THE HYPHEN:

FOODWAYS AS A METAPHORICAL LANGUAGE IN CANADIAN IMMIGRANT LITERATURE

by © Francesca Boschetti A Dissertation submitted

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Abstract

My dissertation explores the connection between foodways, identity, and multiculturalism to advance an understanding of Canadian identity as quintessentially multicultural and hyphenated. My study is divided into five chapters: two devoted to multiculturalism and the hyphen in Canada and the final three to food and foodways as a metaphorical language in Canadian immigrant writing. Together, they trace the complex connection between food and identity and shed light on the hyphenated identity construction process within a Canadian context. To account for the diversity of today's Canada, I conducted a comparative analysis of eight fictional works published between 1982 and 2009 that portray hyphenated Canadian characters of different heritages (Italian-Canadian, Indo-Canadian, Japanese-Canadian, Ukrainian-Canadian, Portuguese-Canadian, as well as characters attached to a multiplicity of hyphenated Canadian components). Through these close readings, I address Canadian identity as heterogeneous and dynamic, in line with policies and theorizations of Canadian multiculturalism. My analysis draws from a wide range of secondary sources (Canadian governmental documents, post-colonial theories, Canadian literary scholarship, sociological studies, food studies scholarship, and scholarly and non-scholarly sources on Canadian multiculturalism and the hyphen), offering an interdisciplinary theoretical approach that contributes to a better understanding of Canadian diversity and multiculturalism. The main contributions of this dissertation are 1. its recognition that literary representations of multiculturalism and the hyphen spill into general Canadian discussions on

multiculturalism and help better explain the current Canadian climate, 2. its investigation of the impact of food and foodways on the hyphenated identity building process, and 3. its presentation of hyphenated spaces as productive in-between spaces that accommodate diversity and help redefine what it means to be Canadian. Considering Canada's contemporary socio-cultural and literary makeup, I hope that my research will stimulate additional conversations on the hyphen, hyphenated identities, and hyphenated characters that aim to highlight how Canadian immigrant writing should no longer be considered simply ethnic or minority writing, but an integral part of the mainstream Canadian literary canon.

General Summary

My dissertation analyses the connection between food practices (such as eating, preparing, and discussing food), identity, and multiculturalism to suggest that Canadian identity is quintessentially multicultural and hyphenated. It includes five chapters: two devoted to multiculturalism and the hyphen in Canada and the final three to food as a metaphorical language in Canadian immigrant literature. Together, they explain the complex connection between food and identity and clarify the hyphenated identity construction process within a Canadian context. To account for the diversity of today's Canada, I compare and analyze eight fictional works published between 1982 and 2009 that portray hyphenated Canadian characters of different heritages (Italian-Canadian, Indo-Canadian, Japanese-Canadian, Ukrainian-Canadian, Portuguese-Canadian, as well as characters attached to multiple cultures). Through a close analysis of these texts, I explain how Canadian identity is heterogeneous and dynamic, in line with policies and theorizations of Canadian multiculturalism. My study draws from a wide range of secondary sources (Canadian governmental documents, post-colonial theories, Canadian literary scholarship, sociological studies, food studies scholarship, and scholarly and non-scholarly sources on Canadian multiculturalism and the hyphen), offering an interdisciplinary theoretical approach that contributes to a better understanding of Canadian diversity and multiculturalism. The main contributions of this dissertation are 1. its recognition that literary representations of multiculturalism and the hyphen spill into general Canadian discussions on multiculturalism and help better explain the current

Canadian climate, 2. its investigation of the impact of food and food practices on the hyphenated identity building process, and 3. its presentation of hyphenated spaces as productive in-between spaces that accommodate diversity and help redefine what it means to be Canadian. Considering Canada's contemporary socio-cultural and literary makeup, I hope that my research will stimulate additional conversations on the hyphen, hyphenated identities, and hyphenated characters that aim to highlight how Canadian immigrant writing should no longer be considered simply ethnic or minority writing, but an integral part of Canadian literature.

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Introduction

The Hyphen: Foodways as a Metaphorical Language in Canadian Immigrant Literature explores the symbolical value of food and foodways in literary representations of hyphenated Canadian identity. It has two main goals: 1. to examine the ambiguous notions of multiculturalism and the hyphen and establish their importance to identity in a Canadian context, and 2. to investigate how Canadian immigrant literature depicting characters with diverse cultural backgrounds portrays food and foodways as fundamental in the construction of a hyphenated Canadian identity.

In my Master's Essay (Memorial University 2013), I began working on literary representations of immigrant women by examining South-Asian-American Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* (2003) and *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) as literary responses to the negotiation of new female identities. In my analysis of Lahiri's texts, I noticed a significant absence of linguistic melding, which is instead prominent in Italian-Canadian literature. Therefore, when I started my PhD, I initially wished to analyse how Canadian literary works use code-switching to depict Italian-Canadian identity formation. However, I later realised that concentrating on hyphenated Canadian characters of different heritages (rather than focusing on Italian-Canadian identities only) would be a more productive project. This new focus led me to take note of the prominence of food and foodways, and their function as a type of language that connects characters across generations and cultures. This, in turn, subsequently led me to ponder the importance to identity of the connection between food, multiculturalism, and the hyphen in novels about

diverse immigrant groups. This discovery led me to formulate my central research question: How does Canadian immigrant fiction address Canadian multiculturalism and the hyphen, and what does that say about Canadian identity? It also led me to posit food and foodways as central to its response.

Even though both the relation between food and identity and the integration of food "into literature" (Bolen) have been acknowledged by the scholarship, the connection between food, identity, and multiculturalism in Canadian literature requires further investigation. My dissertation addresses this important issue in Canadian studies, with the aim to contribute to debates surrounding multiculturalism and the hyphen as quintessentially Canadian notions. To account for the diversity of today's Canada, my study brings together literary representations of hyphenated Canadian identities of different heritages. Even though the contribution of Canadian ethnic writers to the literary landscape has been acknowledged by several scholars (Beneventi, Canton, and Moyes; Carrera Suárez; Elliott Clarke; Hutcheon; Kamboureli; Simon), and anthologies collecting works by Canadian immigrant writers have been published since the 1990s, so far only a few critical studies have offered a comparative analysis of different hyphenated literatures and their representations of hyphenated characters.[1]

[1] Elliott Clarke in his essays "Correspondences and Divergences between Italian-Canadian and African-Canadian Writers" and "Let Us Compare Anthologies: Harmonizing the Founding African-Canadian and Italian-Canadian Literary Collections," compares the Italian-Canadian and the African-Canadian literary community/anthologies, but not their representations of hyphenated identities. Another example is Ashis Sengupta's essay "The Hyphenated Identity in Contemporary Multiethnic American Drama," which investigates African-American, Mexican-American, and Japanese-American primary sources to contend the hybridity of American identity. However, Sengupta analyses the United States rather than Canada.

Instead of focusing on the biography of immigrant authors (a tendency in much critical work that explores the representation of immigration in Canadian novels),[2] in what follows I will concentrate on literary representations of the immigrant experience to assess behavioural patterns shared by characters of different heritages. In doing so, I highlight the central role of foodways that often serve as a metaphorical language that elucidates the hyphenated identity construction process. Throughout my dissertation, I contend that comparing hyphenated identities in literature does not wipe away or undervalue the ethnic uniqueness of each immigrant community; rather, cultural diversity enriches both hyphenated identities and the cultural makeup of the settler country.[3] Through a literary context, I also address how different Canadian hyphenated communities impact each other, a topic that to my knowledge has not yet been investigated.

Through close readings of eight late 20th- and early 21st-century primary sources that portray hyphenated Canadian characters of different heritages (Italian-Canadian, East-Asian-Canadian, South-Asian Canadian, Ukrainian-Canadian, Portuguese-Canadian, as well as characters attached to a multiplicity of hyphenated Canadian components), I highlight the ways in which hyphenated identities intersect with food and foodways. I conduct a comparative analysis of primary texts that share common patterns and themes, but are still unique in the ways in which they portray hyphenated identities both as

[2] See pp. 68-9 below for details.

[3] My understanding of community is similar to Diana Brydon and William Coleman's, who interpret it as a "relation constantly under negotiation" (2). Similarly, I will read literary representations of immigrant communities as dynamic rather than fixed entities.

individuals and as members of the hyphenated community. This allows me to fully address Canadian identity as heterogeneous and dynamic, an understanding that aligns with policies and theorizations of Canadian multiculturalism. To stress this alignment, my dissertation draws from a wide range of secondary sources (Canadian governmental documents, post-colonial theories, Canadian literary scholarship, sociological studies, food studies scholarship, and scholarly and non-scholarly sources on Canadian multiculturalism and the hyphen), offering an interdisciplinary theoretical approach that will contribute to a better understanding of Canadian diversity and multiculturalism.

In this dissertation, I do not intend to propose that Canadian immigrant literature should be isolated from or not included in the Canadian literary canon. Instead, I contend that Canadian immigrant literature is an integral part of Canadian literature, and that all Canadians are hyphenated (even though there still tends to be a separation between mainstream Canadians and Canadian others, as I will discuss in chapters 1 and 2). In addition, because of the type of research I conduct in this dissertation (an investigation of Canadian immigrant writing and its relation to the 'mainstream'), I will not touch upon literary works by Indigenous writers in Canada as they are outside of my scope (although these works are an important part of Canadian literature as well).[4] I chose works of fiction in particular because they foreground universal experiences that cross over

[4] For an investigation of indigenous and diasporic writing in Canada, see Aloys N. M. Fleischmann's *Narratives of Citizenship: Indigenous and Diasporic People Unsettle the Nation State* (2011), Smaro Kamboureli and Christl Verduyn's *Critical Collaborations: Indigeneity, Diaspora, and Ecology in Canadian Literary Studies* (2014), and Eleanor Ty and Cynthia Sugars' *Canadian Literature and Cultural Memory* (2014),

generational, cultural, ethnic, and racial boundaries. Virginia Woolf describes the novel as a text that "registers the slow growth and development of feeling, … follows many lives and traces their unions and fortunes over a long stretch of time" (143). I join her in her conviction that by recreating the emotions and connections of human life and experience, fiction enables readers to become aware of and re-live complex experiences, including that of embracing a hyphenated identity.

My thesis is divided into five chapters: two devoted to multiculturalism and theorizations of the hyphen in Canada and the final three to food and foodways as a metaphorical language in Canadian immigrant writing. Together, they trace the complex connection between food and identity and shed light on the hyphenated identity construction process within a Canadian context.

In Chapter 1, I define multiculturalism by expanding upon the multiculturalism debates that took place in the Canadian socio-political and literary landscapes and building on the literary responses to multiculturalism in relation to the Canadian literary canon. This first chapter sets the ground for Chapter 2, in which I define and contextualize the notion of hyphen in the Canadian socio-political and literary landscapes. In this second chapter, I clarify why I investigate the hyphen in immigrant Canadian literature, explain how my interpretation of the hyphen and hyphenated identity differs from or is similar to previous theorizations, and advance my understanding of going beyond the hyphen. Taken together, the two chapters thus set out the theoretical framework for my study.

Chapter 3 is the first of the three chapters devoted to foodways as a metaphorical language in Canadian immigrant literature. Its main argument is that food is a metaphor for adaptation through community building and socialization. First, I provide a brief introduction to the field of food studies, with a specific focus on food as a metaphorical language and the link between food and identity. Second, I explore the role of kitchens and foodways in relation to the hyphenated identity construction process through an analysis of Uma Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding*. Finally, I explain why food and the hyphen function as a bridge that fosters intercultural communication. I do so through an examination of Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother* and Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, which both highlight how multicultural foodways impact Canada by portraying food as able to promote the acceptance of difference and adaptation.

Whereas Chapter 3 shows that food functions as a bridge that unites aspects of different cultural heritages, Chapter 4 takes up the notion that food carries characters between different cultural traditions to address how this leads to a desired hybridity of identity. Presenting food as a metaphor for hybridity, I identify restaurants and kitchens as the space of the hyphen, the setting where characters work on the formation of their hybrid multicultural hyphenated identity. To elucidate the connection between hybrid food and identity, I concentrate on Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*, a source text pervaded by hybridity, from its genre, to its portrayal of menus to its depictions of hyphenated

characters. I then turn to an analysis of Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* to explore the relationship between food and magic and explain what it means to be what we eat.

Finally, Chapter 5 further develops foodways as a metaphorical language through an analysis of how Frank Paci's *Black Madonna* and Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother* delineate the steps necessary for hyphenated characters to reach a balanced identity. Bringing together and expanding upon central threads reached in previous chapters, I argue that food stands for cultural nourishment and that maternal feeding and storytelling fuel the cultural learning necessary for hyphenated characters to reach self-acceptance.

Chapter 1: Multiculturalism in the Canadian Political and Literary Landscapes

1. Multiculturalism in Canada: The Political Landscape

The term multiculturalism has been interpreted in many different ways. As Peter S. Li notes, multiculturalism is a "muddled concept" that does not have a unified definition or a "universally accepted version" (148-50). Some critics have offered potential explanations for the difficulty in defining multiculturalism, which include confusion surrounding multiculturalism as an official public policy (Moodley, Li) and the term's many connotations in a Canadian context (Kallen, Li, Guo and Wong). More specifically, three main reasons account for multiculturalism's allusiveness: 1) the concept's many dimensions; 2) increased diversity in Canada and how it is reflected in the changing objectives of Canadian multiculturalism as official public policy; and 3) the complex history of colonialism in Canada and the controversies regarding the treatment of those considered Canadian others.[5]

Multiculturalism is a multi-layered term, with little agreement among critics about how to categorize its several different dimensions or meanings. In their examination of multiculturalism in Canada, *Engaging Diversity: Multiculturalism in Canada* (2002), Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott distinguish between five dimensions of multiculturalism. They propose that multiculturalism can be interpreted as 1) an empirical fact that takes into account demographic diversity and cultural pluralism; 2) an ideology

[5] For an exploration of the history of discrimination against immigrants to Canada, please see Chapter 2, 1.5 The Need for a Comparative Analysis.

or ideal; 3) a state policy; 4) a practice that considers what happens to political and minority interests as a result of the commodification of diversity; and 5) a critique of the challenges to traditional authority (Fleras and Elliott 28-51). Sociologist Wsevolod Isajiw proposes three broad dimensions in his theorization of multiculturalism – it is, 1) an ideology; 2) a social policy; and 3) a feature of the structure of society ("Multiculturalism" 107-17) – to which Miriam Verena Richter adds nuance. For her multiculturalism comprises 1) the reference to the Canadian multicultural policy; 2) the ideology behind the policy; and 3) the diversity of the Canadian population – ultimately a "form of culture" (xix). Finally, Pnina Werbner draws a distinction between a multiculturalism "from above," which corresponds to official state policy, and a multiculturalism "from below," which refers to the experiences of ethnic groups in a particular environment (197-209).

While all these classifications attempt to give order to the confusion surrounding the meaning(s) of multiculturalism, they ultimately reiterate its ambiguity, but also its complexity. Whereas some dimensions (such as ideology, public/state policy, diversity) factor into all of the lists, others blend one into the other or render some more specific. Whatever the proposed division, all of the dimensions, nuances, or specifications need to be taken into consideration in order to be better equipped to reach an exhaustive or, at the very least, a critical understanding of what multiculturalism is. These different approaches and levels of meaning show how ideas about diversity, cultural identity, equality, and political and minority interests come together to influence interpretations of multiculturalism. Because these dimensions are so strictly intertwined and are at once

simultaneously broad and specific, they ultimately productively add to the confusion surrounding the term. They do so by accentuating its broad applicability and usage within a Canadian context.

Most theorists and critics of multiculturalism in Canada address its political dimension, stopping on its societal role as an official public policy. This may be because the implementation of the 1971 Multicultural Policy and the 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act initiated a discussion on cultural diversity as a characteristic feature of the Canadian landscape, ultimately introducing the concept into the Canadian mindscape. These official government documents generated a heated debate across disciplines including among literary theorists who investigated their impact on both the peoples of Canada and the field of Canadian literature.[6]

A central concern of these debates has been to establish what fuels changes in political approaches to and definitions of Canadian multiculturalism. Shibao Guo and Lloyd Wong attribute multiculturalism's changing definition to the different phases of Canadian multiculturalism, suggesting that even though Canada has always been demographically multi-ethnical, the intensity of its diversity has increased throughout the years. Without attempting to define the term, Guo and Wong highlight how multiculturalism existed at the time of confederation in 1867, when the British, the

[6] For a detailed analysis of this debate, please see 2. Multiculturalism in Canada: The Literary Landscape below.

French, and the Aboriginals[7] were considered the nation's three founding ethnic groups, despite Canada's "inequalitarian pluralism" (1). In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Canada began to be more ethnically varied, with a first wave of immigrants of both European and non-European origin. During this time, people from Germany, Sweden, Ukraine, the Netherlands, Iceland, Norway, and Russia; Chinese employed in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway; and Japanese working in agriculture migrated *en masse* to Canada. A second wave of immigrants that includes European immigrants mainly from the Baltic states, the Netherlands, Italy, and Hungary reaches Canada following the Second World War. With the liberalization of Canadian immigration policy in the late 1960s,[8] the number of non-European immigrants to Canada further increases, and starting from the 1980s the number of immigrants from non-white ethnic groups rises even more and includes individuals from Asia, Africa, and South and Central America (1).

There is little doubt that how the Canadian government defines multiculturalism has changed across time to account for the country's different socio-historical climates. The 1971 Canadian Multiculturalism Policy, which was based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism (appointed in 1963), reflects

[7] Even though "Indigenous" is today the preferred term to refer to Indigenous peoples, throughout the dissertation I may need to refer to "Aboriginal" or "Aboriginals" in occurrences where a specific secondary source uses these terms (e.g. governmental documents, scholarly sources).

[8] For a more detailed analysis of the history of immigration in Canada, please see Chapter 2, 1.5 The Need for a Comparative Analysis.

the increased cultural diversity of the 1960s.[9] On 8th October 1971, in a statement to the House of Commons, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau announced the implementation of a policy of multiculturalism as official government policy, making Canada the first country in the world to adopt a multicultural policy. Prime Minister Trudeau further promoted multiculturalism in Canada by proclaiming that cultural pluralism is at the heart of Canadian identity, and that "although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian" (House of Commons 8545). With these words, Trudeau not only stressed that Canadian identity is comprised of multiple coexisting cultures, but also argued that multiculturalism is quintessentially Canadian.

Even though Trudeau's promise to guarantee equity and support to all cultures and ethnic groups in Canada shows an interest in promoting inclusiveness, the Multiculturalism Policy has been harshly critiqued as being simply a political move put into place at a time when Trudeau's Liberal Party needed votes after losing support in Quebec due to a rising interest in separatism (Kamboureli, *Bodies* 97-8; Li 151-2; Wayland 47). Several critics have argued that the goal of the Multiculturalism Policy (and Trudeau's focus on Canadian identity) was to secure votes from the ethnic communities that had recently immigrated to Canada post-WWII. Rather than a real

[9] Appendix A includes a chart on the history of multiculturalism in Canada mapping significant dates regarding Canada's federal policy on multiculturalism, parliamentary action, and provincial multiculturalism policies.

change in government policy or practice, the Multiculturalism Policy was little more than a symbolic acknowledgment (and not a true recognition of the importance) of Canada's cultural diversity (Li 152-3). Although this shared critique speaks volumes to the impact that immigration to Canada has had on the cultural makeup of the country, it also highlights failure on the part of the government to guarantee inclusiveness and real support to Canada's different ethnic communities.

The Multiculturalism Policy received a legislative framework with the implementation of the 1988 *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, passed in Parliament under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. The Multiculturalism Act recognized that multiculturalism reflects Canada's cultural and racial diversity, promotes the preservation of Canadian cultural heritage, aims to assist in the elimination of any barrier to the participation of individuals of all origins to Canadian society, ensures equity for all Canadians, promotes interaction and inclusion, and commits to both the recognition of English and French as the official languages of Canada and to the preservation and enhancement of languages other than English and French (Canadian Multiculturalism Act 3-4). These goals highlight the governmental acknowledgment of diversity as a defining feature of Canada. However, in spite of the declared commitment of the Multiculturalism Act to eliminate barriers to the involvement of individuals of all origins in Canadian society, only eleven years later (1999) a government publication defines Canadian multiculturalism as the "presence and persistence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities who define themselves as different and who wish to remain so" (Leman). In a subsequent version of the same paper, revised by Michael Dewing in 2013, the text is edited to read:

"multiculturalism refers to the presence of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds" (1). While Marc Leman's first definition stresses the desire of minorities to "remain" different, Dewing's revision strikes out any reference to difference. The deletion reflects a move towards inclusion, subtly suggesting that ethnic and racial minorities are no longer perceived as individuals wanting to remain 'isolated' from the mainstream.[10]

The shift from Trudeau's concentration on the undeniable diversity of Canadian identity to Leman's focus on difference and finally to Dewing's move towards inclusion speaks, again, to the changing definition of multiculturalism and its different configurations within different socio-historical climates. The varying governmental approaches to multiculturalism, with their slight modifications to its defining characteristics, express various stages of Canadian multiculturalism and its changing objectives as an official public policy. Kunz and Sykes identify four types of multiculturalism: 1) an "ethnicity" multiculturalism in the 1970s, which celebrates diversity; 2) an "equity" multiculturalism in the 1980s, which manages diversity; 3) a "civic" multiculturalism in the 1990s, which concentrates on society building and citizenship; and 4) an "integrative" multiculturalism starting from the 2000s, which focuses on integration and Canadian identity (6-7, 21). Whereas a focus on ethnicity is a key component of the 1971 Multiculturalism Policy, which proposes to provide assistance to ethnic groups in Canada through cultural retention, just a decade later,

[10] This shift in the definition and interpretation of multiculturalism, however, does not result in a collapse of the boundaries dividing minority from mainstream, as I will discuss in the following chapters.

equity for all Canadians in spite of their origins gains in importance with the implementation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Equity makes room for a "civic" multiculturalism that values citizenship in the 1990s, as exemplified by the implementation of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship Act in 1991 (then dismantled in 1993, when the Department of Canadian Heritage takes over the responsibility of multiculturalism). Finally, in the 2000s, integration defines multiculturalism in public policy, as demonstrated by the establishment of Canadian Multiculturalism Day (June 27), the designation of May as *Asian Heritage Month* and February as *Black History Month*, and the government's public apologies and agreements with the Chinese-Canadian, Ukrainian-Canadian, and Italian-Canadian communities for the discrimination they experienced in Canada. Each governmental definition reflects the distinct (but interrelated) phases of multiculturalism that lead up to the focus on integration in the 2000s meant to address the lack of inclusiveness lamented by the critics who interpret the implementation of the Multiculturalism Policy as a political move.

Multiculturalism is characterized by multiplicity and is open to different interpretations also because of the complicated history of colonialism in Canada, which continues to fuel controversies regarding the notion of Canadian-ness and the treatment of those considered Canadian others. Because Canadian multiculturalism draws notice to the supposed difference between minorities and the mainstream inhabitants of Canada (i.e. Anglo- and French-Canadians), it raises an important question: who, specifically, can be defined–and is perceived–as Canadian? The ongoing debate on Canadian identity and its relation to racial and ethnic minorities is particularly significant today, since over 20%

of the Canadian population is foreign-born and characterized by ethnic diversity (Statistics Canada, *1871 to 2036*).[11] Andrew Griffith, who notes that over 250 ethnicities are represented in Canada (1-2), sees multiculturalism as an element of the "relative" success of Canada as a country, arguing that it is "one of Canada's defining characteristics and an icon of Canadian identity" (i).[12] While identity is a central concern in discussions about any multicultural society, it is particularly important for understanding Canada's contemporary configuration as a multicultural country that welcomes a great number of immigrants.[13]

While cultural diversity is at the forefront in Canadian political, social, and economic debates (Griffith 51), scholars continue to struggle to find an agreed-upon definition of Canadian identity. A clear, unified understanding about what being a Canadian really means remains out of reach. Political philosopher Charles Blattberg has traced this difficulty to different aspects of colonialism in Canada. He identifies three types of social divisions at the heart of this question: 1) the complicated relationship between the First Nations and the European colonist; 2) the divide between English- and French-Canadians; and 3) the separation between immigrants to Canada and mainstream society. These social divisions create a plurality of interpretations of Canadian identity that accentuate either the idea of a single, unified Canada or a Canada broken into several

[11] A study by Jack Jedwab, Executive Director of the Association for Canadian Studies (2008), reports that by 2021 the majority of Canadian residents will be hyphenated, with an attachment to multiple origins.

[12] For a detailed examination of ethnic diversity in Canada, see Isajiw's *Understanding Diversity: Ethnicity and Race in the Canadian Context.*

[13] For a comparison of how multiculturalism is perceived in Europe and in Canada, see Guo and Wong (5).

Canadas (pars. 2-4). To understand Canadian identity as at once grounded in unity and diversity would be particularly attractive in the context of integrative multiculturalism of the 2000s, where the focus is on integration and identity. Nonetheless, it remains an unresolved challenge.

Miriam Verena Richter emphasizes that a country's identity changes as the country itself changes. Reflecting on the meaning of Canadian-ness, she proposes several political and geographical reasons why defining a Canadian national identity is complicated. These reasons include: a) the slow process of de-colonization from Great Britain, which delayed Canada's development of a sense of independence; b) Canada's regionalism, as its inhabitants have different interests and habits because of Canada's extreme geographical diversity; c) the obstacle posed by the dualism between the French and the British founding nations to securing a unified Canadian national identity; d) the waves of immigration to Canada, as ethnic diversity challenges a unified definition of Canadian national identity; and e) the economic and cultural influence of the United States, which has also been seen as a factor that stimulates (instead of hinders) a definition of Canadian identity (27-9). Like Blattberg, Richter also identifies colonization and immigration as complicating efforts to reach clarity about what Canadian-ness means. They draw a link between colonization and immigration because of the shift from a Canada dominated by notions of French *Survivance* and the ties between English-Canadians and the British Empire to a multicultural Canada. Underscoring that a unified notion of Canadian national identity has always been difficult to grasp, they argue that the arrival of immigrants from a variety of countries requires a redefinition of previous

conceptions of Canadian-ness. The country's continuously changing demographics – from colonizers and English- and French-Canadians to immigrants of various ethnicities – requires that the question of Canadian-ness be revisited.

Literary theorists have also tackled the question of multiculturalism as official public policy. In response to the governmental acknowledgment of cultural diversity made in the Multiculturalism Policy and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, literary scholars have turned to these two official documents to discuss their impact on the peoples of Canada. More specifically, the Policy and the Act have stimulated a heated debate, with one side highlighting the positive aspects of multiculturalism and the other concentrating on its negative characteristics. Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott provide a summary of the dichotomous critiques of multiculturalism as a public policy. According to them, multiculturalism can be simultaneously divisive and unifying, marginalizing and inclusive, essentializing and hybridizing, a hoax and catalyst, and hegemonic and counter-hegemonic (108). Similar divisions characterize literary scholars who consider multiculturalism within a Canadian context. In the Canadian literary scholarship, scholars like Neil Bissoondaath, Smaro Kamboureli, and Graham Huggan present a very critical view of multiculturalism in Canada, stressing how it belittles the different or other. By contrast, Linda Hutcheon and Coral Ann Howells cast multiculturalism in a more positive light, emphasizing its great potential to make room for diversity in Canadian literature.[14]

[14] Because of Hutcheon's and Howell's focus on Canadian literature, their arguments will be discussed in the next section of this chapter, "2. Multiculturalism in the Canadian Literary Landscape."

Bissoondath's *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism* (1994) offers a subjective response to the repercussions of the Multiculturalism Act on the Canadian political and literary landscapes, which he sees as intertwined. In his emotional and personal account of how multiculturalism impacts identity (7), Bissoondath offers a two-sided interpretation of multiculturalism. On the one hand, he sees it as a lens through which individuals see, understand, and live Canada. On the other hand, through an analysis of historical documents, statistical data, and personal anecdotes, Bissoondath criticizes multiculturalism as being an official state policy that marginalizes otherness because it highlights difference and commodifies folkloric and heritage performances (83). Bissoondath is critical of the Multiculturalism Act's failure to provide an explicit definition of multiculturalism or multicultural society or explain the implications of a multicultural society for the peoples of Canada (39). In his critique, Bissoondath reads multiculturalism as a policy that aims to stop the full participation of immigrants in Canadian society (23). According to Bissoondath, Canada should accommodate newcomers and help them integrate into Canadian society by encouraging them to develop a new way of living and thinking, instead of promoting the retention of their cultural specificities. He argues that by concentrating on the there (the immigrant's country of origin) rather than the here (Canada), multiculturalism perpetuates the foreignness of subsequent generations. Consequently, it fosters cultural retention (122), emphasizing the ethnic rather than the national, and the belonging to a cultural community rather than Canadian society at large (230). Essentially, Bissoondath claims that multiculturalism fails because it does not foster a sense of national self that stands

apart from the old ethnic tradition (71). By doing so, multiculturalism is unable to successfully integrate immigrants into mainstream Canadian society. Mirroring the critiques of the objectives of Canadian multiculturalism as an official public policy, Bissoondath's interpretation of multiculturalism sees it as a policy that marginalizes others, instead of promoting inclusion.

In line with his critique of multiculturalism as a policy that marginalizes and commodifies forms of diversity, Bissoondath refuses an identifying attachment to his diverse roots. He claims that even though he was born Trinidadian, he is no longer Trinidadian (25), thus refusing a hyphenated identity to identify simply as Canadian.[15] His rejection of his hyphenation is a resistance to a nostalgic view of the immigrant's heritage. Focusing on the process of change that immigrants go through as individuals, he critiques the Multiculturalism Act for erroneously depicting immigrants as frozen in time, as people who do not and are not willing to change once they relocate to Canada (39). For Bissoondath, who claims that he did not experience a sense of alienation (19), home is Canada, not Trinidad. Describing the racial stereotypes he witnessed at York University, he explains that he stays away from associations that recognize him for what he is instead of who he is, because he does not want to join the ghetto of otherness (22). In other words, Bissoondath sees hyphenation as a burden that, if embraced, would drag him into the paralyzing and alienating immigrant condition promoted by multiculturalism.

[15] For a definition of "hyphenated identity," please see Chapter 2.

Graham Huggan highlights the role of Bissoondath's *Selling Illusions* in mobilizing public opinion and drawing attention to multicultural writing as a legitimate component of Canadian literature. According to Huggan, *Selling Illusions* illustrates "the politics of value that surrounds the production, distribution and reception of culturally 'othered' literary/cultural works" (138). On the one hand, Huggan criticizes Bissoondath for being susceptible to the same faults he outlines, such as the simplification and commodification of an ethnic culture, highlighting that his text is itself a commodity (141). On the other hand, Huggan shares Bissoondath's views on the failures of multiculturalism as an official public policy; he also claims that multiculturalism marginalizes ethnic groups by perpetuating stereotypes and simplifying cultural differences. He writes, 'ethnic' becomes the "racialized perception of the other" and ethnic minorities become "museums of exoticism" (139). Like Bissoondath, Huggan believes that multiculturalism commodifies ethnicity and spectacularizes the exotic, transforming people into "alternating objects of attraction and resentment" as it decontextualizes sociocultural experience (140). Spectacularization leads to a lack of inclusiveness (and its possibility) and any sense of belonging for the marginalized ethnic groups. Ultimately, the equity promoted on paper by the Multiculturalism Act is not only not guaranteed, but also discouraged.

In *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins* (2001), Huggan not only draws from and expands upon Bissoondath's *Selling Illusions*, but also provides an overview of the development of multiculturalism in Canada since the 1970s. In it, he adopts Stanley Fish's distinction between two types of American multiculturalism: the

superficial boutique multiculturalism, which emphasizes spectacle and the commodification of the cultural other through a focus on festivals and food, and the strong multiculturalism, which is respectful of differences because it fosters tolerance. According to Fish, neither version of multiculturalism is effective in promoting cultural difference because they cannot solve the conflicts between particularism and universalism and individual rights and collective goals (Huggan 124, Fish 378-382). For Fish, neither the boutique nor the strong multiculturalism can, in fact, "come to terms with difference" (384). More specifically, while the former is a simplistic celebration of diversity, the latter ultimately leads to the suppression of difference, and thus ultimately becomes an example of boutique multiculturalism. Fish believes that it is not sustainable to support all cultures and celebrate all difference because tolerance will at some point turn into intolerance: "the culture whose core values you are tolerating will reveal itself to be intolerant" (384).

In his account of the development of multiculturalism as a public policy, Huggan lists the three most common criticisms it received from both the Left and the Right political wings. First, multiculturalism segregates minority groups into ethnic compartments and promotes a nostalgic view of the past that does not take into consideration historical transformation. It also creates conflict between ethnic minority communities for governmental funding and, lastly, is discriminatory (130). Seeped in contradiction, multiculturalism fosters a contemporary "merchandising of multicultural products" and commodifies notions such as marginality, authenticity, and resistance (xiii). For Huggan, multiculturalism is an institutional practice that ghettoizes while also

promoting inclusion. It is a "discourse of desire," a desire "that other voices be heard, that non-mainstream views be included and celebrated," but that can and often does lead to exploitation and manipulation (153-4). Expanding on the common criticism of multiculturalism as a discriminatory practice, Huggan concedes that multiculturalism can work to establish tolerance only in societies that have yet to free themselves from a white-supremacist past, thus strongly suggesting that Canada has yet to do so. Describing multiculturalism as an "aestheticizing exoticist discourse," he emphasizes that it aims to hide racial tensions and celebrates cultural difference to mask the persistence of social issues such as discrimination (126). Accordingly, the ambiguity of multiculturalism makes it a "device for the maintenance of the white Anglophone status quo" (127-8), and not one that guarantees equity as promoted by the Act.

Smaro Kamboureli is equally critical of multiculturalism, claiming that multiculturalism in Canada has been identified as a threat to the development of a unified Canadian identity. She highlights that critics have seen it to be a policy of containment that will not allow the integration of other cultures into Canadian mainstream society (Kamboureli, *Intro I Making* xxix). Like Huggan, Kamboureli offers a critique and assessment of the official Canadian multiculturalism documents to highlight how multiculturalism emarginates, discriminates, and creates divisions between the Canadian others. First, Kamboureli claims that the main aim of the Multiculturalism Policy, which did not recognize an official culture or the predominance of an ethnic group in Canada, was to secure the ethnic vote (97-8). She then contends that the goal of the Multiculturalism Act was to maintain the status quo in Canada (99) by promoting

difference only to police minorities and protect the predominance of the English and French heritage groups. As a strategy of containment, multiculturalism subscribes to a "sedative" politics that "attempts to recognize ethnic differences, but only in a contained fashion, in order to manage them" (82). By controlling expressions of difference, the Multiculturalism Act therefore celebrates diversity, but only to ensure that the dominant societal structure is not disrupted.

Kamboureli also joins Bissoondath in his critique of multiculturalism as a policy that marginalizes otherness through the commodification of folkloric and heritage performances (109-10). For Kamboureli, in fact, through the heritage performances that receive patronage under the Multiculturalism Act, Canada promotes ethnicity while providing a space that highlights the visibility of minority Canadians as others. Her argument that the multiculturalism governmental documents exclude both the First Nations people and other ethnicities to foreground the French and the English as the dominant groups also aligns her interpretation with Huggan's critique of multiculturalism as public policy. She too highlights the discriminatory aspect of multiculturalism by asserting that the Multiculturalism Act is simply putting up a façade by promising equity, while actually reinforcing the gap between Canadians of French- and British-descent and all other Canadians.

Drawing from Homi Bhabha's notion of colonial mimicry, which describes the behaviour of the colonized that emulates and adopts the culture of the colonizer, Kamboureli argues that heritage performances function as diasporic mimicry. For Bhabha, mimicry is "the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a*

difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (*Location* 86, italics in original). While Bhabha argues that in mimicry there is ambivalence because by imitating the colonial culture the colonizer counterattacks and destabilizes the colonial gaze (88), in Kamboureli's diasporic mimicry existing power relations are not unsettled, but rather reinforced. According to Kamboureli, in the heritage display celebrated by multiculturalism, mimicry functions in a way that ethnic subjects mimic themselves "through a self-defined form of ethnicity" (*Scandalous Bodies* 110). Instead of unsettling the power dynamics between colonizer (mainstream Canadians) and colonized (ethnic groups), diasporic mimicry functions at the expense of the ethnic subjects; it reinforces ethnic stereotype. Consequently, the ethnic subject, and not the mainstream subject, loses agency.

Multiculturalism's diasporic mimicry gives rise to a split of the ethnic subject not only from the mainstream society, but also from within ethnic communities. For Kamboureli, multiculturalism promotes a homogenized ethnicity that "reflects a false community identity" (112). Recognizing ethnic difference only if the subject identifies with a specific ethnic community that is supposedly uniform, it fails to acknowledge difference within individual immigrant communities (for example, it sees Indo-Canadians as a uniform community). Multiculturalism's diasporic mimicry endorses a unified image of ethnic community that subjects cannot ascribe to, ultimately operating to separate not only the mainstream from the other, but also different types of other from each other.

2. Multiculturalism in Canada: The Literary Landscape

In spite of its numerous critiques, some scholars offer a more positive assessment of multiculturalism and encourage a reflection on the benefits it brings to the peoples of Canada. Linda Hutcheon and Coral Ann Howells, for instance, investigate the Canadian literary landscape to highlight how multiculturalism helps encourage diversity of voice and experience in Canadian literature. Hutcheon proposes that discussions of multiculturalism generated by the Multiculturalism Act have fostered an interest in Canadian diversity and a change in Canadian self-identification (*Other Solitudes* 14). For her, the discourse on multiculturalism, which led to a shift in how Canadians talk about Canadian-ness, has the potential to provide an opportunity for the voices of non-Anglo- and non-French-Canadians to be heard through the publication of texts like multicultural anthologies. Hutcheon defines this move towards inclusivity that could broaden the Canadian literary canon as a shift from the Two Solitudes to the Other Solitudes of Canada. Whereas *Two Solitudes* refers to the British and the French, and takes its name from Hugh MacLennan's homonymous 1945 novel that explores the conflict between English- and French-Canadian identities, *Other Solitudes* (which is the main title of the 1990 anthology edited by Hutcheon and Marion Richmond) addresses a multiracial and pluriethnic Canada where the creative work by writers from a multitude of ethnicities must be considered as belonging to Canadian literature (2). Even though Hutcheon acknowledges that multiculturalism has its own shortcomings such as the stereotyping and ghettoizing tendencies deriving from the policy (13), by highlighting its possible

benefits, she shows the potential of multiculturalism to amend its weaknesses through the embracing of diversity and the promotion of inclusiveness.

Howells joins Hutcheon to argue that multiculturalism in Canada has stimulated "a radical revision of the country's colonial image as a dominantly white English- and French-speaking nation" (*Refiguring Identities* 10). In their focus on the potential of multiculturalism to carve out a prominent space for diversity, both critics distance themselves from Kamboureli's perception of the Anglo-Saxon model of Canadian culture as still being normative. In particular, Howells, who writes in 2003, stresses the importance of the Multiculturalism Act in the "refiguring process" in Canada, which today is "plural" (19). According to Howells, this refiguring process entails a redefinition of the concept of Canadian-ness. In disagreement with Kamboureli and Huggan, she claims that multiculturalism is advantageous because it has changed the status quo, adding that it has also helped redefine Canadian nationhood and identity. Multiculturalism has made it possible to account for a concept of Canadian-ness that comprises national affiliation as well as race, ethnicity, and gender (1). For Howells, the increasing publication of immigrant and indigenous writers in Canada has significantly contributed to this new concept of Canadian-ness. According to her, the expansion of the Canadian canon with the inclusion of this writing whose value had been overlooked has led to a change in considerations of what constitutes Canadian Literature (10-1). It introduced a greater degree of inclusiveness in the Canadian socio-cultural landscape.

Despite an increased production in literature by writers who are not English- or French-Canadians, debates surrounding Canadian-ness and Canadian literature are far

from closed. Several critics have joined Hutcheon and Howells to celebrate the shift from the Two Solitudes to the Other Solitudes, arguing that in a multicultural Canadian landscape the opposition between French- and English-Canada is no longer perceived as "centrally defining" (Conrick and Regan 53). However, critics like Connie Guzzo-McParland still lament the exclusion of immigrant writers from the Canadian literary scene. She claims that labels such as 'immigrant' are used to stunt their complete participation in the literary landscape, and points out that even second- and third-generation writers who do not explore questions of immigrant identity in their works still tend to be labeled as immigrant. She challenges us to think about who should be considered a "real" Canadian: "Let's face it: how many 'real' Canadian writers who write about sense of belonging, search for identity or intergenerational clashes can claim not being descendants of immigrants?".

The 1990s debate on the Canadian literary canon led by scholars Robert Lecker and Frank Davey continues to deeply impact understandings of what constitutes Canadian literature (CanLit).[16] Its focus is the very controversial attempt of the 1978 Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel to establish a list of Canadian classics and thus create a Canadian literary canon. During the conference, participants were asked to identify the one hundred most important works of Canadian fiction and the ten best Canadian novels of all time. Such an endeavor has been vastly criticized, with Lecker

[16] For Robert Lecker and Frank Davey's theorizations on the Canadian canon and consequent debate, see Frank Davey's "Surviving the Paraphrase" (1976) and "It's a Wonderful Life: Robert Lecker's Canadian Canon" (1994); and Robert Lecker's "The Canonization of Canadian Literature: An Inquiry into Value" (1990) and "Nobody Gets Hurt Bullfighting Canadian-Style: Rereading Frank Davey's "Surviving the Paraphrase."" (1993).

claiming that the canon deriving from the Calgary conference is merely an "institutional construct" (*Canonization* 28). For instance, Lecker points out how experimental writers were excluded from the canon because they "have found their models and sources of inspiration outside the country" (Lecker 43). To equate the experimental to "antirealist, anticonservative, anti-Canadian" (44) is to suggest that foreignness has no place in the Canadian literary canon. Lecker also critiques the conference for its promotion of an environment where the institution-canonizer (universities, academic presses, and academics) uses the canon to endorse its values, that is, its conservativeness (30). For Lecker, the canon is as conservative as the institutions that established it: "The power of the canon and the power of its members are inseparable: the institution is the canon; its members are the texts" (27).

Davey critiques Lecker for concentrating on a few critics (such as Frye) as representative of Canadian criticism (*Wonderful Life* 48-50) and thus failing to engage with the scholarship that had already challenged the canon. In addition, Davey considers Lecker to be subject to the same faults that he recognizes in the canonizers. In particular, his involvement with ECW Press undermines the reliability of his arguments by associating him with the same group of individuals he criticizes: universities, presses, and academics (60-2). Essentially, Lecker and Davey's debate on the canon becomes a heated exchange not on the composition and/or inclusiveness of the canon, but on each other's involvement and contribution to the literary industry.

Kamboureli, in "Canadian Ethnic Anthologies: Representations of Ethnicity" (1994), laments that Lecker and Davey do not discuss the exclusion of ethnic writing in

their extensive theorizations on the Canadian literary canon. Indeed, in Davey's and Lecker's many essays on the Canadian canon, ethnic writing is only marginally mentioned (Davey, *Wonderful Life* 46; Lecker, *Canonization* 44), and no mention is made as to how such writing can be included in the canon. Just as the government's acknowledgment of multiculturalism does not lead to a change in governmental practice, both the theorizing of multiculturalism by the institution-canonizer and Lecker and Davey's debate on the canon itself do not translate into a Canadian canon that avoids the marginalization or exclusion of ethnic writing.

Davey goes so far as to position himself against opening up the canon to Canadian ethnic writing. Emphasizing the exclusion of writers considered other from the canon, Arun Mukherjee joins Kamboureli in criticizing Davey's argument that literary works such as those of Nino Ricci, Moyez G. Vassanji, and Rohinton Mistry contain "few if any significations of Canada or of Canadian polity" (Davey qtd. in Mukherjee 257). More specifically, in Davey's interpretation, for an experience to be truly Canadian it has to be one that is not impacted by the plurality of cultures that characterize the Canadian environment. It has to, for example, be free of the Italian-Canadian experience discussed in Ricci's works or the Indo-Canadian experience examined in Mistry's novels (what I refer to as a hyphenated experience in chapter 2). Mukherjee strongly opposes Davey's belief that these texts should be pushed to the margins of Canadian literature, and that, in order to belong to Canadian literature, a literary text should focus on mainstream Canadian content and experience instead.

Starting in the 1990s, several scholars – including Natalia Aponiuk, Arun Mukherjee, Enoch Padolsky, Joseph Pivato, and Tulasi Srivastava[17] – joined Kamboureli in highlighting the exclusion of other Canadians from the literary canon. According to Padolsky, minority writing has been either relegated to "sub-categories" of the mainstream (25), despite constantly changing demographics that have altered the Canadian landscape, or ignored altogether. He notes that there is a tendency on the part of literary scholars, including Margaret Atwood, Northrop Frye, W.J. Keith, and Maurice Lemire, to exclude minority writing from the mainstream discourse because it is believed to be concerned with issues specific to ethnic and immigrant communities rather than with those of mainstream Canada–that of Anglo- and French-Canadians (*Pluralistic Approach* 24-7, 35). To rectify this situation, Padolsky calls for an updating of traditional approaches to the theorization of Canadian literature, which are greatly influenced by Atwood and Frye, that fail to provide a thorough literary critical framework that addresses Canada's cultural pluralism. His main critique of these approaches is that they are either focused on defining a national identity and establishing a Canadian mainstream unified by "national … theses" or that they concentrate on French-Canadian literature that tackles questions of independence and "French 'survivance' on a continent of 'Anglais'" (24). Padolsky acknowledges that authors like Susanna Moodie, who published *Roughing It in the Bush* in 1852, continue to exert a strong influence on Canadian literature. Such authors show how the connection to Britain and the adjustment

[17] Srivastava suggests that South-Asian-Canadian women are not identified as totally Canadian, but are instead defined "against [their] Canadianness" (135-6).

to the Canadian landscape shaped identity and "marked the changing boundaries and ethnic characteristics of the developing British-Canadian ethnicity" (28). However, he argues that since the 19th century cultural diversity in Canada has increased, and that Canadian authors, including those considered immigrant others, write of experiences that are grounded in diversity and multiculturalism. Consequently, their literary productions need to be taken into consideration in theorizations on Canadian literature in order to provide a thorough depiction of the Canadian literary landscape (30, 37-8).

Padolsky concedes that the policy of multiculturalism has somewhat helped the dissemination of minority writing because of increased production and publication and also because of the acknowledgment of the importance of writers such as Nino Ricci and Josef Škvorecký, who have received literary prizes and are often included in course syllabi. However, he claims that much still needs to be done to change the critical conceptualization of Canadian literature before it can thoroughly reflect the multiplicity of ethnicities that make up Canada (24). Ultimately, Padolsky argues for the necessity of a pluralistic approach to Canadian literature that would bring minority writing "out of an 'ethnic' periphery and into a common 'Canadian' centre" (34). Such an approach would foster a more balanced discussion of majority and minority writing, offering a comparative analysis that would enrich the investigation of Canadian literature and render it more complete (34, 37-8).

Padolsky suggests substituting *mainstream* with *ethnic majority* and *ethnic writers/writing* with *ethnic minority*, arguing that while all Canadians "share the common characteristic of ethnicity" (because they are all ethnic in some way, whether they belong

to a majority or a minority group), they occupy different social statuses. However, despite Padolsky's argument that such terminology would avoid the marginalization of minority writers (25-6), it nonetheless emphasizes their minority position and therefore lower status (see Pivato, *Echo* 47). Even though a cross-cultural pluralistic approach to Canadian literature could definitely provide a more thorough depiction of the Canadian literary landscape, arguing for the conservation of terms like *minority* and *majority* leads to a perpetuation of a binary discussion of us versus them.

Kamboureli's *Making a Difference* also aims to expose the institutional structures of nation and literary canon as "volatile constructs" (xii). In joining the debate on the perception of multicultural voices in Canada and their (non-)inclusion in the canon, Kamboureli observes that the *Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada* (2002) still does not include the literature written by "ethnic groups that arrived after the first British and French settlers" as a part of mainstream Canadian literature (xv). The encyclopedia's exclusion of ethnic writers is a very telling example of the persistence of a traditional notion of the canon as mainly Anglo- and French-Canadian. It speaks volumes to the fact that even though talking about otherness may help promote ethnic writing, their presentation and assessment as minority writers in much of the scholarship confirms their marginal status. So, although the stage has been set for writing by Canadian immigrant voices to come into visibility and stand side by side other Canadian literature, there is a ways to go before ethnic literary works are considered to be as Canadian as those written by Anglo- and French-Canadians.

The 1990s, a decade characterized by heavy debate about the effects of multiculturalism on the political and literary landscapes, also mark the publication of the first anthologies of Canadian multicultural writing. These anthologies, which attest to the growing corpus of literary works by Canadian 'other' writers, include Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond's *Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions* (1990) and Smaro Kamboureli's *Making a Difference: Canadian Multicultural Literature* (1996). In their attempt to highlight the diversity that characterizes the Canadian literary landscape, both anthologies collect literary works from Canadian authors of various origins. Anthologies collecting works by other writers were not alone in embracing diversity. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, several national hyphenated anthologies specific to distinct immigrant literary communities were published.[18] These national hyphenated anthologies mark focused attempts to establish several minority literatures, including the Italian-Canadian, Ukrainian-Canadian, Portuguese-Canadian, East-Asian-Canadian, South-Asian-Canadian, and Caribbean-Canadian, that I analyse in this dissertation.

[18] These 'national' anthologies include, for Italian-Canadian literature: Pier Giorgio Di Cicco's *Roman Candles: An Anthology of Poems by Seventeen Italo-Canadian Poets* (1978) and Joseph Pivato's *The Anthology of Italian-Canadian Writing* (1998); East-Asian-Canadian literature: Stephen Gill's *Green Snow: Anthology of Canadian Poets of Asian Origin* (1976), *Inalienable Rice* (1979), and Lee Bennett and Jim Wong-Chu's *Many-Mouthed Birds* (1991); South-Asian-Canadian literature: Diane McGifford's *The Geography of Voice: Canadian Literature of the South Asian Diaspora* (1992) and Suwanda Sugunasiri's *The Whistling Thorn: An Anthology of South Asian Canadian Fiction* (1994); Caribbean-Canadian Literature: Camille Haynes's *Black Chat: An Anthology of Black Poets* (1973), Liz Cromwell's *One Out of Many: A Collection of Writings by 21 Black Women in Ontario* (1975), and Harold Head's *Canada in Us Now: The First Anthology of Black Poetry and Prose in Canada* (1976); Ukrainian-Canadian Literature: Jars Balan and Yuri Klynovyĭ's *Yarmarok: Ukrainian Writing in Canada since the Second World War* (1987), Jars Balan and G. Louise Jonasson's "Echoes from Ukrainian Canada" (1992), Larissa M. L. Zaleska-Onyshkevych's *An Anthology of Modern Ukrainian Drama* (1998), and Michael M. Naydan's *Herstories: An Anthology of New Ukrainian Women Prose Writers* (2014); Portuguese-Canadian Literature: Fernanda Viveiros' *Memória: An Anthology of Portuguese Canadian Writers* (2013) and Luis Gonçalves and Carlo Matos' *Writers of the Portuguese Diaspora in the United States and Canada: An Anthology* (2015).

Although the publication of multicultural anthologies and hyphenated anthologies highlights an increased awareness of ethnic writers in Canada, it does not efface their categorization as minority or the labeling of their work as other (i.e. apart) from the mainstream. In his analysis of the literary landscape of Canada and Australia, Huggan points out that the 1980s and 1990s multicultural anthologies are supported by smaller presses and government funding, while major presses tend to support writers who distance themselves from their heritage (133). In her introduction to the first edition of *Making a Difference* (1996), Kamboureli asserts that in 1996 we are still far from the perception of Canadian literature as multicultural, even though that is how CanLit is and should be seen. Turning her attention to understandings of multiculturalism as a term that depicts the diversity of the Canadian population, Kamboureli joins Padolsky in arguing that although multicultural writers at that time had already started to win Canadian literary prizes, and therefore the value of their work had been partly recognized, the Canadian literary establishment had not fully acknowledged the importance of indigenous writers and writers of non-Anglo-Celtic background in the definition and composition of Canadian literature (Kamboureli, Introduction 1st ed. *Making*, xviii). Diversity is key in discussions of multiculturalism.

Kamboureli acknowledges both the role of the scholarship on multicultural writing in celebrating and promoting its contribution to Canadian literature and its limitations in starting to redefine what Canadian literature is. She points to changes that took place in the late 1980s, when some writers that had been "traditionally excluded from mainstream representation" began to appear in Canadian literature course syllabi,

only to show that although they were a step closer to redefining Canadian literature, many of these attempts actually marginalized these writers by casting them as a part of a minority / cultural group, thus highlighting their marginality and non-inclusion in the mainstream (xx). The amount and type of critical response to multicultural writing has increased since then thanks to the publication of ethnic and indigenous literary anthologies and bibliographies and because of the organization of conferences and gatherings aimed at resisting the stereotypical reception of their works. However, according to Kamboureli and Padolsky, much more still needs to be achieved in repositioning Canadian literature from a literature written by and depicting Anglo- and French-Canadians to one encompassing a more complete notion of Canadian-ness that reflects, celebrates, and enhances the diversity that is at its core.

In the introduction to her second revised edition of *Making a Difference* (2006), Kamboureli explains that the collection was a response to the cultural climate of the period. During the mid-1980s and 1990s, when those works were written and published, the focus of the anxiety surrounding Canadian identity was the tension between dominant and minority cultures in political, social, and cultural events (such as the Multiculturalism Act and multicultural conferences). To avoid reinforcing stereotypical images attached to the minority cultural communities of Canada, Kamboureli does not classify writers according to cultural groups. Instead, she organizes the material chronologically, according to the date of birth of the authors, in a way that highlights inclusion and expands the canon rather than reducing it to a sum of separate ethnic categories. In addition, she stresses that even though the authors whose works are collected in *Making a*

Difference have different reactions to ethnic labels, an anxiety "about any homogeneous image of Canadian culture" characterizes their writing. Kamboureli suggests that the diversity within multicultural groups–which are far from heterogeneous–(xxi) should not be seen a barrier (xxiii). Diversity is precisely what makes the Canadian landscape so culturally rich.

Scholars like Howells argue that the 1990s helped reshape the meaning of Canadian-ness as a concept affected not only by national affiliation, but also by ethnicity (1-4). Several years have passed since the first anthologies of Canadian multicultural literature, and the publication of literary works by Canadian ethnic writers has certainly increased over the past thirty years. Today multiculturalism, understood as a "defining" characteristic of Canada (Griffith i) and of its diversity, seems to be "largely accepted by Canadians" (6). However, understandings of Canadian-ness still point to the English and French and the descendants of the colonizers as quintessentially Canadian. In her study on Canadian literary anthologies from 1920 to 2004, Nieto laments that ethnic and women writers "have been either intermittently considered, misrepresented or excluded from anthologization, and consequently from Canadian literary history, tradition, and identity" (176). The fact that anthologies (editors and literary institutions) fail to recognize the diversity of the Canadian literary landscape speaks not only to the strength of tradition, but also to the reluctance to see Canada and its literature as multicultural. More specifically, Nieto's description of how Canadian literary anthologies exclude ethnic writers (except in the case of anthologies that are specifically multicultural, such as Hutcheon and Richmond's *Other Solitudes* and Kamboureli's *Making a Difference*) calls

to mind Lecker's observation that foreignness is avoided in the canon, and that the limited space devoted to women and other minority groups is comparable to a consolation prize aimed to give an exotic flavor to the canon (see Lecker 44). Another recent example is Donna Bennett and Russell M. Brown's fourth edition of *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, which was first published in 1982 and then revised in 1990, 2002, and 2019. Even though the 2019 edition claims to contain "diverse selections by writers of a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds," it does not include most of the Canadian authors of ethnic origin that have contributed to the Canadian literary scene. Latvian-Canadian writer David Bezmozgis is the only ethnic writer newly added to the fourth edition. However, many more ethnic authors have contributed to the Canadian literary landscape between 2002 and 2019, and even prior to those dates. Award-winning authors such as Nino Ricci, Rawi Hage, Anosh Irani, Shyam Selvadurai, Vincent Lam, and David Chariandy (among others) never made it into the anthology, despite being recipients of the Governor General's Literary Awards.

The debate about what constitutes Canadian literature and Canadian-ness is not confined to the 1990s and the early 2000s, but continues to be widely investigated in relation to the exclusion of immigrant writers from the canon. Again, the main question being asked is who, specifically, can be defined as Canadian. That the debate about Canadian-ness and Canadian literature seems to be never-ending may have to do with the fact that Canada "is changing around us even as we speak, stirring up a host of conflicting ideas and interests, and to look for an essence, a core, a central notion within that whirlwind is surely an illusion. To define this country or its literature seems like

putting a finger on Zeno's arrow: no sooner do you think you have done it that it has moved on" (Vassanjii 7). Perhaps, as Vassanjii's statement suggests, a very flexible approach to Canadian-ness is required since it is not a static concept, but it changes across time.

Drawing from and expanding upon Miriam Verena Richter's description of the three nuances of multiculturalism and the multicultural, in this dissertation, I define multiculturalism in Canada as the existence of an environment characterized by cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity, where the population's Canadian-ness is influenced by the history of immigration in Canada and the encounter between different cultures leads not to their simple coexistence, but to a mutually influencing relationship that shapes Canadian identity. In this dissertation, I consider the representation of hyphenated identity in several Canadian immigrant novels written between 1982 and 2009 to examine how the hyphen is entangled in discussions of multiculturalism. More specifically, I argue that the hyphen is the space of identity construction of hyphenated characters in a multicultural Canada, where there is a mutually influencing relationship between the cultural components connected by the hyphen and all Canadians. The contemporary perception of hyphenated Canadians–and consequently hyphenated characters–makes it necessary to investigate the hyphen and hyphenated identities in Canadian literature today. It urges the examination of both the mutually influencing relationship between 'mainstream' and 'other' Canadians and the contribution of the hyphen to shaping today's multicultural Canada.

While chapter 2 will concentrate on the hyphen and hyphenated identity, chapters 3, 4, and 5 will investigate food and foodways as they intertwine with literary representations of multiculturalism and Canadian identity. In the books I study, food features as much more than "the food of regions" (Elton ix); instead, it is "highly multicultural, incorporating recipes from around the world using local ingredients to create an emerging creole that stuns with its ingenuity and devotion to the fresh, the local, and the wild. Canada is a mosaic of evolving culinary traditions held together by the land itself" (Newman 9). Newman aptly highlights the connection between multiculturalism, food, and identity by stating that Canada "is known as a mosaic rather than a melting pot, and how we embrace new foods reflects this" (14). The food practices described in the novels that I examine in this dissertation show the emergence of a hyphenated Canadian cuisine that is very much multicultural, where ingredients and dishes belonging to different cultures blend, but also still maintain its distinctiveness.

Chapter 2: The Hyphen in Contemporary Canadian Immigrant Novels

1. The Hyphen in Canada

The Canadian emphasis on multiculturalism has alluded to the concepts of hyphen and hyphenated identity in both the socio-political and literary landscapes. In these cursory discussions, the hyphen is both criticized and celebrated and, just as with multiculturalism, its interpretation has changed across time. There is as yet no consensus about what the hyphen refers to precisely and, by extension, what hyphenated identities are. Given the ambiguity surrounding the hyphen's meaning, the main goal of this chapter is to offer a working definition of the concept. More specifically, after providing an overview of how the hyphen has been discussed in the Canadian socio-political and literary landscapes, the chapter will propose definitions for hyphen and hyphenated identity and address what it means to go beyond the hyphen. Lastly, it will conclude by explaining why addressing the hyphen is relevant in Canadian immigrant literature.

Critical thinkers in the Canadian socio-political landscape still do not agree on whether *hyphen* is an effective term when talking about Canadians born to immigrant parents or in other countries. The differing stances or sides of the conversation are not well-defined, but there seems to be a tendency to describe the hyphen either positively, as a bridge, or negatively, as a division. Writing about Canadian identity, Eric Andrew-Gee stresses the transitioning of the hyphen from an exclusionary element that separates out one group from another to a bridge that connects individuals. However, the history of the hyphen is far from being a linear passage from a marker of division to one of connection,

and very different perspectives and theorizations emerge even among scholars who lean towards one of these two interpretations.

John Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada from 1957 to 1963, is among the first to address (and reject) the hyphen and its relation to the concept of hyphenated identity in Canada. In an interview during the 1958 election campaign, Diefenbaker explains his reasons for becoming a lawyer and going into politics:

> It was all determined for me. I determined myself that that was the thing I was going to do – and I determined that because of my being of mixed racial origin. I am the first prime minister of this country of neither altogether English nor French origin … I never deviated from that course, and I determined to bring about a Canadian citizenship that knew no hyphenated consideration. (57-8).

Diefenbaker refers to his "mixed racial origin" because he is a hyphenated Canadian himself, born in Canada but of Scottish and German descent. Significantly, in the same interview, Diefenbaker addresses his "intensive hatred for discrimination based on color" (56). For him, race is not only rooted in the colour of one's skin; it encompasses immigrants (and their descendants) who are discriminated against because of their ethnicity. In his refusal of the hyphen, Diefenbaker contends that accentuating hyphenated identity may lead to the discrimination of Canadians of mixed origins. For him, addressing the hyphen in relation to identity implies highlighting ethnic diversity as a negative connotation, rather than celebrating it as a defining feature of Canada.

George Elliott Clarke is one of several thinkers who factors Diefenbaker's stance into his discussion of Canada's hyphenation, acknowledging the importance of

Diefenbaker in bringing this notion to light in Canada (others include Eric Andrew-Gee and Gordon J. Chong). A seventh-generation Canadian of mixed African-American and Mi'kmaq Amerindian heritage, Clarke maintains that Diefenbaker's rejection of the hyphen is similar to US President Theodore Roosevelt's condemnation of the configuration of American immigrants as hyphenated. More specifically, Clarke claims that both Diefenbaker and Roosevelt see hyphenation as a way to create divisions among individuals because it can harm nationalism by accentuating a diversified, highly non-homogeneous population whose allegiances may be divided. He points out that Roosevelt had argued that "there is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism ... The one absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin, of preventing all possibility of its continuing to be a nation at all, would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities" (qtd. in Clarke, *Directions* 239). In other words, in his celebration of American nationalism, Roosevelt rejected ideas of hyphenated Americanism, instead embracing a notion of mainstream Americans, of people who identify with the nation, rather than with cultural ties to another country. For Clarke, Diefenbaker's nationalism follows Roosevelt's by promoting a "singular Canadian identity" (238) that is not divided into different types of Canadians with loyalties to different countries.

While Diefenbaker draws from Roosevelt (as suggested by Clarke) and also from another US President, Woodrow Wilson, in his support of Canadian nationalism, his rejection of the hyphen is not a rejection of hyphenated Canadians in favour of a mainstream Canadian-ness. Despite their shared stance against hyphenation, Diefenbaker's position is significantly different from the standpoints of both US

President Theodore Roosevelt and US President Woodrow Wilson after him. In 1915, President Roosevelt professed that "There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism … a hyphenated American is not an American at all" (qtd. in "Roosevelt Bars the Hyphenated" 1). Four years later, Wilson echoed this view: "I cannot say too often – any man who carries a hyphen about with him carries a dagger that he is ready to plunge into the vitals of this Republic whenever he gets ready." Unlike Roosevelt and Wilson, who explicitly reject the postulation of hyphenated identities because they harm the notion of mainstream American-ness, Diefenbaker opposes hyphenation because he equates it with discrimination. In this sense, Diefenbaker's is an attempt to highlight the ethnic diversity of Canada and promote the inclusion of mixed individuals into what it means to be Canadian. For Diefenbaker, unity of nation requires a common, shared, binding identity that tolerates and accepts diversity. Ultimately, the different perspectives of the Americans Roosevelt and Wilson and the Canadian Diefenbaker highlight a fundamental distinction between the American melting pot and the Canadian mosaic: while in the United States the focus has historically been on assimilation, Canada has instead promoted an idea of inclusion that embraces diversity.[19]

Although the hyphen has repeatedly resurfaced in a Canadian context in the decades following Diefenbaker's stance, to my knowledge there has not been a debate devoted entirely to its definition or relevance. Instead, discussions on the hyphen have been woven into debates on how to address multiculturalism and immigration. It is

[19] The difference between the American melting pot and the Canadian mosaic is also recognizable in the Unites States' and Canada's approaches to foodways (see Newman). I will focus on foodways and the way they inform representations of the hyphen and hyphenated identity in the next three chapters.

therefore difficult to provide a detailed map of how the term has been used from the 1960s to today. However, generally speaking, discussions about the hyphen tend to be separated out between those against its use, those in favour of the hyphen, and those who embrace a more nuanced approach that neither accepts nor rejects the hyphen. Non-academic magazine articles and online contributions present varied and conflicting opinions on the hyphen. They evince a pronounced distinction between those who attempt to navigate different approaches to the hyphen (such as the Asia/Canada website), those who reject it (such as politicians Gordon J. Chong, Michael Chong, Michael Adams, and Ratna Omidvar), and those who support it (such as Aggarwal-Schifellite, Jack Jedwab, Eva Sajoo, and Marcus Medford).

The website Asia/Canada stresses the increased diversity of the Canadian population resulting from the emergence of multiculturalism. Its authors propose that in today's Canada, where different cultures intertwine on a daily basis and mixed couples have reached an unprecedented number, the use of the hyphen depends on the "sensitivities … brought into play." In particular, these sensitivities have to do with how people understand and interpret the hyphen, on whether they see it as a discriminatory label that highlights the difference between 'other' Canadians and Anglo- / French-Canadians or as a way to celebrate the rich diversity of Canada by linking the different components that make up the hyphenated identity of all Canadians. This distinction is helpful because it elucidates the concentration on difference or diversity of those who speak against or in favour of the hyphen.

On the one hand, those against the hyphen reject it principally because they believe it hinders the idea of Canadian unity and collectiveness. In a 2009 opinion piece, Toronto politician Gordon J. Chong advocates for the abolishment of any reference to the hyphen in Canada. More specifically, he laments that its use categorizes Canadians of different origins, "dilutes the significance of Canadian citizenship and is actually inaccurate." Without going into details, Chong claims that "Canada needs unhyphenated, unconditional Canadians." His assertion resembles Diefenbaker's nationalistic stance, as Chong refuses the hyphen altogether because he believes it leads to a classification of different backgrounds that risks distancing Canadians from a collective idea of Canadian-ness. A similar objection to the hyphen is raised by Michael Chong, who claims that the hyphen hinders the formulation of a "common Canadian identity" because it separates ethnic minorities from the Anglo and French founding groups. More specifically, he interprets hyphenation as a threat to Canadian unity, arguing that "We must move beyond thinking of identity in ethnic terms, and start talking of a common Canadian identity." However, while Chong recognizes the importance of a common Canadian identity, by identifying only visible minorities as hyphenated Canadians, he fails to acknowledge that all Canadians are actually hyphenated (even Anglo- and French-Canadians).[20]

[20] It is important to remember that the three founding peoples of Canada are Aboriginal, French, and English (*Discover Canada* 10). While Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) are not normally referred to as "Aboriginal-Canadian," Canadians of French and British origin are often referred to as "French-Canadian" and "English-Canadian," expressions that are at times confused with Francophone –that is a Canadian who speaks French as their first language– or Anglophone –a Canadian who speaks English as their first language.

Similar resistance to the hyphen extends beyond the early 2000s when hundreds of thousands of immigrants came to Canada (see Appendix B). In 2018, politicians like Michael Adams and Ratna Omidvar still interpreted the notion of hyphenated identity as a negative label that leads to division. They critique Maxime Bernier who, as they state, believes that "multiculturalism is a divisive policy that encourages Canadians to identify with their own 'tribes' at the expense of their [sic] wider society." Their stance is that "far from dividing Canadians into factions and hyphenated identities, multiculturalism (or 'interculturalism' in Quebec) actually encourages belonging, participation and integration". Even though Adams and Omidvar embrace multiculturalism and recognize its potential to foster a sense of belonging, they nonetheless interpret the hyphen as dividing and highlighting difference instead of uniting Canadians.

By contrast, those in favour of the hyphen stress how rather than being a discriminatory tool, it at once describes and creates connections between individuals of different heritages. For example, Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite, a hyphenated Canadian who identifies as a "walking hyphen" and as a "member of the hyphenated near-majority," approaches the hyphen as an "equalizer." Highlighting the significance and predominance of hyphenated individuals in the Canadian landscape, Aggarwal-Schifellite argues that the hyphen is the best way to express the complex and rich identity of Canadians because it gives new identities to individuals who have personal and cultural ties to several countries. A similar perspective is conveyed by Jack Jedwab, who argues that those opposed to the hyphen, "the architects of the campaign that sought to have the population declare that they were just Canadian," inadvertently helped strengthen

hyphenated identities because they brought to the forefront the abundance of Canadians who identify with "dual and / or multiple" cultural components. The approaches of Aggarwal-Schifellite and Jedwab aptly reflect how the hyphen fully conveys the multiplicity of ethnicities that make up the Canadian population, and how Canada's complicated history of colonization and multiculturalism and its extreme diversity make it a nation of hyphens. Indeed, nowadays at least over 20% of the population is in fact foreign-born and ethnically varied, and it has been predicted that "By 2031, nearly half (46%) of Canadians aged 15 and older could be foreign-born, or could have at least one foreign-born parent, up from 39% in 2006" (Statistics Canada, *Ethnic Diversity and Immigration*) (see Appendix B).

Eva Sajoo also supports the idea of a hyphenated Canada. In 2018, she compiled *Being Canadian: The Future of a Hyphenated Nation*, a report that presents the results of a survey she administered with the aim to expose what Canadian identity is to Canadians, and whether it is possible to identify values that are typically Canadian (11). In it, Sajoo stresses how immigrants to Canada may experience a lack of economic access because their credentials are often not recognized, and that this may influence their participation (and marginalization) in Canadian society (9). While it is commendable that the report sets out to identify what Canadian identity means in a hyphenated Canada, it presents a number of shortcomings or flaws. To begin with, nearly 90% of the 263 individuals surveyed are from British Columbia, and the survey is therefore problematic because of its regional specificity (12). In addition, considering that the population of British Columbia was over 4.9 million when the survey was administered in 2017 and that the

population of Canada was 36.54 million at that time, the sample size seems too small to reach strong conclusions (being less than 0.0053% of the population of British Columbia). The report also equates Muslim Canadians and "non-white ethnicities," as it groups together accounts of religious discrimination involving Muslim Canadians in Quebec and that of a woman who requested that her child be seen by a "white doctor" in a walk-in-clinic in Ontario (7-8). Unfortunately, reports such as these are problematic because they continue to perpetuate stereotypes based on religion and ethnicity in their own investigations, thus hindering models that celebrate diversity and inclusion.

In spite of its limitations, Sajoo's report provides a helpful reference to Guy Lawson's comments on Justin Trudeau's belief in a pan-cultural heritage. Lawson outlines Trudeau's vision of Canada as "a new kind of state, defined not by its European history but by the multiplicity of its identities from all over the world." Lawson goes on to quote Trudeau, who argued that "There is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada …There are shared values – openness, respect, compassion, willingness to work hard, to be there for each other, to search for equality and justice. Those qualities are what make us the first postnational state." Even though Trudeau does not explicitly mention the hyphen, his emphasis on the lack of a Canadian core identity seems to point towards it. In fact, his theorization of Canada as a postnational[21] state positions him in

[21] The term postnationalism has received an increased amount of critical attention since the early 2000s. See Jürgen Habermas' *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays* (2001), Ronald Niezen's *A World beyond Difference: Cultural Identity in the Age of Globalization* (2004), Thomas Faist and Peter Kivisto's *Dual Citizenship in Global Perspective: From Unitary to Multiple Citizenship* (2007) and Augie Fleras' *Immigration Canada: Evolving Realities and Emerging Challenges in a Postnational World* (2015).

opposition to Diefenbaker's nationalist stance; it implies that he is pro-hyphen in his promotion of diversity. Throughout his speech, Trudeau celebrates Canada and its successful model of integration and inclusion, which he claims sets it apart from other countries. For him, a Canadian identity is characterized by shared values across a multiplicity of identity formations.

Journalist Marcus Medford, who is concerned with the preservation of cultural heritage, is also pro-hyphen. In his explanation of what hyphenated Canadian means, Medford highlights citizenship as an essential component of being hyphenated Canadian. He defines hyphenated Canadians as Canadian citizens who were born in another country or "whose ethnic background is not Canadian." However, his own attempts at self-identification are filled with ambiguity and seem to contradict his own stance towards hyphenation. Growing up, Medford defined himself "half-Trinidadian, half-Jamaican" despite acknowledging that his life in Canada, in addition to his family heritage, has also deeply "shaped [his] experiences and value system." However, in a comment about his article, he states that he identifies as Canadian when travelling abroad, which stands in contradiction with his statement that adopting "the identity of the country [one is] living in and only identify[ing] as such … is inaccurate." This confused logic and ambiguity testify to the complexity and difficulty of providing a definition of what it means to be hyphenated in a Canadian context.

Medford's claim that the hyphen "can be a way to take pride in one's heritage – or an invitation to learn more about it" is most significant insofar as it echoes other interpretations of the hyphen as a bridge. Stopping to consider those who are opposed to

hyphenation, Medford claims that they tend to be supporters of assimilation, which "has a dangerous past" in Canada and can lead to a "silencing of cultures."[22] More specifically, he draws from a conversation he had with Don Curry, a journalist from the New Canadian Media Collective, to support his stance towards the hyphen.[23] According to Curry, Canada "is a nation of immigrants and everyone, except Indigenous people, came from somewhere else. The only difference is when you came." By confirming Curry's claim that everyone except Indigenous people in Canada are from elsewhere, Medford highlights how diversity, multiculturalism, and the hyphen are essential to understanding Canadian-ness and Canadian identity.

In the Canadian literary scene, Canadian authors Joy Kogawa and Fred Wah are both strong advocates for the hyphen and accentuate its privileged place in their understanding of what it means to be Canadian. While Kogawa accentuates the potential of the hyphen to create connections between peoples of different heritages, Wah, in his attempt to challenge traditional ideas of multiculturalism, oscillates between a multifaceted conception of the hyphen as simultaneously and/or asynchronously a bridge and/or a division.[24]

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[22] Medford includes a hyperlink to a website that examines the policy of Aboriginal assimilation implemented by John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, in the late 1800s. The website explains that "The essence of the policy of Aboriginal assimilation is that Indigenous Peoples in Canada have no rights unless they assimilate and become Canadian (enfranchisement)" (caid.ca).

[23] The New Canadian Media Collective is a group of journalists "who can generate local content from a variety of ethnocultural perspectives" (*New Canadian Media*).

[24] Susanne Hilf notes how Wah challenges the Multiculturalism Act by arguing that it sees cultures as unchangeable, while they are dynamic, and that *Diamond Grill* becomes an example of what Homi Bhabha defines as "counter narratives of the nation," that is, narratives that help redefine the concept of nation itself by rejecting essentialist ideas of identity (151-5).

Joy Kogawa, a second-generation Japanese-Canadian (Nisei) born in Vancouver in 1935 who was removed from her home and interned during the Second World War with her first-generation Japanese-Canadian (Issei) parents (Young), offers a comprehensive depiction of what 'Canadian-ness' means by presenting the hyphen as a bridge between cultures. In response to "What makes a story Canadian?," a question posed in an interview with Magdalene Redekop, Kogawa answers that Aunt Emily, a character she portrays in her semi-autobiographical *Obasan* (1981) and its sequel *Itsuka* (1992),[25] tells another character, Naomi, that "a Canadian is a hyphen." Kogawa does not explicitly define what she means by hyphen, but explicitly associates it with a bridge, further explaining that Aunt Emily (who works for an organization called Bridge) "experiences 'bridge' as a verb: a bridge is what takes you from one side to otherness" (96). Kogawa's conclusion that "even if we are all in different hyphens, we could put a line through the hyphen and be connected as hyphenated people" (99) clarifies her understanding of the term as something that signifies community, union, and sameness within or even despite difference. First, her use of the pronoun we does not denote Japanese-Canadians only, but rather the entire Canadian population, indicating that Kogawa is "blurring the boundaries of distinct ethnic identities to highlight their common ethos" (Frailé Marcos 178) or the cultural values that Canadians accept and recognize as their own. Second, charting a connecting line through all of the hyphens still makes its presence known while also highlighting its potential to unite rather than divide.

[25] Partly autobiographical, as it is based on Kogawa's own experiences in addition to historical documents, *Obasan* tells the story of a Japanese-Canadian family's internment in post-Second-World-War-Canada. *Itsuka* concentrates on the fight for Japanese-Canadian redress.

Ultimately, Kogawa presents hyphenation as a defining characteristic of all Canadians: it at once bridges the two sides straddled by a hyphenated identity and serves as a mark that unites all Canadians. In her configuration of Canadian-ness, "otherness" loses its negative connotation to become a synonym of diversity.

Wah's understanding of the hyphen is even more complex and multilayered than Kogawa's: he straddles two seemingly contrasting descriptions of the hyphen in his attempt to reconfigure contemporary understandings of the term. To begin with, he states that the hyphen is a "silent dash" that represents a "Mi-nus mark, not equal sign" ("Half-Bred Poetics" 94-5), strongly suggesting that the hyphen can be used quietly to highlight the inequality of ethnic subjects. More explicitly, in his biotext *Diamond Grill*, he argues that the hyphen can be problematic in the context of multiculturalism because it is "usually a sign of impurity and it's frequently erased as a reminder that the parts, in this case, are not equal to the whole" (178). Wah's stance towards the hyphen highlights how, in the 1990s discussions on multiculturalism (see Chapter 1 and below), hyphenated Canadian is frequently used in opposition to mainstream Canadian. Because it marks a power dynamic of exclusion in this context, hyphenation is rejected by ethnic subjects who refute it as a label assigned to them by the mainstream.

However, Wah's claim that the hyphen is a "marked or unmarked space that both binds and divides" ("Half-Bred Poetics" 73) suggests that he does not discard the term, but rather tries to reformulate it and, eventually, claim it. More specifically, Wah redefines the hyphen by focusing on hybridity and embracing it as a tool that unites different cultures and heritages into one Canadian identity. He has repeatedly argued that

the hyphen is a charged term that reaches into the heart of the Canadian experience to celebrate hybridity as the defining characteristic of Canadians:

> Canadian isn't a racial identity. That's turned out to be true. But I'm not really Chinese either. Nor were some of the other kids in my class real Italian, Doukhobor, or British. … There's a whole bunch of us who've grown up as resident aliens,[26] living in the hyphen … That could be the answer in this country. If you're pure anything, you can't be Canadian. We'll save that name for all the mixed bloods in this country and when the cities have Heritage Days and ethnic festivals there'll be a group that I can identify with, the Canadians. (53-4)

That there is no real "pure" Canadian (or Italian, Doukhobor, or British) in Canada implies that Canadians do not, or better, cannot identify completely with either of the components of their hyphenated identities (neither the Canadian nor the Chinese, Italian, or other ethnic component). Instead, they are people who live "in the hyphen," in a conflicted, but nonetheless productive, fluid identity position where subjects are alternatively pulled towards one or the other culture that make them hyphenated. For Wah, the hyphen "always seems to demand negotiation" (137) between the cultural components that it connects. By defending his Canadian-ness through a shared diversity and alien status, Wah redefines the notion of Canadian-ness. His celebration of the hybridity of Canadian identity is particularly evident in his representation of passageways, such as the swinging door of the restaurant in *Diamond Grill* that

[26] In immigration law, 'resident alien' usually refers to individuals who are permanent residents of the country in which they reside, but do not have citizenship. During the First and Second World Wars, 'enemy alien' was used to refer to citizens of countries at war with Canada who resided in Canada during the war.

symbolize a connection between two worlds (in and out of Canada) rather than a separation. Chapter Four will return to Wah's passageways to examine how they function as spatial metaphors of the hyphen.

Both Kogawa and Wah advance a redefinition of Canadian-ness by revisiting understandings of the hyphen. Although they elucidate important characteristics of the hyphen, including its quintessentially Canadian-ness and its entrenchment in multiculturalism, they do not separately or collectively provide a fixed definition of the term. Instead, like others who have examined the concept, their discussions on being hyphenated and living in the hyphen clearly show that their focus is on accentuating that the hyphen is necessarily characterized by ambiguity and fluidity. It resists a stable definition.

Just as thinkers outside of academic disciplines and Canadian literary authors have engaged with the notion of the hyphen, prominent Canadian literary critics too have both embraced and rejected the term, offering varied and contrasting readings on its usage and relevance in a Canadian context. As in the case of non-scholarly treatments, scholarly investigations only peripherally touch upon this concept. From these cursory engagements, the hyphen once again emerges as a complex concept intrinsically tied to multiculturalism, whose definition, as discussed above, is difficult to grasp. The main scholars who have engaged with this notion are Neil Bissoondath, Linda Hutcheon, and Joseph Pivato. Bissoondath disputes the hyphen because, influenced by the 1990s debates on multiculturalism, he fears it can serve to marginalize Canadians who are not of English or French descent. Whereas Hutcheon maintains a more ambiguous position

towards the hyphen, Pivato embraces it and joins Kogawa and Wah in describing it as typically Canadian.

In his critique of multiculturalism, Bissoondath strongly contests the hyphen, proposing that it carries the illusion of adding meaning to the adjective Canadian, while actually diminishing the Canadian-ness of individual Canadians. For him, the hyphen is a tool that fosters discrimination of Canadian others. Its effect, Bissoondath argues, "is not to define the word 'Canadian' but to mark a distance from it" (108) through the addition of another cultural component (for example, Italian, African, or Greek). Accordingly, the hyphen becomes an instrument of marginalization that multiculturalism employs to highlight the minority status of hyphenated Canadians. Thus, whereas the two dominant groups are considered purely Canadian, all other groups are marked by a hyphen that others them (as they were also othered by the multiculturalism policy). However, for Bissoondath, eliminating the hyphen does not constitute a solution to this long-standing divisiveness, but only a way to avoid alienation. He suggests that "Encouraging people to view each other as simply Canadian, discouraging the use of the marginalizing hyphen, would not solve such problems … but it may help deflect some of the resentment, so that in expressing our pain we do not also alienate our fellow citizens" (112). His rejection of the hyphen is aimed to avoid discriminating against ethnic minorities and aligns with his critique of multiculturalism as a policy that marginalizes and creates otherness by highlighting difference (see Chapter 1).

Hutcheon's stance on the hyphen aligns more closely to Wah, as she too adopts a multifaceted conception of the hyphen that highlights the concept's ambiguity. In her

collection of essays *Splitting Image: Contemporary Canadian Ironies* (1991), Hutcheon opts for not hyphenating the names of ethnic groups in Canada in order to avoid any discrimination. In explaining her choice, she argues that the hyphen is regularly met with a negative response because the expression *hyphenated Canadian* is perceived as "connoting inferior hybrids – in opposition to some notion of pure 'Canadian'" (66). While this first stance seems to entail a firm rejection of the hyphen that is in sync with some dominant views of the time, in a subsequent interview, Hutcheon refers to herself as a "hyphenated Canadian," thus adopting the expression as a label of her own identity (Pivato and Hutcheon 2001). By changing her stance vis-à-vis the hyphen, Hutcheon does not provide an explicit rejection or acceptance of the term in her critical works following *Splitting Image*.

In contrast to Bissoondath,Hutcheon, and Wah, Pivato is clearly pro-hyphen. To argue in favour of its use in Canada, he draws from Italian-American literary critic Anthony Tamburri, who goes so far as to refute the hyphen as a visual punctuation mark. In *To Hyphenate or Not to Hyphenate? The Italian/American Writer: An Other America* (1991), Tamburri proposes substituting the hyphen with a slash, which he considers a more appropriate visual marker of connection because it "bridges the physical gap between the two terms, thus bringing them closer together" (qtd. in Pivato, *Echo* 47). Pivato, on his part, argues that the substitution of the hyphen with a slash is not a good solution in a Canadian context, where the hyphen has a strong history of being used in expressions such as 'French-Canadian' (48). Pivato highlights that while in Central Canada hyphenation has a negative connotation, in Western Canada labelling immigrants

with a hyphen seems to be widespread and acceptable (51). He thus draws attention to the many connotations and uses of the hyphen across Canada. Although Pivato does not support his claims regarding hyphenation in the different Canadian provinces with any specific evidence, his mention of a varied reception of the hyphen across Canada reflects the contrasting opinions put forth in the non-scholarly and scholarly literature.

Based on Tamburri's and Pivato's different views, it seems that the slash could perhaps better address the needs of the American context, where the notion of the melting pot promotes assimilation. In such a context, a slash could indicate the absorption of other cultures into a preferred American-ness, rather than those of the Canadian context, where the Canadian mosaic encourages integration, and diversity is celebrated. As will become apparent in this thesis, the hyphen graphically brings close together the two components that make up hyphenated identities. Its visual mark and conception as a bridge facilitate a proximity that enhances the connection between Canadians of different heritages into a collective Canadian-ness.

Discussions on the hyphen are still open, and the lack of clear definitions of what the hyphen and hyphenated identities are attests to the potential of these notions. The disparate understandings of the hyphen in the Canadian socio-political and literary landscapes show that there is still disagreement about whether the hyphen divides or unites. Scholars who advocate for the abolishment of the hyphen see it as a discriminatory tool used against individuals of mixed origins (Diefenbaker), as a mark that distances individuals from a collective idea of 'Canadian-ness' (G. Chong, M. Chong), or as a tool of multiculturalism to highlight difference (Bissoondath). Those who

embrace the hyphen interpret it as a bridge between cultures and as quintessentially Canadian (Aggarwal-Schifellite, Kogawa, Wah, Jedwab, Medford). Isabel Carrera Suárez, drawing a strong connection between the hyphen and hyphenated identities, writes that Canadian authors have read the hyphen as a "bridge, dividing line or site of identity" (17), and that hyphenated identity has become "one of the most worn clichés" when it comes to multiculturalism. Her frustration with the term and its use in identity politics is particularly apparent when she designates the hyphen an "'empty' structural signifier" (18). While Carrera Suárez's frustration with the lack of a unanimous interpretation is understandable, it is important to recognize that, despite its knotty nature, the debate on multiculturalism and the discussions surrounding the hyphen attest to the currency of the expression and show that the hyphen is far from being a cliché. In fact, it is precisely because the hyphen may very well be a 'floating' or 'empty signifier' – that it may be open to many interpretations – that it can serve as a concept able to highlight Canada's diversity and focus on cultural inclusiveness. Adopting the hyphen aptly promotes the equity and cross-cultural understanding that are much needed in a Canadian multicultural society.

2. Revisiting the Hyphen

Confident that engagement with the hyphen can help better map the complexity of Canadian identity by drawing focus away from the marginalization of difference to embrace diversity as a defining feature of Canadian-ness, in this section I join the critics above to propose my own understanding of hyphen and hyphenated identities. I build on and revisit the existing scholarly and non-scholarly sources, but also take inspiration from

post-colonial theorists Homi Bhabha and Stuart Hall in my definition of hyphen and hyphenated identity. I advance an understanding of "going beyond the hyphen" (an expression first introduced by Eleanor Ty and Donald C. Goellnicht) to then propose that literary representations of hyphenated identities in Canadian literature show that the hyphen can also foster connections between different hyphenated groups.

Literally, the hyphen is a simple graphic sign in-between the two parts of a compound word or an expression made up of more than one word. But, the reality is that a literal definition does not aptly convey the complexity of the hyphen in relation to identities and cultures. As discussed in the literature review above, much ambiguity surrounds the hyphen, with the scholarship's contrasting interpretations suggesting that it can simultaneously be understood as a bridge and as a barrier (and, at times, either one or the other). It is certain that when theorizing the hyphen, it is difficult to make hard claims to an either-or thinking. It is also certain that its theorization changes in line with or in response to current sociopolitical configurations of Canadian-ness.

Taking into account the current Canadian climate, I propose that in a contemporary multicultural Canada, the hyphen no longer divides and establishes difference as suggested by various scholarly and non-scholarly sources. On the contrary, it becomes a unifying trait, creating connections between individuals who live and develop their unique identities in Canada. More specifically, rather than carrying negative connotations and marking individuals as only partially Canadian, the hyphen celebrates the diversity of Canada's people. It does not separate the different ethnic characteristics that influence and make up a multicultural Canada; on the contrary, the hyphen draws

them closer to celebrate Canada's cultural richness and diversity. In doing so, it has the potential to enable the identity construction process of Canadian immigrants (or characters, as my literary analyses will show) because it allows the linking together of different heritages and cultural components into a rich tapestry of difference.

The developing hyphenated culture and Canadian-ness that emerge from the union of different hyphens is not an assimilation of hyphenated Canadians to a uniformity that is identifiable as a single nationality. Rather, it is a blend of different characteristics of individuals who fluctuate between the old (the country of origin of the hyphenated) and the new (the Canada in which they have settled). These characteristics – habits, values, and behaviours – that operate simultaneously, even if at times in a contradictory fashion, comprise the multiple facets of a hyphenated identity. Ultimately, rather than identifying with either one or the other culture, hyphenated identities negotiate a flexible position in-between the cultural components linked by the hyphen. As suggested by Aggarwal-Schifellite, they are "living hyphens" who embody the pluralism and diversity that informs Canadian identity. Revisiting the hyphen through an analysis of Canadian literature, as I do in the following chapters of this dissertation, sheds light on the hyphen's function in joining the peoples, cultures, and heritages that is Canada. Ultimately, it shows how the hyphen abolishes any idea of mainstream behind the notion of Canadian-ness to highlight cultural richness instead.

As suggested above, discussions on the hyphen begin to map the complexity of Canadian-ness as they allow for a more comprehensive understanding of Canadian identity than one that postulates Anglo- and French-Canadians as Canadians.

Approaching all Canadians as hyphenated ushers an inclusive, comprehensive approach to Canadian identity that dismantles more traditional formulations that secure the predominance of Anglo- and French-Canadians in Canada. In a Canadian context, the use of the hyphen highlights how all Canadians are hyphenated, thus accentuating the ethnic and cultural diversity that characterizes Canadian-ness by grouping together individuals of different heritages. It at once enhances and celebrates diversity.

My understanding of hyphenated identities takes inspiration from Stuart Hall's notion of cultural identity and Homi Bhabha's theorization of a third space. It also builds on the Canadian scholarship's allusions to these terms, especially Eleanor Ty and Donald C. Goellnicht's proposal of "going beyond the hyphen." More specifically, as I will demonstrate in the next three chapters that trace the connection between foodways and hyphenated identity in Canadian immigrant novels, I argue that hyphenated identities create an in-between space – the space of the hyphen – that accommodates ethnic diversity and fosters unity rather than division.

In his examination of cultural identity in Caribbean cinema, Stuart Hall interprets immigrant identities as being in constant transformation. Influenced by both the history and traditions of their heritage culture and their dynamic positioning within the culture of the settler country, these identities are always in process and thus not fixed. More specifically, Hall contends that identities are "placed" and influenced by the context and environment that surrounds them: identity enunciations are "positioned" according to place, but also cultural, temporal, and historical contexts with which they interact (*Cultural Identity* 222-3). Hall distinguishes between two conceptualizations of such an

identity. On the one hand, it can be conceived as "one, shared, culture," a collective identity that is formed by shared cultural and historical experiences and traditions (223). In this configuration, the heritage country is the "missing term" that, because of its absence, causes a "lack of identity" (224), namely a displacement from the common origin from which the collective cultural identity derives. Hall's second (preferred) understanding of immigrant cultural identity is a non-essentialist identity rooted in and influenced by the past heritage and traditions, but also fundamentally dynamic; such an identity is "a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'" (225). For Hall, cultural identity is not a "fixed origin." Instead of designating a static and universal identity that lies in individuals because of their origins, he sees cultural identity as an active identity, built through memory and a narrative of the past that fosters a dynamic "positioning" within one's history and culture (226-7). Ultimately, cultural identity is "framed" between two vectors: one that expresses similarity and continuity with the past (the "being"), and the other that expresses difference and discontinuity (the dynamic "becoming"). This "'doubleness' of similarity and difference" (226-7), according to Hall, can be fully experienced through a return trip home.[27]

A process of negotiation also informs Homi Bhabha's postcolonial theory of identity. He proposes the existence of a third space to describe an ambivalent in-between space where individual and collective identities can emerge between colliding cultures (*Location* 5, 23). Bhabha also postulates the unhomeliness of the third space, which is the

[27] Hall contends that the country of origin is also dynamic, and that returning to it is problematic, because it is "no longer there" as it used to be (231). To Hall, it becomes what Benedict Anderson calls 'an imagined community' and what Said, in *Orientalism*, calls "imaginative geography and history" (55).

state in which the individual is deprived of any sense of belonging to what is homely or familiar. Rather than reading the state of being far from home as being without a home, Bhabha considers it a condition in which immigrants create hybrid cultural spaces where the border between the "private" (the home) and the "public" (the world) are blurred and thus become part of each other (9). Joining other postcolonial theorists such as Hall, Bhabha therefore sees these identities as characterized by a hybridity that counters any ideas of essentialism (*Location* 58).

Taking inspiration from Bhabha, I argue that when it comes to the literary representation of hyphenated identities in Canadian immigrant literature, the third space is the space of the hyphen or of the hyphenated home (often more specifically represented by kitchens or home-like places connected to food, such as family restaurants and ethnic food stores) and the unhomeliness of the third space translates into the sense of confusion that hyphenated identities experience as they negotiate the different cultural components that make them hyphenated. As contemporary works by immigrant authors show, rather than being strictly a national space identifiable with the immigrant characters' heritage or settler country, for hyphenated identities the notion of home extends beyond strict national identifications. It is a space influenced by the characters' transnational movements and cultural negotiations. In the literary works examined in the next three chapters, home is a space inhabited by immigrant characters. As the space where the process of identity construction begins, it influences the characters' identity building process by bringing together the culture of both their heritage and their settler country. In this sense, the hyphenated home comes to stand in for the hyphen.

Drawing from the dynamic positioning of Hall's non-essentialist notion of cultural identity, I contend that in these novels, hyphenated identities are framed between the two vectors of the old and the new, which both influence their development. The hyphen functions at once as a barrier and as a bridge between the two cultural components linked by it. As a barrier, it does not permit full access to either of the two cultural components it separates. But as a bridge, it enables characters to fluctuate between them depending on the context and situation they face. My analyses in the following chapters will highlight how foodways promote social exchange and inter-generational relationships for hyphenated characters, aiding their fluctuation between the old and new based on what stage of the hyphenated identity construction process they occupy (such as the self-hatred, self-understanding, and self-acceptance stages experienced by second-generation characters in Frank Paci's *Black Madonna* and Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited*).

The identities presented in these immigrant novels thus "go beyond the hyphen." In their collection of essays *Asian North American Identities: Beyond the Hyphen* (2008), Eleanor Ty and Donald C. Goellnicht examine Asian North American[28] self-representation in literature and culture, and how the interaction between different

[28] Naming is one of the main aspects that the scholarship on Asian-North-American Literature concentrates on. Ty and Goellnicht suggest adopting the term "Asian North American" because it denotes both Asian-Canadians and Asian-Americans, who "face many of the same issues regarding identity, multiple cultural allegiances, marginalization vis-à-vis mainstream society, historical exclusion, and postcolonial and/or diasporic and/or transnational subjectivity" (2). Ty and Goellnicht do, however, acknowledge that while in the United States the expression "Asian American" prevails, in Canada labels that refer to specific cultural groups are more common. For example, expressions like "Chinese Canadian" or "Japanese Canadian" are used more frequently than "Asian Canadian." This is further clarified by Ty and Verduyn in *Asian Canadian Writing beyond Autoethnography*, where they explain that the term "Asian Canadian," which refers to immigrants from East Asia, South Asia, and the West Indies, is commonly used starting from the late 1970s, but that since the 1980s labels such as "Chinese Canadian" or "Japanese Canadian" are preferred, and that West Asians are considered "Middle Eastern" or "Arab Canadian" (11-15).

minority subjects impacts subjectivity (10-3). In their introduction, they argue that Asian-North-American identities go "beyond the hyphen" because instead of being simply shaped by the contrast between Asian and North-American cultures, they are also affected by questions of gender, sexuality, religion, language, and economy (2-5). Ty and Goellnicht suggest that identities are influenced by a multiplicity of factors that go beyond cultural identification. Interestingly, they do not use the graphic hyphen when utilizing labels such as "Asian North American," "Asian American," "African North Americans," and so on, but do use it when they write "Euro-American" (2). It is therefore unclear whether they are rejecting the use of the graphic hyphen (even though they use it for certain identity configurations), whether they are attempting to suggest that going beyond the hyphen means rejecting the hyphen as a notion (even though nothing in their theorization seems to reject the hyphen per se), or whether their lack of inclusion of the graphic sign is meant to signal a geo-historical reality.

In *Asian Canadian Writing beyond Autoethnography* (2008), a later publication by Ty and Christl Verduyn (instead of Goellnicht, who does, however, contribute to the collection with an essay), the authors write about going "beyond autoethnography" to address the changes in the representation of race and ethnicity in Asian Canadian literature starting from the early 2000s. They adopt the expression "beyond autoethnography" to identify texts that "refuse to be contained simply by their ethnic markers" and that move from depicting static collective identities to dynamic ones (4). Their theorization of a dynamic identity that breaks out of ethnic boundaries and thus exceeds the restrictions of racial and ethnic categories seems to be quite similar to Ty and

Goellnicht's earlier concept of "beyond the hyphen," which focused on the different factors that impact identity development. By stating that Asian is no longer "a geographical point of origin," but instead "a space of mobility and of becoming" (16), Ty and Verduyn suggest an understanding of Asian-Canadian that echoes Hall's understanding of identities as fluid and in constant transformation, and that also entails other expressions of identification (such as gender, language, etc.) in addition to one that simply defines a cultural attachment.

Drawing from this work, I suggest that going beyond the hyphen need not imply a rejection of the hyphen. The expression can be used to define the identity construction process of hyphenated identities that, although still hyphenated, overcome the divisiveness that a traditional reading of the hyphen as a barrier implies. According to this interpretation, going beyond the hyphen does away with an understanding of the hyphen as that which separates the different components linked by the hyphen, thus resulting in a dual or split identity. Instead, it accentuates the fluidity of hyphenated identities as beneficial or, better, necessary to the process of identity construction. By going beyond the hyphen, characters with hyphenated identities overcome the duality of their own hyphenation and gain access to other cultures.

My understanding of what it means to go beyond the hyphen will be expanded upon in the following chapters, where an analysis of foodways as a metaphorical language in Canadian immigrant novels will demonstrate that hyphenated characters belonging to different hyphenated cultures enrich each other and contribute to shaping our understanding of Canadian identity. An example of what this enrichment entails can

be drawn from *What We All Long For* by Dionne Brand, a novel in which members of a group of second-generation immigrant characters of different origins share the same experience of being collectively marginalized from mainstream Canada.[29] The novel presents Canada as a place where the displacement of hyphenated characters is eased by the moving between different immigrant neighborhoods. With this movement, hyphenated characters learn to accept their hyphenation through connecting with other hyphens. The identity resulting from this interaction of different hyphenated cultures is a new hyphenated identity that destabilizes the understanding of the hyphen as a division between cultures. As my analysis will show, novels such as *What We All Long For* portray the hyphen as a bridge between its two components as well as between other cultural collectives that surround and impact the hyphenated characters' identity-building process.

3. Why Literature?

Literature is an important resource for studying the hyphen and understanding it in a Canadian context because literature reflects and contributes to identity formation, while also playing an active role in shaping society.[30] Literature shows "how individuals and communities articulate their identities through their cultural self-awareness" (Howells 8), and thus can help achieve a better understanding of society. In addition, as suggested by

[29] For an analysis of the relationship between mainstream Canada and minorities, see Chapter 1: Multiculturalism in the Canadian Political and Literary Landscapes.

[30] For an investigation of the contribution of literature to national identity-formation (with a focus on children's literature) see Miriam Verena Richter (10-26).

Hall, identity is formed "within representation," which allows participants to "recognize the different parts and histories of ourselves," to recognize our "cultural identities" (236-7). Extended to literature, Hall's theorization asserts that literary representation can enable one's better understanding of his/her cultural identity. In this dissertation, an exploration of the hyphen in Canadian immigrant literature helps better comprehend the role of the hyphen in the context of Canadian multiculturalism and the importance of diversity as a defining feature of Canadian-ness.

Because of the deep connection between literature, culture, identity formation, and self-knowledge, many studies of Canadian immigrant novels align with sociological studies in their focus on real immigrants and the biography of immigrant authors.[31] Pilar Cuder-Domínguez, for example, in her analysis of Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, provides a careful reading of the character Tuyen as a reflection and "metafictional counterpart" of Brand, focusing more on Brand's role as artist, rather than on Brand's character (153-9). Similarly, Shaily Mudgal draws heavily on Anita Rau Badami's biography and immigrant experience when analysing her literary works. Asking what the role of diasporic writers is in shaping national identity through their narratives, Mudgal addresses Badami's displaced subjectivity to argue that diasporic writers inhabit and negotiate their identities in the "interstitial spaces" of their settler country (109). Finally, a significant portion of the scholarship on Asian-North-American writing concentrates on the experiences of Asian immigrants to North-America, rather than on the literary works.

[31] See Domenic A. Beneventi, Fulvio Caccia, Lien Chao, Pilar Cuder-Domínguez, Antonio D'Alfonso, Shaily Mudgal, Filippo Salvatore, Christiane Schlote, and Pasquale Verdicchio.

The trend is evident; starting from the introduction to one of the first Asian-North-American anthologies, *Inalienable Rice*, which offers a reading of the Chinese-Canadian writers' contributions to the anthology as a reflection of their own personal immigrant experiences and identities, and culminating with Lien Chao's *Beyond Silence: Chinese Canadian Literature in English* that although considered to be the first critical study on Chinese-Canadian literature, also tends to focus on the identities of real women and how they are a source of inspiration for Chinese-Canadian writers (150). In these and similar studies, literature becomes a tool to explore the real lives of real immigrants to Canada and/or immigrant writers, while fictional characters and representations of hyphenated identities do not receive sustained critical attention.

By contrast, my dissertation concentrates on literary representations of the immigrant experience, rather than on accounts provided by real native informants belonging to the Canadian immigrant community. Although an approach that draws from the lives of immigrant authors and those of real immigrants may be beneficial for examining the genres of memoir, autobiography, and biography, when studying fiction it could lead to the conflation of the experience of fictional characters with that of actual immigrants. Even in works that include both fictional and autobiographical elements, such as Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* and Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited* (that I analyse in the following chapters), equating writers with their fictional characters would not account for how fictional characters are not real people (even though they may based on or inspired by a real person). Through a literary analysis of hyphenated characters, I will explore

how contemporary Canadian immigrant writers of fiction propose representations in which the hyphen defines Canadian identity and Canada's diversity.

In the context of Canadian literature, it is particularly relevant to consider hyphenated Canadian characters when defining Canadian-ness. Literary works portraying immigrant Canadian characters often depict the relationship between minority and mainstream groups that are so widely discussed in debates on Canadian multiculturalism. In *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, Margaret Atwood broaches the question of who should (or should not) be considered an immigrant and/or a Canadian. She writes, "we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here" (62). Atwood's assertion has been widely debated, with some critics highlighting how Atwood's statement is inclusive (Richmond) and others stressing how her claim that "we are all immigrants" underestimates the challenges experienced by immigrants to Canada (Kulyk Keefer, Padolsky, Mukherjee). Some also suggest that it reinstates the two solitudes stance popularized by Hugh MacLennan's *Two Solitudes* (1945). Janice Kulyk Keefer, for example, argues that Atwood's remark "becomes highly simplifying and occlusive when one imagines the 'We' to be, for example, people of the First Nations," and stresses how the experiences of immigrants to Canada are very different from those of English- and French-Canadians ("The Sacredness of Bridges" 98-100). Even though the experiences of English-/French-Canadians and 'other' Canadians are indeed quite different, by arguing that in Canada everyone is an immigrant, Atwood powerfully stresses that ethnic diversity is a defining feature of Canadian-ness. This is particularly significant because, as I have argued above, in a multicultural Canada the designation 'Canadian' is not

simplistically restricted to Anglo-Canadians or French-Canadians; Canadians are all hyphenated regardless of where they (or their ancestors) were born.[32]

4. The Need for a Comparative Analysis

The notion of visible minorities is widely addressed both in Canadian socio-political and literary landscapes. Canada's Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour." Statistics Canada further specifies that visible minority groups in Canada include "South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese" (*Visible Minority*). Visible minority subjects, such as South-Asian-Canadians (Mukherjee,[33] Russell[34]) or East-Asian-Canadians (Chao,[35] Ty, Goellnicht, and Verduyn[36]) have received much critical attention in the

[32] For a distinction between the 'Two' vs the 'Other Solitudes' of Canada, see Chapter 1, section 2. Multiculturalism in Canada: The Literary Landscape.

[33] In "How Shall We Read South Asian Canadian Texts?" (2004), Arun Mukherjee takes into account only this specific group, arguing that a South-Asian-Canadian identity has emerged in Canada, and that South Asians may either reject the hyphen, or choose another hyphenation (253). In addition, in "Ironies of Colour in the Great White North: The Discursive Strategies of Some Hyphenated Canadians" (1992), she discusses non-white hyphenated Canadian writers' use of irony. She interprets this technique as an irony that can be understood only by non-white critics or by those who are familiar with their theories. According to Mukherjee, the irony of non-white Canadian writers mocks the official Canadian discourse that highlights the homogeneity and unity of Canadian culture, and thus ignores the history of social and cultural discrimination experienced by racialized Canadians (159).

[34] Elizabeth Russell, in "Cross-cultural Subjectivities: Indian Women Theorizing in the Diaspora" (2002), argues for a postcolonial consciousness that is created through the alliance between different visible hyphenated identities, therefore excluding non-visible identities from her grouping (84).

[35] Lien Chao focuses on the Chinese-Canadian community in *Beyond Silence: Chinese Canadian Literature in English* (1995).

[36] Eleanor Ty, Donald C. Goellnicht, and Christl Verduyn concentrate on Asian-North-American subjectivities in *Asian North American Identities: Beyond the Hyphen* (Ty and Goellnicht 2004), *The Politics of the Visible: In Asian North American Narratives* (Ty 2004), and *Asian Canadian Writing beyond Autoethnography* (Ty and Verduyn 2008).

scholarship on Canadian immigrant literature and hyphenated identities. For example, Ty stops to consider the invisibility of visible subjects, who are visible because of their physical appearance, but also invisible because they have been isolated from the mainstream because considered 'minor' and therefore less important. According to Ty, the Canadian classification 'visible minorities' ultimately differentiates racial minorities (such as Chinese or Indian) from ethnic minorities (such as the Italian) (*Poetics* 5-9).

Classifications of immigrants abound also in the history of Canadian immigrant policy. Following Confederation (1867), the Canadian government developed a number of policies aimed at determining the 'desirability' of immigrants, including the Head Tax (1885), which imposed a tax on immigrants from China, and the Chinese Exclusion Act (1923), which regulated which Chinese were allowed to enter Canada and even affected Chinese with British nationality who wanted to cross the Canadian border. These policies limited the categories of immigrants who were permitted and encouraged to immigrate to Canada. The Immigration Act of 1906 granted the government the power to exclude any prospective immigrant who could impose a financial burden on the country, such as individuals with transmissible diseases or even people with an impairment of sight, speech, or hearing. The Immigration Act of 1910 reinforced the exclusionary measures against certain categories of immigrants even further by prohibiting "the landing in Canada … of immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada, or of immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character" ("Chapter 27: An Act Respecting Immigration" 218). Finally, the Immigration Act Amendment of 1919 reiterated the possibility of entry being denied because of one's

nationality, race, occupation, and class ("Immigration Act Amendment, 1919"). Furthermore, the deportation of immigrants during the Great Depression (1929) even affected individuals who had already settled in Canada, especially those who needed social assistance because of a medical condition. During this time, deportations increased dramatically in an attempt to ease the financial burden on a country that was experiencing a critical economic situation.

Throughout the years, different populations of immigrants to Canada have received very different treatments, and the use of the term *race* in reference to white immigrant groups has complicated the relation of whiteness to race, and suggested that certain white immigrants were considered more or less white than others.[37] On the one hand, British, Americans, French, and Germans were thought to "belong to the races to which we [the Canadians] belong" and were thus desired (Canadian MP qtd. in Kelley and Trebilcock 131). These groups were believed to be able to help Canada prosper thanks to their familiarity with Canadian institutions and their suitability to the Canadian climate. On the other hand, at the beginning of the 20th century, many immigrants from central, southern, and eastern Europe were discriminated against because they were perceived to be "incapable of assimilating" and thus a threat to "the preservation of

[37] *White Civility*, devoted to whiteness in Canada, focuses exclusively on the colonial period, thus portraying Canada as a colonial nation rather than as a mosaic comprised of many peoples (which is the current situation). In it, Daniel Coleman examines the Canadian "pan-ethnic Britishness," that is the construction of a Canadian national identity where Britishness and whiteness are strictly related (18). Through the analysis of four allegorical figures that repeatedly appear in Canadian literature (the loyalist brother, the Scottish orphan, the muscular Christian, and the maturing colonial son), Coleman argues that Canadian whiteness is "a specific form of civility modelled upon the gentlemanly code of Britishness" (10). Coleman recognizes that the equation of 'Britishness' and 'whiteness' is a fiction by highlighting that the period he analyses (1850s-1950s) "constitutes an era in which popular literary forms were common tools in the hand of interested parties, often educated elites or reform-oriented lobby groups, who wished to craft the narratives of the emerging nation to suit their visions" (36).

Anglo-Saxon norms" ("Immigration Act, 1906"). Italians, for instance, were thought to be corrupt (Bissoondath 31) and aggressive, traits that are highlighted in literary texts: "Italians were paid less than the Irish and the Blacks. They weren't liked much. Newspapermen said that Italians were hot-tempered and prone to violence" (Melfi 103). In spite of the undesirability of these categories of immigrants, however, individuals from countries like Italy, Ukraine, Poland, and Russia were still accepted into Canada because they were able to fill a shortage of laborers in the country (Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21). Nevertheless, immigrants from these countries still remained non-preferred people. Ultimately, the history of immigration in Canada shows that even certain invisible minorities became at times visible because of discriminatory immigration policies. Restrictions explicitly based on race, ethnicity, and country of origin were removed only in 1967 when a new set of immigration regulations introduced a points system.

Literary works have also shown that the term *race* in Canada is a complicated concept when referring to immigrants. In *Diamond Grill*, Wah reflects on the conceptualization of difference between a race and a country as it is conveyed in school to young Canadian immigrants: "The teacher telling us who we get to be, to write down what our fathers are. Race, race, race. English, German, Doukhobor, Italian. But not Canadian, there is a difference between a race and a country. No matter what, you're what your father is, was, forever … Race makes you different, nationality makes you the same. Sameness is purity" (36). According to Wah's first-person narrator, even invisible ethnic classifications such as Italian or German could be identified as races. In the text,

Wah highlights his experience as a miscegenated individual[38]: he is a "ChineseHYPHENCanadian" (178) who is "half Swede, quarter Chinese, and quarter Ontario Wasp" (36). In him, the visible and invisible components blend. Even though being called a "Chink" and experiencing racial stereotypes led the fictional Wah to hide his Chinese-ness and to "become as white as [he] can, which, considering [he's] mostly Scandinavian, is pretty easy for [him]," (98) the text identifies both whites and non-whites as Canadian. Italian, German, Doukhobor, and the very own miscegenated Wah share a hyphenated state both in the micro-context of the classroom and in the macro-context of the Canadian environment. And, most importantly, they are all Canadian.

Like Wah's *Diamond Grill*, recent literary works by immigrants to Canada promote an understanding of multiculturalism as the existence of an environment characterized by cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity where there is a potential for a mutually influencing relationship between all Canadians. This aspect of multiculturalism is recognized by Tomson Highway in an interview with Ann Wilson, where he discusses how his creative process is influenced by different cultures, even North-American popular culture, which he blends with his native background (*Other Solitudes* 354). Ideally, multiculturalism should forge unity from diversity. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed how Bissoondath's focus remains on the negative aspects of multiculturalism and its use of the hyphen. However, in spite of his refusal of the hyphen, there are similarities between Bissoondath's declared hope for a united–even if diverse–Canada,

[38] 'Miscegenation' refers to the sexual relations and / or marriage between people of two different races.

where "every individual is Canadian, undiluted and undivided" (240), and the potential Kogawa, Wah,[39] and other scholars who offer a positive assessment of multiculturalism see the hyphen as having. Embracing a positive assessment of multiculturalism and acknowledging the potential of the hyphen to create connections would then have the same goal as Bissoondath's wish for an undivided Canada, where unity can be forged from diversity.

In a literary analysis of the hyphenated Canadian identity construction process such as mine, focusing only on the oppression experienced by visible immigrant characters to Canada would undervalue the complicated history of immigration and discrimination in Canada. My work thus moves away from strict divisions based on visibility to enhance understandings of hyphenated identities of different origins, who, even within the specificities that characterize their immigrant communities, are influenced by a shared history of being othered. In what follows, I bring together immigrant characters of differing heritages, visible and invisible, regardless of their colour, race, or ethnicity. By doing so, I do not intend to undermine the importance and timeliness of scholarship on visible minorities and their representation in literature.[40]

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[39] The connection between Wah and Bissoondath has been acknowledged by Anna Branach-Kallas, who in *Corporeal Itineraries: Body, Nation, Diaspora in Selected Canadian Fiction* (2002) states that 'hyphenated Canadian' is "a suspicious and freezing label within "the master narratives of duality" (Wah, *Faking It* 74), for the hyphen does not really render the concept of Canadian-ness more inclusive but it becomes "a sign of an acceptable marginalization" (Bissoondath, *Selling* 116)" (32-3). Even though Branach-Kallas does recognize Bissoondath's interpretation of the hyphen as a division, the quotation she extrapolates from Wah's *Faking It: Poetics and Hybridity* (2000) should not suggest Wah's rejection of the hyphen, as in reality Wah does embrace it.

[40] For an extensive reading of black diasporic writers in Canada, see Paul Barrett's *Blackening Canada Diaspora, Race, Multiculturalism* (2015).

Rather, my goal is to conduct a comparative analysis of the representation of the hyphen and hyphenated identities in Canadian immigrant literature to address how foodways relate to the process of identity formation. Even though the characters I analyse belong to different immigrant communities and therefore have different cultural backgrounds, they all experience similar feelings of displacement in Canada and share similar patterns of behaviour when they negotiate the different values in the Canadian environment that impact identity.

Considering that Canada is multicultural, a comparative approach that draws connections between visible and invisible hyphenated Canadian identities offers the opportunity to concentrate on the inclusiveness rather than on the divisiveness that different readings of identity (and of the hyphen) may imply. In the following chapters, I focus on broad similarities and the engagement with foodways shared by hyphenated Canadian characters of different origins in order to examine their identity construction process and address how hyphenated identities shape our understanding of Canadian-ness. The novels I analyse strongly suggest that visible and invisible minorities in Canada share a history of marginalization as well as similar behavioural patterns that elucidate the hyphenated identity construction process that, in literary works, is often expressed through foodways.

Chapter 3: Food as a Metaphor for Adaptation through Community Building and Socialization

> *"Eating is our earliest metaphor, preceding our consciousness of gender difference, race, nationality and language. We eat before we talk.*"
>
> Atwood, *The Canlit Foodbook* 2

1. Introduction: Food as Metaphorical Language

In this chapter and the following two chapters, I will investigate food practices in Canadian immigrant fiction to reveal a number of metaphorical meanings associated with eating and preparing food that help to uncover the complex connection between food and identity. This chapter, in particular, concentrates on food practices, approaching their representation as a metaphor for processes of community building and socialization necessary for hyphenated characters to adapt to Canada. Preparing, discussing, and eating food are in fact social activities that provide opportunities for cultural exchange that strengthen the character's bond to its hyphenated community, while also solidifying the community's unity. This chapter opens by providing an overview of how scholars, especially in the field of semiotics, have investigated the symbolical value of food. It then introduces the relation between food and identity before delving into the analysis of the metaphorical meaning of foodways in Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother*, Frank Paci's *Black Madonna*, Uma Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*, and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding*. These novels provide examples of how

hyphenated identities go beyond the hyphen through foodways, and thus challenge the apparent divisiveness that a more conventional reading of the hyphen as a barrier between two components may imply. Examining common patterns between multicultural characters where Canadian-ness blends with Jamaican-ness, Vietnamese-ness, Italian-ness, Portuguese-ness, Japanese-ness, Indian-ness, Ukrainian-ness, and Chinese-ness will lead me to detail how foodways are fundamental to the formation of a Canadian hyphenated identity.

Semioticians, including Roland Barthes, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Mary Douglas, provide attractive theoretical tools to discuss food and explore its symbolical value. In their examinations of "the grammar of foods" (Barthes 30), food has been shown to fulfill much more than a physiological need; it is "part of a sign system as it is strictly involved in processes of signification and interpretation" (Stano 647). In particular, Barthes' theory of food as a system of communication highlights how the multiple meanings and associations of food characterize it not only as "a collection of products that can be used for statistical studies ... [but] also, and at the same time, a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behavior" (29). Food signifies: it conveys information about the context in which it is consumed, as well as about who consumes it. Food also fosters change in those who prepare and consume it. Nevana Stajcic observes how Barthes' theory implies that consuming food does not simply mean ingesting a food item. Instead, consuming food also partakes in "a whole system or chain of meanings" (5) that inevitably intersects with and impacts personal, social, and collective identity.

Also investigating the semiotics of food, Lévi-Strauss explicitly compares language and cooking, describing them as universal human activities. He argues that, like language, cooking can be analysed as a triangular semantic field characterized by an unmarked pole–the raw ingredients– and two marked poles–the cooked (a cultural transformation of the raw) and the rotted (a natural transformation of the raw) (*Culinary Triangle* 40-1). According to Lévi-Strauss, the culinary triangle underlies a double opposition between elaborated/unelaborated and culture/nature. To explore these binary oppositions, he traces another triangle within the culinary triangle to represent techniques of boiling, roasting, and smoking. On the one hand, the opposition between culture and nature is exemplified by the difference between boiled and roasted. Whereas boiling entails a double mediation (water and the cultural container in which the food is boiled), roasting involves only the relationship between food and fire (41). On the other hand, the opposition between elaborated and unelaborated is exemplified by the relation between the raw and the roasted, which is never uniformly cooked (and thus unelaborated), and also by the relation between the boiled with the rotten (as in many European recipes meat almost appears as "rotted from cooking") (42). Smoking is presented as a technique that has affinity with both the cooked (as it is a slow form of cooking) and with the boiled (as it also needs a container/receptacle to be performed). Lévi-Strauss situates food preparation "between nature and culture" (46) because, as supported by his system of oppositions, cooking is both a biological necessity and a cultural activity, and food is characterized by both a need and a choice.

As a language, food and its preparation speak to the structure of a society, and, by extension, its culture. Arguing that "the cooking of a society is a language in which it unconsciously translates its structure" (47), Lévi-Strauss strongly suggests that there are hierarchies attached to food. Social conventions normally lead one to believe that the raw (the unmarked pole) needs to be altered by cooking (the cultural transformation of the raw), and that the rotted (the natural transformation of the raw) should be discarded. Lévi-Strauss' theories highlight how the preparation of food does not simply entail a material alteration of ingredients, but is charged with symbolical and cultural meanings. For him, food is a metaphorical language.

British anthropologist Mary Douglas joins Barthes and Lévi-Strauss in her examination of the social significance of food. Douglas extends Barthes' "grammar of food" to analyse the role of food categories in the home, which she interprets as a social system (and which, as I examine in this dissertation, in Canadian immigrant novels is often a location where characters engage in a negotiation of cultural values and identity-building processes). Adapting Barthes' analogy between language and food, Douglas proposes that patterns of behaviour and socialization are associated with language, but also with food practices, as they involve both social relations and cultural associations. Critiquing Lévi-Strauss' aim to determine "universal food meanings" and for conducting a binary analysis that she sees as too restrictive (37), Douglas turns her attention to food categories as social systems inscribed in the preparation and consumption of food as well as in the presentation of food and its inscription in menus, which are linguistic forms that speak about culture and society.

Several scholars have touched or expanded on the foundational works of Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, and Douglas to further investigate food semiotics and the symbolism of food in literature. Drawing on Lévi-Strauss' argument that the preparation of food transforms ingredients into cultural products with symbolical meanings, Simona Stano proposes that "food and cooking represent a language to the extent they express social and cultural configurations, and possess a particular grammar" (655). Similarly, Seiwoong Oh observes that food is a "complex semiotic system which helps us understand ourselves as well as others" (304) because it encodes a multiplicity of cultural assumptions and attitudes (303-4). Annette Cozzi joins Stano and Oh to claim that "food is neither innocent nor neutral, nor is it merely nourishing fuel; rather, it allows for an assortment of associations and attachments to be swallowed with it, like mold on cheese" (4). Like them, she too highlights how food is inscribed with an array of cultural meanings.

Taking my cue from these and similar discussions about food and cooking, in this dissertation, I ask how representations of foodways, that is, all practices related to food, in Canadian immigrant literature function as a metaphorical language that communicates the complex cultural identity of characters and the makeup and attitudes of the Canadian hyphenated multicultural society they inhabit. In arguing that in the novels of Brand, de Vasconcelos, Goto, Melfi, Paci, Parameswaran, Wah, and Warwaruk representations of food and foodways hold a plurality of metaphorical meanings that shed light on multiculturalism in Canada, I join theorists who draw a link between foodways and Canadian multiculturalism. Newman, for instance, argues that "Historically, Canada has

incorporated techniques from the far corners of the British Empire and the recipes of newcomers since Confederation. Our status as a formally multicultural society has resulted in a developing Canadian creole … Canada is known as a mosaic rather than a melting pot, and how we embrace new foods reflects this" (14-5). Besides addressing Canadian multiculturalism, food and foodways in Canadian immigrant novels build identity and link the different cultural components that surround the hyphen. They thus contribute to and elucidate the construction process of the hyphenated identity of characters in Canadian immigrant literature.

Expanding on a study by sociologists Gerard Delanty and Chris Tumfort (2005), anthropologist Thomas Wilson investigates the role of food and drink in the construction of a cosmopolitan culture and identity in Europe. Describing Europeanization as "a process of identity-building" (17), he argues that the study of food is useful to investigate Europeanization as "a form of cross-border and transnational societal interpenetration" (18-9). I contend that, in a similar fashion, hyphenation in Canadian immigrant literature can be approached as a process of identity construction that is firmly grounded in foodways. Food is a marker of multiculturalism, and hyphenation crosses borders between cultures.[41] Ultimately, this dissertation explores food imagery in Canadian

[41] Sue Kenny and Michele Lobo define cosmopolitanism as "the acknowledgment of the global interconnections and interdependencies between human beings" (116) and outline the following three differences between multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism, all dealing with the management and negotiation of cultural difference: 1. multiculturalism can be applied to national spaces, while cosmopolitanism operates at a global scale; 2. unlike multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism rejects distinctions such as us vs them, local vs global, and national vs international; 3. multicultural identities are fixed, while cosmopolitan identities are fluid (116-7). Please note that Kenny and Lobo's point on multiculturalism as being characterized by static identities does not coincide with the one supported in this dissertation. This contrast is additional proof of the many dimensions of multiculturalism and the competing interpretation of the term (see chapter 1: Multiculturalism in the Canadian Political and Literary Landscapes).

immigrant novels as a powerful metaphorical language invested with symbolic value in an attempt to strengthen the understanding of how the mutually influencing relationship between the different components of hyphenated identities is a defining feature of a Canadian multicultural identity.[42]

In Canadian immigrant literature, food nourishes more than the bodies of characters. It also plays a pivotal role in cultural knowledge building and, by extension, is an essential part of hyphenated characters' identity-construction process. Much more than simply a physiological need, a literal sustenance, or a means of survival, food helps characters negotiate the different cultural components of their hyphenated identities. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, food is an ethnic marker that defines individual characters (we are what we eat!), highlighting diversity and hybridity as a defining feature of Canadian-ness. Enoch Padolsky describes food as "a useful ethnic marker, a way of defining who we are," cautioning that "the connection of food to ethnic identity, however, is far from self-evident" (19). Although a number of scholars assert the link between food and identity, they tend not to critically engage with why and how food is significant in relation to identity. Instead, scholars concentrate on highlighting aspects such as the universality of food (Avakian and Haber, Wilson, Lupton), the relation between food and culture (Anderson, Cook and Crang, Danesi, Koc and Welsh, Oh, Padolsky, Srinivas, Stano), and the link between food and human interaction (Brown and Mussell, Deer, Koc and Welsh, Montanari), without expanding upon the particulars of

[42] For my definition of multiculturalism, see chapter 1: 2.3 The Debate Continues: Why the Hyphen?

these relationships. This dissertation, by contrast, asks what it means for hyphenated characters in Canadian immigrant novels to prepare, eat, and discuss food in relation to their understanding of self.

Foodways are a daily practice "central to individuals' subjectivity" (Lupton 37). According to Lupton, the meanings of food are constructed, understood, and experienced principally through sensations: "food and eating practices ... have a primary role in the development and maintenance of subjectivity, experienced through the body and the emotions" (137). The connection between foodways and subjectivity opens up an opportunity to discuss universal and habitual experiences. In this chapter, the focus on universality is not intended to stress that everyone needs to eat in order to survive. By looking at food practices as universal and habitual experiences, the focus is neither on the particularities of traditional dishes and festivals as specific cultural experiences, nor on any cultural specificities that would make, for instance, cooking practices differ across cultures. Instead, attention is given to patterns of behaviour surrounding food across the multiplicity of cultures that make up the hyphenated identities featured in Canadian immigrant novels.

Rituals of eating and preparing food are instrumental in defining ethnic identity, and help to shed light on the social organization and cultural identities of those who eat and cook. Because of its strong cultural connotations, food has been identified as "part of a culture's overarching network of meanings" (Danesi 533, Stano 664). In particular, cultural practices associated with food, such as food choice and consumption, are expressive of cultural identity and provide an opportunity to learn about individual and

collective tendencies for adaptation, diversity, identification, distancing, and integration (Koc and Welsh 47).

E. N. Anderson highlights that even though ethnic groups are often defined by their foodways (201), it is crossing ethnic boundaries that makes foods "ethnic," and not just "'local' foods" (205). For Anderson, this crossing of boundaries happens because "groups learn, imitate, and borrow all the time" (205); it entails immigrants "gradually [changing] their foodways" when they arrive in a new country (201-2). In this context, changing food practices is not a rejection of heritage food, but a blending of different culinary traditions that eventually leads to adaptation. According to Anderson, influenced by both their ethnicity and other ethnicities that surround them (that is, the plurality of cultural components that make up hyphenated identities), members belonging to a specific group celebrate ethnic cuisine during festivals, for instance, to "reassert" their identity, and let this cuisine blend with other traditions and habits when they eat at home (202). It follows that food practices challenge essentialist ideas of authenticity and provide opportunities for hyphenated individuals to straddle the different components of their hyphenated identities.

Just as identities are in flux, food too is not static or crystallized in the past traditions of a character's heritage country. In an autobiographical article about her family's relationship with food in Canada, Indo-Canadian author Anita Rau Badami observes how adapting food habits is part of the process of adaptation to a new country. She argues: "culture is, after all, a fluid, dynamic thing. And there is a certain excitement in crossing borders, changing a little now and again, without entirely sacrificing that

ephemeral thing we call an identity" ("Turkey and Tamarind Chutney"). Similarly, the hyphenated identities depicted by Badami in *Tamarind Mem* are as flexible and dynamic as the culture she describes. *Tamarind Mem* is a novel about Kamini (an Indian woman who moved to Calgary to pursue graduate studies) and her mother Saroja (who has embarked on a liberating tour of India after feeling displaced in her own land all her life because of societal and family pressures). In the novel, Kamini's immigration and subsequent adaptation to Canada does not entail a rejection of Indian food, as the smells of India are conveyed to Kamini through the postcards she receives from her mother Saroja, who lives in India. Saroja writes to her daughter: "*I have rubbed the peel of a ripe Nagpur orange on this card … Right now it smells as fresh and tangy as the fruit itself. I hope the smell has not faded by the time the card reaches you. And if it has, all you have to do is imagine*" (112, italics original). Kamini is catapulted into India through the postcard that connects her to her birth country and its familiar foods while she is experiencing the Canadian winter: "*I held Ma's card against my face and breathed in deeply. Opened my eyes and I could see, against the implacable white of the snow outside my window, dark leaves and the bright colour of fruit ripening in the sun. My mouth filled with the tart juice of a burst orange*" (124, italics original). Despite being in Canada and engaging in Canadian foodways, India and its culture impact Kamini's identity through the scents and tastes of its food that travel great distances. In this novel, as in those discussed more thoroughly throughout this thesis, food is an important factor in the identity-building processes of hyphenated characters, who use it to help cross physical, emotional, and societal borders. Across food, hyphenated characters negotiate different

cultural values with different degrees of attachment to one or the other cultural components that make up their hyphenated identities. In this way, food is crucial for hyphenated identities to exist in a multicultural environment.

Tulasi Srinivas offers a completely different perspective from Anderson's, contending that for diasporic individuals, eating "is transformed into a performance of 'gastro-nostalgia' that attempts to create a cultural utopia of the ethnic Indian-ness that is conceptually de-linked from the Indian nation state." In her reading, the attempt to replicate "authentic" recipes, just "as mother made them" (356), helps immigrants maintain a close connection with their heritage. This, in turn, leads to a "cultural utopia"–an idealized cultural state–of their Indian-ness, and cooking comes to represent a utopian "lost time" (369). Srinivas' stance aligns with that of others who emphasize that a "group's food tastes" can also be "used as a strategy of distinction and to articulate and reproduce a sense of difference" (Ashley et al. 72). However, the notion of authenticity–in this case, of Indian-ness–is a challenging one to support in a transcultural environment because Srinivas's argument risks interpreting Indian-ness (or another cultural component) as an essentialist type of identity or one that remains unchanged. Essentialist notions of identity are not sustainable in a multicultural context like the one explored in the Canadian immigrant novels analysed in this dissertation. Presenting hyphenated identities that are, by definition, fluid and flexible, the novels examined in the following chapters challenge Srinivas' idea of food practices as enhancers of essentialist identities. In fact, literary works such as Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Mary

Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother*, Frank Paci's *Black Madonna*, Uma Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*, and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding* portray foodways as practices that can stimulate the characters' acceptance of their hyphenation and in-between-ness. In them, foodways tend not to lead to a character's self-identification with a single culture, especially in the case of second-generation characters.

Food helps the building of identity because it is a personal experience–a language that communicates who we are to us and to others–that allows us to connect with others through foodways. The activities surrounding food, such as cooking, eating, and sharing, have the potential to connect people and foster human interaction. As Brown and Mussell suggest, they "bind individuals together, define the limits of the group's outreach and identity, distinguish in-group from out-group, serve as a medium of intergroup communication, celebrate cultural cohesion, and provide a context for performance of group rituals" (312). Similarly, Glenn Deer points out that food "serves both our most immediate biological needs and also constructs the ritualized spaces of social occasions or situations. Cooking and eating are ways of constructing social identity and community solidarity" (290). Food promotes community building by setting up opportunities and delineating spaces where people bond over rituals, build relationships, and work on their identity-building. For example, identity forms at the table, which represents both membership in a group and the relationships within the group or community (Montanari 94-5). The instrumentality of foodways thus extends beyond the development of personal and cultural identity to include group identity.

Drawing similarities between food and spoken language, Massimo Montanari stresses the link between food, culture, and the multiplicity of identity. He defines food as a "repository of traditions and of collective identity." Most importantly for a discussion of hyphenated identity in Canadian immigrant literature, Montanari posits food as a "vehicle of self-representation and of cultural exchange—a means of establishing identity, to be sure, but also the first way of entering into contact with a different culture." In other words, food functions as a bridge between cultures. Adopting a non-essentialist perspective and further suggesting an association between food and identity, Montanari adds that "[cultural] identities change and are redefined incessantly, adapting themselves to always-new situations determined by contact with different cultures" (133-4). For him, the adoption of different food practices and the consumption of different types of food are expressive of the multiplicity of identities that define us (89). Food, he specifies, is a "decisive element of human identity and … one of the most effective means of expressing and communicating that identity" (xii).

The following chapter sections examine how food fosters community building through social exchange and the strengthening of inter-generational relationships. Close attention is given to the space of the kitchen in Canadian immigrant novels, which is an important site for foodways that promotes and celebrates their impact on hyphenated identities. In the chapter's final section, food will be examined as a bridge that facilitates intercultural communication.

2. Food and the Diversity of Hyphenated Identities: Uma Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukranian Wedding*

Uma Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding* portray the kitchen as a private space where the domesticity of foodways promotes cultural negotiation and intergenerational interaction between hyphenated characters. Whereas Oh observes how the kitchen embodies "a site of identity contestation and negotiation" (304), Stano and Boutaud highlight the symbolical meaning of commensality, arguing that eating together is a form of sharing and identifying with each other (Stano 663, Boutaud 23). In these novels, the kitchen promotes such a sharing, serving as a space of connection between an old and a new culture, between the characters' heritage and the traditions associated with the settler country. Ultimately, the kitchen and the foods prepared and consumed in it aid the characters' negotiation of different values as they work towards their adaptation to Canada.

Uma Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree* explores the settlement and adaptation to Canada experienced by the Bhaves and Moghes, two related families who moved from India to Manitoba before 1997, the year in which the novel is set. Whereas Sharad (the father), Savitri (the mother), and their children Jyoti, Jayant, and Krish comprise the Bhave family, the Moghes include Veejala (Sharad's sister), Anant (Veejala's husband), and their children Vithal and Preeti. In the novel, the Bhaves' home is a meeting place for the Indo-Canadian community of Winnipeg, where North-

American and Indian ingredients are mixed to create a hybrid drink, multiculturalism is discussed at the kitchen table while enjoying a meal, and Indian food items seem to be able to grow on a typically Canadian tree.

The food prepared in the Bhaves' kitchen reflects a state of being in-between cultures, whereby hyphenated characters do not choose between a total rejection or acceptance of either of the cultural components–Canadian and Indian–that make up their hyphenated identities. Instead, they embrace in-between-ness and create a hybrid hyphenated home where they can develop hyphenated identities that are far from pure. In the novel, the representation of food and its intersection with identity formations echoes Anderson's understanding of ethnic food as deeply involved in the processes of adaptation and identity-construction. Throughout, its preparation is open to modifications and adaptations through the mixture of local and non-local ingredients. For instance, in the first half of the novel, some of Jayant's friends visit the Bhaves' for lunch. The meal they are offered includes a few Indian dishes; however, the beverage-dessert prepared for the occasion is particularly distinctive. Rather than preparing a mango lassi, the South Asian beverage that would likely accompany the traditional Indian dishes prepared for their meal, Jayant chooses to offer a mango sundae instead. In an Osterizer jar also used to blend masala, Jayant prepares a "Chef's special sundae" made of "mango pulp" and "vanilla ice cream" whisked together (57-8). On the one hand, both the chosen flavor (mango) and the "need to make sure the jar doesn't smell of masala" (57) establish a connection to the group's Indian origins. On the other hand, Jayant blends Indian and North-American traditions by choosing to make an ice-cream sundae, a typically North-

American dessert, and preparing it in an Osterizer, an American blender.[43] In addition, he offers his guests pop, a quintessential North-American soft drink, while they wait for the sundae. Through its introduction of a distinctly North-American component into the otherwise Indian meal, the mango sundae ultimately carries a strong symbolical meaning associated with Jayant's hyphenated identity.

Significantly, Jayant argues that "mangoes and maple don't mix" (58), thus putting in contrast a characteristically Indian fruit and the quintessentially Canadian syrup. However, the ostensible clash between mangoes and maple does not indicate a stark division between Indian and Canadian. Rather, as the bringing together of Indian and Canadian dishes, ingredients, and food practices throughout *Mangoes on the Maple Tree* suggests, the mixing of what is perceived as typically Indian (embodied by the mango) and what is seen as typically Canadian (embodied by the maple syrup) is not impossible. By preparing the sundae for lunch, Jayant acknowledges the different components of his hybrid hyphenated identity. Further, highlighting the potential combination of mangoes and maple can be seen to symbolize Jayant's multicultural identity, one that fluctuates between different components depending on the context of a specific situation. In the Canadian context of the novel, mangoes (Indian) and maple (Canadian) do not need to mix; if they did, the resulting identity would be one more

[43] Several American cities and towns have claimed to be the birthplace of the ice-cream sundae. See Cichon; *History of Two Rivers: Home of the Ice Cream Sundae*; "Ithaca, NY: Home of the Ice Cream Sundae"; "Village of Plainfield: Historical Information Directory."

readily identifiable with the American melting pot, rather than with Canadian multiculturalism, as discussed in Chapter 2.

As *Mangoes on the Maple Tree* exemplifies, the kitchen and the interaction between characters that occurs therein influence individual identity construction. In this intimate familial space, characters discuss multiculturalism, develop their hyphenated identities, and begin to accept their in-between-ness. Characters undergo a discussion of multiculturalism in Canada around the kitchen table and while consuming food. Some characters do not have a good opinion of multiculturalism, believing it entails being marginalized in ghettos until an opportunity presents to celebrate cultural difference, such as during a cultural festival.[44] As Prakash (a friend of Jayant's) asserts, these cultural festivals are "the only time the Brits and Scots and French, the so called founding nations, actually bring themselves down to the same level as the rest of us hyphenated Canadians by having pavilions like everyone else" (63). Rather than dismissing multiculturalism, however, the novel critiques its weaknesses as a public policy and reflects upon its many different interpretations. For instance, the perspectives of two characters, Vithal and Sridhar, exemplify the contrast between negative and positive interpretations of Canadian multiculturalism. On the one hand, Vithal, who believes that immigrants to Canada must stay united so that they are not "pushed around" by the mainstream (64), argues that multicultural ghettoes promote the unity of immigrants,

[44] The interpretation of multiculturalism as a strategy that promotes ethnic divisions between different hyphens echoes the 1990s debate on Canadian multiculturalism and Neil Bissoondath's critique of multiculturalism in particular, as discussed in chapter 1: 1.2 The Literary Debate on Multiculturalism.

which leads to their thriving. On the other hand, Sridhar, who is an Indo-Canadian student in love with Jyoti, rejects ideas of division in support of multiculturalism because it could lead to cultural cohesion. For him, processes of multiculturalism dilute cultures, "but the upside of it is that we'd have a newer and richer mix within each community and within society generally, and once we have a fair degree of white-brown mix of kids, we'd all be better off" (68). Sridhar, like Jayant, celebrates the creation of identities that exist in-between cultures, where mangoes and maple could blend while at the same time maintaining their own distinctiveness. In such a reading, the cultural richness of a hyphenated multicultural identity is not weakened.

The hyphenated home of the Bhaves ultimately emerges as a productive space, a hybrid home that is enriching to the characters' adaptation to Canada. Parameswaran's depiction of a Christmas tree planted outside of the family's kitchen window mirrors hyphenation as a productive condition. Enthusiastically,

> Jayant pulled the curtain, unveiling the tree … "That's us, Dad, not just you and me with our memories of another land another life but all of us in this modern world in the year 1997, rootless but green for the length of our life, long or short; not a plantain tree that leaves a young one in its place, not an oak tree with its roots stretched a mile radius, this evergreen doesn't have one christly [sic] use, it isn't good even as firewood but it is there, it is green, it is beautiful and therefore right. (175-7)

The Christmas tree outside the kitchen window represents the difficulties and struggles as well as the positive aspects of their process of adaptation to Canada. Jayant promises to

grow typically South Asian food items (mangoes, jamuns, and bilvas)[45] on trees that are characteristic of the Canadian environment (maples, birches, and spruces). In doing so, he embraces both aspects of his hyphenated identity and encourages the members of his family to see the beauty of such a state of being. Further, the tree's rootlessness is symbolical of the desired state of rootlessness of the hyphenated characters that inhabit the storyworld: home for them is the hyphenated, fluid, and all-embracing Canada of their present, rather than the India of their past. Negotiating different cultures and notions of 'old' and 'new,' they do not confirm the common belief that an immigrant's roots lie in the country of their ancestors. As the passage suggests, they are certainly different from when they arrived, but they are as "right" (177) as the rootless tree. For these characters, having roots is not a necessary requirement for identity, and being rootless in Canada does not entail a detachment from their origins. Rather, rootlessness is the condition of straddling two cultures in a multicultural country.

In Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, journeys towards adaptation vary according to the character that experiences the journey. Several family members maintain such a strong connection to their Indian past and India that they experience difficulty adapting to Canada.[46] At the very beginning of the novel, for example, Veejala considers leaving her husband and children and going back to India, which she still considers to be

[45] *Jamuns* could refer either to an evergreen Asian tree, also known as the Indian blackberry because of the edible fruit it yields, or to the South Asian dessert gulab jamun. *Bilvas*, also known as bael fruit or wood apple, is a sacred tree with medicinal properties.

[46] In the novel, Canada is not presented as a utopic environment, as the hyphenated characters experience discrimination, such as when Jyoti opens the door and two boys collecting pledges for the school band shout "Paki! Paki house!" (95). It is Jyoti's "first encounter with overt racism" (98).

"home" (107) even though she seems to have adapted to Canada. Towards the end of the novel, she explains that her move is mainly motivated by her failed marriage: "ever since I knew this was a dead end street with no future for me, I've wanted to quit and strike out as I'm doing now but things weren't quite right … if I'd left then, I'd have felt guilty all the time that I was running away from something that I perhaps didn't want, rather than going towards something that I want with all my soul" (129). Her brother Sharad, Jayant and Jyoti's father, moved to Canada to seek a better environment and situation for his family. However, even after several years, he remains unsure whether his family will be able to fully adapt: "Roots, son, roots … Roots are so important. Can we really grow roots here?" (22). Jyoti also expresses feelings of displacement when she asks her aunt Veejala if she could join her in India because she is struggling to settle in Canada, and thinks they are too "different" to fit into Canadian culture (8). Jayant, by contrast, finds it easier to adjust to Canada and plants the tree outside of their home to help his family better understand how to overcome the difficulties they have been experiencing. As suggested in the previous section, he hopes they will be able to accept their hyphenation and rootlessness, and embrace Canada as their new home. His father Sharad benefits from Jayant's efforts and is immediately "deeply touched. Jayant had brought home to him, he said, that trees could and would withstand even this eternally wintry Winnipeg" (177). Sharad's realisation that trees can survive and even thrive in the harsh Canadian climate conditions symbolizes his understanding that immigrants can flourish in what initially presents as a hostile environment.

In *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, this realization comes to life in the kitchen, where characters openly discuss multiculturalism and multicultural identity. In Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, the kitchen is also portrayed as a constructive site for hyphenated identities whose attitudes towards foodways reflects the diversity of hyphenated identities. It is a space of connection between old and new, between heritage culture and Canadian hyphenated identity. In it, the domesticity of the kitchen promotes a bond between members belonging to different generations. Female immigrant characters, in particular, gather in the kitchen to discuss their adaptation to Canada, and the stories that flow over and across foodways ultimately aid them in their journeys towards embracing their hyphenated identities and establishing a sense of belonging in Canada.

My Darling Dead Ones shifts temporally between past and present and spatially between Portugal and Canada to explore the lives of three generations of Portuguese-Canadian characters. These characters revisit memories, negotiate family history, embark on travel, and experience love and death. Vastly different in their outlooks on life, they take different steps towards their personal acceptance of their hyphenation. Throughout their acceptance processes, foodways are symbolical of how characters balance and come to terms with the multiplicity of cultural affiliations that make them hyphenated. In a scene towards the end of the novel set in Montreal in 1995, Leninha and her two daughters Fiona and Laura are in the kitchen opening gifts wrapped in white tissue paper, "soft, like the onion-skin sheets her mother used to write letters on" (167), received from their Portuguese relatives (167). With Celeste and Eunice, the "other women in the kitchen" (169), they listen to Portuguese songs from tapes that play "Old songs. Old

songs from [Leninha's] mother's time" (174). Food is often raised as a topic of conversation, especially by Eunice, who is a good cook. One of Eunice's "favourite topics of conversation is food, and she loves to repeat recipes, enumerating each ingredient and describing each step, even unasked" (169-70). Although each immigrant woman considers herself to be a good cook, not all of them share Eunice's habit of or enthusiasm for talking about food, which "drives Leninha crazy" (170). Despite their differences, the female characters meet in the kitchen, sharing their relationship with foodways and "driving away boredom and loneliness throughout the winter" (170). Together, they curse the harshness of Canadian winters, "using words like 'blasted country' and 'uncivilized,' though they are by now hardened Canadians, having exchanged their vanity for pairs of Sorel boots and inelegant, down-filled coats" (170).

Through these conversations that unfold in the kitchen, readers are made aware of distinctions, but also similarities among the women regarding their processes of settlement and adaptation to Canada. The diversity of the characters' processes is accentuated as they interact and help each other ease into a new environment in the kitchen. Celeste, "a quiet woman who only enters the conversation when it is spoken in Portuguese, having never learned English" (169), for example, is a relative who moved to Canada after Leninha and her husband. Because of her inability to speak English, Leninha criticizes her for her lack of adaptation skills. Language is a major barrier for Celeste's adaptation process, who is more attached to the Portuguese component of her identity and is thus hindered in her efforts to embrace her Canadian-ness and adapt to her new country. By contrast, both Leninha and Eunice, Fiona's godmother and Leninha's

and Celeste's good friend, are more advanced in the adaptation process. Spending time away from Portugal and growing older, Eunice starts to forget details about the recipes that she likes to repeat out loud. Recipes are eventually substituted for or blur with the contents of Eunice's soul: "Occasionally, Eunice will forget about recipes and lay the contents of her soul out for Leninha to examine" (170). Ultimately, their literal reconstruction by Eunice and then Leninha is necessary to symbolically maintain the Portuguese component of their identities.

In *My Darling Dead Ones,* foodways foster a sense of belonging, reinforcing the women's hyphenated identities and helping them adapt to their Canadian-ness while maintaining a connection with their Portuguese heritage. In a scene set in Montreal in 1986, food and the time spent in the kitchen are extremely important in strengthening the bond between Fiona and her mother, Leninha. Together, they form "the kitchen crew" (113), preparing food for the family and two relatives–"Helena and Magdalena, Leninha's mother and her aunt" (111), visiting Canada from Portugal–as they share feelings that are tied up in complex family histories. Over their two-week-stay, Leninha has taken them to visit the sights and the shopping malls, and "she has fed them, of course, three times a day" (111). But, Leninha reveals to her daughter that her "hours of suffering in the kitchen" (112) were undervalued if not overlooked by her husband and guests that ate at her table. Her frustration, readers are made to understand, lives and brews within the kitchen walls. And, it is within these walls that Fiona comes to realize that Leninha, who meticulously prepares food for her relative, actually "hates to cook" (111).

Throughout the novel, emphasis is placed on food and its centrality within the web of family expectations, especially family from Portugal. Leninha is highly efficient in the kitchen and knows the importance of foodways for the building of intergenerational relationships. Her "meal spreads out across the white tablecloth, lush, moist platters, the best breads, colour. Leninha never makes too much; just the right quantities, leaving you satisfied, but with the possibility of having had more … What's more, the kitchen is spotless, as if no one had worked here, all the pots cleaned and put away" (111). Leninha's cooking, plating, and presentation are flawless, and the kitchen is immaculately clean as if nobody had worked in it. The perfection of her meal starkly contrasts with her dislike for cooking, which is a frantic activity: she "always cooks as if she were in a terrible rush and had ten important businessmen waiting with her husband in the next room, about to clinch a deal whose outcome depended on the quality of the food she prepared" (112). Her fast pace in the kitchen reflects at once her dislike for cooking and her unease at dealing with close relatives with whom she has a difficult relationship (her mother, aunt, and husband Joaquim). Notwithstanding Leninha's complex relation with cooking, Fiona feels closer to her mother and better understands the complex family dynamics when she spends time with her in the kitchen: "Fiona is the only one who knows how to help her mother in the kitchen without getting in the way" (112). The kitchen, an unhappy space where Leninha completes her duty to feed her family, transforms into a space where Fiona observes Leninha's frustration that is "like a volcano ready to erupt at any minute" and tries to alleviate it by confirming that the food "looks beautiful" (112). In the kitchen, after reminiscing about the many meals shared

with her family while growing up, Fiona finds the courage to ask her mother why she tolerates her father's behaviour and continues to lead an unhappy life. Even though Leninha offers up the elusive answer – "You don't understand, Fiona … Mind your own business" (113) – the kitchen still emerges as a productive site where members of different generations bond and grow into a deeper understand of one another.

Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding* also uses foodways as a metaphorical language to highlight the characters' conflictual interpretations of heritage traditions and trace their journey towards the acceptance of their hyphenation. The title of this Canadian immigrant novel, set in the mid-20th century, refers to its central event: the wedding of Nellie Semchuk and Danylo Melnyk, children of Ukrainian settlers in the Interlake region of Manitoba.[47] Ritual food dishes play a prominent role in the wedding preparations and festivities, identified by those who organize and prepare them as an essential part of the characters' Ukrainian heritage. Whereas older characters are very much invested in Ukranian traditions, younger characters gradually develop an interest in balancing their Ukrainian-ness and Canadian-ness. In *The Ukrainian Wedding*, food, especially cabbage rolls, marks the conflict between the settlers' generation and their children's progressive distance from the Ukrainian component of their hyphenated identities. Cabbage rolls (*holubtsi*) are one of the main items served at traditional Ukrainian weddings, typically

[47] Another central event depicted in the novel (that also suggests that characters need to embrace the hyphen, but which will not be examined in this dissertation as it is not related to foodways) is the downfall of Yuri Belinski, a second-generation Ukrainian-Canadian school teacher married to Rose Melnyk, Danylo's sister. Yuri rejects any Canadian-ness and is very much attached to old Ukrainian values and traditions. He has an affair with a young woman named Marusia Budka, kills her, and is jailed. His downfall symbolizes an attachment to a utopian idea of "pure" Ukrainian-ness that is doomed to fail.

consumed during the *perekuska* or midnight snack ("Ukrainian Wedding Traditions"). The centrality of this cabbage dish is made apparent in the novel when Nellie's mother Paraska criticizes the bride-to-be's decision to hold the wedding in July. She complains, "stupid time for a wedding … Middle of July … Cabbage rolls! How can we keep the cabbage rolls from spoiling? Why can't we have the wedding in January? At least November like everybody else?" (91).[48] For Paraska, cabbage rolls must be served at Ukranian weddings, even if that wedding takes place in Canada in July. Very much attached to the Ukrainian component of her hyphenated identity, Paraska is convinced that Nellie's choice reflects the younger generations' lack of interest in their heritage (27). Ultimately, she sees Nellie's disregard for the difficulty of preserving cabbage rolls in the Canadian summer heat as a detachment from Ukrainian customs and traditions.

However, as the novel progresses, Ukranian food items like *kolach*, *shyshka*, and *kutia* are instrumental in aiding the younger generation to understand what it means to be hyphenated in Canada. In spite of initial intergenerational conflicts, the preparation and consumption of traditional Ukrainian ritual food items (such as ritual breads) that reflect prosperity and good luck symbolize how the characters' ultimate acceptance of their hyphenation is essential to their prosperity in the Canadian environment. "Nothing," our narrator informs us, "is more sacred to Ukrainian people than bread" (45). It is well known that Ukrainians make specific types of breads according to different festivities and ceremonies (Litchie). In *The Ukranian Wedding* (as in Ukranian households around the

[48] Fall and winter are traditionally the preferred seasons for Ukrainian weddings (Oppenneer 153) because they are seasons when cabbage rolls would not risk spoiling.

world), *kolach* and *shyshka* are traditional breads that feature in important family events: *shyshka* is a "pine-cone-shaped fertility loa[f] given out at weddings," and *kolach* is a "decorated bread–[with] different styles and names for different occasions–Christmas, Easter, weddings" (Warwaruk 301). These breads carry a strong symbolic value. More specifically, *kolach,* which consists of three round loaves stacked one on top of the other with a candle placed in the hole in the middle (*Ukranian Daughters' Cookbook* 163), symbolizes "good luck, eternity, prosperity, bountiful life, and general welfare" (Litchie), represents Christ and the Holy Communion, and embodies eternity because of its round shape (*Ukranian Daughters' Cookbook* 163). An essential component of the Ukrainian Christmas Eve dinner, *kolach* is also placed on the table as a centerpiece for other religious or family rituals and celebrations (such as weddings). In *The Ukrainian Wedding*, both the Melnyks and the Semchuks make *kolache* for the wedding of their children. However, the bride's "mother would not trust this chore to anyone but herself" (45) because she is aware that, as Lévi-Strauss has noted, the preparation of food entails a transformation of ingredients into cultural products with symbolical meanings.

That this bread can bring prosperity to the bride and groom is apparent when Nellie's father Panko touches her wedding headpiece with it (Warwaruk 93). A family ritual that "has been done many times, far back to Panko's childhood," it firmly positions Nellie within her Ukrainian identity. Tellingly, Nellie's acceptance of her Ukrainian-ness was initiated when she helped shape and position the decorative doves that represent the bride and groom for one of the *kolache*. Across food and alongside the members of her family, she partakes in her cultural heritage, absorbing and understanding the Ukrainian

traditions that are part of her hyphenated identity. Nellie's mixing of traditions, a July wedding with traditional Ukranian foods and rituals, marks her hybridity. In *The Ukranian Wedding*, food can be approached as a "medium of cultural symbolism" (Koc and Welsh 48) and its consumption as "metonymic of the various modes of cultural interaction and acculturation" (Oh 304). Ultimately, by shaping the bread that she introduces in a Canadian July wedding, Nellie transforms basic ingredients into a cultural product (the *kolach*) that becomes representative of the fruitfulness of her hyphenation.

Nellie also embraces the ritual power of *shyshka*–another traditional bread–and her wedding preparations show how she complements Ukrainian traditions with North-American attitudes, finding a balance between her Ukrainian-ness and her Canadian-ness. She instructs her younger sister-in-law Lena on the bread's properties: *shyshka* is a "fertility charm" (17). At Ukrainian weddings, the bride and groom are expected to perform the "Priveet," a formal presentation of the *shyshka* to their guests (Litchie). Unlike Nellie, Lena does not accept the tradition and beliefs surrounding *shyshka*, and believes that bread cannot enhance a woman's fertility. Lena thinks:

> What a Nellie! Here she is having a stupid old-fashioned Ukrainian wedding, but she will be wearing black silk under her dress. She will wear the plaited myrtle leaves and coloured ribbons in her virgin headpiece, but her panties will be black, black silk that somehow frightens Lena. The *shyshka* loaves are in the car. Lena smiles. Nellie's black underwear will do more for fertility then [sic] a thousand loaves of *shyshka.* (39)

Lena's perspective on Nellie's acceptance of the *shyshka* elucidates the contrast and coming together of Ukrainian and Canadian values, and how even characters belonging to the same generation negotiate their hyphenation differently. Unlike Lena, who struggles with both aspects of her hyphenated identity, Nellie has already found a balance between her Ukrainian-ness–here represented by her inclusion of the ritual of *shyshka* in the wedding celebrations–and her Canadian-ness–represented by her wanting to wear the black silk lingerie she ordered "from an ad in *True Romance* magazine" (39) on her wedding day. While Nellie ultimately balances her Ukrainian-ness and her Canadian-ness by blending the two components of her hyphenated identity, her sister-in-law and bridesmaid Lena struggles to negotiate between the two sides. Lena's difficulty manifests her inability to understand how Nellie can embrace two seemingly different approaches and attitudes to the wedding day. Nellie and Lena's different perspectives speak to how the building of a hyphenated identity is not an identical process for all characters.

Nonetheless, although Lena does not believe in the *shyshka*, "there is one tradition that Lena can cherish" (259): the *kutia*, a ritual dessert "used to foretell a plentiful harvest and family happiness" ("*Kutia*"). *Kutia* is another traditional Ukranian Christmas Eve dish, often consumed at festivities and family celebrations. Similarly to *kolach*, it is believed to bring good luck: according to Ukrainian traditions, "the eldest of the family throws a spoonful of the *kutia* to the ceiling. The more kernels that stick to the ceiling, the greater the good luck in the following year" (*Ukranian Daughters' Cookbook* 8). It also has a religious meaning: the honey used to make the dessert represents the spirit of Christ (*Ukranian Daughters' Cookbook* 10). Towards the end of the novel, the

preparation of *kutia* is meticulously described. Around Christmas time, Lena recalls how she sat beside her father and observed him preparing the sweet dish:

> He had a grey earthenware pot, a wooden pestle, a two-quart sealer of poppy seed, a cup of water, and sugar. He ground the poppy seed into paste for *kutia*, adding water and sugar. Lena remembers her father every once in a while saying, "Taste it," and handing her a spoon. Her mother had spent evenings sorting through syrup pails full of wheat, choosing only perfect kernels for *kutia*. Wheat, poppy, honey, and sugar, boiled together. (260)

Gathering and assembling the ingredients for the ritual dish is fondly remembered as a family effort. While observing her parents' careful preparation of the *kutia*, Lena bonds with them and enjoys the contact with her cultural heritage. The preparation of the dish is a cultural experience that helps her access the Ukrainian component of her hyphenated identity. Ultimately, the traditional ritual dish holds the potential to help Lena embrace her hyphenation.

3. Food as a Bridge: Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother* and Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*

Food can link two (or more) cultures; it can build connections between and thus break the boundaries that may divide different cultural collectives. Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* and Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother* address food's connection to Canadian multiculturalism by depicting it as a bridge that, like the hyphen, facilitates intercultural communication and exposes the diverse cultural make up of Canadian hyphenated characters to the mainstream. In the two novels,

hyphenated characters foster a change in the perception of what it means to be Canadian across their engagement with food. As I show in this section, in them, food functions to expose how multiculturalism is a defining feature of Canadian identity, and also plays a central role in addressing how immigrant characters impact the Canadian environment.

Italy Revisited: *Conversations with my Mother* is a culinary memoir filled with recipes that a first-generation Italian-Canadian mother shares with her daughter in the kitchen. Besides strengthening intergenerational connections between the two characters, food also fosters change on a larger scale. The mother emphasizes that even though it is difficult to maintain certain Italian culinary traditions in Canada because of a lack of ingredients, for instance (147), Italian food nonetheless influences North-American food habits. For example, she points out how initially Canadians critiqued Italians for using olive oil (48), but that they then started to incorporate it into their own recipes. She also characterizes wine drinking during meals as an Italian custom, to then emphasize that although North-Americans first criticized the custom, they eventually adopted it (150). Through their acceptance and assimilation, these customs activate an intercultural negotiation that helps all Canadians, mainstream and hyphenated, accept diversity. The adoption of Italian food customs represents much more than the introduction of Italian food items or practices in the Canadian diet. Food bridges the heritage and the settler culture, fostering processes of understanding and acceptance that lead to an acknowledgment of the importance of multiculturalism in the establishment of a collective Canadian identity that extends beyond the mainstream idea of Canadian as purely Anglo- or French-Canadian.

In her analysis of Timothy Mo's *Sour Sweet* and Gish Jen's *Typical American*, Oh describes the shift in attitude towards foods and foodways belonging to other national cuisines as "a model of intercultural negotiation, a way to bridge the gap between different cultural groups" (310). Montanari also aptly highlights the connection between food, culture, language, and identity. He claims,

> Like spoken language, the food system contains and conveys the culture of its practitioner; it is the repository of traditions and of collective identity. It is therefore an extraordinary vehicle of self-representation and of cultural exchange– a means of establishing identity, to be sure, but also the first way of entering into contact with a different culture. Eating the food of the "other" is easier, it would seem, than decoding the other's language. Far more than spoken language itself, food can serve as a mediator between different cultures, opening methods of cooking to all manner of invention, cross-pollination, and contamination. (133)

In *Italy Revisited*, food brings together different cultures and enhances the acceptance of difference. Foodways mediate between immigrant hyphenated characters, their culture, and mainstream Canadians, and help bring different Canadian identity formations closer to each other through exchange and mutual influence and understanding.

In the novel, hyphenated characters also experience a lack of authenticity when accessing heritage food items. Andrea Borghini distinguishes between four different perspectives on the authenticity of a dish: (1) realist; (2) constructivist; (3) existentialist; and (4) naïve (183-4). According to the realist perspective, a dish is authentic if it has certain essential characteristics (such as standards of production for a wine like

champagne). This interpretation risks being a static interpretation of food, unless it is taken into consideration that recipes evolve and that the characteristics of the dish need to be contextualized. The constructivist perspective highlights cultural "contamination," emphasizing that certain cuisines and ingredients are perceived as authentic based on the subjective decisions of consumers. The existentialist perspective sees "the quest for authentic dishes" as symbolic of "the quest for the realization of an authentic self" (183). Finally, according to the naïve perspective, "some dishes *are* authentic, without the need to justify why that is the case" because the focus is simply on the enjoyment of preparing and serving food (184). As discussed below, the lack of authenticity of food as experienced by the characters of *Italy Revisited* is, literally intrinsically linked to their inability to experience heritage cuisine as it would be prepared in their heritage country. This aligns with the realist perspective.

The daughter experiences confusion as she negotiates between Canadian and Italian values because most of the Italian food available in Canada is not authentic as it is fundamentally different from the food prepared in her heritage country. For example, she criticizes Chef Boyardee's canned pasta that presents consumers with a "fat little man who tells you he is Italian with a foreign-sounding name like Chef Boyardee" (214). The usage of inauthentic Italian canned pasta has an unsettling effect on hyphenated characters, who interpret these types of food items as reminders of the difficulties of juggling different cultural values. The daughter, for example, states that inauthentic food is a "pivotal experience in my life … [which] gave birth to my cynicism" (214). Her mother notices how this confusion may become even stronger for future generations. She

believes that her grandchildren, surrounded by Canadian foodways and a "lazy English style" (282), cannot recognize what is truly Italian (34). Because of this lack of understanding, the children are even more distant than her daughter from their heritage culture: they only know generic names for Italian food, and the English language has substituted the Italian language at the dinner table (296). These and other such indicators strongly suggest that each subsequent generation is losing a crucial connection with their heritage.

However, foodways and, in particular, the conversations about food between mother and daughter in the kitchen help counteract this movement away from heritage. In *Italy Revisited*, the kitchen is what Sharmila Sen describes as a "repository of migrant culture" (Sen 195). It is a place of revelation where "there are no family secrets … there's no place for shame … [and] miracles are commonplace" (Melfi 332). Spending time in the kitchen, posited throughout the novel as a space of growth free of critique, helps the daughter work on the discovery and formation of her hyphenated identity. It is a work-in-progress: "I had believed if I found my roots, I could hold onto to [sic] something … Trying to figure out who you are is as difficult as trying to figure out where the hell you go after you die" (331). Ultimately, she defines herself as a "Nonna-to-be" (332), firmly situating herself within the Italian tradition, accepting her hyphenation, and foreseeing herself in the role of mediator of immigrant culture. Just as her mother offered her a chance to accept and understand her Italian-ness through the recollection of memories and recipes exchanged in the kitchen, the daughter will one day take on the same

responsibility and pass on the knowledge of her heritage to future hyphenated generations.

Food and recipes, valued much more than practical knowledge in the immigrant novels I examine here, symbolize cultural nourishment, as will be examined in detail in chapter 5. There, we will see how such nourishment is in the hands of mothers, who, as the one in *Italy Revisited*, are portrayed as mediators of culture that safeguard a connection to the heritage culture that could otherwise be forgotten.

Similarly to *Italy Revisited*, Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* also highlights how foodways facilitate intercultural communication. The novel explores the lives of a group of hyphenated friends–Tuyen, Carla, and Oku[49]–who negotiate dynamic identities in-between different cultures in the multicultural city of Toronto. The novel is filled with descriptions of the various neighbourhoods of the city, which is described as "polyphonic" because of its ethnic diversity (Brand 149). Rosenthal points out that restaurants and ethnic food in *What We All Long For* are depicted as spread all around the city, rather than being located in demarcated ethnic neighborhoods (227). The dispersion of ethnic restaurants across the city suggests that multiculturalism is a pervasive characteristic feature of the city. In this novel, hyphenated inhabitants are not confined to a restricted ethnic space (such as the ghettoes described in the debate on multiculturalism of the 1990s).

[49] Jackie is part of the group of friends as well, but she is not hyphenated – she is a racialized Canadian who moved from Nova Scotia to Ontario.

Mustafa Koc and Jennifer Welsh, who position themselves against interpretations that see the abundance of ethnic restaurants in cities like Toronto as a "form of rhetorical folkloric multiculturalism," highlight the role of multicultural cuisine in "introducing a symbolic awareness of diversity, in challenging ethnocentrism, and ... in creating a feeling of home away from home" (47). They claim that "if we define who we are through what we eat, then multicultural cuisine may offer a glimpse of widening notions of identity, self, and belonging in Canada." The resulting effect is that "the cultural boundaries of membership become permeable" (47). Multicultural foodways in Canada would thus aid the inclusion of immigrants into Canadian society and the exchange of diverse cultural experiences. Exposure to ethnic practices introduces diversity into the so-called mainstream culture, stimulates acceptance, and helps newcomers integrate.

In *What We All Long For*, the diversity of Toronto neighborhoods reflects the diversity that characterizes Canadian identity. In it, the neighborhoods speak to the quintessentially multicultural nature of Canadian identity:

> There are Italian neighbourhoods and Vietnamese neighbourhoods in this city; there are Chinese ones and Ukrainian ones and Pakistani ones and Korean ones and African ones. Name a region on the planet and there's someone from there, here … People turn into other people imperceptibly, unconsciously, right here in the grumbling train … the whole heterogeneous baggage falls out with each step on the pavement. There's so much spillage. (Brand 4-5)

The "spillage" described by Brand's narrator suggests that hyphenated characters imperceptibly fluctuate toward other hyphens so that different multicultural collectives

are not strictly separated, but rather coexist in connected networks. Consequently, heterogeneity characterizes both spaces and identities.

Brand combines the presentation of Toronto as a polyphonic city with both a critique of multiculturalism as a public policy–through her depiction of the protagonists' parents–and a celebration of multiculturalism as a productive condition for hyphenated characters–through her portrayal of the hyphenated second generation. On the one hand, first-generation parents are depicted as manipulated by multiculturalism as a public policy and become providers of an unauthentic "multicultural dining experience" (Rosenthal 233). For example, Tuyen's parents Cam and Tuan, a former doctor and a civil engineer, open a Vietnamese restaurant in the city, the Saigon Pearl. When Cam and Tuan fled Vietnam and came to Canada, "the authorities would not ratify their professional documents, and Cam became a manicurist in a beauty salon near Chinatown while Tuan unloaded fruit and other produce from trucks to the back of stores on Spadina" (Brand 65). Later, they decide to open the Saigon Pearl, which "became their life" (66). The association between the restaurant, food, and identity is made explicit: 'They were being defined by the city … After the loss of Quy, it made a resigned sense to them that they would lose other parts of themselves. Once they accepted that, it was easy to see themselves the way the city saw them: Vietnamese food" (66-7).[50] The portrayal of these first-generation characters as being equated with ethnic food contradicts with the

[50] As they were fleeing Vietnam, Tuyen's parents lost their six-year-old child, Quy, who got on the wrong boat and ended up separated from his family. While the family reached Canada, Quy ended up in a refugee camp in Thailand and was never found (but later in the novel the family briefly reunites right before Quy is killed in a robbery). The loss of their child makes Cam and Tuan lose hope, and they ultimately adapt to mainstream 'Canadian' expectations of what they are, "Vietnamese food" (Brand 67).

vision of Toronto as a polyphonic city open to and accepting of diversity. Cam and Tuan let the city (which reflects this vision of multiculturalism) define them by adjusting to a stereotypical view of ethnicity. As one critic puts it, they are "split between feelings of limited belonging to the nation-state and intense nostalgia, caught sleepless between the two" (Dobson 188).

However, Brand's depiction is not a critique of hyphenation, but rather a critique of multiculturalism as a public policy that limits–rather than aids–the adaptation of immigrant characters to Canada. Cam and Tuan's ethnic restaurant is characterized by "cultural hypocrisy and contradictions" (Leow 204): "Neither Cam nor Tuan cooked very well, but how would their customers know? Eager Anglos ready to taste the fare of their multicultural city wouldn't know the differences. Luckily, national pride and discerning palate overtook the Vus and they hired a good cook" (Brand 67). The food's lack of authenticity reflects both a realist perspective of authenticity (like in *Italy Revisited*) and a constructivist perspective. On the one hand, Cam and Tuan hire a good cook to provide a more authentic experience for their patrons (realist perspective) so that they can offer dishes prepared as they would be in Vietnam. On the other hand, the setup of the Saigon Pearl is a performance meant to satisfy customers in search of an exotic experience. These customers do not have the cultural insight to understand that the experience provided in the restaurant is a reconstruction of ethnicity tailored to their needs. Cultural "contamination" is therefore highlighted, and authenticity is based on the target audience of the restaurant, the "Anglos," whose expectations differ from those of a Vietnamese audience. Cam and Tuan are trapped and unable to overcome the difficulties of settling in

another country. Foodways ultimately indicate that they cannot successfully, fully balance their Canadian-ness and Vietnamese-ness.

For the second generation, foodways symbolize the construction of hyphenated identities that go beyond national boundaries, lead to community building, and shape the space of the city by affecting understandings of multiculturalism and of Canadian-ness. Rosenthal suggests that the second generation approaches the city and its multiculturalism "as a rich source of materials from which to construct an identity" (233). These second-generation characters reject traditional food because it is a "strong marker of ethnic identity and of preserving a memory of origins" (245). In this way, foodways in the novel "exemplify the two different understandings of cultural identity of the two generations: the parents see it as a way to preserve cultural memory, and their children as a way to transcend it" (246 Rosenthal).

The rejection of heritage food in the characters' family homes by members of the second generation is also a symbolical rejection of their parents' losses, nostalgia, and attachment to an idea of ethnicity that prevents them from fully developing their multicultural identities. This is particularly evident across Tuyen and Carla's relationship with food, as they both develop an "aversion to cooking" (Brand 129). In spite of spending most of her youth in her parents' restaurant, Tuyen "made every effort not to learn cooking and developed a dislike for what was called Vietnamese food" (129) because she associates the inauthentic Vietnamese experience provided at the Saigon Pearl with a homogenization of all immigrants of Asian origin. Her parents' restaurant and the ethnic food they prepare and serve in it are an inauthentic reconstruction of her

heritage culture that she neither supports nor feels comfortable with. She dislikes feeling "exposed" in the restaurant every time the "European clientele was present, and when the customers were Vietnamese or Korean or African or South Asian, she hated the sense of sameness or ease she was supposed to feel with them" (129-30). This homogenization clashes with the notion of hyphenation because the fake ethnic experience presents different cultural components as interchangeable. When it comes to the inauthenticity of Vietnamese food, Tuyen adopts Borghini's existentialist perspective of authenticity: her rejection of inauthentic dishes is symbolic of her desire to embark on a quest for the realization of her authentic hyphenated self.

Carla, who is an Italian-Jamaican-Canadian friend of Tuyen's, also rejects ethnic ingredients whenever they appear to represent a connection to her family. While in Kensington Market, she

> stood waiting, her nose rejecting the smells, her throat gagging on rotten fish and rotten vegetables, her face turning away from the appalling blood stains on butchers' aprons at European Meats, her whole being wishing to be elsewhere … Carla despised the smells of the stores that carried dried cod and fresh thyme and mangoes … Nadine would take her to the patty store, bestowing on her a patty in cocoa bread and a cola champagne as a treat. Carla stood uneasily eating while Nadine insisted that it tasted good. She found the floury depth of the two breads distasteful. The centre of meat and spices burned her and set her tongue on fire. The cola champagne added heat where she wanted coldness, water. So

> overwhelming was the whole market that the taste in her mouth was sweet and sticky at the same time. (130-1)

Carla experiences repulsion and discomfort as she takes in the smells and flavours of ethnic food while roaming through Kensington Market—a quintessentially multiethnic space—with her stepmother Nadine. Similarly to Tuyen, she also rejects ethnic ingredients–and Jamaican food in particular–when its consumption is encouraged by her parents. This generational conflict is evident in how her stepmother Nadine "taught herself how to cook Jamaican just for Derek [Carla's father]" (131), while Carla "considered her father's customs foreign, embarrassing oddities that she would try to distance herself from in public" (131). Nadine enjoys her weekly shopping at Kensington Market, where she can find the ingredients needed to prepare Jamaican dishes for her husband, but Carla rejects these food items. She adopts derogatory words–"rejecting," "gagging," "rotten," "turning away," "appalling," "despised," "uneasily," and "distasteful"–to describe the ingredients, and "expresses her second-generation anxiety, namely that she does not identify with her father's dietary culture" (McFarlane 174). For Carla, the rejection of Jamaican food ultimately seems to be a reaction caused by her loyalty to her deceased mother Angie, an Italian-Canadian woman with whom Derek had an affair, and who committed suicide because Derek did not leave Nadine for her. By refusing to partake in Nadine and Derek's food habits, Carla manifests "[l]oyalty to her dead mother" (37) and aims to perpetuate the memory of her mother.

However, both Tuyen and Carla enjoy the ethnic food that they would normally despise in a family context if it is prepared by someone belonging to their generation.

Lugosi draws on Hall and Du Gay to argue that identities are constantly constructed as people switch from one social context to another. People, Lugosi argues, may act differently depending on whether they are eating with friends or family (22). In *What We All Long For*, Tuyen's and Carla's food choices indicate how the two characters behave differently based on where and with whom they eat, and that they negotiate hyphenated identities that are a blend of different cultures by positing themselves in opposition to their parents. When Tuyen and Carla's friend Oku lovingly prepares multicultural dishes for them, the omniscient narrator contemplates, "Odd that the same foods they were averse to in their childhood they now revered in Oku's hands" (133). Oku is a Jamaican-Canadian aspiring poet, who has dropped out of school without telling his parents. More advanced than Tuyen and Carla in his cultural negotiation, he influences their relationship with foodways and helps them negotiate between the different cultural components of their hyphenated identities. He clearly understands that the unauthentic food available in certain stores is "modified, hardened, and made acrid and stale by the distance; hardly recognizable if any here were to really take a trip to where they once called home" (190). He comprehends how the second generation needs to overcome the nostalgia experienced by their first generation immigrant parents in order to come to terms with their hyphenation: "This was how Oku experienced his mother and father each day. As people who somehow lived in the near past and were unable or unwilling to step into the present" (190). Unlike Tuyen and Carla, Oku did not reject heritage food in his family home; instead, he loved both his mother's and his father's cooking. Goulart Almeida highlights how the members of the younger generation in *What We All Long For*

become translators between their parents' world and their own (174). Oku goes beyond his role as translator, and influences members of his same generation as well, having experiences that are closer to theirs. Similarly to Jayant in *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, his love of ethnic food allows him to function as a mediator of culture who helps other characters accept their hyphenation.

Tellingly, Oku creatively combines both his parents' recipes and those of his friends' parents to cross cultural boundaries and divisions:

> He bargained with [the graffiti crew] for rice and cardamom and cloves and chilies, and now there was a curried chicken dish with the odour of cardamom, cilantro, and burnt cumin. Then there was rice, saffron-coloured, with peas and raisins. Oku hadn't learned to cook rice this way from his mother, but from the graffiti crew … He had taken his mother's training and augmented it along the way with all the training of all the mothers of the friends he had … Oku's tastes had expanded from this base to a repertoire that was vast and cosmopolitan (132-3).

Oku's blending of the recipes of a number of hyphenated immigrant mothers results in a hybrid cuisine that is symbolic of the Canadian multicultural environment. Across Oku, foodways become a way to negotiate cultural values, and ethnic food in particular opens up an opportunity for intercultural communication. Tuyen and Carla reject heritage food when it represents a mono-cultural affiliation (for example, in their parents' homes), but they accept it when it comes from a blend of traditions (for example, when cooked by Oku). In refusing a mono-cultural affiliation, they do not object to being hyphenated. At

first, in their family homes, they reject ethnic identifications because they embody homogeneous unauthentic identities and constitute a mono-cultural affiliation that they cannot withstand. Later, through multicultural foodways, they are introduced to the potential richness of their in-between-ness by a character belonging to their same generation, who has already learnt how to blend different heritages.

Rosenthal observes that collective meals "forge a community and instill the residual space of Tuyen's apartment with new cultural meaning" (246). They create an openness to hyphenation, functioning to help characters build a multicultural hyphenated community whereby they work together to develop their identities by learning how to overcome the uneasiness caused by the difficulties they experience as they negotiate their in-between state. Ultimately, characters learn how to accept their hyphenation, understanding it as a productive condition that allows them to act on the space of the city. Cam and Tuan provide ethnic food to the culturally diverse city people, and Oku's combination of different traditions and ingredients symbolizes an intercultural communication that goes beyond the preparation of food. Both examples highlight hyphenation as a productive condition that permits characters to actively work on the Canadian environment to shape a new understanding of multiculturalism. The focus switches from an interpretation of multiculturalism that limits adaptation (as is the case for Cam and Tuan) to an understanding of multiculturalism as an environment characterized by extreme diversity (in the novel embodied by the city of Toronto), where Canadian-ness proves to be influenced by the encounter of different cultures that mutually impact each other. Koc and Welsh argue that cultural practices such as food

choice and consumption express cultural identity. They contend that by observing them, we are able to learn about individual and collective tendencies for adaptation and integration (47). In *What We All Long For*, characters' food choices are an expression of their hyphenated identities, and food elucidates the effect of their socialization and community building on their identity construction process and adaptation.

4. Conclusion

Food and foodways in Canadian immigrant literature shed light on how multiculturalism is a defining feature of Canadian identity. Representations of food provide a means to juxtapose mainstream Canadian-ness and other types of hyphenated Canadian-ness to reconcile the multiplicity of cultural components that characterize hyphenated identities. Food also posits Canadian identity as crossing mono-cultural boundaries. As suggested by Barthes' and Douglas' theories, there is a strict connection between food practices, social relations, and cultural associations. Characters such as Oku (from Brand's *What We All Long For*), Jayant (from Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*), and the mother and daughter of Melfi's *Italy Revisited* are mediators of culture who, through foodways, help other characters accept their hyphenation and engage in a negotiation between the different cultural components that make them hyphenated.

However, the hyphenation symbolized by the characters' resistance to or acceptance of food is not always a clear process. As argued in this chapter, several Canadian immigrant novels present food as being at the heart of a cultural hybridity of self. The realist perspective of the authenticity of food that emerges from Melfi's *Italy*

Revisited and the one adopted by Tuyen in Brand's *What We All Long For* nudge towards the existentialist perspective, which equates the search for authentic dishes with a "quest for the realization of an authentic self" (Borghini 183). The inauthenticity of food items that pervades the Canadian cultural environment in these novels speaks heavily to the hybridity of hyphenated identities. Food items partake in a process of the blending of cultures that impacts the hyphenated characters' identities. In them, food ultimately becomes a tool to overcome the displacement of hyphenated characters and is a vehicle to contextualize different views of Canadian multiculturalism.

The understanding of Canadian-ness and hyphenation proposed by this dissertation does not suggest the assimilation of hyphenated Canadians to a monocultural affiliation in order to be a true Canadian. Instead, it advances an understanding of Canadian identity as quintessentially hybrid insofar as it celebrates diversity and hybridity by promoting a blend of the old (heritage) and new (settler) cultures that resists assimilation to a single heterogeneous culture. The following chapter will further explore how foodways in Canadian immigrant novels are metaphors for the hyphenated characters' hybridity.

Chapter 4: Food as a Metaphor for Hybridity: Menus, Identities, and Hyphenated Food

"You are what you eat" means one thing to a nutritionist, another to a novelist."
Atwood, *The Canlit Foodbook* 2

1. Introduction: The Hybridity of Food in Restaurants and Homes

Literary representations of food in Canadian immigrant literature reveal foodways to be an important force in the formation of a hybrid multicultural hyphenated identity. In literary works such as Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* and Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the hybridity of food is a metaphor for the hybridity of hyphenated identities comprised of a multiple rather than a single national identification. As I argued in Chapter 2: The Hyphen in Contemporary Canadian Immigrant Novels, hybridity, which accounts for how hyphenated identities are not attached to a single cultural component of their identity, is not to be taken as an undesired negative trait. By contrast, hybridity highlights the type of diversity and multiplicity that may very well be at the heart of Canadian identity. In the novels discussed throughout this study, hyphenated characters continuously negotiate different cultural values that bring them to have mixed hybrid identities where different cultural components blend. This chapter further explores hybridity by focusing on two Canadian immigrant novels, Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* and Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, to explore how the hybridity of food, food sharing, and food choices play a significant role in the negotiation of different cultural values and customs. In these novels, food functions as a bridge between the heritage country and the

host country, and thus prompts characters to negotiate values and formulate new models of cultural self-identification.

It is quite challenging to define what exactly constitutes Canadian food. As Hersch Jacobs argues, Canadian cuisine is an "elusive concept" because of the assortment of food items available across Canada (par. 2). Drawing from Neil Chapman and Josephine Smart, Jacobs highlights how immigration to Canada has influenced Canadian food over the years, mentioning the strong influence of the British, Irish, and Scottish – in the Maritimes and Southern Ontario – the Dutch and Scandinavian – in Ontario – and the German, Poles, and Ukrainians – in Western Canada (par. 37). The influence of immigration on food is so pronounced that he posits the waves of immigration to Canada as one of the main reasons why food is a central component of Canada's "multicultural diversity [that] may be regarded as a defining characteristic of the nation" (Jacobs par. 2, par. 69).[51] As Jacobs explains, in Canada, distinctive cultural culinary features tend to be celebrated rather than erased, thus rendering diversity a quintessential characteristic of Canadian cuisine. The large degree of diversity, in turn, makes it difficult, if not impossible, to clearly identify the particular features of a "Canadian food identity" (par. 69).

The diversity that characterizes Canadian food is particularly apparent in representations of ethnic restaurants that feature prominently in Canadian immigrant novels, such as Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, examined in the previous

[51] Additional reasons mentioned by Hersch are the vastness of Canada and the influence of the aboriginal heritage.

chapter. While Brand's novel is set in the polyphonic city of Toronto, where characters move fluidly between different ethnic neighborhoods (and restaurants), Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* is set in a Chinese small-town restaurant or cafe[52] described by some as a site of "cultural encounter" (Cooke and Boyd) and others as a space that manifests "diasporic culture" (Cho 7). Nathalie Cooke and Shelley Boyd tie the depiction of restaurants in Canadian immigrant literature to multiculturalism, arguing that the growing interest in multiculturalism in Canada and the emergence of Asian-Canadian literature in the 1970s fostered an increase in the depiction of Chinese restaurants in Canadian literature. According to them, "One notable development in the genre was that writers from the Chinese community in Canada grounded their narratives in these restaurants, offering central characters who were at home in, rather than visitors to, these spaces" (Cooke and Boyd). Many Asian-Canadian novels resist a strict separation between the concepts of home and restaurant, further underscoring the importance of the restaurant for processes of identity negotiation and formation. Representations of the conflation of home and restaurant business reflect how Asian immigrants' "family entrepreneurship collapse[s] the workspace and household" and, consequently, complicates the distinction between private and public (Julier 151-2). In such a context, foodways are particularly significant as they "produce, negotiate and reproduce the nature of the relationship between public and private spheres" (Ashley et al. 124). What is more, the Chinese restaurants in these novels are also often frequented by non-Chinese outsiders for whom

[52] Wah refers to the Diamond Grill both as a restaurant and as a cafe. In this chapter I am using "cafe" instead of "café" to follow the spelling that Wah uses in *Diamond Grill*.

the space is "both very familiar (because ubiquitous) and yet exotic (because outside the home space, and distinct from home foodways)" (Cooke and Boyd). A significant underlining social aspect joins the culinary role of the restaurant as a location where customers can consume food: "restaurants are not there simply to feed people" (Ashley et al. 143). As a result, small-town Chinese restaurants function as a perfect location where insiders and outsiders, ethnic and non-ethnic identities can intersect, interact, and ultimately mutually influence one another.[53]

Jacobs points out that the first Chinese immigrants to Canada adapted their menus to the taste of local Canadians, their main target group of customers. The end result of this adaptation was "a genre of Canadianized Chinese food which is very much a part of the Chinese-Canadian culinary identity" (par. 40). Approaching the Canadian-Chinese small-town restaurant as a "culturally productive space rather than as a cultural object," Cho also examines the preparation of Chinese food for non-Chinese customers and its relation to culture. For Cho, these restaurants with their specifically Canadian-Chinese menus are not so much "a reflection of Chineseness or small town Canadian culture, but rather […] a cultural site that is productive of Chineseness, Canadianness, small town Canadian culture, and diasporic culture more broadly" (13). Accordingly, food is central in rendering the small-town restaurant a productive space for the formation of identity. Across the preparation and consumption of the hybrid food served in ethnic restaurants,

[53] See section 2 below, where the character Fred is described as both an insider and an outsider.

different components of the hyphen can interact with each other, and cultural values can be negotiated.

The Diamond Grill cafe depicted in Wah's book is very much a "gathering space" (Cho 7) that resembles the small-town cafes that "serve as informal meeting places" (Wetherell and Kmet 227 qtd. in Cho 7). With its hybrid menu and the symbolic image of the sliding doors, the Diamond Grill functions as a meeting place where different cultures and hyphens come into contact. It presents as a hybrid space that impacts identity; in it, home and non-home, private and public, insider and outsider meet and combine.

2. Kitchens and Restaurant Doors as Spaces of Cultural Negotiation: Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*

Diamond Grill, Fred Wah's first book of prose fiction, explores Wah's heritage and family history through the depiction of the daily operations of the family cafe, the Diamond Grill. At the beginning of the 20th century, Wah's grandfather marries a Scot-Irish woman from Ontario, who works as a cashier in his first cafe in Swift Current, southern Saskatchewan.[54] From the beginning of the book, Wah positions himself as the son of a Canadian-Chinese-Scot-Irish man brought up in China and of a Swedish-Canadian woman raised in the prairies. The hybridity of the character is soon complemented and accentuated by the hybridity of the environment where his present intersects with the past of his family. Immersed in the bustle of the restaurant, he moves

[54] Whereas she marries a Chinese man because she loves him (Wah 13), he marries her mainly because the increase of the Chinese head tax makes it impossible for him to bring his Chinese family to Canada (5).

through the swinging doors, order in hand, realizing how "his foot registers more than its own imprint, starts to read the stain of memory" (1). The narrator explains how he looks "through doors and languages, skin recalling its own reconnaissance, cooked into the steamy food, replayed in the folds of elsewhere, always far away" (1). From the first pages of *Diamond Grill*, the restaurant doors that join the kitchen and the dining area alert readers to our protagonist's hyphenated hybridity: he moves through different linguistic, culinary, and cultural realities, cognizant of being not fully one nor the other, but a hybridblend of both.

In his afterword to the book, Wah defines *Diamond Grill* as a "biofiction" (177), a life-writing genre in which the fictional complements the biographical across the treatment of memories (184). Joanne Saul in *Writing the Roaming Subject: The Biotext in Canadian Literature* (2006) points out that Wah borrows from George Bowering's notion of biotext, where *bio* refers to the life components (family and relationship genealogy), and *text* refers to the articulation of life in writing (13). Janice Fiamengo, Susanne Hilf, and Eleanor Ty and Christl Verduyn approach Wah's book as an example of biofiction that accommodates and relies heavily on a fictional component to tell a biographical story, but prefer the term *biotext* to account for the book's mixing of genres. In her focus on hybridity, Hilf suggests that the fragmentated structure of Wah's biotext – the narrative is comprised of short and often unrelated sequences, some of which stretch across several paragraphs and others are merely a footnote – reflects the fragmentation of memories and narratives of one's life. She argues that hybridity pervades *Diamond Grill*, defining it as a hybrid text (part autobiography and part fiction) about a hybrid family and

a hybrid identity (137-43). Ty and Verduyn approach hybridity through a different angle, arguing that Wah's transformation of established literary genres can be understood as a political act that reflects a refusal of the boundaries positing a fixed, racial, national identity (19). They highlight that the text not only blends biography and fiction and prose and poetry; it also reflects the mix of ethnicities that make up Canada, presenting hyphenated identities that have ties to more than a single ethnic component. Finally, Fiamengo draws a connection between form and space by claiming that the fragmentation of the text functions to "document a fragmented relationship to place" (260). Accordingly, the representation of the Diamond Grill interweaves with memories of other places in his family's history that impacted Wah's hyphenation, including cafes in Swift Current, Trail, and China. The formal hybridity of *Diamond Grill* thus reflects the hybridity of its hyphenated identities.

Foodways, as this chapter argues, are central in communicating the hybridity of such an identity.[55] In *Diamond Grill*, Wah explicitly portrays doors as a hyphen or bridge that unites different cultures and traditions. At the beginning of the book, the unnamed protagonist specifies that the door of the cafe is "a wooden slab that swings between the Occident and Orient to break the hush of the whole cafe before first light the rolling gait with which I ride this silence that is a hyphen and the hyphen is the door" (16). The book ends with Fred's father entering the Diamond Grill from the back door that "clangs and rattles a noisy hyphen between the muffled winter outside and the silence of the warm

[55] In this chapter, I will use "Wah" to refer to the author and "Fred" to refer to the character. At times, "Wah" will function as both author and character because of the conflation of these two roles in Wah's biofiction.

and waiting kitchen inside" (176). In addition to linking the cold Canadian winter and the warmth of the cafe's kitchen (a heated space, but also a space permeated by memories and connections to a heritage culture that figuratively warms hyphenated characters), the back door is described as "noisy" because it provides a space for cultures to connect. In both instances, the doors literally introduce outside noise into the otherwise silent space of the cafe. More importantly, however, in both instances, the doors also refer to the swinging of the hyphen that fosters the blending of cultures.

In addition to the back door, the cafe also has swinging doors both at the entrance and between the kitchen (where food is prepared) and the dining room (where food is ordered and consumed). These doors, which provide access to spaces where the mixing of cultures takes place and hybridity is shaped, are portals to new, blended experiences. They serve a double function. Literally, the swinging doors at the entrance of the restaurant provide outsiders (the restaurants' guests) with access to the dining room. Symbolically, the same doors grant outsiders access to a hybrid Chinese-ness that is emblematic of hyphenated identities that fluctuate between different cultures. The doors of the *Diamond Grill* connect Chinese traditions and food to North-American ones, allowing patrons to embark on a hyphenated experience regardless of their heritage. For example, the "Chinese New year's celebrations sometime in January" attracts all sorts of locals to the cafe with its "booths disguised now with white tablecloths and dishes of quarters wrapped in red wrapping paper and lichee nuts, both chopsticks and cutlery" spread across its tables. On this day, Chinese dishes like "chicken and almond chop suey" taste "incredible washed down with Canada Dry gingerale" and "deep fried rock cod,

abalone, jumbo shrimp and black beans [are] finished off with ice cream or Jell-O and lots of left-over Christmas cake" (159). Cuisines and habits meld in this hyphenated experience, which ends with the "Chinese cooks [standing] just outside the swinging kitchen door in their dirty aprons faces glazed with sweat," the chief cook saying "please come back again you're all welcome, lots more in the kitchen!" (159).

The swinging doors between the cafe and the kitchen also aid movement between different spaces and cultures that benefits the adaptation of immigrant characters (insiders) to their new home: "a Chinaman can always find his way around the country by knocking on the kitchen doors of Chinese restaurants" (17). Working in the restaurant helps Chinese immigrants to Canada settle into a new environment and become familiar with a new language, as exemplified by Fred's father, who improves his English by working in the cafe (65). The cafe also aids the settlement of newcomers like Wingo Bo, a "paper son" (118) and nephew of the old-man dishwasher, who arrives from China unable to speak English.[56] The exchange of cultures flows in both directions. For instance, Fred, a second-generation hyphenated Canadian proficient in English, learns his heritage language by interacting with the cook in the kitchen of the Diamond Grill. He comments: "The few Chinese words I know are the ones I hear in the kitchen when the cook swears at me" (120). Even though his knowledge of Chinese remains limited,

[56] The inclusion of the expression "paper son" informs readers of the history of Chinese immigration to Canada. At the time of the Canadian exclusionary practices towards Chinese immigrants, a paper son was "a Chinese Canadian man's son who did not qualify as a dependant to enter Canada and had assumed the identity of another man's son who did qualify" (Poy 65). Paper sons were illegal immigrants who had to maintain their false identity for all their lives, an identity that was passed on to future generations.

walking through the door into the cafe's kitchen opens up a space marked by the mixing of foodways and language learning that fosters the blending of cultures and the creation of hyphenated identities.

Deer suggests that *Diamond Grill* "highlight[s] the politically constructed divisions between insider and outsider, or mainstream and foreign" (289). A hybrid hyphenated Fred is both an insider and outsider at the same time. Because of his mixed ancestry, Fred is recognized neither as being Chinese – he does not look Asian – nor Canadian – his last name indicates a strong Chinese affiliation. Throughout his life, his father encountered similar "problems from both the Chinese (he's a half-breed, he's really a white man, he's married to a white woman) and the Wasps (he looks Chinese, he can talk Chinese, and he runs the cafe, right?)" (39). This lived experience and its impact on belonging is also evident when the Wahs visit Chinese restaurants in Vancouver. On one occasion, the owners of a Chinese restaurant who do not know his father are surprised to learn he can speak Cantonese despite the family's white complexion (122). Although the family is treated with friendliness, the owners' initial surprise at the Wahs' apparent whiteness and the narrator's admittance that something was not quite right – the chapter ends with the owners refusing to let the Wahs pay for the bill and the first-person narrator admitting, "But I can tell" (122) – highlight the potential confusion surrounding ideas of national and cultural affiliation when it comes to being Canadian and hyphenated, insider and outsider.

Throughout the book, food serves as a trope to explore Fred's simultaneous status as insider and outsider (Baena 108). Just as Fred is a hybrid

"ChineseHYPHENCanadian" (Wah 178), the cafe and the food served in it reflect a hyphenated Canadian-ness that implies a rejection of "pure" Canadian-ness (54). Douglas understands menus as linguistic forms that instruct others about a specific culture and society. Indeed, menus and cookbooks are important for the "development of a standardized gastronomic vocabulary," as Mihalache observes when considering their inclusion in several university libraries across Canada and the United States (63). In an essay about the menu of Le Zyriab (the restaurant of Paris' Arab World Institute), Mihalache remarks that menus are "transitional texts between different communities – the diners – and commodities – the dishes" and serve as "points of encounters between cultures" (60-4).

Transformation and cultural encounter combine in the Diamond Grill's menu. As Baena states, "the type of food cooked and served at the Diamond Grill is highly mixed and thus emblematic of the transcultural situation" (108). The Chinese section of the menu is in fact quite small (Wah 44), leaving much space for dishes that reflect a blending of cultures that is hyphenated. More specifically, while the standard menu includes an assortment of Chinese dishes, the daily menu sounds mostly North-American in its selection of soups, specials, and entrees (144). Regulars to the cafe order pancakes and sausages (38), sausages, mashed potatoes with gravy and sauerkraut (46), or some of the Chinese offerings ("chicken or pork chow mein, sweet and sour spareribs, noodle soup, beef and broccoli" (45)), while the family enjoys food items not on the menu, "some real Chinese food cooked by Shu – ox tail soup, deep fried cod, chicken with pineapple and lichee" (46). This example accentuates that like the menus of small-town

Canadian Chinese restaurants, the Diamond Grill's menu "allows for a mediated form of cultural contact, it also complicates the idea of an authentic or original Chineseness" (Cho 69). With its blending of Chinese and North-American dishes, the Diamond Grill menu is hybrid in a way that reflects the characters' hyphenated experience. Like its characters, the food served at the cafe is at once Chinese and Canadian, and thus neither one nor the other.[57] The cafe exists within and as a multicultural environment, serving hybrid food that prompts a transformation not only of the characters' identity, but also of the identity of the food they prepare and consume.

Popular choices at the Diamond Grill include milkshakes, North-American sauces and soda drinks, breakfast pancakes and sausages, steak with French fries, Campbell soup, and desserts ranging from pies to doughnuts and butter tarts. However, when compared to other North-American establishments discussed within the novel, there are some differences in how these items are served at the cafe. For example, a friend tells Fred that "at the Standard [another food establishment in the town] they slice the lemon instead of wedge it and he prefers [the Diamond Grill's soda] because it's easier to squeeze the lemon" (40). Also, at the Diamond Grill milkshakes are said to taste differently because served in real glasses, rather than in the cardboard ones used at the newly opened Dairy Queen. Attention to details and presentation seem to characterize the offerings of the cafe, where the Chinese staff skillfully switches from the preparation of North-American to that of Asian dishes. The same chef who prepares North-American

[57] For a discussion on how ethnic food is altered in host countries, see Deer (288).

fare also prepares the Chinese menu offerings as well as the off-menu items enjoyed by the Wahs.

According to Cho, small-town Chinese restaurant menus across Canada entail "a strategic incorporation that is not about assimilation, but is in fact its opposite … [They] are a sign not of assimilation but of dissimulation" (51). These menus do not distinguish their offerings "by regional categories such as Szechuan or Hunan, but by genres such as 'egg foo yong,' 'chow mein,' and 'chop suey'" (Cho 7). Cho highlights that small-town restaurant menus, which normally include a western/Canadian and a Chinese section, use this distinction as a "highly aware and agential representational praxis that is all about negotiating and alleviating the perceived threat of their otherness." In particular, the inclusion of a Canadian section in Chinese restaurant menus is "an act of agential self-positioning" (56). Menus would then allow "Chinese cooks and restaurateurs [to] name and define Canadian and western for Canadians" (53) and permit Chinese immigrants to gain power as they define what is Canadian food through their menus. In a way, immigrants in the food industry therefore seem able to "gain agency and self-sufficiency by selling their own invented ethnic cuisine to the dominant group" (Gunew 229). Cho's theorizing accounts for how the menu of the Diamond Grill breaks this popular pattern of naming and organizing food items on a menu. It "does not name its not-Chinese dishes as Canadian or Western" (58). By dismantling distinctions that separate Chinese and Canadian, the menu of the Diamond Grill rejects ideas of uniformity when it comes to Chinese-ness and Canadian-ness to embrace hybridity and hyphenation.

The blending of Chinese and Canadian food is particularly evident during events such as the yearly Chinese New Year's banquet, a popular event at the Diamond Grill. As stated above, on that occasion, the cafe offers a hyphenated Chinese menu that includes lichee nuts, scotch and rye, bird-nest soup, barbecue pork, different rice dishes, "almond chop suey (incredible washed down with Canada Dry gingerale), snow peas, "deep fried rock cod, abalone, jumbo shrimp and black beans finished off by ice cream or Jell-O and lots of left-over Christmas cake" (158-9). Combining typically Chinese items with ginger ale and non-Chinese desserts is a clear example of how the Diamond Grill's food offerings bring together Asian and North-American traditions. Instead of keeping North-American and Asian strictly separated, dishes are mutated, ingredients altered, and names morphed. After New Year's, food's blending of cultures is further highlighted by the preparation of the juk-soup. Fred explains, "Juk is a soup we always have after New Year's because it's made with left-over turkey. I think of it as the bridge between our white Christmas (presents and turkey stuffing) and our Chinese New Year (firecrackers and juk)" (167). According to Baena,

> Culinary language enables Wah to explore his personal identity through metaphors of additions, mixing, and cooking of elements. Wah's culinary performance duplicates his literary enactment: his final product (his text) is composed of his own version of a family past. He reworks recipes and appropriates gastronomic wisdom in order to literally perform the process of a multiracial, transcultural identity. Thus food functions as an empowering trope for

> Wah, as it enacts the multiplicity of his origins and identifications and their process of amalgamation (109).

In its inclusion and mixing of both Asian and American food items, the menu of the Diamond Grill is miscegenated, of mixed ancestry like Fred: it is a hybrid hyphenated menu symbolic of the characters' hybridity and hyphenation.

Offering a combination of Asian and American food, and using ingredients from one fare to prepare dishes belonging to the other tradition can thus be understood to symbolize the identity construction process of the hyphenated characters that populate *Diamond Grill*. Joan Fitzpatrick draws from Annette Cozzi to highlight that food is "one of the most fundamental signifiers of national identity" (Cozzi 5) and that novels such as the ones studied here reveal the construction of an identity that "is created by and confirmed through food" (127). In this sense, the hybridity of food in *Diamond Grill* addresses and confirms the hybridity of its hyphenated hybrid identities that "don't like clear-cut [and] suspect the mechanical purity of righteous, clear, shining, Homelite Americas" (Wah 125).

Fred's fluctuation between North-American and Chinese dishes, for example, reflects his negotiation of different cultural values as he develops his hyphenated identity. On the one hand, he skillfully operates the soda fountain and invents Canadian desserts such as the "Grey Cup Special" – made up of bananas, strawberries, coconut, a maraschino cherry, whipped cream and maple-walnut, chocolate, and pineapple syrups (41) – and the "doughnut sundae," a sugar doughnut topped with vanilla ice cream, whipped cream, peanuts, and a strawberry or marshmallow (107). These culinary

inventions represent his understanding of and connection to the culture of his place of birth and the environment where he grew up, Canada. On the other hand, the take-out his family brings home from the Diamond Grill, a mixture of pastry and pies and Chinese food, unchains memories of lost heritage tastes that are recovered and forever craved (46). The memories of the dishes prepared by his father incite him to include tofu and rice in his diet (151), and his father's use of ginger in recipes evokes the feeling that "ginger's almost nicer than being born" (11). Asian ingredients such as tofu, rice, ginger, and lo bok (also known as Chinese white turnip) help Fred connect with his heritage. In an interview with John Goddard, Wah states: "I feel Chinese because of the food I enjoy, and that's because my father cooked Chinese food. But I don't know what it feels like to feel Chinese" (41). As in Wah's real-life experience, food, heritage, and identity are tightly connected in *Diamond Grill*. Throughout the book, Fred embarks on an educational experience through the consumption of food that, like himself, is miscegenated. The preparation and consumption of food is an essential part of his process of identity construction, and accentuates his impure, hyphenated identity.

Ian Cook and Philip Crang highlight the change in food practices on the part of those who move to a new country, arguing that food is "geographically constituted through processes of 'displacement'" (132-8). According to their interpretation, food practices go beyond boundaries that have to do with place, effacing any barrier between here/there and us/them. This crossing of boundaries is food's role in novels such as Wah's *Diamond Grill*, Parameswaran's *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, and Brand's *What We All Long For*. In these literary works, foodways create connections between the

different components of hyphenated identities as well as between immigrant characters and the outsiders who visit restaurants like the Diamond Grill: here and there, us and them are thus brought together. Cook and Crang see displacement as the proof that "there are no pure cultures to mix, if purity means bounded exclusivity" (139). This chapter has expanded on the argument made in Chapter 2 that in Canadian immigrant novels Canadian identity is hybrid, by showing – through the analysis of Wah's *Diamond Grill* – that in them Canadian foodways are hybrid as well. This is because food practices aid the construction of the characters' hyphenated identities in a multicultural context where different cultural components are brought into dialogue.

3. Eating One's Identity as a Re-appropriation of Old and New in the Family Home: Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*

Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* portrays three female immigrant characters that belong to three different generations, the grandmother Naoe/Obāchan, born in Japan; her daughter Keiko (who renames herself Kate), born in Japan, but who has spent most of her life in Canada; and Keiko's daughter Muriel (renamed Murasaki by Obāchan), born in Canada.[58] Beauregard highlights the importance of naming and re-naming in the novel, arguing that "the 'hybrid space' from which many of Goto's characters can speak is articulated in their plural identities and multiple names" (58). In particular, Beauregard emphasizes that Obāchan's renaming herself Purple and changing Muriel's name to

[58] In this chapter, I will refer to Naoe / Obāchan as Obāchan to highlight her attachment to her Japanese-ness, to Keiko / Kate as Keiko to highlight her cultural displacement, and to Muriel / Murasaki as Muriel / Murasaki to highlight her in-between-ness.

Murasaki (which means purple in Japanese) signals "the coming together of grandmother and granddaughter as 'translations' of themselves" (58). Throughout the novel, the symbolic hybrid space articulated through multiple names and identities is rendered possible in the concrete gendered space of the home. As in Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with my Mother*, female family members in Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms* have an important role in the production and maintenance of hyphenated identities within the home. It is in this intimate space that women transmit culture and determine what culture their children are exposed to.

Although the three female characters develop their hyphenated identities by interacting in the space of the home,[59] they live the negotiation of the components of their hyphenated identities in different ways. Whereas Muriel / Murasaki finds herself in a space in-between cultures because her mother, who controls their home, encourages her to reject her Japanese heritage and to fully adapt to their settler country (Canada), her grandmother Obāchan, who lives with them, attempts to provide her with a connection to their Japanese heritage traditions and values. Regardless of their different approaches to their hyphenatedness, in *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the home is the setting where "food is the point of departure" of the characters' discussions, growth, and hyphenated identity-building (Goto, *Chorus* 201). Ashley et al. argue that the consumption of food "not only works to reproduce ethnic identities but also to negotiate their meaning" (71). In its treatment of hyphenated identity, *Chorus of Mushrooms* does not merely depict the

[59] In an article about code-switching and translation, Goto calls herself "Canasian," which can be interpreted as a way to highlight her own hyphenation (112).

simple consumption of food. Instead, it proposes that acts of preparing, eating, and accepting and/or rejecting heritage food have a strong impact on how the characters negotiate the two cultures that make up their hyphenated identities. The processes of preparing food, eating food, and negotiating cultural values are tightly intertwined throughout the novel.

In *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the characters' relationships with food symbolize either their rejection or acceptance of heritage values. Like language and code-switching that abound in the book and grant Goto the ability of "Moving between cultures: sounds like a back and forth linear repetition" (Goto, *Translating* 112), foodways inform each character's gradual negotiation of different cultural values and customs that govern their cultural identification. Initially, Keiko identifies with Canada, Obāchan with Japan, and Murasaki with both (she is familiar with her Canadian-ness, but also wishes to learn about her Japanese heritage). In *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the conflictual relationship between Keiko and Obāchan, which influences Muriel / Murasaki's negotiation of cultural values, plays out across and is fueled by their contrasting attitudes towards food and language. Upon their arrival in Canada, Keiko and her husband decided, "we would put Japan behind us and fit more smoothly with the crowd. And from that day, when we decided, neither of us could speak a word in Japanese. Not a word would pass our lips. We couldn't even think it" (206). Throughout the book, Keiko speaks English at all times (despite having been fluent in Japanese prior to her move to Canada), and wants nothing but Canadian food to be eaten in the home. Keiko's rejection of Japanese food strongly suggests that she is emotionally detached from her Japanese heritage, and that she instead

identifies or, at the very least, wishes to identify as Canadian. In this sense, food is symbolic of "what and how one eats engender much of one's emotional tie to one's nation or ethnic community," as Wenying Xu highlights in her study of John Okada's *No No Boy* and Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* (52).

Throughout *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Keiko insists that she and her daughter Muriel / Murasaki are "as white as their neighbors" and that they should also look and behave like them, believing that "you can't be everything at once. It is too confusing for a child to juggle two cultures" (Goto 189). According to Keiko, her daughter should also reject forms of Japanese-ness because adhering to one culture – their settler culture – fosters a strong sense of belonging. Her belief is that "if you live in Canada, you should live like a Canadian and that's how [she] raised her daughter" (189). Significantly, Keiko is highly uncomfortable when Muriel / Murasaki eats Mandarin oranges and her hands turn yellow, promptly bringing her daughter to the sink to scrub them clean (92). And, when Muriel / Murasaki is chosen to play Alice in a school play based on *Alice in Wonderland*, and her teacher comments that she would look more like Alice if her hair was blonde, Keiko encourages her daughter to dye her hair so that she can look more Western (177). Keiko goes out of her way to reject anything, including food, that could draw attention to the family's difference, to their Japanese heritage. However, as Bodal argues, the orange episode may also "reveal [Keiko's] deep insecurity about her (and her family's) place in Canadian society, suggesting that despite her efforts she still does not feel quite comfortable as a Canadian" (239). Keiko's denial of her ethnicity may also run the risk of rendering her an outsider to both cultural communities. Sasano makes this point by

drawing from Bhabha's assertion that "the disavowal of difference turns the colonial subject into a misfit – a grotesque mimicry or 'doubling' that threatens to split the soul and whole, undifferentiated skin of the ego" (Bhabha qtd. in Sasano 4).

Notwithstanding her mother's insistence and efforts and her own recognition that "the place where [they] lived didn't foster cultural difference," that "it only had room for cultural integration," and "if you didn't abide by the unwritten rules of conduct, you were alienated as an other, subject to suspicion and mistrust" (189),[60] Muriel / Murasaki embraces Japanese food traditions, such as eating salted squid and rice crackers with her grandmother. However, throughout the greater part of the novel, Muriel / Murasaki is "a culturally displaced individual characterized by her longing to reclaim the heritage her Mother chose to forget, on the one hand, and her wish to define a confident Canadian selfhood, on the other" (Slapkauskaite *Identity* 216). On the one hand, her parents refuse to teach her about her heritage, an absence of cultural knowledge reflected in the family's language choices. As Muriel / Murasaki explains: "I was always hungry for words, even when I was very little. Dad, the man without an opinion, and Mom hiding behind an adopted language. It was no wonder I was so confused, language a strange companion. I never knew what I should do" (98). On the other hand, for Muriel / Murasaki "it was hard growing up in a small prairie town, the only Japanese-Canadian for miles around" (121). Throughout *Chorus of Mushrooms*, she manifests sentiments of displacement in her struggles to self-identify, such as when her first lover asks if she is Oriental, and she

[60] This quote is taken from Muriel/Murasaki's piece in *The Herald*, an issue about the multicultural voices of Alberta to which both Keiko and Muriel/Murasaki contribute.

answers “Not really, … I think I’m Canadian” (122). When she is a young girl, she avoids other Asian-Canadians because “Oriental people in single doses were well enough, but any hint of a group and it was all over. I thought I was proud of being Japanese-Canadian, but I was actually a coward” (125). Her confusion leads to her longing to reclaim her heritage: “Is it ever too late to learn? Obachan, I learned to speak Japanese after you left. Because I wanted to. It’s a good reason … I’m glad I learned Japanese because now I can juggle two languages and when there isn’t one word in English, it will be there in Japanese and if there’s something lacking in your tongue, I’ll reach for it in English” (54). The displacement felt by Muriel / Murasaki is eased by her relationship with her grandmother, who through their sharing of food influences Muriel / Murasaki’s cultural identification.

Obachan’s relationship with food and language affects the family dynamics by providing a chance for Muriel / Murasaki to discover her heritage. According to Obāchan, food has changed her daughter Keiko: by rejecting Japanese food, she has “forsaken identity” (13) and converted from Japanese to Canadian. In her insistence that she “speak[s] [her] words in Japanese” (4) and her love of “dried salted squid,” which she hides in her pocket so to go undetected (14), Obāchan presents a stark contrast to Keiko’s stance toward the food and language of Japan. Obāchan laments that Keiko “converted from rice and *daikon*[61] to weiners [sic] and beans. Endless evenings of tedious roast chicken and honey smoked ham and overdone rump roast. My daughter, you were raised

[61] *Daikon*, or Japanese radish, is a root vegetable popular in Japan.

on fish cakes and pickled plums. This Western food has changed you and you've grown more opaque even as your heart has brittled" (13). According to Obāchan, the consumption of Western North-American food has clouded her daughter's perspective and judgement and, more importantly, obscured a crucial component of her identity, her Japanese-ness. Her food choices have damaged her heart, the very core of her being and identity, because they have fostered a cultural self-identification that distances her from her Japanese-ness.

According to Branach-Kallas, in *Chorus of Mushrooms*, eating Canadian food is symbolic of being devoured by mainstream Canada, while eating Japanese food is symbolic of recuperating one's traditions and health (77). Once Keiko is devoured by Canadian culture – as stated above, her choice to self-identify with a mainstream idea of Canadian-ness (white and Anglophone) leads to an alienation from self – recuperating her Japanese-ness becomes necessary if she is to be a complete version of herself. Keiko's conflict with her mother and hate of Japanese food reflects her struggle to negotiate the Canadian and Japanese cultures and values. For her, such negotiation processes lead to extreme emotional pain.[62] The extent of her pain is evident when she suffers a nervous breakdown, unable to speak and unwilling to eat for three months, after her mother leaves the family home (127). As Šlapkauskaitė notes, "Goto shows that Keiko's attempts to repress her Japanese ethnicity have a traumatizing effect on her consciousness: her feelings of guilt over her refusal to speak Japanese have finally resulted in her loss of

[62] The emotional pain caused by the negotiation of different cultural values is also noted by Xu in relation to John Okada's *No-No Boy* (52).

English as well" (*Language* 123). Specifically, Keiko, who is "unable to verbalise her loss, descends into a near-catatonic state" (Bodal 239). However, when Muriel / Murasaki clothes her in Obāchan's "*nemaki* Japanese night clothes," Keiko responds with a simple "O….K." (128). It is particularly significant that Keiko loses her ability to speak English and stops eating Western food. Although these losses represent the ultimate consequence of Keiko's harmful self-identification with only mainstream-Canadian-ness that had been criticized by Obāchan, it is through her embrace of Japanese-ness that Keiko restores her very self. Eventually, Japanese words slip into her discussions with Muriel / Murasaki (199) and "on a holiday weekend, she would ask [Muriel / Murasaki] to whip up something from '[her] little cook book,' as she called it" (191).

Even though Obāchan knew how to speak English – "How can they think a body can live in this country for twenty years and not learn the language? But let them think this" (3) – unlike Keiko, she only speaks Japanese in the home in her efforts to maintain, but also foster a connection to her heritage. In addition, despite Keiko's attempt to free the house of all things Japanese, Obāchan owns a secret box at the post office where she receives packages of traditional Japanese food items, such as salted squid and rice crackers, picked up and delivered to her room by Muriel / Murasaki (17). By speaking Japanese to her granddaughter, who has never learnt it; sharing Japanese food with her; and telling her stories, Obāchan helps Muriel / Murasaki connect with her Japanese heritage. She inspires her to construct an identity that embraces and blends different cultural values, serving as an active participant in the building of Muriel / Murasaki's hyphenated identity. Although it is not clear how Muriel / Murasaki and Obāchan

understand each other and overcome the language barrier between them,[63] they nonetheless are able to build a meaningful relationship thanks to these shared sensorial experiences.[64] Indeed, once Obāchan leaves the home to embark on a secret journey, they can even communicate telepathically. When this first occurs, Muriel / Murasaki protests, "I can understand what you're saying, and how can we be talking anyway?! I must be insane," to which her grandmother answers, "*Ara*, Murasaki, that doesn't sound like the granddaughter I know and love. There are stranger things in life than two people who are close being able to understand one another" (130).

Foodways in the novel symbolize Keiko, Obāchan, and Murasaki's processes of identity construction and gradual hyphenation. In particular, the characters' contrasting attitudes towards food and language show that their negotiation of cultural values differs depending on their specific identity-building journey. As Muriel / Murasaki puts it, "Two women take up two different roads, two different journeys at different times. They are not travelling with a specific destination in mind but the women are walking toward the same place. Whether they meet or not is not relevant" (200). Even though her words literally refer to Obāchan's physical journey and to her own, metaphorically she is providing a commentary on the immigrant experience and the different self-identification journeys undertaken by her family members: her mother's rejection and then acceptance of her

[63] Muriel/Murasaki pretends to understand until she explains how she learnt Japanese after Obāchan left (54).

[64] Branach-Kallas observes how body rituals and touch encourage a bond between the members of the three generations and allow the creation of a family-community which recuperates the lost heritage (66-7).

Japanese-ness, her grandmother's attachment to their heritage, and her own in-between-ness and blending of Canadian-ness and Japanese-ness.

Muriel / Murasaki turns into the head of the family after Obāchan suddenly leaves the family home and Keiko suffers a nervous breakdown. In that role, she is the preparer of food and, by extension, the transmitter of culture. Following these events, the opposition between Canadian and Japanese food is overthrown by a blending of the two thanks to Muriel / Murasaki, who turns into a mediator between her mother's and her grandmother's differing perspectives and approaches to self-identification. The young woman still benefits from her grandmother's guidance, as Obāchan telepathically communicates with Muriel / Murasaki and encourages her to visit the local Oriental Food Store and prepare Japanese food for Keiko.

Goto explicitly highlights the connection between food and identity through the words of the Oriental Food Store owner. When she learns that Muriel / Murasaki's mother does not prepare Japanese food, the store owner suggests that "eating's a part of being" (138), and gifts Muriel / Murasaki a Japanese recipe book, instructing her on the ingredients she needs to make *tonkatsu* (which is also her family's last name). Gilbert suggests that recipes are "histories of who we are, transmitting the tastes of the past" (8); they constitute "culinary procedures that we've inherited from history, ancestral gifts meant to guide us through the mysteries of the kitchen … prescriptions for the cultural recovery" (45). In *Chorus of Mushrooms*, the gifting and use of the Japanese recipe book symbolizes the recovery of family and cultural heritage, but also highlights the Canadian component of their Japanese-Canadian identities. As a matter of fact, choosing *tonkatsu*

does not simply entail a recuperation of a heritage dish and identity. It also shows the influence of Western habits and ideas on the three immigrant characters. *Tonkatsu* originates from *katsuretsu*, a late nineteenth-century "hybrid Japanese-Western" deep-fried breaded pork dish (Cwiertka, "Culinary Culture" 421). "Ton" is the Japanese word for pork, and "katsu" is the abbreviation of *katsuretsu* ("tonkatsu"), which is the Japanese word for "cutlet." An 1872 Japanese recipe book by Robun Kanagaki and Kyosai Kawanabe, *Seiyo ryori tsu* (*The Expert on Western Cookery*), traces the origin of the recipe to a French dish called *porc côtelette*, which – even though prepared without batter – is believed to be the original recipe of *katsuretsu* (*Tokyo Restaurants Guide*). Katarzyna Cwiertka highlights that in the early 20th-century, Western culture influenced a change in Japanese food culture. At that time, impacted by the dissemination of the Western idea of the role of family meals and the circulation of Western knowledge about nutrition and hygiene, the Japanese start to follow a more varied diet (45-8). At this time, a typical Japanese household menu begins to consist of a blend of Japanese, Chinese, and Western food items, preparation methods, and dishes, including fried pork cutlets, originally a French dish. The choice of a hybrid dish that is also the characters' family name "suggests the possibility of finding nourishment and sustenance in a hybrid cultural/culinary identity" (Beauregard 59). Wenying Xu also notes that a community's celebration of the rituals surrounding food functions to strengthen the unity and identification of the community (51). Indeed, in *Chorus of Mushrooms*, preparing the pork dish and consuming it together fortifies the family and their identification as hyphenated Canadians.

Once Muriel / Murasaki has prepared the dish, she finds it funny that they are "going to eat [their] name" (151). Muriel / Murasaki's father, Otosan, who is known for liking all-things-Western – but also buys salted seaweed paste at the Oriental food store (135) – eventually admits that their last name became *Tonkatsu* because it was the only Japanese word he could remember (209). His statement, delivered at the end of the novel, demonstrates an underlining desire to maintain a connection to their Japanese origins amidst their immersion in a significantly different Canadian culture. It also suggests the difficulty of doing so. According to the "principle of incorporation" (Fischler 279-80), we are what we eat: food provides us with energy, but it also constitutes our bodies, passing on its properties to those who consume it. As argued by Lugosi, "the consumption of products, services or experiences, including those related to food and drink, help [sic] to shape who we are" (25): they impact our identities.

Food in the novel is therefore indeed the "point of departure. A place where growth begins" (Goto, *Chorus* 201). Through food, one gains understanding of self, directly consuming culture. Consequently, food helps our characters embark on a process of hybridization. First, it is symbolic of self-identification with (and a deeper understanding of) a certain culture; second, it facilitates the characters' acceptance of their hyphenation; and finally, it shapes a character's hyphenated identity thanks to its healing properties. Eating the *tonkatsu* prepared by Muriel/Murasaki allows Keiko, who in the first part of *Chorus of Mushrooms* manifested a strong rejection of the Japanese component of her hyphenated identity, to magically heal from her nervous breakdown. After eating the Japanese *tonkatsu*, Keiko suddenly starts talking again. Her husband also

contributes to her healing process by making chopsticks for the meal and teaching her how to use them. According to Ashley et al., "the family meal [...] is central to the reproduction of national cultures" because it constitutes a "proper meal," that is a meal that goes beyond being merely nutritious to encompass a variety of symbolical and cultural meanings (124-5). Indeed, by consuming Japanese food and using traditional eating tools, Keiko regains access to her heritage and begins to accept her hyphenation, thus healing physically, but also emotionally and culturally. Keiko "revives with the help of this Japanese food … and is able to acknowledge the ethnic history of her own family – not in any dramatic reversals but enough to attain more dimensions than the cut-out character she had tried to force herself into becoming" (Gunew 231). In other words, eating *tonkatsu* helps Keiko come to terms with her identity and its hybridity, and feel more complete as she accepts her hyphenation.

Historically, Japanese culture draws a link between food and magic. *Yakuzen*, for example, is a Japanese "medicinal cooking … based on the philosophy of Oriental medicine and … intended to maintain good health and improve physical condition." *Yakuzen* dishes are prepared using seasonal ingredients with healing properties and tastes, called *Sei-Mi* (Tsukagoshi, S., et al. 105). Making use of certain food items "based on their flavor profile and effect on human body temperature" (289), *yakuzen* joins other Japanese food practices and customs, such as eating certain dishes on specific days of the year because of their medicinal effect (De St. Maurice 289).[65] In *Chorus of Mushrooms*,

[65] For instance, eating eel on the Day of the Ox is thought to provide "the nutrition and strength required to make it through the hot summer days" (De St. Maurice 289-94).

the magical properties of food fosters an intimate connection between Muriel / Murasaki and her grandmother. Gunew suggests that "Food becomes the catalyst for precipitating communication – in some ways magically. Sustained by a secret cache of food sent to her by her brother in Japan, Naoe shares her supply with her granddaughter Muriel. The food allows Muriel to communicate with her grandmother, to be suddenly able to hear and speak Japanese" (230). While it remains unclear if the characters communicate telepathically or if Muriel / Murasaki imagines her grandmother conversing with her, the connection between food and magic is explicitly drawn when Obāchan makes *sekihan* in occasion of Muriel / Murasaki's first menstruation. Literally meaning "red rice," *sekihan* is a heritage dish made on special occasions, prepared with rice and red adzuki beans, which give the dish its red colour. Historically, red "was thought to have magical powers in Japan; it heralded good fortune and warded off evil" (Itoh). In the novel, Obāchan prompts Muriel / Murasaki to collect the red beans from a box she keeps in the house, and then proceeds to prepare the traditional ritual dish: "Obāchan stood at the stove, filling two bowls with something from a pot […] two bowls of rice in front of her. But the rice was different. It wasn't white, but a rich purpley reddish colour and there were bean flecks here and there" (Goto, *Chorus* 181). *Sekihan* is not only a key element in the celebration of an important occurrence – her first menstruation – in the life of the young Muriel / Murasaki. It is also central in the formation of her hyphenated identity.

4. Conclusion

> *When does it end?When does itend?When doesitend?WhendoesitendWhendoesitendwhendoesitendwhendoesitendwhendoesitendwhendoesitendwhendoesitendwhendoesitendwhen*
>
> *You tell me.*
>
> *[…]*
>
> *Where does one thing end and another begin?*
>
> *Can you separate the two?*
>
> Goto, *Chorus of Mushrooms* 212-3

In *Chorus of Mushrooms,* the two components of hyphenated identities – Japanese and Canadian – are not easily separated. In-between-ness and hybridity are presented as productive conditions for its immigrant characters, as they allow hybrid identities to maintain or, as in the case of Keiko, gain balance. Throughout the novel, the characters' relationship with food unleashes a negotiation of the different components of their identities that leads to an acceptance of their hyphenation. At a metaphorical level, hyphenated characters are what they eat,; their relationship with food reflects either the rejection or acceptance of heritage values. If characters are what they eat, ordering from a mixed hybrid menu (such as that of the Diamond Grill) or eating a hybrid dish (such as the hybrid *tonkatsu*) means eating multiculturalism and, by extension, being multicultural and hyphenated. This process, in turn, reflects a re-defining of what it means to be Canadian.

If in Wah's *Diamond Grill* the location of the hyphen is the Diamond Grill restaurant, in *Chorus of Mushroom* it is the Tonkatsus' home. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, it is initially Keiko who controls the home, dictating what language and attitudes are most desirable at the Tonkatsus. Obāchan, however, also exerts influence on the space of the home (even though she may at first seem passive), both when she inhabits the space and when she leaves it. At the beginning of the novel, Obāchan spends her day sitting silently on a chair in the living room, refusing to speak English. She is at once passive – she is inactive, both physically (she does not move) and verbally (she does not speak) – and active in her resistance against her daughter's rejection of all things Japanese (food included) and obsession with being mainstream Canadian. On the one hand, home is a limiting space for Obāchan. Frustrated by the conflictual relationship with her daughter and Keiko's attempt to free the family from anything even remotely connected to their heritage, Obāchan criticizes her daughter's attitude: "You cannot move to a foreign land and call that place home because you parrot the words around you. Find your home inside yourself first, I say. Let your home words grow out from the inside, not the outside in" (48).

Branach-Kallas notes how the family home is a limitation for Obāchan, who finally is free when she leaves it: "Naoe's liberation from the confines of the family, the traditional woman's sphere, and her appropriation of the traditional male space of bull riding seem to free the elderly female body from any cultural and physical limitation"

(69).[66] Charlotte Sturgess highlights Obāchan's transformation and multiplicity by arguing that she embodies many identities – she is passive in the home (a place of displacement where boundaries are negotiated) and active in her wanderings once she leaves her family (23-5). According to Sturgess, in the first half of the novel, Obāchan stands "on the border between East and West. As such she articulates a similar 'garrison' anxiety of environment, refusing both the reality of life in Canada and the language which goes with it" (22). In other words, Obāchan's leaving the home is a border crossing. In this sense, the home functions as the hyphen, a border between old (heritage) and new (Canada).

On the other hand, the bond between Obāchan and Muriel / Murasaki as well as the bond between Muriel / Murasaki and Keiko occur within the home, and it is again within the home where Keiko heals from her nervous breakdown. The importance of the home and its connection to identity is further evident when Muriel / Murasaki reflects on her mother's rejection of their non-Western heritage. She states, "home should be a safe space, but there are times when I don't feel safe at all" (190). Her words highlight the unease she initially felt in the home, at a time when the negotiation of different cultural values is challenged by her mother's desire for a cultural integration that rejects any connection to their heritage. As a result, even though the home is initially a location that may seem to challenge the development of hyphenated identities, it is in fact an enabling

[66] See also Frank Paci's *Black Madonna*, discussed in Chapter 5, where the family home is a limiting space for one of the characters, Marie. Similarly to *Chorus of Mushrooms*, in *Black Madonna* the development of the mother-daughter bond and the connection to heritage occurs in the home (although in *Black Madonna* the mother-daughter bond is developed post-mortem of the mother).

location, another location of the hyphen. Home in *Chorus of Mushrooms* has a strong impact on how Obāchan, Keiko, and Muriel / Murasaki negotiate – in their own personal ways – the two cultures that make up their hyphenated identity through foodways.

In both *Diamond Grill* and *Chorus of Mushrooms*, food highlights the power dynamics that affect intergenerational relationships of hybrid hyphenated characters and the double status of insiders and outsiders of hyphenated identities within Canada's multicultural environment. The connection between food and power has been highlighted by several scholars. Cozzi, for instance, argues that "Eating is about more than physical nourishment or sensual pleasure, it is about power" (6). Mintz, too, claims that "food exercises 'power' over people in terms of what it means to them … power and meaning are always connected" (30). Julier, in an analysis of early 20th-century ethnic women's behaviour, proposes that women often "exercised collective power through kin-based cooking, by sharing foods across generations, and by deciding who was worthy of participating in cooking" (152). Finally, Seiwoong carries these observations about food and power into the literary domain in her analysis of Timothy Mo's *Sour Sweet* and Gish Jen's *Typical American* (305).[67] While these critics mainly concentrate on the connection between power and meaning and how it plays out in relation to gender, *Diamond Grill* and *Chorus of Mushrooms* present the connection between power relations, food, and hybridity in particular. In them, the power of food and its influence on identities, family dynamics, and Canadian multiculturalism is highlighted through the hybridity of dishes

[67] Timothy Mo is a Chinese-British writer, and Gish Jen is Chinese-American writer. *Sour Sweet* and *Typical American* were published in 1982 and 1991 respectively.

and foodways. In his analysis of Canadian cuisine, Newman states that "A mix of Chinese techniques and Western flavours, Chinese Canadian dishes foreshadowed the current multicultural state of Canada's cuisine in general" (73). In *Diamond Grill*, a similar association between Chinese-Canadian food and hybrid identity is articulated through the cafe's hybrid menu: the Chinese-Canadian menu does not represent Chinese-ness and Canadian-ness exclusively, but is symbolic of all hyphenated Canadians. These novels depict hybrid homes, hybrid restaurants, and hybrid ethnic food stores as locations of the hyphen, as locations that foster culinary encounters that nourish Canadian multicultural hyphenated identities.

Chapter 5, the next and final chapter of this dissertation, will expand the discussion of food through a careful consideration of how food is a metaphor for cultural learning. Particular focus will be given to the metaphorical meaning of maternal feeding and storytelling in Frank Paci's *Black Madonna* and Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with my Mother*.

Chapter 5: Food as a Metaphor for Cultural Nourishment: from the Preservation of Culture to the Return Trip Home

Every eating experience is a learning experience.

Capaldi, *Why We Eat What We Eat: The Psychology of Eating*, 6

1. Introduction: Food as a Metaphor for Cultural Nourishment

The previous two chapters highlight how many Canadian immigrant novels present the preparation, discussion, and consumption of food as activities that foster intergenerational intimacy by stimulating hyphenated characters that belong to different generations to (re-)discover their roots. Canadian immigrant novels like Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones*, Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited: Conversations with My Mother*, Hiromi Goto's *Chorus of Mushrooms*, and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding* present second- and third-generation hyphenated characters as immersed in a process whereby the (re)-discovery of their heritage food and traditions is essential to the embracing of their hyphenated identity. Earlier chapters also show that relationships with food often vary depending on the generation a character belongs to. While first-generation characters tend to be familiar with and attached to the traditions of their heritage culture, second-generation characters are often portrayed as –initially– not having a deep knowledge of their heritage culture, including heritage food. The complex process of becoming familiar with heritage customs and correlated processes of coming to terms with their hyphenation is often aided by family members of the older

generations, with mothers and grandmothers serving as cultural mediators and helpers for the younger generations.[68]

This chapter further examines the process of identity-building by investigating an additional novel, Frank Paci's *Black Madonna*, and expanding on Chapter 3's analysis of Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited* to argue that food is a metaphor for cultural learning. As a learning experience that shapes hyphenated identities, foodways in the two novels fulfil a developmental function that is as essential to characters as their need for nourishment. They thus assert Sandra Gilbert's argument that in the culinary imagination, "not only are we sustained by what we eat, we are consoled, comforted, and even, sometimes, transfigured by it, since gastronomic experience is ultimately more mental than it is physical" (30). Food practices such as the collection of recipes, the preparation of food, and the consumption of heritage food provide Paci's and Melfi's characters with a nourishment that extends beyond the physiological. In these novels, food culturally enriches and transforms characters, and foodways function as a sensory experience able to evoke in characters feelings of connection with their heritage culture and thus help them re-discover their roots and navigate their positioning of self across cultures.

I chose to analyse Frank Paci's *Black Madonna* and Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited* in particular because, in them, distinct stages of hyphenated identity building are clearly defined as being intertwined with and dependant on food and foodways. In both *Black*

[68] As I argued in chapter 4, Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For* breaks away from this pattern to accentuate the distinction between the two generations and portraying a member of the second generation as a mediator/helper.

Madonna and *Italy Revisited*, second-generation daughters go through three stages in their hyphenated identity building process: self-hatred, self-understanding, and self-acceptance. Whereas self-hatred corresponds to the rejection of their heritage culture, self-understanding corresponds to the realization that embracing their heritage culture is needed to thrive as a hyphenated identity and self-acceptance to accepting one's hyphenation as grounded in both components of one's hyphenated identity (for example, Italian and Canadian). This three-stage hyphenated identity construction process involves the recuperation of heritage values through foodways, with first-generation mothers functioning as mediators of cultural knowledge for their second-generation daughters. In both novels, a loss triggers the active participation in foodways that provide daughters with the cultural nourishment that leads to an ultimate acceptance of the characters' hyphenation. Foodways combine with the daughters' physical and symbolical return trips home to foster the re-discovery of their cultural roots and stimulate a physical and emotional healing.

Many anthropological studies emphasize that "humans define themselves on their propensity to eat – and not eat – certain foods" (Zhen 36). This is not an uncommon theme in hyphenated literature, in Canada and elsewhere. In this literature, characters often change their customs (including eating habits) in an attempt to "try to obliterate their background" (Ripley 20). However, obliteration is not possible because the characters' displacement creates a gap that can only be filled by gaining a better understanding and ultimately acceptance of one's hyphenation. I aim to build on studies such as these to highlight not only the connection between food and self-identification,

but also the impact of foodways on the three-stage-process I identified and set out to examine in this chapter.

My theorization of the three stages of the second-generation hyphenated identity construction process is inspired by Joseph Pivato's claim that, in immigrant literature, it is common for the characters' "self-hatred … [to change] into self-acceptance and love" (*Echo* 217). In his essay, Pivato considers Marie's self-hatred in *Black Madonna*, arguing that she is initially "self-destructive in her attempt to escape the immigrant family and all things Italian" (215). I expand on Pivato's observation to build a model that includes self-understanding as the crucial in-between step that brings characters from self-hatred to self-acceptance as a hyphenated identity. In Italian-Canadian writing in particular, characters are often portrayed as needing to go through a re-evaluation of their heritage culture "in order to come to terms with the element of 'schizophrenia' inherent in a bicultural identity" (Canton *Question*, vii). Both *Black Madonna* and *Italy Revisited* follow this popular journey motif in Italian-Canadian writing, presenting characters that embark on a three-stage hyphenated identity construction process.

It is worth analysing both novels because while both *Black Madonna*'s Marie and the daughter of *Italy Revisited* go through this three-stage-process, their personal journeys are unique. Whereas Marie of *Black Madonna* rejects her heritage, the daughter in *Italy Revisited* is interested in learning more about it. Notwithstanding their opposite attitudes, both daughters ultimately accept the dual components of their hyphenation by going through the three stages, but at different paces and across different life experiences. The identity building processes that lead hyphenated identities to self-acceptance are

heterogeneous (just as identities are). Examples of this heterogeneity include: a) the degree to which heritage is rejected, with *Black Madonna*'s Marie strongly rejecting her Italian heritage and the daughter of *Italy Revisited* experiencing a less strong rejection; and b) the daughters' relationships with their mothers, with *Black Madonna*'s Marie getting closer to Assunta post-mortem, and the mother and daughter of *Italy Revisited* being close all along and in a constant dialogue that aids the self-understanding of both generations.

2. Frank Paci's *Black Madonna*: Marie and Assunta

Frank Paci's *Black Madonna* is a novel about the Barones, an Italian-Canadian immigrant family living in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.[69] It explores the relationship between the second-generation (Joey and Marie Barone) and their first-generation parents (Assunta and Adamo), and highlights their contrasting behaviours and clash of cultural values. Adamo was the first family member to move to Canada, followed by Assunta, who moves to Canada as Adamo's mail order bride from the village of Novilara in Le Marche, Italy. *Black Madonna* opens with Adamo's death and ends with his widow Assunta's death, which leaves their children, Marie and Joey, orphaned.

From the novel's very beginning, Paci depicts Marie and Assunta as opposites (17). Assunta is a nourishing mother, while Marie is a rebellious girl (and then woman) who

[69] Gerolamo Moroni provides details regarding the Italian community in Sault Ste. Marie in a report published in the *Bolletino dell'Emigrazione* (1914). Paci's character Assunta seems to fully embody the Italians described by Moroni, who "live completely separated from the English and Canadians and have a quarter completely their own called 'Little Italy'" (15).

starves herself, and whereas Marie embodies the wish to be Canadian, Assunta embodies the need to preserve Italian heritage and traditions. Their initial inability to be of the same mind, which manifests through their relationship with food and foodways, is symbolic of their emotional turmoil and lack of understanding of their own individual hyphenation. Throughout the course of the novel, it becomes clear that Assunta has made sacrifices, moved to another country, and left her relatives in Italy so that her family could experience an easier life than the one she had in Italy, with no shortages of food (32, 193-4).[70] Her daughter Marie, however, fails to comprehend and appreciate her mother's difficult past, and considers her "an illiterate peasant," a "mail order bride" who "probably milked cows all her life" (37), which causes a conflictual relationship between the two that affects their physical and emotional health.

The setting of this fraught family dynamic is the immigrant neighbourhood of Sault Ste. Marie and the Barones' home; both embody the location of the hyphen. In these spaces, the Italian cultural values promoted by the first generation intersect with the Canadian values and habits of the second generation. The Italian houses in the neighbourhood are particularly distinctive: they are "easily distinguishable in the summer by their vegetable gardens, while the others [non-Italian ones] had overgrown grass" (20). In addition, the first-generation women who inhabit these "old dingy houses" that smell typically Italian, "reeking of pasta sauce" (29), their inhabitants described by Marie as "feeling or smelling every little piece of food" (29) whenever they shop in the local

[70] Canton notes how Assunta's suffering from hunger during her time in Italy is proved by the photo of Assunta that Marie finds in the family hope chest (*bavulo*) at the end of the novel (*Ingrata*).

grocery stores. The descriptions of the culinary smells of the Italian homes and those who inhabit them and of the careful selection of the ingredients needed to prepare heritage dishes highlight the importance of food for immigrant characters. If we agree that for immigrants "the destiny of a community depends on how well it nourishes its members" (Xu 19), then Paci's descriptions of foodways (including their homegrown produce, food smells, and shopping habits) are central to understanding why first-generation characters like Assunta preserve Italian traditions and aim to pass their cultural values to the second generation. While embedded into the larger Canadian mainstream environment, it is within the microcosm of the Italian immigrant homes of the neighbourhood that characters turn to foodways to establish and transfer a cultural memory necessary to secure the survival of a rich cultural heritage.[71]

Within the home, kitchens are the central location of foodways, exerting an enabling power over hyphenated characters. As spaces where foodways originate, kitchens provide a setting for characters to work on their relationships and engage in cultural negotiations. In the Barones' household, there are two kitchens, each with a particular use. The one in the basement "was where their mother cooked all their meals. The more modern one upstairs was only used to entertain guests" (5). The family basement kitchen and the family meals cooked and consumed in it present opportunities for communication between the first and the second generation. Marie and Joey recall their chats with their father Adamo in the kitchen: "I'd be washing the dishes and he'd

[71] For an analysis of the relationship between home and identity, see Lewin, who observes Lantz's interpretation of the home as an "extension" of the self, and Redvall's theory on the interconnection of values and the home, which becomes "an integrated part of the individual's identity" (Lewin 356).

still be at the dinner table and we'd talk about things I was learning in school" (15). Even as adults, Joey and Marie still feel its importance in their upbringing: "It was as if they were kids again and Assunta was calling them to supper" (8). In her study about food, Willa Zhen observes that sharing meals turns a biological need into "a ritual of family and community … an act of culture" (65). Assunta's telling her children that "they weren't to bring anyone home to dinner unless they were prepared to marry them" (Paci 164) serves as a clear indicator of the cultural importance of the family meal in *Black Madonna* and its potential to connect those who engage in it.

However, the Barones' kitchens are also the setting of the conflict between its family members, with the characters' movements between different floors reflecting their identity negotiation processes and their agreements or disagreements on cultural values. In her guide on food studies, Zhen notes that "generational conflicts … come to a head at the table, where different sets of values and ideologies can clash, leading to a 'contested table'" (66). In *Black Madonna*, not only is the table contested, but so too is any room that is permeated (or not) by foodways. Joey, for example, moves around the floors of the house in search of a connection with his Italian-ness. Unsettled by Assunta's decline after the loss of Adamo, he goes "downstairs into the cantina (or cellar) to escape her distressing sounds" (84). The cantina, in turn, connects him with the memory of his deceased father through Italian wine and preserves: "Joey looked around his father's bricked-in workroom in the basement where the wine and preserves were kept" (84). Spending time in the *cantina* has a strong impact on Joey not only because it provides a connection to his heritage through foodways, but also because it is where he finds an old

photo of his mother. While at first he does not recognise Assunta in the "young woman smiling from a farm in a village of a country he had never seen," he quickly notices that "[t]here was no mistaking the strong resemblance to Marie" (85). Joey's acknowledgement is one of the first indications that even though there seem to be unsurmountable differences between hyphenated members of the first and second generation, they are more similar than they realise.

The pointed movements of family members between the two kitchens and the floors they are located on reflect the clash between Italian values (embodied by the first generation, who tends to spend time downstairs) and Canadian ones (embodied by second-generation characters, who feel more connected to their Canadian-ness when they are upstairs). First-generation Assunta, for instance, passes most of her time in the basement, especially "ever since Adamo had built the second bathroom" there, while Marie "thought of herself as a foreigner in her own house" (66) because she does not feel at ease in it. The physical and symbolic separation between first-generation Assunta and second-generation Marie is also accentuated when Marie opens her acceptance letter from the University of Toronto upstairs, while she hears "the sounds of her mother making dinner downstairs." Although the sounds serve as a reminder of how her house is filled with Italian-ness, they also announce her separation from her mother, which permits her to "read and reread the letter, savouring every last morsel of triumph" (65). Marie metaphorically eats the content of the letter (Zanchi 11), fully enjoying the possibility of leaving the Barones' household to experience more freely her preferred Canadian-ness.

For first-generation characters like Assunta, preparing food in the more functional and intimate basement kitchen reaffirms their Italian-ness; it grants them the means to craft a hyphenated microcosm in the Canadian mainstream environment. Finding it difficult to adopt Canadian values, Assunta finds refuge in the basement where she cooks elaborate Italian meals. In this space heavily soaked with Italian values, foodways grant her the opportunity to negotiate her hyphenation. Her negotiation does not entail adapting to mainstream Canadian-ness, but actively constructing her hyphenated microcosm in a basement that is significantly located in a house within the Italian neighborhood. As Father Sarlo suggests, moving to Canada for immigrants such as Assunta "was like going to the ends of the earth … Like going to China." The Sault for Assunta therefore turns into "the place in between China and the old world. Where they could make a place like home" (159). In her investigation of Italian-Canadian women writers, Caporale-Bizzini expands on Anne-Marie Fortier and Judith Butler's gender theories to argue that the "ritualized production of food in a basement" is "a practice of resistance" used by immigrants to perform a "re-territoralization" of their identities (81). As Caporale-Bizzini further specifies, for these immigrants, the basement comes to represent "repressed psychological issues," such as "the shadows of unresolved relationships" and "the difficulty of fully accepting the habits and values of a new land" (81). In *Black Madonna*, the basement kitchen is marked at once by the Canadian-ness brought into the house by her children and by her own immigrant experience, which exposes her to Canadian-ness as well. The kitchen in which Assunta operates is also the space of her continuing conflict with Marie and her struggle with adaptation in the new country. In the basement kitchen,

Assunta's engagement with foodways is an integral facet of her hyphenated identity negotiation process.

More specifically, foodways are central to all aspects of Assunta's life. Not only do others often describe Assunta through her relationship with food, but she also uses food to convey both a literal and a cultural nourishment to the members of her family. Assunta maintains food-related Italian customs to preserve her Italian heritage and prepares food to transmit knowledge to her children. To this end, she often prepares bread or ventures to the train tracks to pick *cicoria* (dandelion greens), which in Italy is commonly prepared as a salad.[72] Assunta devotes time to these basic, nourishing foods to counter her children's total assimilation to Canada and facilitate a connection to their Italian-ness. When Marie is sixteen years old, for example, Assunta teaches her how to make dough: "This is how you knead the dough, Marietta. And keep it going so that it'll come out strong and even" (25). Rather than serving simply as a set of steps and directions, Assunta's dough preparation connects her daughter to Italian food practices and history; it is a "communicative tool for imparting Italian cultural knowledge to her children" (Zanchi 5). Strengthening the dough can thus be approached as symbolical of strengthening one's heritage so that it is not lost and can be shared across generations. Through food and its preparation, Assunta thus influences Marie's hyphenated identity building process.

[72] Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited* has a chapter specifically devoted to *la cicoria* (290-2).

That bread nourishes Assunta's family both literally and metaphorically is also suggested by the town priest, who explains to Joey how Adamo's death has influenced Assunta's progressive decline. Discussing Assunta's cultural values, the priest explains that "[i]n the old country … [l]ove came from a need … It's like bread. You need bread to live. Then from your need you come to love your food" (157). The analogy between love and bread, need and life, helps explain Assunta's drastic transformation once her husband Adamo dies. Once Adamo dies and Assunta loses her love and, by extension, her life sustenance, she stops grooming herself and does not attend to the housework like she used to (79-80). She switches from being "a true Italian Mamma" (161) always ready to cook, wash, and iron to a woman who "neglected to clean up after herself" and is "always [surrounded by] some form of garbage or leftover food lying around" (165). As her mental state worsens, Assunta starts to "depend on the neighbours for food" (157). Her pronounced neglect of foodways becomes particularly evident when her family realizes that she has not "made a regular meal in six months" (166). The loss of her husband triggers such a loss of self in Assunta that she begins to experience a lack of physical and emotional nourishment that is clearly reflected in changing nourishing habits.

Picking *cicoria* is arguably the most apparent of Assunta's food-related Italian customs. Ever since he was a child, Joey "had seen his mother go out on countless occasions to pick *cicoria*. All she'd need was an apron, a bag, and a knife. Squatting down, she'd cut the leaves just above the root so it wouldn't be destroyed, fill the upturned apron, and then dump it all into the bag. They ate *cicoria* salad for days on end

every spring" (81). While many of the Italian women in the neighborhood abandon this Italian custom, Assunta persists going to the tracks to pick *cicoria*, even at the risk of embarrassing her son. When Joey manifests his surprise at seeing his mother looking for *cicoria* so early in the season, she simply shrugs her shoulders and insists that she has to "get the *cicoria*, *Giuseppino*" (81). However, following Adamo's death, Joey realizes that Assunta "says she's picking *cicoria*, but she hardly comes back with any" (121). From a purposeful way to provide food to her family, picking *cicoria* has turned into a "meaningless walking … that anticipates the character's own physical transformation into an inert object, a dead body" (Ferraro 188).

Her death, however, does not simply transform her into an inert object. Assunta dies by the train tracks along which she picks *cicoria*. It is important to note that Assunta had arrived in Sault Ste. Marie by train, and her continuous visits to the tracks (even when she stops actively picking *cicoria*) are symbolic not only of her displacement to Canada, but also of her connection to her Italy and Italian heritage. Dying by the train tracks mirrors her physical inability to embark on a return trip home. Such a trip will, however, be undertaken by her daughter at the end of the novel. The return trip home by the second generation is the culmination of Assunta's success in enabling Marie to accept and explore her Italian-ness.

Assunta's relationship with her daughter Marie strongly influences Marie's three-stage process of hyphenated identity construction, which begins with self-hatred and ends with self-acceptance and a trip to Italy. In the initial stage, Marie experiences her first loss: a loss of her heritage. Her self-hatred is manifested through the rejection of her

mother,[73] which (unsurprisingly) coincides with her rejection of Italian food. Marie's desire to be unlike her mother and adopt a different gender role is in fact firmly couched in all that is related to food, including its abundance and Assunta's insistence that she eat more than she wants to. As Mintz argues, food is not simply eaten. Rather, "its consumption is always conditioned by meaning" that is "symbolic, and communicate[s] symbolically" (7). In the same way, Marie's rejection of her mother and Italian food symbolizes the rejection of her Italian-ness. Tightly intertwined, both her mother and the Italian food she prepares are central to Marie's hyphenated identity, and thus their rejection is intrinsically linked to her refusal to embrace her cultural heritage.

The haunting mother is a common figure in Canadian literature where daughters have embarked on an identity quest (Sciff-Zamaro 32). Oftentimes, in these literary works, "the rejection of food symbolizes the rejection of the mother herself, who has always been associated first of all with eating" (84). This conflict is exemplified by several passages in Paci's *Black Madonna*. For example, when Marie wants to leave Sault Ste. Marie to attend the University of Toronto, Assunta accuses her of not appreciating her nurturing habits: "I cook your food. I wash your clothes. I clean up your mess. And then what do you want to do? You want to leave. You can't even take care of yourself. Is this gratitude? (72-3). While Assunta values being "a true Italian Mamma" (161), Marie believes that "[t]here's more in the world … than cooking and keeping house for a man," and wants to "make a life for herself" by distancing herself from "old country" customs

[73] Padolsky describes a similar process in Margaret Atwood's *Lady Oracle*, where a "character's rebellion against her mother" is "part of the natural process of developing self-identity" (21).

(73). Despite her mother's protests, Marie abruptly leaves the house, "overtaken by a blinding hatred of her mother. Of her ignorant peasant ways and her stupid dialect. Of her screaming. And her abominable eating habits … Her stupid obsession with food. The way she made them all eat until they were bursting" (74). In *Black Madonna*, as in several examples of Canadian immigrant novels, food, to borrow Padolsky's words, "provides a terrain … for sorting out what is happening in the complex relationship between ethnicity and Canadian cross-cultural spaces" (20-1). Assunta's haunting presence feels like a burden to Marie because at this stage she is unable to comprehend the cultural enrichment that her heritage can provide. By interpreting the Italian-ness that her mother imposes upon her as an affront to her desire to be more Canadian, Marie fails to see that this Italian-ness can have a positive influence on her identity construction process. Marie's cultural conflicts with her mother ultimately manifest in Marie's eating disorders.

Jeffery Sobal draws on George Devereaux's concept of "ethnic disorder," which "expresses core anxieties and unresolved problems of a culture," to accentuate the cultural aspect of eating disorders (138). The cultural aspect of Marie's difficult relationship with food is particularly apparent: in rejecting her mother and the Italian-ness she protects and wishes to transmit, Marie must also reject her mother's dishes and heritage food at large. From the beginning of the novel, Marie struggles to accept her body image: "Her weight had always been a problem … She had cried bitterly that night in front of the mirror and determined to diet herself into a figure that would satisfy anyone's standards" (31). Just as Assunta's efforts to maintain her cultural customs

present an obstacle to Marie's Canadian-ness, Assunta's obsession with food poses a real challenge to Marie's desire to be thin. When considered alongside the strong link between food with Italian-ness throughout Paci's novel, Marie's eating disorders reflect an ethnic, cultural struggle.

Assunta is described as "an absolute tyrant at the dinner table" that "was like her theatre of operations and [where] her rules were unquestioned" (31). Assunta, who always cooked "more than was needed" and demanded that "[w]hatever was put on the table had to be eaten," "badgered all during the meal – and even went so far as to put the food up to their mouths" (32). Scholars have diverging views on how to approach Assunta's tyrannical approach to food and foodways. Some argue that Assunta is like a monster that has trapped Marie "on two levels, a physical one represented by her fatness, and a psychological one, represented by her Italian environment she feels is alien" (Sciff-Zamaro, *Essays* 32). Others propose that Assunta presents as a figure of authority strengthened by "the fear of change and of the outside" (Ferraro 185). Finally, Zanchi proposes that Assunta attempts to fill the void between herself and Marie through food, and that Marie's stomach becomes "a medium of expression" that she uses "to visibly show, instead of express in words, what Assunta's force-feeding physically feels like" (5). These interpretations highlight how Assunta and her foodways negatively, overwhelmingly, and strongly impact Marie. However, they fail to acknowledge that Marie's conflict with Assunta pushes her to experience a necessary rejection that will lead Marie to ultimately embrace her hyphenated identity. Marie's rebellion against her mother and her foodways is much more than an intergenerational conflict aimed to gain

freedom. It is a productive step towards self-acceptance. Marie's troubled relationship with Assunta and, by extension, food and eating habits drive her identity negotiation process. The rejection of her heritage is a fundamental, necessary step for her to reach self-understanding and, ultimately, self-acceptance.

Throughout the novel, Assunta strives to understand her daughter's struggle with food. She contemplates the various reasons why Marie is dieting, "refusing to let her … ladle the pasta onto her plate, and taking small portions of everything" (32). In their hyphenated identity building processes, both Assunta and Marie experience physical and emotional pain. Assunta struggles to fully comprehend Marie's efforts to lose weight to fit in because of her own traumatic nutritional experience in Italy. First, she calls Marie "*pazza*, crazy" (32). Then, she thinks, "If she wasn't crazy she must be ill then. Assunta came around the table to feel her forehead. That had to be it" (32). Assunta's third guess is that Marie may be refusing to eat because she has "been influenced by the English and their stupid eating habits" (32). Unlike the previous attempts at understanding, this guess transfers blame to the host country and its habits, thus clearly underscoring the contrast between the Barone's Italian heritage and the Canadian culture that Marie longs to be a part of. However, Assunta offers one last explanation when she supposes that Marie may be dieting to hurt her. Assunta's wondering comes to an end when Marie's health drastically deteriorates after only five days following her diet, and she is forced to resume "her regular eating habits" despite feeling discouraged because she has never been athletic and "her lumpy waist continued to be a source of embarrassment" (33).

In the previous chapter, it was observed that the emotional turmoil experienced by second-generation characters like *Chorus of Mushroom*'s Keiko causes physical and emotional pain. In *Black Madonna*, this pain is experienced by both the first and the second generation, as confirmed by two of the options contemplated by Assunta: the effect of dieting on Marie's body (her physical and mental illness) and Marie's attempt to hurt Assunta (which causes another blend of physical and emotional pain). The options that Assunta considers include and connect cultural values and emotional and physical wellbeing –craziness, sickness, cultural influence, and hurting a family member– all of which are important influencing factors in the identity construction process of hyphenated identities.

Marie, who in the first stage of her hyphenated identity building process is consumed by a self-hatred that is tied to a resistance of her heritage culture, understands Assunta's force-feeding as a limitation of her freedom and an obstacle to achieving the body image she desires. By limiting her food choices and avoiding any dishes that may be even remotely connected to her Italian heritage, Marie attempts to suppress her Italian-ness and identify as Canadian. Indeed, her emotional distress over her body subsides when she moves to Toronto and completely rejects Italian food. In Toronto, she is "unable to eat chicken anymore, or spare ribs, or steak, or broccoli, or veal, or even crusty bread" (100). She avoids restaurants and reads up on "nutrition and health foods, educating herself to the point where she became adept at making all sorts of light nourishing meals" (100). Marie's move to Toronto and her new eating habits result in the weight loss she had for so long desired: "She was surprised to find herself more attractive

… Her skin cleared and became pinkishly lustrous. Her figure was in vogue with the taut-skinned models she occasionally saw in the New York fashion advertisements" (100). This newfound joy in having attained the desired body image is intrinsically linked to the avoidance of Italian eating habits. Marie finds "herself unable to eat at all," turns irascible, and becomes "entirely disgusted with herself" after her husband Richard "had forced her to eat a plate of spaghetti" (100). This episode serves to highlight how by rejecting her mother and food, Marie ultimately rejects her own self. In this first stage of the hyphenated identity building process, this second-generation character is unable to successfully negotiate the two components of her hyphenated identity.

Marie's rejection of her mother's heritage food and her newly found nutritional standards mark a concerted abandonment of the cultural knowledge that her mother insists on instilling upon her. When Adamo picks up Marie at the airport when she visits the Sault for the Christmas holidays, he expresses concerns over her health, complaining that she is "too thin" and looks "like a sheet of paper" (96). Assunta, too, notices Marie's physical change, but initially reacts only with silence, and does not "object when Marie only [eats] the vegetables and soup, leaving the pasta on her plate" (98). However, when Marie is "almost nauseated … to see the rich pasta sauce on the steaming ravioli" and, disgusted by the smell of Italian food at Christmas dinner, declines the ravioli by asking just for "a bit of the turkey" (101), Assunta ignores her request and serves her the pasta dish anyway. Pushing the plate towards Marie, Assunta complains: "You mean that's all you eat? … I cook all this food, spend all this time, and you eat nothing! … She comes once a year to visit us and she acts like this. Look at her. She's all bones. She can't even

take care of herself" (101-2). Frustrated with her mother's blatant disregard for her nutritional choices, Marie asks for her father's intercession, insisting that she has "learned to eat different types of food. More nutritious kinds," and that she "can't eat this anymore" (101). Marie's resolved refusal to eat Assunta's Christmas dinner food, which is "Assunta's masterpiece" and "the highlight of the holidays" at the Barones (99), underscores the extent to which she has separated herself from her Italian heritage. This detachment from Italian customs is reflected in the stark difference between Marie's and Assunta's understanding of the term 'nourishing.' Whereas for Marie, food's nourishment is caught up with her detachment from her mother's habits, for Assunta, it is the central way to care for her family.

As suggested above, Assunta approaches the preparation and distribution of food to her family as providing her children with the sustenance she lacked in Italy. Consequently, Assunta believes that Marie's refusal to eat more stems from a lack of respect towards her lived experience, her family, and the Italian heritage. Ferraro highlights Assunta's dual objective in relation to food. First, cooking "is a daily ritual meant to exorcise the old spectre of hunger … [as] indigence and hunger have been the primary causes of depopulation and social erosion for innumerable Italian villages." Second, Assunta's behaviour seems to constitute "war operations against the North-American cultural model that threatens her values" (186) as she believes that Marie is being influenced by mainstream Canadian-ness. Assunta's multifaceted relationship with food is central for assessing her own hyphenated identity-building process. When Joey tries to convince Marie to eat the Christmas meal to make their mother happy, Marie

criticizes Assunta by saying that "she's always tried to push the food down [their] throats while she eats nothing herself" (102). The contrast between Assunta's concern that her family be nourished and her own reluctance to eat suggests that food and the preparation and consumption of lavish Italian meals are much more than a way for Assunta to maintain a connection to the "old country" she had to leave. For Assunta, food nourishes her family not only physically, but also psychologically by serving as a means to communicate and share her heritage with her family. In this way, Assunta's "limited indulgence in her own food" reflects an enthusiasm for her origins that she aims to pass on to the following generation (Zanchi 4). Since her literal and cultural nourishment are intrinsically entangled, Assunta does not indulge in her own literal nourishment as she is already connected to her heritage.

Assunta's investment in preserving and sharing her Italian heritage also informs her insistance that Marie and her brother eat more. Throughout the novel, Assunta repeatedly insists that more food be consumed: "*Mangia this and that*, she'd say. *Non è bastanza*. Nothing was ever enough. Marie, you haven't eaten enough. How can you have eaten enough? Here, have some more. If you don't eat you'll get sick. You don't know the blessings you have. Only sparrows eat like that. And on and on" (32). Assunta's insistence on eating is directed not only to Marie, but also to Joey. In spite of Joey's having "a voracious appetite" (69), Assunta insists that he eats slower and enough: "You eat that, Joey. *Non hai mangiato 'bastanza*" (70). When Marie rejects the Italian food that she lovingly prepares, Assunta calls her "*ingrata*" (102) or ungrateful, a highly offensive accusation given the importance of gratitude for immigrant families. Gratitude, as Canton

explains, "is what the immigrant expects of his dependents for the hardships endured and the 'sacrifice' of having abandoned the mother country in order to give them more opportunity and a better life" (*Ingrata*). Assunta's expectations that her children eat more than what they desire is ingrained in her preoccupation with their cultural nutrition.

Assunta's force-feeding also attempts to fill the void caused by the cultural distance between herself and Marie, which overtly manifests as a language barrier. While Assunta predominantly uses dialect when speaking with her children, Marie mainly responds to her mother in English. The use of different languages culminates in a total lack of communication, which triggers Assunta's frustration and her accusation that Marie is an *"ingrata*," a "stranger" that cannot possibly be her daughter (102). In *Black Madonna,* code-switching highlights linguistic and cultural difference. Canton refers to code-switching as stone, that is as a way to present graphically "the symptoms of otherness … [existing] at the thematic level" (*Ingrata*). In this sense, code-switching conveys the tension at play in the identity negotiation that characterizes immigrant literature (*Question* vii). In *Black Madonna,* the conflicts triggered by the use of different languages and the incomprehension that language fosters posits language as much more than a physical reality. Its importance extends beyond being simply Italian (or dialect) and English: just as food is more than biological sustenance, language is much more than simple words. Language also stands for heritage.

In *Black Madonna* the many references to the old country (a term that Italian-Canadian immigrant novels often use to refer to Italy) reiterate the opposition between old (Italy and Italian-ness) and new (Canada and Canadian-ness) portrayed through the

relationship between Marie and Assunta. Assunta joins other female characters studied in this dissertation that exemplify first-generation hyphenated-Canadian women that are misunderstood and seen as anachronistic, despite their important role in influencing younger hyphenated generations. In fact, not only does Marie use food imagery to criticize her mother, but she also considers Assunta a "fossil," someone "in the wrong time and the wrong country" (17). In her examination of Marie's critique of her mother's backwardness, Ferraro emphasizes that such cultural, generational clashes between hyphenated Canadian characters are not specifically Italian (190), an observation confirmed by Helena Grice and Silvia Schultermand in relation to Asian-American literature. In Asian-American immigrant literature, "the mother figure often represents mother-land" (Grice 83-4), whereas a daughter tends to assimilate "to the dominant culture," adopting "the prevalent xenophobic attitudes and appl[ying] them against her mother in order to distinguish herself from a culture she has grown to disrespect" (Schultermandl 44-5). Marie's process of identity development is similar to what Schultermandl describes in relation to the avoidance of "any ties to their cultural origins" by Asian-American daughters who perceive the preservation of cultural heritage as a "deficiency in their successful acculturations" and in their mothers' "degree of assimilation" (44). Unable to understand or respect Assunta's desire to maintain the ways of the old country and wanting to fit into the cultural milieu of her native country, Marie strives to adhere to what she considers to be more contemporary Canadian values.

Marie's association of food choice with cultural identification and control over her own identity extends to her own role as mother. Despite having opposed her mother's

approach to food for so long, Marie adopts several of her ways when she tends to her son Michael and his eating habits. For instance, although Marie continues to struggle with food and often reverts to unhealthy eating habits (144), when occupying her role as mother, she is quick to acknowledge that Michael, her "child[,] required nutrition too" (141). When Michael does not eat, her response echoes that of Assunta: "'Michael, you're supposed to eat them, not play with them' … 'Eat your food, I said'" (144-5). Marie's attempt to exert power over her son by controlling food extends to Assunta's home. When they visit her childhood home the following Christmas, Marie demands "a promise that her instructions for feeding the child would be scrupulously followed" (149). Even though she insists that her son needs to eat (like Assunta did with her), Marie does not eat (somewhat similarly to what Assunta did as well). Her contradictory behaviour and negligence are highlighted by Richard: "how can you expect him to eat … when you don't eat yourself?" (145). Marie weakly attempts to "defend herself," claiming that "He has to eat. You can't just coax him anymore" (145-6), as she tries to assert her motherly control. Paradoxically, exerting power over what Michael eats carries her farther away from her Canadian-ness and much closer to her Italian heritage as she closely models Assunta's behaviour. With time and in her role as mother, Marie begins to move into the next stage of identity building.

In the second stage of her hyphenated identity construction process, self-understanding, Marie experiences two losses: the loss of control over her food intake and the loss of family. Through these losses, she comes to the realization that she needs to reconnect with her Italian roots in order to survive and thrive in her hyphenated identity

construction process. Marie's diagnosis with anorexia nervosa marks both the peak of her rejection of her Italian-ness and the beginning of her healing and self-understanding process. Similarly to Keiko in Goto's difficult relationship with food in *Chorus of Mushrooms*, Marie needs to go through an extreme rejection of her heritage (manifested through a symbolical withdrawal from food) to better understand her hyphenated self. Drawing from Kristeva's notion of the abject, Zanchi argues that Marie's anorexia is a manifestation of how Marie "treats Italian food as a contaminated and unassimilable object (the abject), that threatens her desire to disavow her Italian heritage," which "she can never completely separate herself from" (7). I argue that instead of entailing a rejection of Italian food because of its potential to taint Marie and hinder her desire to achieve as little Italian-ness as possible, anorexia nervosa acts at a deeper emotional and psychological level. Anorexia nervosa is characterized by a "cycle of self-starvation," in which "the body is denied the essential nutrients it needs to function normally" ("Anorexia Nervosa"). In *Black Madonna*, Marie's self-starvation certainly deprives her of the physiological sustenance that her body needs to survive. However, it also deprives her of a fundamental connection to her heritage that would allow her to function as the hyphenated identity that she is because of the cultural nourishment it would provide. Marie's extreme self-starvation grants her emotional pain a way to explode and manifest itself through a liberating physical pain. In this sense, although a dangerous illness insofar as it weakens Marie to the point of hallucinating (as addressed below), the diagnosis of anorexia nervosa is also a necessary probe for Marie to revisit her obstinate resistance to her mother's Italian ways.

Anorexia nervosa thus opens up an opportunity for Marie to change and ultimately accept her hyphenation. It marks the beginning of Marie's healing and self-understanding process, which begins when she reaches a point in which she is overwhelmed, faints, and hallucinates. At her mother's Christmas dinner table, Marie openly challenges Assunta: "You want me to eat your food, Ma … I'll eat your food. I'll show you how to eat your food … with that she reached her hand into the bowl of ravioli, grabbed a handful of the hot slippery pasta, and quickly stuffed it into her mouth" (103). Her unusual reaction leaves her family speechless and disgusted, and herself feeling sick. Upon her return to Toronto, Marie eats only salad and yogurt, ultimately feeling unwell at a party and hallucinating the Christmas meal. In her hallucination, Marie is taken by "an overpowering hunger," and finds the same smell that had originally disgusted her "excruciatingly delicious" (112). Dreams are like "overnight therapy," as they help heal after difficult emotional experiences (Walker). Similarly, Marie's dream (in which, for once, she enjoys her mother's food) constitutes a first step towards embracing her heritage. Representing her subconscious telling her that she needs to accept her Italian-ness to thrive as a hyphenated identity, the dream presents Marie with a way for her to heal from her emotional pain.

When Marie wakes out of her hallucinatory state, her husband Richard reveals that she fainted because she drank too much alcohol on an empty stomach at a party. He insists that she goes to the clinic because "This not eating has got entirely out of hand" (114). For a while, Marie keeps vomiting whenever she tries to eat something to the point that "[h]er flesh seemed to be melting away from her, as if her bones were too hot for her

body" (115). This is when she is finally diagnosed with anorexia nervosa and can consciously start her journey towards a physical and an emotional recovery.

The second loss that contributes to Marie's self-understanding is a double loss of family to death: her father Adamo dies at the beginning of *Black Madonna* and her mother Assunta dies at the end of the novel. Adamo's death is a critical event that impacts the relationship between Marie and Assunta because it initiates a sense of loss that leads to Assunta's decline and activates Marie's three-stage-process of identity construction. According to Ferraro, Adamo's passing "accelerates the decline of an old way of affirming ethnicity," as exemplified by his wife Assunta, and "the emergence of a new ethnic conscience," represented by the second generation (176). I argue that Adamo's death does not so much erase Assunta's understanding of hyphenation, as Ferraro seems to suggest. Instead, it constitutes a loss that triggers a change in the Barones' family dynamics. With Adamo's passing, Assunta and Marie lose their husband and father, but also the linguistic mediator that had often interceded in their quarrels. On the one hand, this change leads to Assunta's total loss of appetite and progressive physical and emotional decline. On the other hand, it accelerates Marie's process of hyphenated identity construction because it leads from disconnection to connection (post-mortem) between her and Assunta.

Assunta's death represents a further loss of heritage for Marie; it joins the death of Adamo to trigger in Marie a longing for family ties. Through the traumatic loss of Assunta, Marie gains physical access to the *bavulo*, a hope chest that had been in the family for a couple of generations and Assunta had brought to Canada from her village of

Novilara. Even when in the self-hatred stage, Marie thought of the *bavulo* "as her personal possession" as she hunted for the mysterious key that would unlock it (10). Her obsession to find the key is reiterated throughout *Black Madonna*. Ironically and quite tellingly, Marie discovers that the *bavulo* is unlocked after Assunta has died. The search for the key suggests Marie's lack of understanding of her mother and heritage, which are incomprehensible and inaccessible to her (in the same way in which she cannot access the *bavulo*) until Assunta's death. It also shows that, notwithstanding her overt acts of resistance, Marie had always been drawn to her heritage (even when she was not aware of it, and was not ready to embark on the final stages of her identity construction process). Once Marie learns to understand her mother and her own self, she is finally ready to open the *bavulo*. In this way, Assunta's death is necessary for Marie to complete her self-understanding and reach self-acceptance. It announces the ability and need for Marie to thrive in her identity construction process by re-connecting with her heritage.

Marie's resulting self-acceptance is the stage in which she fully embraces her heritage by going through the items contained in the *bavulo*. By rummaging through the *bavulo*'s contents, Marie accepts her place within her family as the one who can continue to preserve her family history. Marie's ability to open the *bavulo* when she visits the Sault at the end of *Black Madonna* symbolizes her ability to finally understand her heritage and accept her hyphenation. The *bavulo* holds family knowledge. Assunta used to tell her children about how, according to tradition, it would be passed on from one generation to the next "when the daughter married or the mother died" (10). Although Marie was not ready (yet) for the self-acceptance that such important knowledge would

trigger when she married Richard, once Assunta dies, she is finally ready for the *bavulo*. In it, Marie finds one of Assunta's black dresses and decides to put it on. Wearing Assunta's signature clothing announces Marie's self-acceptance. Forming connections between Marie and Assunta and between heritage and the hyphenated experience, the act of donning her mother's dress exposes her willingness to embody the role of an "Italian mamma" (161), a black Madonna that resembles Assunta.[74]

The opening of the *bavulo* also triggers a strong desire in Marie to further experience her Italian heritage culture. The desire to learn more about her heritage culture prompts her to call her Italian relatives, plan a visit to Novilara to attend her cousin's wedding, and bring the *bavulo* to Italy as a wedding gift, thus continuing the family tradition. Examining identity in Italian-Canadian fiction, Canton observes that an "initial rejection" of anything related to Italian-Canadian literary characters' heritage is often "followed by a reevaluation of *italianitá* or Italianness, a process which can be referred to as the 'journey home' or the quest for identity, the search for true self" (*Identity* 6). Similarly, Marie's quest, punctuated by the realization that the *bavulo* was open all along and gaining access to it, ultimately culminates with a return trip home that symbolizes a reconciliation of the two components of her hyphenated identity. Marie's trip is both

[74] This is not the first time in the novel in which a similarity between Marie and Assunta is suggested. Although their conflictual relationship is never resolved, Marie and Assunta share many similarities: Marie is like Assunta in her mothering, and also eventually looks very similar to Assunta through suffering anorexia nervosa. These similar characteristics ironically highlight their connection, despite their persistent conflicts (Saccucci 4, Tuzi 98). At the end of the novel, Joey studies a photo of Assunta and concludes that "There was no mistaking the strong resemblance to Marie. They were both so thin and bony, with the same sharp features and cut of hair" (Paci 85).

physical and symbolic. Although her decision to bring the *bavulo* to her Italian cousin as a wedding gift may seem to represent a detachment from it, it is actually an embracing of her Italian-ness. By traveling to Italy and donating the *bavulo*, symbol of her mother's hyphenated experience, she continues the preservation of her family history. This gesture thus marks and realizes her wish to connect with her Italian family in the region of Marche. Marie's improved nutritional habits, her restored mental health, her re-connection to her Italian-ness, and her motivation to share her hyphenated experience combine at the end of *Black Madonna* to confirm that both of the cultural components of her hyphenated identity are essential to her physical and emotional survival.

3. Mary Melfi's *Italy Revisited*: A Culinary Memoir

The role of maternal feeding as literal and symbolical nourishment is also explored in Melfi's *Italy Revisited*: *Conversations with my Mother*. In it, a second-generation hyphenated daughter bonds with her first-generation immigrant mother through the exploration of traditional recipes. The fifty-year-old daughter of this memoir shares important experiences with the real-world author, Melfi, who was born in 1951, and moved with her mother from Casacalenda (Molise, Italy) to Montreal's Italian neighbourhood in 1957, three years after her father settled there (Melfi 14, 181, 251).[75] The daughter's place of birth (Italy) complicates the definition of who is a first- or second-generation immigrant in the family. I will consider the daughter to be a second-

[75] In this chapter, I will refer to daughter and mother to identify the two unnamed autobiographical characters of Melfi's *Italy Revisited*.

generation Italian-Canadian, as she lived her formative years in Canada and her only memories of Italy have to do with her mother "making pasta, her apron … dusted with flour" when her family received their immigration papers from Rome before they moved to Canada (255). *Italy Revisited* centres around the daughter's *Book of Memories* project, through which she embarks on a recipe collection journey to record her mother's memories and family history while at the same time negotiating her own hyphenation. Several of the recipes she collects are embedded into the narrative, offering cultural insight about Italian traditions and ingredients common in Italian meals.

According to the contemporary food studies scholarship, recipes and cookbooks can be considered literature, insofar as they serve as important sources of cultural knowledge (Voski Avakian et al, *Betty Crocker*, 17).[76] With the introduction of the field of food studies, scholars and publishers started to recognise that "the study of food can be an important avenue to understanding both historical and contemporary society" (vii). More specifically, recipe books have been approached as "cultural instruments that can provide insight into modern culture" (Brownlie et al. qtd. in Hersch par 57). Consequently, texts such as Elizabeth Driver's *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cookbooks, 1825-1949*, which collects over 2000 titles, are crucial in helping understand the relation between food and Canadian identity (Hersch par 57). These

[76] This has not always been the case. In the late 1970s, for instance, feminist and women's studies scholars tended to approach cookbooks as a "mark of women's oppression" and thus unworthy of being collected and preserved in an American library, such as the Schlesinger Library. Similarly, the examination of the relationship between food and women's identity was frowned upon until recently (Voski Avakian and Haber, *Betty Crocker* vii-viii).

developments in the scholarship highlight that recipe books constitute a critical tool for collecting and transmitting the food and foodways knowledge that allows a better understanding of how hyphenated Canadians navigate their heritage culinary traditions and incorporate them into the Canadian cultural mosaic. They also allow us to appreciate the role of food and foodways in the lives of first- and second-generation immigrants as they work on their identity building.

Scholars like Traci Marie Kelly have begun distinguishing between different types of women's food writing. She distinguishes between culinary memoirs where the focus is on a personal story interwoven with memories of food, and that may or may not include recipes; autobiographical cookbooks, which combine autobiography and recipes; and autoethnographic cookbooks, which explore the foodways of a specific cultural group and combine recipes with traditions (255-61). Each of the three categories draws a connection between food and the representation of identity. Colleen Cotter also distinguishes between different types of food writing: commercial recipe books and community recipe books. While recipes are considered narratives in both categories, Cotter argues that in community books they become cultural storytelling constructed by a community to highlight and preserve its cultural values (52-3). For instance, using as an example her grandmother's church cookbooks, Cotter details how community cookbooks can foster self-reflection and identity formation within a specific community by providing elements "readily accessible" to someone belonging to that community. This allows the reader of the cookbook to travel "beyond her own kitchen and into her community" (53). In other words, community cookbooks can facilitate cultural self-

identification and feelings of inclusion. Willa Zhen also notes how the recipes, lists of ingredients, and stories included in community cookbooks "say much about who a group is … [as they] often contain stories, information about the group's history and organizational mission, and even advertisements from local businesses" (31). Zhen's claim highlights that these texts are much more than a simple list or archival record of recipes. Another categorization is offered by Sandra Gilbert, who proposes food memoir to describe texts that are a "history of origins" and a "cultural record" (144). Gilbert identifies the transmission of cultural knowledge as the main purpose of food memoirs. Drawing from Christine Muhlke, she also adopts the term foodoir to identify "memoirs about love and food [that] go together like steak and martinis" (Muhlke qtd. in Gilbert 325n5). While Kelly's, Cotter's, Gilbert's, and Muhlke's categorizations are quite different, they all highlight the link between food, culture, identity, and memory. Each scholar speaks to the strong connection between foodways and self-identification, proposing a similar interpretation to Goldman's theory that "reproducing a recipe" entails the bringing together of "cultural practice and autobiographical assertion" (Goldman qtd. in Gunew 229).

Melfi's *Italy Revisited*, which features several characteristics of the categorizations outlined above, is primarily a culinary memoir.[77] More specifically, it is an autobiographical text that incorporates actual recipes and food memories within the narration to help understand its characters' process of hyphenated identity construction.

[77] Scholars like Baena and Eder have interpreted Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill* (analysed in chapter 4) as a culinary memoir as well.

To further accentuate the role of foodways in the journey toward self-acceptance, the book is divided into sections that reference the days of the Holy Week (Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday) followed by Easter Sunday and Easter Monday. The memoir's organization around a Catholic holiday that for Italian-Canadians joins other festivities to constitute "important moments of family and social life" that are "rites of passage" (Saidero 108) symbolically announces the resurrection of the daughter's Italian-ness. From Palm Sunday to Easter Monday, the sharing of recipes and the mother's cultural storytelling stimulate the daughter's process of re-discovery of the Italian component of her hyphenated identity through food items and practices typical of these festivities (such as *cicoria*, which in Italy is commonly eaten on Easter Monday, and making homemade pasta, a common bonding activity within Italian families).

Food is also at the heart of the daughter's self-hatred stage, which begins with the lost opportunity to fully absorb the daily happenings of Casacalenda when she visits Italy in 1977 when she is 17 years old. As in other Canadian immigrant writing where characters embark on a literal trip home (such as in Paci's *Black Madonna* or in Nino Ricci's *Lives of the Saints* trilogy), the daughter of *Italy Revisited* travels to Italy with her mother. She describes the experience as a common one among Italian-Canadians: "Italy recalls its sons and daughters back to its borders. The country is an emotional magnet for my mother's generation as well as my own" (315). The journey was the first occasion in which the daughter felt "proud" of her heritage: "Suddenly, it was okay to be Italian," she states. However, she was not interested in recuperating her heritage yet. She explicitly states: "I wasn't interested in my roots back then. My roots were entangled in *la miseria*,

and if anything, I had to disentangle myself from them" (316).[78] Her roots are in fact in the small town of Casacalenda, which is too close to a past of shame and too far from the more appealing tourist destinations of the *bella Italia*, crystalized in cities like Rome, Florence, or Venice. She admits, "I let myself think Italy, the tourist Mecca, was my home town" (316). Through this imagined Italy, which, she says, "placed her hand on me and … cured [me] of my deformity (my shame)" (316), the daughter's trip home takes on a metaphorical significance. It comes to stand in for a rejection of her heritage (less strong than that of Marie's in *Black Madonna*) that prepares her for the next stage of her process of hyphenated identity formation, namely, going back to Canada and slowly starting her educational journey of self-understanding.

Two additional losses further intensify the daughter's loss of heritage: a loss of food and a loss of language. The loss of food is strictly connected to her physical return trip home. When she first traveled to Italy, the daughter did not partake in traditional food knowledge: "now you don't know what an olive or fig tree looks like, or what an almond tree has to offer. All you know is that an olive tree doesn't look like a maple" (321), her mother accuses her later in life. This loss of food impacts the daughter's experience as an adult Italian-Canadian, depriving her from the practical and symbolical cultural knowledge needed to understand her heritage.

The daughter's troubled access to her heritage is further suggested by a loss of language, which reflects her confusion surrounding the fundamental differences between

[78] *La miseria* literally translates to extreme poverty.

herself and her mother. Language poses a significant barrier between them, but this is not because they lack a vehicular language. The daughter speaks both Italian and English, having learnt English "watching television" (145),[79] and often acts as translator for her mother (her translating duties are explicitly mentioned when she describes the recording process that she follows when recording her mother's storytelling). At times, however, the daughter turns language into a weapon because she is confused by the behaviours that differentiate her from her mother: "I use English to create a barrier between us. A sound barrier" (145), she states. In this and similar instances, instead of serving as a structured system of communication, language and its use are intended to create a firm divide between first- and second-generation lived experience and values.

Assimilation, which is one such experience, seems not to concern the first generation, but it is a cause of uneasiness for the second. The daughter explains, "my mother's generation doesn't see themselves as victims, but as conquerors. They kept their language, their traditions. It's my generation that complains we've been taken in, conquered, assimilated, call it what you like" (271). While the mother did not feel discriminated against in Canada, the daughter did. In school, they anglicized her name and made her feel like she was a "second-class citizen." Outside of school, people

[79] The idea of watching television to learn a language is, interestingly, recurrent in immigrant writing. While in Melfi it is the daughter who used to do it as a child, in Paci it is the first-generation character Assunta who watches English programs on television to learn the language. This draws a further link to their heritage culture. In the 1960s, Italians in Italy would also use television as an educational tool: *Non è mai troppo tardi. Corso di istruzione popolare per il recupero dell'adulto analfabeta* was a TV program supported by the Italian Ministry of Education aimed to teach people how to read and write and increase literacy rates.

"looked down on [her] for being Italian" (315). The daughter's sense of having been conquered, assimilated, or displaced is caused by the inability to find a balance between the shame felt for her family's economic constraints (that convinced her parents to migrate) and the pressure to assimilate to Canadian culture, caused by the expectations of her school and Canadian mainstream society.

Torn between differing cultures, the daughter is initially lost in her hybridity and unable to understand who she really is. She admits, "I never knew from one day to another if I were a hyphenated Italian-Canadian, at ease in both cultures, or a lost soul, roaming the streets, in search of this woman that answered to my name" (206). Often times, she does not clearly understand where home is and where she belongs, recognizing herself as someone in-between cultures: "I felt divided, not at home in either culture" (304). Rightfully accused by her mother of being "tired of Italian culture being defined by its food" (148), the daughter regularly becomes overwhelmed by her mother's recollection of heritage traditions and by the exposure to Italian food and smells. She laments: "too much cooking, too many smells, time to open the back door and get some fresh air. Too bad I can't open the door of the past. It's forever shut. Even if I had the key to my grandparents' home, I couldn't just enter it" (193). Her inability to access her mother's past – "*Figlia mia*, you can't see well, you don't need a new pair of glasses.

You need a new set of eyes" (32) – and thus fully partake in her heritage culture results in a frustration and confusion that defines her initial relationship with food.[80]

The self-understanding stage begins with the daughter's realization, later in life, that she did not fully take advantage of her physical return trip home. Then, she develops an interest in learning more about her heritage, as evidenced by her *Book of Memories* project. She realizes that she "remember[s] more what [she] didn't do" than what she did do during that 1977 trip and regrets not attempting to learn more about her family heritage when she visited Italy. She laments, "I should have done the tour of my town, my heritage, now it's too late, I can't go back; my grandparents have disappeared into the ancient landscape" (321). All the experiences she lived as an Italian-Canadian living somewhat lost between two cultures prepared her for this central moment of regret, as the feelings of displacement that characterized her youth and adulthood make her realize that her family history and heritage have the potential to help her better understand the Italian-ness that makes her hyphenated and thus positively influence her identity construction process.

Instead of returning to Italy, she embarks on a symbolic return trip home within her mother's kitchen in Canada. As a point of departure, she uses the *Little Big Book of Memories*, a book that "comes with questions you can ask your mother about her childhood, and provides spaces for the answers" (11), and starts to investigate her family

[80] Confusion is further addressed when she is unable to access the grandparents' home that has been sold. This emotional turmoil is similar to Marie's when she is unable to access the *bavulo* in Paci's *Black Madonna*.

heritage aided by her mother's storytelling and transmission of traditional food knowledge. Storytelling intertwined with foodways is crucial for the daughter's self-understanding, fostering a dialogue between mother and daughter that influences both of their hyphenated identity construction processes.

Even though the mother mentions that they were not forced to change when they moved to Canada – "In the 1950s l'America welcomed Italians; the *Inglesi* were tolerant, you could remain Italian as long as you obeyed the laws of the land and paid your taxes" (269) – *Italy Revisited* highlights how both hyphenated identities (mother and daughter) and the concept of home are not static. The old country, for instance, changes irrevocably once it is left. When the mother returns to Italy for a visit for the first time in 1974, she finds everything changed (181). The mother, who was a white widow for three years, describes the situation as particularly stressful: "If your husband was abroad, everyone spied on you – if you looked at another man, you would be called *una puttana*, a whore" (104).[81] She also aptly conveys the need to keep a connection to the family left behind once in Canada by saying that no letters were kept before moving to Canada, but that they start to be after a white widow joins her husband abroad. She specifies, "A letter is just a letter until the one who wrote it passes away and then the letter becomes a vehicle – a sort of boat that takes you across the ocean of time and brings you to the one you love" (113). Letters in *Italy Revisited* are documents that like recipes preserve memories through storytelling.

[81] The theme of the white widow is also included in Nino Ricci's *The Lives of The Saints*, likely the most famous Italian-Canadian immigrant novel.

For the mother, storytelling has a double effect: it allows her to preserve and transmit her heritage culture. On the one hand, the mother's maintenance of a connection with her heritage through the recollection of her own memories is crucial to the maintenance and development of her own hyphenated identity. As Caporale-Bizzini specifies in her study of Canadian women writers of Italian origin, for "displaced subjects, remembrance is most often used as a way of holding onto (or at least not entirely losing) the vital parameters of culture and identity" (74).[82] Similarly, in *Italy Revisited* the mother uses memories to avoid losing her Italian-ness and continue to work on her own self-understanding. Memories bring her to "look at the world as much as one's eyes" (33). Across them, she can draw links between her old and new homes, ultimately reaching acceptance of her own hyphenated status.

At the same time, the mother is a cultural mediator who transmits traditional food knowledge to her daughter to safeguard a connection for the second-generation to practices and values that could otherwise be forgotten. Kwik defines traditional food knowledge (TFK) as a "collective wisdom" (iv) of the "cumulative teachings and experience gained from the process of sharing foodways from generation to generation" (24). To achieve this intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge, the mother of *Italy Revisited* turns to storytelling and the use of foodways (including recipe sharing) to protect the family's Italian-ness and stimulate her daughter to embrace her hyphenation

[82] Caporale-Bizzini draws on Hannah Arendt's definition of "remembrance," a term that highlights "the need not to forget cultural origins and the past in order to be able to construct a future life in both the private and public realms" (74).

through a better understanding of her roots.[83] The mother is aware of her role as cultural mediator, and is motivated to share her knowledge as she interprets her daughter's wish to record her memories (and recipes, in particular) as a way to "enrich [herself] with the past" (Melfi 98). Even though the daughter may be considered more educated than her mother (she has a degree and is an avid reader), the mother possesses a different practical kind of knowledge –such as how to make wine according to the Italian tradition– that is necessary for personal growth. This practical knowledge corresponds to what Lugosi describes as cultural capital or knowledge of "culturally specific experience and expertise" (34). In this sense, foodways turn into an educational experience that helps both women negotiate old and new cultural values (those of the heritage country and those of the settler country). By telling her stories "in the idiom of food," to borrow from food studies scholars Miller and Deutsch (158-9), the mother literally and culturally feeds her daughter as well as herself.

The daughter's loss of food experienced during the self-hatred stage and the important knowledge it holds for her identity is thus rectified by her mother's storytelling and recipe sharing. Recuperating her mother's Italian recipes contributes to the daughter's development of an understanding of who she is as an Italian-Canadian, propelling her into the second stage of her hyphenated identity building process. Baldo highlights how the mother is an essential part of the daughter's symbolical return home, as "she reminds her daughter that the return she is longing for is right in front of her eyes:

[83] Cammy Lee in her autoethnographic thesis about identity construction through food describes a similar process in relation to her personal experience (97).

she needs to write down its recipe, to taste its flavour, to seize the moment, to pay attention to the important ingredients (those that a chicken broth, like a memoir, requires)" (263). Foodways not only preserve the family's Italian heritage, but also cure the daughter from feelings of displacement; they help her find her place within her family. Her mother's cultural nourishment carry her daughter closer to her ultimate goal: to learn about and discover what her own hyphenated identity is.

In this culinary memoir, as in other Canadian immigrant novels analysed in this and in the previous chapters, the kitchen functions as much more than a location where ingredients are mixed and delicious meals are crafted. In *Italy Revisited*, the kitchen becomes the space of the hyphen, a site that fosters the sharing of cultural insight. In particular, it provides the setting for the daughter's educational journey. The kitchen's power in transmitting heritage is not lost on the mother. "In the kitchen," she explains, "there are no family secrets … miracles are commonplace … when you're in the kitchen, your search stops. You don't need special attention. It has been given to you – your survival assured, your body reaffirmed, reappraised, you can relax and seize the day. What a delight!" (332). Linda Murray Berzok, in her collection of essays and recipes *Storied Dishes*, describes mothers' kitchens as a culturally productive space, where foodways stimulate daughters to "participate in an oral ritual" (19). *Italy Revisited* reflects both of these practices, as the daughter collects her mother's recipes in the kitchen, fully aware that these recipes represent the family's cultural inheritance.

In her search for some "food for thought" (10), the daughter tries to "dig up [her] mother's memories." Through those memories, which are so safely inscribed in the

recipes, the daughter attempts to "find [her] connection with the almighty Past, the Main Power Source" and overcome her loneliness (10). The mother, on her part, was reluctant to openly share her memories, "ashamed, [and] didn't want to make *la brutta figura*" by relating her story to her daughter (20). However, when in the kitchen, described as "a wonderland," the mother "enjoys special powers" (27) and those powers fuel the stories surrounding foodways. As suggested by Murray Berzok, the memories unleashed by a mother's recipe collection are tools that daughters can employ to work on their own self-identification and cultural journeys (18-20). Offering freedom from external influences, the kitchen, the food prepared and discussed in it, and the family secrets and memories held in recipes collect various facets of the heritage culture. Once shared, they also distribute it across family members to forge connections not only between traditions, family, and memories, but also between different generations.[84]

The daughter overcomes the language barrier between her mother and herself by turning to discussions of food, which not only help in her examination and comprehension of Italian customs, but also in the facilitation of a productive exchange between them. Committed to being as thorough as possible in her *Book of Memories* project, the daughter realizes that "something is lost in the translation," as her mother suggests. The mother confirms her daughter's realization, commenting "You ask me questions, I answer in Italian, and you write them down in English in your *Memory*

[84] For more examples of the intergenerational connection built over foodways in Canadian immigrant writing, see my analysis of Erika de Vasconcelos' *My Darling Dead Ones* and Larry Warwaruk's *The Ukrainian Wedding* in Chapter 3.

Book" (94). Although something may be lost as recipes and memories travel between languages, to reflect on language nonetheless permits the mother to draw connections to her Italian heritage and bridge the two cultures that inform her identity. For instance, the mother admits that "in the old country there was no shame in being illiterate" (107), pointing out that "it wasn't Mussolini that helped peasants get an education, it was emigration" (108). Similarly, the discussions surrounding translation and comprehension constitute a moment of self-awareness for the daughter. Across them, she appreciates that she will always be between the two cultures, knowing and not fully knowing either of them. Language, like food and foodways, at once unites and separates cultures, traditions, and memories.

The mother's cultural mediation is instrumental in helping the daughter fully acknowledge the loss of heritage she has experienced and recognize that the risk of miscomprehension and, by extension, self-alienation is possible. The mother comments, "You think you know your life story. The fact that you're in this country is just a little piece of it. A short chapter. What if it's the whole story, one you can't read, because it's in a language you don't understand?" (105). The mother's comment strongly suggests that the daughter cannot read the whole story (of her own immigrant experience) because she still lacks the skills to comprehend it. Their dialogue helps the daughter realize that she may stand somewhat too far apart from the heritage she so much wants to understand to recuperate it. At one point in the narrative, the daughter reflects: "I come around to her house with my imaginary camera in my hands, hoping to get a few shots. Even if I had the best camera in the world, with the most powerful zooms, there are limits to what it

can capture on film. I'll always be too far away, I'll never get a clear picture." (179). The analogy she draws between her inability to shoot a clear picture and her inability to fully understand her heritage culture constitutes a crucial step of self-awareness. It exposes the linguistic and cultural lack experienced in the self-hatred stage that complicated and risked stunting her hyphenated identity-building process.

The loss of language (and by extension heritage) experienced by the daughter in the self-hatred stage is fully overcome through the recognition that the Italian language enhances the eating experience. Italian aids processes of self-identification by providing a sensory experience intrinsically connected to feelings.[85] In fact, for the daughter, "Language … affects taste." The dialect word *pomodora*, for instance, unlike its English equivalent 'tomato,' "adds colour and texture; it enhances the flavour, adds spice. Change the vocabulary of the food you eat, and you change its taste" (Melfi 33). Michela Baldo dwells on this example, arguing that code-switching "is capable of adding extra taste to a tomato by triggering specific memories related to the context of the consumption of that particular food" (300). Through her recognition of her heritage language as one that can affect and make a food experience authentic, the daughter seems to adopt Borghini's existentialist perspective of authenticity (like Tuyen does in *What We All Long For*), where the "quest for authentic dishes" is also "the quest for the realization of an authentic self" (Borghini 183). Language in *Italy Revisited,* as Baldo's analysis of code-switching

[85] The connection between food and emotions is a dynamic addressed by a number of scholars (see Jones et al. 135; Zhen 188). In *Italy Revisited*, for both mother and daughter, the intertwining of food memories and emotions leads to feelings of nostalgia that are crucial for understanding their hyphenation.

suggests, is an important tool for capturing an authentic culinary experience that triggers authentic memories needed to position Italian-ness as an integral part of self.

Even though the daughter's displacement at times hindered her self-understanding, it is a necessary step towards self-awareness and self-love. The peak of the daughter's self-understanding is also the beginning of her self-acceptance. Once she accepts that it is alright for hyphenated identities to be heterogeneous, she is able to turn her displacement into a productive condition. While some of her conversations with her mother seem to highlight a conflict between their perspectives (for example, her mother's belief that "the generation gap between immigrant parents and their children is as wide as the Atlantic Ocean" (297) and that food may not be important enough for second-generation Italian-Canadians (213)), their dialogue actually creates an opportunity for the daughter to identify heterogeneity as a defining (and liberating) characteristic for hyphenated identities. It does not matter if her mother and herself lived different experiences. What does matter for their sense of self is that they both learnt to negotiate the two cultural components of their hyphenated identities.

Providing a common ground for an intergenerational discussion of the daughter's hybridity and confusion that facilitates self-acceptance, the daughter's symbolical return trip home across foodways ultimately helps her come to terms with her hyphenation. Indeed, her conversations with her mother are filled with acknowledgments and discussions about her own hyphenation. That the mother comprehends and appreciates her daughter's predicament as a displaced hyphenated person is also overtly addressed. She observes, "You're too Canadian to be Italian, and too Italian to be Canadian" (268)

after the daughter asks, "Who am I: half Italian, half Canadian, or just plain old me (a merriless Mary?) … This is the history of an I. An I in the making" (266). Being hyphenated is clearly presented as a state of being a work-in-progress, an identity that is fluid and flexible, never complete and between two cultures. The Canadian multicultural environment is filled with hyphens, and accepting her hyphenated state (that is both of her cultural components) enables the daughter to thrive in this environment and better engage with those who surround her.

4. Conclusion

In *Black Madonna* and *Italy Revisited*, the daughters' active participation is trigged by a loss of heritage intensified by and inscribed in losses of food, family, and language. For Marie, the hyphenated process of identity construction entails initially rejecting her heritage through a rejection of her mother and Italian food. After reaching the peak of her self-hatred and beginning of her self-understanding through anorexia nervosa, she ultimately embraces her heritage after Assunta's death, turning into a very close version of her mother, and going back to Italy with the symbolic *bavulo* for a family wedding. For the daughter of *Italy Revisited*, the process entails a loss of heritage through a rejection of her ancestors' home and a loss of food and language, and subsequently embarking on a symbolical trip within her mother's Canadian home kitchen that involves collecting recipes and traditional food knowledge to re-discover her heritage. In these texts, anxiety over the loss of food and the need for cultural preservation is representative of the anxiety over the loss of one's heritage culture and the desire to embrace hyphenation. Both of the daughters' trajectories highlight that food

holds knowledge and emotions, history and ritual that are essential for these hyphenated characters to survive the negotiation of the different components of their identities.

That the authors devote more attention to one stage or another –the self-hatred stage in *Black Madonna* or to the self-understanding stage *Italy Revisited*– highlights the heterogeneity of hyphenated identities and how the two daughters reach their acceptance of their hyphenation at a different pace. For example, while Paci for most of *Black Madonna* focuses on the conflict between Marie and Assunta, Melfi in *Italy Revisited* prefers to concentrate on the productive dialogue between mother and daughter that impacts the daughter's self-understanding. In addition, the two books address the language barrier between mothers and daughters by either highlighting force-feeding as a way to fill the void caused by the cultural distance between mother and daughter (*Black Madonna*) or by showing how a lack of understanding in terms of values and lived experiences can be overcome through dialogue (*Italy Revisited*). Finally, while both books present the kitchen as the place of the hyphen, where mothers provide their cultural nourishment and daughters are actively involved in their hyphenated identity construction process, they do so by highlighting the daughters' unique journeys and relationships with their mothers. In *Black Madonna* the kitchen is the place of connection and disconnection between characters, with the conflict between Marie and Assunta at a contested table as its main focus. In *Italy Revisited*, the kitchen presents as a place of both confusion and self-understanding. In other words, *Black Madonna* stresses the disconnection experienced during the self-hatred stage, while *Italy Revisited* explores the potential of overcoming displacement through a dialogue that leads to self-understanding.

Through food and mothers who serve as mediators of cultural knowledge, displaced hyphenated identities tap into a wealth of practical and felt knowledge that brings these hyphenated characters closer to their heritage. In both instances, this identity building process reaches its peak with a return trip home that helps these hyphenated characters navigate their understanding of self as positioned vis-à-vis the different cultural components that make them hyphenated. Caporale-Bizzini argues that "Movement between spaces is the element that bridges the gap between a sense of paralysis and a possible future identity" (80). The physical return trip at the end of *Black Madonna* and the symbolical return trip home in *Italy Revisited* do exactly this: they provide a way to bridge the gaps between the daughters' Italian-ness and Canadian-ness and enable them to fully embrace their hyphenation.

Conclusion

This dissertation has investigated the multilayered and ambiguous notions of multiculturalism and hyphen to reveal how diversity is an essential characteristic of Canadian identity. More specifically, it has advanced an understanding of Canadian identity as quintessentially multicultural and hyphenated by offering a comparative analysis of Canadian immigrant fiction that depicts foodways as a metaphorical language. Through an examination of the Canadian socio-political and literary landscape, it has shown that in a Canadian context everyone is hyphenated (Anglo-Canadians, French-Canadians, and Canadians attached to other heritages). As Margaret Atwood suggested, "we are all immigrants to this place even if we were born here" (*Journals* 62).

The main contributions of this thesis are 1. its recognition that literary representations of multiculturalism and the hyphen spill into general Canadian discussions on multiculturalism and help better explain the current Canadian climate, 2. its investigation of the impact of food and foodways on the hyphenated identity building process, and 3. its presentation of hyphenated spaces as productive in-between spaces that accommodate diversity and help redefine what it means to be Canadian.

1. Multiculturalism and the Hyphen

Canadian immigrant fiction addresses multiculturalism and the hyphen by presenting the hyphenated identity construction process as a heterogeneous and unique journey that ultimately leads characters to self-acceptance. My analysis has spoken to

how second-generation immigrant characters successfully navigate self-hatred and self-understanding thanks to the cultural mediation of hyphenated peers (*What We All Long For* and *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*) or motherly figures (*Italy Revisited*, *Black Madonna*, and *Chorus of Mushrooms*) who feed them both literally (with food) and symbolically (with culture). Other times, characters learn to better understand their hybridity through self-reflection and by engaging with hybrid foodways (*Diamond Grill*) or through an intergenerational bonding that makes it easier for them to recuperate their cultural heritage (*The Ukrainian Wedding* and *My Darling Dead Ones*). The uniqueness of their journeys reflects the diversity of their hyphenated identities.

Concentrating on diversity by uniting hyphenated characters of different origins (instead of restricting my analysis to distinct ethnic groups) allowed me to address a heterogeneous immigrant experience that is more aligned with Canadian multiculturalism. A comparative approach to hyphenated identity as represented in literature fosters a deeper understanding of multiculturalism and Canadian identity, concepts that the scholarship has struggled to define. Authors like Uma Parameswaran and Dionne Brandt[86] highlight both sides of the debates on multiculturalism, namely the critique of multiculturalism as a public policy and multiculturalism as an environment

[86] Among the authors included in my literary corpus, Dionne Brand and Fred Wah are the most widely studied. In addition to the secondary sources I mentioned in this dissertation, other notable contributions on these two writers include Cynthia Sugars' "The Negative Capability of Camouflage: Fleeing Diaspora in Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*" (2001), Julie McGonegal's "Hyphenating the Hybrid 'I': (Re)Visions of Racial Mixedness in Fred Wah's *Diamond Grill*" (2002), Joel Baetz's "Now and Then: Dionne Brand's *What We All Long For*, the Desire to Forget, and the Urban Archive" in *Canadian Literature and Cultural Memory* (2014), and Andrea Katherine Medovarski's "A Kind of New Vocabulary': Dionne Brand's (Re)Mappings in *What We All Long For*" in *Settling down and Settling up: The Second Generation in Black Canadian and Black British Women's Writing* (2019).

that celebrates the diversity of hyphenated identities. My dissertation is premised on the notion that Canadian immigrant literature can lead to a refinement of the notions of multiculturalism and hyphenation thanks to its focus on hyphenated identities that go beyond the hyphen in their overcoming strict national boundaries and reflect the experiences of real (non-literary) ones.

The hyphen features prominently in Canadian immigrant literature, linking characters across generations and places. My approach to the hyphen as a bridge that celebrates Canada's diversity by connecting a plurality of peoples, cultures, and heritages highlights the cultural richness of contemporary Canada. In literature, hyphenated identities are portrayed as fluctuating between the here and there, the old and new (the country of origin of the hyphenated and the Canada in which they have settled) to negotiate a flexible position in-between the cultural components linked by the hyphen. Once characters are open to the complexity and hybridity informing their identities and can thus reach self-acceptance (as the daughters of *Chorus of Mushrooms*, *Italy Revisited*, and *Black Madonna*), they are positioned to overcome the duality that readings of the hyphen as a barrier imply. Interpretations of the hyphen as promoting a division between exclusive national identity categories then become outdated, as they do not accurately reflect the cultural plurality inherent in multiculturalism understood as an environment that promotes diversity.

2. Food and Foodways

I focused specifically on food and foodways because they play a central role in the development and portrayal of Canadian hyphenated identities and their journey towards self-acceptance. In the immigrant fiction studied in this dissertation, food is much more than literal nourishment: it assumes a symbolical value and is instrumental in defining cultural identity because of its impact on the hyphenated identity construction process. In other words, foodways build identity and connect the different cultural components that surround the hyphen. My research has shown that food and foodways in Canadian immigrant writing take on three main metaphorical meanings that elucidate multiculturalism and hyphenation as defining features of Canadian identity: they symbolize adaptation through community building and socialization, hybridity, and cultural nourishment.

Food ties multiculturalism and the hyphen together because hybrid foodways reflect the characters' hybrid multicultural hyphenated identities (and Canadian identity at large), where different cultural components blend in the same way as dishes incorporate multicultural traits. For example, *Chorus of Mushrooms* highlights how food takes on magical properties, and eating a hybrid dish that carries the characters' name helps gain balance, come to terms with one's hybrid identity, and accept one's hyphenation. Eating from a hybrid menu that is symbolic of the characters' hybridity and hyphenation (as in *Diamond Grill*) or eating hybrid dishes that represent all Canadians means eating multiculturalism. It means finding literal and symbolical nourishment in hybridity and hyphenation, and by extension being multicultural and hyphenated. In the

types of literary texts examined here, diversity emerges as a quintessentially feature of Canadian food and symbolizes the diversity of Canada, contributing to a better understanding what it means to be Canadian today.

3. Hyphenated Spaces

The primary texts that comprise my corpus of Canadian immigrant literature portray hybrid homes, hybrid family kitchens, hybrid restaurants, and hybrid ethnic food stores as spaces of the hyphen, in-between productive spaces that accommodate diversity. In these hyphenated spaces, foodways promote intergenerational bonding, cultural negotiations, and culinary encounters that nourish Canadian multicultural hyphenated identities. For instance, in *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, characters develop hybrid hyphenated identities over hybrid meals while discussing multiculturalism in a hybrid hyphenated home; in *My Darling Dead Ones*, characters balance their attachment to their heritage and settler cultures in the family kitchen; and in *The Ukrainian Wedding*, ritual dishes incite questions about the characters' degrees of attachment to heritage traditions and their journeys towards the acceptance of their hyphenation.

Ultimately, the space of the hyphen is enriching and productive because it enables characters to redefine what it means to be Canadian. The hyphenated space allows diversity to flourish, and the food that is prepared in it (like the hyphen) functions as a bridge that facilitates intercultural communication, building connections between different cultural collectives that highlight the impact of multiculturalism on mainstream Canada. For instance, in *Italy Revisited* and *What We All Long For*, food promotes the

acceptance of difference and adaptation, ultimately symbolizing a collective Canadian identity that is quintessentially multicultural and hyphenated. Multiculturalism therefore presents as an environment characterized by cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity, where the Canadian-ness of the population is influenced by Canada's history of immigration and the encounter between different cultures does not lead to their simple coexistence, but to a mutually influencing relationship that shapes Canadian identity.

Considering Canada's contemporary socio-cultural and literary makeup, I hope that my research will stimulate additional conversations on the hyphen, hyphenated identities, and hyphenated characters that aim to highlight how Canadian immigrant writing should no longer be considered simply ethnic or minority writing, but an integral part of the mainstream Canadian literary canon. By depicting its characters' multi-stage identity construction processes, Canadian immigrant fiction provides readers with the possibility to embark alongside these characters on their symbolical return trips home that lead to an acceptance of their quintessentially hyphenated Canadian identity. On the one hand, these trips help second-generation literary characters accept their hyphenation. On the other hand, they provide an opportunity for readers to experience and better understand the diversity that makes Canada multicultural and hyphenated. Readers could be first-generation immigrants who re-live their immigrant experience through the pages, second- or third-generation immigrants who can better understand their own processes of hyphenated identity construction through the characters' or even individuals who do not identify as immigrants, but as Canadians are influenced by the type of immigrant experience addressed in these books. Readers benefit from these works of fiction because

they foster an opportunity for learning about and self-reflecting on Canadian identity. This is particularly relevant today, as the Government of Canada has recently increased the targets of its immigration strategy to over 400,000 immigrants per year to help the Canadian economy recover from the impact of COVID-19 (*Plan to Support Economic Recovery*), in line with the governmental focus on inclusion of the past few decades.

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Appendix A: History of Multiculturalism in Canada

To provide a map of the history of multiculturalism in Canada, it is helpful to consider the various stages of the political dimension of Canadian multiculturalism as an official public policy. The chart below expands on Dewing's distinction between three developmental stages of multiculturalism as a public policy in Canada: 1) Incipient Stage (pre-1971); 2) Formative Period (1971-1981); and 3) Institutionalization (1982-present). It also builds on Guo and Wong's analysis of the three stages of multiculturalism (1-3), to include details of Canada's federal policy on multiculturalism, parliamentary action, and provincial multiculturalism policies.

History of Multiculturalism in Canada	
1. Incipient Stage of Canadian Multiculturalism (pre-1971)	
Early 1900s	First wave of immigrants to Canada (mass migration mainly from Germany, America, Sweden, Ukraine, the Netherlands, Iceland, Norway, and Russia).
Post-WWII	Second wave of immigrants to Canada: post World War II European immigrants and refugees (mainly from the Baltic states, the Netherlands, Italy, and Hungary).
1947	*Canadian Citizenship Act*: Canadians are no longer considered British subjects.
1948	Canada adheres to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.
1960	*Canadian Bill of Rights* protects from discrimination based on "race, national origin, colour, religion or sex."

1963	Establishment of the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.*[87]
1967	Abolishment of racial discrimination provisions in Canadian Immigration Law.
1969	*Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Book IV: The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups.*
	Official Languages Act.
1970	Ratification of the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.*
2. Formative Period of Canadian Multiculturalism (1971-1981)	
1971	The *Canadian Multiculturalism Policy* is announced as an official government policy by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, making Canada the first nation in the world to adopt a multiculturalism policy.
1972	First appointment of a (junior) minister for Multiculturalism.
	Approval of a *Multicultural Directorate* within the *Department Secretary of State.*
1973	Establishment of the *Ministry of Multiculturalism*.
	Establishment of the *Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism* (later *Canadian Ethnocultural Council*).
1974	Saskatchewan is the first province in Canada to enact multicultural legislation with the *Saskatchewan Multicultural Act* (a new *Multiculturalism Act* is enacted in Saskatchewan in 1997).
1976	Ratification of the *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*.
1977	*Canadian Human Rights Act*.
	Establishment of the *Canadian Human Rights Commission*.
	Ontario's *Official Multicultural Policy*.

[87] Guo and Wong point out that during the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*'s hearings across Canada (1963-1969) there were many comments on pluriculturalism from people who were not of British or French origin. Evidently, Canada was more than bicultural even at that time (1-2).

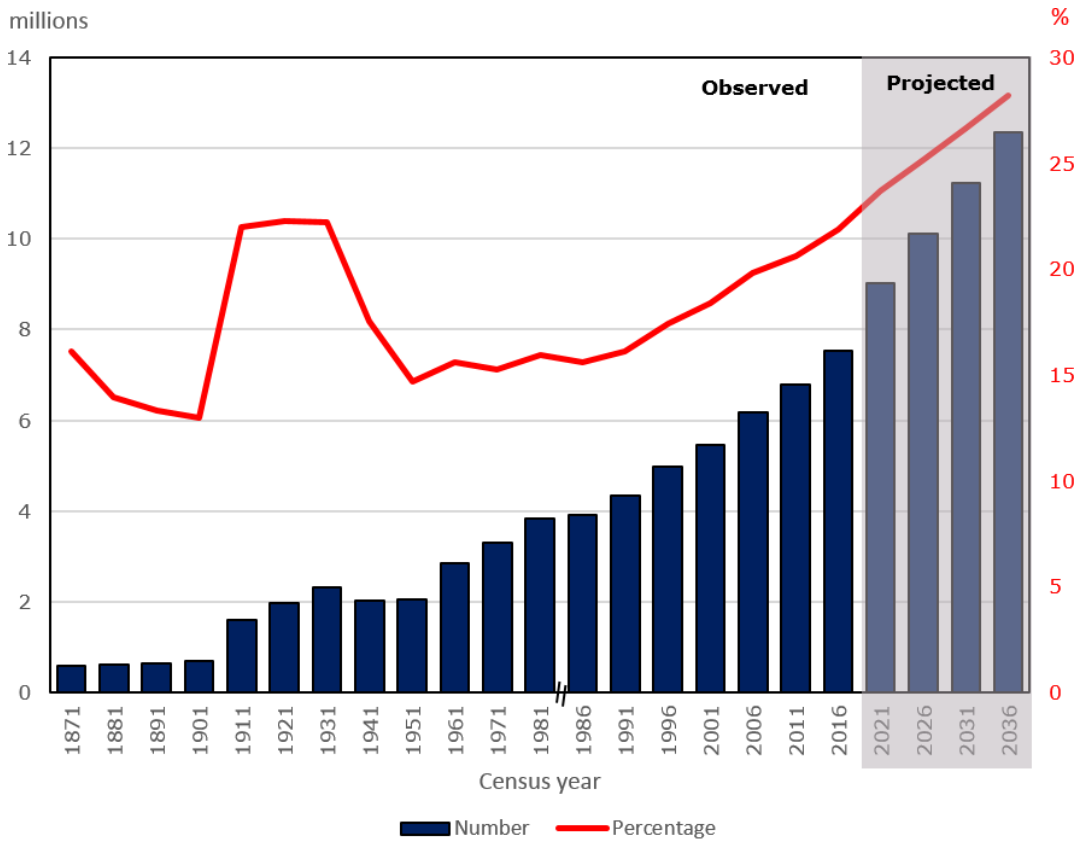
1981	*Ministry of Cultural Communities and Integration*'s plan of action *Autant de façons d'être Québécois*.
3. Institutionalization of Canadian Multicultural Policy (1982-present)	
1982	Establishment of the *Ministry of Citizenship and Culture*.
	The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* recognizes Canada's multicultural heritage.
1983	The *Canadian Multiculturalism Policy* is written into the Canadian Constitution.
1984	*Manitoba Intercultural Council Act* (followed by a new *Multiculturalism Act* in 1992).
	Creation of the *Council of Cultural Communities and Immigration* in Quebec (later *Council of Intercultural Relations*).
	Report *Equality Now!* by the *House of Commons Special Committee on Visible Minorities in Canadian Society*.
1985	Establishment of the *House of Commons Standing Committee on Multiculturalism*.
1986	*Employment Equity Act*.
	New Brunswick's *Policy on Multiculturalism*.
	The Government of Quebec publishes the *Declaration on intercultural and interracial relations*.
1988	The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* is passed in Parliament under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. The Act "provides a statutory framework for the existing multiculturalism policy" (Dewing 18).
	Japanese Redress Agreement between the Government of Canada and the National Association of Japanese Canadians. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney formally apologizes to Japanese Canadian survivors and their families for their internment, seizure of property, and disenfranchisement during World War II, and offers compensation for their losses.
	Prince Edward Island's *Provincial Multicultural Policy*.
1989	Nova Scotia's *Act to Promote and Preserve Multiculturalism*.
1990	White Paper *Let's Build Quebec Together: A Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration*.
1991	*Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Act* (repealed in 2012).

	Canadian Race Relations Foundation Act.
	Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship Act (the Department is dismantled in 1993, when the responsibility of multiculturalism is taken over by the *Department of Canadian Heritage*).
1993	*Study of the Implementation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in Federal Institutions* (last report of the *Standing Committee on Multiculturalism and Citizenship*).
1996	Establishment of the *Canadian Race Relations Foundation*.
2002	June 27 is designated as *Canadian Multiculturalism Day*.
	May is designated as *Asian Heritage Month*.
2005	Establishment of the *Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities* (replaces the *Ministry of Cultural Communities and Integration*).
	Canada is the first country accepted in the UNESCO's *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression*.
	A Canada for All: Canada's Action Plan Against Racism.
	The *Acknowledgement, Commemoration, and Education Program* is announced in the *February 2005 Budget*, and followed by agreements-in principle with the Ukrainian-Canadian, Italian-Canadian, and Chinese-Canadian communities.
2006	The federal Government apologizes to Chinese Canadians for the Head Tax on Chinese immigrants (until 1923) and the exclusion of Chinese immigrants to Canada (1947).
2007	Establishment of the *Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences* (Quebec).
2008	The Government of Quebec publishes the policy *Diversity: An Added Value – Government Policy to Promote Participation of All in Québec's Development*.
	Newfoundland and Labrador's *Policy on Multiculturalism*.
	Establishment of the *Community Historical Recognition Program* (CHRP) and the *National Historical Recognition Program* (NHRP).
	The responsibility for multiculturalism issues is transferred from the *Department of Canadian Heritage* to the *Department of Citizenship and Immigration*.

	February is officially adopted as *Black History Month*.
2009	Canada becomes a member of the *Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research* (IHRA).
2010	Canada hosts the second annual conference of the *Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism* (ICCA). Development of the *Ottawa Protocol on Combating Antisemitism* (signed by Canada in 2011).
	Implementation of new objectives for Canada's Multiculturalism Program.
2013	The Canadian Government creates the Office of Religious Freedom (closed in 2016).
2015	Parliament passed Bill S-219, known as the *Journey to Freedom Day Act*, in commemoration of Canada's acceptance of Vietnamese refugees after the Vietnam War.
	The Canadian Parliament passes the *Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act*, which amends the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, the *Civil Marriage Act*, and the *Criminal Code*.
	The multiculturalism portfolio is transferred from the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to the Department of Canadian Heritage.
2016	Creation of the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion (OHRFI), which substitutes the Office of Religious Freedom.
	Government of Canada's formal apology for the *Komagata Maru* incident (1914).
2017	The House of Commons passes Motion M-103 on systemic racism and religious discrimination.
	The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage begins a study on how the government could: 1. Reduce/eliminate systemic racism and religious discrimination; 2. collect data regarding hate crimes and conduct needs assessments in the affected areas.
2018	The Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage publishes the report *Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia*, which includes 30 recommendations.
2021	Prime Minister Justin Trudeau formally apologizes for the internment of Italian-Canadians during World War II.

Appendix B: Immigrants to Canada

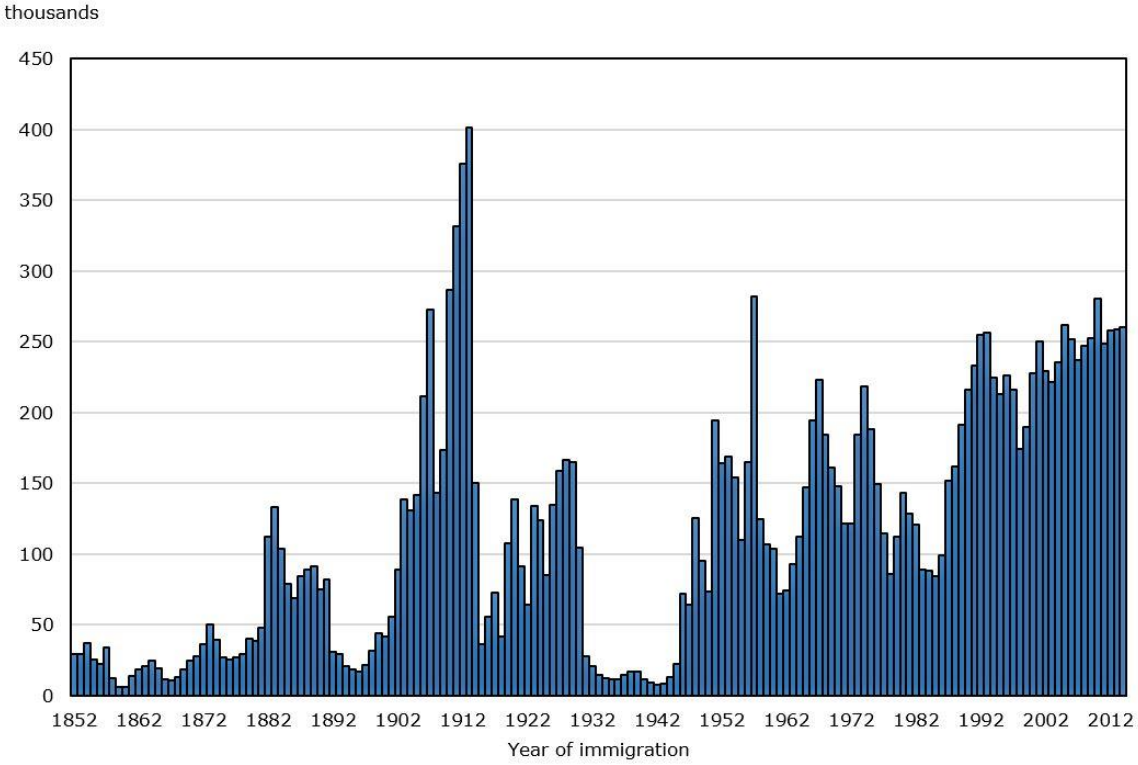
Table 1: Number and proportion of foreign-born population in Canada, 1871 to 2036 (Source: *1871 to 2036*, Statistics Canada).



Note: // represents a break in the historical series.
Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1871 to 2006, 2016; National Household Survey, 2011; Immigration and Diversity: Population Projections for Canada and its Regions, 2011 to 2036 (reference scenario).

Table 2: Number of immigrants who landed in Canada, 1852 to 2014 (Source: *1852 to 2014*, Statistics Canada).

Chart 1
Number of immigrants who landed annually in Canada, 1852 to 2014



Sources: From 1852 to 1979—Employment and Immigration Canada, 1982. For 1980—Immigration Statistics, Immigration and Demographic Policy Group, Catalogue no. MP22-1/1980. From 1980 to 2014—Immigration Refugees Citizenship Canada.

Table 3: Detail of the description of the chart, 2000 to 2014 (Source: *1852 to 2014*, Statistics Canada).

2000	227,500
2001	250,600
2002	229,000
2003	221,300
2004	235,800
2005	262,200
2006	251,600
2007	236,800
2008	247,200
2009	252,200
2010	280,700
2011	248,700
2012	257,900
2013	259,000
2014	260,400
Sources: From 1852 to 1979—Employment and Immigration Canada, 1982. For 1980—Immigration Statistics, Immigration and Demographic Policy Group, Catalogue no. MP22-1/1980. From 1980 to 2014—Immigration Refugees Citizenship Canada.	