rendered speechless by the privileged settler voice. "The originary mythology," she writes,

outlines a rational and coherent explication of how the nation was founded. It describes how the encounter of Europeans with Native peoples during the fur trade led to European settlement and the creation of a new nation (complicated somewhat by negotiations of contending British and French interests), which subsequently made an orderly and largely peaceful transition to a modern, liberal- democratic society. The claim of the lawfulness of the foundations of nationhood (despite some serious excesses), and of national subjects as essentially law- abiding (with some exceptions) is sustained, if not strengthened, by the processes of confession, expressions of profound regret, and celebrations of the constitutional and legislative inclusion of Aboriginal peoples into the embrace of the law (35).

Thobani's notion of "originary mythology" is helpful in understanding the ways Indigenous histories are treated in the Canadian meta-narrative of history. Her choice of the words "rational and coherent explication" speak to the goal of the historical record to give a linear, progressive timeline of historical "facts": one that speaks truths about the past and its relation to the present. Next, the only "complication" to the creation of the Canadian nation, as Thobani indicates, is the conflict between British and French colonial interests. This conflict was central when considering conflicts between "cultures" in Canada, and is a major topic in Ontario history curricula.[[24]](#footnote-24) Unfortunately, a look at the conflicting "bilingual origins" of Canada discredits the many languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples that were prevalent prior to colonization.

One can finally understand Thobani's statements about the "regretful", inclusive, civil and lawful settler state in Canada by looking at the Indian Act, Stephen Harper's official apology for residential schools, and Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. On a superficial level, the Indian Act caters specifically to the cultural and unique needs of Indigenous nations in Canada. Though this can be considered to indicate the settler-state's inclusion of Indigenous peoples within legal systems, this legislation historically disallowed Indigenous practices such as potlatches, which contributed to the loss of Indigenous traditions and oral histories, and the term "Indian" fails to account for the individual differences between differing Indigenous nations. It is important to note, additionally, that Métis peoples were excluded from "Indian status" until 2003, as the Act defines "Indian" as: "First. Any male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band; Second. Any child of such person; Thirdly. Any woman who is or was lawfully married to such person" (1-2). This definition gives power to the Canadian government to manage and define Indigenous "bands" and construct Indigenous lineage based on a patriarchal worldview. Further, this separated and generalizing legislation renders the Indigenous subject a "no-body" in Canadian law systems; they are governed by a system "other" than that of Canadian "citizens". The Indian Act, writes Daniel Coleman in *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada,* was based upon policies that sought to "enfranchise"[[25]](#footnote-25) Indigenous peoples as British subjects by disenfranchising them from participation in civil society.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Harper's 2008 apology for residential schooling in Canada and the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRCC) paint a similar narrative of tolerant and lawful whites, who own up to their "past" mistakes. In an extremely belated 2008 apology, "The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes," stated Harper, "and asks for the forgiveness of the aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly" (Government of Canada, 2010). Harper's speech also ends with the words "God bless all of you. God bless our land." Such language privileges Eurocentric notions of religion over Indigenous ways of knowing. This unfortunately supports the same colonial mindsets that legitimized colonial assimilation projects: Indigenous peoples needing to be "saved" from their own heathen ways of life through religious conversion. Indeed, a study by Bombay, Matheson and Anisman examined "Aboriginal expectations" of the potential impacts of the federal apology. The authors found that, although the apology itself was viewed positively, most participants were pessimistic - on account of ongoing discrimination in Canadian society - about whether the apology could facilitate real positive change (2013).[[27]](#footnote-27)

The TRCC, too, is problematic in its language- the word "reconciliation" is derived from the root word "reconcile", which is defined as to "restore friendly relations between" (Oxford 2015). This language assumes that Indigenous peoples and colonial settlers who perpetrated assimilation projects were previously harmonious, which is a fabrication given the violent history of colonization. Further, the TRCC has thus far failed to make significant grounds toward their goal of achieving reconciliation for victims of residential schools, due in part to governmental restraints such as lack of funding and limited access to federal archives and records.[[28]](#footnote-28) The TRCC's five year term ended on May 31, 2015, as I was finishing a draft of this chapter. Upon researching the final summary, and related reports, of the TRCC, which deemed that the acts committed in residential schools resulted in cultural genocide in Canada, I was disturbed to learn that the TRCC's records would be archived for up to 15 years before they would be destroyed.[[29]](#footnote-29) This is particularly problematic given that the second of only three TRCC mandates indicates that the commission would "Create a *permanent* record of what happened in the Indian Residential Schools" (trc.ca, emphasis mine). The extent to which this permanence is manipulated by the court's decision to destroy any documents that were not explicitly "spared" by school survivors is a disturbing example of the contemporary silencing of Indigenous histories in Canada - especially as it comes out of an initiative set out to make public the silenced traumas and histories surrounding Residential schools. Evidently, the mythical meta-narrative is disrupted on every level by a look at the current and historical proceedings of Indigenous-settler-governmental relationships.

I consider Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* as an avenue through which subaltern pasts are witnessed, and a breakage from such harmful narratives of Canadian history is facilitated. It is important to acknowledge that Campbell's memoir uses normative modes of language and narrative- such as the use of English, linear time progression, or the written word. I have found Beth Brant's *Writing as Witness* helpful in thinking how to work through the politics of recognition that are inherent in the writing that I look at in this project - Campbell must use an imposed settler language and write her story in a linear, progressive timeline that moves away from the Cree and Métis oral histories that she describes in her text. Brant considers the same struggle in her writing, and says, "Land. Spirit. History, present, future. [...] We labour with the English language, so unlike our own. The result of that labour has produced a new kind of writing" (8). Maria Campbell's writing for me, then, represents this "new kind of writing" that fits within the European discourses of writing and history recording, but is simultaneously non-linear and heterogeneous in its meaning for the ways that it represents silenced Indigenous pasts and ways of knowing.

I argue that Campbell calls us to witness her fragmented memories as they come into words, and also to bear witness to what is outside of words: to the silences surrounding her abuses, and to the silences surrounding the traumatic histories of Indigenous peoples. Her memoir constructs a historical narrative that is both true and legitimate, as a genre, and challenges a master narrative in which minority voices are silenced. In *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History,* Cathy Caruth writes that "it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and language" (4). I will consider the ways that the collective wounds of Indigenous peoples pervade Campbell’s individual wounds, as her personal experiences of racism in Canada draw attention to the contemporary ways that Indigenous lives are framed in society.[[30]](#footnote-30) This is Caruth's conceptualization of the truth's "belated address"- the often ignored, violent, colonial histories of Indigenous peoples "cry out" in Campbell's story. In this way, unfinished colonial histories have claims on the present, and call for a response that requires a rethinking of Canadian histories that devalue the Indigenous subject.

**The Politics of Witnessing Indigenous Histories in Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*: Negotiating Ongoing Colonial Legacies in Canada**

In the introduction to *Halfbreed*, Campbell immediately calls readers to bear witness, and respond, to her story*.* "I am not bitter. I have passed that stage. I only want to say: This is what it was like; this is what it is still like" (9), she writes introducing the text that will tell the story of her life as she remembers it. Campbell's words call readers to acknowledge the truths of her life as she voices them through her memoir. She does not wish to speak any kind of historical "truth," but seeks to represent her story, and that of her family, the way she remembers it. Campbell's opening sentence also emphasizes that the traumas of Indigenous peoples do not exist in the past: “this is what it is still like.” This disrupts perceptions that Canada has moved on from its colonial past, or that colonial legacies no longer exist, and discredits Stephen Harper's comments that the missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada are not a sociological problem. Rather, from the beginning of the text Campbell explicitly calls her readers to recognize the ways that histories of violence, racism and cultural decimation pervade the present legal, political and social landscapes in Canada.

Campbell's memoir is framed by the history of Métis peoples in Canada. She especially focuses on settler-Indigenous relationships and the government's treatment of her people in respect to land claims and civil rights. She begins the first chapter by detailing the histories of "Halfbreeds"/the Métis in Canada, who fled to Saskatchewan in the 1860s after the Red River Rebellion, which solidified the Métis peoples' realization that the Canadian government would not advocate for, or even recognize, their rights to land. Campbell offers the Métis perspective on the violent rebellions led by Dumont and Riel against the federal government, who had "continued to ignore their existence" (4) despite multiple petitions placed to gain fair rights to their land. "Gradually," concludes Campbell in her timeline of events,

the homesteads were reclaimed by the authorities and offered to the immigrants. The Halfbreeds then became squatters on their land and were eventually run off by the new owners. One by one they drifted back to the road lines and from then on were known as the 'Road Allowance People.' So began a miserable life of poverty which held no hope for the future. (8)

Here, one can see the forced dispossession of land perpetrated on Indigenous peoples during and after British colonization of Canada, and particularly the plight of Métis groups who were excluded from claiming land rights altogether by the 1876 Indian Act, which did not define them as "Indian." Their identities regulated by a government that did not legitimize their "Indian" blood based on the latter's definitions, Métis peoples were rendered ideologically and physically homeless; under the British laws imposed on them, they could not take ownership of the land they had lived on for years, and they were framed as deviant "others" in a nation that had "included" other Indigenous peoples in its laws and systems.

Given this historical framing of Indigenous subjects and claims for land, one can identify the grounds for the contemporary notion that Indigenous peoples in Canada make "impossible and unending demands for special treatment in their claims to land and state funds and to hunting, fishing and logging the nation's fast-depleting resources" (Thobani 4). The media often frames these land claims as nuisances, impediments to economic or infrastructural progress. For example, a *National Post* article on British Columbia's 2014 ruling that Indigenous land claims in the province would stand against resource extraction projects, outlined the "staggering" implications of this ruling on economic development, particularly that of the Northern Gateway oil pipelines that have provoked a lot of resistance.[[31]](#footnote-31) Not only does this take focus away from the important land rights victory won by Indigenous nations in the province, but it also perpetuates the notion that the "bothersome Indians" are both backward and illegitimate in their "unending" demands for rights. Brian Hutchinson, indeed, ends his article with the sarcastic warning, "Expect to hear similar demands from other First Nations across Canada" (2014). Campbell's overview of the events that led to these harmful public perceptions from a Métis perspective humanizes the Indigenous voice and disrupts the hegemonic claims that Britain had rightful and lawful ownership to Canadian land.

A history that privileges the white settler's voice, who has the authority to "grant" and "claim" land rights as well as define "Indian" identity, is evidently problematic given that it perpetuates contemporary views of Indigenous peoples as undeserving of "special" land rights. In addition to providing the reader with a history that disrupts these narratives, Campbell directly addresses the troubling ways that Canadian history is constructed from the colonial perspective. After detailing the events leading up to, and including, the rebellions of Métis and Indigenous peoples led by Riel, Campbell finishes her introductory chapter with a few isolated lines of text. They read:

The history books say that the Halfbreeds were defeated at Batoche in 1884. Louis Riel was hanged in November of 1885. Charge: high treason. Gabriel Dumont and a handful of men escaped to Montana. Poundmaker and Big Bear surrendered, were charged with treason, and sentenced to jail for three years. The other Halfbreeds escaped to the empty pockets of North Saskatchewan. The total cost to the federal government to stop the Rebellion was $5,000,000. (6)

Here, Campbell draws readers' attention to the processes of history writing in Canada that privilege the white, British voice. She makes explicit reference to history books, which represent legitimized historical truths, and tell a history that is contradictory to the one that she has provided in her introduction. These lines draw attention to history's biased framing of Riel, Dumont, Poundmaker and Big Bear as traitors to the nation. In contrast, for Campbell and her Cree and Métis family, these figures were the only representations of hope for the future of their people. Campbell then forces readers to recognize the politics of representation in Canadian discourses. She also contests historical truths by offering personal, experiential truths that question historical “truths.”, There is, then, a politics of reading that Campbell involves her reader in, implicating them as consumers of literature that manipulates and frames subjects for particular purposes. Further, Campbell's reference to the government's anti-rebellion expenditures offers a critique of the colonial project that privileges economic goals over racialized lives, as the money is trivial compared to the devastating impacts these events had on her people. This is also a critical comment on the way the Canadian government wasted money to stop peoples from accessing their own land. Silenced colonial histories also seep through in this line, as colonial projects primarily sought to exploit land, resources and Indigenous peoples for the economic gain of the mother country.

In her introductory sections, then, Campbell sets up her text so as to implicate readers for the ways that they uncritically read and consume literature, history and media, framing her own story with a call to readers to question the historical narratives they are taught in schools. Readers are also called to bear witness to the silenced histories that pervade "official" accounts of historical record in Canada, as she draws explicit attention to the ways that Métis and other Indigenous peoples were "ignored" by the government, and silenced in the official record. By embracing such a reading of the text, one can identify "subaltern pasts" that cause breakages in meta-narratives of Canadian history.

Throughout the text, Campbell offers an Indigenous-centered history of Canada that disrupts a Eurocentric master narrative of Canadian history. For example, a significant source of Canadian patriotism stems from Canada's involvement in the first and second World War. In *Halfbreed*, Campbell challenges a British-centered history of Canada's involvement in World War Two by asserting the involvement of Métis and other Indigenous peoples in the fights overseas: "When World War II broke out many of our men were sent overseas [...] Many of our men never returned, and the ones who did were never the same again" (22). Though Indigenous peoples' involvement in both World Wars is officially acknowledged by the federal government, recorded numbers of Indigenous soldiers and veterans are much lower than what is thought to accurately represent Indigenous involvement. Further, according to the *Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*, "First Nations did not receive the same treatment as other Canadians [after the war], particularly in the limited Veterans Land Act benefits available to them. After 1950, disillusioned veterans [...] lobbied provincial and federal agencies, and initiated court actions seeking damages." Though this has led in recent years to redress packages offered to Indigenous veterans (2015), at the time of *Halfbreed*'s publishing these issues were still unaddressed. By offering an Indigenous-centered perspective of World War Two, however brief, Campbell disrupts the Eurocentric history of the war. This also interrogates the colonial positioning of Indigenous subjects as outsiders or threats to the nation by placing the Indigenous subject as the object of normative patriotism. Further, Campbell both asserts the place of the Indigenous soldier in Canadian military history and speaks to the silences surrounding Indigenous involvement, as their rights as veterans have only been recently acknowledged. The differential treatment of Indigenous veterans in comparison to other Canadian veterans indicates the ongoing racist practices of the Canadian government. The subaltern histories of Indigenous soldiers cry out from Campbell's brief statement - calling readers to bear witness to those histories and traumas and rethink current historical records that privilege a British-centered perspective.

Campbell's recounting of her personal experiences also disrupts meta-narratives of Canadian history by drawing readers' attention to the limits of historical narratives. An important example of this is her personal recollection of her experience in a residential school. In telling her own story, Campbell also makes a space for collective narratives of residential school trauma that call for acknowledgement. Campbell's description of her time in a residential school is brief; however, I argue that this brevity acknowledges and embodies the silences that surround these experiences in the larger Canadian meta-narrative. On her seventh birthday, Campbell's Cree grandmother gifted her with a place in the Beauval, Saskatchewan residential school. That this was a gift from a "treaty Indian" relative shows the extent to which colonial ideals of Christian and Anglophone "Canadian-ness" were engrained in Indigenous communities who were taught their own inferiority compared to their white counterparts. "I can recall little from that part of my life," writes Campbell of her time at the school, "besides feeling lonely and frightened when I was left with the sister at the school. [...] I cannot recall ever doing much reading or school-work as Momma had said I would" (47). Evidently, the designation of these facilities as "schools" is a gross euphemism for what actually occurred there - cultural decimation and forced assimilation. Campbell continues,

I do recall most vividly a punishment I once received. We weren't allowed to speak Cree, only French and English, and for disobeying this, I was pushed into a small closet with no windows or light, and locked in for what seemed like hours. I was almost paralyzed with fright when they came to let me out. I remember the last day of school, and the sense of freedom I felt when Dad came for me. (47)

Campbell does not give more details of her experience at residential school. However, her traumas are evident - she later claims that public school, where she and her family experienced blatant racism from white teachers and students, was "Heaven compared to the Residential School" (49). Her unarticulated traumas, however, give way to an acknowledgement of the collective traumas of Indigenous peoples within these schools. The Beauval residential school is known for a 1927 fire that killed 19 students and one nun and, recently, Paul Leroux was convicted of 10 charges of molestation of young boys at the Beauval school.[[32]](#footnote-32) Though Campbell herself does not detail these traumas, her mention of the Beauval school evokes these collective traumas that are often silenced or forgotten within larger Canadian narratives of history. It also implicates the reader in current structures of privilege in Canadian legal systems- as aforementioned, residential school survivors do not feel the official governmental apology for residential schools was adequate in facilitating positive change in Canada, and the TRCC has been unable to reach its goals of recovery and reconciliation.

A useful framework for understanding Campbell's call to bear witness to silenced histories is provided in Kelly Oliver's *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*, where she examines the critical necessity of witnessing that which is *beyond* recognition, or outside of normative frameworks of knowledge and subjectivity. She writes that "any real contact with difference or otherness becomes impossible because recognition requires the assimilation of difference into something familiar" (9). Instead, a witness acknowledges the testimony of an "other" as a subject, and bears witness to the subjectivity of the "other's" trauma, therefore creating a dialogue of address and response. She calls this the response-ability of a witness. "We are obligated to witness beyond recognition," writes Oliver, "to testify and to listen to testimony- to encounter each other- because subjectivity and humanity are the result of response-ability. That which precludes a response destroys subjectivity and therefore humanity" (90). By representing, addressing and recording the silences surrounding Indigenous experiences of trauma in Canadian meta-narratives of history, Campbell calls for readers to take up this response-ability in bearing witness to silenced colonial histories, traumas and legacies.

Campbell's recording of a Métis-centered history in Canada calls readers to bear witness specifically to the experiences of Métis peoples in the nation. Much of Campbell's memoir deals with her struggle to reconcile with her identity as a "Halfbreed" in a nation that defines her under terms of negation: she is neither white and "Canadian" nor is she a treaty "Indian." As children, Campbell and her siblings are acutely aware of their racialized position in Canadian society. One of their favourite games re-enacted the story of Caesar, Cleopatra and Mark Anthony. "Oh, how I wanted to be Cleopatra," describes Campbell, "but my brother Jamie said, 'Maria, you're too black and your hair is like a nigger's.' So, I'd have to be Caesar instead" (14). The role of Cleopatra went to their "white-skinned, red-haired cousin" (14). At young ages, the children not only see themselves in terms of their race, but privilege white skin for a position of power and femininity. Whiteness, for a young Campbell, is equated with femininity and desirability, while being non-white is designated into a subordinate position. Later, Campbell recalls her grandmother, Cheechum, rubbing bear grease into her curly hair to straighten it like an "Indian" (53), and describes feeling ashamed by her blue eyes, as these were linked with whiteness by her Métis and Cree relatives and community (43). Conflicting racial identities are a source of confusion and shame for Campbell, as a Métis child.

Throughout the text, Campbell details experiences of racism as a Métis woman in Canada, and describes the ingrained self-hatred felt by Métis and other First Nations peoples in a nation that privileges the white body. "I thought they [German and Swedish settlers] must be the richest and most beautiful on earth" (27), she recalls. In another instance, she publicly calls a Métis family friend an "old, ugly Indian" and later recalls the feelings of shame and hatred for her actions against another Métis woman, remembering Cheechum's warning against the aims of white society: "They make you hate your own people" (103). This sentiment is a legacy of colonial assimilation projects that devalue Indigenous cultures, bodies and voices. Later, Campbell extends her critical look at racial discrimination in Canada through its legal systems when she describes an attempt to receive welfare assistance to support herself and her young children. The welfare officer says to Campbell, 'I can't see the difference- part Indian, all Indian. You're all the same'" (155). Here, a government employee generalizes all Indigenous peoples under the same identity category based on their racialized identity. "You're all the same," he says, indicating the prevalence of the generalized, problematic colonial view of "Indians" defined by the Indian Act, which generalizes Indigenous nations under a designation as "status Indians."

Evident in Campbell's text, then, is a paradox for Métis peoples in respect to their place in Canadian society as their perceived abandonment and ignorance by the federal government renders them homeless "no-bodies" in the nation. Yet their identities as Métis differentiate them from "Treaty Indians", and Campbell describes feeling her sense of true belonging to her Métis community, under the guidance of Cheechum.[[33]](#footnote-33) For example, Cheechum teaches Maria to never feel shame for her heritage, encouraging her to "always walk with your head up, and if anyone says something then put out your chin and hold it higher" (37). By asserting her autobiographical "I" as a Métis woman distinct from both "Indian" and white, "Canadian" identity, Campbell both resists and disrupts the systems that render Métis peoples "no-bodies" and gives them a place within Canadian history.

Campbell's text also offers resistance to colonial assimilation projects when she privileges, and asserts the legitimacy of, Indigenous ways of knowing and being over that of the colonizer. She writes oral histories and Métis traditions into the historical record, giving them legitimacy as Canadian history. Campbell describes the rich oral histories that are passed down between generations in her family. She writes, "We were taught to weave baskets from the red willow, and while we did these things together we were told the stories of our people- who they were, where they came from, and what they had done. Many were legends handed down from father to son" (18). Here, Campbell privileges these Métis legends and sources of knowledge as the positive and guiding forces in her life. These beliefs are placed alongside the problematic roles of religion in the text, which attunes the reader to the constructed colonial projects of religious conversion. Religious leaders are controversial figures in the text, who abuse their authority and act condescendingly toward their Indigenous congregation members. Campbell writes,

I never found peace in a church or in prayer. Perhaps Cheechum had a lot to do with that. Her philosophy was much more practical, soothing and exciting, and in her way I found comfort [...] She taught me to see beauty in all things around me; that inside each thing a spirit lived, that it was vital too, regardless of whether it was only a lead or a blade of grass, and by recognizing its life and beauty I was accepting God [...] Her explanation made much more sense than anything Christianity had ever taught me. (81-2)

Here, Campbell describes the value of Indigenous ways of knowing, particularly focusing on Cheechum's belief in the subjectivity of nature, which directly combats a Eurocentric notion of the natural world as an object to be taken and commoditized for economic gain - the driving force behind colonial projects that dispossessed Indigenous peoples from their land.

She also describes visiting her relatives in the Cree reserve nearby: "They took me to pow-wows, Sundances and Treaty days, and through them I learned the meanings of those special days. Mushoom would also take me with him to council meetings which were always the same: the Indian agent called the meeting to order, did all the talking, closed it and left" (26). This recollection indicates the importance of Indigenous tradition within those communities and displays Campbell's reverence toward these ways of life distinct from her own, acknowledging the unique distinctions between Indigenous nations and communities. We also see the privileging of the white, settler voice in "official" settings - the "Indian agent" speaks for the Cree community in council meetings, silencing their voices and traditional practices through official practices.

As I have traced, Campbell's text indicates the ways that the silencing of Indigenous voices, histories and traumas result in a normalized othering of Indigenous peoples; they are excluded from normative ideas of Canadian identity, history and geographical space. Given the current treatment of Indigenous bodies in Canada, particularly the federal government's ignorance of the violence toward Indigenous women, Campbell's writing is particularly compelling to the contemporary Canadian reader. Helen Knott’s poem "Invisible" speaks to the literal constitution of Indigenous women as "no-bodies" within Canada. Her opening lines read:

Your eyes, they curve around me.

I watch you try so hard to find your way past me.

Your sight is like rushing waters,

Moving beside me, behind me, pushing over me,

Indirectly consuming me.

[...]

What bad medicine did your forefathers use to make me invisible?

You don't want to see me.

As Knott writes, Indigenous bodies are rendered invisible by the legacies of colonialism that constitute common perceptions of Indigeneity. Knott's words, read by the Special Committee on Violence Against Indigenous Women in February 2013, calls the listener to bear witness to the Indigenous girls and women who are silenced in Canada.

Amnesty International, the Native Women's Association of Canada, and countless other groups, companies, and individuals are calling for Canadians to stop the silence surrounding the individual narratives and marginalized histories of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. According to the first report of the Special Committee on Violence Against Indigenous women, studies of the extent of violence perpetrated against Indigenous women indicate the extreme objectification and commoditization of the female Indigenous body. The report cites media instances of normalized violence against women in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, as well as the widespread prostitution market that solicits, kidnaps or forces Indigenous girls and women into supporting themselves as sex workers.[[34]](#footnote-34) Campbell's text raises questions about the notion of the Indigenous subject as a commodity; a clear result of colonial legacies that exploited Indigenous peoples for economic gain. She writes about her relationship with an abusive white man, her experiences as a sex worker in Vancouver, and the ways Indigeneity is "performed", bought and sold for survival in Calgary. The critical stance Campbell raises against the normalized commoditization of Indigeneity both calls readers to question the histories that legitimize those views and implicates readers in the structures of privilege that maintain and perpetuate the devaluing of Indigenous bodies.

Struggling to support herself and her daughters in Alberta, Campbell is faced with the disturbing reality that employment and assistance prospects for her depend on the commoditization of her body as an Indigenous woman. In her first attempt to receive welfare from the government, Campbell is unsuccessful, and is scolded for disclosing her savings of 200 dollars to the social worker, who denies her assistance on the basis that she was not in need. In order to, then, receive monetary assistance from the government, Campbell is given advice to "Act ignorant, timid and grateful" (154), and wear a friend's threadbare coat (155). Upon her second attempt, Campbell "looked like a Whitefish Lake squaw" (155), which caused confusion about the legitimacy of her Métis identity but ultimately rendered her eligible for assistance. Evident here is the way that Campbell was forced to perform the stereotypical disadvantaged, poor and pitiable "squaw" in order to sell herself to the welfare office as deserving of assistance.

Further, Campbell learns that Indigenous peoples had the option to commoditize themselves and their cultures for profit by performing "Indian-ness" during the Calgary Stampede. A friend explains, "Once summer comes we can make a few dollars here and there. The Calgary Stampede always needs Indians. There's no need to go out and earn a living on the street. We can fix up outfits for ourselves, and go to pow-wows, and put on for white people, and get paid" (155). Here, the Indigenous subject becomes an object as "White people" attend the Stampede for a "different" experience - an old, Western cowboy-and-Indian experience that requires the commoditization of the Indigenous body. These kinds of narratives equate Indigeneity with the past. As Daniel Coleman argues, Canadian narratives of white civility and progress assumes the myth that "Natives were or are a 'vanishing race.' The kind of social Darwinism assumed in the single timeline of the race of civilization allowed settlers to fantasize that the disappearance of Aboriginal peoples was an inevitability and therefore to mourn this necessary passing of a way of life that was doomed under the unstoppable wheels of progress" (29). Beth Brant too writes of the devastating impact of settler ideologies that "wished to eradicate all memory of us" on her Mohawk community. This narrative legitimizes the Canadian fetishization of the "traditional" Indigenous body - the "dead Indian" - as described by Campbell here. Her focus on the stampede evokes a critical look at the event as what Coleman calls a white "mourning" of Indigenous cultures.

"I couldn't see myself in an Indian woman's costume," continues Campbell, "parading around while white people took pictures of me. I asked her if she was serious, did Indians really get paid to be Indians for tourists? Marion answered that business was good in Calgary for Indians. *White people said it was a cultural thing, so no one thought it was bad*" (155, emphasis added). In this excerpt, Campbell implicates Canadian readers for their role in perpetuating the objectification of Indigenous peoples. The appropriation of Indigenous culture for entertainment, Campbell explains, was legitimized by white people who equate Indigeneity with an ancient, unusual culture that is inherently different than "Canadian-ness." One may consider the ways that Indigenous peoples and cultures are currently framed in normative Canadian discourses - the Western image of the Indian with feathered headdresses, the totem poles and artifacts placed in museums that represent what Canada "used" to be. Each of these examples posits Indigeneity as lacking futurity, and appropriates the Indigenous "object" into something bought and sold for entertainment. Relevant to this discussion is Jennifer Adese's PhD dissertation, which discusses the ways that Indigenous culture is commoditized in Canada by the tourism industry. Her argument is that the term "Aboriginal" was an imagined construction by the economic Canadian state; one that legitimizes the notion of a civil and multicultural Canada through promoting this idea in outside tourism. One sees a similar imagination of the "Aboriginal" subject by white Canadians in Campbell's description of the stampede. Coleman's thoughts are again useful, as he theorizes: "Civility dynamites *and* memorializes the spectres of the past; it grieves *and* reproduces the ever-vanishing 'Indian.'" (34). Campbell's demonstration of how extreme poverty prompts the commoditizing of Indigenous bodies disrupts this "civil" narrative that normalizes the objectification of Indigenous bodies to memorialize a "past" culture.

A study of the ways that Indigenous bodies are objectified in current framings of them in Canadian society becomes particularly relevant when moving to a study of Campbell's experiences as a sex worker in downtown Vancouver. Sherene Razack's study of the murder of Pamela George and ultimate failure of the Canadian legal system to hold her young, white killers accountable for their crime indicates the extent to which Indigenous women are subjugated to ongoing "colonization" that objectifies and commoditizes their bodies. George, a Saulteaux woman, was working as a prostitute on the "Stroll," Regina's prostitution streets, when she was picked up by two white college students, driven to a remote area, and beaten to death. "While it is certainly patriarchy that produces men whose sense of identity is achieved through brutalizing a women," analyzes Razack, "the men's and the court's capacity to dehumanize Pamela George came from their understanding of her as the (gendered) racial Other whose degradation confirmed their own identities as white - that is, as men entitled to the land and the full benefits of citizenship" (126). Razack speaks to the ongoing colonization of Indigenous women's bodies that follows colonial narratives of white dominance over the objectified subject - peoples, land, and resources.

These colonial ideologies are most evident in Campbell's abusive relationship with her white husband, Darrel, and her "escape" from him to the streets of Vancouver, where she supported herself as a sex worker. Darrel, whose white family calls Campbell "nothing but a dirty Indian breed" (126), physically abused her for most of the duration of their marriage. Campbell recalls one of many violent attacks, writing "One night in December Darrel came home beaten and covered with blood. Smoky had laid a licking on him. After slapping me, her threw me on the floor and kicked me. He told me to pack up my clothes and kids and move in with that fucking Halfbreed - the kid was probably Smoky's anyway" (123). Here, readers are called to bear witness to the ongoing colonial legacies that normalize violence against Indigenous women on the basis that they are sexually uncouth, dirty, and guilty of violence against white populations. Sherene Razack's study of the media's framing of Pamela George's death is relevant here, as she quotes a Calgary newspaper that reads, "The lesson of the case [...] was that it was important to 'keep the Indians out of town'" (131). This is the same logic indicated by Campbell who describes Darrel's quick demonization of her based on her race.

Campbell is eventually abandoned by Darrel, leading her to become a sex worker in downtown Vancouver. Describing one of the prominent men whom she worked for, Campbell writes that she was expected to be "damned beautiful and happy and entertaining when he arrived or I'd be out on my ass hustling on the street" (137). Reading through Razack's lens, which studies the framing of Indigenous women's bodies as sites of colonial domination, Campbell's relationship with her white, abusive husband and later with her "Johns" enact the colonial settler strategy of sexual and physical abuse of Indigenous women in order to dominate Indigenous peoples. Sarah Carter writes that sex was often commoditized by government officials and the NWMP in their economic relationships with Indigenous peoples. This often forced sex in exchange for food was legitimized by the constitution of the "immoral squaw" image (130). This also indicates the perverse, white desiring gaze onto Indigenous women's bodies that is fuelled by ingrained colonial ideologies that affirm white identity through its domination of the racialized "other". Julia Emberley's historicization of sexual violations of Indigenous women's bodies in "To Spirit Walk the Letter and the Law: Gender, Race and Representational Violence in Rudy Wiebe and Yvonne Johnson's *Stolen Life: The Journey of a Cree Woman,"* is useful in understanding the sexually commoditized "Indian" subject. Looking at Yvonne Johnson's memoir, she argues that accounts of Johnson's sexual abuse offer larger commentaries about ongoing colonial legacies and ideologies. She calls for the necessity to bear witness to the sexual violence on objectified Indigenous bodies as one of the "multiple forms of colonial dispossession [that ...] include[s] the commoditization of land *and* bodies as naturalized objects of exchange and exploitation" (236). In *Halfbreed*, Campbell exposes readers to the commoditized and objectified sexual body of the Indigenous woman. However, in her humanized depiction of her own experiences, and the experiences of other sex workers and objectified Indigenous women in Vancouver and Calgary, Campbell calls readers to bear witness to the silenced "lives," with histories and voices, behind the figure of the "commoditized Indian." In one of such descriptions, Campbell writes,

One Chinese girl, who was part Indian, tiny, fragile and very pretty, had started work a few weeks before I did [...] Her room was next to mine and she cried a lot by herself. When I heard her I'd desperately want to go to her and help, but it was impossible [...] One afternoon she was missing at the table for dinner, so I went to her room and knocked. When there was no answer, I opened the door. She was on the floor - dead [...] She had died from an overdose of drugs. They gave her a welfare burial, and *forgot about her*. (134-5, emphasis added)

Campbell's recollection of the young girl's life gives a humane look into the lives of racialized women who support themselves as sex workers in Downtown Vancouver, directly disrupting narratives that dehumanize these women to legitimize violence against them. She also forces readers to bear witness to the unnamed life of this girl, who is one of many who are "forgotten" in Canadian society due to racialized and gendered structures of privilege.

By bearing witness to the colonial legacies that seep into Campbell's accounts of sexual violence, one may break from a normalized acceptance of Eurocentric knowledge or structures of privilege in society. Indeed, as Emberley writes, "In the larger context of the present day disappearance and murder of Indigenous women and the disclosure of widespread sexual abuse of Indigenous children in the residential school system, it is also possible to recognize the degree to which sexual violence toward Indigenous women and children was central to the formation of the postcolonial nation-state of Canada" (236). This implicates readers in the ongoing colonial legacies in Canadian society that work to naturalize the objectification of, and subsequent violence against, Indigenous bodies. Perhaps this is the start to a productive conversation about making real steps to achieve justice for the 1,181 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. Knott's final lines of her poem represent Campbell's project of bearing witness to devalued Indigenous women's bodies. She writes,

Never somebody's daughter, never somebody's mother, never an aunt, a sister, a friend.

Never am I seen as strong, as proud, as resilient.

Never as I am.

[...]

Do you see me now? (Knott, 2013).

Knott's final call to her listeners and readers to "see" her, acknowledging not only her existence but the violence perpetrated on her body as an Indigenous woman, is similar to Campbell's final chapter of *Halfbreed*, which calls readers to bear witness to efforts for Indigenous resurgence in Canada. The final lines of Campbell's memoir, published in 1973, implicate readers in making change possible in Canada. They read: "I believe that one day, very soon, people will set aside their differences and come together as one. [...] Then, together, we will fight our common enemies. Change will come because this time we won't give up. There is growing evidence of that today" (184). Forty two years later, in 2015, Campbell's call to readers to embrace change by uniting in a "human" solidarity still rings true. The colonial legacies in place in contemporary Canadian society that silence Indigenous traumas are still pervasive, and Canadians need to bear witness to silenced histories and act against the structures that perpetuate this silencing. *Halfbreed*'s final chapters give Campbell's account of her role in Métis and First Nations political activism. She became involved with the Métis Association of Alberta and the Indian Association, writing that the long range goals for the organizations were to educate the Canadian public in order to see "the need for unity, thus making a federation possible" (182). Campbell later describes the founding of the Alberta Native Communications Society, to make Canadian society aware and informed of the political and social issues faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. Breaking the silences surrounding the traumas of Indigenous peoples, according to Campbell and her grassroots Indigenous activism, depends on a societal embrace of education that informs the public of silenced histories and ongoing colonial legacies.

Maria Campbell, therefore, takes up this project through her memoir. She calls readers to bear witness to the ongoing nature of colonial histories and the ways that they work to silence the voices, cultures and bodies of Indigenous peoples. The persistence of these histories implicates readers who live within current structures of privilege, and calls for a response that allows an alignment with the subaltern subject in order to oppose colonial legacies. Her decision to conclude the text with a look at the potential for Indigenous resurgence through activism that breaks silences surrounding Indigenous traumas implicates the reader in an ethical choice: continue perpetuating the silence, or respond to her call. I argue that this possibility for response exists in a moment of breakage from normative notions of knowledge, being and history. Such breakages, as I have traced, can be facilitated through the apprehension of what Chakrabarty calls subaltern pasts. Campbell disrupts normalized colonial histories and the legacies of colonialism that maintain societal and legal structures in current Canadian society which privilege the white body and silence and objectify the Indigenous subject. By forcing readers to bear witness to, and implicate themselves within, these ongoing traumas that are previously unacknowledged, Campbell facilitates that breakage that dispossesses us from certainty, from the normalized or accepted structures that make up our society.[[35]](#footnote-35) Responding to this call to bear witness may open the potential to re-think Canadian historical narratives that perpetuate silences surrounding traumas of Indigenous peoples.

**Chapter 3 - "A Wordless Word"[[36]](#footnote-36): The Racialized "Non-Citizen", Normalized Racism, and Silent Testimony in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan***

and I prayed to the God who loves All the children in his sight That I might be white (Joy Kogawa, "What Do You Remember of the Evacuation?")

The final lines in Joy Kogawa's poem, "What Do You Remember of the Evacuation?" detail the extent to which idealized whiteness is internalized by children. The final words penned by Kogawa, which describe her prayer to a Christian God that she be made white so that she may be included in his protective gaze, represent the experience of the racialized "other" who is told that she falls outside of God's love due to her race. "God keep our land glorious and free," reads the Canadian national anthem. The line resonates more significantly when placed beside Kogawa's poetry, which suggests that God's "protection" over Canada depends on whiteness. It also indicates the extent to which Canadian discourse perpetuates the notion that Canadian-ness equals whiteness. Its literature, as Bannerji's story shows, and art, as the anthem reads, gives a particular view of Canadian identity that excludes the racialized immigrant subject. More troubling is the normalization of this sentiment, seen in the self critical views of these Japanese and South Asian-Canadian children.

In this chapter, I examine the ways that Kogawa presents instances of normalized racism in Canada--"everyday" occurrences which contribute to normalized whiteness and the racialized citizen as "other." The silences surrounding her experiences, and the experiences of Japanese Canadians before, during and after the Second World War, pervade the text and call readers to acknowledge and apprehend what is conveniently ignored or re-written in Canadian master narratives. Kogawa therefore calls readers to apprehend silent testimonies - those that are outside of normative boundaries of recognition - in order to rethink Canadian "memory" through an acknowledgement of ongoing normalized racism and its silenced victims.

Kogawa's look at the normalized racism in Canada has increasing relevance in contemporary Canadian society and politics. Canada's May 2015 Bill C-24 indicates that now, the government will categorize Canadian citizens under two classes. The law, effectively, legally constitutes those who identify as dual citizens or have national ties with other countries as "others" based on their "mixed" citizenship. Further, the Bill arbitrarily allows the government to revoke citizenship from such "others" on the basis of national security: no longer does citizenship revocation have to go through legal processes or depend on a Judge's decision. As the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association explains, "Canadians with another nationality (and those who are eligible to obtain another nationality) now have second-class status, even if they were born in Canada: under Bill C-24, their citizenship can be stripped" (2015). Though it is important to note that citizenship can only be revoked for reasons including serious criminal convictions of terrorism or treason, the sentiment present in a law that distinguishes immigrants from "pure" Canadian-ness is disturbingly reminiscent of the ideologies behind theories of racial eugenics that normalize the "difference" and inferiority of the "other."

In her chapter titled "Reforming Canadians: Consultations and Nationalizations," Sunera Thobani examines Canadian public sentiment toward immigration policies and immigrants themselves, and the "official" actions that motivate and legitimize normalized racism. Thobani's study centers on a 1994 call for Canadians to participate in a public review process concerning a restructuring of Canada's immigration and social security programs. This was an attempt to allow citizens to take part, democratically, in the processes that would change the demographic of Canada as a nation in years to come. Thobani argues that, contrary to perpetuating a notion of Canada as multicultural or accepting of an open immigration policy, this review hardened the lines between "nationals" and immigrants, who were scapegoated as the cause of economic and social problems in Canada, and naturalized the Canadian citizen as white. She explains,

The public review process served as a key institutional mechanism through which racialized discourses of nationality, citizenship, and immigration were reproduced [... and] served at least two functions. First, they reproduced definitions of real Canadians as white nationals, and thereby maintained the historically racialized nation-state relationship in spite of ever increasing heterogeneity among the population. Second, they legitimized unequal citizenship rights for immigrants as outsiders, and maintained the possibility of increasing the restrictions on their citizenship in the future. (182-183)

Thobani's claim in the final sentences of this excerpt emerge as frighteningly true when one considers the restrictions placed on immigrants, and citizens with multiple nationalities, under this new Canadian bill. Though the citizenship of "real" citizens can never be removed, even if one is found guilty of a criminal offense, the citizenship of racialized "others" is *legally* constituted as precarious; only deserving if one upholds existence as a model citizen.

In the above quotation, Thobani explains the ways that notions of Canadian identity and belonging are still tied up with race in a contemporary setting, regardless of the practices that seem to promote multiculturalism and democracy for all citizens on a surface level. By conducting the Immigration Policy and Social Security Reviews, the government constitutes notions of whose voices matter in the Canadian imaginary, and whose do not. Under the ruse of democratic legislation, these "Canadians" are therefore constituted as the "real" citizens who have the right to decide whether or not racialized "others" should have the same rights to citizenship as they do. Thobani argues that the questions given to Canadians in the survey were framed in such a way that perpetuated notions that immigrant subjects come to Canada in order to take advantage of Canada's social services. One question asks, "Should newcomers receive materials explaining the rights and responsibilities of consuming public services?," while another reads, "How far are Canadians prepared to go to ensure their generosity and openness are not abused?" (185). Each of these questions posits the immigrant subject as being somehow undeserving, if not of the benevolence of white Canadians, of the benefits of Canadian citizenship. The questions go as far as to link social and economic problems in Canada with immigration, asking whether immigrant programs need to be altered in order to keep costs down, or if a generalizing database should be created to filter those immigrants that would be undesirable for inclusion into Canada.

By linking social issues with the inclusion of undesirable immigrants in the Canadian nation, the government is able to legitimize race-based discriminatory laws under the basis of protecting or advancing the nation as a whole, or working toward the benefit of the general population. These ideas ring strongly with the measures taken against Japanese Canadian citizens during the Second World War, who despite their designation by the RCMP as non-threatening, were blamed for creating racial tension in Western Canada and posing a significant threat to national security. According to the Immigration Policy review, "many Canadians worry that the immigration systems are not working as they should, particularly as they pertain to the entry of undesirable persons and the removal of those who violate our laws" (197). These "undesirable persons" evidenced by the survey, are perceived to pose a threat to social systems, economies and people in the nation. The characteristics under which certain subjects are constituted as "undesirable", however, are those which support a national imaginary that privileges the civility of the white subject.

The same sentiment that supported the citizenship restrictions on Japanese Canadians in the early 20th Century and their internment[[37]](#footnote-37) during World War Two is that which normalizes the designation of citizens with multiple nationalities as "second class" in Bill C-24. Andrea Gieger-Adams's "Writing Racial Barriers into Law: Upholding B.C.'s Denial of the Vote to Its Japanese Canadian Citizens" considers the phenomenon of the racialized "non" citizen in early twentieth century Western Canada. Gieger-Adams examines a 1902 court case seeking to allow Japanese Canadian citizens the right to vote, brought by Tomekichi Homma against the British Columbia Provincial Voter's Act that stated, "no Chinaman, Japanese, or Indian shall have his name placed on the Register of Voters for any Electoral District" (21). Though the federal Supreme Court ruled that there was no reason to deny the vote to Japanese Canadian citizens, who were "officially" naturalized British subjects, the British Columbia provincial government appealed the ruling and achieved its goal to keep the political voice solely in its white community.

Gieger-Adams argues that this case shows the extent to which citizenship in Canada was ultimately viewed in terms of race. She writes that the laws which kept those of Asian and Indigenous descent from voting naturalized racist connections between race and nationality, perpetuating the notion that a non-white subject cannot be truly Canadian. Statements made by British Columbia Attorney General David McEwen Eberts express this sentiment, as he cautions that Japanese Canadian citizens would not exercise the right to vote in a responsible manner. His reasons for this, however, are solely based on their physical, racial appearance. Gieger-Adams paraphrases,

They had no real interest in Canada, he told the barrister, and no knowledge of its political institutions. Their votes would simply be bought, and they would 'impersonate one another at the polls,' since it was, in Ebert's words, impossible to 'distinguish one Jap or Chinaman from another.' [Further,] It was intolerable, Eberts insisted, that 'these foreign races, which can never be assimilated with our population should in many constituencies determine who shall represent the people in the legislature' (28).

Eberts describes his inability to distinguish among Asian Canadian citizens, indicating the problematic white gaze that cannot differentiate between features of racialized subjects. Ultimately, Eberts's reasoning for the denial of voting rights to Japanese and Chinese Canadians is based in racist white perceptions of the non-white "Other." Such racialized subjects cannot be trusted with the important right to vote, under his logic, for no legitimate reason other than their "different" appearance.

Patricia Roy considers the conditions under which "undesirable" characteristics were ascribed to Japanese Canadian citizens after the Second World War, when there was no legitimate evidence that indicated that they would pose a security threat to the nation (254). Her paper considers the factors that legitimized the delayed return of the interned Japanese Canadian citizens to the West coast. She considers British Columbia's constant attempts to keep the Emergency Powers Law, which allowed the government control of the movement of Japanese Canadians, alive amidst a push to honour the rights of citizenship for Japanese Canadians. These attempts, she writes, were driven by a reversion to older claims of the inexorable "other-ness" of Japanese Canadians. In statements that seem to echo that of Attorney General Eberts, government officials "rehashed ancient allegations of Japanese unassimilability, 'unfair competition' especially in the fisheries, and immigration that would overwhelm the province" (262). Again, the legitimizations for systemic racism that would remove Japanese Canadian citizens, and keep them from, their homes are not based in on factual or founded fears, but on an image of them as racialized "others". These statements also speak to the more current governmental practices shown in the 1994 immigration report, which blamed economic issues in Canada directly on immigrant populations.

Current "official" pushes for immigration policy changes, as studied by Thobani, ultimately echo the sentiments behind the internment and deportations of Japanese Canadians during and after the war. Undesirable immigrants should be removed, state Canadian citizens quoted in the 1994 official report, for the "good" of the country. Thobani explains, "Recommendations for 'across the board' and 'equitable, generalized removals' no doubt were seen as attesting to the commitment of those who advocated such measures to the principle of fairness" (196). Equity being the basis for the removal of undesirable subjects from Canada fits within a larger narrative of Canada's benevolence and fairness in its approach to multiculturalism and immigration. It would be for the good of all citizens in British Columbia, for example, that the Japanese be removed in order to avoid, in the words of Major General Alexander in 1941, "inter-racial riots and bloodshed" (Sunahara 26). Evidently, the parallels between current governmental stances on immigrant subjects and the treatments of Japanese Canadians disrupt notions that internment was a part of Canadian history from which we have moved on.

**Joy Kogawa's Challenge to Normalized Canadian Racism**

Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* is important to an understanding of contemporary Canadian society, and its treatment of racialized subjects. Considered an incredibly influential novel in Canada, the text examines the experience of Japanese Canadian internment from the perspective of a young child. Her personal look at the lives of Japanese Canadians, and assertion of their definitive belonging in the nation and its history, disrupts the normalized racism that legitimizes the notion that Canadian equals whiteness. Kogawa writes in an open ended, non-linear language and alternates Japanese and English in her text. This further disrupts the linguistic practices of a post-colonial Canada which weave a national history that privileges colonial voices while simultaneously maintaining the perception that belonging in Canada must be predicated by speaking English or French. Kogawa also, further, implicates her readers in her writing, as she takes a critical and nuanced look at everyday Canadian citizens who intentionally and unintentionally partake in the government's normalized racism that marginalizes racialized "others". In doing so, she disrupts the legitimized state practices that designate generations of immigrant subjects as "others" in Canada.

Emily Kato[[38]](#footnote-38), a character who is heavily involved in Canadian politics and Japanese Canadian rights, is one who disrupts the stereotypical "unassimilable" Japanese subject that legitimized the removal of rights from them. Contrary to the opinions of government officials in *Cunningham v. Homma* which state that Japanese Canadians should not be granted the right to vote based on their inability to understand Canadian politics. "Aunt Emily" directly addresses and disproves this notion. In her manuscript titled *I am Canadian* found by Naomi, Kogawa's protagonist, Kato asserts her citizenship in a manifesto style. She writes,

The exact moment when I first felt the stirrings of identification with this country occurred when I was twelve years old [...] At first I was proud, knowing that I *belonged.* This is my *own,* my native land. Then as I grew older and joined the Nisei group taking a leading part in the struggle for liberty, I waved those lines around like a banner in the wind. This is my own, my *native* land (emphasis original, 42).

Aunt Emily repeats this line many times in her manuscript, appropriating the lines in the national anthem to include a more expansive view of national belonging. She repeats this line until the end, when she reflects on the dispossession of her family from their homes, their internment in isolated camps, forced repatriation, and ban from free movement in the country even following internment. She writes, "after our former homes had been sold over vigorous protests, after having been re-registered, fingerprinted, card-indexed, roped and restricted, I cry out the question: *Is* this my own, my native land?" (42). Though her statement here speaks to the feeling of "other-ness" within the nation as a Japanese Canadian woman, Kato immediately answers her own question with the decisive statement, "Yes. It is. For better or worse, *I am Canadian*" (43). Contrary to the racist beliefs of British Columbia government officials that work to constitute Japanese Canadians as "non-citizens" in the nation, Emily Kato asserts her unending and unchanging belonging in the nation.

Naomi struggles more visibly with her racialized subjectivity in Canada. The beginning of the text details her frustration with her Japanese last name, as her elementary students cannot pronounce the "foreign" word (5). However, she comes to make the same assertions of national belonging in Canada: one that is rooted in a shared physical connection to Canadian land. When describing her family's forced evacuation from their homes, she writes, "We are leaving the B.C. coast - rain, cloud, mist - an air overladen with weeping. Behind us lies a salty sea within which swim our drowning specks of memory - our small waterlogged eulogies" (119). In this passage, Kogawa describes the physical landscape of British Columbia as housing the emotions, memories and lives of its Japanese Canadian citizens. There is a dual connection between Japanese Canadian lives and the landscape, as each is connected with the other based on the evidence of their lives on and within it. Later, Kogawa more explicitly writes

Oh Canada, whether it is admitted or not, we come from you we come from you. From the same soil, the slugs and slime and wild bogs and twigs and roots. We come from the country that plucks its peoples out like weeds and flings them into the roadside. We grow in ditches and sloughs, untended and spindly. We erupt in the valleys and mountainsides, in small towns and prairies, our hair wild as spiders' legs, our feet rooted nowhere. We grow where we are not seen, we flourish where we are not heard, the thick undergrowth of an unlikely planting [...] We come from Canada, this land that is like every land, filled with the wise, the fearful, and compassionate, the corrupt. (247-8)

Kogawa's assertion of connectedness with the natural geography in Canada disrupts colonial ways of knowing that are centered on human dominance of the natural world, and the exploitation of the land for economic gains. Her assertion of belonging in Canada based on connectedness with its land privileges a solidarity between nature and all of its peoples. This is also an important Indigenous way of perceiving the world, de-legitimized during colonization, which sought to exploit the land and its peoples. This connectedness is most evident when Kogawa seems to address Canada itself, writing that she and her family come from "the same soil." Kogawa, here forces readers to acknowledge the connectivity inherent in the land, and the ways that solidarity exists between peoples who live on that land. And, as will be explored in the following section, she also speaks to the histories present in the physical geography of Canada, and the silenced lives that can be witnessed through an apprehension of the ways violent collective histories are tied up with a Canadian landscape. Each of these practices allows Kogawa to disrupt colonial and current Canadian constructions of separated identities based on notions of "us" and "them".

Kogawa's linguistic structure also works to delegitimize the systems that construct Japanese Canadians as "others" on a broader scale. Her poeticism, praised by many critics of the book, is evident throughout the text. An example lies in the passage I have quoted above, wherein she presents an image of Japanese Canadian citizens as part of the land itself, fused with the natural world as growths despite attempts to eradicate them. "We flourish where we are not heard," Kogawa asserts, "the thick undergrowth of an unlikely planting." Despite the silencing perpetrated on Japanese Canadian subjects, Kogawa's likening of them to a plant that flourishes regardless of being "underground" indicates that their existence cannot be ignored. Further, in her descriptive language Kogawa breaks from normative linguistic structure by forgoing traditional rules of grammar. For example, she repeats "the slugs and slime and wild bogs and twigs and roots" when describing Japanese Canadian belonging within the landscape, emphasizing connectedness and continuity in her language rather than following normative language. In doing so, Kogawa not only breaks from normative linguistic structures which limit language, but her metaphorical writing style allows readers the freedom to infer meaning and make multiple connections. In another passage, Kogawa recalls waking up in a hospital after being saved from nearly drowning by an Indigenous man, Rough Lock Bill. "I am in a hospital," she writes, "Father is in a hospital. A chicken is in a hospital. [...] The weeds in the garden do not moan when they are plucked from the earth. Nor do the trees cry out at their fierce combing as they lie uprooted by the roadside. Rapunzel's long ladder of hair could bear the weight of prince or witch. I can endure this nurse's hands yanking, at the knots in the thick black tangles" (163).

Kogawa's metaphorical and poetic language deviates from normalized structure and meaning in this passage. Most simply, this passage can refer to the confusing and terrifying experience of a child who wakes up in a hospital, and self-soothes using these thoughts. However, I argue that her nonsensical statement connecting herself, her deceased father and a chicken give way to racialized connections between her family and white Canadians, parodied in the text by a repeated killing of yellow chicks by a white hen. She, further, describes her hair being combed by connecting her own experience with that of the natural world being objectified and used for profit. The experience of weeds and trees being uprooted can also be connected to the experiences of Japanese Canadians during internment and repatriation. Her reference to Rapunzel's "resilience" in the face of hair-tugging could be interpreted as a representation of idealized white-ness, as she looks to the European fairytale princess as the model by which she must act in the situation. Similarly, she describes her own hair as having knots; thick black tangles. These words indicate a negative stance toward her own image as "other" than beautiful, white Rapunzel and her own acceptance of the necessity for the nurse to forcibly get rid of such imperfection.

Therefore, Kogawa uses language heterogeneously to complicate the logic of "One-ness" championed by a logo centric philosophy of language, which refers to the singular meanings of words which represent absolute truths, and also works through the creation of binaries. Kogawa's merging of poeticism, which uses this metaphorical language, with the traditionally straightforward language of historical novel writing breaks from normative canonical language in novels. Kogawa's language disrupts a binary of "citizen" and "foreigner" for example, by signifying Japanese Canadian citizens through many variations of both terms. Rather than undertaking a search for fundamental truths in language, as Jacques Derrida describes of a logo centric linguistic philosophy, Kogawa blurs lines between meanings to complicate a logic that has rendered her as "other" in Canada based on singular notions of Canadian nationality. According to Donald Goellnicht, as cited by Arnold Davidson, her writing also disrupts normative practices of writing history which seek to tell truths in a progressive and logical narrative. History as an absolute truth is problematized by Kogawa's referential language, he argues, as history cannot be constructed or recovered in such language (29). Kogawa's poetic and metaphorical language breaks from normative time progression and gives an alternate narrative with many different meanings, questioning the act of history writing itself.

Further, Kogawa's language also disrupts the colonial project of assimilation through the erasure of languages other than English or French. Canada, as a bilingual country, privileges native speakers of these languages, which further, naturalizes the idea that European citizens are "true" Canadians. By writing in both English and Japanese, Kogawa legitimizes and naturalizes Japanese Canadian citizens' belonging in the nation. Her merging of languages also contributes to her disruption of a logic that works from a singular network of meanings and worldviews. She writes her own history using linguistic multiplicities and stories or traditions from both cultures, and creates a linguistic space in which heterogeneity is privileged. Therefore, Kogawa's language challenges the idea that Canadian-ness depends on the speaking of English or French alone, or that knowledge languages other than English and French designate a person an outsider to the nation. Thobani explains this sentiment in her study of the 1994 immigration reform. Canadians who were cited in the final report were of the agreement that immigrants allowed to live in Canada must be able to speak one of its official languages in order to allow their easy assimilation into society. Thobani summarizes the report's call for linguistic homogeneity:

Repeated recommendations were made for increasing the recruitment of independent class and of English- and- French-speaking immigrants. Recommendations were also made for recruiting immigrants from the original European source countries because they would be more compatible with the nation [...] *Fluency in English and French were repeatedly recommended as criteria by which the quality of potential immigrants should be evaluated.* Such criteria would, of course, privilege Europeans, who were defined as being of the quality deemed most compatible with the nation. (200, emphasis added)

One can determine, here, the connection between language and nationality. For Canadians, proficiency in English or French is equalled with belonging, as these allow subjects to be "compatible" in the nation. These recommendations normalize the idea that "undesirable" immigrants are those who come from non-majority English speaking countries, which privileges a particular part of the world as being most able to fit within Canadian society. Indigenous languages in Canada are denied as the first words which recorded Canadian life and history, and were damaged, forgotten and abolished in the colonial project which privileged ways of knowing rooted in the English language. In Canada's call for an exclusively bilingual linguistic nation, there is a loss of words, nuances and knowledge rooted in other languages. This results in Canadian knowledge being controlled within the parameters of the English and French languages, forcibly eliminating other languages.

By writing in both English and Japanese in *Obasan*, Kogawa privileges Japanese as an equally important language in Canada as English, and makes mimetic connections between the two languages so that Japanese becomes recognizable to the English speaker. Her merging of Japanese and English also inscribes and legitimizes a unique, Japanese-Canadian identity. Arnold Davidson argues this point in *Writing Against the Silence: Joy Kogawa's Obasan,* in which he studies Kogawa's fluid transitions between English and Japanese in ways that make the latter accessible. He writes, for example, that her title, *Obasan*, is at once both English and Japanese, as "Obasan" is the Japanese word for "aunt," but Kogawa does not use "kanji," "hirangana" or "katagana" to write the word in the indigenous Japanese tradition. By using the letters of the English alphabet to write Japanese words, Kogawa effectively merges the two languages in order to privilege a heterogeneous Canadian identity. As Davidson writes, "The semantic interconnections of *obasan* and *aunt* (similarity and difference in a nutshell) like the merging of biblical and Buddhist implications in the two epigraphs, demonstrate the interplay of different cultural contexts that runs through *Obasan*" (29). Kogawa's use of Japanese words and phrases, written in the English language, complicate the perceived inherent differences between Japanese and Canadian - by merging the languages in the text, she makes the Canadian text a place in which heterogeneity is embraced.

Kogawa also appropriates Japanese and English in order to show the connectivity between both languages, and make Japanese recognizable to the English reader. The traditional Japanese orthography would not allow English readers to access these words. This recognizability challenges Canadian perceptions that one must speak English in order to belong in the nation. Davidson, further, writes that Kogawa deepens the link between English and Japanese by using their words interchangeably, and in ways that make the translation of Japanese to Canadian seamless. In other words, Kogawa's use of Japanese words naturally fits within her mostly English text, and the words she uses can be easily understood by English readers without the need for translation. The interchangeable use of "aunt" and "obasan" is an example of this - On page 3, she explains "From both Obasan and Uncle I have learned that speech often hides like an animal in a storm". Here, Kogawa simply replaces the common English phrase "Aunt and Uncle" with "Obasan and Uncle". The meaning of the word "Obasan" is clear within its English context in this phrase, and makes the transitions between English and Japanese fluid and almost unnoticeable. Davidson also focuses on a compelling example in the beginning of the text, wherein Naomi voices her first words of the text: "Nothing changes ne" (1). "*Ne*," Davidson explains,

is a Japanese sentence marker roughly analogous to *ka,* which, at the end of any sentence, turns the preceding statement into a question. But *ne* does not really question the truth of the statement it follows; instead, it solicits the listener's agreement with that statement by posing a question and already implicitly answered in the affirmative. The nearest English equivalent of *ne* is the Canadian *eh*, as in 'you agree with me, eh?'. In a small touch of brilliance, the first Japanese word in the novel is not translated nor, especially for Canadian readers, need it be (29).

This further breaks down the perceived inherent difference between the two cultures, and two languages. Kogawa linguistically constructs her text based around the "same-ness" between languages, and in doing so presents a space in which Canadian-ness can be both English and Japanese. Her use of the Japanese "ne" in the space of the quintessentially "Canadian" word "eh" seamlessly merges the nuances of both languages and connects a Canadian linguistic "quirk" with its counterpart in Japanese; drawing a unique cultural connection between the two.

In *Obasan*, then, Kogawa skilfully disrupts language boundaries by giving Japanese a place in the Canadian imaginary as well as integrating it with English. These approaches, taken together, are somewhat conflicting in the way that one disrupts the "bilingual" nature of Canadian language and belonging, and other advocates for a merging of Japanese with dominant language in order to open a space where community and connectedness is embraced. Kogawa's use of Japanese therefore simultaneously stands out in resistance to dominant ideas that Canadian citizenship is dependent on English or French fluency, and acts as a visible bridge between normative languages and "other-ness." This dual approach is effective in both challenging the exclusionary bilingualism in Canada and advocating for a more open and heterogeneous look at the place of language and culture in the nation. Her breaking from normative linguistic structures and boundaries challenges notions that English or French speakers are the only ones who belong in Canada, and on a more broad scale, disrupts practices of historical narrative making that privilege specific voices and silence the histories of others.

Evidently, in her linguistic style and narrative content, Kogawa challenges the ideologies that create, maintain and legitimize constructions of citizenship and "other-ness" in Canada. I argue that, pushing further, Kogawa directly implicates Canadian readers in these ideologies; forcing them to acknowledge their own complicities in the structures that serve to maintain a homogenous national identity in Canada. In her immediate framing of the protagonist as a teacher, Kogawa is implicating readers in the pedagogical space to take note of their own role in learning from the text. Naomi, as a teacher, has something to teach them, and her voice should be valued as a person of authority. This also draws attention to the pedagogical influence that texts have on readers, and the potential for change that *Obasan* can offer. Kogawa's framing of the text's protagonist in this way calls the reader to undertake the role of a learner when approaching this text.

Naomi, at the beginning of the narrative, describes her interactions with other Canadians with frustration. She states that "Where do you come from?" is the "one sure-fire question" that she will inevitably hear from strangers who meet her. "People assume when they meet me," Kogawa writes, "that I'm a foreigner" (7). Naomi, on a date with a man in her small town, gets asked this frustrating question: "'Where do you come from?' he asked, as we sat down at a small table in a corner. [...] 'How do you mean?' 'How long have you been in this country?' 'I was born here.' 'Oh,' he said, and grinned. 'And your parents?'" (7). Though it seems reasonable to assume that the man in this exchange means well, his questions are a clear example of the implicit "othering" that takes place daily for Naomi, as she is consistently assumed to not have been born in Canada. When he is told that Naomi, in fact, was born in Canada, he shifts his assumption of "foreign-ness" to her parents, unable to believe that she is "truly" Canadian. This exchange shows the extent to which these kinds of assumptions and questions place racialized subjects in a perpetual state of "other-ness" from the Canadian nation.

Kogawa returns to this later in the novel: "The comments are so incessant and always so well-intentioned. How long have you been in this country? Do you like our country? You speak such good English. Do you run a cafe? My daughter has a darling Japanese friend. Have you ever been back to Japan?" (247). Such questions de-legitimize or de-naturalize racialized subjects' belonging in the nation. They also create and maintain the equalling of "immigrant or "foreigner" and "non-white", and naturalize the belonging of white citizens to the nation, even if many white citizens are immigrants themselves, or descendants of immigrants. "These are icebreaker questions," concludes Kogawa, "that create an awareness of ice" (247). Motivating these statements later in the text is another example of normalized racism, in which the well-meaning farmer Mr. Baker acknowledges the ways that the Canadian government practiced racism against its subjects. "'It was a terrible business'," he states to Naomi, "'what we did to our Japanese,' Mr. Barker says" (247). Though the acknowledgement of wrongdoing is well meaning, Mr. Barker's use of the possessive "our" when referring to Japanese Canadians indicates the colonial ideology that pervades Canadian society today. Referring to Japanese Canadians with such language objectifies them, making them possessions of the nation to be manipulated or "protected" as seen fit. Such ideology justifies the moving of Japanese Canadians into internment camps, their repatriation to their "home" countries for their "own good," and the "protection" of their rights following the war. Kogawa describes this kind of ideology as patronizing and unwanted; immigrant subjects are members of Canada, and not foreign "wards" of a benevolent state. This is the same ideology that justified colonial projects that sought to "civilize" Indigenous peoples, that paints immigrants and Indigenous peoples as living off the benefits given to them by the government, and that rationalized the "democratic" immigration reform report of 1994, in which immigrants' lives became objects to be manipulated for the benefit of the nation.

A final, compelling example of normalized racism in Canada is taken from a newspaper clipping found by Naomi in Aunt Emily's notes: "The newspaper clipping has a photograph of one family, all smiles, standing around a pile of beets. The caption reads: 'Grinning and Happy'" (213). The article goes on to state that Japanese "evacuees" were the "best beet workers" in Alberta, as they helped to produce thousands more tonnes of beets in 1945 than in the previous year. The article quotes a Mr. Phil Baker, the president of the Alberta Sugar Beet Grower's Association, who explains that "Japanese evacuees worked 19,500 acres of beets and German prisoners of war worked 5,000 acres. [...] Some of the heaviest beet yields last year came from farms employing Japanese evacuees. Generally speaking, Japanese evacuees have developed into the most efficient beet workers ..." (213). This article blatantly fails to acknowledge that these Japanese "workers" and "evacuees" are actually Canadian citizens removed from their homes, made to live in sanctioned areas, and *forced* to work for white farmers for minimal, if any, pay. Forced labour and the violent removal of freedom evoke another word: slavery. Interestingly, the article describes German workers as "prisoners of war," acknowledging that they have had their freedom taken from them, and implying that this work is not the norm for Germans or German Canadian citizens. Japanese workers, however, are called "evacuees," a superficially less harsh word than "prisoner of war." The language used in the article seems to normalize the Japanese Canadians' work in the beet fields, ignoring the voices of Japanese Canadians themselves who were *forced* to enter these positions under slave-like conditions.

The newspaper's apparent praise of the Japanese Canadians' hard work, and its depiction of smiling, happy workers, deny the nation's role in removing them from their former livelihoods and forcing them to work so that white farmers like Phil Baker can reap the benefits. Phil Baker, praising the Japanese workers, seems well meaning, but he benefits from a system in which Japanese Canadians are objectified and exploited as "others" in the nation. The ethical treatment of Japanese Canadians is not questioned in the article, but is clear to the reader, given the plight of Naomi and her family, who were forced to live and work on a farm similar to that described here. Readers of the newspaper article are exposed to the danger of systemic, state-sanctioned racism: it becomes normalized and justified. Kogawa further draws critical attention to the economic systems that benefit "Canadians" through the objectification of its racialized subjects when she describes that her Uncle, visiting the coulee, "could be Chief Sitting Bull squatting here. He has the same prairie-baked skin, the deep brown furrows like dry river beds creasing his cheeks. All he needs is a feather headdress, and he would be perfect for a picture postcard - 'Indian Chief from Canadian Prairie' - souvenir of Alberta, made in Japan" (2). Here, Kogawa draws the first of her multiple connections between Japanese Canadians and Indigenous peoples in Canada, for the ways that they are objectified and marginalized in the Canadian imaginary. Here, again, Kogawa exposes the problematic practices of exploitation that, when accepted without question, perpetuate a system in which privileged individuals benefit economically- the "Indian" as an object achieves an idealized narrative of Canadian history, and the Japanese subject is exploited for cheap labour. Kogawa, evidently, calls readers to think critically about the ways racism, objectification and exploitation are framed as normal and legitimate in Canadian history. She, further, disrupts the systems of privilege that silence "alternate" histories, and constitute racialized citizens as "others" in the Canadian imaginary.

**Bearing Witness to Silent Testimony: Apprehending Unspoken Traumas in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan***

Drawing readers' attention to silenced histories in Canada allows Kogawa to facilitate a breakage in dominant narratives of Canadian history. Here, I would like to return to Dipesh Chakrabarty's notion of "subaltern pasts" (see Chapter 2) for the ways that they may offer breakages in meta-narratives of history and estrange one from their own preconceived senses of Truth in the historical record. According to Chakrabarty, subaltern pasts are those which cannot be included within normative linguistic boundaries of historical narrative and this creates gaps in these narratives that, when acknowledged, create a breakage. Similar to Campbell's writing that is permeated with the silenced, subaltern pasts of Indigenous peoples, I argue that Kogawa's focus on the functions and implications of silences in *Obasan* provides opportunities for readers to apprehend "subaltern pasts" through the gaps that silences represent. Bearing witness to these silences can allow readers to apprehend the existence of those traumas that are silenced as a result of their victims' designation as "other" in the Canadian imaginary.

Kogawa's text is framed by silence. The text's epigraph explains that the text will grapple with a silence that cannot, and will not, speak. A silence that cannot speak is one that, I suggest, represents Chakrabarty's idea of "subaltern pasts"- a voice or story that *cannot* be told is one that presumably exists outside of language and cannot be expressed within its limits. A silence that will not speak, similarly, is one that I perceive as intentionally existing outside of normative language. When normative boundaries of knowledge and language privilege a particular worldview, silence can be a resistive tool. In her text, Kogawa represents and employs both kinds of silences. These silences, Kogawa makes clear to the reader throughout the text, cannot be ignored.

*Obasan* opens with Naomi and her Uncle's yearly visit to the coulee, a stretch of prairie land, prior to his death. In her description of the coulee, Kogawa returns to her focus on the ways that landscapes house memories, histories and lives: "From the beginning of time, the grass along this stretch of prairie has not been cut. About a mile east is a spot which was once an Indian buffalo jump, a high steep cliff where the buffalo were stampeded and fell to their deaths. All the bones are still there, some sticking right out of the side of the fresh landslide" (2). Kogawa's acknowledgement, in this passage, of the unspoken histories that exist in the land is important for the way that it calls us to acknowledge those histories. Her imagery of dead buffalo bones embedded within the land, slightly visible, provokes a critical look into the histories that led to the almost-extinction of buffalo, and the reasons for which the "Indian buffalo jump" was no longer in use. This draws attention to unspoken colonial histories that erased Indigenous hunting traditions, as colonial settlers over-hunted the buffalo so that the traditional Indigenous custom and essential source of food was depleted. This, of course, forced assimilation and starved Indigenous populations into signing land treaties. Therefore it also calls readers to bear witness to the dispossession of Indigenous land during colonial projects. Kogawa points us to the reality that many spaces today are built on land that harbours histories of colonial violence.

Kogawa takes another look at the ways landscapes can house silenced histories when she and her family revisit Slocan, the town wherein they were interned during the Second World War, after twenty years. Naomi reflects, "I drove through what was left of some of the ghost towns, filled and emptied once by prospectors, filled and emptied a second time by the Japanese Canadians. The first ghosts were still there, the miners, people of the woods, their white bones deep beneath the pine-needle floor, their flesh turned to earth, turned to air. Their buildings- hotels, abandoned mines, log cabins- still stood marking their stay" (125). Again, Kogawa creates stark imagery of bones built into the land, and describes the traces of lives that are preserved in the land. The first ghosts are there, she explains, but she finds the traces of the second wave- of interned Japanese Canadians- have been eliminated. "Not a mark was left," she writes, "All our huts had been removed long before and the forest had returned to take over the clearings" (125). By contrasting her statements about the visible remains of the first inhabitants of Slocan with the seemingly non-existent lives of Japanese Canadians who were sent there afterward, Kogawa indicates that the landscape is also ridden with silenced histories, and can be manipulated in order to actively silence inconvenient histories. Literature like *Obasan* then offers an avenue through which we can recognize that a "silencing" has taken place in the landscape, and bear witness to the lives that are tied up with Slocan regardless of the visibility of their remains.

The connection that Kogawa stresses between landscapes and silenced histories, and the ways that the physical land can facilitate the ability to bear witness to such silences, calls readers to recognize their own connectedness with landscapes, and the lives they are therefore connected with through the sharing of these spaces. Bearing witness to visible or silenced traces of histories, lives and traumas on and within Canadian soil involves an understanding that we are all connected by our lives, sustained by Canadian land, and belong in Canada because of our connection to that land. By acknowledging and embracing land as a shared space that connects lives outside of time, normative ideas of the progression of history- which silence dissenting voices- are disrupted. Kogawa's representation of silences through landscape offers readers the possibility to bear witness to an alternate Canadian history.

In *Obasan,* Kogawa exposes the silences surrounding Japanese Canadian experiences of marginalization and systemic racism. Though these traumas cannot always be voiced, as readers see in the title character herself, who is purposefully silent about her experiences, bearing witness to the existence of a silence- the existence of a "gap" in the historical narrative- allows readers to apprehend subaltern pasts and recognize alternate histories. Through Aunt Emily's series of letters and news clippings, Kogawa presents the reader with the "official" Canadian narrative of Japanese dispossession and internment and contrasts it with Aunt Emily's narrative, which exposes the hypocrisy of the government. For example, a newspaper clipping titled "Bar Japs for Another Year from Going Back to B.C." details the debate between policy makers as to whether to maintain the ban on Japanese Canadian citizens' return to the West coast. The article cites the winning side, those against the return: "'As long as I have breath in my body'," states Liberal Tom Reid, "'I will keep fighting in this House of Commons to see that the heritage which belongs to Canadians should be returned to the white people'" (218). Reid blatantly states that Canadian "heritage" is white- any other histories do not belong in the Canadian imaginary. Further, the article cites Major General G.R. Pearkes, who "suggested there would be 'crimes of revenge' if the exiles were permitted to return home now. In war, he said, the innocent suffer with the guilty; there was still hatred among the white people of B.C., and he thought the government was wise in giving the old sores another year to heal" (218-9). Not only does Pearkes fail to acknowledge that Japanese Canadian citizens were the true, and current, victims of the events in B.C., but he re-writes the historical record to reflect the notion that white citizens were the ones harmed, and needed to "heal" from the events. Such statements silence the traumas of Japanese Canadian citizens who were forced from their homes, made to live in internment camps, and exploited for labour for the unfounded, racially motivated interests of the state. Kogawa therefore shows the way that the Canadian discursive world is made of privileged voices, and these voices silence the traumas of "others" in their construction of a flawed historical narrative.

I argue that Kogawa compels us as readers to bear witness to the silenced traumas of Japanese Canadians. Bearing witness to silences, or acknowledging practices of silencing that leave gaps in the historical narrative, involves apprehending that which is outside of normative boundaries of knowledge. Understanding this witnessing requires a return to Kelly Oliver, who states that it is imperative for one to witness what is beyond their normative schemas of recognizability. According to Oliver, one is obligated to bear witness and respond to the testimony of "others", as this opens the possibility to rethink notions of subjectivity and community. She writes, "We are obligated to respond to what is beyond our comprehension, beyond recognition, because ethics is possible only beyond recognition" (106). That is, as readers it is imperative to apprehend the testimonies of those designated as "others", which is often beyond boundaries of language, subjectivity and historical record. Our ethical response as readers then lies in an engagement as witnesses with Kogawa's written and unwritten testimony. This is what Kogawa offers readers in *Obasan*. Therefore, to apprehend the "subaltern pasts" of Japanese Canadians and others, readers must acknowledge the silenced voices in the breakages presented by Kogawa in the text.

Perhaps there is no more compelling example of Kogawa's invitation to readers to bear witness to silenced traumas than when Naomi discovers the truth about her mother's disappearance. She writes, "It was sent, Sensei says, from somewhere in Nagasaki. There was no return address" (258). These two sentences, which finally reveal the fate of Naomi's mother, form one of the only mentions of the devastating impact the war had on Japanese subjects outside of Canada. The importance of this excerpt is immense for the way that it represents a silence that cannot speak, and yet it simultaneously exposes one of the most terrifying effects of state-sanctioned racism in history. The dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki may be the most literal example of erasing voices and lives from the historical record; they achieved complete annihilation of the Japanese towns they were dropped on. Kogawa alludes to this silencing when she states twice that the origin of the letter is unknown, similar to the unknown existence of the Kato family members in Japan. The traumas of many of the victims of these attacks are also rendered unknown, in the complete destruction that the bomb left. For many victims, only silence remains, and a gap in the historical record holds the subaltern histories of these victims that cannot be voiced.

Kogawa's choice to include Nagasaki in the text is a direct appeal to readers to understand the implications of state racism on a world scale. Nagasaki was the second of the two cities on which the United States dropped atomic bombs, and has been widely criticized as being unnecessary to the war effort. When the devastating effects of the first bomb were known, one must question the logic that went into dropping a *second*, largely unnecessary bomb on a city of innocent people. Such excessive violence, I argue that Kogawa suggests, is a symptom of the state-sanctioned racism that constitutes Japanese subjects as objects to be exploited. Readers are therefore called to simultaneously bear witness to the ultimate example of silenced trauma, and recognize their own complicity in systems of privilege that could have violent, devastating consequences. This is also a quintessential example of the way that *Obasan* shows the critical necessity of bearing witness to silences.

For Arnold Davidson, Kogawa not only inscribes silences into her text, but breaks silences that had been maintained by a Canadian historical record that privileged history from a singular perspective. In analyzing the text's epigraph, Davidson argues that "it is against this silence that the novel must be told, must become its own 'reply'" (27). Indeed, the text ends with Naomi's admittance that stories must be told and cannot remain silent, as Obasan herself does throughout the text. Naomi's attempts to remain silent about her sexual abuse as a child, her experiences during internment and her struggles as a racialized subject in Alberta following the war are abandoned at the end of the text. Kogawa writes, "Gentle Mother, we were lost together in our silences. Our wordlessness was our mutual destruction" (267). Davidson, in analyzing the final conclusions made by Naomi against remaining silent, writes, "just as silence did not work for Naomi's mother and her own mother (note the second letter) it did not work for her and Naomi (as the whole novel demonstrates). Naomi, in fact, can now connect her silence regarding the sexual abuse she suffered with her mother's silence after the bomb" (74). Intergenerational silence is finally reconciled, Davidson argues,, with the ultimate revelation at the end of the text of the letters sent within the family. Goellnicht, too, examines the end of the text as an ultimate breaking from silence. The language describing Naomi's final return to the coulee evokes that of the poetic epigraph that began the text: "water and stone dancing [...] a quiet ballet, soundless as breath" is paralleled with "the word is stone [...] seeking an underground stream" (i). Therefore, Goellnicht brilliantly connects, with "Naomi's culminating epiphany [...] the 'stone' of silence and the 'stream' of language unite, [... bringing] us full circle [back] to the prose poem that opens the novel" (297). Ultimately, both critics argue, the silence is broken.

"Breaking the silence" would, presumably, imply that something previously ignored or suppressed is voiced. However, much of my own argument has centered on the transformative possibilities of silences *as silences*, to be witnessed by readers. Many of the silences Kogawa presents readers with remain silent, but by representing these silences through her writing, Kogawa is actually breaking that silence. In other words, drawing attention to the fact that there *are* silences, and refusing to let her readers ignore these silences by making silence *the* central theme of the text, breaks a silence that fails to acknowledge the existence of these gaps altogether. Kogawa seems to acknowledge this in the final pages of the text when she writes, "it is as if I am back with Uncle again, listening and listening to the silent earth and the silent sky as I have done all my life. I close my eyes. Mother. I am listening. Assist me to hear you. Silent Mother, you do not speak or write. You do not reach through the night to enter morning, but remain in the voicelessness. From the extremity of much dying, the only sound that reaches me now is the sigh of your remembered breath, *a wordless word*" (264-5, emphasis added). Kogawa, too, breaks silences about the practices of silencing in historical record-making, and government legislation. By forcing readers to acknowledge these practices, Kogawa inspires a reflection on current Canadian society and the ways that immigrant voices are silenced in their racially-motivated, normalized constitution as "others" in the nation.

Indeed, the impact of Kogawa's text in the Canadian imaginary is tangible. Studies cited in my first chapter by Sarah Corse and Paul Martin both found that *Obasan* was one of the most commonly taught texts in Canadian curricula. Davidson's text also speaks of the influence Kogawa's work has had on Canadian policy, including the 1988 government apology for Japanese Canadian internment, during which excerpts from *Obasan* were read. The Vancouver home of Kogawa's family is now a National Historic Site, and Kogawa herself received the Order of Canada in 1986. Evidently, breaking the silence on her own story sparked a critical reflection on Canada's racist practices against her people.

Though the transformative potential of Kogawa's writing is clear, my look at Thobani's chapter on more contemporary Canadian immigration policies, sentiments, and legislation indicates that the same normalized racism that constituted Japanese Canadians as perpetual foreigners in the nation pervades Canada now. The Immigration Policy review and Social Security Review's official statements are proof of this, as they point to both public and governmental statements that place immigrant subjects as "non-citizens", undeserving of the same benefits to social security as "true" Canadians and posing a threat, in their racial and cultural diversity, to the overall image of Canada. Therefore, Kogawa's call to bear witness to the silenced traumas resulting from normalized racism and her implication of readers in the structures that continue to marginalize and exploit racialized Canadian subjects are still relevant.

**Chapter 4 - Pedagogical Implications for Teaching and Studying 'Other' Histories in Memoir**

How are TransCanadian histories carried forward? How does change happen?

(Diana Brydon, "Cross-Talk, Postcolonial Pedagogy, and Transnational Literacy" 1).

I would like to return, in this final chapter, to the anecdote I shared in my introduction that detailed my struggle, as a first-time teacher, to teach students from a non-Eurocentric perspective. I learned that one of the most productive ways to work *against* problematic white, European privilege in the classroom is to expose the ways that it operates within that space, and in students' lives. I saw this in the first lesson I gave as part of the history unit that I described. I posted Lorne Kidd Smith's oil painting depiction of the legend of Laura Secord informing the British army and its allies, of an impending American attack. The painting, titled "Laura Secord Warning Colonel Fitzgibbon", is included in the collection of Library and Archives Canada, making it an "officially" sanctioned image representing Canadian history. Smith's image details Laura Secord, dressed in white, addressing three traditionally dressed British soldiers. Two other British soldiers are on the side of the image, eyes toward Secord and the soldiers in the middle of the image. In the back of the painting, by the door, is an Indigenous man. His traditional dress and headdress gives the impression that he is a traditional "Chief" and, though none of the British attention is directed toward him, he looks calmly toward the viewer of the image. His compelling gaze toward the viewer of the painting is one that seems to call for a meeting of eyes in recognition of his presence. As I reflect on this image almost two years later, this gaze is one that sticks with me as a representation of the responsibility held by viewers of art and readers of literature to acknowledge this shared gaze, and the politics surrounding it.

I asked my students, after giving them time to view and process the image, what their thoughts about it were. What followed was an incredibly rewarding conversation between myself and my students on our preconceptions about historical events based on such images. I asked the students varying questions about the image itself, such as "Based on this image, who are the heroes?," "Who is in charge here?," and "Why might it be important for us to consider who painted the image?" In our conversations, the students replied that the British soldiers in uniform are clearly in charge, that Laura Secord was the hero, and that they felt these individuals were the most important to our history. I then asked students to tell me what they thought about the Indigenous man that was depicted in the background of the image, and specifically to think about why they did not mention him when asked who the important subjects in the image were. Our conversation turned to bias in historical record making, and the ways that this has since influenced our perceptions of Indigenous peoples in Canada. An image that depicts an unequal power relationship of foregrounded British soldiers with Indigenous leaders in the background, for example, could contribute to current student perceptions of the inferiority of Indigenous subjects, or the normalization of white privilege, in Canada.

At the end of my history unit, I had my students arrange themselves across the classroom in a spectrum that indicated their stance on which side was the victor in the war. One of my students noted that though he felt that there was no real winner in the war of 1812, the Indigenous peoples involved were the losers: they were essential to the war efforts of both sides, but were left out of post-war land negotiations leading to the creation of reserves. This statement proved to me the essential role that education must play in inspiring real change in systems that privilege white subjects, and silence others.

This kind of critical thinking in education can help students understand their own positions within these systems and to critically consider how they influence, and are influenced by, colonial ideologies and structures of privilege. In my time as a teaching assistant for a first year English class at McMaster University, I had the pleasure of teaching *Obasan* in my tutorials for Dr. Roger Hyman's English 1AA3. In both of my tutorials, I gave my students three passages of normalized racism in Canada and asked them to take some time to think about the implications of each example in small groups. The discussion that was generated in each of these classes was extremely valuable, as many students observed that Kogawa's writing had inspired them to look at their own practices and understand the ways that they see legitimized racism and "othering" in their own lives. Some students admitted to asking about the origins of people of visible racial difference, such as "What are you?" or "Where are you from?" Others understood that the ways they were consuming media perpetuated an "us" and "them" mentality. Many students, in conversation, felt that it was their responsibility to understand their own contributions to normalized racism in Canada.

The productive possibilities opened up by introducing memoirs such as Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* into the Canadian classroom as ways of voicing the often silenced stories of particular groups in Canada is the focus of this concluding chapter. In my own experiences, voices such as Kogawa’s and Campbell's can open the door for students to ask, and start to answer, important questions about the ways colonial legacies that privilege white subjects operate in Canada. By considering ways that a teacher, or institution, might approach curricular structures that give marginalized voices a place in Canadian education, I argue that it is essential for the pedagogical space to foster a more inclusive and expansive view of Canadian-ness. As Diana Brydon asks in "Cross-Talk, Postcolonial Pedagogy, and Transnational Literacy", "How are TransCanadian histories carried forward? How does change happen?" (1). This concluding chapter suggests that histories are carried forward by generations of teachers and students who learn, record and teach them, and as a result they are responsible for bearing witness to the silenced histories that exist in Canada. Bearing witness to memories deemed "forgettable" in a national context opens the possibility of rethinking notions of "Canadian" history and identity. It also allows students to recognize that they are responsible for the potential future change that is needed in Canada, and that, as Canadian citizens, they are connected to the silenced histories that exist in and through the landscape.

First, I will consider the ways that teachers and students might approach the classroom space as a community of learners that are dedicated to fostering a multicultural, inclusive nation. Drawing from theorists including bell hooks and Cynthia Sugars, I suggest ways that the classroom can be a space in which barriers are challenged and even broken. Memoirs like *Obasan* and *Halfbreed*, in particular, I argue, can provide an avenue through which to break from preconceived certainties that privilege colonial knowledge or ideology. I will discuss the ways to conceptualize a student/reader's role as witnesses to the silenced traumas in Kogawa and Campbell's texts. I will also consider the politics and possibilities present when readers step into the role of witnesses. Finally, I will explore how the reader as witness may *respond* to the calls of Kogawa and Campbell, and other racialized writers, in an ethical way: one that does not *give* voice to subaltern subjects but embraces and acknowledges the silences that surround their traumas in order to engage in productive dialogue with the subaltern, against subalternity. In doing so, perhaps a recognition of the nuanced ways lives are entangled with one another, and an embracing of alternate ways of knowing and being, can be realizable, making the alignment with subalternity an attainable possibility for teachers and students.

**Rethinking Curricular and Classroom Approaches**

Multiculturalism compels educators to recognize the narrow boundaries that have shaped the way knowledge is shared in the classroom. It forces us all to recognize our complicity in accepting and perpetuating biases of any kind. Students are eager to break through barriers to knowing. They are willing to surrender to the wonder of re-learning and learning ways that go against the grain. When we, as educators, allow our pedagogy to be radically changed by our recognition of a multicultural world, we can give students the education they desire and deserve. We can teach in ways that transform consciousness, creating a climate of free expression that is the essence of a truly liberatory liberal arts education

(bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress* 44).

In *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom,* bell hooks writes that there is a need to break from old ways of thinking and ideologies in order for there to be a transformation in teaching strategy and content in the classroom (29).A revolution in the ways that education is approached is essential to change the processes that perpetuate colonial ideologies which privilege white Canadian subjects. Chapter One discusses how the elementary, secondary and post-secondary curricula are problematic in the ways that they approach the teaching of multicultural perspectives and histories. Often, as Paul Martin and Sarah Corse study, the voices of multicultural or non-white subjects are placed in niche positions within the curriculum: they are framed as being additions to true "Canadian" voices rather than an equal part of the nation. bell hooks, speaking from her experience in the academy, writes that texts by racialized women are often victim to "tokenism," as they are lumped to the end of a course or occupy a space alongside white writers wherein the racial experience of that author is not acknowledged or taught. "Clearly," hooks writes, "such pedagogy is not an interrogation of the biases conventional canons (if not all canons) establish, but yet another form of tokenism" (39).

Further, from my experience, the Ontario history curriculum includes minimal expectations that a teacher instruct students about the histories of non-European subjects in Canada.[[39]](#footnote-39) The Language (1-8) and English (9-12) curricula describing the elementary and secondary language units in schools use the phrase "different cultures" often in their language. A common phrase used in the curriculum's front matter, which gives an overview of teaching goals and overarching themes within the program, is "Reading activities should expose students to materials that reflect the diversity of Canadian and world cultures, including those of Aboriginal peoples" (5). This repeated phrase in the curriculum indicates that Aboriginal cultures are separate from Canadian cultures, as they are placed as an afterthought; separate from what the curriculum calls "Canadian" cultures. Teaching Indigenous and "world" cultures, then, is automatically framed in Ontario curricula as separate from Canadian culture. This, to me, does not appear to promote a notion that Canadian-ness includes a multiplicity of different cultures and voices. Also, though the curriculum indicates these “diversity” of voices should be taught, they are not posited as being part of Canada. That being said, I also hesitate to inscribe the term "Canadian literature" upon the work of authors who identify as being Indigenous. As Laurie Kruk writes in "'Outsiders' and 'Insiders': Teaching Native/Canadian Literature as a Meeting Place," colonial pasts cannot allow for imposing the title "Canadian" on Indigenous writers without a self-reflexive practice that acknowledges where we, as readers, stand in the racial structures of "us" and "them" that are entrenched in Canadian society (304). When we are aware of the processes of "othering" that affect our own reading of the text, and the experiences of the author, we may begin to understand the place of Indigenous writing within "Canadian" literature.

There is a need for a rethinking when it comes to the way that literatures and histories are taught in Canadian schools at many levels. Rather than separating the teaching of "different cultures" from Canadian studies, teachers should focus on the ways that Canadian-ness encompasses these multiple voices. In *Teaching to Transgress,* bell hooks writes of the immense possibilities existing within the school system when students are taught to break from the boundaries which define them. Drawing from her own professional experience as an academic of many disciplines, she recounts her struggle to navigate her own place within a post-secondary institution that so concretely divided black studies from white-centered feminist studies (6). She learned that true freedom in education means to transgress these boundaries in order to foster critical thinking in a trans-disciplinary way, and also to draw attention to the pedagogical practices that limit studies themselves (12). I see a similar problem in the ways Canadian history and literature are framed as a single entity. Instead, a cross-cultural and nuanced approach that acknowledges the intersections between experiences of nationality, race, gender, class, and more are embraced. In short, intersectionality offers freedom to explore many experiences of Canadian-ness.

Taking an intersectional and multicultural approach to pedagogy also allows the teacher and student to critically reflect on the ways that educational practices operate to inscribe boundaries of identity and privilege in Canada. Similar to hooks's approach to a pedagogy dedicated to disrupting and transgressing boundaries, Diana Brydon writes of the essential need for cross-cultural pedagogy in Canada in her essay "Cross-Talk: Postcolonial Pedagogy and Transnational Literacy." She writes that in her classroom communities, it is a goal for her to "destabilize" accepted norms, knowledge, and binaries of "learning and unlearning". This is what Brydon calls "Cross-Talk": moments when the normative boundaries of knowledge, space, and dialogue are broken in order to allow the merging of different voices in a productive re-learning. This strategy enables hooks' freedom of education: the classroom becomes a space wherein boundaries of ideology and knowledge are crossed in order to apprehend the view and experiences of an "other".

As hooks describes, "Expanding beyond boundaries, it has made it possible for me to imagine and enact pedagogical practices that engage directly [...] the concern for interrogating biases in curricula that reinscribe systems of domination" (10). Most importantly, this approach does not seek to distinguish between theoretical approaches to education, nor does it exclude particular perspectives from places in the classroom. For example, Canadian history should be approached with an anti-colonial lens, but can also be integrated with a feminist pedagogy that looks at specific Indigenous women's exploitation or with a pedagogy of historical literacy that critically examines historical sources for bias. Integrating multiple cultures and perspectives into the "Canadian" classroom breaks these boundaries by privileging all voices within that space; moving from an ideology that gives academic legitimacy to white, English speaking authors. Texts like Campbell’s and Kogawa's are useful in a classroom setting, because they challenge preconceived knowledges about nationality, history, subjectivity and language. Hearing the voices of Kogawa and Campbell integrated into the "cross-talk" between students allows for students to break their own limiting perceptions and practice freeing, "transnational" literacy.

Brydon and hooks's writing also speaks of the way that critical pedagogy requires students to situate themselves within the systems that silence voices and privilege white subjects on a national and global scale. Understanding one's own role in Canadian systems which perpetuate colonial ideologies was an important strategy for me as a teacher, as this self awareness was often the first step in helping students break from preconceived certainties. Asking students to first identify their own biases or perspectives, then grouping them together to compare differing and similar perspectives, biases and backgrounds before beginning a unit can be valuable in facilitating this awareness of one's own position in a classroom community. Integrating texts into the classroom that draw attention to Canadian racism, such as *Obasan* and *Halfbreed,* is an effective way to facilitate students' self reflection on a wider scale. hooks writes that teachers must inscribe this self awareness for students, as in order for a multicultural classroom to be fully embraced it is "crucial that 'whiteness' be studied, understood, discussed- so that everyone learns that affirmation of multiculturalism, and an unbiased inclusive perspective, can and should be present whether or not people of colour are present" (43). Whiteness cannot be considered the norm against which "other" races are distinguished. When whiteness is studied as a race itself, students are forced to reflect on the ways racial privilege functions in their own lives, and can understand the need for a multicultural and inclusive perspective that combats such privilege. *Obasan* and *Halfbreed* are both memoirs that call critical attention and awareness to whiteness and white privilege in Canada, and introducing them into the classroom as the basis for creating such conversations can allow for transnational literacy.

Pushes for reform in Canadian education are not new, particularly when it comes to Indigenous histories in Canada and their legacies today. Based on recommendations by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, British Columbia will now be integrating more focus on Indigenous histories, particularly those of residential schools, in their Canadian history curricula. This implies an acknowledgement of the fact that excluding these histories from the curriculum is an implicit silencing of those voices, or a privileging of non-Indigenous perspectives of the event. This is, undoubtedly, a fantastic step toward an acknowledgement of previously silenced or manipulated histories in Canada. However, I am still troubled by the way that including Indigenous voices in the history curriculum assumes that these voices exist in the *past*; they are part of a history of Canada that is no longer representative of Canada's present. This implication is problematic, as it does not give the Indigenous voice a place in current Canadian conversations. This implies that Indigeneity lacks futurity; as it is posited only in the past, it is something that current Canadians must learn from rather than learn to work with. Including a text like *Halfbreed* in the Canadian classroom, particularly in respect to Campbell's call at the end to advocate for Indigenous rights, disrupts the notion that Indigeneity exists only in the past. Campbell's voice gives a clear place for the Indigenous subject in Canada and shows readers how Indigenous peoples deserve to be heard in current society. Her voice also opens the door to discussions of the Indigenous subject's position in Canada today, particularly in respect to the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Memoir can show the ways that these "dark histories" pervade the present, and the colonial ideologies have legacies in systems in Canada today.

In her introduction to *Home-Work: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy and Canadian Literature*, Cynthia Sugars writes that a teacher in the postcolonial classroom should consider the performative practice of "post-colonizing." This is reminiscent of hooks's idea that teaching is a performative act that involves the positioning of the teacher and students in reciprocal relationships that demonstrate the interplay of voices and perspectives in a postcolonial space (11). Post-colonizing in the classroom, for Sugars,

represents an attempt at an awareness of one's positioning vis-a-vis the national (and possibly even postcolonial) pedagogical imperative, and further attempt to interrogate it in various ways. This might occur on a practical level in terms of one's approach to a text in the literature classroom, or as a reassessment of historical and cultural metanarratives, or as a re-evaluation of critical responsibility within national and global contexts, or even as a sense of the ways Canadian culture is interpellated by intranational and international communities more broadly. (15)

Campbell and Kogawa offer each of these practical examples of post-colonizing in the classroom, showing the value of integrating memoirs that give alternate "histories" and voices within the Canadian classroom. Sugars's argument indicates the value of this literature in the classroom, as it can allow students to broaden their notions of Canadian identity and belonging to embrace a multiplicity of cultures and races. Memoirs like those of Kogawa and Campbell need to be part of a holistic look at the Canadian experience in education, as they require students and teachers to acknowledge a multiplicity of voices and histories that are often silenced by the boundaries that place them outside of conventional Canadian studies. They can, in short, allow for Sugars's postcolonizing education in the classroom.

The classroom also needs to become an open, responsive community that embraces collectivity and connectedness over individuality. Beginning classroom lessons with an open floor for students to voice their thoughts on the texts, or implementing student "Tribes" into the classroom which group students based on varying backgrounds and abilities can facilitate this connectedness.[[40]](#footnote-40) Understanding one's own place within a collective and then breaking from preconceived certainties about knowledge, culture and subjectivity can foster a community that breaks boundaries and embraces multiple voices. Laurie Kruk writes of the need for a community classroom when teaching Indigneous literatures. She conceptualizes this community as a "meeting place"; one that embraces same-ness between peoples rather than difference. For Kruk, and as I have argued in this project, texts are the avenues through which this "meeting place" can be facilitated in the classroom. Texts that simply inspire a debate about racial and gendered identity constructions can give agency to readers in the classroom who, by engaging in this debate, can interrogate their own positioning in relation to others. "Agency is possible in each reader's response, student or teacher," Kruk argues, "[... that prove] We are never merely 'White' or 'Native,' for obviously, we are also invested in other alliances and loyalties that may be in opposition to these categories of privilege [...] or impoverishment" (309). Kruk writes that a classroom should be considered a meeting place between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, one where restrictive boundaries of cultural or national identity are abandoned in favour of communality. I argue that this can be taken further to consider a meeting place between all peoples, not only Indigenous and non-Indigenous, as the barriers between all cultural identities that constitute notions of "others" can be broken in this way.

By incorporating a study of *Obasan* and *Halfbreed* into the classroom, Kogawa and Campbell facilitate this meeting place for readers. Campbell's text, which gives a Métis-centered Canadian history, is about the merging of Indigenous and European peoples and traditions and the experience of the peoples in her blended communities. By tracing connections and differences between her own peoples, Indigenous communities and white Canadians, Campbell presents readers with a space where cultures are merged and connected, but also separate in the hegemonic race structures that make up Canadian society. By doing this, Campbell shows the connectedness between peoples while also drawing attention to the structures that seek to separate them. This allows students and teachers the opportunity to understand their own places in these structures, and understand the ways that cultures can connect, rather than separate, peoples in Canada. Kogawa also presents this space as she gives readers a text laced with both Japanese and Canadian tradition. In this way, she merges old Japanese traditions with new Canadian society, breaking linear timelines between old and new and writing a "meeting place" into history. Kogawa, too, asserts Japanese Canadian belonging in Canada while also showing readers the structures of racial privilege that constitute them as "other". "We are both the enemy and not the enemy" (76), writes Kogawa. Canadian memoirs, texts that in their structure narrate a personal experience laced with connections to others within Canada, can offer the Canadian classroom a meeting place between peoples, cultures and histories.

The post-colonial classroom, for Sugars, takes up the project of challenging historical and cultural metanarratives. This is the way that I conceptualize a classroom that centers on a study of multiple voices and histories. Kogawa's text, for example, asks readers to critically examine their complicities in a world that justifies dropping two atomic bombs on Japan. In doing so, she asks readers to conceptualize themselves as part of a global community of humans: one that does not justify such destruction by objectifying others, but aligns itself against such practices. Similarly, Campbell gives humanity to objectified subjects in Canada including Indigenous peoples and sex workers in Vancouver, making their voices and stories heard as a part of a collective Canadian nation. Therefore the texts involve readers in different communities across boundaries, forcing responsibility onto them as community members who live within structures that privilege some and disempower others.

By bringing silenced histories to light, and making readers aware of the silences that still exist, Kogawa and Campbell call on readers to be witnesses to those silences, and carry them forward by aligning themselves against the structures that work to silence these voices in perpetuity. Both Campbell and Kogawa's texts are pervaded by traumas, peoples, and histories. Language, for Campbell and Kogawa, does not have a single meaning, nor do their memoirs follow linear narrative forms with beginnings, middles and ends. Instead, the past and present are merged, creating a cyclical, decolonizing structure and multiplicity of meanings that *require a productive return* to silenced histories. It must be acknowledged, however, how students and teachers might approach this project of witnessing in the classroom. How might we bear witness to these histories in a productive way, one which does not perpetuate structures of privilege in Canada? How can we bear witness to that which can be unrecognizable to us, especially considering the traumas we are presented with and the silences surrounding them?

**The Politics of Bearing Witness**

Campbell and Kogawa call readers to bear witness and *respond* to "unrecognizable" truths in moments of breakage from normative ideas of history, language and narrative. Before moving forward, it is important to consider the implications for readers who act as witnesses to silenced traumas in Canada. Campbell and Kogawa prompt me as a reader to understand my own privilege or subordination in relation to authors, characters and content. As I acknowledged in my introduction, my own position gives me limitations in approaching texts that speak of many marginalized experiences. Speaking to Kogawa and Campbell's texts in particular, it is important for me to understand my positioning specifically in terms of my race. As a white Canadian whose race is privileged in the nation, I am required to acknowledge, as a witness, that I cannot presume to know or recognize the experience of racism, as I have never experienced this. It is, however, essential for me to take up the role of witnessing those experiences as ignoring them would perpetuate a system that silences those voices. It is also important for me to understand that I live within a system that I benefit from as a white individual, and that, to move forward, I must align myself against this system. As a woman, I can understand experiences of gendered subordination to an extent, but again must take an intersectional approach to my identity to acknowledge the *different* experiences of women of different races, gender identities and classes.

When limits are recognized, empathy and connectedness can be fostered in a classroom space as students can share and understand each other’s limitations and perspectives. This positioning also allows a student, as witness, to work against the common and problematic excuse that, a person cannot talk about something that they have not experienced. Acknowledging one's own limitations and understanding one's own position in the structures of privilege surrounding texts like Kogawa and Campbell's can combat this viewpoint while also approaching a text in an ethical and communal way. Ultimately, members of a pedagogical community who act as witnesses to the silenced histories present in Canada must consider how to ethically respond in the pedagogical space as individuals from varying positions of privilege. This is where positioning ourselves is so essential in the classroom.

In one of my own graduate courses, I was struck by a passage by Manina Jones in her chapter titled "*Stolen Life*?: Reading through Two I's in Postcolonial Collaborative Autobiography." Jones quotes Gayatri Spivak who asserts, "'You don't give the subaltern voice. You work *for* the bloody subaltern, you work against subalternity' (de Kock 46)" (220). Spivak's words implicate those who encounter the call to bear witness to respond in a way that aligns them alongside the subaltern, working against the systems that silence these voices. In examining texts like *Obasan* and *Halfbreed*, in being called to witness both individual and collective traumas of Indigenous and immigrant peoples, and respond to silenced voices and histories, how does a reader "align" oneself with the subaltern, against the historical structures that maintain subalternity?

**A Pedagogy of Feeling: Breakage, Community and Response**

I celebrate teaching that enables transgressions- a movement against and beyond boundaries. It is that movement which makes education the practice of freedom (hooks 12).

'Who the hell wants to [...] protect subalternity? Only extremely reactionary, dubious anthropologistic museumizers [...] You don't give the subaltern voice. You work for the bloody subaltern, you work against subalternity'

("Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: New Nation Writers Conference in South Africa", Leon de Kock, 46).

Given the call in *Halfbreed* and *Obasan* for readers to act as witnesses, in what ways is it possible to respond as witnesses to, or engage in dialogue with, traumas and voices who have been silenced without *giving* voice to them? I argue that this possibility exists in a moment of breakage from normative notions of knowledge, being and history. By forcing readers to bear witness to ongoing traumas that are previously unacknowledged, Campbell and Kogawa facilitate that breakage that dispossesses us from certainty, from the normalized or accepted structures that make up our society. The pedagogical space as a community is, as I have considered, the most productive space in which this breakage can occur.

Shoshana Felman explores this in her chapter "Education and Crisis, or the Vicissitudes of Teaching", in which she describes the notion of a moment of estrangement, writing

texts that testify do not simply *report facts* but, in different ways, encounter- and make us encounter- *strangeness*; how the concept of the testimony, speaking from a stance of superimposition of literature, psychoanalysis and history, is in fact quite unfamiliar and *estranging*, and how, the more we look closely at texts, the more they show us that, unwittingly, we do not even know what testimony is and that, in any case, it is not simply what we thought we knew it was (7).

Felman, here, speaks of the way that testimony forces a witness to encounter that which is unfamiliar; that which is different from the self and calls for, in the act of witnessing, a rethinking of some kind. Therefore, bearing witness in order to rethink certainty requires a breakage in preconceived knowledge, and an embrace of the difference that exists between subjectivities- some experiences and voices are unknowable, but need to be acknowledged. bell hooks, too, speaks of this breakage. She writes of the importance for students and teachers to be willing to learn different "cultural codes" from that which they are already familiar with. This means that students and teachers must, in the multicultural setting, "learn and accept different ways of knowing, new epistemologies" (41). This is also reminiscent of Kelly Oliver's witnessing *beyond* recognition, which depends on bearing witness to that which is outside of our normative boundaries of recognition and knowledge. Our ethical response lies in an engagement as witnesses with Kogawa and Campbell's testimonies- that which is and is not within our normative boundaries of language and understanding- and in a response to our affective estrangement at experiencing this unknowing.

I suggest that the classroom can be a space in which affective mapping, or the understanding of one's own emotional response to an "other" as a point of estrangement from the self, and connection to others, can be fostered. Affective mapping, a term used by Jonathan Flatley in *Affective Mapping: Melancholia and the Politics of Modernism,* refers to the ways that individuals, in examining art and literature, may conceptualize a broader sense of connectedness and community based on shared experiences with others. He argues that affective mapping "represents the historicity of one's affective experience" (4), suggesting that the experience of being moved, emotionally, by art opens the possibility to understand one's connection with a broader community or within ongoing histories. This term is helpful for me in understanding ways that memoir opens a space to apprehend broad communities across boundaries of identity, and is a process that should be taken up when approaching memoirs that tell "alternate" histories.

In an experience of being affectively "moved" by the stories of Kogawa and Campbell, one may apprehend a connectedness with the lives in the texts based on shared experiences in time, history and space. Flatley continues, "an aesthetic practice helps with the process of affective mapping [... that] is accomplished by way of a self-estrangement that allows one to see oneself in relation to one's affective environment in its historicity, in relation to the relevant social-political anchors or landmarks in that environment, and to see the others who inhabit this landscape with one" (80). I would like to focus on the collectivity, or removal from individuality, that is described in Flatley's quotation. His notion that affective mapping may not only situate the self in historicity, but allow one to "see the others who inhabit this landscape with one" suggests a collective "we" that exists within a space or environment. I have studied how Campbell and Kogawa both, by asserting Indigenous and Japanese Canadian belonging within the Canadian landscape that we inhabit today, write a connection between all Canadian peoples on the basis of this shared land. Bearing witness to the individual and collective traumas in Kogawa and Campbell's text involves understanding one's own connection with the shared space of Canada, and the responsibility we have in our connectedness with this space to acknowledge and respond to the traumas interlaced in our existence.

Literature can therefore allow readers to move outside of themselves and across boundaries to embrace community. Moving outside of the "self" requires, as Felman explains in her chapter, an estrangement; one in which normative ideas of language and knowledge are unsettled, and a new way of understanding is opened. Flatley also argues that his process of affective mapping requires self estrangement, what he defines as "a self-distancing that allows one to see oneself as if from the outside [...and] in the sense of defamiliarization, making one's emotional life [...] appear weird, surprising, unusual, and *capable of a new kind of recognition, interest, and analysis*" (80, emphasis mine). Therefore, by unsettling from the self, new possibilities are opened for embracing connection between peoples. This is what I call the pedagogy of feeling[[41]](#footnote-41)- approaching the pedagogical space and its content with the intention of learning from one's own affective experience with a text, and understanding the ways that this emotional response connects us- in its limitations, possibilities and responses- to others both within and outside the space.

This is the power of introducing memoirs such as Kogawa and Campbell's into a pedagogical space wherein a community of learners across boundaries has been established. I suggest, finally, that this affective experience of breakage or estrangement from the self, in a project of apprehending embracing alternate ways of knowing, results in a shared vulnerability on the part of all "estranged" readers. Judith Butler, in *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, explores the possibilities that exist when vulnerability can be embraced. She writes that vulnerability opens a dimension of life that she writes "makes a tenuous 'we' of us all" (20). This refers to the way that our bodies are rendered vulnerable at the hands of others, and concurrently, the way that we are capable of rendering bodies other than our own vulnerable. This shared vulnerability, for Butler, exists in our capacities as social beings to inflict and feel violence and loss. Perhaps the possibility to align with the subaltern, a being that is in a position of imposed vulnerability, requires the embracing of our own vulnerability in an act of affective estrangement from our selves. I wish to end with observations on how Campbell and Kogawa estrange readers from their preconceived knowledge, and force them to apprehend and embrace "other" ways of knowing and being.

Both authors' use of non-normative linguistic structure unsettle a reader in an encounter with texts, forcing them to pause, and listen to a "new kind of writing", as Beth Brant describes Indigenous responses to colonialism through written language.[[42]](#footnote-42) Utilizing this pause, readers do not impose normative and disruptive knowledge or interpretation onto texts. In order to avoid "giving voice" to the subaltern, then, a reader is implored to be silent and *listen* to the *different* ways subaltern subjects speak through Johnson and Vermette's language. Felman, in her study of the poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé and Paul Celan, calls the productive potential in breakages from normative verse "accidenting." An accident of verse and aesthetics refers to the notion that, in fragmenting or deforming language in order to reform it, the language accidentally opens new meanings. An author cannot purposely force meanings, but there is an open ended interpretation on the part of the reader that requires, in some way, a reform of meaning (Felman 19, 25). We are therefore, in the process of reading Campbell and Kogawa's writing, productively being estranged from regular ways of knowing.

Though Campbell's Métis heritage is sometimes a source of difficulty and isolation for her, it allows her the freedom and agency to restore her own sense of identity and she ultimately embraces her connection with her Indigenous heritage. She ends her text with her involvement in Indigenous rights movements in Alberta, weaving a story that expresses the way that her heritage, and the heritage of other Indigenous peoples, were able to survive despite attempts to silence them. Campbell's text is a demonstration that they will not be silenced. Joy Kogawa expresses her Japanese heritage in *Obasan,* retrospectively detailing the beauty in the Japanese traditions maintained in Canada. She writes of the immense support and respect within Japanese Canadian communities in Canada, particularly in the internment camps. In one scene, an old woman offers her underskirt to a young mother on the train to an internment camp, to use as a diaper. Despite their situation, Kogawa frames Japanese Canadian citizens with immense strength. Simultaneously, though, Kogawa privileges the hybrid identity that is Japanese Canadian, writing of the need for readers to broaden their notions of what a Canadian citizen can be. By breaking from preconceived ideas of certainty and embracing a pedagogy of feeling that includes empathy for an "other", the possibility to apprehend and celebrate previously devalued Indigenous, immigrant and other nationalities' ways of knowing and being *in Canada* is opened.

I do not wish to suggest that there is a way to remedy any of the past, present or future injustices against racialized subjects in Canada, who are continuously denied "true" belonging in the nation based on colonial legacies that privilege the white subject as the true Canadian citizen. However, I believe that education is the place to begin a difficult process of critical self reflection needed in Canada. In the elementary, secondary and post secondary classroom, we need to diversify our literature and history content to include, equally, voices from multiple perspectives, races and cultures. These need to be integrated within, not separated from, Canadian studies as these voices share the space of Canada as citizens who fully *belong.* Maria Campbell herself is paraphrased by Laurie Kruk as putting her hope for change in "a healing conversation based on a shared knowledge of historical common ground that would create a 'meeting place' for Native and non-Native today" (309). This meeting place, beginning in the classroom, has the potential to extend beyond colonially constructed boundaries of belonging, identity and nationality. Perhaps, through embracing the productive change existing in breaking from one's own boundaries and bearing witness to previously silenced voices and histories, Canada itself can be a meeting place for all to align with each other, as a community, against subalternity.

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1. See http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/niqabs-rooted-in-a-culture-that-is-anti-women-harper-says/article23395242/. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. I conceptualize memory and history as being inexorably intertwined; each informs the other, especially in respect to constructed notions of nationhood, identity and belonging. Learned History, then, informs collective memory within a nation. Knowledge of Canadian history makes up collective memories of "belonging" in Canada, when cultural groups are posited as being a part of the nation's history. This moves from Maurice Halbwachs' separation of memory and history in *Les cadres sociaux de la memoire*, as explained by Astrid Erll (2004) which is a central text that sparked contemporary memory studies. Halbwachs' assertion that collective memory, unlike history, remembers only what benefits a cultural group in the present is important, but I suggest constructed histories have similar functions. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. I use the term "nobody" deliberately, as it dually represents the position of Metis peoples as being identified neither as "Indian" nor as "Canadian" as well as the violent dispossession of Indigenous women's bodies in legal systems - to be explored further in Chapter Two. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Erll (2004), Chapter 1: "The Invention of Cultural Memory: A Short History of Memory Studies". [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. "Canonical" Canadian texts, I presuppose, make up a vast majority of texts deemed valuable by educational institutions. Therefore, the two are intertwined; the academy or the government deems some texts "important", which are then taught in schools. Both steps here are what I would consider "practices" of cultural memory. This can be edited and incorporated into the text of the essay. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This document, notably, was not offered at my high school and it was not referenced during my time in teacher's college. It is significantly shorter than others in its explanatory sections and is a curricular addition, rather than a fundamental component. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. I have used only those characteristics that have direct connection to my project. For a detailed list of all characteristics, see Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity", *New German Critique* 65: 125-133. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Though I am using Casey's theorizations of public memory specifically, it is worth acknowledging that Casey's idea of cultural memory troubles parts of the broad, national collective memory that has been discussed here. Casey takes into account the ways that differing experiences of collective or historical events makes for a more nuanced idea of collective memory. I do not suggest that collective memory assumes that all members of a "collective" have the same memories. However I do assert that all members have "memories" of the same events in history, in that their experiences or interpretations of these events may differ, but the existence of this history is legitimized. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The word "homey", here, is one conceptualized by Sharma in her chapter. She uses the word specifically to describe the attachment between an individual and their notion of home within a nation- the nation becomes a "homey" space, as one might describe of their living room. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See also, Stephen Harper's comments that the wearing of a niqab is "anti women", and "contrary to Canadian values" (City News 2015) or Tory MP John Williamson on temporary work permits: "it makes no sense to pay 'whities' to stay home while we bring in brown people to work in these jobs" (National Post). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See Anderson, "The Biography of Nations." He concludes his book by discussing the way that published and reproduced literatures construct the biography/ autobiography of a nation, in that memories of the distant pasts of a state (likened to childhood) are not psychologically "remembered" by the brain, but are constructed based on present narratives and "proofs" of that past. "As with modern persons, so it is with nations", finishes Anderson. "Awareness of being imbedded in secular, serial time, with all its implications of continuity, yet of 'forgetting' the experience of this continuity [...] engenders the need for a narrative of 'identity'" (205). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The full quote by Lowenthal is helpful: "Heritage addresses common needs and embodies common traits the world over. But the needs are defined and the traits cherished by chauvinist jealousy. We confront one another armoured in identities whose likenesses we ignore or disown and whose differences we distort of invent to emphasize our own superior worth. Lauding our own legacies and excluding or discrediting those of others. we commit ourselves to endemic rivalry and conflict" (41). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See http://www.brocku.ca/webcal/2015/undergrad/engl.html [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Of course, it is worth noting Lecker's privileging of the English Canadian voice over the "othered" voices that speak in languages other than English. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Francophone communities in Canada are generally associated with Quebecois ideologies of separatism. The referendums for Quebec's sovereignty in 1980 and 1995 support this record. The result is that the word "Canadian" then becomes associated with English-speaking citizens, and Quebecois or Francophone with French-speaking in Canada. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. A complete list of Corse's findings of the most commonly taught texts in Canadian literature courses are as follows: Sara J. Duncan, *The Imperialist;* Frederick Philip Grove, *Fruits of the Earth*; Sinclair Ross, *As for Me and My House*; High MacLennan, *Two Solitudes*; Ernest Buckler, *The Mountain and the Valley*; Margaret Laurence, *The Stone Angel*; Robertson K. Davies, *Fifth Business*; Alice Munro, *Lives of Girls and Women*; Margaret Laurence, *The Diviners*; Margaret Atwood, *Lady Oracle.* She concludes that, based on a canon constructed of these texts, notions of Canadian national identities are tied up with interpersonal connection and familial relationships, focus more heavily on women's experiences, and share a common "rebelling" against social ideologies and customs. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Martin's top 10 commonly taught authors are as follows: Margaret Atwood, Margaret Laurence, Michael Ondaatje, Robertson Davies, Timothy Findley, Stephen Leacock, Sinclair Ross, Thomas King, Alice Munro, and Russell Brown, Donna Bennett, Nathalie Cooke (eds). Evidently, there are many overlaps with Corse's study years earlier. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. According to Martin, Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*, which I will study in a later chapter, often occupies this place. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Though I make this assertion here, I wish to acknowledge Martin's goal for the project, which is to illuminate, disrupt and challenge these practices of "sanctioned ignorance". As Martin writes, "It is only by uncovering and making more visible some of those 'lines drawn around what we do' that we can begin to challenge and even dismantle the parameters that help us to avoid questioning in meaningful ways how we study the literatures of our own country" (Said 20)." (xxviii). In my final chapter, I will return to Martin to work more closely with a study of the possibilities present when pedagogical spaces can be questioned and re-worked to become spaces for change. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Of course, a broadened scope does not mean that some voices and subjectivities do not still hold places of privilege compared to others. This project seeks to destabilize this reality. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. The word re-membering is important as it signifies not only a recalling of events, but a literal re- membering of the past; a putting together of fragmented, forgotten and erased histories. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Kelly Oliver's "response-ability", *Witnessing Beyond Recognition.* [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. I am indebted to my colleague, Elizabeth DiEmanuele, for the creation of this term which came up in conversation prior to the conception of this project. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/canworld1112curr.pdf (154-193); https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/canworld910curr2013.pdf (103-125); http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/sshg18curr2013.pdf (129-145) [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. "Gradual enfranchisement of Indians", a euphemism for assimilation, was the goal of the 1876 Indian Act. See http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/a69c6\_1100100010205\_eng.pdf. It required Indigenous peoples to give up their "Indian" status under the Indian Act in order to receive civil rights to vote, etc. An "enfranchised" Indian would no longer be deemed an Indian, but a British subject. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The act forbade any individual from receiving money for helping Indigenous peoples pursue legal claims, which effectively barred them from participation in legal processes. The act also denied Indigenous peoples the vote until 1960, and required them to seek permission from the government to leave reserve land and sell resources grown/ produced on reserve land (Coleman 14). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. "Aboriginal peoples in Canada did not view the apology as a trigger for an improved relationship with the government, thereby diminishing expectations of changes in their overall quality of life. In line with past research, the present results suggest that forgiveness is not likely to be elicited by an apology until some level of trust is established, which was not present in the current context" (458). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. I am indebted to Andrew Reszitnyk, who provided me with his paper "No Reconciliation, Not Yet- The Im-possible Task of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada", completed for course requirements at McMaster University. His work on the limitations of the TRCC have provided me with facts for this chapter. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. A 2014 court case, Fontaine vs. Canada, ruled that the government should exercise their rule to destroy TRCC archives following a 15 year retention period, "during which the survivors of Residential Schools may choose to spare some of their documents from destruction and instead have the documents with redactions to protect personal information of others transferred to the National Research Center for Truth and Reconciliation" (3). Of course, this option to "save" documents from destruction via government "notices" of destruction during this 15-year period would result in survivors being unable to speak for themselves in saving these archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. It is important for me to note, here, that I do not conceptualize Maria Campbell as a "symbol" for all Indigenous women or peoples. Rather, I am interested in the ways that the accounts of her individual life become pervaded with silenced traumas, pasts and voices. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. "Supreme Court B.C. land-claim ruling has staggering implications for Canadian resource projects". http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/supreme-court-b-c-land-claim-ruling-has-staggering-implications-for-canadian-energy-projects.The *Post* writes on the expected impediments to moving forward with the pipeline construction, "With Thursday's ruling, they may assert title and prevent outside 'intrusions' on the basis of their 'occupation,' or proven historic use" (Brian Hutchinson, National Post, 2014). Notable to me are Hutchinson's use of quotations around "intrusions" and "occupation" in order to, it seems, delegitimize Indigenous claims that resource extraction are indeed intrusions, or devalue the types of occupations held on reserve land by its peoples. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. It is worth noting that Leroux was not convicted on all of the charges laid against him for molestation and abuse, and he was sentenced to only three years, causing outrage to his victims and other survivors of the residential school. This is one incident that contributes to feelings of residential school survivors that the legal system does not have their best interests at heart. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. On pages 25-6, Campbell makes these distinctions, saying "There was never much love lost between Indians and Halfbreeds. They were completely different from us- quiet when we were noisy, dignified even at dances and get-togethers. Indians were very passive- they would get angry at things done to them but would never fight back, whereas Halfbreeds were quick tempered- quick to fight, but quick to forgive and forget [...] Even though I liked visiting them, I was always glad to get back to the noise and disorder of my own people". [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. For further knowledge on this report, see "Invisible Women: A Call to Action. A Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada", March 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The ways that we may embrace, understand and respond to these breakages will be explored in depth in chapter four, which explores the pedagogical space as a conduit for productive change. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*, 265. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. I would like to make a note, here, on my use of the word "internment". As Roger Daniels argues in his essay "Words Do Matter: A Note on Inappropriate Terminology and the Incarceration of the Japanese Americans", the word "internment" is problematic as it acts a gross euphemism for the actual acts perpetrated on Japanese American (and I would extend to Canadian) subjects. Internment, argues Daniels, was used specifically so that the actions of North American governments would be constituted as being legal. Incarceration, which would have been more legally problematic for governments to justify, is a better term according to Daniels. I acknowledge the importance of this terminology, and that "internment" can definitively be considered a problematic, politically motivated and euphemistic word. However, I have decided to use the term in this chapter due to the fact that almost all of the sources I have consulted, and cited, use the term. Using the term myself allows me to avoid confusion between sources and my own words. However, I use the term mindfully, and acknowledge its limitations. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Kato's character is influenced by the writer and journalist Muriel Kitagwa. Kitagwa, a Nisei or second generation Japanese Canadian, recorded her experiences of interment. These are now important records of the events. Her collection, *This is My Own: Letters to Wes and other Writings on Japanese Canadians* addresses the injustices of the government toward Japanese Canadians, much like Emily Kato's collection of letters. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. It is worth noting that there are history expectations of differing strands that involve studying histories from multiple cultures and perspectives. However, strands teaching *Canadian* history do so from a Eurocentric perspective. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. "Tribes" is a teaching method that involves arranging students in small groups that promote a learning community within the classroom. See http://tribes.com/. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. This phrase, which I have since appropriated for my own meanings and interpretations, was first said to me by Grace Kehler, who was my professor for the graduate class "Literature as Witness". I am indebted to her for many of the initial musings that went into these ideas and for her help in talking through many of these ideas with me. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. See Beth Brant, *Writing as Witness: essay and talk,* 1994. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)