

**Prairie and Paratext:  
Contesting Voices in Early Twentieth-Century Canadian  
Literary Production**

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## **Abstract**

In “Black w/Holes” M. Nourbese Philip comments upon the psychic border that “prohibits or limits” the entry of racialized bodies into what she refers to as “wilderness spaces.” By focusing on literary constructions of the Canadian prairie, this project identifies early twentieth-century Canadian literary production as a site of contestation, where such psychological barriers were either upheld or challenged by writers, critics, and publishers. While twentieth-century critics consecrated the work of white prairie writers (Frederick Philip Grove, Martha Ostenso, Laura Salverson, and Robert Stead) this project seeks to re-centre the textual work of two mixed-race writers who resided in Calgary in the 1920s: Winnifred Eaton (Chinese and English) and Buffalo Child Long Lance (Lumbee and Cherokee). Remembered by subsequent critics as “racial imposters,” Eaton and Long Lance adopted alternate literary personae (as the Japanese writer Onoto Watanna and as a Kainai chief, respectively) as a way of interrogating legal and social categories of racial and Indigenous difference. This project shows how their prairie-centric writings reveal and reflect their conflicted subjectivities, thus calling into question colonial epistemologies. In addition, by examining the paratextual apparatuses surrounding Eaton and Long Lance’s textual interventions (book design, prefatory materials, critical reviews), this project amplifies this moment’s tenor of tension and dissent, when conflicted voices existed in tense relation with the colonizing aims of white settler publishers, editors, and critics. By reading Eaton and Long Lance in confluence with each other and in conjunction with two other under-examined writers of the early twentieth-century period (Anahareo, Christine van der Mark), this project raises the following questions: what literary linkages have been neglected by critics and what do these linkages reveal? How do Eaton and Long Lance’s works illuminate new ways of conceiving human movements and interactions, beyond the limiting language of nationhood?

**Keywords:** Settler Colonialism; Canada; Literary production; Early twentieth-century; Paratexts

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**CHIEF BUFFALO CHILD LONG LANCE, THE AUTHOR, IN CEREMONIAL GARB. HE WAS BORN IN A TEEPEE, BECAME AN HONOR GRADUATE OF CARLISLE INDIAN SCHOOL, WAS PROMINENT IN ATHLETICS, ENLISTED IN THE CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE AND CAME OUT A CAPTAIN. HE WAS WOUNDED TWICE AND DECORATED FOR HEROISM.**

### **Buffalo Child Long Lance**

Source: *Washington Evening Star* (6 Jan. 1924)



**Winnifred Eaton Reeve (right) and Francis Reeve**  
Source: *Maclean's* (15 Oct. 1922)



## Chapter 1. Introduction

In the first photograph (Frontispiece, Image 1), Buffalo Child Long Lance (1890-1932) poses on horseback. Long Lance self-identified as chief of the Kainai (Blood) nation, but he was, in actuality, a mixed-race man from the American South of probable Lumbee and Cherokee ancestry. A prolific journalist, Long Lance used clothing derived from various Western Canadian and American Indigenous nations—a “Blackfoot vest, [...] Blood tobacco pouch, Crow Indian pants” (D. Smith 101)—to play into a white settler imaginary. Similarly, he used his journalism and life writing in order to legitimize his identity as a self-professed “Blackfoot” chief. Like Long Lance, Winnifred Eaton (1875-1954) closely entwined her literary work with her self-crafted identity. Born to an English father and Chinese mother, Eaton assumed the persona of a mixed-race Japanese writer named Onoto Watanna. However, the second photograph (Frontispiece, Image 2) signifies a departure from Eaton’s Orientalist self-imagining. Standing alongside her second husband, rancher Francis Reeve, the image invokes visual signifiers of rural life. Taken in the year following the passage of the exclusionary *Chinese Immigration Act* (1923), this visual aligns Eaton, implicitly, with the project of white agrarian settlement.



**Figure 1.1 An early Orientalist representation of Eaton as “Onoto Watanna”**

Note Eaton’s kimono and floral adornments. Source: *Hood River Glacier* (11 Aug. 1899)

I begin with these two images because they touch upon this dissertation’s concern with settler colonialism, authorial self-representation, and literary resistance within

nationalizing sites of literary production. As two racialized writers writing in and about southern Alberta in the early 1920s, Eaton and Long Lance attracted considerable attention from white settler publishers, editors, and other cultural gatekeepers eager to project onto them fantasies of Asian Canadian assimilation or absence (in the case of Eaton) or images of Indigenous exoticism (in the case of Long Lance). Such projections are made clear in the various ways that they and their textual works are represented through newspaper reportage or in mainstream, nationally disseminated magazines. The writers who form the basis of this dissertation both exploited and pushed back against these framings. They used identity construction—as articulated through their public personae—in *confluence* with their narrative work (in fiction, journalism, and life writing) to intercept or to complicate colonial imaginaries. For instance, in spite of his apparent exploitation of Indigenous stereotyping, Long Lance’s journalism and life writing gesture towards a more nuanced conception of the Canadian West, one that weds romantic images of Indigenous heroism with more complicating histories that reveal the “processes, connections, and continuities” (Calder and Wardhaugh 15) underpinning western territorialization. Similarly, Eaton’s 1924 prairie realist novel, *Cattle*, challenges the white supremacist logics underpinning settler colonialism, by raising questions about the position of Chinese Canadians within the Western Canadian frontier.

In my dissertation I identify the tensions that lie at the heart of Canadian cultural production in the first half of the twentieth century (pre-1950), beginning with two central case studies: the first is an analysis of Eaton’s prairie realist novel *Cattle* (1924) and the second considers Long Lance’s memoir: *Long Lance: An Autobiography of a Blackfoot Indian Chief* (1928) (which I will refer to as *Autobiography* for the remainder of this dissertation). As Eaton’s second-to-last published novel, *Cattle* represents the author’s turn away from Japanese themes. While *Cattle* stands as an under-examined example of early twentieth-century settler fiction, I recognize *Autobiography*’s position as a critically neglected Indigenous memoir that includes the voice and testimony of an unnamed contributor, Mike Eagle Speaker (1903-1979). As I discuss in Chapter Two, Eagle Speaker was a member of the Kainai community and an adoptive brother to Long Lance; thus, while I identify Long Lance as an important and largely neglected

contributor to prairie writing, I also seek to both acknowledge and illuminate Eagle Speaker's vital contributions to *Autobiography*.

Although my analysis centres upon *Cattle* and *Autobiography*, I connect these texts with another pair of underexamined texts that fall within the generic binary of Indigenous memoir writing/settler fiction: the memoir of Mohawk author Anahareo (1906-1986), *My Life with Grey Owl* (1940), and its rewritten version, *Devil in Deerskins* (1973), and the prairie realist novel *In Due Season* (1947) by white settler writer Christine van der Mark (1917-1970). *My Life with Grey Owl/Devil in Deerskins* and *In Due Season* were recuperated in recent years through new editions by New Star and Wilfrid Laurier University Press (*In Due Season*) and the First Voices, First Texts series published by the University of Manitoba Press (*Devil in Deerskins*). All four texts share a similar thematic concern with self-representation and identity formation in spaces of colonial contact. Thematic similarities aside, I am interested in the questions that Anahareo's memoir and van der Mark's realist novel raise about the role that literary recovery may play in either inscribing or challenging colonial logics. In short, by tracing this textual constellation, I address the larger project of Canadian literary nationalism. As an institution, Canadian Literature has functioned as a crucial site of image construction and inscription, where early twentieth-century settler writers, critics, and other cultural agents articulated their desires and anxieties with regard to the nation's future as a settler colonial nation. These "desires and anxieties" have shaped how the literary legacies of each of the writers in question (Anahareo, Eaton, Long Lance, van der Mark) have been remembered by readers and critics.

Crucially, all four writers discussed in this dissertation engage directly with the colonial imaginary, through text *and* (to varying extents) through their play with imagery, voice, and self-fashioning. For the sake of clarity, I differentiate between the *Canadian West*, or more specifically the province of Alberta as a politically articulated regionality (to use Frank Davey's terminology), and the *Canadian prairies* as a site of literary representation. Davey conceives of regionalized geographies as *regionalities* shaped by competing and converging ideological frameworks, "both of the sectional kind that provinces and powerful cities can offer and of the transnational kind, such as gender,

race, and ethnicity” (“Towards the Ends” 18). In my case studies, I look towards Alberta (particularly Treaty Seven territory) as a *regionality* formed by settler colonial logics. By *Canadian prairies* I refer to a space that has been invented through literary texts (Grove, Ostenson, Stead) and criticism (Eggleston, McCourt, Ricou). As a recurring site of textual representation and reinvention (Cariou, “Occasions for Feathers” 30), settler writers have rendered the Canadian prairies as an agricultural site of white settler occupation and Indigenous absence (Calder 88); however, the writers that form the basis of this project complicate this reading. In other words, this dissertation historicizes the development of the Canadian prairies as a literary location, wherein writers from the early twentieth century onwards have discussed the terms of settler colonialism, albeit from varied gendered or raced positionings. Eaton, Long Lance, and van der Mark all contributed to the formation of the Canadian prairies as a locus of literary invention; as well, I include Anahareo’s writings, which span geographies of the Prairies, the East Coast, and the Canadian North or “Northland,” because, as I argue in Chapter Three, it is part of the same white settler imaginary.

As a “region of the human mind,” as it was once described by the poet and critic Eli Mandel,<sup>1</sup> the Canadian prairies (and the Canadian North, in Anahareo’s case) serve as a metonymic representation of *the larger processes* and *structures* that support settler colonialism. I define settler colonialism, not as a uniform process or “event” resulting in Indigenous evacuation and white settler occupation, but as an ideological framework based upon on what Patrick Wolfe refers to as a “logic of elimination” (“Settler Colonialism” 387). This logic is reliant on pseudo-scientific taxonomies and other forms of knowledge production that assert and reproduce uneven relationships between European settlers and Indigenous or racialized populations (Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism” 387). As an “organizing principle,” or as a structure rather than an event—to paraphrase Wolfe (“Settler Colonialism” 388)—such logics are reproduced through sites of cultural production. Thus, if the Canadian prairies is, as Métis critic Warren Cariou has argued, a site of continual and repetitive textual reinvention (“Occasions for Feathers” 30), then

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<sup>1</sup> See Mandel’s essay, “Images of the Prairie Man” (1973): “We began by suggesting that the term ‘prairies’ means a conceptual framework. We can conclude by suggesting that the prairie artist chooses images that help to fill in that conceptual framework” (208).

Anahareo, Eaton, Long Lance, and van der Mark's respective orientations in relation to the broader project of settler colonialism not only influence their reception and treatment by cultural producers, but also the particular ways in which they "reinvent" sites of colonial contact.

While their particular "reinventions" support a more nuanced understanding of colonial histories, Anahareo, Eaton, Long Lance, and van der Mark's prairie and frontier writings have been largely neglected by Canadian literary scholars until recent years. Some mid-century critics located van der Mark's novels *In Due Season* and *Honey in the Rock* (1966) within the larger framework of Canadian prairie fiction (see Ricou, McCourt); however, these same critics have tended to overlook Anahareo, Eaton, and Long Lance's contributions to the Canadian colonial imaginary. The latter three do not appear in most critical surveys of prairie or frontier literature from the mid twentieth-century onwards (see Eggleston, Calder and Wardhaugh, Harrison, Hill, Keahey, McCourt, Ricou) nor do they appear in any major Canadian Literature anthologies. The authors of the seminal critical anthology, *Literary History of Canada* (1965), provide a fleeting reference to Eaton (but not to Anahareo, Long Lance, or van der Mark); however, they do not reference her in relation to prairie writing.<sup>2</sup> *My Life with Grey Owl* and *In Due Season* were rewritten and/or republished in subsequent decades, but neither their work nor that of Eaton or Long Lance appear in McClelland & Stewart's canon-forming *New Canadian Library*.<sup>3</sup> Eaton and Long Lance were highly performative public personae whose images circulated through magazines and newspapers; and yet, they are absent from Lorraine York's research on early Canadian literary celebrity (see *Literary Celebrity in Canada*). York does cite Long Lance (via Daniel Francis) as an example of a "celebrity Indian" but she does not provide additional analysis (43). Such critical elisions may be an outcome of these writers' transnational identities (both moved

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<sup>2</sup> Two essays provide a brief reference to Eaton (see Roper; Roper et. al.). One cites *Marion*, Eaton's fictive biography of her sister, Sara Eaton Bosse, as part of a wider body of fiction concerned with expatriate artists in Europe (Roper et. al. 310). *Marion* took place not in Europe, but in the United States. Neither essay gestures towards toward "Winifred Reeve's" output as "Onoto Watanna." Desmond Pacey does not refer to Eaton or to Long Lance in his survey of Canadian fiction between 1920 and 1940 ("Fiction").

<sup>3</sup> *Autobiography* was republished in 1956; however, unlike *In Due Season* and *My Life With Grey Owl/Devil in Deerskins*, it has not been re-issued as a scholarly edition.

between Canada and the United States<sup>4</sup>) and/or their controversial relationships with racial performance. Julie Rak sees Long Lance as a “translocal” figure whose work cannot (or should not) fit into a “CanLit discourse” (“Translocal” 292), but I believe that Long Lance and Eaton’s often difficult relationships with nationalizing cultural structures are worth exploring precisely because of their transracial and transnational positionings.

Alison Calder has argued that critically consecrated texts by white settler writers like Grove, Ostenson, or Stead “tend to depict the prairie as agricultural space from which Aboriginal inhabitants have already been removed” (88). In turn, Canadian critics have been less likely to canonize writings that “engage with, and frequently re-enact the process of, that removal” (Calder 88). Calder’s summation is true in the case of the texts considered here (notably, she discusses van der Mark’s novel *In Due Season*). Both Eaton and Long Lance, for instance, use livestock (cattle in both cases) as tokens in order to debate the terms of colonial resource allocation. By reading their resistant writings against surrounding paratextual materials (photographs, interviews, reviews, prefatory materials), my argument orients their literary output in relation to the various recursive debates and conversations that have remained central to Canadian literary production *and* processes of canonical consecration from the 1920s and beyond. In considering this series of underexamined early twentieth-century texts and their accompanying paratexts, what emerges are not only recurring questions about representation and identity, but also of voice: *who speaks?* and *who speaks for whom?* In bringing together Anahareo, Eaton, Long Lance, and van der Mark, I am recognizing four early twentieth-century writers who explore or raise these questions, albeit from critically marginalized positions. As I discuss in my paratextual analyses, these writers share an especially uneasy relationship with Canadian settler sites of literary production (as represented, in the context of this dissertation, by magazine and book publishers, editors, journalists, reviewers). As I argue throughout this dissertation, the material and cultural conditions of early twentieth-century Canadian literary production produced a body of texts that not only show *colonialism-as-process*, but also illuminate Canadian Literature’s development as a both

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<sup>4</sup> York does address transnationalism and the question of Canadian citizenship in her study; hence Eaton and Long Lance’s absence is particularly unfortunate, since their respective relationships with Canadian celebrity raise significant questions about race, citizenship, and nationalized celebrity cultures.

a nationalizing institution and as a contested space that functions as a “discursive, cultural site of exchanges” (Kamboureli, “Preface” viii).

I use paratextual materials in order to show these competing discourses. Gérard Genette conceives of paratexts in spatial terms. Firstly, he identifies the *peritext* (or more specifically, the publisher’s peritext), as “the whole zone [...] that is the direct and principal (but not exclusive) responsibility of the publisher [or publishing house]” (Genette 16). Peritexts include prefatory materials, bylines, titles, title pages, and inscriptions, as well as artistic elements and decorations found on pages, covers, and dust jackets. The second function is the *epitext*, which comprises the “distanced elements [or] all those messages that, at least originally, are located outside of the book, generally with the help of the media (Genette 5). Epitexts often serve a promotional purpose and include matters found in periodicals (interviews, advertising). Throughout the course of my case studies, I read Eaton and Long Lance’s texts against the ways that they are represented by their publishers (via peritext) and by critics and other gatekeepers (via epitexts). Epitextual materials offer a broad picture of the varying pressures exerted on writers with respect to their relationship with Canadian literary nationalism. Within the context of my dissertation, epitexts do not only include authorial interviews in publications like *Maclean’s* or the *Toronto Globe*, but also academic articles or new editions produced in subsequent decades.

I extend Genette’s idea of the epitext to include textual matters that are not directly related to the literary texts in question but *are* directly related to the authors’ public identities and self-representations, as they have changed over the span of their professional lives (e.g. bylines or authorial images). In other words, while Genette describes paratexts in spatial terms, I emphasize their temporal function as sites of tension, areas of contestation, and as textual sites of repetition (the temporality of paratext becomes especially pertinent to my discussion of Anahareo and van der Mark). The textual and paratextual archive that forms the basis of this analysis is a discursive one, formulated by competing histories, debates, and representations. When using the term *archive*, here, I consider Anishinaabe critic Gerald Vizenor’s treatment of the settler imaginary as a Derridean collection of “simulations, discoveries, treaties, documents of

ancestry, traditions in translation, museum remains, and the aesthetics of victimry” (50). This particular archive contains its own repetitions, strewn throughout both text and paratext: some are images reproduced through magazines and book covers (reprinted photographs of Long Lance in a headdress or of Eaton in a kimono, or images of white settler farmers); some are instances of naming and re-naming (Eaton’s ever-changing byline); some are repetitious textual themes (representations of “stolen” cattle); or recurring descriptions (of raw prairie or northern landscapes—either inhabited or not).

The archive that occupies the centre of this analysis has been shaped by three intertwining contexts: social, material, and cultural. In the following sections, I will summarize each of these contexts. First, I will draw connections between settler colonialism as an “organizing principle” or structure (Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism” 388) and the formation of Indigenous, racialized, and white settler subjects. In the second section, I will explicate the material conditions informing Anahareo, Eaton, Long Lance, and van der Mark’s literary interventions, namely the role and function of book and periodical publishing as a site of colonial image formation and dissemination. In the final section, I will elaborate upon the connection between the Canadian prairies as a colonial construction and the formation of Canadian Literature as a cultural and academic institution.

## **Social Contexts: Articulating Subjects**

Before I consider the subject positions of the writers in question, I must articulate my own. I am a white settler scholar raised on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haundenausaune, Lenaapeewak, and Attawandaron peoples in Southwestern Ontario. I wrote this dissertation while living and studying in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, on the traditional unceded lands of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and Squamish nations. My doctoral studies coincided with a series of controversies that generated considerable discussion about the state of Canadian literary culture. In the first year of my studies, Jian Ghomeshi, CBC radio personality, literary advocate, and host of the popular Canada Reads competition, was arrested and charged with sexual assault. In November 2015, Steven Galloway, Canadian novelist and chair of



the University of British Columbia Creative Writing department, was suspended due to allegations of sexual misconduct. A group of influential Canadian authors (including Margaret Atwood, Joseph Boyden, and Michael Ondaatje) authored an open letter (entitled “UBC Accountable”) in support of Galloway. In December 2016, Jorge Barrera of APTN openly challenged Boyden’s Indigenous identity. Citing a 1956 article in *Maclean’s* magazine, Barrera identified Boyden’s Ojibway uncle Earl (or Erl) as a white man of Scottish ancestry. The Boyden controversy has resulted in rigorous discussions among Indigenous peoples about how Indigeneity is or should be defined (Akiwenzie-Damm, “What Does Being”). It has also raised questions about inclusivity and the Canadian literary establishment; namely, whose voices are deemed most “palatable” by “white, abled CanLit” (Palmer 119).

This divisive moment has directed and, at times, unsettled my research process. It is difficult for me to consider the work of Eaton and Long Lance, or Anahareo and van der Mark, as writers, journalists, activists who were (to varying extents) either voluntary or involuntary spokespeople for Chinese Canadian and Indigenous rights, without considering their relationship to Canadian Literature (or “CanLit”) as a nationalist institution. By “Canadian Literature,” I refer to both its commercial function as an industry comprised of publishers, editors, agents, and members of the media *and* as a field of study.<sup>5</sup> As a white settler scholar with a background in Canadian literary studies and print culture, I am an active participant in this culture—albeit, at times, uneasily. In spite of its alignment with nationalistic impulses, Canadian Literature is not a monolith. In the words of poet and scholar Ryan Fitzpatrick, “[w]hat gets called ‘CanLit’ is a site of struggle” (qtd. in Lorenzi 80). The literary work discussed in this dissertation emerges out of this “site of struggle.”

Long excluded from conversations about prairie writing, critics, historians, and journalists tend to orient Eaton and Long Lance within a broader narrative of racial imposture. In the case of Long Lance, settler and Indigenous critics often connect him with his controversial contemporary, Archie Belaney, or Grey Owl (1888-1938) (see:

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<sup>5</sup> I am drawing upon Hannah McGregor, Julie Rak, and Erin Wunker’s definition of “Canadian Literature” or “CanLit”: see their introduction to *Refuse: CanLit in Ruins* (2019) (McGregor et al. 17).

Francis, Vizenor, Younging). Eaton’s Japanese-themed stories have been the subject of many articles, books, and dissertations, largely from American literary scholars (see: Cole, Ferens, Ling). In comparison, her Canadian prairie novels have not received as much attention. In 2003, an article in *Maclean’s*—the same publication that published and promoted her writing in the 1910s and 1920s—recognized her contributions to prairie realism, but not without depicting her as a “flamboyant, flirtatious fraud” (Bergman 40).<sup>6</sup> Rosmarin Heidenreich’s 2018 study of literary imposture in early twentieth-century Canadian autofiction includes chapters on Eaton and (somewhat problematically<sup>7</sup>) her sister Edith (Sui Sin Far), Long Lance, Grey Owl, Grove, and Will James. In each of these case studies, Heidenreich traces the development of their fictive personae with their movement westward, “from densely populated centres to thinly settled areas” (9)—never mind that Eaton, in all likelihood, first constructed her Japanese persona while living in Chicago.

In reference to Will James and Grey Owl (white settler men who assumed Indigenous personae), Heidenreich characterizes the American West and the Canadian North as fluid sites in which they could indulge in “the apparently limitless freedom that the Wild West and the northern wilderness, respectively, seemed to offer” (267). Needless to say, for Indigenous peoples and Black or Chinese Canadian settlers, the Canadian West or North was not a place of “limitless freedom.” For Eaton and Long Lance, their orientation in relation to the broader structure of settler colonialism, and the uneven power relations that form its basis, inflected how they articulated their racial identities. In turn, their respective social placements in the colonized west impacted how they represented/engaged with the colonial imaginary in their fiction and journalism. By re-centring these writers *and* by reading them in constellation with Mohawk writer Anahareo<sup>8</sup> (instead of her more famous spouse, Grey Owl), I recognize their fraught positions as non-white or racialized writers working within a settler colonial framework.

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<sup>6</sup> I am quoting the title of Bergman’s article.

<sup>7</sup> As Heidenreich herself acknowledges, Edith Eaton is somewhat of an outlier in her study, since she did not participate in “biographical self re-invention” (235).

<sup>8</sup> I use the term “Mohawk” in reference to Anahareo because it is in keeping with her own self-description (McCall, Afterword 90). See McCall (Afterword) for more discussion of Anahareo’s ancestral history.

Furthermore, by drawing Anahareo and van der Mark into this conversation, I suggest other ways of orienting or positioning Eaton and Long Lance within the landscape of early twentieth-century literary production that go beyond the usual mappings of literary imposterism.

Throughout my research process, I was faced with constant slippages between legally and socially articulated categories of difference and publicly performed identities. Eaton and Long Lance's authorial papers, housed at the University of Calgary Special Collections (Winnifred Eaton Reeve Fonds) and Glenbow Museum and Archives (Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance fonds, Donald B. Smith fonds), further this sense of ambivalence, as do their life writings (see *Autobiography* and Eaton's 1915 memoir *Me: A Book of Remembrance*). As I discuss in Chapter Two, Long Lance's "autobiography" is not a traditional memoir; however, it does contain memories and stories voiced through multiple unidentified Indigenous contributors (especially Eagle Speaker). Published two years prior to her arrival to the Calgary region in 1917, Eaton's autobiography gestures—somewhat playfully—to her sense of otherness: "I was a little thing, and, like my mother, *foreign-looking*" (*Me* 6, emphasis added). Such vague and, I would argue, *resistant* descriptors toy with her readership's expectations and assumptions about raced difference. When I refer to *racial performance* throughout the course of this dissertation, I am gesturing towards these disruptive moments of self-articulation, as they arise either through publicity (eg. in interviews) or through textual work (journalism, life writing, fiction).

Writer and critic Wayde Compton describes Long Lance's relationship with racial performance as part of a process of interception. Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as Sylvester Long, Long Lance and his family were impacted by the one-drop rule, a Restoration-era policy intended to segregate anyone "who had any degree of known African ancestry" (Compton 20). Although the Longs had Indigenous ancestors, according to Compton, their appearance rendered them Black in the eyes of their white neighbours. Historically, the concept of racial *passing*, that is, the idea that some people might willfully sidestep such racial designations, originates from this moment. Although it may be said that Long Lance *passed* as Indigenous, Compton takes issue with this term,

since it “implies that what a viewer sees is the responsibility of the person being seen”; in other words, *passing* (and, I will add, the term *imposture*, which is commonly used in reference to Eaton and especially Long Lance) suggests a certain level of deception (Compton 21-22). Instead, Compton has formulated an alternate term, “pheneticizing,” as a way of acknowledging the subjective experience of the viewer.

In the case of Long Lance, his and his family’s social positioning within Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was determined by the pheneticizing eyes of white neighbours, who perceived them as Black. While Compton acknowledges Long Lance’s deceptions and the fact that he was not a leader of the Kainai nation, the critic views his “passing” as a strategy intended to “intercept a roaming pheneticization” (33). In other words, if “bodies are shaped by histories of colonialism” (Ahmed 153), then Long Lance’s authorial postures emerged in direct response to the varied processes—both legal and social—that shape these bodies. Along similar lines, Eaton’s resistance was, in part, rooted in her mixed-race Japanese persona, which she developed as a way of addressing/pushing against the racialization of Chinese and Japanese immigrants. She evolved this persona both through interviews with the media and through her writings. Anahareo used her autobiographical voice in order to assert a sense of agency over her public image, which had been closely entwined with Grey Owl and his legacy of imposture. As a white settler, van der Mark is a sort of outlier in this study; as I explain in Chapter Three, her textual resistance emerged, not through an embodied performance, but through her work with prairie realism. *In Due Season* is an outcome of van der Mark’s concern with social justice issues, namely Indigenous rights. Her lack of (explicit) engagement in racial performance speaks to the formation of whiteness as a normative (or “invisible”) identity. In spite of their differences, van der Mark and Anahareo shared a strained relationship with their respective settler publishers. Significantly, these tensions arose in response to larger questions about the (mis)representation of Indigenous peoples and their histories.

In order to better understand the histories that inflected Eaton and Long Lance’s particular orientation in relation to the Canadian West (or Alberta) as a politically determined territory, I draw upon archival and historical sources (municipal bylaws,

federal and provincial legislation, newspaper articles, photographs, author's papers and correspondence). Both writers lived in the Calgary region around the same time: in 1917, Eaton moved from New York City to her husband's ranch; Long Lance settled in the city limits shortly after the end of the First World War (1919). This region is Treaty Seven territory; it is home to the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney-Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee) nations (where possible, I try to identify specific nations by their traditional name: for instance, Kainai instead of Blood). By the time of their arrival on Treaty Seven territory, the process of territorialisation and settlement had been set in motion by federal laws and initiatives, namely the 1872 *Dominion Lands Act*. Instituted ten years after the passage of the United States government's *Homestead Act* (1862), both acts determined patterns of settlement in the Canadian and American West, by configuring "spatial, gender, and race relations in the West" (McManus 38). The *Dominion Lands Act* determined the terms of Western Canadian settlement, by rendering white male settlers (over the age of twenty-one) eligible to a 160-hectare plot. It also laid the foundation for a series of numbered treaties, or agreements, between the colonial government and First Nations communities. Passed into law four years after the passage of the *Dominion Lands Act*, the *Indian Act* articulates a legal definition of Indigeneity (Indian Status). Since its institution, it has had a continued impact on Indigenous people's access, or title, to land and resources. Those deemed to be non-status (Métis or mixed-blood people) were excluded from treaty-making process. Based upon logics of Indigenous elimination, the *Indian Act* was part of a broader attempt to disconnect Indigenous peoples from their ancestral land and communities.

Efforts to regulate Indigenous peoples often occurred in tandem with racializing immigration policies. After the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1885, the Canadian government and the province of British Columbia identified Chinese immigrants (many of whom worked on the CPR) as a threat to the project of western settlement. In turn, the federal government instituted a head tax law, as inscribed in the *Chinese Immigration Act* (1885). The government of British Columbia passed similar laws, as did the city of Calgary—thus creating points of exclusion both at the border and

within provincial and municipal spaces.<sup>9</sup> Around the same time, the Canadian federal government amended the *Indian Act* as a response to the North-West Resistance. Intended to deter further acts of resistance, the amendment codified harsh measures for “disloyal” bands, particularly those residing in Western Canada (Lawrence, ‘*Real Indians*’ 34). Such instances of convergence illustrate Renisa Mawani’s point that colonial articulations of racial and Indigenous difference emerge out of “overlapping temporalities that produced uneven and contradictory colonial geographies of racial power” (18). Eaton and Long Lance’s biographies illustrate the unevenness of these colonial geographies; for instance, as I describe in my case studies, their engagement with the colonial imaginary sometimes changes and alters in response to different nationalized (American vs. Canadian) contexts.

When I researched the historic laws and regulations that shaped these colonial geographies, I encountered many instances of obfuscation and erasure. As legal historian Constance Backhouse has observed, early twentieth-century legislation sometimes obscured—or failed to name—the racialized groups that were clearly the target of or subject to the laws in question (13). In looking at the history of Chinese Canadian segregation in southern Alberta, I noticed that Lethbridge’s racist Bylaw 83 targeted *laundries*. Although the law was clearly directed towards Chinese Canadian businesses, the term “Chinese”—a racially homogenizing descriptor used to indicate people of Chinese descent—does not appear in the bylaw; however, journalists reporting on it *did* employ that term (“City By-law”). Such instances of legal—or official—silence serve to perpetuate a myth of racial tolerance (Backhouse 13). Timothy Stanley locates the descriptor “Chinese Canadian” within a resistant context. Stanley traces this descriptor’s origins to early twentieth-century anti-racist activist activities in Victoria, BC. For second and third generation Chinese Canadians living in Victoria,

The term ‘Chinese Canadian’ articulated something completely new: the everyday stuff of people’s lives caught between the racist exclusions of the

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<sup>9</sup> The province of British Columbia instituted provincial head taxes in tandem with the federal one. See Ward for more discussion.

dominant society and the China-focused lives of first-generation migrants (Stanley 110).

As far as I can discern through my archival research, Eaton did not use the term “Chinese Canadian” in reference to herself (in interviews she uses “Chinese” or “Japanese”). Rather than re-entrench the homogenizing term “Chinese,” I use the descriptor “Chinese Canadian” with Roy Miki’s observation about poet Fred Wah’s play with identity in mind: “[Wah’s] situation is especially telling because his imagination is an effect of that gap between the discursive production of the Asian/Chinese body and the visual codes attached to the Asianized body” (Miki, “Can Asian” 111). Through her writings and fluctuating persona, Eaton plays with these same codes, thus revealing “the undercurrents of racialization” (Miki, “Can Asian” 111).

As Compton has argued, Long Lance’s varied postures have exposed these same racializing undercurrents. Long Lance’s biographer, Donald B. Smith, sees his shifting self-identifications—as Cherokee and, eventually, as a Kainai chief—as part of a gradual effort to distance himself from Blackness and, by extension, anti-Black racism. D. Smith emphasizes Long Lance’s discomfort with Blackness throughout his 1982 biography, *Long Lance: The True Story of an Imposter*. In one passage, the historian speculates, “Doubtless [Long Lance] squirmed in his seat when the black preacher spoke of the coloreds’ place in the world” (7). Karina Vernon draws upon D. Smith’s interpretation. Like D. Smith, Vernon acknowledges the possibility of Long Lance’s Indigenous ancestry (or ancestries), but focuses on his relationship with Blackness, namely his denial of it. In her dissertation, she locates him as a displaced subject, “raised culturally, at least, as black,” who used *Autobiography* to disavow his Blackness and to “inscribe a different, a more tolerable (to one’s self) autobiographical subject” (*The Black Prairies* 62). Noting Long Lance’s early history, as well as the fact that that white Calgarians sometimes interpreted (or *pheneticized* to use Compton’s language) him as Black (*The Black Prairies* 57), Vernon locates his textual work within the critically underexamined tradition of Black prairie writing.

I think that Vernon is right to consider Long Lance and his *Autobiography* within the context of Black prairie histories. I wish to add to her point, by emphasizing the fact

that his particular subject position is an outcome of the complex legacy of Black and Indigenous exchanges, the history of which Tiya Miles has explored in her important work, *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (2015). While Vernon's work is also important, my particular reading of *Autobiography* seeks to complicate her understanding of it as "a fiction that tells a kind of true—more metaphorical or allegorical than factual—story" (*The Black Prairies* 62). Critics (Cook, Rak, Vernon) tend to support the notion that Long Lance's rendering of the Canadian prairies is a somewhat fantastic or figurative one, largely drawn from his personal imagination. I fear that this interpretation threatens to understate the nature of Eagle Speaker's contributions, which consist of actual memories—both individual and familial. According to my analysis, Long Lance's textual depiction of the prairies is a collation, at times self-reflexive, that draws upon varied Indigenous perspectives and experiences that he encountered throughout his residency in Western Canada.

As I explain in Chapter Two, the question of Long Lance's own Indigeneity is a contested one that gestures towards the movements and interactions between white, Black, and Indigenous peoples in the American South. In terms of his specific affiliations, I refer to Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm (Anishinaabe), who describes Indigenous nationhood in the following terms:

nationhood is something that would be defined by individual nations themselves. Their own sense of governance and how they define themselves, how they consider citizenship and membership in their nations and communities ("What Does Being").

Throughout the course of this dissertation, I describe Long Lance as a mixed-race writer with white, Black, and Indigenous ancestries. While white settler publishers and editors pheneticized him as Kainai or Cherokee—a perception that impacted their framing of his work—I do not describe him as a Lumbee, Cherokee, or Kainai writer, specifically. In doing so, I do not intend to dismiss the Long family's Indigenous histories; rather, I wish to express my respect for the particular protocols employed by the various nations and communities with which Long Lance aligned himself.<sup>10</sup> Due to Eagle Speaker's

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<sup>10</sup> Thank you to Sophie McCall for her valuable insights into this aspect of my argument.



contributions as well as the possible textual presence of other unnamed Indigenous subjects, I describe *Autobiography* as an Indigenous memoir that weds various perspectives and experiences. In this dissertation, I seek to amplify those voices.

In my chapters, I more fully describe and discuss Chinese Canadian, Black, and Indigenous histories in Western Canada and (in Long Lance's case) the American South, but I do not explore patterns of white settlement in the Canadian West. For instance, I do not describe the histories and movements of Ukrainian, Hungarian, or Mennonite settlers in the 1890s and early twentieth century, nor do I give much space to taxonomies of whiteness, such as those described in J.S. Woodsworth's *Strangers Within Our Gates* (1909) or Edward Gibbon's *Canadian Mosaic* (1938).<sup>11</sup> My work acknowledges the fluid nature of racialization. For instance, some European immigrant groups, such as Ukrainian Canadians, were not always regarded as white.<sup>12</sup> However, many of these populations (including Ukrainian Canadians) gradually *became white*. Writing in response to Charles Taylor's thoughts on multiculturalism and nationhood, Himani Bannerji notes that Taylor's analysis (like Gibbon's "mosaic") is centred upon a utopian vision of European plurality, to the exclusion of Black, South Asian or Chinese Canadian presences (102). Since whiteness is a changing "ideological-political category," if Canadians of Ukrainian descent now wish to be identified in terms of their sense of cultural difference "it is because the price to be paid is no longer there" (Bannerji 113).

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<sup>11</sup> Also see Coleman, *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* (2006) or Kamboureli's work with European immigrant literatures for more critical discussion about white settlement.

<sup>12</sup> See Fee et al., "Myrna Kotash: Ukrainian Canadian Non-Fiction Prairie New Leftist Feminist Canadian Nationalist." Kotash comments on the shifting bounds of whiteness:

I re-read the incident that occurred in my great-uncle's life when he, as a new immigrant, a new Canadian, had decided that he wanted to run for some kind of office and become part of Canadian institutional life and put his name forward as an official weed inspector for the district of Vegreville which is in the block settlement area of Ukrainians, and the editorialist of the Vegreville Observer wrote that this was a scandalous event that-to think that some "Russian yokel" would have authority over Englishmen, and then finished by saying, "No white man will stand for this." I realized that Ukrainians were not white-but I am, right? (Fee et al.)

In exploring the politics of early twentieth-century racialization, I must note that certain legislative measures intended to open the western provinces to white settlement often coincided with the passage of exclusionary policies. For instance, in 1922, the British government passed the *Empire Settlement Act* to facilitate British settlement in the Canadian West. The next year, the Canadian government instituted a ban on Chinese immigration (see the *Chinese Immigration Act* of 1923). In 1928, the province of Alberta instituted the *Sexual Sterilization Act*. Even though the *Act* targeted the mentally disabled, the province's eugenics movement had initially emerged in response to white middle-class concerns about immigration, particularly from Eastern Europe (Dyck 9). Clearly, the 1920s was a decade fraught with broader anxieties about national belonging and exclusion. As a category of belonging, whiteness is, at times, relational and unstable; it emerges throughout this dissertation not as an account of European pluralism or of how Gibbon's Euro-centric mosaic *came to be*, but as an "an ongoing and unfinished history, which orientates bodies, and affects how they 'take up' space (Ahmed 150). While Anahareo, Eaton, and Long Lance used visual signifiers, such as clothing, in order to play into (or to resist) the desires and expectations of their readers, whiteness is performed *as an orientation* with a white settler agricultural space (as with Eaton's photograph in Frontispiece Image 2). In other prairie texts, specifically those authored by settler writers like van der Mark, whiteness is suggested through book covers (peritexts) and other paratextual apparatuses that image a settler body in/or in close proximity to a seemingly barren field. The next section explains how mainstream, white settler-driven publishing structures (magazines, books) served as a site of colonial image-making.

## **Material contexts: Print Culture Interrogations**

This dissertation locates early twentieth-century Canadian print culture as a crucial site of colonial inscription. In the interwar period, especially, periodicals served as a particularly effective vehicle for nationalist/capitalist propaganda and storytelling. As Faye Hammill and Michelle Smith explain in *Magazines, Travel, and Middlebrow Culture: Canadian Periodicals in English and French, 1925-1960* (2015), magazines such as *Canadian Home Journal*, *Chatelaine*, *La Revue Moderne*, *La Revue Populaire*, *Maclean's*, and *Mayfair* spoke to the underlying nationalist impulses of affluent,

upwardly mobile middle class Canadians. These wide-reaching publications helped many aspiring novelists and non-fiction writers connect to a broad readership. Using the professional life and work of the Norwegian-born prairie writer Martha Ostenso (1900-1963) as an example, Hannah McGregor explicates the porous relationship between periodical and book publishing in this period. Like many other Canadian writers from the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century periods (Morley Callaghan, Sara Jeannette Duncan, Lucy Maud Montgomery, Arthur Stringer) Ostenso started out as a journalist, in her case reporting for the *Manitoba Free Press*. Working in probable collaboration with her husband, Douglas Durkin (1884-1967), Ostenso moved between critically consecrated forms (see *Wild Geese*) and popular fiction. Her most well-known and critically lauded work, the prairie realist novel *Wild Geese* (1925), first appeared as a serial in the Winnipeg-based periodical *Western Home Monthly* and was later published in New York by Dodd, Mead. *Wild Geese* has achieved considerable critical attention, both at the time of its publication and in subsequent decades; and yet, McGregor's research proposes a much broader examination of Ostenso's short fiction:

Even a sample survey of these stories immediately suggests the enormous range of Ostenso's writing style, and the flexibility with which these stories were adapted to their publication venues. The stories published in *Country Gentleman*, for example, tend to focus on rural settings and the social values of prairie farmers, particularly those of Scandinavian extraction. Stories in Canadian periodicals such as *Chatelaine* and *Canadian Home Journal* often include explicitly Canadian content, with references to the fur trade and locations like Winnipeg. (107).

While Ostenso's wider body of work certainly nuances literary histories, particularly those that privilege the myth of single authorship, McGregor believes that Ostenso's versatility, the very quality that helped to ensure her commercial success, resulted in her critical neglect. As a woman writer and as a Scandinavian immigrant, Ostenso capitalized upon editorial expectations, which, in turn, shaped her generic and stylistic choices. At the same time, she discovered, or perhaps created, space within these same structures in order to explore uncomfortable truths. *Wild Geese* serves as a particularly vivid rendering of domestic violence in a frontier community.

At first glance, the mainstream publishing structures that anchor this dissertation served as an obvious vehicle for what Pauline Butling refer to as “the homogenizing controlling power of the dominant” (“One Potato” 31). Butling’s survey of late twentieth-century small press cultures (written in collaboration with Susan Rudy) orients regional grassroots movements against “the former, centralized publishing system that revolved around nationalist agendas and was concentrated in central Canada” (“One Potato” 31); however, it is through this nationalizing system that writers such as Eaton and Long Lance, and Anahareo and van der Mark reinvented imagined sites of colonial contact. Given their shared location within a specific geographic space (southern Alberta) and decade (1920s), I have tried to pinpoint any shared social or professional connections between Eaton and Long Lance. While Eaton was an active member of various regional literary communities—she was president of the Calgary Branch of the Canadian Authors Association (CAA) in 1923—I could not find any archival evidence to suggest that Long Lance participated in the same circles. They did, however, publish in many of the same textual spaces. *Maclean’s*<sup>13</sup> magazine emerges as a key site in this study. Both writers published there *and* were profiled in feature articles, interviews, or editorial spaces (see “In the Editor’s Confidence”). In 1919, the magazine published one of Eaton’s final Japanese-themed stories (“Lend Me Your Title”). She appeared in its pages again in 1924, when her first prairie novel, *Cattle*, garnered interest from Canadian critics. Long Lance contributed several articles from 1923 until 1928. Many of his contributions focused on Indigenous issues or histories, including two articles that described the stand-off of Cree resistance fighter Almighty Voice (Kitchimanitowaya<sup>14</sup>) (c1875-1897) against the North West Mounted Police (NWMP). A recurring figure in my case studies, J. Vernon Mackenzie served as *Maclean’s* senior editor from 1923 until 1926, a period that coincided with the passage of exclusionary immigration legislation. A number of articles published in this time, including a series entitled “How I Found in Canada a Land of Opportunity,” discussed Canada’s immigration policies in light of the ongoing project of western settlement. Under Mackenzie’s editorship, *Maclean’s*

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<sup>13</sup> I use the current typography. In the 1920s, *Maclean’s* was represented as “*MacLean’s*.”

<sup>14</sup>Kitchimanitowaya is Almighty Voice’s Cree name. For the duration of this dissertation, I will refer to Almighty Voice using his colonial name, since this is how Long Lance identifies him in his writings.

functioned as a discursive space, in which the bounds of national belonging—and exclusion—were subject to debate.

Further complicating this site of social and cultural contestation are the transnational movement and circulation of Canadian writers and their texts. Starting in the late nineteenth century, a substantial cohort of Canadian writers moved to the United States, including Eaton and her sister Edith Eaton (1865-1914), who authored articles and short stories under the pen name Sui Sin Far (other transnational figures from this period include Bliss Carman and Ernest Thompson Seton).<sup>15</sup> At this time, Canadian print culture thrived through urban and regional newspaper publications;<sup>16</sup> however, ambitious fiction writers (like the Eaton sisters) were pulled towards American centres, where they could access major publishers like Harper or Doubleday. Lowered tariffs meant that Canadian readers relied heavily on imported books and periodicals from the United States or Britain, which impeded the growth of a domestic publishing culture. Even those who remained in Canada relied upon transnational circuits of dissemination, submitting their work to American and Canadian periodicals (Montgomery, for example, published in *Good Housekeeping* and *Munsey's* in addition to Canadian journals like *Everywoman's World* and *Toronto Ladies' Journal*). At the time of Eaton and Long Lance's residency in southern Alberta, the Canadian magazine industry struggled to compete with American publications (*McClure's*, *Saturday Evening Post*). Mobilized by professional collectives like the CAA, writers and publishers advocated in favour of state interventions, including higher tariffs on American periodicals (Vipond 35). Many fiction writers still accessed a broad readership through magazines; however, critics and publishers regarded the *book* as a vehicle for the “transmission and promotion of a national culture that was seen as both a heritage and a projection into the future” (Gerson and Michon 3).

In this post-war moment, commercial interests coalesced with broader cultural concerns over about the state of Canadian nationalism. A product of John Bayne

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<sup>15</sup> See Mount's work with late nineteenth/early twentieth-century transnationalism, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York* (2005).

<sup>16</sup> See Vipond for more discussion. Vipond attributes the growth of the Canadian newspaper industry to increased literacy, cheaper postage rates, and the growth of railway transit (24-25).

Maclean's media empire (which also included the *Financial Post*, *Mayfair*, and *Chatelaine*), in March 1923, *Maclean's* responded to prevailing nationalist anxieties by Mackenzie touting the magazine as "Canada's National Periodical" ("In the Editor's Confidence," 2). Even though this project focuses on sites of nation-building in mainstream, white-settler based publishing structures, I must acknowledge the early century's robust counter-publics. Regionalized newspapers and magazines functioned as expressive vehicles for dissenting, non-white, or non-English speaking settler populations. Note, for instance, the publication of allophone newspapers by various European immigrant populations (Icelandic, Swedish, Ukrainian). Some early Indigenous publications, such as the Métis newspaper *Le Métis* (1871-1881), disseminated messages of resistance. The newspaper served as an integral site of community formation for early twentieth-century diasporic Black communities. Based out of southern Ontario, the long-running *Dawn of Tomorrow* (1923-c1975) circulated into parts of the northern United States. Its coverage ranged from international news items to happenings in Ontario's Black communities of Dresden, Chatham, London, and Windsor. During the First World War, publications from China circulated to readers in Victoria and Vancouver as part of transpacific routes of transmission (Black 205). At the same time, Chinese immigrants and their descendants cultivated a strong culture of domestic Chinese language newspapers, which served as a counterpoint to prevailing white settler discourses. Although Eaton and Long Lance did not participate directly in these counter-publics<sup>17</sup> (to my knowledge), their self-positioning reflects their complicated orientation to Chinese Canadian, Black, and Indigenous community formations.

As far as their professional lives are concerned, Eaton and Long Lance followed a trajectory similar to that of many of their contemporaries: both supplemented their income as journalists writing for city newspapers. Eaton left Montreal in 1896 to take up a position at *Gall's News Letter* (Kingston, Jamaica). In Chicago and New York City, she worked for daily publications like the *Brooklyn Eagle* (Birchall 68). Her fiction

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<sup>17</sup> Except for Long Lance's contributions to the Carlisle Indian Residential School newspaper (see Chapter Two for more discussion).

appeared in a number of major American and Canadian magazines: *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Maclean's*. Compared to Eaton, Long Lance was more deeply embedded in journalism. Initially he worked for the *Calgary Herald*, the *Regina Leader*, and the *Vancouver Sun*. As his readership increased, his journalism started to appear in widely circulating publications like *Maclean's* and *Cosmopolitan*. Both eventually gravitated towards major publishing houses. Eaton published her Japanese-themed fiction with Harper and Brothers. *Cosmopolitan* (the magazine publisher) published Long Lance's memoir as a book (once again demonstrating the intersections between periodical and book production). Eaton's *Cattle* was published concurrently by Toronto publisher Musson and New York-based publisher Watt.

As decolonizing critics such as Sara Humphreys and Gregory Younging have noted, Indigenous and settler writers alike wrote both within *and* against hierarchical editorial structures that were (and continue to be) deeply intertwined with literary colonialism.<sup>18</sup> Michael Lane aligns editorial structures with the corporatization of publishing houses. The compartmentalization and hierarchization of editorial roles have helped to bolster the authority of a senior editor whose primary function is that of cultural gatekeeper, “discovering, judging, and coordinating the production of a work” (Lane 35). Some twentieth-century editors achieved a certain degree of celebrity and renown; however, most often newspapers, magazines, and publishing companies tended to obscure the work of their editorial staff in order to preserve the mystique of authorial authority (Irvine and Kamboureli 5). Historically, the mythos of the authorial genius is usually aligned with white male subjects. In the case of texts authored by women, Indigenous peoples, and Black writers, paratextual framings—particularly book prefaces—are conspicuous indicators of editorial authority and intervention. Rather than amplify the writer's genius, prefatory materials may work to diminish their authority and/or to recentre a white settler perspective. Humphreys' work with the early twentieth-century novel *Cogewea* (1927), by the Sylix/Okanagon writer, Mourning Dove, provides

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<sup>18</sup> Also see Akiwenzie-Damm's essay, “‘We Think Differently. We Have a Different Understanding’: Editing Indigenous Texts as an Indigenous Editor” in *Editing as Cultural Practice in Canada* (2016).

a strong example of the colonist and misogynist impulses underlying paratextual practices. These impulses are evident in Lucullus McWhorter's original introduction and in prefaces to subsequent academic editions (Humphreys, "Creating"). Long Lance and Anahareo received a similar editorial treatment; subsequent editions of their work were prefaced by an intervening white settler voice. Observing journalist, humourist, and Indigenous art collector Irwin S. Cobb's (1876-1944) preface to Long Lance's *Autobiography*, Vernon suggests that it "shares with slave narratives similar anxieties about authentication" ("First Black Prairie Novel" 41-42) (Cobb was quick to reject Long Lance's friendship when he heard rumours about his true origins [D. Smith 196]). McWhorter's introduction to Mourning Dove's "Indian" novel suggest a similar preoccupation with authenticity. "Despite her tinge of Caucasian blood," McWhorter writes, Mourning Dove is closely allied with her Indigenous community: "Her characters are all from actual life, and throughout the narrative, she has endeavored to picture the period as she actually saw it—*an Indian*" (12, emphasis added). Early in her career, Eaton's publishers demonstrated this concern through design elements such as book covers and photographs of the author.

Dean Irvine suggests that "if an author's identity is plural, as [Jerome] McGann claims, it is so because [their] identity is socially—and multiply—constituted" (66). As I demonstrate throughout this dissertation, early twentieth-century periodical and book publishing amplified this sense of plurality and refraction. Since Eaton and Long Lance published or promoted their work within nationalized periodicals (such as *Maclean's*), their authorial identities were continually constituted (and reconstituted) through a colonizing framework. York notes that mass produced texts comprise part of broader circuitry intended to generate interest, not only in writer's works but in their lives: "advertising, television and radio interviews, magazine profiles, book launches, the hiring of agents, prize competitions, and other commercial activities" (12). As my paratextual reading of Eaton and Long Lance's engagement with Canadian media (especially *Maclean's*) emphasizes, the logic of white or colonial ethnocentrism plays out in this circuitry and becomes apparent through the various ways in which racialized and Indigenous bodies are framed. In the case of the writers in question, the distinction between authorial intention and the intentions of editors and publishers become murky.



In many instances, I have found it difficult to differentiate Eaton and Long Lance's expressive or performative gestures from the aims of editors, publishers, and journalists: did Eaton wish to pose in that farm setting (see Frontispiece Image 2)? Did Long Lance choose that particular headdress (see Frontispiece Image 1)? When it comes to racial performance, white ethnocentrism, and identity formation, early twentieth-century Canadian publishing is yet another site of slippage; it is through this structure that two transnational mixed-race writers confronted homogenizing narratives about Canada's settler colonial foundations.

## **Cultural Conditions: The Canadian Prairies and Literary Nationalism**

Dennis Cooley identifies 1925, the year that Grove's *Settlers of the Marsh* and Ostenson's *Wild Geese* were published, as the moment when "prairie literature begins" (34). This facetious statement is not intended to erase the efforts of writers (such as Ralph Connor, Eaton, or Laura Salverson) who published before this time. As Cooley acknowledges, "[p]eople have been writing [prairie fiction] for quite awhile actually, but nobody takes their stuff seriously" (34). Instead, the critic's argument foregrounds the close relationship between prairie writing—or what we may think of when we think of prairie writing (i.e. realist fiction)—and processes of critical consecration. Colin Hill cites two early twentieth-century journals (*Canadian Bookman* and *Canadian Forum*) as places in which the merits of prairie writing—specifically prairie realist fiction—were under constant discussion (24). As a literary construct, the Canadian prairies attracted critical attention again in the 1960s and 1970s (Harrison, Pacey, Mandel, Ricou); however, it was in the 1920s when Canadian Literature's "uneven and sometimes unpredictable" composition as both a commercial industry and as a field of critical study (McGregor et al. 17), became apparent.

Prior to the critical consecration of prairie realism, explorers, surveyors, and agents of the state invented the prairies through print: first through literature produced by explorers and surveyors, and then through brochures advertising empty tracts of "paradise farmland" to prospective immigrants (Calder and Wardhaugh 4). In the 1920s,

mass print production and book publishing served as another site of replication. The imagery that accompanies the concluding chapters of Robert Stead's canonical novel *Grain* (1926) (see Figure 1.2) shows a fertile agriculture space (as implied by the ubiquitous bundle of wheat and grain elevator). Again, whiteness is produced through implied proximities: the (white) settler is foregrounded against a field and an enveloping horizon. Such images typify book production in this era: McClelland & Stewart's dust jacket for Salverson's *The Viking Heart* (1923) shows a sole settler looking onward towards a passing horse-drawn cart and a far more distant horizon. As Osteno demonstrates through her polyvalent, cross-genre writings, prairie fiction is not "homogenous, anomalous, predictable, and limited in subject matter and technique" (Hill 78); however, its paratextual alignment with homogenizing images of white settlement suggests a conflict between a broader settler imagining and more resistant representations.



Figure 1.2 Whiteness emerges in proximity to agricultural landscapes  
Source: Maclean's (15 Oct. 1926)

In “Occasions for Feathers, Or, The Invention of Prairie Literature,” Métis critic Warren Cariou describes the prairie setting as “a European concept, not an indigenous one”:

If we agree with Robert Kroestch’s essays and poems, we will also have a strong suspicion that Prairie Literature in a certain sense invented the prairie. “The fiction makes us real,” as he said. Prairie Literature was begun largely by writers working in the English language and a few in French: writers educated in basically European traditions (29)

When considering Indigenous and diasporic writers such as Hiromi Goto, Suzette Mayr, and Sally Ito, (who, as Cariou acknowledges, may not necessarily identify themselves as prairie writers) the critic questions the relevance of the prairies, both as a term and as a concept, given the push towards decolonization: “Are we living now in a world that is “post-prairie,” to quote the title of a poetry anthology recently co-edited by none other than Robert Kroetsch? (“Occasions for Feathers” 29-30). Cariou concludes his essay by orienting the Canadian prairies as a site of re-invention. This conceptualization of a regionalized space and its literary associations creates rooms for changing social and political contexts. It invites “the kind of re-invention that is necessary to a vibrant, living and changing reality” (Cariou, “Occasions for Feathers” 30) by taking into consideration the different forces and power structures at play in the construction of Western Canada as a politically articulated space consisting of intersecting regionalities. Such forces impact how one orients oneself in relation to the Canadian prairies as a literary space, and how one perceives and constructs it.

In the first chapter, I connect Eaton’s Orientalist persona with her “reinvention” of the Canadian prairies by detailing the varied political, social, and legal contexts that informed her self-construction as Onoto Watanna. Eaton produced nine of her ten Japanese themed novels in the first decade of the twentieth century (1899-1912).<sup>19</sup> At this point in time, the Canadian and American settler states had instituted head tax laws and other restrictive and exclusionary immigration policies. These policies were largely directed towards Chinese newcomers. Faced with incoming immigrants from Japan and

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<sup>19</sup> See the Works Cited for a full list.

India, politicians and government officials used official reports and other forms of knowledge production in order to solidify the bounds of racial difference and white belonging. In response, Eaton employed a mixed-race Japanese persona in order to both capitalize upon and intercept racializing ideas about Chinese and Japanese identities in North America. In this chapter, I draw upon peritexts (book covers and other design elements) in order to identify the book as a site of colonial image-formation and inscription. Since Eaton's novels were produced by major publishing houses (including Harper and Brothers), I use book design to demonstrate the book's function as a contested site, wherein white settler fantasies (as demonstrated by Orientalist artwork) coincide with—and compete with—Eaton's textual interventions.

In the 1920s, Eaton reinvented herself as a Canadian prairie writer; however, the memory of Onoto Watanna still lingered in the public imaginary in spite of (or perhaps because of) the exclusion era's fervently anti-Asiatic climate. Although Eaton's rebranding as Winnifred Reeve seemed to erase or negate her Orientalist posture, the Canadian press and Toronto-based publisher (Musson) reanimated the memory of Onoto Watanna through bylines, feature articles, reviews, and promotional materials. The final section of the chapter reads Eaton's prairie fiction against Onoto Watanna's paratextual presences. In her prairie realist novel, *Cattle* (1924), Eaton depicts Alberta's ranching territory as a fraught terrain, divided by conflicted relations between various competing subjects (American, British Canadian, Chinese Canadian and Indigenous). Through these divisive relationships, Eaton engages in a broader criticism of settler colonialism's violent foundations. At first glance, *Cattle*'s sole Chinese Canadian character seems to reinvigorate anti-Asian stereotypes; however, I argue that Eaton uses this character in order to destabilize these same constructions. By reading Chum Lee against *Cattle*'s paratexts, different ideas about Asian-ness emerge. These representations gesture towards the various racializing processes underlying Asian identity-construction in white settler Canada. Ultimately, my paratextual analysis treats *Cattle*'s design elements, as rendered by Eaton's Canadian publisher (Musson), in convergence with the novel's critical reception (epitexts), as evidence of the Canadian literary establishment's uneasy relationship with Eaton's Chinese Canadian presence. Since Eaton produced *Cattle* in the mid-1920s—a crucial moment in Canadian immigration history *and* in the

development of Canadian literary nationalism—its subsequent erasure from critical discourses about prairie realism is, in part, an outcome of this anxious response.

In Chapter Two, I foreground *Autobiography's* (1928) resistant qualities. Critical examinations of Long Lance's life and writing tend to focus on his racial postures; however, while I do take Long Lance's complicated subjectivity into consideration, my analysis works towards a critical foregrounding of *Autobiography's* collaborative elements, with a particular emphasis on Eagle Speaker's contributions. In the first section, I situate Long Lance's life and writing within a particular historic and social context by tracing his varied self-constructions as they correspond with—or respond to—different regionalities, namely the American South and the Canadian West. As was the case with Eaton, Long Lance's relationship with identity-construction draws attention to processes of racialization. Long Lance's treatment by white settler members of the literary establishment (for instance, *Maclean's* editor J. Vernon Mackenzie) is inextricable from his engagement with the colonial imaginary; however, his particular rendering of the Canadian prairies-- as a space comprised of multiple, intersecting histories-- also contests it.

In subsequent sections, I identify continuities between Long Lance's work in journalism and in life writing. More specifically, I read *Autobiography* against the writer's early work with major urban dailies and mainstream magazines. As with Eaton, my paratextual analysis reveals Long Lance's difficult relationship with nationalizing cultural formations. By drawing attention to these paratextual framings (and reframings), I demonstrate the Canadian literary establishment's broader investment in the story of white colonial settlement. Using his recounting of Almighty Voice's resistance against the NWMP as a focal point, I show how *Maclean's* magazine's editorial staff used paratextual framings in an attempt to undermine Long Lance's criticism of the Canadian government and its genocidal policies. Long Lance's resistant account appears, again, in *Autobiography*.

Due to its textual genealogy, *Autobiography* is a disjointed, partly (but not wholly) fictive memoir that vacillates between different voices, temporalities, and

geographies. In order to contextualize these polyvocal cadences, this chapter relies upon epitextual readings that foreground *Autobiography*'s rootedness in mainstream sites of textual production. In this chapter, I bring to light an unpublished epitext. In the Spring of 2016, Long Lance's biographer, historian Donald B. Smith, brought an important document to my attention: a copy of *Autobiography* that contains textual annotations, dictated by Eagle Speaker to D. Smith, indicating Eagle Speaker's precise contributions to Long Lance's "auto" biography. Since *Autobiography* is a living text containing Indigenous histories and epistemologies, D. Smith's act of scholarly generosity has compelled me to consider my responsibilities as a white settler scholar working within a nationalizing institution (Canadian Literature). Ultimately, I call for a rereading of *Autobiography* that re-orientes Long Lance and Eagle Speaker's narrative within the context of Kainai (and potentially Cree, Apsáalooke, and Siksika) ways of thinking about the land and its histories.

In Chapter Three, I consider *My Life with Grey Owl* by Anahareo (1940), and its rewritten version *Devil in Deerskins: My Life with Grey Owl* (1972), in relation to *In Due Season* by Christine van der Mark (1947). Broadly, my analysis is concerned with matters pertaining to the politics of literary recovery (and erasure). Like Eaton and Long Lance, van der Mark and Anahareo wrote in response to colonial power structures, albeit from different subject positions (white settler/Indigenous). As such, Anahareo and van der Mark serve as examples of challenging voices working within/against mainstream settler publishing structures. In this respect, this section of my dissertation coincides with my readings of *Cattle* and *Autobiography*, since I use paratextual analyses to make visible their tense relations with white settler sites of cultural production. For instance, this chapter brings to light Oxford University Press (Canada)'s conflicts with van der Mark over matters pertaining to the representation of Indigenous peoples in realist fiction. As an Indigenous woman, Anahareo was directly impacted by these discourses. Her publisher (Peter Davies) used peritextual imagery in his selection of internal photographs in order to invite (and encourage) a fetishizing focus on the writer's body.

Again, as I demonstrate in my case studies, paratextual materials help to illuminate the conflicted relations between writer and publisher; however, unlike *Cattle*

and *Autobiography*, *In Due Season* and *Devil in Deerskins* were republished in the 1970s and, again in the 2010s in scholarly editions (Gerson, McCall). Hence I turn my attention towards *In Due Season* and *My Life with Grey Owl/Devil in Deerskins*' prefatory framings (the publisher's peritexts, in other words) as they have evolved through various editions: starting with their initial publication in the 1940s and ending with Gerson and McCall's scholarly editions. Colonial sites of contact have been subject to continued and persistent processes of invention amongst writers, publishers, and critics. As such, Canadian literary production is both a site of reinvention and a site of potential re-entrenchment, wherein damaging editorial practices threaten to replicate and legitimize the logics of elimination (Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism" 387).

Much of my research is centred on the early twentieth century, and yet the fiction, journalism, and life writing that I explore in these chapters are not cultural artifacts or literary curiosities fixed in an antiquated past. The histories, memories, and contesting narratives contained within these texts counter homogenizing stories of white settler dominance. They do so by reminding readers that settler colonialism is both an entrenched structure and an *ongoing process*. Accompanying paratexts show how Canadian Literature has contributed to this process, through the silencing, countering, or reframing of dissenting voices. The repercussions are real and serious: writer and critic M. NourbeSe Philip comments on the colonial imaginary and its lasting impact on how Black and Asian Canadian subjects move within the nation-space; white settlers have used language in order to construct "psychic borders" that, in Philip's words, "we cannot penetrate, unless we enter the world of whiteness" ("Black w/Holes" 125). Underlying this study, then, is the question of its futurity. If reproduced through literary recovery efforts (eg. new editions) how might Eaton and Long Lance's dissenting perspectives change the way that Indigenous/racialized/white settler subjects think about—and move through—colonized spaces?

## Chapter 2. Troubling Realism: Onoto Watanna's *Cattle*

Winnifred Eaton (1875-1955) was born in Montreal to a Chinese mother (Grace Trefusis) and an English father (Edward Eaton). Following in the footsteps of her older sister, the noted journalist and short story writer Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far) (1865-1914), Eaton joined a generation of ex-patriate Canadian writers who sought a wider readership in major American urban centres.<sup>20</sup> In New York City, Eaton found fame as the half-Japanese romance writer, "Onoto Watanna." Commencing with *Miss Numè of Japan* (1899), her early novels featured intercultural interactions between Japanese (often mixed-race) characters and white Americans (also see: *A Japanese Nightingale* [1901], *The Wooing of Wistaria* [1902], *The Heart of Hyacinth* [1903], *The Love of Azalea* [1904], *A Japanese Blossom* [1906], *Tama* [1910], *The Honorable Miss Moonlight* [1912]). As a flamboyant public figure Eaton generated enough interest to warrant the publication of her 1915 memoir, *Me: A Book of Remembrance*, but her career seemed to be winding down. She relocated to southern Alberta in 1917, where she lived with her second husband, a rancher named Francis Reeve. Here she continued to publish novels, this time under the name Winnifred Eaton Reeve (or Winnifred Reeve). This critical stage in Eaton's personal and professional life was short-lived: in 1925, she moved to Hollywood where she was employed as a screenwriter before her retirement in the 1930s.

This brief biography does little to convey the full scope of Eaton's versatility as a writer. She worked in a number of genres (romance, western, historical, life writing) and media (journalism, fiction, film) using various bylines (Onoto Watanna, Winnifred Mooney, Winnifred Eaton Reeve, Winnifred Reeve), each of which corresponded with her changing authorial persona, ranging from her Orientalist guise as Onoto Watanna to her later self-representation as the prairie realist author "Winnifred Eaton Reeve" or "Winnifred Reeve." Eaton's willingness to exploit racial stereotypes is evident in these

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<sup>20</sup> Mount describes this history of transnational movement in his detailed study, *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York* (2005); however, he makes only cursory references to the Eaton sisters (147, 159). This oversight is unfortunate, given that Edith and Winnifred's engagement with American and Canadian readers is not only informed by the history of Canadian literary production, but by the broader history of race-making in North America.



fluctuating bylines; in addition to Onoto Watanna, Eaton adopted the Irish surname “Mooney” upon the publication of *The Diary of Delia* (1907), an account of an Irish-American domestic worker. In a 1934 letter to producer William Selig, Eaton went so far as to cite herself as the first North American writer to draw upon a Japanese setting (Letter). This statement is quite contentious: Eaton produced her first novel in 1898, the same year that John Luther Long’s short story “Madame Butterfly” was published. The premise of “Madame Butterfly” is similar to that of a French novel, *Madame Chrysanthème*,<sup>21</sup> published in 1887. Certainly, Eaton did capitalize on late nineteenth-century Orientalism; however, her feelings towards her alternate persona (Onoto Watanna) and her precise reasons for adopting this guise have been subject to considerable speculation.

Critical perspectives regarding Eaton’s racial performance are entangled with the larger history of Asian racialization in North America. Many Eaton scholars have noted the obvious linkage between her authorial persona and nineteenth-century Japonisme (Cole 11; Honey and Cole 2). Diana Birchall believes that Eaton may have felt the need to distinguish herself from her older sister Edith, who had already claimed a Chinese literary identity under the name of Sui Sin Far (xvii). Critics have suggested that it was only through the playful, impish character of Onoto Watanna that the writer could address her sense of racial otherness while also avoiding the strictures of anti-Chinese sentiments (Honey and Cole 2; Ferens 118; Ling 5). All these rationales are plausible. What I want to emphasize is this: Eaton’s various literary personæ—that is, the way that

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<sup>21</sup> A large portion of the archive contains correspondence pertaining to Eaton’s work on a number of screenplays, some of which involved Asian subject matter. Eaton also worked hard (and rather unsuccessfully) to adapt many of her Japanese novels, as well as *Cattle*, into film. Her persistence is made clear in her letter to Selig:

You own “Tama,” “Heart of Hyacinth,” “Wooing of Wistaria” and the [“]Honorable Miss Moonlight,[”] besides others I think of as Japanese novels. I feel certain that a Japanese story, especially where the heroine is a white girl, as in Hyacinth and even Tama, would make a success at this time, when there is a dearth of good original material, and they are using re-hashes of old pictures. [...] You know what a success *Madame Butterfly* made in its day, and after all, Belasco was heavily influenced when he wrote that by the Japanese stories I was then writing. In fact I was the very first to write stories of that sort. (Letter)

she performed race to her various readerships—are not separable from her actual literary output.

My analysis draws connections between the questions raised by Eaton early in her career, when she published Orientalist novels under the pseudo-Japanese name Onoto Watanna, and her eventual interventions in the field of prairie writing. Unlike previous studies, this chapter does not treat the earlier stage of her career as wholly separate from the prairie-themed novels that she authored under her married name, Winnifred Eaton Reeve. Instead, I address Onoto Watanna's spectral influence on her prairie novels, especially *Cattle* (1924). As I will discuss in the first part of this chapter, Eaton's Orientalist self-representation emerged in the final years of the nineteenth century, a time when the Canadian and American settler states struggled to articulate and consecrate the bounds of white belonging and racialized difference through head taxes and restrictive immigration policies. Eaton used her alternate personæ to both capitalize upon and intercept popular ideas about Asian racialization. The memory of Onoto Watanna still lingered in the public imaginary when Eaton revitalized her literary career in the early 1920s; however, her conflicted self-representation was further complicated by the exclusion era's fervently hostile climate.

This chapter reads Eaton's textual representation of a Chinese Canadian character (Chum Lee) against her public self-representations and the framing, management, and articulation of these representations via paratextual materials. By *text*, I refer to *Cattle*'s narrative of white settler violence, the perceived brutality of which impelled critics to situate the story within the category of prairie realism alongside the writings of Martha Ostenso and Frederick Philip Grove. *Paratext*, in my usage, includes the peritextual elements that comprise the book's material presentation (cover design, bylines, title pages) as well as epitextual matters (interviews with the author, book reviews). In examining these textual layers, different ideas about Asian-ness emerge; some reflect and conform to white settler imaginings, while others trouble them. These emergent representations *both* support *and* question racialized constructions, while also hinting at the varied conditions underlying these constructions. Ultimately, the paratextual materials in question gesture towards a greater attempt on the part of Eaton's Canadian publisher

(Musson) and her reviewers to address their own questions about the placement of Chinese Canadian identities within the nation. Underlying these paratextual framings is an anxious response to Eaton's self-representation as Onoto Watanna—a persona that subtly gestures towards *racialization as process*, rather than *race as essentialist fact*.

## Contextualizing Onoto Watanna

In order to understand Eaton's rebranding as a Western Canadian realist writer, I must turn towards her early career as the pseudo-Japanese writer, Onoto Watanna. Viewed in light of the politics of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century racialization, Eaton's alter ego emerged out of a particularly ambiguous position. In this section, I will highlight two factors: first, the sociopolitical moment in the history of North American immigration; and secondly, Eaton's particular relationship with Asian racialization. In order to properly flesh out these contexts, I must delve into the history of anti-Asian legislation and border controls. As Lisa Lowe has observed, the colonial archive tends to render invisible the relationship between indentured servitude, Black enslavement, and colonialism (5). In the following summary, I acknowledge these connections by locating Asian racialization within a broader legal framework that supports settler colonialism *as structure* (Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism" 388).

As an entry point into this conversation, I must address Eaton's gravitation towards a mixed-race Japanese persona. For a brief period in the 1890s and 1900s, Japanese immigrants occupied an uncertain position between racialized difference and white belonging. In Canada, early Chinese immigration occurred in two major waves. The first wave consisted of Chinese and Chinese American migrants, many of whom arrived from San Francisco in the hope of profiting from the discovery of gold along the Fraser River in 1858. The second wave arrived as indentured labourers, hired by the federal government to hasten the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1885. White settler states (Canada, the United States, Australia) imposed a series of restrictive immigration laws intended to curb the influx of Chinese bodies into the nation state; in turn, provincial, state, and municipal laws policed the movement and settlement of Chinese immigrants *within* the nation through official and unofficial means of

discrimination. Yet when Japanese immigrants arrived later in the nineteenth century, governing bodies at federal (Canada, United States), provincial/state (British Columbia, California), and municipal (Vancouver, San Francisco) levels did not impose the same limitations on Japanese movement and settlement as they did on their Chinese predecessors. This is due in part to British and American diplomatic relations with Japan. Apparent tolerance of Japanese immigrants notwithstanding, both the Canadian and American federal governments eventually incorporated Japanese immigrants and their descendants into a broader category of Asian or “Oriental” otherness. In short, Eaton adopted the distinctive guise of a Japanese author during a brief transitional period in which Japanese immigrants were in the process of becoming *Asian* but still were in a relatively privileged position with respect to Chinese immigrants, most of whom had arrived as impoverished workers.

But Eaton was not Japanese Canadian; she was a mixed-race woman of Chinese and English parentage. Her daughter Doris Rooney offers this personal insight:

My mother was not particularly proud of the fact that she was partly Chinese. As a child she had suffered from racial prejudice in Montreal and I think would have preferred to be all Chinese or all English. (Letter)

Rooney’s account draws attention to the considerable pressures exerted upon Eaton and her family. The writer’s relationship with mixed-race or (to use her phrasing) “half-caste” identities emerges in light of the particular politics of racial categorization and its broader impact upon social structures in settler colonial nation-states. To put it differently, Eaton’s sense of non-belonging to both white and Chinese Canadian communities is a direct result of colonial gatekeeping or of the public governance of “thresholds of racial membership, sexual access, and colonial status” (Stoler 3). Although Eaton’s choice of a Japanese persona is certainly significant, the character of Onoto Watanna is not just *Japanese*: she is, like Eaton herself, half-caste. Eaton’s performance of a half-caste identity raises further possibilities. It is possible that she wished to capitalize upon not just the fetishization of Japanese women, but also the fetishization of mixed-race women in turn-of-the-century Britain, Canada, and the United States. Like her literary contemporary Pauline Johnson (Mohawk/English), Eaton represented intimacies between

western imperial bodies and colonized peoples,<sup>22</sup> and like Johnson, Eaton devised ways of incorporating this aspect of her subject position into her public representation.

In spite of her identification as a mixed-race woman, the American media attempted to “pin” Eaton as Japanese. This seemingly anxious response reveals something about the nature of Asian racialization at this time. The supposed inscrutability of Asian cultures—inscrutability being a quality projected onto Chinese, Japanese, and Indian migrants by white settler scholars, law makers, and writers<sup>23</sup>—reflects a broader unwillingness to interpret and understand the origins and identities of incoming groups of “alien settlers,” to use Iyko Day’s term for racialized newcomers (21). This process made easier the management of national borders, by enabling wider patterns of exclusion that extended beyond the first waves of Chinese settlers. Having been born during a formative period, when the parameters of racial difference were still under construction, Onoto Watanna was obviously a conflicted and destabilizing persona.

To better illustrate this sense of racial formation, I turn to the following example from Eaton’s family history. Edward Eaton and Grace (Trefusis) Eaton immigrated to Montreal in 1873, after residing in New York and Macclesfield, England. The sizable family consisted of twelve surviving children. While not as widely recognized as their sisters Edith and Winnifred, Grace and Sara Eaton were notable in their own right: Grace became a pioneering female lawyer in the United States and Sara was an artist and co-author (along with Winnifred) of one of the first Chinese cookbooks published in North

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<sup>22</sup> See Gerson’s essay, “Postcolonialism meets Book History: Pauline Johnson Meets Postcolonial London” in *Home-Work: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy, and Canadian Literature* (2004) for further discussion.

<sup>23</sup> See the following description of the San Francisco Chinatown in the *Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration* (1902):

strange signboards, Chinese lanterns, cages with singing birds, give to the American houses a foreign character. The Chinaman writes, not from right to left, or left to right, but down, and so you see the horizontal signboards covered with gilding or in gaudily painted Chinese characters wholly unintelligible to one unversed in the monosyllabic group of languages. Unless indeed they are translated, and even then it must be confessed little insight is gained as to the character of the goods for sale. (367)

This telling passage not only conveys the idea of inscrutability, but also argues for the supposedly untranslatable (and thus unassimilable) nature of Chinese American culture.

America.<sup>24</sup> In the early 1890s, Grace and Sara left their crowded Hochelaga home in pursuit of economic independence. The 1891 Canadian census situates the sisters in Montreal's St. Antoine District; their occupations are listed as stenographer and painter, respectively. Prior to 1901, the Canadian census did not account for the "race" of those surveyed; rather, racialized identities were hinted at via an individual's religion (Grace and Sara's neighbours are listed as "Hebrew"), the birthplace of the person surveyed, and the birthplace of their parents. According to this 1891 document, the Eaton sisters' father was born in England. In a gesture that anticipates the falsified life and career of Onoto Watanna, the census-taker listed their mother's birthplace as "Japan."

The precise origins of Grace (Trefusis) Eaton are obscured by family legend. According to the Eaton sisters, their mother was the child of a Mandarin noble. Kidnapped at a young age, she worked for a circus company until she was rescued by Scottish missionaries. Regardless of the level of accuracy of this account, this story was believed and accepted by the Eaton family (Birchall 8). The elder Grace Eaton consistently identified as Chinese until her death in 1922. What might account for this census error, which may seem small, but is most glaring to those familiar with Winnifred Eaton's Japanese alter ego? Did Grace and Sara wish to account for their mother's difference, while also distancing themselves from anti-Chinese sentiments? At this point, the Canadian government did not fully prevent Chinese labourers from entering the country; however, the Chinese population was still subject to a substantial head tax. Furthermore, Montreal was a holding place for Chinese immigrants seeking to bypass the *Chinese Exclusion Act*, a ban enacted by the federal government ten years previously.<sup>25</sup> As Mary Chapman reveals in a recent study of Edith Eaton's early work, Grace and Sara's white father was a known human smuggler. One year after this census data was collected, Edward Eaton was arrested and imprisoned for his role in secreting Chinese migrants into Vermont (Chapman xxvi).<sup>26</sup> By denying their mother's actual place of

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<sup>24</sup> Winnifred Eaton and her sister Sara (Eaton) Bosse co-authored the *Chinese-Japanese Cookbook* (1914). Although weighted more heavily towards Chinese food, both Chinese and Japanese recipes appear alongside commentary on place settings and meal etiquette.

<sup>25</sup> See *An Act to Prohibit the Coming of Chinese Persons in the United States* (United States, Congress).

<sup>26</sup> See this account in the *Mariposa Gazette* (1900):

origin, did the Eaton sisters hope to detract attention away from the family's clear and obvious investment in the politics of Chinese migration? Or was this an instance of carelessness—and perhaps racial elision—on the part of the census taker? Certainly, early censuses were not known for their accuracy and sometimes obtained information from unreliable informants such as neighbours or unrelated residents in a household. This inscription could even be the result of pheneticization, or race-reading, on the part of the recorder.

In this example, we see the tense relationship between public representation, legal category, personal identity, and, perhaps, pheneticization. I cite this obscure but telling moment in the colonial archive as a crucial starting point to discussing Eaton's literary interventions. The varied trajectories of the Eaton sisters' lives<sup>27</sup> make visible the different ways that this tension manifested itself through the professional, personal, and creative paths of these late nineteenth century Chinese Canadian women. Furthermore, any questions regarding the racial identities of the Eaton sisters were complicated by the

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Quebec, Montreal and Sherbrooke remain the headquarters in Canada of the Chinese smuggling trade. The companies engaged in the work get a good round sum for each Chinaman smuggled, payable in weekly installments, when he has succeeded in establishing himself in some American town. One of these companies is known as the border smuggling trust and is said to consist of a number of United States border lawyers and Chinese interpreters ("Smuggling of Chinese" 3).

The "border lawyers and Chinese interpreters" referenced in the article falsified certificates affirming the prospective immigrant's residence in the United States. A struggling artist with a large family, Eaton's reasons for participating in the smuggling industry were likely rooted in economic need. The question remains: to what extent were Grace Eaton and her children involved in these activities? The answer remains unclear. Notably, the same article credits Edward Eaton's daring jailbreak to a group of "very clever women [...] who invented, perfected and carried out the plans for [Eaton and his business partner's] escape from Plattsburg jail" ("Smuggling of Chinese," 3). See Chapman for more discussion. For general contexts about Chinese smuggling, also see Mar's *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (2010).

<sup>27</sup> Edith Eaton worked as a reporter in Canada, America, and Jamaica. Proudly Chinese Canadian, she published a series of short stories under the name "Sui Sin Far." These stories often involved trans-racial interactions. Grace married the noted writer and editor Walter Blackburn Harte. After his death, she cultivated her own career as a pioneering woman lawyer in the United States. She was known professionally by her married name, Grace Harte. Sara, "the wildest of the girls" (Birchall 21), married the artist Karl Bosse. The couple lived in New York. Sara was the subject of Eaton's 1916 biography *Marion: The Story of an Artist's Model*. As Edith Eaton wrote in "Leaves from a Mental Portfolio": "It is not difficult in a land like California, for a half Chinese, half white girl to pass as one of Spanish or Mexican origin" (227). Tellingly, her younger sister May briefly joined a convent before moving to San Francisco, where she passed as Mexican American. Another sister, Rose Eaton, proved herself a capable business woman. She ran an oil company office in Alberta (Birchall 19, 25-26).

Canadian *Chinese Immigration Act*, which dictated that mixed-race children of Chinese descent took on the racial identities of their fathers.<sup>28</sup> Thus, in the eyes of the Canadian state, Eaton and her siblings were neither Chinese nor Japanese, but legally British. Of course, their legal status did not protect them from the othering gaze of non-racialized Canadians (see Sui Sin Far [E. Eaton], “Mental Leaves”). This instance highlights a particular conflict that emerges through Eaton’s textual work, her public persona, and the framing of this persona among whites.

Speaking from a transnational perspective, Day offers this view about the racialization of Asian immigrants in North America:

In a settler colonial context, these variable, exclusionary logics have resulted in the heterogenous racialization of the alien: the African American, whose indisposability in the settler state requires a heightened form of racialized exclusion as a form of domestic social control, and the Asian North American, whose disposability from the settler state produces *a less fixed and more volatile racialization by virtue of the exclusionary power of immigration restriction*. (Day 33, emphasis added)

Because indentured servants operated as part of an impermanent labour force, Day argues that domestic policies targeting Chinese labourers were not as consistent or as nuanced as the various “domestic social controls” impacting African Americans, either during or after enslavement. According to Day’s argument, the management of Chinese newcomers was most visible at the border, where immigration controls such as head taxes or immigration bans functioned as the prime method of racial management. Such “exclusionary, segregationist logics [...] inhibited Asian exposure to more sustained domestic logics of racial exclusion and elimination” (Day 33). As a result, Asian immigrants and their descendants were (and are) subject to a “less fixed and more volatile” form of racialization, one that aligns Asian bodies with transcontinental labour practices and reinforces Orientalist perceptions of Asian inscrutability and alien-ness (Day 7).

Early American and Canadian immigration policies seem to support this argument. Canada’s restrictive and exclusionary legislation—beginning with the *Chinese*

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<sup>28</sup> See the 1887 amendment to the *Chinese Immigration Act* (Canada, House of Commons, *An Act to Amend*).



*Immigration Act* (1885) and ending with the *Chinese Exclusion Act* (1923)<sup>29</sup>—does little to define the Chinese subject towards whom the acts are directed. Unlike the 1876 *Indian Act* and its amendments, there is no discussion of Chinese or Chinese Canadian identities in terms of genetic, biological, or behavioural characteristics; however, the legislation is clearly directed towards the male labouring body. The government introduced its infamous head tax in the 1885 *Chinese Immigration Act*, which identified a Chinese immigrant as “any person of Chinese origin entering Canada” (Canada, House of Commons, *An Act Respecting* 208). According to the *Act*, those not required to pay the tax upon entry into Canada included: Chinese government officials, tourists, or merchants “who are bearers of certificates of identity, specifying their occupation and their object in coming to Canada” (Canada, House of Commons, *An Act Respecting* 208). The law, in other words, was clearly intended to deter the entry of labouring classes. The *Chinese Exclusion Act* (United States), passed in 1882, was even more explicit in its aim to halt “the coming of Chinese labourers<sup>30</sup> into the United States,” regardless of whether or not they arrived from China or another country (United States, Congress, *An Act to Execute*). The *Act* also deemed them ineligible for citizenship. Initially intended as a decade-long ban, it was extended in 1892 under the *Geary Act* (United States Congress, *An Act to Prohibit*) and again, indefinitely, in 1902 (United States, Congress, “Public Law”). In targeting “Chinese laborers” or “Chinese persons or persons of Chinese descent,”<sup>31</sup> this

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<sup>29</sup> See *An Act Respecting and Regulating Chinese Immigration into Canada* (1885) and *An Act Respecting Chinese Immigration* (1923).

<sup>30</sup> American and Canadian law exempted merchants from these restrictions. Unfortunately, both governments required merchants to provide documentation in order to be eligible for exemption; this documentation was not necessarily easy to obtain, though many immigrants relied upon forged documents (Mar 27). Furthermore, once landed in the Canada or America, members of the merchant class were not afforded the same rights as whites (Lee 258).

<sup>31</sup> The *Geary Act* (1892) and the 1902 *Exclusion Act* move beyond Chinese indentured labourers by also referring to “Chinese persons” and those of “Chinese descent”; for instance, the *Geary Act* stipulates:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all laws now in force prohibiting and regulating the coming into this country of Chinese persons and persons of Chinese descent are hereby continued in force for a period of ten years from the passage of this act. (United States, Congress, *An Act to Prohibit*)

The 1902 act seems to waver between “Chinese persons, and persons of Chinese descent” and “Chinese laborers.” This vacillation obscures any categorical difference between the Chinese American population as a whole and incoming workers from China (United States, Congress, “Public Law”).

legislation posits an idea of Chinese difference that is profoundly and explicitly racial rather than national. In the initial *Chinese Exclusion Act* and the *Geary Act* of 1892, what makes a person Chinese seems to have little to do with their country of origin (the question of birthright citizenship was not raised until later in the decade<sup>32</sup>); residence; or national, regional, or cultural affiliation. For instance, the wording of the *Geary Act* might suggest that a “person of Chinese descent” who happens to be of Canadian birth or residency (like the Eaton sisters) could be subject to the law’s strictures (United States, Congress, *An Act to Prohibit*).<sup>33</sup> That the idea of Chinese difference remained largely undefined suggests that, for white lawmakers, racial otherness was (and still is, according to Larissa Lai) fluid and contextual (Lai 4).

White settler Canada is what Raymond Williams describes as a “residual culture” that carries the traces of past iterations of settler colonial domination. As Williams explains, a residual culture refers to persistent, intergenerational practices and meanings: “The residual [...] has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present” (122). The state’s construction of a class of Chinese alien settlers is inextricable from the broader history of British dominance in Asia. In the wake of the Opium Wars (1839-1842, 1856-1860), British officials used official data (collected in censuses) and criminal justice (recorded in curfew and vagrancy laws) for the purpose of transforming this displaced population into a criminalized class referred to as *coolie*, which is based on a Hindi word for labourers (Lowe 120). In the latter half of the

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<sup>32</sup> The question of birthright was raised in the 1898 United States Supreme Court case, *United States vs. Wong Kim Ark*, when the court ruled that a person born in the United States, with parents of Chinese descent who have permanent American residency, should automatically obtain American citizenship at birth (United States, Supreme Court, *U.S. Reports*). The 1902 act does not account for the outcome of the case (United States, Congress, “Public Law 90”).

<sup>33</sup> The 1892 act stipulates that those of Chinese descent

shall be removed from the United States to China, *unless he or they shall make it appear to the justice, judge, or commissioner before whom he or they are tried that he or they are subjects or citizens of some other country*, in which case he or they shall be removed from the United States to such country (United States, Congress, *An Act to Prohibit*, emphasis added).

This section of the act demonstrates the state’s view that racial difference is not based upon a person’s country of citizenship.

nineteenth century, Britain imported indentured labourers (mostly from China and India) to colonies in the Americas, Hawaii, and Australia, often with the intent of positioning them in labouring roles previously occupied by enslaved Black people. In the years following the American Civil War, a new racialized labouring population thus emerged. As was the case of Indigenous peoples and those freed from Black enslavement, politicians drew upon colonial data (censuses, reports) and scientific conceptions of race to support the notion that Chinese immigrants were an anachronistic population, unworthy of the freedoms afforded to white settlers, a conception that stemmed from Britain's presence in Hong Kong. Adam McKeown summarizes this history:

To many Europeans, the Chinese state was a major obstacle to a smooth regime of free emigration. They saw it as excessively authoritarian and opposed to free intercourse, yet incapable of enforcing its own laws against emigration. [...]

At the same time, the presence of Chinese in Hong Kong, outside the control of the Chinese state, was no guarantee of their freedom. Rather, it only generated new ways to depict the migrants as unfree and the cause of their own abuse. Already in the 1840s, Hong Kong officials who worried about their still tenuous control over the island argued that once Chinese were freed from the despotic control of the Chinese state, it could only be expected that a people with no habits of self-restraint would relapse into banditry and licentiousness. (78-79)

While not consistently referred to as “coolies” in official legislation, Chinese immigrants to both the United States and Canada carried the traces of this economic and social demarcation. In spite of the United States Congress's efforts to ban imported labour in 1862 (*An Act to Prohibit*),<sup>34</sup> restoration-era politicians and plantation owners in the American South believed that Chinese labourers would serve as a logical replacement

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<sup>34</sup> In 1862, the United States Congress passed an act prohibiting the shipment of “inhabitants or subjects from China, known as ‘coolies,’ [...] to any foreign country, port, or place, whatever, to be disposed of, or sold, or transferred [...] as servants or apprentices, or to be held to service or labor” (*An Act to Prohibit* 340). Congress pushed to expand the legislation to include “the inhabitants on the coast of Japan or of any other oriental country” (*The Congressional* 886). The inclusion of Japanese people is curious, since, due to their lack of involvement with European powers, the Japanese were not as closely aligned with imported labour as their Chinese and Indian counterparts. Clearly this act anticipates the gradual inclusion of Japanese identities into this fold. Legislation targeting imported labour from China or Japan eventually paved the way for anti-Asian immigration legislation. The *Page Act* (1875) was intended to curb the importation of labour from all Asian countries; however, in practice, the law dramatically curtailed the influx of Chinese women, thus leading to the creation of a bachelor society.

for those emancipated from enslavement and so, in addition to filling this labour vacuum, the Asian presence in the American South illuminates the triangulated relationship between racialized labour (Black, Asian), Indigenous evacuation, and white settlement.

<sup>35</sup>In Canada, the state's relationship with Chinese newcomers was complicated by the nation's conflicted positioning within the British Empire. The Canadian state had to maintain a strong diplomatic relationship with other colonies in spite of the white supremacist logics that formed the foundation of white settler rule. As Radhika Mongia explains, the government consistently obscured its racism by "articulat[ing] [race] to a space increasingly described as 'national'" (538). This pattern was especially true in early legislation directed towards Indian immigrants seeking refuge in Canada<sup>36</sup> and I suspect it is also at the root of the state's construction of a "Chinese" identity. In amendments to the *Chinese Immigration Act*, the word *nationality* becomes a placeholder for the idea of race.<sup>37</sup> To officially inscribe the terms of identity management into law would result in a legal category of people, thus raising difficult questions about the terms of race-making: Would former residents of Hong Kong, born of Chinese parents, be considered Chinese or are they British subjects? Would a former resident of China, born of *British* parents, be considered Chinese?<sup>38</sup> How did the state categorize people born in China with one (or two) non-Chinese parent(s)? At what point does a "Chinese" person become "Canadian" or "Chinese Canadian"? And what about their Canadian-born descendants? These

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<sup>35</sup> Some American scholars (see Bow, Desai and Joshi) tend to perceive the Asian American labourer as an interstitial identity, located between and reliant upon the binary relationship between Black and White, and enslavement and freedom (Desai and Joshi 8). This argument seems to gloss over the construction of the idea of the "coolie" by British officials in Hong Kong and India as a multi-ethnic economic and social class. The construction of Chinese-ness in Canada, in the absence of a significant Black labour force, further complicates this argument.

<sup>36</sup> See Mongia for further discussion of this issue.

<sup>37</sup> See the 1887 amendment to the *Chinese Immigration Act*:

No duty shall be payable under "*The Chinese Immigration Act*," in respect of any woman of Chinese origin who is the wife of the person who is not of Chinese origin; but, for the purposes of the said Act, such woman shall be deemed to be of the same nationality of her husband. (Canada, House, *An Act to Amend*)

Here, the act employs the language of national identity ("nationality") to police interracial intimacies.

<sup>38</sup> In an unsigned article for the Montreal *Daily Witness*, Edith Eaton documents the story of Yen Moy. Transported to China as a baby by his English parents, Moy relocated to Montreal with the intention of opening a laundry. Though other immigrants from China balked at his "English features," the state categorized him as Chinese ([Eaton], "Born a Britisher" 174).

labourers were not a legal class of people; they are inherently vague in construction, “a conglomeration of racial imaginings” (Jung 5) not aligned with a specific nation-state (not in the sense that European immigrants were). To explore and carefully consider their origins would be to assign them a western subjectivity in keeping with the paradigm of modern nationhood. From the white settler perspective, then, the term *Chinese* did not connote a national identity (in spite of its implicit nod towards “a space increasingly described as ‘national’” [Mongia 538]), but a broader, seemingly unfixed identity.

The flexibility of this designation allowed for the easy incorporation of other newcomer identities. Between 1899 and 1900, approximately 10,000 Japanese farmworkers entered Canada via Hawaii (Ward 55). In 1908 the Laurier government instated its Continuous Journey rule (Canada, House of Commons, *An Act to Amend*). An amendment to the *Immigration Act*, the regulation prohibited newcomers from landing if they did not travel directly from the country of their origin. This law sought to curb the influx of Indian and Japanese labourers travelling from Honduras and Hawaii. As was the case with Chinese immigrants, white settler perceptions of Japanese newcomers were shaped by the broader history of intercontinental interaction. Unlike China, which endured a long and difficult trade history with Britain, Japan was viewed as an isolationist nation, untouched by other powers. (McKeown complicates the notion of Japan isolationism by pointing out the broader history of migrant movement between Japan and Korea, Northern China, and other locations [Hawaii, Southeast Asian, South Africa] [50].) When European and American missionaries and traders (like, perhaps, Edward Eaton<sup>39</sup>) visited the island nation, their reports often promoted a romantic depiction of Shogunate culture that was eventually reproduced through literature of authors such as William Elliot Griffis, Basil Hall Chamberlin, Lafcadio Hearn, and John Luther Long and dramatic productions such as Gilbert and Sullivan’s Orientalist spectacle, *The Mikado* (Honey and Cole 3). In turn, the Meiji government responded to western interventions by distancing itself from other Asian nations. Japan’s colonial

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<sup>39</sup> Historical records yield little information about Edward Eaton’s movements through eastern Asia; however, he likely conducted business in Japan and China (Chapman xvi). Apparently, his brother Isaac married a Japanese woman (Birchall 10).

expansion into Korea and Manchuria coincided with this moment of transcontinental contact (McKeown 154).

Japan's diplomatic relationship with Britain and America conflicted with the racial logics of white settlerhood. Since the British government sought to maintain a positive relationship with the fledging power, the Canadian state was forced to reconcile its racist agenda with British economic and diplomatic interests. This tension is evident in official discourses, such as the *Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration* (1902), a document that simultaneously acknowledges geopolitical differences between China and Japan, while also blending Japanese and Chinese identities into a singular category of racial otherness. In spite of the report's racist conclusions, the Canadian state did not develop head taxes or immigration restrictions targeting Japanese people, at least not explicitly. Instead, the Canadian state reached a "gentleman's agreement" with the Meiji government that stemmed the tide of Japanese immigration but did not halt it completely (the United States government reached a similar agreement in 1907). Government documentation (immigration laws, the *Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration*) articulated a racial category ("Japanese") that did not fully account for these internal cultural divisions, or Japan's own history of colonial expansion.<sup>40</sup> In 1938, Charles H. Young and Helen R. Y. Reid addressed the "problems of Japanese-Canadians" (vii) in a study that mirrored the 1902 report. Young and Reid's project includes chapters on "The Oriental Population," "Oriental Standards of Living," and "The Chinese in British Columbia." Although Young and Reid's work centred upon the Japanese Canadian presence, Japanese Canadians were clearly viewed in relation to, and in convergence with, the Chinese Canadian population.

Colonial governments were particularly attentive to interactions between disparate groups. Sites of cultural and racial interaction and interconnection became sites of surveillance and knowledge-generation, since "[the] colonial state's investigative technologies were aimed at *knowing* aboriginal peoples as well as many Others who complicated and potentially subverted colonial rule" (Mawani 27). While such

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<sup>40</sup> Koreans seem absent from the colonial record. Since Korea was a colony of Japan, it may be assumed that any incoming Koreans were to be categorized as "Japanese."

apparatuses were often used to articulate categorical differences between certain populations (see Renisa Mawani's writings on Indigenous-Chinese Canadian interactions in British Columbia), in the case of the Chinese and Japanese Canadians, colonial knowledge served the purpose of blurring or obfuscating the division between these two groups. In Canada, this process was consecrated in anti-Asiatic legislation: British Columbia's 1895 amendment to the *Provincial Voter's Act*, for example, denied voting rights to the "Chinaman, Japanese, or Indian" (British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, *An Act to Amend 73*). Further east, the province of Saskatchewan passed the *White Woman's Labour Law* in 1912, which prohibited Japanese, Chinese, and "other" Asian business owners (perhaps in reference to Indian populations) from employing white women (Backhouse 146). The province of British Columbia passed a similar law in 1914.<sup>41</sup> On a federal level, the American government banned Chinese *and* Japanese immigration in 1924. While my project does not delve deeply into the subtle differences between Canadian and American laws and governmental structures at this time (the key difference being Canada's position within the vast British Empire), it is significant that both nations were united in their efforts to construct a "white man's country" or a space dictated by settler colonialism's aim to "[declare] the western frontiers the exclusive preserve of Anglo-American civilization" (K. Chang 672). This process was reliant on the construction of a nebulous Other.

## **Racialization and the Paratext**

In her Japanese writings, Eaton responds to—and intercepts—the process of racial elision by aligning her Japanese characters with western (often American or British) figures. These moments of intercultural confluence arise either through intimacies between American and Japanese characters, or, more explicitly, through fictive representations of key moments of intercultural transaction, namely the Perry Expedition of 1853 (in *The Wooing of Wistaria* [1902]) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) (in *A Japanese Blossom* [1906]). On a much more implicit level, Eaton punctuates some of

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<sup>41</sup> Upon protest from the Japanese consul general, the provincial government amended the law so that it would no longer target Japanese and "other Oriental persons." Prior to the amendment, one of the first settlers to be prosecuted under this law was Japanese Canadian (Backhouse 146).

her novels with subtle references to “coolie” labour.<sup>42</sup> Regardless of Eaton’s intentions—whether she tosses this racist slur about carelessly or with a specific argument in mind—this choice of wording is certainly significant given the contexts of Asian racialization in early twentieth-century America and Canada. Within the scope of Eaton’s Japanese universe, this association serves to crystalize Japan’s position as a colonizing power on par with the West by offering a distinction between Japanese citizenry and an unspecified body of racialized labourers.<sup>43</sup>

But if we read Eaton/Onoto Watanna’s Japan as a multi-layered series of interactions—between image and narrative; or between text and paratext—an even more complicated truth is revealed, a truth that arises out of a set of interlocking, often asymmetrical, relations between legal categories, colonial images, and personal identities. Eaton’s 1903 novel *The Heart of Hyacinth* serves as an optimal case study in textual and paratextual interaction. Among her Japanese novels, *Hyacinth* engages most directly with larger questions about race-making and pheneticization; thus, it is through *Hyacinth*’s narrative, its materiality, and the media messages surrounding the text, that certain conflicting messages about racialization become most apparent. Given Eaton’s dramatic writing style—rife with fanciful prose and simplistic characterizations—*Hyacinth*’s nuances are easy to overlook. On a narrative level, the story centres upon the romantic exploits of the white daughter of American parents. Though white, the titular heroine identifies as Japanese; hence, *Hyacinth*’s racial identity is subject to much scrutiny and interpretation by Japanese and American characters alike. By the novel’s finale, *Hyacinth* rejects a white American identity and marries her half-Japanese adopted brother. The novel raises obvious but profound questions that serve to complicate the essentialist logics of early twentieth-century racial categorization: What makes a person Japanese? Is

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<sup>42</sup> In *The Love of Azalea* (1904) the cruel aristocrat Matsuda Isami is known for employing “hundreds of coolies” (53). Another fleeting reference to imported labourers appears in *A Japanese Blossom*, when Niyo’s son Taro makes a charitable donation to “an old coolie whose sons were at war” (Watanna 163). In *Daughters of Nijo* (1907), the affluent farmer Yamada Kwacho is a kind master to his “coolies” (Watanna 15), who are tasked with the job of carrying his spoiled daughter on a litter (Watanna 17).

<sup>43</sup> During the war, Eaton redressed this convergence. According to one article (c.1941), Eaton took certain pains to distance herself from her past alignment with Japan: “Actually,” [Eaton] says, “I’m ashamed of having written about the Japanese. I hate them so.” She is herself partly Chinese on her mother’s side, and very proud of the fact (“Alberta Women”).



it their place of birth? The racial identity of their father? Of their spouse? Their chosen community? Is it their manner of dress, or other visual signifiers?

This unconventional tale is mediated through an ornate design: the jacket-less cover is embossed with a gold, Japanese-inspired font bearing the book's title and the author's name (Onoto Watanna) in two parallel columns that replicate vertical writing. In the centre, a delicate hyacinth emanates from a golden heart (see Figure 2.1). The book's interior is laden with complementary images. Eaton's text is interposed on top of a rotating sequence of Orientalist scenes pre-printed on the paper used in these pages: birds, pagodas, bamboo, koi fish, and kimonoed women (see Figure 2.2). The stylistic clarity of these images contrasts with the detailed watercolours that comprise the plate illustrations.

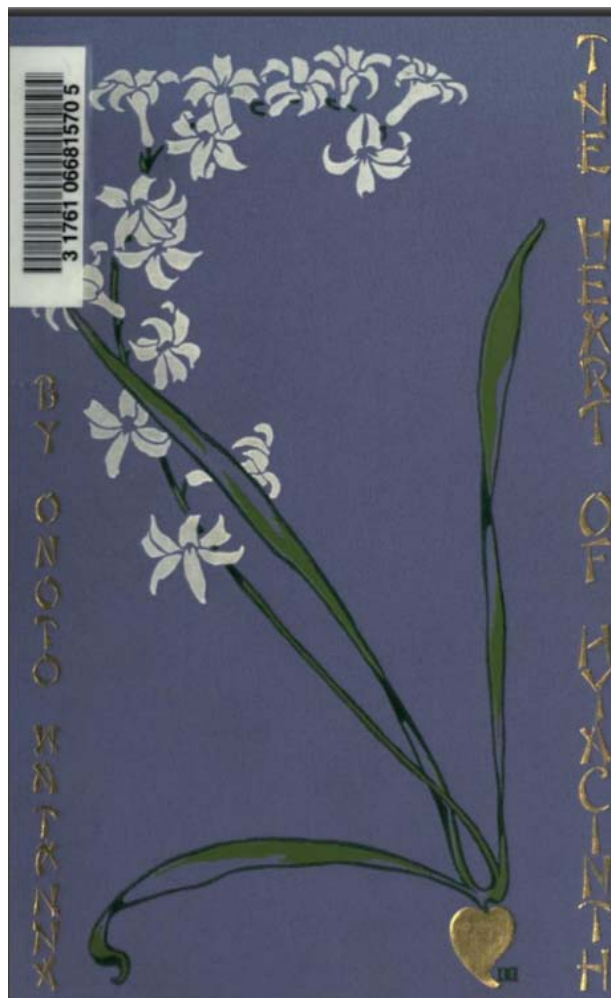


Figure 2.1 Cover art for The Heart of Hyacinth

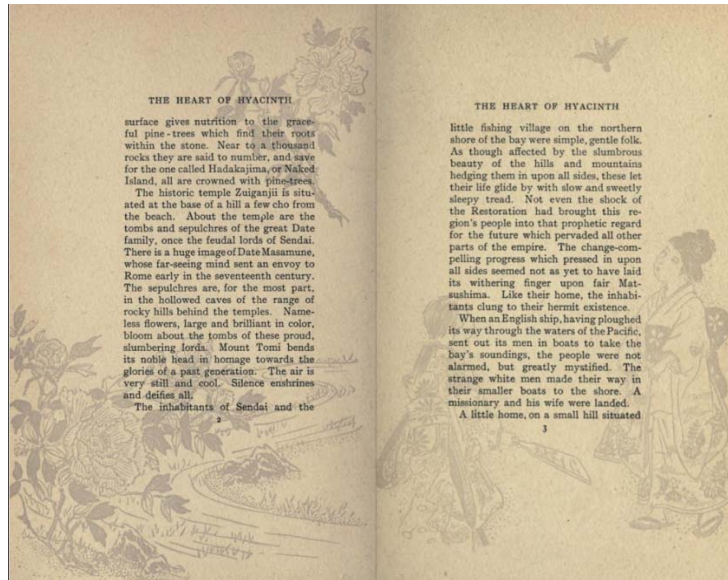


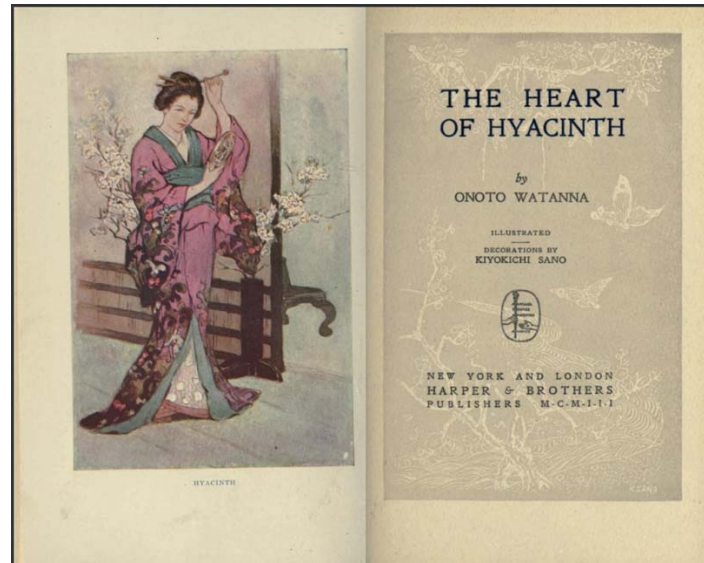
Figure 2.2 A sample of Kiyokichi Sano's page design



Figure 2.3 Winnifred Eaton's authorial photo as "Onoto Watanna" as it appeared in *The Wooing of Wistaria*

In addition to her obvious kimono, Onoto Watanna's signature in kanji represents an attempt on the part of Harper and Brothers to authenticate the writer's Japanese identity.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> See Matsukawa for further discussion of this topic.



**Figure 2.4 Title page and frontispiece**

Note the stylistic difference between the design of the frontispiece and the background imagery in the title page.

Unlike earlier entries in this series of Orientalist novels (for example *Miss Numè of Japan* and *The Wooing of Wistaria*) Onoto Watanna’s costumed likeness (see Figure 2.3) does not appear as *Hyacinth*’s frontispiece;<sup>45</sup> instead, the story opens with a representation of Hyacinth in Japanese clothing (see Figure 2.4), perhaps a deliberate echo of Eaton’s authorial self-representation. Despite this absence, Eaton’s alternate persona is still part of the text: the name “Onoto Watanna” appears in a prominent position on both the cover and title page, while “Winnifred Eaton” is nowhere to be seen. For white readers, especially those unfamiliar with the Japanese language, “Onoto Watanna” may also suggest an authoritative Japanese presence that confirms, or at least *suggests*, an authentic perspective; on the other hand, Japanese speakers would recognize the surname Watanna as a fabrication, thus adding a complicating layer of signification (Matsukawa 36). On the title page, the author’s name appears above another name: that of the *authentically* Japanese designer and illustrator Kiyokichi Sano.<sup>46</sup> Given the important role that Sano’s

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<sup>45</sup> Eaton’s image appears less frequently in later volumes, perhaps because her character was established at that point in her career; perhaps because she slipped away from it, or at least attempted to, through other literary experiments (for example her pseudo-Irish persona, Winnifred Mooney).

<sup>46</sup> Sano’s authenticating function recalls the collaboration between Long Lance and his “native-informant,” Eagle Speaker.

imagery plays in meaning-making, he seems to function more as a collaborator than an illustrator.<sup>47</sup>

The text is a contested space structured upon a number of competing and at times complementary perspectives: in this case, that of the author (Eaton disguised as Onoto Watanna), illustrator (Sano), a major New York publisher (Harper and Brothers), and the reader. Of course, any published text is governed by a number of hierarchical relationships; however, in this example, as in all of Eaton's Japanese books, the interplay between text and imagery is especially fraught with social, and potentially political, meaning. Sano's depiction of Hyacinth in the frontispiece and in other images invites the reader to interpret and evaluate the protagonist's racial identity. The reader thus takes part in the racialization process, a process that is informed by their own particular positioning within the white nation-space. As an active participant in race-making, the reader must then navigate various, and often conflicting, framings in order to arrive at a truth.

Mainstream newspaper reportage from this era serves as yet another mediating perspective. Unlike Buffalo Child Long Lance's *Autobiography* (1928), Eaton's novels are not prefaced by an intervening white settler voice; instead, these dominant voices mostly exist outside of the text, through the press. Of course, it is possible to make meaning from *Hyacinth* without any knowledge of the writer's racial background; however, as a high-profile figure, often invoked by early twentieth-century newspapers as a public expert on Japan, Eaton's persona was closely entwined with the press's reception of her work. Throughout the first decade of Eaton's career, American and Canadian newspapers produced and disseminated various wildly inconsistent accounts of Eaton's origins. Eaton's public debut is the likely subject of this *Chicago Daily Tribune* article (1898):<sup>48</sup>

Katishima Tachehasche, a young Japanese woman who has been much made in Chicago society, has created a sensation and stirred all Evanston

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<sup>47</sup> Matsukawa explores this collaboration in her article, "Onoto Watanna's Japanese Collaborators and Commentators" (2005).

<sup>48</sup> This news item was featured in "Sui Sin Far and Onoto Watanna: Writing Hybridity at the Cusp of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," an exhibit presented at the University of British Columbia Special Collections in the Autumn of 2016, and curated by Mary Chapman, Jennifer Tang, and Brandy Lien Worrall Soriano.

by tearing an American flag from her gown [...] and burning the flag to ashes over a Japanese lantern in view of all the guests. [...]

Each guest at the lawn fête was required to wear a small American flag, and Miss Tachehasche created some indignation on her arrival with a party of Chicago people by refusing to wear the flag at all. It was pinned to her gown against her protests. (“Woman Burns Flag”)

The article characterizes Tachehasche as a mixed-race Japanese Canadian “whose features are more strongly English than Japanese.” Her mother was a Japanese woman and her father was an English envoy to China by the name of Eaton (“Woman Burns Flag”). In spite of her residence in Canada, her “English” features, her mixed-race identity, and the underlying possibility that Tachehasche had never set foot in Japan, the news story describes the woman (who is undoubtedly Eaton) as distinctively and indisputably *Japanese*.

According to the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Eaton was a “half-Japanese, half-English” resident of Chicago (“Is a Girl from Japan”). A report from 1902 offered some additional embellishments:

Miss Onoto Watanna was born in Nagasaki 23 years ago, and spent her girlhood in Japan. Her mother was pure Japanese and her father was an Englishman in the English Consular service at Nagasaki. When her father was transferred to Canada, she migrated to this country with the rest of her family. (“The Wooing of Wistaria”)

In 1904, the *Canadian Bookseller* described Eaton as “half-Japanese, but who was born in Nagasaki,” while the *Cleveland Plains-Dealer* noted that she was born in Nagasaki “of Canadian parents” ([“Daughters of Nijo”]). A reporter with the *Chicago Daily Tribune* revealed Eaton’s actual parentage, her British father and her Chinese mother, but persisted in describing the writer as “the little Japanese woman” (“Modern Drama in Japan”).

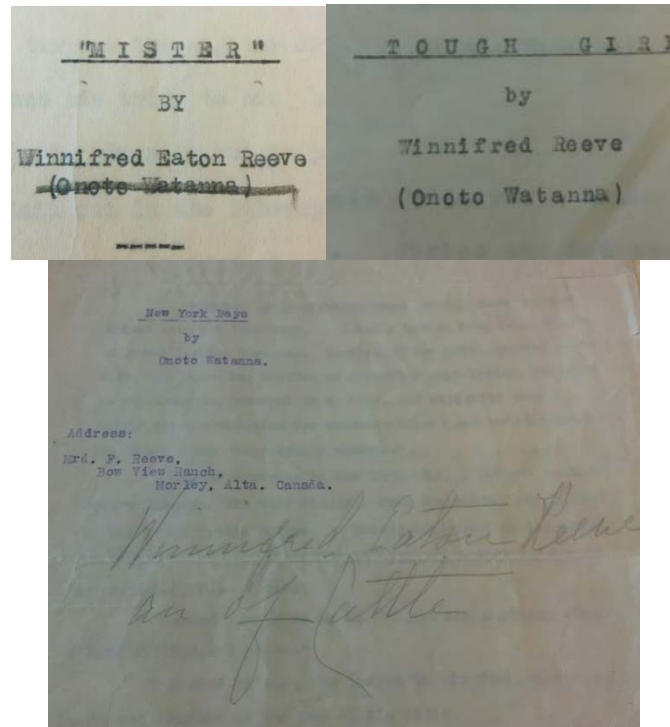
Clearly this reportage is based, at least in part, on Eaton’s own words and her fluctuating self-descriptions, rather than on intensive inquiry into her past. Eaton’s skillful self-representation is an obvious promotional ploy, intended to imbue her

Japanese narratives with a sense of racial authenticity.<sup>49</sup> This marketing strategy is not surprising, given Eaton's strong sense of business savvy; but in addition to this effect, the writer's carefully constructed authorial identity also highlights the complexity of early twentieth-century race-making, especially as it intersects with American and Canadian citizenship. Of course, the fact that Eaton was accepted not only as Japanese but also as an expert in America's relations with the so-called "East," reveals more about the desires and expectations of her audience than of the writer herself. When she embarked upon a new career in the 1920s as a Canadian realist writer, the relation between text, paratext (including media coverage), and persona was further complicated by the exclusion era's heightened racism. At a time when anti-Asiatic sentiments were rampant, Eaton and her Canadian publisher (Musson) were forced to reconcile her success as a Japanese literary celebrity with post-war Canada's divisive social and political climate. Through *Cattle* and the extensive reportage surrounding the novel, Onoto Watanna, and all her conflicting significations, existed in uneasy confluence with the white frontier.

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<sup>49</sup> Upon the publication of *Diary of Delia*, a first-person account written from the perspective of an Irish American domestic servant, Eaton also claimed Irish, Scottish, and French ancestries. She originally submitted the story to the *Saturday Evening Post* under the pseudonym Winnifred Mooney.

## Becoming Winnifred Eaton Reeve



**Figure 2.3 Sample bylines from various manuscripts held in the Winnifred Eaton Reeve fonds, University of Calgary Special Collections**

The Winnifred Eaton Reeve fonds in the University of Calgary Archives and Special Collections contains dozens of manuscripts from the 1920s, a decade that served as a transitional period in the writer's personal and professional life (see Figure 2.5). The fonds contains the outcome of Eaton's restlessness: manuscripts that fall into a number of genres—short stories, poetry, screenplays, articles—and narrative voices. Although generically and stylistically diverse, this body of (mostly) unpublished work tends to share a peculiar commonality: the complicated byline. The following is a list of the many bylines adopted by the writer in the early 1920s, as transcribed from various manuscripts contained in the Winnifred Eaton Reeves fonds (University of Calgary Special Collections):

- Winnifred Eaton
- Winnifred Eaton (Onoto Watanna)

- Winnifred Eaton Reeve
- Winnifred Eaton Reeve ~~Onoto Watanna~~
- Onoto Watanna
- Onoto Watanna “Winnifred Eaton Reeve, author of *Cattle*”

These varying signatures could reflect a deeper sense of conflict. It is also possible that Eaton acted upon the advice of an editor or agent who asked her to use a byline that reflected (or did not reflect) her past persona. The writer’s success stemmed, at least in part, from her sensitivity to audience expectations. Naturally, when faced with the prospect of a new readership (a largely Canadian one), she was forced to reckon with the enduring memory of her Orientalist alter ego. In response to this particular moment in Canadian nation-building (and racial exclusion), Eaton approached settler colonialism from a dualistic persona, one that enclosed Onoto Watanna’s Orientalist traces within the image of a white Canadian settler.

When Eaton arrived in southern Alberta in 1917, Canada’s western and northern territories had been portioned into spaces of racial and Indigenous containment. Three years after Eaton’s return to Canada, the federal government signed the last of its numbered treaties with Indigenous groups, and the pass system, an unofficial but ubiquitous form of social control, policed movements in and out of these spaces.<sup>50</sup> Although Chinese newcomers were policed at international border sites through head taxes and restrictive immigration laws, racial management also occurred *within* the nation-space. Western Canadian cities like Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Regina, and Winnipeg developed their own methods of population control; for instance, in the mid-1880s, Calgary’s comptroller of Chinese Immigration monitored the influx of Chinese newcomers—many of them CPR workers—into southern Alberta.<sup>51</sup> They also oversaw

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<sup>50</sup> See Alex Williams’s 2015 documentary, *The Pass System* for more contextual information.

<sup>51</sup> The original *Chinese Immigration Act* called for the assignment of a state official (comptroller) to police the migrant movements in and out of port cities (Vancouver, Victoria, New Westminster) and frontier cities. In the course of my research process, I found that records or information belonging to the Vancouver, Victoria, and New Westminster’s respective comptrollers are relatively easy to locate, but the colonial



the collection of a municipal head tax (on top of the federal one) of five dollars and ensured that Chinese Canadians provided a medical certificate (Dawson 26).<sup>52</sup> Not all municipalities employed a state-appointed gatekeeper, but the presence of this figure in a major Western Canadian city is worth noting, as it suggests a concerted attempt on the part of federal and municipal powers to create clearly delineated points of entry and exclusion *within* the frontier in an effort to control the movements of itinerant CPR workers.

City and town councillors responded to the transnational movements of Chinese Canadians through the passage of seemingly ad hoc municipal policies. Such policies often concentrated upon Chinese businesses, most often laundries and restaurants. In 1892, when a laundry employee in Calgary was stricken with smallpox, a group of whites responded to the threat of biological (and social) contagion by vandalizing Chinese-run businesses. In the years following this event, the city responded to this perceived threat through the passage of bylaws limiting the placement of these laundries to a few streets; this policy also pushed many Chinese Canadians from the city. South of Calgary, the city of Lethbridge responded to Chinese Canadian migration by instating their own restrictive regulations, including Bylaw 83, which confined Chinese laundries to a space known as the “restricted area” (Lethbridge, Town Council, *Bylaw 83*). By articulating and defining spaces of racial containment, these municipal laws shaped community formation as the location of laundries and other businesses also determined patterns of Chinese settlement (the Lethbridge Chinatown was based around the municipally mandated area<sup>53</sup>). This pattern persisted throughout Canada: cities like Montreal and Vancouver also called for the surveillance and management of Chinese laundries; these laws existed, of course, in tandem with other forms of segregation, which were either codified into law (for example Victoria’s school segregation laws) or not (as when white restaurants and businesses refused to serve Chinese customers). In southern Alberta, municipal reactions to Chinese

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archive seems to hold comparatively little information about the official’s presence in frontier centres like Calgary.

<sup>52</sup>British Columbia passed its own head tax laws in addition to the federal head tax; see Ward for more discussion of this issue.

<sup>53</sup> A shadow of its former self, the Lethbridge Chinatown is now home to a Japanese Canadian grocery (a sign of Canada’s longer history of racial elision) and a few scant placards that indicate its historic presence.

newcomers led to clear patterns of segregation, not just in cities, but also small towns: Fort Macleod's town council went so far as to impose a hefty tax on Chinese laundries (Dawson 47). White settler anxieties were compounded by the arrival of Japanese settlers on the Albertan frontier, leading to escalating tensions in communities like Hardieville and Raymond.

Interwar literature and journalism helped to formulate popular ideas about these intra-national areas of segregation. Notable examples include Frederick Niven's depiction of paternalistic Indian Agents in the 1935 bestseller *The Flying Years*, and Nellie McClung's sensational descriptions of the Winnipeg and Edmonton Chinatowns in *Painted Fires* (1925). In this period, Chinatowns were subject to intensive scrutiny by law enforcement officers and concerned white settlers. Initially appearing in *Maclean's* and eventually published as *The Black Candle* (1922), Emily Murphy's extensive exposé of Vancouver's opium dens identifies Chinatown as not only *a* location of vice, but as *the* space where urban ills originate. As an illustration, Murphy's report features a photograph of a hazy-eyed woman (see Figure 2.6). This photograph is juxtaposed with an Orientalist representation of Asian femininity, as perceived by the white imagination. The hand-rendered image rubs against the edge of the photograph, as if to disturb the boundary between white subjecthood and Orientalist fantasy. The juxtaposition of these two images brings to mind *The Arcades Project*, in which Walter Benjamin described Parisian streets as threshold spaces (*schwelle*) that swell beyond the limitations imposed by fixed borders and other containing apparatuses (Benjamin O2a, 1). It seems as though white settlers perceived the Chinatown as a similarly transgressive location on the verge of some unspeakable transformation. Samuel Weber interprets Benjamin's notion of the *schwelle* as follows:

Swelling indicates a crisis in the function of containment. The container no longer serves as a fixed place to define movement as change of place, but instead is itself caught up in a movement, or tension, but itself becoming over-extended. (233)

This idea may easily apply to the (perceived) destabilizing threat of the racial enclave and white fears and concerns regarding the efficacy of urban containment. Like the smoke

that emanates from Murphy's imagined drug dens, Canada's Asian presence was viewed as an inscrutable haze, impervious to state-produced, municipally enforced boundaries.



**Figure 2.4 An image from Emily Murphy's racist inquiry into Vancouver's opium trade**

Source: *Maclean's* (15 Feb. 1920)

The exclusionary *Chinese Immigration Act* (1923) arose as an anxious response to the threat of destabilization. Months prior to the passage of the *Act*, a journalist and friend of Eaton's produced an extensive profile of the writer for *Maclean's*. Elizabeth Bailey Price skirts around the question of Eaton's Chinese and/or Japanese affiliations altogether, as she presents a selective version of the life and career of Edward Eaton (excepting his criminal activities). In Eaton's own words:

My father had been back and forth to China no fewer than eighteen times, and during that perilous period of the Tai-Ping Rebellion he had made journeyings into old-fashioned sailing vessels, being one-hundred odd days at sea at a time. (qtd. in Price 64)

Grace (Trefusis) Eaton is not mentioned. Who excluded this information? Was it Eaton herself?<sup>54</sup> Or Price? Eaton's interview with the Toronto *Globe* contains similar omissions:

Mrs. Francis Reeve, who is the daughter of Edward and Grace Eaton, formerly of Macclesfield, England, and for yeasers [sic] resident in China and Japan, was born in Montreal, and began to write when she was 15 years of age. ("Tales Flow" 16)

The report verifies Eaton's authority in Asian matters by (falsely) declaring her a long-term "resident" in China and Japan. Describing Eaton as an "interpreter of Japanese life and lover of Canada" ("Tales Flow" 16), the journalist is careful to foreground her family's English foundations. In both examples, the question of her Japanese (or Chinese) heritage is not so much an absence as it is an uncomfortable presence.<sup>55</sup> Present-in-absence, Eaton's mother represents the tension between intercontinental imperialism and white nationhood,<sup>56</sup> the same tension that was addressed in the *Chinese Immigration Act's* (1887, 1900) assignment of subjecthood to those married to or born of a British father. On one hand, then, Eaton represents a fantasy of racial assimilation. Price's profile, including its accompanying image (see Frontispiece Image 2), is particularly attentive to her friend's alignment with signifiers of white middle-class life: namely a

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<sup>54</sup> No doubt, Birchall would argue that Eaton was responsible for these omissions. In *Onoto Watanna: The Story of Winnifred Eaton* (2001), she writes: "Winnifred seldom wrote about her mother, and when she did, she carefully refrained from mentioning her race and the name of her home country" (Birchall 9). This observation is somewhat complicated by Eaton's representation in the press which did, in the early stages of her career, reference a Japanese or a mixed-race mother.

<sup>55</sup> Price alludes to Edith Eaton's brief but notable career:

One of Onoto Watanna's sisters was the late Edith Eaton, who under the nom de plume of Sui Sin Far wrote "Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Stories," a collection of Chinese fairy tales and child life, some of these being regarded by literary critics as classics. The Chinese of Montreal have erected a monument on the grave of this talented Canadian author, who is buried in Mount Royal Cemetery. (66)

Edith Eaton comes across as another adventurous white settler woman enamoured with "the East." Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, the elder Eaton sister's pointed social commentary is neutralized by Price's infantilizing reference to "Chinese fairy tales." Furthermore, like the spectral figure of Grace Eaton, this article represents Edith Eaton as another present-absence.

<sup>56</sup> See Mawani's *Colonial Proximities* for more discussion of the white settler regime's attempts to police and document interracial relations (intimate or otherwise). Also see Lawrence ('*Real Indians*'), Lowe, and Stoler.

profitable marriage and land ownership. On the other hand, Eaton's origin story also serves as a reminder of Canada's conflicted relationship with British imperialism; the unmentionable mother calls into question the future of the settler regime (Mawani 168) in a decade fraught with white anxiety.

## **Onoto Watanna's *Cattle***

Published in 1924, Eaton's first prairie novel responds to Asian erasure by offering an interrogation of colonial violence. As Warren Cariou has argued, settler writers have long relied upon the language of the gothic—e.g. through descriptions of haunted landscapes absent of *living* Indigenous bodies—in order to legitimize European settler land claims (“Haunted Prairie” 727). While some of *Cattle*'s characters are haunted by traumatic memories of lost home-spaces (Angella Loring), its momentum is derived largely from the horror of the present. *Cattle*'s landscape is not the source of some uncanny horror; instead, horror is expressed through the domineering American-born ranch owner Bull Langdon. The plot is anchored by two acts of violence, both involving Bull: the rape of the young protagonist, Nettie Day, and the rapist's brutal death at the hands of his Chinese Canadian cook, Chum Lee. A ruthless, destructive force in the same spirit as Caleb Gare, the villain of Martha Ostenso's 1925 novel *Wild Geese*, *Cattle*'s central character is a caricature of a woman-hating villain.<sup>57</sup> His misogyny is expressed through improbable dialogue (“With few exceptions, he would snarl, spitting with contempt, women were all scrub stock, easy stuff that could be whistled or driven home to pastures” [4]). As Buffalo Child Long Lance makes clear in his journalistic work, the Albertan livestock industry represents colonial violence (see his telling of Almighty Voice's resistance against the NWMP). Since settler colonialism entailed the movement and containment of Indigenous peoples and the near extinction of their traditional food source (the buffalo), some (like Almighty Voice) killed cattle in order to combat starvation (Bednasek and Godlewska 448). In Eaton's novel, cattle also represent

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<sup>57</sup> *The Kappa Child* (2002) by Hiromi Goto draws upon this theme of male settler brutality. Goto's young woman protagonist is terrorized by her father, a Japanese Canadian settler who unsuccessfully attempts to plant rice in the southern Albertan prairies. In Goto's novel, the intersection between racial and gendered violence is complicated by the protagonist's sense of marginalization as a queer, racialized woman.

the intersection between racial categorization and gendered violence; while Bull clearly views women as bodies requiring management and containment, his livestock are also representative of population management through racial selection and classification, a process that is largely dictated by *Cattle*'s villain. As Eaton seems to argue, those who control the cattle control the frontier space; those who control the frontier space guide the process of territorial formation.

This critique, which forms the crux of *Cattle*'s narrative, occurs in simultaneity with textual and paratextual treatment of Asian identities; converging representations of Asian-ness (through the character of Chum Lee and through Onoto Watanna's paratextual presence), gesture towards the various ambiguities and slippages that characterized Asian racialization in this period. Ultimately, *Cattle*'s narrative and the contexts surrounding its production and reception reveal the close relationship between literary production and nation building in this period, the Canadian literary establishment's investment in the frontier as a site of nation building, and the various forces and external pressures exerted upon Asian identities at this time.

As a Chinese Canadian writer, Eaton responded to her complicated placement in white nation-space by playing into the interwar moment in canon-building. As Carole Gerson explains, the rise in universities and colleges in Canada occurred in tandem with post-war patriotism, which, in turn, led to the development of Canadian Literature as a field of study ("The Canon" 47). While largely under-examined by critics, this moment set the stage for mid-century canon formation. Ever-enterprising, Eaton was attuned to prevailing trends in Canadian literary production. In addition to her work as president of the Calgary branch of Canadian Authors Association, she also contributed to a body of criticism directed towards promotion of literary nationalism. In a speech delivered to the Canadian Club of Calgary in 1923, she spoke not only to the nationalizing role of Canadian literature, but to the nationalizing role of *Western Canadian Literature*. In her words:

We need to proclaim to the world that Canada possess [sic] remarkable natural and mineral resources, the qualities and the climate that go to the making of one of the greatest countries on earth.

Our orators and advertisers—all of the railroads and government tracts and pamphlets, cannot, I declare, have the power or the effect of a single great novel or poem from the magic pen of an inspired writer. (Reeve, “The Canadian Spirit”)

This address confirms the linkage between Canadian literary nationalism and western expansion; just as the land must be cultivated by able-bodied immigrants, Canada must also nurture the aspirations of its writers. In order to secure her placement within the national literary establishment, Eaton capitalized on her friend Price’s work as an established Calgary-based journalist. In this role, Price (a white woman) helped to publicly verify Eaton’s alignment with mainstream Canadian values. Price, who is quoted in this interview with a reporter from the *Toronto Star*, foregrounds Eaton’s sense of national identity:

Mrs. Reeve, *intensely Canadian*, wearied of writing merely Japanese stories, but as she explained, her father and uncle lived so long in the Far East, and she, as a child, had heard so many stories at home of her parents’ sojourn there that the country appealed to her imagination. (“Montreal Girl,” emphasis added)

Having cast aside the frivolity of her Japanese novels, Eaton’s public re-branding as an *intensely Canadian* writer set the stage for *Cattle*’s critical reception.

*Maclean*’s editor J. Vernon Mackenzie<sup>58</sup> situated the novel within the tradition of “new realism,” alongside Laura Salverson’s *The Viking Heart* (“In the Editor’s Confidence” 2). Nearly a century later, Mackenzie’s gesture speaks to certain shifts in early twentieth-century literary sensibilities; by the mid-century, neither Eaton nor Salverson were considered realist writers, a change that Gerson explores in her analysis of the gendered history of Canadian canon formation in “The Canon between the Wars: Field-notes of a Feminist Literary Archeologist.” Tonally, *Cattle* veers towards the melodramatic; its plotline is improbable and (with the possible exception of Angella Loring<sup>59</sup>) its characters are not fully realized. Many critics overlooked *Cattle*’s failings,

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<sup>58</sup> Notably, in this 1924 editorial note, Mackenzie addresses Eaton as “Onoto Watanna.”

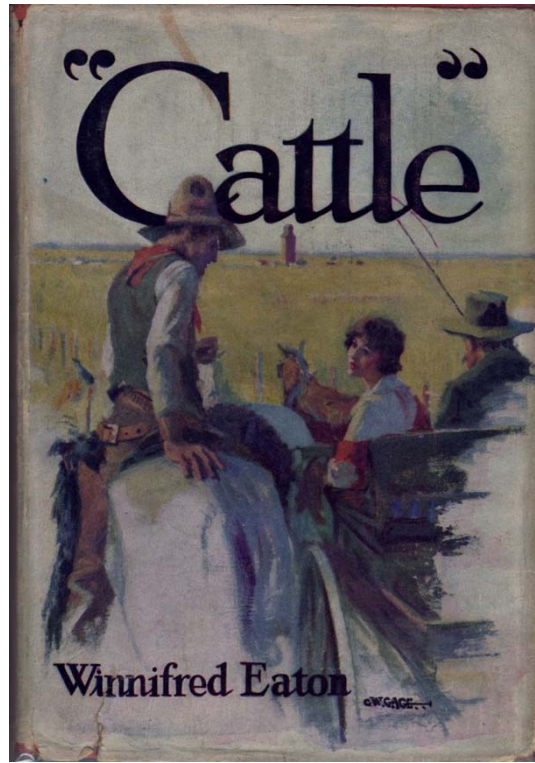
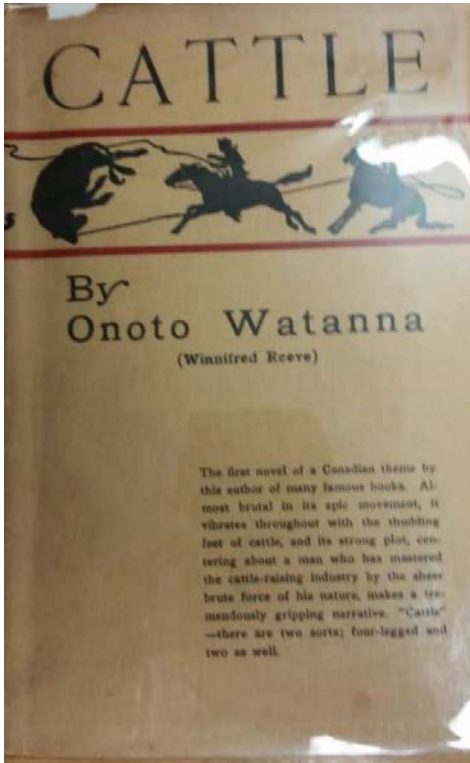
<sup>59</sup> Eaton grants Angella Loring a first-person perspective through her journal. Unlike the overly earnest Nettie Day (a more traditional heroine), Angella is constructed with a complicated background story that anchors her often-challenging personality and drives her resistance against Bull Langdon.

choosing instead to focus on the novel's rendering of sexual violence, though some readers apparently bristled at its raw depiction of "the facts of life" (Powell). Cultural writers seemed to support Eaton's engagement with more brutal subject matter. A reviewer for the Toronto *Globe* declared it "the most powerful and dramatic study of ranch life which has been written by any Canadian author to date," its contents a departure from the "light, breezy" style of her Japanese novels ("Canadian Narrative," 14). S. Morgan Powell of the Montreal *Star* deemed *Cattle* "a great Canadian novel." An American reviewer offered the following assessment:

Not a half-bad tale, and most effectively told. No words wasted, no padding, no mawkish sentiment, [only] the great open spaces where men are men and everybody has red blood. All the characters vivid, even those with minor roles. Tempo of book even. No ragged edges, no creaking machinery. ("A Good Cattle Country Story")

If taken out of context, the latter paragraph may be easily mistaken for a reading of Ernest Hemingway's terse prose; in this sense, *Cattle*'s reception is very much in keeping with the interwar period's critical preoccupation with "virile," unsentimental writing (Gerson, "The Canon" 53-54).





**Figure 2.5** Cover art for the Canadian (left) and American (right) editions of *Cattle*

This reading was bolstered by the aims and motives of Eaton’s Canadian publisher, Musson, whose intentions are made clear through *Cattle*’s design (see Figure 2.7). The cover art consists of modernist clean lines and silhouettes. Represented in this image is a man on horseback, lasso in hand. Beneath the scene is the author’s byline: by Onoto Watanna (Winnifred Reeve). The eye is drawn to an extensive paragraph in the lower right corner:

The first novel of a Canadian theme by this author of many famous books. Almost brutal in its epic movement, it vibrates throughout with the studding lust of cattle, and its strong plot, centering about a man who has mastered the cattle-raising industry by the sheer brute force of his nature, makes a tremendously gripping narrative. “Cattle”—there are two sorts; four-legged and two as well.

This description situates Bull Langdon as *Cattle*’s solitary hero, an interpretation that is supported by *Cattle*’s reviewers. In truth, while Bull furthers much of the plotline and is indeed central to Eaton’s critique of settler colonialism, he is not the central protagonist.

Arguably, the story revolves around his victims, Nettie Day and Angella Loring; however, the Canadian publisher's paratextual framings clearly celebrate Bull and the oppressive structures that sustain him. Musson's marketing strategy differed considerably from that of Eaton's American publisher (Watt), who situated the novel firmly within the generic constraints of the western (which, given *Cattle*'s rather simplistic treatment of plot and character, may be a more apt classification). In contrast with the Canadian edition's design, the American version features a detailed rendering by George W. Gage, a popular illustrator of mystery and western novels. While Gage's cover suggests dramatic tension and the possibility of a romantic triangle, the Musson version is in keeping with modernism's more minimalistic sensibilities. In short, Musson's *Cattle* is presented as a cultural artefact; Watt's *Cattle* is clearly ephemeral. The crucial difference between Musson's and Watt's treatment of *Cattle* affirms the commercial and cultural forces at play in the interwar period and makes visible the relationship between the literary and the national.

The material representation of the Canadian edition and the novel's overall critical reception reveal two points of tension: first, the paratextual re-centering of Bull as hero and protagonist seems to undermine *Cattle*'s more critical elements; second, Onoto Watanna's continued presence, both on the cover and in the minds of *Cattle*'s reviewers, is conflicted. Clearly Musson wished to capitalize on Eaton's past celebrity; however, the added byline (Winnifred Reeve) undermines her past persona by revealing its constructedness. Similarly, reviewers both acknowledged and delegitimized her past work by pitting *Cattle*'s supposed realism against the sentimentality and artifice of her Japanese tales. These critical declarations confirm not only *Cattle*'s Canadian-ness, and thus its placement in a nationalized literary culture, but also Eaton (or "Winnifred Reeve's") own placement in the national space. Contrary to Onoto Watanna's racial and national ambiguities, Winnifred Reeve is authentically, and indisputably, Canadian. According to critics, *Cattle* proves this because it situates the frontier space, and the bodies that occupy it, in the realm of the real (as opposed to Japan, which Eaton's critics envision as an imagined space). And yet, Onoto Watanna's lingering textual and paratextual presence complicates this critical positioning by gesturing towards multiple,

persistent iterations of Asian-ness. This complication closely coincides with Eaton's critique of colonialism.

Eaton's shadow-persona is always present, both in her public persona (as Winnifred Eaton Reeve) and in her literary output. On a paratextual level, Onoto Watanna's memory is reanimated through critical and material apparatuses (covers, title pages, and bylines). On a textual level, Eaton introduces *Cattle* with a description of a prairie chinook that subtly gestures towards transcontinental movements and transitions. In one passage, for example, Eaton describes how "a 'Chinook,' the warm wind which has its origin in the Japanese current, had melted the flying snow of a March blizzard" (*Cattle* 13).<sup>60</sup> In addition to the Japanese wind, Eaton also makes a reference to a kimono (*Cattle* 61). I read these references as teasing hints, reminders that alert the reader to the author's dualistic persona, as both Onoto Watanna *and* as Winnifred Eaton Reeve. In spite of these Orientalist gestures, *Cattle*'s plot and setting centres upon benevolent but dominating British Canadian settlers. Eaton's follow-up to *Cattle*, *His Royal Nibs* (1925), continues the same pattern. The main character of this novel is a British Canadian settler named Edward Eaton. The equivalence of the writer's and character's surname seems a legitimizing gesture as Eaton plants a fictive version of her father into the frontier-land (this fictive version of Edward Eaton is far less subversive than his real-life counterpart, a convicted human smuggler). The question thus remains: how do Asian Canadian communities and individuals fit into this setting? Eaton attempts to address this question through her depiction of a multi-racial frontier.

*Cattle*'s characters operate within multiple tiers of structural violence: between men and women, between white settlers and Indigenous peoples, and between white settlers and racialized settlers. Jean Lee Cole interprets *Cattle*'s setting as a "multi-ethnic frontier" (128) in the spirit of American and Canadian prairie writers Willa Cather, Ralph Connor, Frederick Grove, Martha Ostenso, Ole Rolvaag, Laura Salverson, Robert Stead, and Arthur Stringer. Cole's summation is not entirely accurate, though. Eaton differs from her contemporaries in one crucial sense: unlike Grove, Ostenso, and many of their

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<sup>60</sup> Because it is more easily accessible, I am citing the American version, which was published under the byline "Winnifred Eaton."

contemporaries, Eaton does not focus her attention on Swedish, Ukrainian, or Icelandic immigrants, at least not explicitly. Instead, Eaton's prairie is dominated by (white) American and British settlers. These figures, representative of Britain and America's competing colonial interests, reveal the particular colonial tensions that reside at the heart of Eaton's novel.

The plot takes place in a southern Albertan community known as Yankee Valley. Technically, Yankee Valley is a Canadian territory, occupied by a number of American settlers (including Bull Langdon). Eaton's vision of the frontier-as-borderland is not a freeing locale in line with William New and Barbara Godard's conception of the borderland as a transgressive space where gendered, national, and racial identities may be challenged (New 27; Godard, "Writing Between Cultures" 232); Eaton's frontier is striated, a hierarchical rather than hybridized space. Through this segregated space, Eaton establishes a clear thematic correspondence between white agency and racial marginalization. Bull's rapaciousness is not limited to his treatment of women; it is also expressed through his contemptuous attitude towards government and privately owned livestock:

[Bull's] covetous eye had marked the Indian cattle, "rolling fat," in the term of the cattle world, and smugly grazing over the rich pasture lands, with the "I.D." (Indian Department) brand upon their right ribs, warning "rustlers" from east, west, south, and north, that the beasts were the property of the Canadian Government. (Eaton, *Cattle* 2)

His seizure of the Indian Department's livestock, not to mention livestock belonging to other farmers, suggests the failure of colonial policing structures in the face of American encroachment. It is possible (and probable) that Eaton's rendering of Bull is intended to capitalize on Canadian anxieties concerning the threat of American territorial and cultural expansion. On a much more subversive level, Eaton's depiction of Bull suggests a larger critique of racial and gendered power structures. Bull represents a vision of white masculinity that is decidedly—and most dangerously—unchecked. Since American difference is obviously not racialized, Bull's white masculinity affords him certain freedoms that remain inaccessible to other characters. Regardless of his national affiliation, or his feelings about the Canadian government, Bull may move freely across

property lines and state-sanctioned boundaries (some of his work necessitates movement across the Canada-US border). Much of *Cattle*'s narrative tension lies in the contrast between Bull's untethered movements—his fearless traversal into privately and federally owned properties—and the containment of bodies, both animal and human. The narrative is punctuated by frequent references to geographic boundaries, property lines and fences, thus conjuring a vision of the frontier that is less freeing than it is compartmentalized. The reserve is an obvious example of containment. Chum Lee's confinement to the ranch kitchen (not to mention his confinement within a stereotyped characterization) is another example. In the weeks leading up to her rape, Nettie lives and works with Bull's ailing wife in the Langdon's ranch house, a signifier for domestic entrapment. Not all spaces of containment are necessarily limiting, though. After her rape, Nettie Day seeks refuge in the homestead of her friend Angella Loring. For a time, the Loring home serves as a protective and healing space, an alternative to Bull Langdon's violent hand or the gentler paternalism of Angella's suitor, the Scottish-born Dr. McDermott.

To present the white male settler as a monstrous threat is a bold re-framing of otherness. Eaton's extreme depiction of Bull reveals white settlement's horrific potential. This observation is not intended to overstate *Cattle*'s subversive nature. In the book's final chapters, the condescending Scottish Canadian doctor Dr. McDermott is imbued with a heroic status. Furthermore, Eaton's racialized and Indigenous characters are largely undeveloped. Bull's son Jake is a young mixed-race Indigenous man with a mental disability, which turns out to be the result of his father's abuse. As such, Jake functions as little more than a wounded emblem of white male violence. Aside from a brief gesture towards Black settlement in Alberta (Eaton, *Cattle* 281),<sup>61</sup> the only racialized character is Bull's cook, Chum Lee. Chum Lee is a limited character and he is referred to using the racializing descriptor *Chinaman*. We know little about him, aside from what is conveyed in brief passages like this one:

Chum Lee had no desire to die in the white man's land; he wanted to repose in peace under the sacred soil of his ancestors. He would have run away

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<sup>61</sup> Eaton's reference to "Jim Crow, the only darky in the camp" (*Cattle* 281) illuminates the writer's racial biases. Eaton's racism towards Black people is most evident in her memoir, *Me*, when the writer discusses her work as a journalist for a Jamaican newspaper (see [Eaton], *Me*).

from the camp, but the barren country, with its vast blanket of snow, gave no hope of any refuge, and he feared Bull Langdon as though he were an evil spirit. (Eaton, *Cattle* 245)

This is not a nuanced vision of Chinese Canadian identity. Eaton characterizes Chum Lee as a perpetual foreigner, a temporary, transitory presence, who yearns for ancestral lands. In spite of these limitations, Chum Lee is granted an important role, when he frees Bull Langdon's starving livestock from their pen:

[Chum Lee] would perform a last act of charity and win the favor [sic] of the gods. The famished brutes within would come presently against the loosened door, and find themselves free from the prison where they had been confined for days. That day, bellowing and moaning their unceasing demands for feed and water, the bulls crashed against the doors, as the Chinaman had foreseen, and they gave. (Eaton, *Cattle* 279)

This brief passage captures *Cattle*'s preoccupation with (racialized and Indigenous) containment and (white settler) movement. Chum Lee's action also, crucially, leads to the unleashing of the bull that fatally gores Bull Langdon, a plot point that exorcizes his unhinged version of white masculinity from the plains, leading to a sense of restoration. The cook's character arises from Eaton's playfulness as well as her writerly instincts; she caters to her reader's expectations, only to subtly subvert them. Not as nuanced as the half-caste women who populate her Japanese novels, Chum Lee is a "Chinaman" cook, a designation that echoes the language of white settlers and, thus, conforms to the strictures of Chinese-ness as a constructed category. Ultimately, he may be seen simply as a stock character, a sign of Eaton's placation to her readers; or, when viewed in light of the writer's body of work and her changing authorial persona, Chum Lee might function as part of a larger commentary on the constructed-ness of Asian Canadian identities and their reformulation in various spaces and contexts. That Eaton tasks Chum Lee with releasing the fatal bull is certainly no coincidence: he is another *schwelle* figure—a contained body who, through an unhinged gate, precipitates the failure of the container.

While *Cattle* hints at themes explored in Eaton's early work, it also signals a change in focus, a movement towards an even broader and more explicit response to settler colonialism as a structure that articulates and contains different identities. That structure includes Asian racialization and its slippages, ambiguities, its constructed-ness.

In the second half of the novel, a mysterious sickness sweeps the prairie; Eaton makes a point of tracing its transnational spread, from Europe to North American, from city to frontier. This plot point is likely an allusion to the Great Influenza of 1918; however, *Cattle* seems curiously ahistoric. The First World War is absent from the text—nowhere do the young men of Bar Q allude to overseas service— and yet, the war and its aftermath were clearly in the public consciousness at the time of *Cattle*'s publication. *Cattle*'s disease comes from a nebulously defined metropole and its trajectory—from Europe to the Canadian prairie—imitates the movement of settler bodies. Eaton's treatment of this theme seems intended to harness a larger anxiety about futurity of the settler colonial project, but unlike, say, Nellie McClung's arguably eugenicist text *Painted Fires* (1925),<sup>62</sup> in which urban slums are a source of moral and biological contagion, the cause of this sickness is not so easily located. Its scope is broader and its source is deeply embedded in structures of power that are simultaneously gendered and colonizing. Sickness and disease are so prevalent in *Cattle* that it takes on a larger resonance; they represent something larger and more deeply unsettling. After her rape, Nettie Day suffers from a nervous breakdown. McDermott describes the girl as a "sick lass." Sickness in Eaton's prairie is more than contagion: it may also manifest itself as a traumatized response to structural violence.

Chum Lee's containment, in both a figurative and in a literal sense, is part of this violence. But what Onoto Watanna's persistent presence represents—that is, the conflicted perceptions and desires of both the writer and the various cultural figures that sustain and shape her persona—intercepts this depiction by gesturing towards a more complicated truth. When reflecting upon the relationship between writing, language, and political subjugation, Trinh Minh-ha critiques clear or "well behaved" forms of writing that conform to stylistic and generic "principles of composition":

Clarity is a means of subjection, a quality of official, taught language and of correct writing, two old mates of power: together they flow, together they flower vertically, to impose an order. [...] To write "clearly" one must incessantly prune, eliminate, forbid, purge, purify. (16-17)

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<sup>62</sup> See Devereux, *Growing a Race: Nellie L. McClung and the Fiction of Eugenic Feminism* (2005).

Certainly, at first glance, *Cattle* seems a “well behaved novel,” adhering to certain generic principles; yet much of the text’s difficulty stems not from Eaton’s use of language, but the various ways in which Onoto Watanna’s disruptive presence is made apparent, through both text and paratext. In turn, the interaction between text and paratext muddies the distinction between authorial intention and the respective intentions of various early twentieth-century cultural shapers (editors, publishers, mainstream journalists). These competing and converging voices, perspectives, and shaping hands provide insight into the heightened stakes of interwar race-making and nation-building. In spite of the efforts of Eaton’s publisher and some members of the media, though, *Cattle*’s exclusion from the Canadian literary canon is no surprise. Given its reliance on weak characterizations and ineffective plot devices, its literary merit is certainly questionable; and yet, the critical effort to situate *Cattle* within the terrain of a larger nationalized literary field is thus certainly curious. I read *Cattle*’s critical reception as, in part, an anxious and conflicted response to Eaton’s racialized presence within the Canadian literary establishment. In the case of *Cattle*, the prairie novel is not merely a colonizing tool, wherein the dreams and fantasies of white settlerhood are imposed upon a national readership. It is a contested space.



### **Chapter 3. Long Lance and Eagle Speaker's *Autobiography: The Polyvocal Prairies***

Sylvester Long (1890-1932) was born to Sallie and Joe Long in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, on 1 December 1890. Both Sallie and Joe had white, Indigenous, and Black ancestors. Sallie Long's mother, Adeline, was the child of a plantation owner and an enslaved Lumbee woman: her father was a plantation owner and eventual Senator Andrew Cowles (D. Smith 5-6). Residents of Winston-Salem perceived Joe Long's skin tone as evidence of Black ancestry; however, Long Lance's father denied any traces of Blackness in his family tree. Rather, he identified as the son of a white man and of an enslaved Cherokee mother (D. Smith 6). Due to Joe Long's inability to pass as white, the Longs were, according to the one-drop rule, considered "colored," and Long Lance was admitted to Carlisle Residential School as a member of the Eastern Cherokee tribe. He arrived in Calgary in 1919, after serving with the Canadian military during the First World War. As a self-identified member of the Cherokee nation, he wrote about Indigenous issues for the *Calgary Herald*. In the following years, Long Lance accepted assignments from the *Vancouver Sun*, the *Regina Leader*, and the *Winnipeg Tribune*. As his visibility increased, his persona changed. By 1923, he represented himself to readers as Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance, leader of the Kainai nation. In the mid-1920s, he returned to the United States, where he accepted the role of an Anishinaabe warrior in the 1930 film *Silent Enemy*. Long Lance's growing celebrity warranted the publication of an autobiography, *Long Lance: The Autobiography of a Blackfoot Indian Chief* (1928); however, his career was soon impacted by persistent rumours of his "real" identity, as a mixed-race Black man named Sylvester Long. He died of a self-inflicted shotgun wound in 1932.

This chapter centres upon *Autobiography* and its complex textual genealogy. *Autobiography* weds various voices and perspectives—both settler and Indigenous—while working within multiple generic frameworks: historical fiction, anthropology, journalism, children's adventure stories, memoir, and the western. The result is an especially disjointed, unstable narrative, one that wends back and forth between different speakers and historical moments. *Autobiography* features recycled, rewritten,

recontextualized versions of Long Lance's early journalistic output, including a *Maclean's* article recounting the resistance of Almighty Voice (Cree) (c1875-1897) against the North West Mounted Police (NWMP). Published in the 1 January 1924 issue, "How Canada's Last Outlaw Died" links Almighty Voice's standoff against the NWMP to the decimation of Indigenous food sources. Long Lance rewrote the article and incorporated it into *Autobiography*. An excerpt of the revised telling was published in *Maclean's* in February of 1929 (Long Lance, "Last Stand") to promote the book's publication. Both versions contain the spoken testimony of Spotted Calf, Almighty Voice's mother, along with the voices of those interviewed by Long Lance—the Indigenous *and* settler witnesses to this critical historical event. In addition to his early journalism, and the voices contained therein, *Autobiography* is largely based upon the recorded memories of a collaborator, unnamed in the narrative: Long Lance's friend and adoptive brother Mike Eagle Speaker (1903-1979). As a multi-voiced memoir, the text foregrounds the very particular "weave of internal and external pressures" that shape a racialized writing subject (Miki, "Asiancy" 119); in doing so, *Autobiography* calls into question the very epistemologies that led to Long Lance's transformation into a Kainai chief.

As a North Carolinian, mixed-race, Cherokee-Lumbee man hailed as "colored" and transplanted into Kainai territory, Long Lance's situation is, from a critical standpoint, particularly difficult to pinpoint, precisely because it shakes the "Western folk theory of essential self" to its core (Valentine 104). It is from this complex subject position that Long Lance calls into question colonial truths perpetuated by social and legal systems of racial categorization. In the first portion of this chapter, I situate Long Lance's literary output within the broader history of early twentieth-century racialization and Indigenous subject formation. In order to do so, I explore crucial historic contexts, namely the (Canadian and American) settler state's reliance on pseudo-scientific taxonomies as a method of policing and subjugating Indigenous and racialized populations. This context had a profound impact on the way that Long Lance represented himself and the Canadian prairies, as a colonial formation. Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe) is inclined to see Long Lance as what he refers to as a small "i," inauthentic *indian* subject, "bold but derivative" (102). While Long Lance's participation in systems of colonial oppression—as made evident, for instance, by

his racist writings on Métis people—must be acknowledged, Vizenor’s seeming categorization of Long Lance as a mere “simulation” or “pose” of the “native real” (100) negates the complex negotiations that are reflected through his textual work and his changing public persona. Having surveyed much of his literary output, and the different contexts in which he wrote, I see the emergence of another subject: Long Lance’s position is that of a displaced “eye/I witness,” whose fluctuating postures speak to the converging histories of Indigenous displacement and Black segregation. He speaks from a uniquely conflicted and at times multitudinous, position and, in doing so, expresses a more nuanced, more complicated truth about Indigeneity and identity formation. Here, I am borrowing from Julia Emberley’s notion of the settler eye/I witness, with the acknowledgement that Long Lance is *not* the white settler subject that forms of the basis of Emberley’s critique. However, as an observant journalist and as newcomer to Treaty Seven territory, his textual work reflects a movement from the position of spectator to that of an engaged witness of Western Canadian “indigenous histories of domicile and the dissolution of kinship relations and their social, political, and economic realities” (*Defamiliarizing* 178).

The second section of this chapter treats Long Lance’s coverage of Almighty Voice’s resistance against the NWMP (and *Maclean’s* magazine’s editorial treatment of his coverage) as epitextual materials that either anticipate *Autobiography’s* publication or shape the way it was received by its readers. This section considers the emergence of Long Lance’s “eye/I witness” perspective through his early literary output, specifically through his recounting of Almighty Voice’s act of resistance. Since *Autobiography* is the product of a collaboration between a mixed-race writer with probable Indigenous ancestry and an unnamed Indigenous contributor (Eagle Speaker), I read the text as a dialogic form of expression. According to my reading, *Autobiography* aligns with Mikhail Bakhtin’s definition of the novel as a multi-voiced heteroglossic text, consisting of “social speech types” (Bakhtin 262). The interactions between these “speech types,” which are voiced through “[authorial] speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters” (Bakhtin 263), are inextricable from social relationships. Long Lance’s contributions to *Maclean’s* render visible the ambivalence of his own subject position, as well as the contested nature of early twentieth-century publishing. Ultimately, it is his work within (and against) the hierarchies of Canadian periodical publishing, not

to mention his collaborative work with Eagle Speaker and possibly other unnamed informants, that lends *Autobiography* its heteroglossic cadence.

In the third section of this chapter, my argument moves from an examination of Long Lance's subject position within a specific time and place towards an intersubjective reading that foregrounds his literary partnership with Eagle Speaker. This reading gestures towards different ways of understanding *Autobiography*. Although the narrative is largely based in southern Alberta, unlike my readings of other settler texts (my discussions of Winnifred Eaton and Christine van der Mark, in particular), my work with *Autobiography* has guided me away from a conversation about southern Alberta as a traditional agrarian setting. Where, then, does *Autobiography* fit into a larger conversation about the Canadian prairies as a settler colonial construction? As I will demonstrate through this paratextual reading, *Autobiography*'s authorship is not simple, nor is it singular. This inconsistent memoir presents multiple narratives stemming from multiple subject positions, thus guiding the reader towards different histories and, in turn, different relationships to land and community. Throughout the narrative, Long Lance offers extensive descriptions of nomadic movements into present-day Montana (across what is now the Canada-United States border) and through the Rocky Mountains. Clearly, Long Lance adapted some of these details from the testimonies of Eagle Speaker and other unnamed Kainai, Siksika, and Apsáalooke individuals that he encountered throughout his short but productive career in journalism. In his research on the Native Hawaiian diasporic presence in Victoria, British Columbia, David A. Chang (Kanaka Maoli) uses early nineteenth-century periodicals to generate a decolonizing history that re-centres Native Hawaiian ways of thinking about land, space, and movement. *Autobiography* is due for a similar re-reading, one that re-orientes Long Lance and Eagle Speaker's narrative within Kainai (and potentially Cree, Apsáalooke, and Siksika) systems of knowledge. Rather than dismissing *Autobiography* as the product of a troubled imposter, readers should turn their ear towards the multiple voices that speak to another way of thinking about land and region.

## Contextualizing Long Lance

### A Present Absence: Indigeneity and Blackness in the American South

Critical readings of Long Lance's textual work have long been intertwined with larger conversations about racial performance and authenticity. Since the 1982 publication of Donald B. Smith's revelatory biography, *Long Lance: The True Story of An Imposter*,<sup>63</sup> settler and Indigenous critics alike have located Long Lance within a larger tradition of racial imposterism. In *The Imaginary Indian* (1992), for example, Daniel Francis positions Long Lance as a "celebrity Indian," alongside Grey Owl and Pauline Johnson (Mohawk).<sup>64</sup> In more recent scholarship (2018), settler critic Rosmarin Heidenreich devotes an entire chapter to Long Lance in *Literary Imposters: Canadian Autofiction of the Early Twentieth Century*, while Cree critic and publisher Gregory Younging acknowledges the possibility of Long Lance's Indigenous ancestry, but ultimately categorizes his writings as "charlatan literature." Vizenor makes similar reference to Long Lance's "obscure trace" of Indigeneity but concludes that "he could not document his ancestors, so he created a native absence as presence" (99). Wayde Compton nuances such readings of Long Lance's racial identity by locating the writer within the broader context of Black enslavement, Indigeneity, and race reading. Although Long Lance self-identified as Indigenous, his family's social and legal position within their hometown of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was reliant on local knowledge, "demographic precedents," and pheneticization (Compton 32). According to this argument, their positioning was determined by the fact that members of the Long family "looked too much like they *might* be black" (Compton 32). Because Compton makes clear that racialization is a process informed in part by the perceptions of a racializing subject, his argument does not negate the possibility of Long Lance's Indigeneity, but

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<sup>63</sup> Red Deer Press published an updated version of the biography in 2002. Clearly, D. Smith's perceptions of Long Lance have changed over the years (from our conversations, I know that he acknowledges the complexity of Long Lance's life and the contexts that shaped it and welcomes intervening perspectives from new researchers). While D. Smith's position has no doubt shifted, my analysis draws upon the 1982 biography, due to its considerable influence on how critics and historians have approached Long Lance's life and literary output.

<sup>64</sup> Francis's inclusion of Johnson in this chapter is somewhat problematic, since he situates her in the company of two "imposters" (Grey Owl and Long Lance).

creates space for it.<sup>65</sup> However, since Indigenous nationhood is not reliant on self-identification alone, but rather each nation's "self of governance and how they define themselves, how they consider citizenship or membership in their nations or communities" (Akiwenzie-Damm, "What Does Being"), further inquiry needs to be conducted in order to determine the extent to which members of the Cherokee, Lumbee, and Kainai nations have recognized his membership in their respective communities.

The close correspondence between racialization and settler colonialism has not only impacted settler and Indigenous perceptions of Long Lance, but also Long Lance's relationships with different communities and his positioning in relation to them. Patrick Wolfe conceptualizes racialization and Indigenous displacement as concurrent processes:

Indians and Black people in the US have been racialized in opposing ways that reflect their antithetical roles in the formation of US society. Black people's enslavement produced an inclusive taxonomy that automatically enslaved the offspring of a slave and any other parent. In the wake of slavery, this taxonomy became fully racialized in the "one-drop rule," [...] For Indians, in stark contrast, non-Indian ancestry compromised their indigeneity, producing "half-breeds," a regime that persists in the form of blood quantum regulations. As opposed to enslaved people, whose reproduction augmented their owners' wealth, Indigenous people obstructed settlers' access to land, so their increase was counterproductive. ("Settler Colonialism," 387-88)

In his early years, the question of Long Lance's racial origins had a very real impact on his quality of life, including his access to education. For most Black children, access to formal schooling was not certain. In comparison, the federal government funded a network of residential schools for Indigenous youths intended to impart white settler values to its students. Long Lance's admission form for Carlisle Residential School list him as half Lumbee (on his mother's side) and half Cherokee (on his father's side) (D. Smith 15). When Long Lance applied for admission into West Point military academy a

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<sup>65</sup> Compton poses some provocative question(s): "what exactly were Long Lance's transgressions? He was no chief and he was no Blackfoot. But was he a black man?" (33). Compton continues,

He passed in order to intercept a roaming pheneticization that he knew could denote one suddenly, firmly, and forever. Long Lance's passing was a matter of the best defense being a good offence against an opposing urge to round down any racial indecipherability to occult Africanity. (33-34)

few years later, he described himself as a member of the Eastern Cherokee tribe. According to D. Smith's interpretation, this was a move intended 'to distance the young man from the possibility of colouredness (32). As D. Smith notes in his biography, Long Lance represented himself as Cherokee until the early 1920s after he drew acclaim as a popular journalist for the *Calgary Herald* and subsequently adopted the guise of a Kainai chief. While D. Smith does acknowledge the legal and social complexity of late nineteenth and early-twentieth century racialization, as a whole his biography seems to put forth a linear narrative of racial transformation, in which Sylvester Long "becomes" an imposter. At points, he seems to suggest that Long Lance's transformation is an outcome of a series of compounding lies; for instance, when Long Lance was accepted to West Point as a member of the Cherokee nation, the biographer uses pathologizing language: "By now, Long Lance had lied enough to be inured to it. It was becoming a habit; indeed, he was close to being a compulsive liar" (D. Smith 32). I am not certain if the truth is so linear. As was the case with Eaton, I see Long Lance's fluctuating self-representations as a strategic response to competing colonial geographies.

In order to further nuance D. Smith's explanation, I must turn towards the colonial archive. Categories of racial and Indigenous difference emerge from (and respond to) the specific needs of a conquering class:

Race's adaptability was sufficient to accommodate the complexity of imperialism's far-flung network of unequal social relations. For every articulation—relations of slavery, of indenture, or dispossession, of compradorship, of (inter)mediation, of commercial exchange, a corresponding racial category could be nominated. (Wolfe, *Traces* 10)

In the decades following the Civil War, Southern politicians strove to maximize the Black labour force in the absence of slavery. Although not codified into law until the 1924 *Racial Integrity Act* (Virginia), the one-drop rule was a tacitly understood social guideline that designated mixed-race individuals (or individuals perceived as mixed-race) as colored, thus expanding the Southern Black population. Indigenous identities<sup>66</sup> were articulated via the interplay between emerging definitions of whiteness and coloured-ness

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<sup>66</sup> Bow makes a similar argument regarding Asian-American identities in the American South. See *Partly Colored: Asian Americans and Racial Anomaly in the Segregated South* (2010).

(Bow 7). In Canada, as early as 1850, British colonists enacted legislation granting the colonial government the authority to define Indigenous identities. These laws culminated in the *Indian Act* of 1876, which clearly outlined the parameters of Indian status and its role in determining title to land (Canada, House, *An Act to Amend and Consolidate*). As a colony in a state of rebellion, the United States government did not draw upon Britain's foundational system of legislation and government controls, at least not immediately. Instead, as Bonita Lawrence (Mi'kmaw) explains, the United States government enforced more directive acts of violence and warfare, "later supplemented by legislation and government policies, all of which were focused on directly removing whole communities from their land base and gradually destroying tribal sovereignty, rather than Indianness through identity legislation" (*'Real Indians'* 7). In 1887, Congress enacted the *Dawes Act* with the intent of dismantling Indian reservations and thus tribal power. Nowhere in the *Act* does the question of identity arise. Instead the document focuses on the relationship between the United States and its subordinate "nations" (United States, Congress, *An Act to Provide*). That the *Dawes Act* was passed in the years following the Civil War, is suggestive of the simultaneity of Indigenous assimilation and the expansion of the Black labour force as concurrent processes intended to further the dominance of white settler society.

In the early nineteenth century, federal authorities forcibly relocated the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muskogee, and Seminole tribes from the Southeast to lands designated as Indian territory. But the speciously termed "Indian Removal" did not rid the southern states of its Indigenous presence. A small group of Cherokees (now recognized as the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians) remained in the western part of North Carolina. Mixed-race, off-reserve communities such as Sallie Long's ancestors—the Lumbees of Roanoke County, North Carolina—were subject to much scrutiny and debate as white Southerners struggled to situate them within a Black/white binary. Paradoxically, in order to prove their Indigeneity, the Lumbees have had to emphasize their relationship with whiteness (and simultaneously distance themselves from the Black diaspora). Descended from the Cheraws, the Lumbees are the product of multiple generations of Indigenous displacement and interracial union with whites and Blacks. To avoid the many restrictions imposed upon those of African descent, the Lumbees publicly



denied their Black heritage. In a 1960 history of the Lumbee people, Clarence E. Lowery emphasizes the tribe's white civility as well as their English and Native blood, which is pure "to the degree that they cannot be distinguished from white people" (12). C. Lowery's reference to tribal purity is rooted in a story perpetuated by a Democrat named Hamilton McMillan. In the decades that followed the Civil War, Democrats wished to dissolve the vast bloc of Black and Indigenous voters who supported the Republican party (no doubt they also wished to discourage all other forms of community organization and political solidarity). And so, to strengthen ties between Lumbees and white Democrats, McMillan sought to link the tribe with a colony of English settlers, who had disappeared in the sixteenth century (M. Lowery, 26-27). The narrative of the lost colony appealed to white authorities and in 1885 the State of North Carolina recognized the tribe as the Croatans of Roanoke County. As of May 2019, the Lumbee tribe's official website makes no mention of the lost colony nor does it refer to the community's multi-racial origins. Instead, the website provides a timeline of tribal history that charts a linear trajectory from the inland movement of the Cheraws to the tribe's current location in Roanoke County (Lumbee Tribe). This pared-down narrative may serve a particular function, that is, to increase the tribe's chances of obtaining full recognition from the American federal government by de-emphasizing their complicated racial history; however, from Malinda Maynor Lowery's (Lumbee) experience, the reality of how members of the Lumbee community actually see themselves is far more nuanced:

Lumbees tend to discuss ancestry and kinship as somewhat distinct layers of identity. I was taught that our mixed-race ancestry doesn't make us less Indian; an outsider who marries in is able to stay in because he or she can live with and even adopt some of the symbols and attitudes that Lumbees have used to maintain our community. The children of such unions are Lumbees because they have Lumbee family and perhaps because they and their descendants stay in the community and contribute to it for generations, upholding the values of their non-Indian ancestor initially embraced. This view, I think, generally sums up Lumbee attitudes about our mixed-race ancestry. (12)

Clearly, Long Lance did not think that his mixed heritage made him "less Indian"; however, significant changes in the State's treatment of Indigeneity occurred in years following North Carolina's recognition of the Lumbee tribe (then known as Croatan) in

1885 through to the 1930s. During these crucial decades, the federal and state governments gradually refined the “epistemic foundations”<sup>67</sup> of state-enforced racial divisions. In the absence of any federally sanctioned definition of Indian status, Southern authorities adopted informal means of articulating Indigeneity, through oral accounts, family histories, or visual markers of racial difference. In regard to the latter, the Bureau of Indian Affairs kept an extensive visual record of mixed race and unrecognized Indigenous peoples in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the 1910s, the Coharie, another mixed-race Indigenous community, attempted to gain recognition as members of the Lumbee tribe. To do so, the tribe appealed to the pheneticizing eyes of the state. A pamphlet entitled *The Croatan Indians of Sampson County, North Carolina: Their Origin and Racial Status* asserts the group’s purity of blood as a series of photographs depict the Coharie, thereby inviting the readers to interpret the racial identities of the photographic subjects (see Butler). In this racial climate, Long Lance played up his alignment with white settler communities (and his distance from the Black community) because, seemingly paradoxically, it affirmed his Indigenous belonging. Separated from his ancestral communities through enslavement and colonial displacement, Long Lance may not have grown up among the Lumbees of Roanoke County, or the Eastern Cherokees, but he was certainly familiar with the racial climate of the southern United States and what it demanded of mixed-race, off-reservation Indigenous peoples. To a certain extent, Long Lance’s experiences in the American South informed his relations with Indigenous nations in the Canadian West.

### **Competing Colonialisms: Performing Indigeneity in the Canadian West**

As a transnational figure who worked in and among various Indigenous and settler communities, Long Lance negotiated between competing systems of colonial oppression. Upon his arrival in Calgary in 1919, Long Lance was no longer encumbered by the one-drop rule of the southern United States. Although certainly subject to racial discrimination,<sup>68</sup> as a self-identified Cherokee man his day-to-day life was not directly

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<sup>67</sup> I am borrowing this term from Mawani’s study of early cross-racial relationships in Canada (33).

<sup>68</sup> D. Smith writes: “Long Lance realized that in race-conscious Calgary there were limits beyond which he could not go” (52). At times, Long Lance was pheneticized as Black. *Calgary Herald* reporter Fred Kennedy

impacted by the particular systems of colonial coercion that affected the social and cultural lives of Indigenous peoples residing on Treaty Seven lands (though this is not to diminish the psychological impact of bearing witness to overt racism). In many communities, Indian Agents and officers of the NWMP controlled the movements of individuals who wished to leave their reserve by requiring them to carry documentation. Ultimately, the pass system emerged as an attempt on the part of colonial administrators and policing agents to deter community-building between nations and between those who resided on treaty territories and those residing off-reserve (K. Smith 81).<sup>69</sup> Much like the one-drop rule, state officials did not codify this measure into law; and yet, as a punitive structure arising in response to the resistance movement led by Louis Riel, it succeeded in fostering a climate of social isolation and containment that persisted over the course of multiple generations (K. Smith 82). In hiring a Cherokee man to report on issues affecting the Kainai, Tsuut'ina, and Siksika nations, the *Calgary Herald's* editorial staff were not only able to capitalize on the reporter's professed knowledge of Indigenous lives, but also his relative mobility and his ability to circulate between different communities.

Long Lance's fluctuating subject position is reflective of racism's permutations across various nationalized (United States, Canada) and regionalized geographies (the American South, the Canadian West). Renisa Mawani sees racialization as a reactive and sometimes inconsistent process. Although the process is mutable, its goal is always the same: to further the project of white settlement by drawing boundaries around populations that colonial agents perceive as destabilizing (Mawani 28). Through the production of colonial knowledge (via legal and scientific apparatuses), nineteenth-century colonial administrators produced a series of changing racial (a)symmetries:

It was precisely amidst racial intermixture and heterogeneity, in the proximities between aboriginal peoples, whites, Chinese, "mixed-bloods," and other Others, that colonial authorities drew what they believed to be immutable racial distinctions between these seemingly different

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recalls an instance when a bar patron addressed him using a racist slur: "The way Kennedy remembers it, 'Long Lance's left didn't seem to travel any more than eight inches, but when it connected with the man's jaw, he went out like a light'" (D. Smith 55).

<sup>69</sup> See Alex Williams's 2015 documentary, *The Pass System* for more contextual information.

populations. Although these differentiations were always implicated in sustaining European cultural and racial supremacy, what these broader comparisons illustrate is that racial logics, even those circulating within the same geographical context, were never linear, consistent, or straightforward and were anything but immutable. Racial distinctions [...] shifted the constitution and distribution of state racisms and their corresponding colonial policies. (Mawani 28)

While postbellum US officials were invested in the construction and management of a Black labouring class, the Canadian state responded to the dissolution of American slavery by impeding the migration of Black settlers into the Canadian West via restrictive immigration legislation; to borrow Vizenor's phrasing, the state used the law in an attempt to create a black absence.<sup>70</sup>

Such negotiations between various competing colonial structures are evident in the tone and subject matter of Long Lance's journalistic work. His early journalism (published under the name "S. C. Long Lance") consisted of sympathetic but slightly condescending think-pieces. In one such article, "Blackfoot Indians of the District Have in the Last Fifty Years Evolved from Savage Hunters into an Industrious People," Long Lance disputed the narrative of the dying Indigenous race ("The red man is no longer 'Lo, the Poor Indian'") by emphasizing similarities between the culturally "evolved" Siksika and their white neighbours (16). In this instance, Long Lance employs the same logic that led the Lumbees to assert their Indigeneity by asserting their proximity to whiteness. His writings about Métis and mixed-blood Indigenous people were much less sympathetic. In a letter dated 5 August 1924, Long Lance addressed Kainai reader Ethel T. Feathers, as follows:

I hear that you have taken exception to a paragraph of one of my articles which appeared in The Vancouver Sun; namely, that "certain foreign bloods mixed with Indian produces individuals too crooked to trust themselves."

Well, that is most assuredly a fact; and I have reference to French blood. If you knew all the tricks that have been played on Indians by a certain type of French half-breed, as I know, you would readily realize the truth of what I say.

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<sup>70</sup> This "absence" (or the idea of it) is countered by Compton's and Vernon's crucial work on Black presences in Western Canada.

I hope you have not interpreted my article as meaning that all half-breeds are crooked. You could not have done that if you read it through for I mentioned other white bloods mixed with Indian produced half-breeds altogether as good as either race, in either possible way. Practically all half-breeds of Alberta whom I have met are either half Scotch or English; and you know as well as I do the good standing of these half-breeds, many of whom you have on your reserve; and if there are any there it does not necessarily mean that they are not as good as any Indian. But what I was trying to get at was that in the main French does not mix well with Indian—and I would stick to that through thick and thin.<sup>71</sup> (Letter to Ethel T. Feathers [5 Aug. 1924])

Long Lance may have focused his racist critique on a group that has struggled for legal recognition in order to affirm his authenticity as a self-described “full-blood.” Obviously, this affirmation also suggests an implicit denial of—and distancing from—his mixed identity. In the months following his correspondence with Feathers, Long Lance delivered a lecture to the Women’s Canadian Club of Hamilton, Ontario. According to an account published in the *Hamilton Spectator*, Long Lance explained to his listeners:

The Indians [...] are not Asiatics. We believe we are a separate race, and we have not one single characteristic of the Mongolian. When Japanese, Chinese or negro blood is mixed with white blood that strain will recur in possibly the third generation. Such has never been the case when Indian and white blood are mixed. (“Tells of Indian Life”)

Clearly, Long Lance used his public platform in order to play upon white settler anxieties about racial heterogeneity; much like colonial administrators that form the basis of Mawani’s study, the writer draws upon interracial intimacies in order to support essentializing arguments about “immutable racial distinctions between [...] seemingly different populations” (Mawani 28).

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<sup>71</sup> Lawrence uses the example of Jerry Potts, who served as a translator for Treaty Seven, in order to show the conflicts and difficulties faced by mixed-bloods living within Kainai society: “A heavy drinker who reportedly spoke a number of Native languages but whose English was poor, Potts was asked to translate during the signing of Treaty 7, until his alcoholism made it difficult for him to function adequately. In his later years, while tuberculous and severely alcoholic, he nevertheless worked for the police until he died” (Lawrence, *Real Indians*’ 92). When read in confluence with Long Lance’s correspondence with Feathers, this example illuminates a complicated reality that is absent from the writer’s racist musings. See Lawrence, *Real Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native Peoples and Indigenous Nationhood* (2004), for more discussion.

These racist musings exist in uneasy relation with the journalist's work as an activist. After witnessing Squamish leader Andy Paull's work with the BC Indian Alliance, Long Lance envisioned himself as the person to draw from various Western Canadian First Nations a similar collective (Letter to Canon Middleton [11 May 1922]).<sup>72</sup> The plan never came to fruition; however, at this point, his writings tended to promote a more critical view of the Canadian state, critiquing for instance, the government's attempt to ban potlatch ceremonies. During this period, Long Lance seemed to recognize that he could have more clout as a self-described "Blackfoot" or "Blood Chief" than he could ever have as a diasporic, self-identified Cherokee reporter. In April 1923, the Office of Indian Affairs in Washington received a letter from "Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance, chief of the Blood band<sup>73</sup> of Fort Macleod, Alberta" demanding financial recompense on behalf of the Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation in Saskatchewan (Letter to the Office of Indian Affairs).<sup>74</sup> Photographs from this period often show the writer costumed in an assortment of tribal styles, Siksika, Kainai, and Apsáalooke (D. Smith 101).

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I am very agreeably [sic] surprised to find so much life among the B.C. Indians. You can tell the young fellows there that they are way ahead of us in the plains. They have a B.C. Indian Alliance embracing all tribes of the province, and they have a wide-awake secretary [Andrew Paull], who makes frequent visits to Ottawa to right things that need to be righted. [...] They are fighting a hard fight against certain measure that have recently been put through making it possible for the government to take over Indian lands, not at their present value, but at the value which prevailed when the white man first came to this country, which could be anything ranging from nil to nothing. (Letter to Canon Middleton [11 May 1922]).

Long Lance envisioned himself the person to draw various Western Canadian First Nations into a similar alliance. His strong belief in his leadership abilities is evident in the following sentence: "Now, in my mind, [the Alberta Indian Alliance] is but a small undertaking" (Letter to Canon Middleton [11 May 1922]).

<sup>73</sup> Long Lance seemed to use the terms "Blood" (Kainai) and "Blackfoot" interchangeably. By "Blackfoot" he is likely referring to the confederacy of First Nations that include the Kainai, Siksika, and Piikani peoples.

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If your belief is based solely on the circumstance that the Sioux have been here too long to claim their treaty moneys, then the Sioux would arrive nowhere by attempting to argue that they have not been here too long. They would be forced to hire a firm of lawyers, who could wade through treaties and perhaps delve into precedents, merely to prove what appears to me to be a case of common justice. (Letter to the Office of Indian Affairs)

Although Long Lance moved throughout the Canadian West, he maintained a strong connection with Canon S. H. Middleton, a settler minister and principal of the local residential school. Through Middleton, Long Lance became acquainted with members of the Kainai community. In the summer of 1921, Middleton had arranged a meeting between Eagle Speaker and Long Lance, in the hope that Long Lance would have a positive influence over him. With the support of Eagle Speaker's father, the two were bonded by an adoption ceremony (D. Smith 115-16). Long Lance's relationship with the Eagle Speaker family resulted from certain power dynamics, most notably Middleton's paternalistic relationship with the Eagle Speakers. These power dynamics are certainly reflected in their collaborative work on *Autobiography*, yet the relationship was not purely exploitative. Both Long Lance and Eagle Speaker seemed to take their relationship as adoptive brothers seriously. Their connection shines through their correspondence, as Eagle Speaker's tone, in particular, vacillates between affection and concern.

Daniel Heath Justice's writings on identity and community formation provide a useful framework for understanding Long Lance's relation with Eagle Speaker and the Kainai nation. Drawing upon Jace Weaver (Cherokee)'s notion of communitism, Justice argues that many Indigenous communities privilege relationships over unwavering definitions of tribal belonging:

[C]ommunity isn't a stable or static group of people; rather, it's an ever-adaptive state of being that requires its members to maintain it through their willingness to perform the necessary rituals—spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and familial—to keep the kinship network in balance with itself and the rest of creation. (152)

Kinship criticism is an acknowledgement of the relationships and contexts underpinning Indigenous community formation. While Justice acknowledges that community is not monolithic and that his essay is not an attempt at a generalization, he envisions kinship criticism as an antidote to settler-invader "race-reading" because it is "responsive to the historicized contexts of Indian communities in all their complexity" (159). To read Long Lance through the lens of kinship is to recognize the triangulated relationship between white settlement, African enslavement, and Indigenous displacement. To recognize this

relationship is, in turn, to acknowledge the emergence of static definitions of racial difference and how these same definitions have impacted Indigenous community formation in the past two centuries. Justice's notion of kinship creates room for forms of relations and partnerships that exist beyond the pale of colonizing categories. Such static definitions do not account for the violent severances caused by colonialism nor for the unlikely connections fostered through it. Given Justice's thoughts, the question of Long Lance's actual relation to the Kainai community—that is, the extent to which he was welcomed in their “kinship network”—is a provocative one that requires further consultation with members of this nation.

In spite of his professed allegiances with the Cherokee and Kainai nations, Long Lance was at times pheneticized as Black,<sup>75</sup> yet it was not until his return to the United States in the late 1920s that his racial identity was seriously called into question. Investigations prompted by *Silent Enemy* (1930) producer Ilia Tolstoy and the film's legal counsel William Chanler were largely concerned with probing the question of Long Lance's Blackness.<sup>76</sup> Although neither the publisher nor the producer disclosed details from their investigation, widely circulating rumours of Long Lance's true origins in Winston-Salem, North Carolina's Black community led to his ejection from various New York City society circles. Upon his death in 1932, some Alberta-based journalists acknowledged his uncertain personal history (W. D. Stovell of the *Calgary Albertan* remarked: “Even making allowances of the doubtful authenticity of the legends connected with his name, Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance will go down in history as an adventurer of adventurers.”), but none of the Canadian reports that I reviewed<sup>77</sup> attempted to pinpoint his exact origins. Some accounts accentuate the tragic elements of Long Lance's death, using it as a basis for broader expressions of colonial anxiety. A reporter for the Toronto *Mail and Empire* blamed his suicide on a thwarted relationship with a white woman: “Did the urge to marry into the white race—to become a white man as he

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<sup>75</sup> See Footnote 10.

<sup>76</sup> See D. Smith (160, 198-204). After meeting with the Long family, Tolstoy reported to Chanler: “HAVE FULL INFORMATION AND AFFIDAVIT OF HIM BEING INDIAN AND WHITE” (D. Smith 203, emphasis added).

<sup>77</sup> From clippings in the the Donald B. Smith fonds (Glenbow Archives).



called it—move him profoundly again? Did he heed the inner warning that it would be fatally unhappy? Did the tribal instinct rise supreme, smash his buoyant spirit with the knowledge that he could not marry a white and still remain in the eyes of the Redmen, an Indian?” (Knowles 1). A report from the Toronto *Globe* promoted a similarly tragic angle: “Unfortunately, no matter what success the tribesman may attain, there will be in the back of his head the persistent thought that, despite his talent, he remains under the handicap of color. Again: thus far; no further” (“Thus No Further” 4). Members of the Canadian press seemed to value Long Lance’s status as symbol of tragic Indigeneity but they did not seem as interested in clarifying his proximity to either Indigenous or Black populations. This point becomes clearer when this response is considered in comparison with the national *and* international uproar that followed the revelation of Grey Owl’s “real” origins in 1938.

Since the publication of D. Smith’s biography in 1982, the critical urge to view Long Lance as a sympathetic imposter has persisted. In *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing by and about Indigenous Peoples* (2018), Younging critiques Long Lance’s employment of “the stereotypical image of Indigenous cultures as glorified remnants of the past, à la notions of the noble savage.” Certainly, Long Lance did capitalize on damaging stereotypes and biological notions of race in order to foster his public image. My particular reading of Long Lance’s *Autobiography* is not intended to dismiss or overlook more problematic elements of his self-representation; however, it is also possible to read his public image—his “Blackfoot vest, [...] Blood tobacco pouch, Crow Indian pants” (D. Smith 101)—for signs of ambivalence. As Harry Elam writes, “Definitions of race, like the processes of theatre, fundamentally depend on the relationship between the seen and unseen, between the visibly marked and unmarked, between the real and the illusionary” (5). By simulating the image of the generic “Plains Indian” persona popularized in the western literary genre, Long Lance certainly capitalized on a romantic image in order to *make seen* the unseen diasporic, mixed-race Indigeneity denied to him both legally and socially. Yet Long Lance’s ambivalence stems not only from his use of costume, but also surfaces through the subject position that emerges through his writing: that of the “eye/I witness.” As Emberley writes, the settler “eye/I witness” moves from the role of spectator to that of “a witness to indigenous

histories of domicide and the dissolution of kinship relations and their social, political, and economic realities” (*Defamiliarizing* 178). Long Lance was a visitor to the Canadian West and was witness to its particular Indigenous histories, but as Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance, he positioned himself *as a product* of these same histories. This state of ambivalence is embedded in his writerly voice and is amplified through his participation in settler sites of literary production. Ultimately, it is through this uncertain position that Long Lance called upon others to bear witness.

## The First Person(s) Periodical

As a journalist who often wrote in the first person,<sup>78</sup> Long Lance was uniquely positioned, since he had access to a medium that enabled him to formulate a subject position *and* to continually rewrite it. Paradoxically, it is through first-person narrative that Long Lance acted as textual mediator of sorts, serving as a conduit for Indigenous voices (notably Spotted Calf and Mike Eagle Speaker). Between his conflicted subject position and the inherently hierarchical format of periodical and book publishing at the time, clearly *Autobiography* is not a neutral textual space. Therein lie its challenging qualities. This section touches upon *Autobiography*’s textual genealogy: namely, its rootedness in Canadian periodical publishing (in this case, *Maclean’s*). Long Lance’s Indigeneity may be contested, but because his white settler editors identified him as an Indigenous writer, I argue that Long Lance’s journalistic approach and its representation through editorial framings are tied to the longer lineage of Indigenous literary production.<sup>79</sup>

Indigenous literary production has long been aligned with broader debates about textual mediation, voice, and representation. Sophie McCall speaks to the broader political implications of these conversations:

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<sup>78</sup> See Ponce de Leon’s *Self-Exposure: Human Interest Journalism and the Emergence of Celebrity in America, 1890-1940* (2002) for more discussion about the growth and development of human-interest journalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

<sup>79</sup> Compare with Vernon, who aligns *Autobiography* with testimonies of Black enslavement (“First Black Prairie Novel,” 41-42).

In 1990, the “Oka crisis,” (also known as the standoff at Kanehsatake) coincided with the explosion of debates over the “appropriation of voice” in universities and dominant media outlets. The disputes go to the heart of struggles around the politics of cultural representation: who has the authority to speak, for whom, and under what circumstances? (*First Person* 3-4)

In the early twentieth century, Indigenous voices emerged through published collections in which non-Indigenous writers, editors, and scholars altered or retold Indigenous songs, stories, and testimonies, re-working them in order to suit the parameters of one or more genres: ethnography, autobiography, biography, documentary. Referred to as the “told-to,” early examples of the genre adhered to a Romantic-nationalist agenda that represented songs, prayers, chants, and family narratives, not as dynamic, living texts that support spiritual practices, but as decontextualized artefactual representations of a dying culture (McCall, *First Person* 18). Interactions between settler writers, editors, and Indigenous subjects ranged from non-existent (Martha Craig’s *Legends of the Northland* and some of Constance Lindsay Skinner’s poems are complete fabrications) to ethnographic (anthologist Natalie Curtis relied on recordings of performances that were “detached from conversation and stripped of their narrative frames” [McCall, *First Person* 21]).<sup>80</sup> Although the majority of these collaborations were centred on the presence of a settler writer or recorder, some collections were authored and/or edited by Indigenous writers: for instance, Zitkála-Šá (Ihanktonwan Oyate)’s *Old Indian Tales* (1901); *Legends of Vancouver* (1911) by Pauline Johnson (Mohawk), in collaboration with Joe and Mary Capilano (Squamish); and *Coyote Stories* (1933) by Mourning Dove (Sylix Okanagan). Johnson’s literary partnership with Joe and Mary Capilano is a crucial intervention in this genre. Published in 1911, *Legends of Vancouver* brings together articles originally published in *Boy’s World*, *Mother’s Magazine*, and the *Vancouver Daily Province* (Fee and Nason 215). In this collection, Johnson does not present Joe and

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<sup>80</sup> See, for instance: *Land of Little Rain* (1903) by Mary Austin; *Legends of the North Land* (ca. 1910) by Martha Craig; *Thirty Indian Legends of Canada* (1912) and *Indian Legends* (1913) by Margaret Bemister; *The Indian’s Book* by Natalie Curtis (1907); *The Path on the Rainbow: an Anthology of Songs and Chants from the Indians of North America* (1918) edited by George W. Cronyn; *Red Earth, Poems of New Mexico* (1920) and *The Turquoise Trail, An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry* (1928) by Alice Corbin Henderson; *Songs of the Coast Dwellers* by Constance Lindsay Skinner (1930); and *Sepass Poems: The Songs of Y-Ail-Mihth* (1962) recorded by Eloise Street.

Mary Capilano's narratives as anonymous literary artefacts; rather, *Legends of Vancouver* is a dialogic text that presents an exchange of knowledge between the Mohawk poet and the Capilanos.

McCall identifies the paradox at the heart of these textual partnerships as the simultaneous control *and* erasure of the mediation processes responsible for the “making of the ‘Native Voice’” (*First Person* 18). While much of McCall's research centres upon monographs, editorial perspectives are especially apparent in periodicals, most obviously through editorial notes and letters (in *Maclean's* this editorial space was entitled “In the Editor's Confidence”), through design features such as layout, or through intervening images and advertisements. Newspapers functioned as a crucial vehicle for communication between and within Indigenous communities (Suzack 292), although early examples usually served as textual mouthpieces for colonizing institutions such as churches, missions, and residential schools, which served the expressed purpose of disseminating ecclesiastical teachings.<sup>81</sup> In spite of this context, community, church, and school newspapers offered an expressive space for Indigenous writers, although their voices were sometimes, though not always,<sup>82</sup> limited either by the expectations of a settler editor, and/or by the structural constraints of a colonizing institution. Long Lance fine-tuned his journalistic skills as a writer for a residential school newspaper, the *Carlisle Arrow*, an endeavour that prepared him for his work with the *Calgary Herald* and *Maclean's*.

Anne McClintock's study of white supremacy in late nineteenth-century advertising highlights the periodical's archival function as a medium that has entrenched

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<sup>81</sup> Examples are numerous. To name a few: *Algoma Missionary News* and *Shingwauk Journal* (Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; 1877-1932), *Our Forest Children* (Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, 1887-1890), *Kamloops Wawa* (Kamloops, British Columbia, 1892), *Ayamiywatikom mawnitosaykaekan* = La Croix de Ste. Anne (Lac Sainte-Anne, Alberta, 1900-1903), *Kitchitwa miteh atchimomasinahiganisa* (Sacred Heart, Alberta, 1906-ca. 1941), *Setaneoei* (Sainte-Anne de Restigouche, Quebec, 1908-1942); *Wampum* (Muncey, Ontario, 1940). While I do not delve into the under-examined histories of Indigenous periodical publications, I suspect that, as with the told-to narrative, their editorial structures likely reflect varying levels of settler-Indigenous interaction.

<sup>82</sup> Notable examples of Indigenous-run publications include the Métis, resistance-era newspapers *Le Métis* and *The New Nation*, and the *Native Voice*, which was co-founded by the Native Brotherhood (Vancouver, British Columbia) in 1946.

colonial and white supremacist logics through repetitious imagery that, in turn, “[converts] the narrative of Imperial Progress into mass-produced *consumer spectacle*” (33). The format of periodical as a multimedia object published in accordance with a regular publication schedule (daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly) lends itself to repetition *and* to a sense of novelty. Since magazines are multi-media objects resistant to linear reading practices (Hammill and M. Smith 67), they produce destabilizing juxtapositions between disparate writers, between image and text, and between the voice of the writer (text) and the voice(s) of the editorial staff (paratext). In Long Lance’s case, the periodical form amplifies the dance between the seen and unseen (Elam 5) through its function as a space where different truths and perspectives can co-exist through competing images. At the height of his celebrity, Long Lance produced an article for *Maclean’s* entitled “I Wanted to Live Like a White Man” (15 May 1926). The writer appears in two images (see Figure 3.1). In one (beside the title), he wears a suit and bow tie; the accompanying caption reads, “Long Lance *as he appears today*” (“I Wanted to Live” 16, emphasis added). The second image shows him on horseback, wearing what the caption describes as “the regalia of a chief of the Blackfoot Indians” (“I Wanted to Live” 16). “This image,” the caption continues, “*was taken* at a Blackfoot Sun Dance in Alberta” (“I Wanted to Live” 16, emphasis added). These paratextual descriptors support the article’s assimilatory message by locating his body “in regalia,” as an artefact of the past, however recent, while the image of the suited writer represents how he appears in the present. The proximity and placement of these photographs undermines the intent of the captions, because the reader/viewer encounters them *simultaneously* on the same page. Appearing in juxtaposition, these two representations of Long Lance gesture towards different truths: the periodical page is not an either/or space, but an “and” space, where seemingly disparate possibilities may co-exist; in this case, Long Lance is *both* the suited man *and* the man in “regalia.” To invoke Homi Bhabha’s thoughts on colonial mimicry, the images conjure a sense of slippage that calls into question the standards that settler readers/viewers draw upon in order to determine or evaluate Indigenous identities (126).



Chief Long Lance, as he appears to-day.

**M**ISSIONARIES on a Blackfoot Indian Reservation in southern Alberta taught me my A B C's—but an old-fashioned bartender out in Wyoming first thrilled me with the idea that I might become educated and really make something out of my life.

This man was a Pennsylvania Dutchman and so he happened to know about Carlisle Indian School. He asked me one day when I was in the old Central Bar at Laramie with a crowd of newboys why I did not go to Carlisle and become educated. He explained that it was free for Indians.

"But I can't even speak good English," I told him. "Well," he said, "you can educate yourself for entrance to Carlisle by reading. Read, read all the time—anything and everything you come across."

I was at that time thirteen years old and a full-fledged cowhand. I could break and ride bucking horses. I could barely sign my own name and spell out words. But I could ride almost anything that stood on four feet.

I had just been fired from a ranch for losing my temper and striking a horse with my fist and I thought I was through with the white men. I thought they had mistreated me because I was an Indian. And that afternoon I bought an unbroken cayuse for seven dollars, threw my tarpaulin over his back, in lieu of a saddle, and went north to the Indians, breaking him as I rode.

Shortly after this I was infatuated among a band of Indians selected to make a tour with Colonel Cody, who was known all over the world as "Buffalo Bill." We traveled sidley for a year—I do not know where we traveled, as all cities looked alike to me then, but I often see places now where I know I have been before. I was still a boy, and my hooded hair had again grown so that I could lead it.

"I Am Going to be Like That"

**S**OMETHING happened at the very beginning of this tour which had a tremendous influence on my life. One afternoon the chiefs and some of the older Indians were taken out to a wealthy and cultured home and some of us youngsters were taken along. This was the first time I had ever met people of real culture and seen how they lived in their homes—and I liked them. They were different from any I had ever met. They had the dignity that the Indians have, and they did not peepish—talk too much. An Indian distrusts anyone who talks a lot. These people so impressed me with their bearing and their environment that I decided on the spot, "I am going to be like that."

Then it was that I remembered the bartender's advice, and on the strength of that and the smattering of the "three R's" I had learned at a mission, I began forthwith to read everything I could get my hands on. I bought a dictionary to

# I Wanted to Live Like the White Man

By CHIEF BUFFALO CHILD LONG LANCE

*Chief Long Lance, an Indian, has run the gamut from cowboy to college student, to soldier, to boxer, to newspaper and magazine writer. They told him that he could never "live white," that sooner or later he would go back to the feathers. They were mistaken, and in this article he tells why.*

help me translate the English tongue. I never passed a word in my reading without finding out its full meaning, with its principal synonyms and antonyms. By the fall of 1910 I had prepared myself for entrance to the Carlisle Indian School.

Though I had a tremendous will to learn, my brain was as tough as raw buffalo meat when I arrived at this famous old institution. I could not make the first-year class, but the instructors, evidently seeing that I was a willing student, shoved me into the class anyway, and sat up nights teaching me on the side. I was almost a hopeless case, but I had one faculty which saved me, and that was my thoroughness for learning every detail of a thing, and once learning it, never forgetting.

I skipped the junior class and graduated in 1912 as the honor graduate and valedictorian. Having gone into athletics to offset the indoor life and the mental strain of learning, I now found that it was possible to go on to higher schools on my athletic ability. I attended Conway Hall, Dickinson College, a year, and then received a scholarship to St. John's Military Academy, at Marlton, New York, where I took post-graduate work and graduated in 1915 with a silver medal for class and athletic honors.

At St. John's, old temper, which I thought I had conquered, popped up again one day, and I struck a fellow cadet. I was court-martialed and reduced to the ranks. At the time I was under appointment to West Point by President Wilson but I "bunked" the entrance examinations and decided that the best place for a chap who could not keep from disgracing himself and his friends was fighting under the colors of an army that was upholding a world cause. So back west and north I came. Three

weeks after I had "coughed" and said "Ah-h" for the medical officer, I was on my way to France on the *Cyprien*, as "Sergeant E. C. Long Lance, C. Company, 90th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force."

What college did not teach me about holding my temper the war did. After seeing men laborated day in and day out intermittently for nearly three years, the vengeful ego in me disappeared. It has been supplanted by a desire to fight only for things big enough to be a principle of protection to others.

"You'll Go Back to the Feathers"

**W**HEN I returned from overseas in 1919 and got my discharge in Calgary, I walked out of the armory wearing civilian clothes for the first time in ten years. In fact, they were about the first civilian clothes I had ever worn; for before I had gone to the military schools, about the nearest I had got to white civilian clothes was a wide-brimmed, two-gallon hat.

My real problem was: What was I going to do with myself? I knew absolutely nothing about earning a livelihood. All I knew was arts and science and how to construct trenches for warlike. I had entered school, ten years before, as an immature cowboy, not knowing even the rudiments of that "profession." I had emerged from the kaleidoscopic whirl of college and war, an educated person with a white man's brain—yet an Indian. And I was three years behind time—years that were more valuable to an Indian trying to fight his way from college into civilization than to a white college man who returned to a civilized home, friends and prospects of a position.

The day after I got out of the army I met Major C. W. Marlonis, of Edmonton, former chief intelligence officer of the Canadian Forces with whom I had worked after being disabled by wounds. We met on Eighth Avenue, Calgary. He said: "What are you going to do now, Chief?" "Oh, I'm going to get a job somewhere and marry on."

"I'll make you a bet," he said. "I'll bet you a hundred dollars that two years from now you'll be back into the blanket. I'll just give you that amount of time. You might think you are going to stick it out, and you may stick it a year. But I know you better than you know yourself. You are going to get disgusted and go back to the feathers, and the reservation."

That was the best thing that anyone could possibly have said to me. In athletics I always had fought better in the opposition's territory. To be against me was to be with me. So now I had the Major to game with—I'd show him.

Looking for a Job

**I**LOOKED around Calgary, and it was jammed with soldiers out of work. The Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment said that they would put through an application for admission to university so I could finish my college work. I made out the application and forgot about it.

Then, I remembered the one thing that I could always fall back upon, professional athletics. I had heard successfully in the army and I decided to go down the Pacific Coast and become a professional boxer. I went to Los Angeles, and on my way down was singled out on the train by a boxing promoter, who im-

Continued on page 60



Long Lance, in the regalia of a chief of the Blackfoot Indians. This photograph was taken at a Blackfoot Sun Dance in Alberta.

## Figure 3.1 "I Wanted to Live Like a White Man"

Source: *Maclean's* (15 May 1926)

An editorial note dated 1 October 1923 sheds light on Long Lance's particular relationship with *Maclean's* editor, J. Vernon Mackenzie. Mackenzie writes:

Chief Long Lance is not a "courtesy" Chief, but the pukka head of the Blackfoot tribe in Alberta. He is a distinguished and impressive—as well as

an extraordinarily likeable—specimen of manhood. He was educated at Carlisle, and won distinction in the Great War. He left with me this time another chapter in his forth-coming book on the story of the Canadian West from the Red Man’s viewpoint. “The Real Story of the Almighty Voice Disaster,” is the title of this particular article. (“In the Editor’s Confidence” 2)

Mackenzie’s introductory comments serve a legitimizing purpose. As a representative of the literary establishment, Mackenzie verifies Long Lance’s authority as a chief, as well as his social standing among settler writers. According to the note, Long Lance was a personal friend of Mackenzie’s, one of several members of the Canadian literati known to grace the editor’s doorstep.<sup>83</sup> In introducing Long Lance, the editor also introduces the story of Almighty Voice, under a pejorative title (obviously, the real disaster is not Almighty Voice’s act of resistance, but the colonial regime that starved his community). Mackenzie’s allusion to a “forth-coming book,” is perhaps a reference to an early version of *Autobiography*, or a similar book-length project. Although eventually published by an American publisher (Cosmopolitan), I read *Autobiography* as an outcome of Long Lance’s work with white settler editors and journalists in Canada; his articles for *Maclean’s* magazine served as a testing ground wherein he could communicate a narrative of Indigenous resistance while at the same time not alienating (and possibly reassuring) a broad settler readership.

Almighty Voice was born in the mid-1870s near Duck Lake, Saskatchewan. As a young child, he would have been close, both geographically and psychologically, to the

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<sup>83</sup> Mackenzie’s note locates Long Lance within a broader social context, while also hinting at his social prowess and charisma:

There has been an unusual influx of distinguished visitors, including many internationally-known artists, illustrators and writers, during the past fortnight. The first caller was Norman Price, who has made a high reputation for his work in London and New York [...] Other visitors were Charles A. MacLellan, en route to spend a few days in his Trenton, Ont., home; H. Weston Taylor, the well-known Philadelphia illustrator who spends a month each year roughing in the Timigami region; Arthur William Brown, famous for his good work in MacLean’s Magazine, The Saturday Evening Post and the Red Book [...] Leslie Gordon Barnard, the Montreal author [...] Arthur Heming [...] and, finally Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance, several of whose interesting articles appeared in Maclean’s last February and March. (“In the Editor’s Confidence” 2)

events leading up to the North-West Resistance of 1885. The resistance movement (popularly referred to as the “North-West Rebellion”) was led by Métis, Cree, and other Indigenous residents of the plains (including Almighty Voice’s Saulteaux father Sounding Sky [Sinnookeesick]) whose title to land and resources was threatened by settler encroachment. In 1895, the memory of the resistance was still fresh in the minds of settlers and Indigenous peoples alike, and many of the problems faced by Métis and Cree inhabitants of the Saskatchewan plains still persisted. Almighty Voice was arrested for killing a government steer without permission or permit (as I discussed in Chapter One, the problem of colonial ownership and control over food sources is a common theme in Eaton and Long Lance’s prairie texts). Fearing for his life, Almighty Voice fled his holding cell and went into hiding. Shortly thereafter, NWMP Sergeant Colebrook discovered him in Kinistino, Saskatchewan, and attempted to arrest him. Almighty Voice shot Colebrook and remained in hiding for two years until he was discovered in the Minichinas Hills. A stand-off ensued between the NWMP, and Almighty Voice and his two companions: his brother-in-law Topean and Little Saulteaux. Vastly outnumbered by the NWMP and their supporters, Almighty Voice and his allies were caught in a bombardment from which they could not escape. The entire incident occurred in close proximity to the location of the Battle of Batoche, the famous event that led to Louis Riel’s capture and eventual execution by the Canadian government.

In two overlapping articles—“How Canada’s Last Frontier Outlaw Died” (1 January 1924) and “The Last Stand of Almighty Voice” (1 February 1929)—both of which are versions of the same story—Long Lance wrote against more authoritative accounts of this series of events. The settler voice is not completely absent, though. Herein lies the double-ness of Long Lance’s voice—a voice that simultaneously caters to *and* denies the colonizer’s perspective: strewn throughout Long Lance’s tellings and retellings of Almighty Voice’s rebellion are references to a conflicted subject position—one that struggles in its role as a go-between, a cultural translator. What is significant *is not* that Long Lance serves as a cultural bridge between his settler contemporaries and his Indigenous connections. Given his position as a self-identified Indigenous reporter working for settler publications, this state of “in-betweenness” comes as no surprise. What I would like to stress are the ways in which he draws attention to his mediating



position. Long Lance's critique does not completely eviscerate colonial structures of domination but nor does he present himself as an imperial eye. As a textual cacophony, the Almighty Voice articles force the reader into a space where settler and Indigenous epistemologies—and the voices that speak these epistemologies—meet. To complicate matters, *Maclean's* republication of the article, excerpted from *Autobiography*, adds additional editorial framings.

The first article shows an image of a young man holding twin babies in his arms (see Figure 3.2). The photograph takes up space; it is front and centre. The caption reads: "Almighty Voice, Jr., holding his twin daughters, who were born to his young wife during the writer's visit in his camp" (Long Lance, "How Canada's" 19). This image of intergenerational survival stands for an active Indigenous presence (what Vizenor calls, "survivance") that counters the article's title, which implies a sense of finality. In the second article, two images are displayed prominently (see Figure 3.3). On the left side of the page is Long Lance's profile: dressed in a suit and tie, with his short hair slicked back. He seems to look down towards the lower edge of the photograph, as though studying the frame that contains his image. His expression is pensive; his eyes and mouth are downturned. According to the caption, he is "author of this article, and adopted son of Spotted Calf, the mother of Almighty Voice" (Long Lance, "The Last Stand" 12). On the right-bottom corner, we see "Chief Long Lance, in Indian costume." Long Lance's long hair is pulled into two loose ponytails; his soft eyes gaze at an unseen horizon. Almighty Voice Jr.'s family portrait is tucked away on the second page and encased in a small oval frame. In both examples, *Maclean's* editorial staff used visual imagery in order to create a focal point; in the case of the 1929 iteration, editors foregrounded Long Lance's seemingly dualistic celebrity persona(e).

# HOW CANADA'S LAST FRONTIER OUTLAW DIED

"THE Mounted Police said they were going to hang me for killing a steer. But they will never put a rope around my neck—I will die fighting them!"

These were the first words of Almighty Voice—the most desperate Indian the Canadian West has produced—as he entered his mother's tepee, panting and sweating, on the night of October 17, 1895. He had just escaped from the Mounted Police and completed his remarkable run and swim from Duck Lake, Saskatchewan, to One Arrow's Reserve, fifteen miles away.

In carrying out this vow he set a record unparalleled in the annals of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. He brought down seven "Mounties" and scouts during the succeeding two years, and culminated his career by standing off one thousand troops for three days, before the field guns which finally shelled him to death were brought on the scene. His only fort was a hole about the size of a bathtub, situated on the edge of a bluff less than the size of a city block.

Why did Almighty Voice choose to become a man-killing outlaw, rather than serve one month's imprisonment? Where was he during those two mysterious years in which the Mounted Police searched for him in every corner of the northern wilderness? How did his father keep in touch with him all this time? Why did he suddenly appear, purposely to show himself to the Mounted Police? These and many other questions centering on this last frontier outlaw, have always baffled the Mounted Police.

There are only two people living who can answer these questions: they are Almighty Voice's father and mother, Sounding Sky and Spotted Calf. They are still living in the camp in which, twenty-six years ago, Almighty Voice bade them his last farewell and rushed over to a bluff four miles away, to make his last famous stand against the Mounties. Although mentioned in history as being "wrinkled and old" twenty-six years ago, they are apparently as strong and active to-day as they were at fifty.

As I write, I am spending a week as the guest of these two old people. Their camp is situated on a beautiful stretch of bush-dotted prairie land, twenty miles northeast of Duck Lake, Saskatchewan—a little more than three hundred miles north of the Montana border.

## First Telling of the Story

WHEN I came here from Alberta last year, I found that, old as they are, they had just gone into the frozen North to spend the winter trapping. The Indian agent, half-breed son of the secretary of Riel's rebel government, told me that I was not likely to get the old people to talk of their son; as they had refused to open their mouths on this subject since he was killed in 1897. When queried about their son, he said, they would sit stolid-faced and still, as if unaware that they were being spoken to. Everyone, even their tribesmen, said the same; that they had never forgiven and were still distrustful.

But when I returned here a few days ago I was pleased to learn that the old people knew me through their son, Prosper, a fine, upstanding chap of six-foot-five, who had formerly visited my territory. I had not been here two days when the old mother asked me to exchange names with her and become her adopted son. Under these friendly relations, the old people, without my asking, volunteered to tell me the whole story of their son's career.

Observing that deliberateness of action which is dear to all Indians, we did not mention the subject of their son for some time afterwards. Then, one afternoon about four

Real facts of Almighty Voice's last stand, when he fought 1,000 men for three days, told for the first time by

## CHIEF BUFFALO CHILD LONG LANCE



Almighty Voice, Jr., holding his little twin daughters, who were born to his young wife during the writer's visit in his camp.

again for two years. Next to her sat Almighty Voice, Jr., the dead warrior's son, who was born to his father and mother during their two years of refuge. Now 27 years old, this tall, powerfully-built chap is described as the hair and toe of his father. Three brothers of the dead brave and a sister, Bear Cane, completed the group.

We ate silently for a few minutes after the old father had uttered a deep nasal "Ha-anh-h," indicating that he was now going to talk. Then he lighted his pipe, took a few thoughtful puffs, and, casting his gaze towards

ment had put on the Reserve. Francois Croyle, a half-breed living at Batoche, reported the killing of this steer to Louis Marion, who had charge of the cattle for the government.

"We did not know anything about this happening until a Mounted Policeman rode up to where we were digging roots the next day, with his gun pointing at me. He said: 'I arrest you; you will come with me.' I went with him, and my wife followed. They took me to the Detachment and kept me a prisoner for eight days. My son had been arrested before they came after me, and it was while I was still in prison that he escaped and killed Sergeant Colebrook. My wife will tell you what happened when he escaped and came home the next morning; for I was in prison then."

## The Escape

IT MIGHT be explained that Almighty Voice was taken to Duck Lake, tried for cattle killing and sentenced to one month's imprisonment at Prince Albert. But on the night following his trial he made his escape.

That night in the Mounted Police jail at Duck Lake, Almighty Voice had rolled up in his blanket on the floor of the guard room and apparently had gone to sleep. During the night a relief constable came on duty, but he promptly went to sleep sitting at a table.

Almighty Voice's mother tells what happened. He said to her when he reached home after escaping:

"I had not been asleep at all; I had been lying there watching things through the corners of my eyes. The Mounted Police told me last night that I was going to be hanged for killing that steer. But I have made up my mind that the Mounted Police will never hang me; I will die fighting them. (One of the Mounties in charge laughingly admitted that he had told Almighty Voice this, to put a little scare into him. And it was this little joke that changed him from a contented prisoner to the most dangerous outlaw the force has ever encountered.) So," said Almighty Voice, "I had been waiting and watching for my chance to get away; and to-night it came."

"When that fellow came on duty about midnight he came over and looked at me—I was lying still with my eyes half-shut—and then he went over to the table and leaned over it and went to sleep. When I saw that he was sleeping well, I raised myself to my feet and crept over to the table. I lifted the keys lying beside him and unlocked my chains."

Having been known throughout the north country as a marvelous runner, Almighty Voice knew that once his feet were free he would be safe; for there was not a man in the country who could beat him in the annual Indian races at Prince Albert. He told his mother that he dashed out of the door of the barrack room and leaped over the fence enclosing the prison yard, without touching it. He sped on like an antelope for eight miles until he came to the Saskatchewan River. He threw off his blanket and scant Indian clothing, placed them on a hastily constructed triangular raft, to keep them dry; and pushing this raft in front of him, swam the broad, swift current to the shore beyond. Covering another six miles at top speed, he reached home long before dawn, and awoke his mother. His first words were, "I want to see my father; where's he?" She told him that he was in prison. She then gave him something to eat and put him to bed.

## Hidden Insecurely—But Safely

## Figure 3.2 The first of two articles about Almighty Voice's resistance

Source: *Maclean's* (1 Jan. 1924)



I stood at the pit and gazed thoughtfully across the broad stretch of lowland at the rising hill beyond, where the field guns were put in position. Then I turned around and looked up the abrupt west slope of the rise on which the bluff is situated; and I could see the spot, a hundred yards above, where the old mother stood shouting and singing to her son during the long days and nights of the siege. (Long Lance, "How Canada's" 44)

This is not the *terra nullius* of the colonial imaginary. While given to romantic, lyrical flourishes reflective of his colonial education, Long Lance's description populates the plains with Indigenous inhabitants. This is their land and he is a guest, invited to look upon the site of the last stand. Long Lance's perception of the land refuses to be guided by the unfettered gaze of the colonizing eye or the "monarch of all I survey" position that is reflective of the "imperial stylistics of civilizing via aestheticizing" (Butling, "Poetry and Landscape" 90) privileged by poets and artists throughout the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth.<sup>84</sup> In spite of his aestheticizing impulse, Long Lance's description is not "civilizing." In fact, Long Lance leaves his readers with the evocative image of Spotted Calf's counter-gaze; in other words, he leaves the reader on a resistant note:

Even when I asked her to pose for a picture over the pit, she walked up to it with her head turned slightly to the right, her eyes turned away. (Long Lance, "How Canada's" 44)

Long Lance implicitly and explicitly acknowledges his complicated position as both an insider—a Cree speaker,<sup>85</sup> quickly adopted by Sounding Sky and Spotted Calf—and as an outsider with a camera.

As an outsider with a camera, Long Lance has the power to shape his narrative in accordance with his agenda. He does not conceal his role as storyteller, nor does he conceal that he is writing against the official testimony of the NWMP:

"The Riders of the Plains," the official history of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police says: "During this period Almighty Voice never showed himself among his people, nor did he apparently hold any communication with them." But as a matter of truth, Almighty Voice constantly visited his

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<sup>84</sup> See Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (199-201).

<sup>85</sup> Long Lance's knowledge of Cree was likely minimal; however, he presents himself as a Cree speaker.

people during this period, and spent much of his time in their camp. His mother says:

My son would come into camp every now and then and take a rest and then he would go out into the wilderness again, and we would not hear from him for days and weeks. Then he would suddenly return again. (Long Lance, “How Canada’s” 20)

Here we have an example of polyvocality as Long Lance invokes the voice of the settler (albeit in order to deny it). In turn, Long Lance gives credence to Spotted Calf’s testimony, as he renders it. To paraphrase Bakhtin, it is through Long Lance’s ambivalent authorial voice, his inclusion of the NWMP’s official history, and through his depiction of Spotted Calf’s speech, that heteroglossia enters this article. Each voice demonstrates a multiplicity of social positions fostered by colonial power structures.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, his inclusion of Spotted Calf’s account adds considerable emotional resonance to his account. Long Lance clearly foregrounds the image of the mourning mother in order to redirect the sympathies of his settler audience.<sup>87</sup>

The later version, which appeared in both *Autobiography* and in the 1 February 1929 issue of *Maclean’s*, does not seem as self-reflexive as its earlier iteration. Here, Long Lance adopts the first-person plural in order to articulate his insider status, his role as an indirect witness to this historical event. According to this iteration, Long Lance recalls hearing news of Almighty Voice’s stand-off when he was a young boy living in southern Alberta (an obvious falsehood). This new telling reads as a comparatively seamless account and much of the self-reflexivity of the 1924 article is lost. In the first version, Long Lance reminds his reader of his outsider–insider status as a guest on Sounding Sky and Spotted Calf’s ancestral lands, and his articulated position becomes a crucial component of his narrative. In the second version, Long Lance leaves us with a

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<sup>86</sup> I am paraphrasing the following sentence:

Authorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia [raznorečie] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships. (Bakhtin 263)

<sup>87</sup> See Stoler’s discussion of colonial affect in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (2006).

brief and vague description of his relationship with Almighty Voice's kin: "My mother, Spotted Calf, is also my adopted mother and that is why I am able to record the inside story of this famous man-hunt" ("The Last Stand" 12). And yet, reading this version against the 1924 text, "The Last Stand of Almighty Voice" becomes, like any adaptation,<sup>88</sup> palimpsestic. Long Lance's journalistic perspective is not completely absent; rather, the voice of Long Lance the (outsider-insider) reporter mingles with the voice of Long Lance, the persona. Even though the writer opens with the personal "we" of collective memory, the actual narration of Almighty Voice's arrest, escape, and death, is conveyed in the detached voice of one who has collected facts and testimonies, not one who is emotionally invested in the event. Compare this paragraph with the passage I quoted above:

"The Riders of the Plains," the official history of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, says: "During this period Almighty Voice never showed himself among his people, nor did he apparently hold any communication with them."

But the inside story of these two mysterious years is well-known by his father and mother who are still living at Duck Lake. And here, for the first time in any book touching upon this notorious episode, I shall give this story. (Long Lance, "The Last Stand" 13)

In this revision, Spotted Calf's voice is eclipsed by Long Lance's, as the writer takes ownership of the story by stressing the authority of his speaking persona. Again, Long Lance avoids discussing the contours of his relationship with Spotted Calf and Sounding Sky, adoptive parents to a nomadic Indigenous-but-outsider reporter. Their presence has less resonance. The 1924 account—the more explicitly journalistic version—seems more personal, more evocative than the version presented in Long Lance's life story. Yet the later version, the one published in *Autobiography*, is in some respects more illuminating. The 1929 telling of Almighty Voice's story reveals the amorphous space between settler expectation—*Indigeneity as performance*, in other words—and the fractured identities created by colonial displacement. This slippage is apparent in the writer's point of view,

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<sup>88</sup> See Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006).

as he toggles between the inclusive “we”-voice of “Long Lance, Indian spokesman” and the detached “I”-voice of an uncertain, somewhat multitudinous subject.

Long Lance’s human-interest stories reveal the textures and nuances of a perspective rarely featured in mainstream early twentieth-century publishing. The novelty of his subject position was not lost on his readers. On 15 June 1929, *Maclean’s* published an unattributed story that countered Long Lance’s telling of Almighty Voice’s last stand (see Figure 3.4). This “echo of Long Lance’s story” proposed “fresh facts concerning one of the tense periods of the West’s history” (“The Last Stand” 15). Written in the voice of the colonizer, the article stresses Almighty Voice’s criminality, while predictably downplaying the contexts leading to Colebrook’s murder: the decimation of the buffalo; the allotment of land and resources to settlers; the NWMP’s role in policing those resources; and, finally, Almighty Voice’s treatment in jail.<sup>89</sup> As this article demonstrates, the textual space that lies between the covers of *Maclean’s* serves both as a contested space *and* as a stage wherein identities could be played out. Long Lance’s conflicted representation of identity and subject formation sheds light upon the particular pressures of “writing back” against the colonizer while working within the constraints of a mainstream publication.

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<sup>89</sup>According to Long Lance’s account, Almighty Voice fled the jail after a NWMP officer threatened him with hanging. This inciting moment is reiterated in other tellings of the event, notably Daniel David Moses’s 1991 play *Almighty Voice and His Wife*.

# The Last Stand of Almighty Voice

An echo of Long Lance's story that reveals fresh facts concerning one of the tense periods of the West's history

WHEN, some years ago, Henry Ford expressed the opinion that "history is bunk," some of the front page despatches featured by the press of the world threw much light on the deductions which led to the conclusion. It may have been that Mr. Ford had read several conflicting versions of some historic happenings and despaired of ever securing information that would for all time remain uncontradicted.

In the compilation of the history of a nation the task of the chronicler is not an easy one. Human memory is apt to have its lapses with the passing of years. The records written by different persons "on the spot" conflict. Only by painstaking sifting of facts, by the discarding of this evidence and the confirmation of that, can uncontrovertible scrolls be established.

In *MacLean's* of February 1, there appeared an article by Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance describing "The Last Stand of Almighty Voice." It presented the Indian viewpoint concerning one of the most dramatic episodes in the history of the Canadian Northwest, and in writing it, Chief Long Lance gathered much of his information from people who were either actors in the drama itself, or who were very close to them.

Since that article appeared, several surviving members of the Northwest Mounted Police force which made the final charge against Almighty Voice, have forwarded accounts disagreeing in some particulars with that given by Chief Long Lance. Other reports have been received from civilians who observed the attack on the pit in which Almighty Voice and his companions made their last stand.

The fact that all these reports, in differing with Long Lance, differ with each other, led *MacLean's* to make a very thorough and independent investigation extending over a period of three months. The information presented in this article settles definitely a number of points which seemingly have long been in doubt, and throws at least additional light on others which may never be settled.

### The Escape

IT WAS a simple case of cattle-killing that brought Almighty Voice, otherwise Jean Baptiste, Kakame-maitoways and Opatias, into the hands of the police. He had killed a steer belonging to a settler. The settler complained to the Indian Agent at One Arrow's Reserve, who issued a warrant. On October 22, 1895, Sergeant Colebrook arrested Almighty Voice, another Indian charged with aiding him, and a squaw, charged with theft.

Removed to Duck Lake, the three Indians were placed in the police guard-room. At night, three beds were placed for them in a corner of the room, the prisoners were shackled, and a guard mounted with instructions that each man would maintain a watch of two hours and would not leave the room until his relief came.

It is at this point that versions of what followed begin to differ materially. For Almighty Voice escaped, and the circumstances of that escape occasion debate.

Discussing the motive of that escape,

Inspector John Beresford Allen, shot through the arm by Almighty Voice as he attempted to ride the Indian down in the first attack on the bluff.



Long Lance, in his article, asserted that Constable Casimir Dickson, one of the policemen in charge of the prisoner, "jokingly told Almighty Voice through an interpreter, that they were going to hang him for killing that steer." To this "joke" Long Lance and Almighty Voice's mother, Spotted Calf, attributed the Indian's break for liberty and his subsequent desperate actions.

Casimir Dickson is still alive, in Vancouver. Mr. Dickson makes an unequivocal denial that he told Almighty Voice, either jokingly or otherwise, he was going to be hanged.

Concerning Almighty Voice himself, it is interesting to note in passing that John Bounding Sky, his father, was at the time of the escape undergoing a term of imprisonment for a theft perpetrated some days previous to the arrest of the son. Further information unearthed also reveals the fact that shortly before his arrest, Almighty Voice had dimmed his reputation as a hunter and runner by threatening to shoot the Agent at his reserve.

The next difference in reports concerns those relating to the day when Sergeant C. C. Colebrook, accompanied by a half-breed scout, came face to face with Almighty Voice. Long Lance's reports related that, after shooting and killing Colebrook, the Indian shot at the half-breed and shattered his elbow. Further evidence proves that the half-breed was not fired on. Almighty Voice appears to have made off as soon as Colebrook fell, while the scout galloped off to warn the police. The young squaw taken by Almighty Voice in his flight, witnessed the shooting, but it is claimed that she did not accompany him into hiding, and that very shortly afterward she married another Indian.

As Long Lance describes it, it was two years later, in 1897, that the police again picked up the Indian's trail. His movements in the interim were graphically related in "The Last Stand of Almighty Voice."

It is in the description of that last grim siege that once again reports are at variance. Long Lance, adopted son of Spotted Calf, mother of Almighty Voice, with whom he has often talked over the tragedy, records that during the black nights of sleepless tension, while her son lay in his ambush pit, Spotted Calf stood on the bluff shouting encouragement to him. This statement has puzzled several surviving members of the attacking force, who insist that Spotted Calf was sent to the One Arrow Reserve when Almighty Voice was surrounded, and that there is no evidence that she left the reserve during the siege.

Corroborating Long Lance's statement is the Regina Leader of June 3rd, 1897. In this issue, the Leader's correspondent, who accompanied the Regina police party and was present during the siege, records in his despatch that the mother of Al-



Assistant Commissioner Melville, who commanded the Regina police party and who ordered the last charge. At left: Lieutenant-General Sir A. C. McDonnell, now Western Commissioner of the Bay Scouts, who, as Inspector McDonnell, participated in the charge.



mighty Voice visited the besiegers' camp.

### The Charge

BUT it is with reference to the last charge by the police and civilian volunteers that *MacLean's* has secured positive evidence from various sources. The final raid was made following heavy shelling of the bluff. Then it was that the bodies of Almighty Voice and Going-Up-to-Sky, his young cousin, were found lying in a brush-covered hole, and that of Little Saltaxe some distance away. Long Lance, in his article, quoted Henry Smith, the half-breed who Smith declared that when the police reached the pit, still breathing and that a constable put a finishing bullet through the dying youth's head. Smith adds that, witnessing this, the other policemen were angry, and that one exclaimed: "A man who could do that has no heart in him at all, and should be shot himself!"

All the evidence *MacLean's* has accumulated proves Smith to be entirely in error. It is definitely established that the three Indians were dead hours before the police reached the pit. All had been hit in the exchange of firing before the nine-pound and seven-pound guns were brought into action. Saltaxe was killed by rifle fire, but shell fragments administered the death blow in the case of Almighty Voice and his cousin. That is conclusively proved by the reports of the doctors who examined the bodies.

Much confusion appears to exist on the part of some survivors of the attack as to what actually happened in the last charge. There are some who claim it was made by civilians and Prince Albert Volunteers, and that the police followed. Others insist that the Indians were alive when the charge was made, because bullets were fired from the pit.

Continued on page 29

Figure 3.4 A white settler response to Long Lance's account of the resistance  
Source: *Maclean's* (15 June 1929)

Ultimately, the topic of Almighty Voice's last stand functions as an epitextual hinge-narrative connecting the writer's journalistic output with *Autobiography*. These accounts are hardly the only recycled narrative that emerges through the memoir; much of the text contains echoes of his early journalism. Yet, of all the scattered testimonies



that appear throughout *Autobiography*, the story of Almighty Voice certainly stands out. Thematically, this is a story of connection and severance, of exile and cyclical return: forced into hiding, Almighty Voice moved between the wilderness and his family home (note that Long Lance took great care to emphasize this cyclical movement, even though it contradicted the NWMP's recorded history). On a thematic level, Daniel Heath Justice views the vacillation between "departure *and* return, separation *and* (re)integration" as a prominent characteristic of Indigenous writing that speaks to the fluid, and ever-adaptive structure of Indigenous communities and, potentially, Indigenous identity itself (164). "How Canada's Last Frontier Outlaw Died" and its later iteration reveals a preoccupation with kinship and relation in light of (or in spite of) colonial impositions; both articles, but particularly the first, are as much about the persistence of familial ties as they are about armed resistance. As an instance of co-authorship between a member of the Kainai community and a displaced mixed-race writer from the American South such relationships are knit into the fabric of the text.

### **Long Lance and Eagle Speaker's *Autobiography***

My shift in attention towards Long Lance's *autobiography* signals a slight (though not complete) turn from Long Lance's fraught subject position towards a larger discussion about authorial collaboration and intersubjectivity. As a text that vacillates between Long Lance's authorial voice and the testimony of an unidentified contributor, Eagle Speaker, *Autobiography* shares certain characteristics with the "told-to" narrative: foremostly, the hierarchical relationship between an authoritative voice (Long Lance) and unnamed informant (Eagle Speaker). In this instance, Irwin S. Cobb's preface, like Mackenzie's editorial note, serves a legitimizing function that not only verifies Long Lance's authenticity, but also supports his position as the sole author of and witness to the events described in the text. Thus, Cosmopolitan Publishing privileges Long Lance's authority as a "celebrity Indian" over Eagle Speaker's contributions, which neither Long Lance nor Cobb acknowledge, at least not explicitly.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> At one point, Long Lance refers to a figure named "Young Eagle Talker," clearly a covert references to Eagle Speaker (*Autobiography* 132).

In May 2016, while I was on a research trip to Glenbow Archives (where Long Lance's papers are held within both the Buffalo Child Long Lance fonds and the Donald B. Smith fonds), Long Lance's biographer, Donald B. Smith, brought the memoir's intersubjective elements to my attention. When D. Smith provided me with a heavy stack of photocopied pages from *Autobiography*, he directed my attention to the contents of the pages, specifically the marginalia: long brackets with brief notations: "Mike," "M," "no," "not so." These marginal notes indicate Eagle Speaker's contributions to *Autobiography*, which are extensive; the heft of the papers gives form to Eagle Speaker's uncredited but considerable presence in Long Lance's memoir. In the late 1970s, Eagle Speaker dictated to Smith the precise passages containing his words and stories. By vocalizing *Autobiography's* heteroglossic elements, this marginalia (presumably written in D. Smith's hand, another instance of textual collaboration) gives voice to a counter-narrative that challenges and contradicts Long Lance's version of events. In an article for the *Kainai News*, D. Smith elaborates on the nature of Long Lance and Eagle Speaker's relationship, including the terms of their collaboration:

After a number of enquiries I had been directed to Mike Eagle Speaker. Mike and his wife, Kathleen, proved gracious hosts. Around the teapot on this first, and subsequent trips, unfolded the true story of how Long Lance was written. Mike began by telling me that Long Lance was his brother. In 1922 the Bloods adopted the Indian war hero as one of their first Kainai Chiefs, giving him the name of "Buffalo Child." Two years later Mike and Long Lance took each other as brothers. He had helped his "brother" write his book in 1927. For two weeks they had worked together on the manuscript—in Calgary for a week, then in Banff and Golden, BC. Long Lance had asked many questions about their tribal dress, the Blackfoot language, and the Bloods' customs. Now I knew how Long Lance had made his book so "authentic." (Many Fingers 8)<sup>91</sup>

Gérard Genette distinguishes between the public epitext that circulates freely "anywhere outside the book" (344) and the private epitext, in which the author addresses a personal confidant or correspondent (371). Since Genette conceives of the author as a specified social or professional role, the critic does not create space for different modes of authorship. In this context, the private epitext raises considerable questions about voice

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<sup>91</sup> In another instance of imposture, D. Smith's article for the *Kainai News* was produced under the byline "Wallace Many Fingers."

(who is heard and how are they heard), custodianship (the notes are under the custodianship of D. Smith, a white settler researcher, who trusted it to me, another white settler researcher), and responsibility (to whom does this text, and the ancestral stories contained within, belong? As a settler researcher, what do I do with this text and the knowledge that it contains?) This epitextual context and the ethical considerations that accompany it are a key component of *Autobiography*'s textual history, and how one receives or reads it.

Whether or not a reader is privy to Eagle Speaker's contributions, *Autobiography* still reads as a fractured, incohesive text. When reading *Autobiography* in terms of its placement within the broader history of Black prairie writing, Karina Vernon comments on the writer's defamiliarizing language, particularly in relation to the idea of Blackness ("The First Black Prairie Novel" 42).<sup>92</sup> As a whole, *Autobiography* is centred upon confused narrative voice; throughout the text, the speaker's voice shifts—often abruptly—between the first person singular "I" and the plural "we." Intentional or not, these subjective shifts illuminate the Long Lance's conflicted position as *both* a self-identified Indigenous subject and as an outsider to the Kainai community. *Autobiography* is a uniquely ruptured text, one that reveals the ambiguous space between identity "as the Western folk theory of essential self" (Valentine 104) and public persona.<sup>93</sup> The continual shift between "I" and "we" has the additional effect of subtly gesturing towards Long Lance's mediating role as a destabilizing eye/I witness. This auto-ethnographic memoir–fiction–narrative collage "create[s] [its] own noise, [its] own clamoring for justice" (Emberley, *Testimonial Uncanny* 11). Through this noise, the reader hears the clash of competing epistemologies (Emberley, *Testimonial Uncanny* 12), settler and Indigenous.

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Long Lance writes as though Black people were a race of aliens to him, one beyond imagining. They not only live in the unimaginable land beneath the sun, but they are also monstrous with their 'scorched' skins. Long Lance emphasizes the outlandish nature of these legends syntactically, by writing that not only was his tribe hearing about White People, but 'they even told us of "black white men"' (Vernon, "The First Black Prairie Novel" 41).

<sup>93</sup> I must credit Christine Kim for her helpful insights into the space between identity and public persona (as in Long Lance's performed identity).

The correspondence between Eagle Speaker and Long Lance provides insights into the power dynamics underpinning their relationship. In an archived letter dated 30 November 1930, Eagle Speaker seems unaware of *Autobiography*'s publication two years previously:

Dear Brother,

You will have to excuse me for my delay in answering your letters which I received last spring sometime but as you spoke of coming out west this fall to be here for the re-union however when I hear about the postponement of this Re-union and I thought to write you—in fact, I was waiting for you, it has been long time since I have seen you—it must have been sound three four years ago, that seemed not a such long time, is it?—I did not go to Calgary Stampede this year—for if you have been there so that is why we missed each other. [...]

Have you finished that Book you was writing? If you have—can you sent me a copy—lent it to me—if you cannot give one away for Xmas present—Say, Chief—I was talking to [?] and I spoke to her about you and the Book you was to write and she said—Mike—I would be very much anxious to see it—you will you let me, see it, when you do get one from your brother—and as you know- answer was to give her all the pleasure I could do for her—Promised to her to let her see it—so sent one copy in order to keep my promise. (Letter [30 Nov. 1930])

In the early 1920s, Eagle Speaker and Long Lance wrote to each other regularly. By the 1930s, their correspondence dwindled. In a subsequent letter dated March 1932, Eagle Speaker's words are tinged with concern: "I did write some time ago and you never answer yet, I wondered what become of you at [?], I always expect you would write but I cannot wait any long ago, that is why am writing" (Letter [Mar. 1932]). The letter was returned to Eagle Speaker, unopened, with an accompanying note from Clyde Fisher relaying the news of Long Lance's suicide (Letter [12 Apr. 1932]).

Eagle Speaker's letters read like affectionate missives to an older sibling. The tone of young Eagle Speaker is both respectful and tongue-in-cheek: note that he addresses Long Lance as "chief" in a manner that comes across as more playful than reverential. At times he seems concerned, even protective. Sensing his adoptive brother's troubled state, he attempts to integrate him into the Kainai community in his subtle attempt to broker a match with a local woman; Long Lance politely brushes him off

(Letter to Mike Eagle Speaker [c1930]). But even while Eagle Speaker addresses his brother with loving affection, he is not completely honest. In his final letter, he tells Long Lance that he is pleased by *Autobiography* (Letter [Mar. 1932]), an assertion undermined by D. Smith's notations, which indicate a far more complicated response, as I will demonstrate below. Long Lance's writings to Eagle Speaker—at least those archived by D. Smith—are paternal, but aloof and certainly less effusive. It seems he reserved his most candid thoughts and opinions for his correspondence with Middleton.<sup>94</sup>

According to D. Smith's notes, Eagle Speaker imbued Long Lance's memoir with extensive descriptions of Kainai ceremonies and day-to-day life. The tone of the following passage (which D. Smith attributes to Eagle Speaker) reads like an intimate exchange of knowledge:

We youngsters were given daily lectures on how to live, by twelve of the oldest men of the tribe. Because they had lived to such remarkable ages it was considered that they knew better how to live than anyone else. Every morning just before sunrise, while the camp still lay on their pallets in their teepees, one of these old men would take his turn in getting up early and walking through the camp shouting out his lecture on how to live to be old and his advice on morals, courage, and personal bravery. His voice would awake us, and we would lie still and listen intently to every word he said. At that time of the morning, just as we had awakened from a night's rest, his words seemed to pierce deep into us; we remembered every word he said, and all during the day his advice would keep coming back into our minds, and we would try to live up to it.

All of these men were great warriors who had many scalps to their credit, and we respected our old people above all others in the tribe. To live to be so old they must have been brave and strong and good fighters, and we aspired to be like them. We never allowed our old people to want for anything, and whenever any one of them would stop as he made his silent, dignified way through the camp, and put his arm across our shoulders and utter a little prayer for us to the Great Spirit, we would feel highly honored. We would stand quietly, and when he was through we would remain in our tracks, respectful and silent, until he had disappeared. We looked upon our old people as demigods of a kind, and we loved them deeply; they were all our fathers.

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<sup>94</sup> The existing correspondence between Middleton and Long Lance show evidence of a close and often candid relationship; see Middleton's critique of Long Lance's exploitative public persona (Middleton [Letter]).

This respect for the aged was so deeply bred into us that to this day I have not the courage to dispute the word of an old person. To me old people still are demigods to be heeded and revered at all times.

Each morning at sunrise every boy and young man in the camp would race to be the first up and into the river for the morning plunge--we always camped near a river for our water supply. The boy or young brave who most often attained the distinction of being the first up and outside, just as the sun peeped over the eastern horizon, was the model man of the camp. (Eagle Speaker and D. Smith 34-35)

Eagle Speaker provided *Autobiography* with some of its most intensely vivid passages:

To toughen our bodies, our fathers used to whip the boy members of each family as we arose in the morning. After they had whipped us they would hand us the fir branches and tell us to go to the river and bathe in cold water. If it was winter they would make us go out and take a snow bath. And every time it rained we all had to strip off and go out for a rain bath. All of this was to harden our bodies.

Far from disliking this sort of treatment, we youngsters used to display the welts on our bodies with great pride. Sometimes we actually would ask for more. (Eagle Speaker and D. Smith 7)

The first paragraph is notated with an “M” to indicate Eagle Speaker’s personal testimony. The underlined sentence in the second paragraph, “Sometimes we actually would ask for more” is annotated with the word “NO.” Another “NO” marks a detailed description of an intense whipping witnessed by members of the tribe: “The more stout-hearted among us would sometimes stick it out until the flogger had completely worn off the switches” (Eagle Speaker and D. Smith 8). While intended to highlight the physical toughness of the Kainai youth (a quality no doubt appreciated by Long Lance, an extremely disciplined athlete) for the sake of creating a more dramatic narrative, the embellishment plays into sensationalized perceptions of Indigenous masculinity and violence as popularized through the western genre. Eagle Speaker’s adamant rejection of Long Lance’s version of events is understandable.

A substantial portion of *Autobiography* centres upon conflicts between the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Apsáalooke of present-day Northern Montana. Eagle Speaker contributed the following details:

I shall never forget the first time I witnessed the medicine-man's startling incantations over the dead buffalo head, which is a special ceremony performed when out on war parties. I was young, and I was so scared that I ran. We were camping at Shell Cree, south of the Milk River in Montana, when one night the band of Crows whose spy we had killed, caught us off guard and crept into our camp and drove away our entire herd of horses. The next day our band decided to chase the Crows and avenge this raid. Our aim was to recapture our own ponies and to take all of the horses possessed by the Crows, if we could. (Eagle Speaker and D. Smith 62)

Since Eagle Speaker's memories are embedded in a historic, post-contact reality, his testimonies (which may be retellings of family stories [Many Fingers]) complicate Nancy Cook's reading of *Autobiography* as largely taking place in a mythic pre-contact world (151) or Julie Rak's contention that Long Lance constructed an imagined time and space "when no one had to hide or compromise who they are" ("Translocal" 197).

Furthermore, by providing insights into Blackfoot–Apsáalooke relations, Eagle Speaker's contributions—as transcribed by Long Lance—destabilize colonial demarcations of political and geographic difference, because it suggests another reality. The Alberta-Montana borderlands is not a site of division; rather, it serves as a site of political and cultural interaction. Sheila McManus describes this site as a zonal border,

a region grounded in local relationships of social and economic exchange. The land that would become the Alberta-Montana borderlands was home to interconnected communities, economies, and ecologies that could not be divided simply by proclaiming that a linear boundary ran through them. (xi)

These shared ecologies are traced through the movements of Kanai hunters, who enter Cree territory (Eagle Speaker and D. Smith 33) and present-day Montana in search of buffalo:

The men were gone for several hours, but when they returned they said that they could find no buffalo. The buffalo was fast disappearing in the plains then, and it was only in the north that one could be found at all. (Eagle Speaker and D. Smith 81)

Long Lance knew how to tap into the sympathies of his white audience, albeit discreetly. While not explicitly linked to the arrival of settlers, the connection between European settlement and the plains' changing ecology is implied. These scattered references to the dwindling herds foreshadow Long Lance's telling of the Almighty Voice saga (which

appears in the second-to-last chapter). Though Almighty Voice's resistance took place on Treaty Six territory in present-day Saskatchewan, its inclusion in Long Lance's Kainai history speaks to the broader process of territory formation and its subsequent impact on food supplies and the management of livestock. It is thus, through allusions to the dwindling buffalo, and the cattle brought in in their place that *Autobiography* tells a story about western territorialisation-as-process.

*Autobiography*'s challenging message is amplified by the text's polyvocality. In addition to the unattributed words of Eagle Speaker, we also hear Spotted Calf's outcry in the penultimate chapter ("I wanted to go into that bluff and take my son in my arms and protect him" [Long Lance, *Autobiography* 234]), which resides alongside the flippant testimony of an settler eyewitness ("[Almighty Voice] could have made quick work of me if he wanted to [...] but he [...] was sport enough not to take a pot at me" [Long Lance, *Autobiography* 233]). To add to this chorus, one chapter is anchored by a speech delivered by Assiniboine chief Carry-the-Kettle (CeghaKin), in an account that reproduces his vocalizations (Long Lance, *Autobiography* 80-99). Long Lance had met the chief six years before *Autobiography*'s publication, while working as a reporter for the *Regina Leader* (D. Smith 97). In another section, we hear a story related to the writer by the Reverend Canon Stockten, a missionary to the Siksika Nation.<sup>95</sup> In Long Lance's telling, the skeptical Canon is made foolish by a medicine man's predictions of the future (Long Lance, *Autobiography* 62-64), thus casting doubt on the accuracy and relevancy of settler epistemologies. Joining this soundscape is the voice of Long Lance the "Indian reporter," reminding his readers of his mediating role: "Lest it might be assumed that I am a little over-credulous of the medicine-man because I am an Indian, I am going to relate an incident [...]" (Long Lance, *Autobiography* 62). In another instance, the writer alludes to article that he wrote for the *Winnipeg Tribune* regarding the story of two white boys adopted by the Apsáalooke and Sioux, thus drawing attention to his role as writer,

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<sup>95</sup> The account is recycled from one of Long Lance's earliest articles ("Blackfoot Indians"). In the original telling, the medicine man is a community leader named Crow Shoe, who may be an allusion to Siksika leader Issapóomahksika (1830-1890).



as a shaper of narrative (188-94). In establishing his distance and authority as a reporter, Long Lance bypasses the story of his own adoption into the Eagle Speaker family.

By pushing *Autobiography*'s polyvocality to the foreground, it is my intention to highlight the structures and relationships that shaped this multi-generic memoir. Certainly, those who view Long Lance as an imposter may be tempted to read *Autobiography* as a contradictory text that pits the voice of an authentic *Indian* (Eagle Speaker) against that of a derivative *indian* (Long Lance), to use Vizenor's phrasing; however, the reality is not so simple. I hope that future readers and critics direct their ears towards the static—sometimes barely audible—of the ambiguous, half-spoken, unattributed, disjunctive, and repressed words that lend Long Lance's body of work (but particularly *Autobiography*) its destabilizing cadence. To reiterate, the points in which the writer's conflicted subjectivity becomes most evident are when colonial ways of perceiving and evaluating the terms of Indigeneity are troubled. But while the various questions surrounding Long Lance's Indigeneity are part of this story, critics should not neglect Eagle Speaker's contributions, nor should they disregard the possibility of additional unnamed sources.

In his history of Kanaka (Indigenous Hawaiian) relationships with land and print culture, D. Chang records his belief that "indigenous geography is crucial to understanding the dispossession of indigenous people and working for ecological restoration and social justice" (xiii). Ultimately, *Autobiography* reminds us that geography is temporal as well as spatial: the Canadian West is not a "fixed place"; it is "a web of historical processes, connections, and continuities" (Calder and Wardhaugh 15). Embedded in *Autobiography* is an Indigenous geography that emerges through the voices of Eagle Speaker and a community of unidentified contributors. I have approached *Autobiography* from the position of a solitary white settler scholar embedded in a particular field (print culture history). In providing me with a copy of Eagle Speaker's testimony, D. Smith's gesture reminds me of my placement in a long-standing lineage of settler scholars exchanging information within the bounds of consecrated institutional structures. Given my position, I am a settler eye/I witness as described by Emberley. But not only am I witness to colonization's ramifications; I am also a witness to a larger

critical movement that aims to decolonize literary scholarship. *Autobiography* demands further critical inquiry that complicates its critical situation as an “imposter” text, by recognizing its orientation within an Indigenous geography.

## Chapter 4. Constellating Points of Contact: Rereading Early Twentieth-Century Canadian Literary Culture

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Mississauga Anishinaabe) uses the Anishinaabe concept of constellated intelligence to describe Indigenous activism and community formation. As Simpson explains:

Constellations exist only in the context of relationships; otherwise they are just individual stars. When individual star people or thoughts come together, they create doorways into Nishnaabewin. [...] This gestures toward the constellation as an organizing value in resurgent movement building, one that I started to see glimpses of during Idle No More with small collectives of people coming together to organize a particular event, or to create or hold Indigenous presence that in some way was disruptive to settler colonialism. (215-16)

At a symposium hosted by Simon Fraser University's English and First Nations Studies departments in November 2018, writer and critic David Chariandy cited the concept of constellated co-resistance as a useful way of thinking about Black and Indigenous collaborations and interrelationships. By drawing upon Indigenous epistemologies in order to conceptualize Black and Indigenous relations, Chariandy raises questions about frameworks: how may we compare or relate Indigenous and diasporic contexts? Responding to Chariandy, I ask: to what extent are certain comparisons possible? Is Chariandy's application of constellated intelligence (or the fact that I re-inscribe it in this chapter) appropriate in this situation? What sorts of possibilities emerge out of these comparisons, either conceptually or in terms of movement building between Indigenous and Black communities? What other connections may be made? Between, say, Indigenous and Asian Canadian communities)?

Winnifred Eaton's and Buffalo Child Long Lance's corpora interrogate colonial ways of processing, identifying, evaluating, and managing racialized bodies. Viewed in relation to each other, these writers illuminate the particular tensions that underscored Canadian cultural production in the early twentieth century, namely the conflict between the burgeoning climate of Canadian literary nationalism and the presence of writers who sought to use their literary output in order to "adapt to or survive oppressive conditions"

(Waziyatawin 3). Given their resistant qualities, it is hardly surprising that *Cattle* and *Autobiography* have not been canonized.

The idea of a constellation, as Simpson uses it within the context of Indigenous activism, is an expansive metaphor that signifies a resistance against larger containing structures. To continue with this pattern of constellated literary relations, this chapter considers Eaton and Long Lance's writings in proximity with two texts that, until recent years,<sup>96</sup> have been neglected by Canadian critics: the memoir *My Life with Grey Owl* by Anahareo (1940), rewritten as *Devil in Deerskins: My Life with Grey Owl* in 1972, and the novel *In Due Season* by Christine Van der Mark (1947). In my case studies, I showed how Eaton and Long Lance's literary self-representations illuminated their conflicted subjectivities, thus calling to question received colonial truths. *My Life With Grey Owl* and *In Due Season* share a similar preoccupation with identity and self-invention in spaces of colonial contact. While Eaton and Long Lance's texts address colonial image-making in the midst of a formative period in the history of western settlement, my paratextual examination of *My Life with Grey Owl* and *In Due Season* (original and subsequent editions and versions) illuminates ongoing discourses about identity, colonialism, and literary representation as they have unfolded across the span of several decades: from the 1940s until the present day. The Canadian prairies have remained central to the nationalization of Canadian literary production, since the literary consecration of prairie or frontier novels such as Frederick Philip Grove's *Settlers of the Marsh* (1925) and Martha Ostenso's *Wild Geese* (1925), and again in the 1960s and 1970s, when the prairie novel underwent a critical resurgence.<sup>97</sup> Although *My Life With Grey Owl* and *In Due Season* were never canonized by mid twentieth-century critics, these texts were reissued or rewritten (in the case of *My Life With Grey Owl*) in the

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<sup>96</sup> I am building off Carole Gerson and Janice Dowson's recent work with *In Due Season* and Sophie McCall's work with *Devil in Deerskins*. Gerson and McCall, my supervisor and a dissertation committee member respectively, are faculty members at the Department of English at Simon Fraser University; Dowson is a past graduate student from the same department. My work, then, may be situated within an institutional constellation of early twenty-first century Canadian scholarship.

<sup>97</sup> See the mid-century celebration of white settler writers like Frederick Philip Grove, Martha Ostenso, and Sinclair Ross (Harrison, Pacey, Ricou).

1970s; *Devil in Deerskins and In Due Season* were republished in the 2010s in scholarly editions (edited by Sophie McCall and Carole Gerson, respectively).

When considered in comparison with Eaton and Long Lance, Anahareo and van der Mark engaged with the colonial imaginary from a slightly different historical context (the 1940s, as opposed to the 1920s). Even though Anahareo is not strictly a prairie writer, unlike the other writers that form the basis of this study, she did take up residence on Lake Ajawaan in Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan, in the years following her marriage to Grey Owl. I include her in this chapter because her memoir stretches this analysis beyond the Canadian prairies towards other spaces of colonial contact. Much like the Canadian prairies, the Canadian North, or “Northland,” appears as another site of colonial image-making. Anahareo’s life story takes place primarily in traditional Algonquin territories in the Ottawa River valley region (eastern Ontario) and western Quebec. At the onset of colonial settlement, the Ottawa River valley functioned as “gateway to the west” for voyageurs seeking access to the Great Lakes (Lawrence, *Fractured Homeland* 263). As a crucial point of convergence for Indigenous peoples and English and French settlers, this setting was “central to the colonization process of both the French and British regimes” (Lawrence, *Fractured Homeland* 21). Because it has served as an important point of contact between Indigenous peoples and settler populations, this region, like the Canadian West, has been “infused with originary qualities and held up as emblematic of senses of [settler] Canadian selfhood” (Cooke 236). Like the prairies, the Canadian North is yet another metonym for settlement.

As I will argue in this chapter, the textual work of Anahareo and van der Mark speaks to three characteristics of early (pre-1950) twentieth-century literary production. First, these texts address the continued prevalence of colonial points of contact (the Canadian prairies, the Canadian North) as sites of literary representation (and/or intervention) wherein the project of Canadian settler colonialism is upheld or called into question. Secondly, as in the case of Eaton and Long Lance, Anahareo and van der Mark offer examples of resistant voices working within/and at odds with mainstream early twentieth-century settler publishing structures. As my paratextual analysis will reveal, their shared compromises and negotiations speak to some of the tensions existing within

a nationalizing structure. Thirdly, when read in conjunction with *Cattle and Autobiography*, *My Life with Grey Owl* and *In Due Season* demonstrate the continuation of Indigenous memoir/settler realism as a space of interrogation. These two generic streams cross the span of several decades, starting with Eaton and Long Lance's prairie writings and ending with the late-century boom in Canadian thematic criticism, which largely served to readdress, re-centre, and re-entrench settler imaginings. This movement was countered by a less-recognized, albeit robust body of Indigenous counter-narratives, voiced through first-person memoirs: most notably Anahareo's 1972 rewriting of *My Life with Grey Owl*; Maria Campbell's *Half-Breed* (1973); Lee Maracle's *Bobbi Lee, Indian Rebel* (1975); and, in the French and Innu languages, An Antane Kapesh's, *Je suis une maudite sauvagesse* (1976).

Unlike the previous chapters, my readings of *My Life with Grey Owl* and *In Due Season* lean more heavily towards the *peritextual* (book design and layout, titles and headings, prefatory materials) than the *epitextual* (interviews with the author, book reviews, critical responses). This is due in part to the issuing of a new version of *My Life With Grey Owl*, rewritten as *Devil in Deerskins: My Life With Grey Owl*, and a new edition of *In Due Season* in the 1970s, and again through scholarly editions in the 2010s. By reading the original texts and the paratextual materials accompanying these new iterations in 1970s and 2010s, this analysis will illuminate ongoing recursive conversations, not only about colonization, but also about voice, identity, and literary representation. That these conversations emerge out of the Canadian prairies or (or the Canadian North), supports Alison Calder and Robert Wardhaugh's observation about regionalized literatures: "it is not necessarily the land itself, but rather the initial literary and historical representations of it, with which subsequent generations must wrestle" (7). As this chapter makes clear, the idea of Canadian nationhood is entwined with "initial literary and historical representations" of sites of colonial contact. Underlying my analysis is the question of Eaton and Long Lance's historic absence from mid to late twentieth-century critical discourses about the Canadian prairies as a site of literary representation. Ultimately their absence from such conversations speaks to the particular role that literary nationalism has played in the shaping a western imaginary that is bound by exclusionary "psychic borders" (Philip, "Black W/Holes" 125).

## Reading from the Margins

When I first started to consider the positions of Anahareo, Eaton, Long Lance, and van der Mark within a broader Canadian literary culture, I initially intended to examine the relationship between race, gender, and the institutionalization of Canadian Literature by approaching the nationalized literary canon from its margins. In order to do so, I would have needed to identify a centre in the form of either a definitive, stable set of consecrated texts, or “a network of competing canons” (Davey, *Canadian Literary Power* 69). My urge to conceptualize Canada’s literary terrain in terms of centres and margins plays into a larger nationalistic tendency to conceive of cultural, gendered, and regional differences in terms of spatial metaphors: Northrop Frye’s notion of the “garrison mentality” and its emphasis on protective borders (342) is one of the most clear and obvious examples of the territorializing impulse underlying Canadian literary criticism. This critical investment in space and borderlines is preceded by the work of early twentieth-century white male academics, editors, and cultural critics (Donald G. French, Raymond Knister, J. D. Logan, Archibald MacMechan, A. J. M. Smith, Lionel Stevenson, Lorne Pierce), who mapped the contours of Canada’s cultural field through essays, literary surveys and anthologies. In 1928, A.J.M Smith criticized Canadian poets for their preoccupation with environment and setting: writing in a moment of nationalistic fervour, he argued that Canadian poetry “is altogether too self-conscious of its environment, of its position in space, and scarcely conscious at all of its position in time” (“Wanted” 33). Yet, his influential essays invoke spatial divisions; for instance, his foundational anthology, *Book of Canadian Poetry* (1943), divides Canadian poetry into a “native” national tradition that attempts to articulate “what is individual and unique in Canadian life” and a “cosmopolitan” tradition that draws upon international influences (A. Smith 5). In the 1960s and 1970s, thematic critics fixated on the relationship between the settler nation and its colonial influences.<sup>98</sup> Desmond Pacey furthered this pattern of literary territorialization when he declared early- and mid-century literary landscape “a

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<sup>98</sup> See for example Mandel’s Introduction in *Contexts of Canadian Criticism* (1971) and Atwood’s *Survival* (1972).

barren area” (658).<sup>99</sup> In this instance, the use of the term “barren” invokes settler colonial imaginings of colonized lands as spaces of Indigenous absence; however, in this instance, Pacey’s criticism evacuates the textual legacies of a wide range of early century writers (excepting Grove, Morley Callaghan, Mazo de la Roche) from the territory of “Canadian fiction.” Nick Mount furthered this pattern of erasure<sup>100</sup> in his recent, contentious history, *Arrival: The Story of CanLit* (2017), which identifies the 1960s as the sole originary moment in Canadian Literature’s (“CanLit’s”) development as a national literature.<sup>101</sup>

If I were to reformulate this dissertation as a literary mapping, who would occupy the margins? And where would these margins be situated? Does Anahareo, a well-recognized Indigenous activist and public figure whose memoir was published by Peter Davies, the same English firm that helped shape the career of Daphne Du Maurier, share the same margin as Christine van der Mark, a white settler writer whose novels were

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Looking back from the vantage point of the mid-century, we are apt to see Canadian fiction of the twenty years between the two World Wars as a barren area peopled only by Frederick Philip Grove, Morley Callaghan, and Mazo de la Roche, with perhaps a few small figures of historical romancers such as Frederick Niven and Laura Goodman Salverson grouped around them. A more detailed scrutiny [...] Well, yes, because there were Morgan’s *Bibliotheca Canadensis* (1918), Horning and Burpee’s *Bibliography of Canadian Fiction (English)* (1904), James’s *Bibliography of Canadian Poetry* (1899), Tod and Cordingley’s bibliographies (1932; 1950), and a number of shorter collections of critical remarks regarding Canadian literature as a whole or often maritime literature more specifically (both articles and full-length studies)] for the first time made feasible by the publication of R.E. Watters’ *Check List of Canadian Literature* (1959), reveals that the novels and novelists were surprisingly numerous. In these twenty years, some seven hundred novels were published by Canadians, and to the readers of that time many of them appeared as important as, if not more important than, the few novelists whose reputations have survived. In spite of this great bulk of fiction, however, it is still true to say that Grove, Callaghan, and to a lesser extent Mazo de la Roche were the most significant writers, that their joint achievement is almost equivalent to the total achievement of the period. (Pacey 658)

<sup>100</sup> See Gerson’s “The Canon between the Wars: Field-notes of a Feminist Literary Archeologist” for more discussion. This erasure has, to some extent, been countered by more recent re-examination of Canadian literary modernisms (see Betts, Irvine, and Rifkind) and Hammill’s work with middlebrow publications.

<sup>101</sup> Rak addresses *Arrival*’s colonial undercurrent in an acerbic review for *Hook and Eye*: “It seems that before the 1960s (before 1959 to be exact) there was no Canadian literature at all. Mount’s CanLit boom, at last, brought proper literature into being” (“Another Dumpster Fire”).



largely forgotten by the end of the century? In turn, does Eaton, a commercially successful settler writer who, at times, obscured her racial identity, share the same margin as van der Mark? Do two writers with different Indigenous ancestries (Anahareo and Long Lance) occupy the same margin? Perhaps, in light of Frank Davey's suggestion that the literary field is composed of not one but "a network of competing canons" (*Canadian* 69), may it also be composed of a similar network of competing margins?

M. NourbeSe Philip troubles the concept of marginality, "as it is ordinarily articulated," for its reductive representation of the relationship between the marginal and the dominant: "It suggests a relationship with the dominant culture in which the marginal is considered inferior, and implies that the marginal wishes to lose its quality of marginality and be eventually absorbed by the more dominant culture" ("Who's Listening?" 10). Further complicating matters, the writers who anchor this project occupy a space that is neither wholly marginal *nor* dominant. Unlike more consciously experimental writers, these figures represent a larger body of literary work that does not necessarily threaten to overthrow the dominant culture by "[appealing] to a creative violence" (Betts 12). Yet, as I have demonstrated through my case studies, because Eaton and Long Lance also used their writerly voices in order to critique colonial structures, the mainstream text has functioned a site wherein literary convention interacts with literary intervention.

The idea of constellated knowledge becomes useful here because it rids us of the idea of a precise centre and invites a way of looking at differing literary perspectives in terms that are dynamic and relational, rather than adhering to colonizing categories. Thus, in steering this analysis towards van der Mark and Anahareo, I recognize two other voices that, while wholly different in terms of their subjective positionings, share an engagement with racial performance and/or cultural exchange via their particular imaginings of frontier space. At first glance, their depictions of the Canadian prairies and the Canadian North may seem to conform to a colonial vision of "the Wild West" and "the northern wilderness" as places of "limitless freedom" in which communities converge and white people can "go native" (Heidenreich 267); however, *In Due Season* and *My Life With Grey Owl* (and *Devil in Deerskins*) are far more complicating. These

texts reveal the colonial processes and power structures that guide and mediate intercultural interactions, transformations, and moments of exchange.

## Contesting Narratives

*In Due Season* takes place in a fictive community in northern Alberta. Like *Cattle*, *In Due Season* considers the triangulated relationship between the white and racialized settler and Indigenous populations; however, unlike Eaton, van der Mark is largely concerned with the interaction between Cree, Métis, and white settler communities. Van der Mark's Chinese Canadian characters have the slightest peripheral presence and offer none of the transgressive potential suggested by Eaton's rebellious ranch cook, Chum Lee. Since Chinese Canadian voting rights were restored in the same year that *In Due Season* was published (1947), this instance of erasure could be the outcome of continued white ambivalence towards the situation of Chinese Canadians and their placement in the nation-space. Indeed, van der Mark does not make much of an attempt to humanize her Chinese Canadian characters and they remain a somewhat alien presence. In spite of their tonal differences, then, *In Due Season*'s interrogation of settler colonialism lacks one aspect of *Cattle*'s nuance. Nonetheless, in her introduction to the 1978 edition of *In Due Season*, Dorothy Livesay, presumably thinking of the novel's thoughtful representation of Indigenous and Métis characters, lauded van der Mark for her "freedom from racial prejudice" (iv). Read in conjunction as two complementary examples of prairie realism, *Cattle* and *In Due Season* undermine the notion that the genre conveys a sense of mimetic truth.

Livesay aligns van der Mark not just with realism, but more specifically with what she calls documentary realism. As she explains in her 1969 essay, "The Documentary Poem: A Canadian Genre," the documentary mode is a dialectic form that moves between "the objective facts and the subjective feelings of the poet" (267). Born in Calgary in 1917 to Dutch and English immigrants, van der Mark spent much of her early adult life teaching in various rural communities across northern Alberta. She recorded her observations of these towns in letters, notebooks, and manuscripts, one of which formed the basis of a Creative Writing Master's thesis, "A Study of Conditions of the Last

Frontier During the Depression and Following, in the Form of a Novel Entitled *In Due Season*.” Oxford University Press (Canadian division) published a version of this draft in 1947, after it won the Oxford-Crowell fiction award for unpublished manuscripts. The summary appearing on the original dust jacket renders the novel a realist “picture of life in a new settlement on Canada’s last frontier.” At the forefront of van der Mark’s narrative, though, Oxford University Press cast *In Due Season*’s Métis and Cree characters as signifiers of the greater “tragedy of [their] people,”<sup>102</sup> an argument clearly undermined by *In Due Season*’s plot. The archival record reveals editorial attempts to downplay the novel’s more resistant elements. To her editor, van der Mark wrote:

One of your suggestions is to omit the discussion of the position of “breeds” and the question of Jay’s birth. This suggestion bothers me considerably. If such discussion were omitted, the impression the reader will have of the native and his place will be Lina’s [the protagonist’s] own. And her prejudices are of the worst. I would rather the book were not published at all than feel that I had been unjust to such people as Jay, Bill Manydogs, and the others. (Letter)

Although *In Due Season* was lauded by critics, ultimately Oxford University Press did little to support van der Mark’s future career, likely an outcome of her strained relationship with editor R. W. W. Robertson.

Livesay attempts to position *In Due Season* alongside the writings of better-known prairie writers such as Frederick Philip Grove, Vera Lysenko, Martha Ostenso, and Sinclair Ross (Introduction i).<sup>103</sup> Given its focus on Indigenous rights and settler–Indigenous relations, *In Due Season* also seems a logical predecessor to Margaret Laurence’s canonical Manawaka cycle;<sup>104</sup> however, no known archival evidence seems to exist suggesting that Laurence had contact with van der Mark or her novel (Gerson and Dowson 325). Regardless, Laurence’s novels and *In Due Season* share a thematic

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<sup>102</sup> From the dust jacket: “For many readers the most memorable portrait will be that of Jay Baptiste, the young half-breed, who, in himself, illustrates the tragedy of his people.”

<sup>103</sup> As Livesay acknowledges, Hiemstra and Lysenko do not have Grove, Ostenso, Laurence, and Ross’s canonic status (Introduction i), but their texts have been subject to some interest among scholars of immigrant Canadian literatures (see Kamboureli’s ethnic literature anthologies).

<sup>104</sup> *The Stone Angel* (1964), *A Jest of God* (1966), *The Fire Dwellers* (1969), *A Bird in the House* (1970), *The Diviners* (1974).

concern with cultural exchange as represented through the passage of ancestral objects.<sup>105</sup> Van der Mark extends this preoccupation further by voicing it through her characters. Since “[translation] traffics in power” (Godard, “Notes” 205), van der Mark’s treatment of language becomes integral to her representation of the power dynamics that govern relationships in Bear Claw’s diverse community.

*In Due Season* is largely populated by northern and eastern European immigrants, their children, and Indigenous communities. At the time of the novel’s publication, this narrative of displacement and settlement was particularly resonant, given the post-war migration of eastern and southern European refugees into Canada. Canada’s official bilingualism situates English and French as normative, to the exclusion of Indigenous and immigrant speakers. Van der Mark counters this erasure by populating the town of Bear Claw with an array of voices, through which the politics of translation reveal instances of cultural inclusion and exclusion. Abandoned by her husband and driven from the south by drought, Lina Ashley and her family struggle to forge a home-space in the northern frontier town of Bear Claw. While the young protagonist, Poppy Ashley, finds herself excluded from exchanges between her Ukrainian neighbours, she learns to converse in Cree with Jay, her close friend and eventual love interest. Their intimate exchanges exclude most of Bear Claw’s settler community, thus revealing tensions between communities, as well as rifts and silences that emerge in response to colonial violence.

As Barbara Godard observes, the figure of the silent “Indian” prevails throughout exploration literature—yet, silence doesn’t connote voicelessness, but rather the inability of settlers to hear them—in any other language than that of the settler. In the colonial context, translation emerges, not as a means of cultural exchange, but as a method of smoothing differences between Indigenous and European cultures. This process is driven towards a certain end: the assimilation of Indigenous speakers through the imposition of an official language. This language is, necessarily, the language of the colonizer (Godard “Writing Between Cultures,” 207-08). Tellingly, in the case of *In Due Season*, the one

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<sup>105</sup> The Manawaka Cycle begins and concludes with the passage of two objects (a knife and a Celtic pin) between two Métis and Anglo-Scottish families. A similar exchange occurs in *In Due Season* with the bartering of Benjie’s fiddle. Margery Fee reads such instances of “totem transfer” as evidence of the settler desire “to naturalize our appropriation of their land” (24).

character who demands an interpreter is the town magistrate, a British Canadian settler, Tudor Folkes. At the trial of one of the town's residents, Tudor asks Jay, a young Métis man, to be Bill Manydogs's interpreter. In doing so, Tudor positions Jay as an intermediary between Bear Claw's Indigenous community and the colonizer. Jay reluctantly takes on this duty, but he is not fixed in the role of the Métis go-between, a role adopted by Métis individuals from the fur trading days onward.<sup>106</sup> In one pivotal moment, Jay instructs Benny to relate a message to Poppy in Cree (van der Mark 348). Benny's role as intermediary suggests a shifting relationship between Bear Claw's settlers and the community's Indigenous population, yet in spite of these shifts, Tudor remains in the background, an unwavering representative of colonial governance.

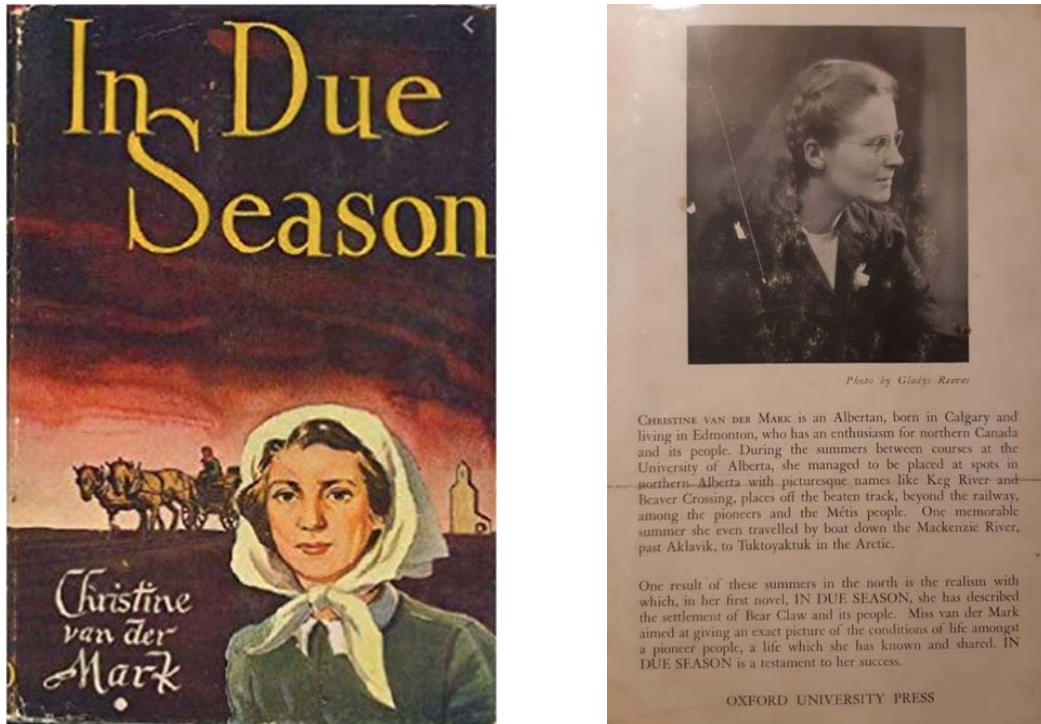
Van der Mark's speaker serves as another potential translator. When "Jay [speaks] to the girl in Cree" (van der Mark 352), the reader, much like the members of Bear Claw's settler population, is usually not privy to these conversations. In one instance, however, the narrator acts as transcriber, not translator, when she relates Jay's message to Poppy via her brother Benny: "'What did he say?' Poppy asked [Benny], very low. 'Bend down and let me whisper' he said, 'Netimos. Ka sakehit'" (van der Mark 348). By including a Cree phrase in her narrative, van der Mark creates a moment of familiarization for Cree-speaking readers, at the same time, defamiliarization for non-Cree speaking readers. In other words, the reader is made aware of their position, as either insider or outsider, in relation to the Cree-speaking community. In doing so, van der Mark does not smooth over cultural differences for the sake of a more homogenizing depiction of Bear Claw's cultural landscape. In relaying Jay's words via Benny, van der Mark does not draw attention to her own privileged position as writer and as transcriber; instead, her authorial position is elided through an ever-shifting third-person viewpoint.

Just as Poppy and Benny move seamlessly between communities, van der Mark's voice and perspective is not entirely stationary; at times, the speaker seems to adopt an Indigenous perspective, referring to Lina as "the white woman." In general, *In Due Season* does not seem to problematize these instances of cultural transmission.

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<sup>106</sup> See van Kirk's *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Societies, 1670-1870* (1983) for more discussion.

Underlying these moments is the spectral figure of the white man “gone native,” as represented by Lina’s hapless husband Sym. Van der Mark’s treatment of Sym allows the white settler a certain amount of mobility and fluidity (and irresponsibility), which arises out of a privileged position. Van der Mark grants Sym, as a white settler, the ability to Indigenize himself and in doing so to both determine and perform the terms of Indigeneity in accordance with his own imaginings.



**Figure 4.1 The dust jacket for Oxford University Press’s edition of *In Due Season*. Compare the cover image (left) with the author’s photo (right).**

Whiteness, in this case, is oriented in relation to representations of settlement.

The white settler subject is centred even further through *In Due Season*’s original peritexts. The seeming plainness of van der Mark’s authorial photograph (see Figure 4.1) does not approximate Eaton (as Onoto Watanna) or Long Lance’s engagement with racial performance through self-imagery; however, as in the case of other white settler prairie texts published from the 1920s onwards (see my discussion of Robert Stead’s *Grain* in the Introduction), whiteness emerges through representations of land and space. The location of van der Mark’s authorial photograph in proximity to the front cover photo—a

representation of a woman settler set against a field—recalls Sara Ahmed’s thoughts on whiteness as an orientation that “[affects] how they ‘take up’ space” (150). Here, van der Mark’s white body is not the sole subject of and focus of an act of self-presentation; however, it is located in peritextual proximity to a representation of white agricultural space.

In spite of this framing, van der Mark’s fragmented narrative voice and its vacillations—between languages, between perspectives, between expression and silence—gestures towards a sense of conflictedness. It seems that the narrator (and, possibly, van der Mark) is in a state of questioning over her role and position in relation to this colonized land and its inhabitants: Who can she speak for? Whose stories can she tell? What limitations bind her? Thematically, *In Due Season* resembles Laurence’s output, and yet these inconsistencies, incongruities, and changes in narrative voice remind me of Long Lance’s *Autobiography*; indeed, it shares with *Autobiography* a preoccupation with larger questions about voice, mediation, and representation. Ultimately, van der Mark seems to offer a concession; by rendering certain voices present but inaccessible, she hints at other truths, other stories and voices that reach beyond the limitations of the colonizing tongue, and, ultimately, beyond the bounds of prairie realism.

Read in conjunction with *In Due Season*, Anahareo’s memoir nuances van der Mark’s interrogation of settler colonialism by intercepting romantic conceptions of land-based Indigeneity. While van der Mark troubles the bounds of prairie realism using a fluid third-person perspective, Anahareo represents moments of cultural translation and transformation using a subjective “I”. In her 1940 memoir, likely the first book-length life-text by an Indigenous woman published in Canada (McCall, Afterword 190), Anahareo articulates a sense of selfhood that is separate from the legacy of her famous husband, Grey Owl (1888-1938). Born off-reserve in Mattawa, Ontario, Anahareo maintained a strong sense of connectedness to her Mohawk and Algonquin ancestors. Although she identified as Mohawk, her grandmother Catherine was born in an Algonquin community in the Oka region (Quebec). Catherine married a Mohawk man (John Bernard Nelson) in Kanehsatake, Quebec, and the family eventually settled near

Belleville, Ontario. Forced off their land by white settlement, the Bernards travelled to Mattawa, which served as Anahareo's home community (McCall, Afterword 195-97). Having been raised in a village far from her ancestral territories, Anahareo contended with negative representations of off-reserve Indigenous peoples; in her memoir, she records Grey Owl vocalizing this racist view in his interactions with an Algonquin community: "they will forget that they are Indians [...] I have seen Indians leave the woods and become tramps" (*My Life with Grey Owl* 137). Anahareo countered this perception by entering the woods.<sup>107</sup>

Read in relation to its paratexts, Anahareo's narrative reveals an intense negotiation between the memoirist's sense of self and the settler-colonial gaze. *My Life with Grey Owl* was originally published in 1940 by Peter Davies, the same company that (under the name Lovat Dickson) published Grey Owl's best-selling accounts of life in the bush. As was the case with van der Mark, Anahareo's conflict with her publisher stemmed from larger questions about Indigenous representation. The memoirist expressed her dissatisfaction with Peter Davies's editorial practices by vandalizing library copies of *My Life with Grey Owl*, tearing out segments that more aptly represented Peter Davies's racist editorial practices than her own version of events (McCall, Afterword 203). The preface to *My Life with Grey Owl* reflects Davies's exploitative agenda:

And she is beautiful. The photographs included in this book, with one or two exceptions, were taken in the open air with uncomplicated, old-fashioned cameras, and by very amateur hands. They show something of her slender, attractive strength, but nothing of the light and play of her features, her golden skin, her straight, deep-set brown eyes; the little tricks of gestures, the one dark eyebrow that lifts itself quizzically over a laughing eye when she is at her ease and indulging the slow, lazy, humorous sense of the backwoods. Nor the even white teeth, or the slim column of her neck rising from an open shirt that holds her small well-shaped head so proudly back. (ix)

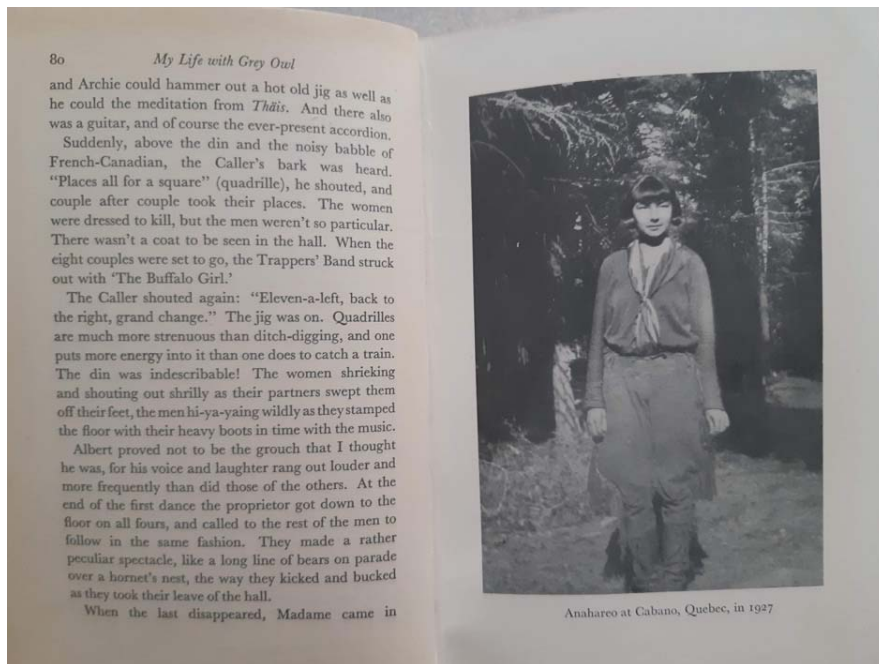
The images referenced in this preface embody the memoirist and remind the reader of her authorial presence; in doing so, they also remind the reader of the mediating forces behind her public image (see Figures 4.2, 4.3). In her 1972 rewriting of *My Life With*

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<sup>107</sup> See McCall's Afterword for additional discussion about Anahareo's family background.



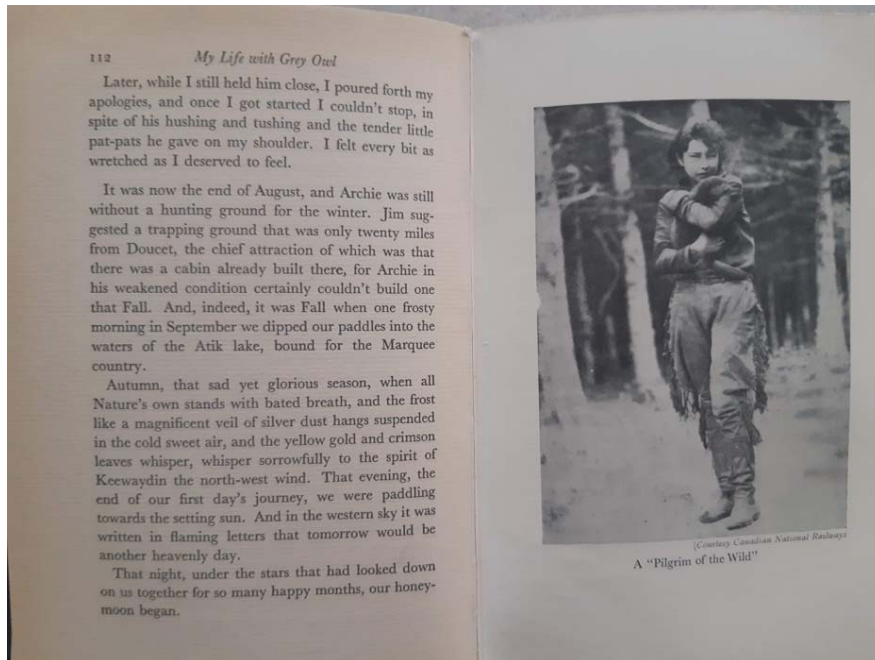
*Grey Owl*, as *Devil in Deerskins*,<sup>108</sup> Anahareo intercepts this sexualized depiction. Unlike Grey Owl, Anahareo does not capitalize on markers of Indigeneity in order to appeal to settler fantasies. As she makes clear in *Devil in Deerskins*, clothing serves as a means of self-articulation; sewing, beading, and tanning offer her a way to re-assert her connections with her ancestors (McCall, Afterword 199).



**Figure 4.2** Bookplate from *My Life With Grey Owl*

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<sup>108</sup> Page citations refer to the 2014 edition (University of Manitoba Press).



**Figure 4.3 Book plate from *My Life with Grey Owl*, invoking the title of Grey Owl's bestselling 1934 memoir, *Pilgrims of the Wild***

Anahareo uses her writerly voice to seek agency over her own self-presentation *and* to address Grey Owl's role in the public imaginary. In both texts, Anahareo describes Grey Owl's interaction with a corrupt priest (a possible reference to the Oblate missionary Étienne Blanchin), who clashes with Chief Ignace Papati,<sup>109</sup> the leader of an Algonquin community in Simosagigan, Quebec. The priest attempts to deceive Chief Papati into letting him into the village, where he risks transmitting tuberculosis to the unsuspecting population; Grey Owl acts as an intermediary on behalf of Chief Papati and his community. The following is a passage from *My Life with Grey Owl*:

Then the priest came out again, in a positive rage this time and in Cree he said: "You will be sorry for speaking those words, Papati. I will write to the King in Quebec."

"The King is not in Quebec," Archie interrupted.

[...] he knew that Archie spoke English, and that was why he had spoke Cree to Papati the last time. He was obviously annoyed at Archie's

<sup>109</sup> I am using Anahareo's spelling. His name also appears in historical records as Nias Papaté or Ignace Papatie.

understanding of it. So now he decided to try French, and in perfect French he said:

“If you are here to make trouble for me, I will have you chased out of the country.”

“You cannot,” answered Archie in his best French.

Then the priest flew at him in Cree. (Anahareo 131).

In *Devil in Deerskins*, this scene is changed:

“You will regret this night, Papati. I am going to write to the King of Quebec!” [the priest] turned and left us standing there.

There was nothing for us to do but go home. (Anahareo 67)

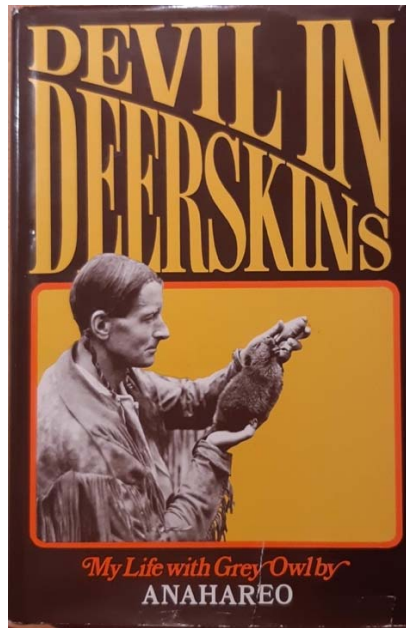
In the original version, Anahareo casts Grey Owl in a heroic light; his heroism lies in his privileged position as translator, a role that gestures towards his mobility, his ability to cross cultural boundaries. The second telling is tinged with cynicism and a sense of resignation.

The textual gap between these two accounts indicates a moment of negotiation: given publisher Lovat Dickson’s friendship with Grey Owl and his company’s investment in the conservationist’s legacy, this depiction of Grey Owl might have had the intended effect of recovering his sullied reputation. As a translator, in both a literal and symbolic sense, Grey Owl is not a strange imposter but rather a complex intermediary, willing to cross cultural boundaries for the betterment of a larger society. The passage from *Devil in Deerskins* takes away this idealized version of Grey Owl and leaves the reader with a sense of unease; the priest lingers in the village, unconstrained and unprovoked by the intervening presence of a white man in deerskins.

This moment is at odds with the message conveyed by Grant MacEwan’s celebratory Foreword to *Devil in Deerskins*. Sophie McCall locates this new version within a specific moment of political organization and self-determinism, when Indigenous activists worked to challenge Pierre Trudeau’s government’s assimilatory policies (Afterword 207). In opting to rewrite her story in this highly politicized climate, Anahareo communicates a stronger, more outspoken message of environmental and

Indigenous rights (McCall, Afterword 207). New Press's editorial treatment of *Devil in Deerskins* also seemed to respond to a widespread interest in ecology and conservation, but rather than draw attention to Anahareo's contributions to Canadian environmentalism and Indigenous rights, MacEwan's preface attempts to centre Grey Owl as the narrative's major focal point. In response to the lingering question of Grey Owl's Indigeneity, MacEwan reassures readers that "[the] revelation of Grey Owl's true background and original name" was secondary to his work as a conservationist (v).

Anahareo's rewriting supports this re-centring to a certain extent. In spite of its racist and misogynistic paratextual framings, *My Life With Grey Owl* more closely adheres to the narrative structure of the bildungsroman, by tracing Anahareo's personal maturation and growing political consciousness as a conservationist. *Devil in Deerskins* serves a more obviously commemorative purpose. In the new version, Anahareo adds sections that narrativize Grey Owl's gradual ascent to a position of celebrity, a process that occurred in tandem with his public transition into a "full-blooded Indian": "The more Archie did, the more Indian he became in the eyes of the public" (*Devil in Deerskins* 176). The Grey Owl that emerges through *My Life with Grey Owl* is a mysterious, moody figure, haunted by a lingering but unexplained sadness. *Devil in Deerskins* attempts to address this mystery, by revealing details about a troubled childhood in late nineteenth-century England. Here, Anahareo represents herself as Grey Owl's closest confidant, the only one privy to his troubled history, and the only real witness to his ascent. She is both a custodian of his legacy and a custodian of the land.



**Figure 4.4** New Press's cover image for *Devil in Deerskins*.

New Press's cover image re-centres Grey Owl as the protagonist of *Devil in Deerskins*.

This sense of custodianship comes through in *Devil in Deerskin's* representation of the land, its histories, and its ecologies. Although attributed to Anahareo, *My Life with Grey Owl's* crucial opening paragraph was not written by her (McCall, Afterword 203). In this example, Indigenous imposterism is embedded *in this text*. It emerges through the voice of a settler, who speaks from the perspective of one of the “Wilderness people”:

Do you know the North, the land that is our land, the home of the Wilderness people? There are some who think it barren and monotonous. There is so much of it that perhaps it does seem depressing at first sight, especially if you see it from the windows of a train, and watch mile after mile of green and silver forest wall, broken only by an occasional lake, or by some outcrop of rock on which no trees can grow. Sometimes the train passes a little clearing so newly-made that the slashed trunks of the trees the settler has felled seem torn and unnaturally white, like wounds that have not healed. And the settler's cabin, set a little back from the railway line, seems in the shadow of the giant trees to be lonely and oppressed, I imagine, to the eye that rests on it but for a moment as the train rushes by.

But to us who love it[,] it is beautiful. I have no mastery of words. If I had, still, I could not describe it, for words cannot tell the silence of the solitude of this great Northland or its fairy music. (Anahareo, *My Life With Grey Owl* 1)

This passage presents a dominating eye-view, clearly voiced from the perspective of a settler subject. Romantic descriptors (a “mile of green and silver,” the lonely “shadow of giant trees”) conjure a scene from a lyric poem or a European landscape painting. In a subsequent passage, the settler narrator makes explicit the connection between the Northland and the production of a cultural imaginary:

To us it was the North, and with that word we imagined everything that the Americans of a century ago mean when they said “the West”. It was a pioneer land, sparsely inhabited, wild and remote, offering every kind of hardship to the uninitiated who penetrated it.” (Anahareo, *My Life with Grey Owl* 11)

Anahareo troubles the settler subject’s description of the mystical North by guiding the reader through a string of interrelated mining communities, woodland camps, Indigenous communities and reserves. These places are named throughout the text: Biscotasing, Wabikon, Timagami, Rouyn, Senneterre, Simosagigan, Forsythe, Doucet. Anahareo’s account of her meeting with Chief Papati and his community in Simosagigan includes some of *My Life with Grey Owl*’s most vivid recollections. Simosagigan was settled in 1910 by members of the relocated Kitcisakik (Algonquin) band; Father Blanchin established a permanent mission there in 1924 (“Lac-Simon”). In her description, Anahareo alludes to the community’s robust ceremonial life, which thrives in spite of the impositions of the domineering Father. Anahareo also draws attention to colonialism’s destructive ramifications: for instance, the community faces starvation, an outcome of white settler hunting and trapping practices—in which Anahareo and Grey Owl took part (Lawrence, *Fractured Homeland* 44). In these recollections, the hard realities of settler–Indigenous relations, as voiced by Anahareo, clash against the settler speaker’s homogenizing descriptions.

The opening to *Devil in Deerskins* offers an entirely different orientation to the land and the people living in it:

It was the Moon of the Windigo and the tamarack, sounding like rifle fire, cracked in the freezing night. The little black spruce were hunched and distorted, bent to the breaking point under their burden of snow. This was northern Quebec in the midwinter, and well below zero.

Unaccustomed to snowshoeing, I trudged on as if in a dream—a nightmare to be more precise—for ahead of me was this stranger. It disgusted me to see him swinging along as if on a wafting breeze, hauling a toboggan with its 150-pound load, while I staggered desperately to keep up. (Anahareo 1)

Anahareo's perspective infuses the scene with personal meaning and symbolism. She places considerable emphasis on verbs and motion, action as opposed to description. In this passage, Anahareo and Grey Owl are not mere observers, but agents moving through the land, approaching it from different levels of familiarity. Her gaze is not dominating; instead, her description suggests different points of perspective and, thus, multiple relations to the land. In the paragraphs that follow, she likens Grey Owl to Jesse James, a popularized historic figure linked with the imagined West (this comparison also appears in the 1940 version). As Anahareo follows "Jesse James" into northern Quebec, she presents a vision of the Canadian North that is composed of multiple overlapping histories (both colonial and Indigenous) and imaginaries. Through this moment of referentiality, Anahareo acknowledges her own contribution to a broader textual imaginary. As a point of Indigenous-colonial contact, the Canadian North—like the Canadian prairies—is a potent textual site, but in choosing to rewrite this space, Anahareo uses the form of the memoir in order to respond to a changing social and political reality.

## **The Politics of Literary Recovery**

Edited by McCall and Gerson respectively, the most recent editions of *Devil in Deerskins* (published by University of Manitoba Press in its First Voices First Texts series in April 2014) and *In Due Season* (published by Wilfrid Laurier University Press in its Early Canadian Literature series in May 2016) emerge out of critical genealogy that includes (though is not limited to), debates about racial and Indigenous appropriation in Canadian literature, feminist criticism, and critical responses to the 1988 *Multiculturalism Act* (see Bannerji, Kambourelli, and Miki). More pressingly, these new editions were released shortly prior to the UBC Accountable controversy (November 2016) and the ensuing debates about Joseph Boyden's Indigenous identity. In the view of some critics these recent controversies have unsettled the foundations of Canadian Literature and have

ignited important conversations about the literary industry's role in normalizing certain voices—and narratives—over others, through the consecration of a select cadre of celebrity writers. As McGregor et al. remind us, Canadian literary production is a heterogenous site, intertwined with nationalist mythologies, academic discourses, and fluctuating publishing trends (17). Continued, cross-generational interest in van der Mark and Anahareo among activists (Livesay), small press publishers (New Star), academics (Gerson, Dowson, MacEwan, McCall), and editors and publishers with nationalistic or colonial agendas (Oxford University Press, New Press) are indicative of Canadian Literature's "uneven and sometimes unpredictable sites of conflict and contradiction" (McGregor et al. 17). If academic work is closely (and at times uneasily) related to Canadian literary production, how may literary recovery projects—particularly those taken up by academics expressing a feminist or decolonizing agenda—evolve in light of these recent controversies and the questions that they raise?

The poet Ocean Vuong expresses skepticism about desires and expectations underlying cultural recovery, highlighting its destructive possibilities:

I have this uneasy relationship with how we have this desire to restore other cultures; artifacts; art. Looking at the violences that we've done to one another as a species, I get anxious about restoration, because, in some cases, we are also erasing acts of violence. If it's broken, we rebuild it; we lose the traces of what made those breaks in the first place.

If colonialism necessitates a collective forgetting (or a selective remembering) of colonial violence (Coleman 28-29), then this process is manifested in New Press and Oxford University Press's editorial practices. If done well, literary recovery can counter such practices, not only preserving and bringing to justice the voices of forgotten, under-examined, or marginalized writers, but by bringing to light the various discourses that informed the production and reception of these texts. Gerson and Dowson's work with *In Due Season* does a good job of connecting van der Mark's textual output with processes of cultural production. In their Afterword, Gerson and Dowson draw upon archival documents<sup>110</sup> to foreground van der Mark's anti-racist agenda and her conflict with

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<sup>110</sup> Thank you to Janice Dowson, who provided me with insights into her extensive and thorough work with the Oxford University Press (Canada) papers.



Oxford University Press editor R. W. W. Robertson over issues of Indigenous representation. This conflict may have contributed to her marginalization (Gerson and Dowson 331-32).

The University of Manitoba Press's new edition of *Devil in Deerskins* goes even further not only to re-centre Anahareo's story, but to show its impact on a larger community. As part of the First Voices First Texts series, *Devil in Deerskins* emerged out of an editorial practice that is embedded in Indigenous ethics and protocols.<sup>111</sup> Writing in response to Margaret Atwood's involvement in the UBC Accountable controversy, Erika Thorkelson sees *listening* as an act of social justice: "Really listening requires full body presence. It requires you to soften and let go of fear, the urge to argue, and the instinct to control the narrative" (189). While McCall's scholarly Afterword provides crucial contexts, this edition—and its framings—invite the reader to *serve a listener*, as Thorkelson means it. In one of two prefaces (authored separately by Anahareo's daughters, Katherine Swartile and Anne Gaskell), Swartile explains her relationship with the Canadian North and its ecologies:

[M]y mother would tell me stories about her life in the bush with Archie and the beavers, Jellyroll and Rawhide. I loved these stories the best because they were about family. I thought of them as my beaver sister and brother; she made them come so alive for me. I felt their fear when their parents were killed by trappers and they were left to fend for themselves [...].

My mother was such a wonderful storyteller. I always begged for her to tell me more and often she would continue until I fell asleep. I used to dream that the three of us would one day go to Ajawan Lake to visit the beavers and I knew they would be happy to see us. (x)

For Swartile, the Canadian North is closely entwined with her mother's words. The inclusion of Swartile's memories coincides with the addition of paratextual maps tracing Anahareo and Grey Owl's route through Northern Ontario and Quebec. To return to Simpson's conception of constellations, this edition works to centre *Devil in Deerskins* within a set of related and coinciding representations; read alongside Anahareo's

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<sup>111</sup> According to a paratextual statement, the series (edited by Warren Cariou) "strive[s] to indigenize the editing process by involving communities, by respecting traditional protocols, and by providing critical introductions that give readers new insights."

narrative, this edition puts forth a multivalent geography formulated through varied stories, histories, imaginings, and mappings. It is through these framings that this edition grapples with and succeeds in disturbing monologic tellings of northern histories. Tellingly, at the time of this writing (Autumn 2019), neither Long Lance nor Eaton's prairie output have been subject to a similar recovery. What would new editions of *Cattle* or *His Royal Nibs* (1925) look like? Or Long Lance's *Autobiography*? What conflicting, intersecting narratives would publishers, editors, scholars, and reviewers make visible? Whose ideas, visions, and geographies of the Canadian prairies would they foreground? Whose would they obscure?

## Chapter 5. Conclusion

Within the context of this project, I have treated selected texts and their surrounding paratextual apparatuses as sticky points (to invoke Sara Ahmed): saturated sites of continual return, wherein critics, gatekeepers, scholars and, in some cases, *the writers themselves* engage in a larger, on-going conversations about history, nationhood, and place. Here I am not only referring to more conventional readings of paratextual reframings—for instance, the progressive differences between subsequent editions—but the ways in which feature articles, reviews, prefatory materials, dust jackets, and other materials serve as sites where colonial pasts are discussed and interpreted, where anxieties about the colonial future are expressed, and where the text and its authorship is itself is, at times, contested. Ultimately, paratextual readings challenge more traditional, and arguably more violent, ideas of temporal progression between past, present, and future by illuminating larger, often recursive debates. By comparing four disparate texts and their surrounding paratextual matter, what emerges are not only questions about representation, but also of voice: *who speaks?* and *who speaks for whom?*

My reading of the interaction between the text and its surrounding paratextual materials (particularly epitextual documents like book reviews and publicity) draws attention to the colonizing impulses underlying print cultures in early twentieth-century Canada. As I demonstrated in my analysis of *Cattle*'s design and reception, the settler novel functioned as an interactive site composed of clusters of competing perspectives and representations (author, publisher, reviewers) united by a shared investment in the idea of Canadian nationhood (either supporting or, to a certain extent, interrogating it). Though a regionalized space, the Canadian prairies (or the western frontier)—or rather *the idea of it*—functioned as metonymic representation of nation-building. In the case of Long Lance's *Autobiography*, the relationship between the writer's representations of Indigeneity and Canadian periodical production (see *Maclean's* magazine's response to Long Lance's telling of the story of Almighty Voice) shows how the periodical functioned as a critical site of interrogation, wherein narratives about western settlement were built, challenged, and sustained.

As Frank Davey reminds us, regional identities seem an authentic response to homogenizing nationalisms; however, the notion of an authentic regional sensibility obfuscates the various ways in which the state defines and organizes geographies (“Towards the End,” 4-5).<sup>112</sup> His proposed antidote is the notion of *regionality*, which provides a more elastic conception of regional identity that illuminates the varied and intersecting subject positions and ideological frameworks that underpin communities. Regionality de-centres static or homogenizing ideas about regionalized spaces. In the case of early twentieth-century settler literature, the notion of regionality may easily disrupt white settler imaginings of the Canadian prairies as a *terra nullius*, absent of Indigenous or (as Compton and Vernon have suggested) Black bodies. All the texts forming this textual constellation gesture towards *regionality* in various ways; however, in considering the histories and social contexts underlying the formation of the Canadian West as a regionality (or regionalities), I have focused on settler colonialism as an organizing principle and structure.

These social and historic contexts are sensitive and highly charged. Black writer M. Nourbese Philip’s observations about wilderness spaces—and who occupies them—is useful, here. In the context of this analysis, what she refers to as “wilderness” may apply to a prairie setting or other points of colonial contact:

There appears to be some sort of psychic border which prohibits or limits our entry, as "Others," into this particularly Canadian aspect of life. Considering that most immigrants are at most one generation away from the land, their lack of engagement with it in Canada is significant. For many peoples from Africa and Asia, the land remains integrally linked to their life: not only is it the source of food, but also of healing and spirituality. With European settlement in Canada, however, the "wilderness" has developed a language that we cannot penetrate, unless we enter the world of whiteness (“Black w/Holes” 125).

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<sup>112</sup> Davey does not refer to settler colonialism, specifically, but he implies it in his assertion that regions may be likened to colonies orbiting a centralized metropole, be it a dominating province or urban centre (“Towards the End,” 7).

Twentieth-century settler critics participated in the construction of these “psychic borders” by working to determine which writers represented (or did not) represent the prairie space; however, my work seeks to counter these erasures.

In this dissertation, I have identified an archive of texts and framing paratexts that emerged largely out of an early twentieth-century context. As a literary scholar with a background in Library and Information Sciences, I believe that the purpose of this dissertation is not only to historicize or to interpret texts; my work is also curatorial in nature. In some respect, this dissertation is an archival space that orients a selection of paratextual images (such as those appearing in *Maclean's*) alongside the words and testimonies of underexamined or unacknowledged voices (like Eagle Speaker's). As the most recent edition of *Devil in Deerskins* (2014) indicates, literary recovery entails a process of recuperation *and* preservation; it preserves voices and histories and (potentially) represents them to new readerships. Crucially, the texts that form the basis of this study are linked to and rooted in complicated and often painful histories. These histories have a continued, lingering impact on survivors—in this case, I refer to relatives of writers or members of their communities. Diana Birchall's eloquent and astute biography of her grandmother is a key source for Eaton scholars. Read in conjunction with the wide breadth of critical literature about Eaton, I think that Birchall's biography comes closest to identifying Eaton's possible motives, as well as the personal and material circumstances that shaped her career. Some of the biography's most telling moments emerge through family anecdotes as well as Birchall's own scattered memories. In the book's preface, she describes a meeting with Eaton's daughter (Birchall's aunt) Doris Rooney:

Three or four years later, we learned that [Eaton] had died of a heart attack. Still later, her daughter, Doris, came for a visit and brought me two tokens: a copy of one of the many novels Winnifred had written, with the unpromising title of *Cattle*, and a photograph of Winnifred, still fairly young, kneeling on a lawn, oddly dressed in a kimono, with that same jolly, wide grin. (2)

Birchall's reference to *Cattle* is significant: in this moment the boring, “unpromising title” seems to exist in confluence—not in contrast—with the “oddly dressed” kimonoed

woman with the jolly (Or perhaps playful? Suggestive?) smile. Birchall's brief description communicates both the multivalence of her grandmother's public persona(e) and, more viscerally, the intergenerational impact of her visual and textual performances.

And yet, if I am a curator of sorts, this dissertation-as-archive is reflective of my subject position and its accompanying privileges and limitations. I was reminded of my position when Donald B. Smith presented me with Eagle Speaker's transcriptions. In that moment, it was made clear to me that *Autobiography* was more than a literary curiosity: not just a fiction produced by a troubled imposter, but also a *living* document, containing multiple, confluent legacies and narratives. Since receiving this document, I have sent a photocopy of D. Smith's transcriptions to Eagle Speaker's granddaughter, Karon Maclean, who, in turn, most generously sent me an image of her grandfather in ceremonial clothing. Since my research into early twentieth-century literary production has broadened into a wider story about community-formation and literary collaboration, about knowledge and the sharing and transmission of that knowledge—between Eagle Speaker and Long Lance, between Maclean and myself—*Autobiography* holds a certain power. Speaking of knowledge and its transmission and dissemination, I must necessarily reflect upon my own voice and how it contributes to a larger paratextual cacophony.

Scholarly editions (in both print and digital format), remain a common method of drawing scholarly attention to “lost” or marginalized texts. In June 2019, I met with a senior editor at a Canadian university press, who expressed a strong interest in producing a scholarly edition of Long Lance's *Autobiography*. She asked me if I was interested in leading the project, a prospect that, while exciting, requires a high level of accountability to the communities involved in *Autobiography*'s production. Sara Humphreys, a settler scholar and faculty member at the University of Victoria, has written critically about scholarly publication as a colonizing structure:

The literary academic edition is inherently colonial. The conventional western norm of a single, authoritative manuscript produced by an academic editor (often a professor) does not reflect the overlapping, interconnected, textual and oral nature of the Indigenous story. [...] We are taught to privilege the editor's voice—we are told to look to the footnote or endnote

to give us direction as readers, which means an edition's paratext can operate as a mechanism of social and state control. ("Creating")

As I have demonstrated in my case studies, these power dynamics are not just evidenced through academic interventions, but also through epitextual materials and book design, which show us the precise manner in which early twentieth-century periodical and book publishing operated as a mechanism of the state (again, drawing attention to Canadian Literature's variegated structure as both an academic field and as a commercial endeavor). Humphreys hopes to decolonize the academic edition, via the creation of a digital version of Mourning Dove's (Syilx Okanagan) 1927 western novel *Cogewea: The Half Blood*. In her efforts to create an edition that aptly foregrounds Mourning Dove's Syilx Okanagan knowledge, Humphreys has confronted her own limitations as a settler researcher:

An edited scholarly edition is an intellectual accomplishment of mediation and interpretation but where is the reader? Who is doing the interpreting? What if an editor is not versed in Indigenous storytelling protocols and practices? ("Creating")

These questions ring true for me. Although I have studied the contexts informing Long Lance and Eaton's literary work, in constellation with van der Mark and Anahareo, crucial information is missing from my study. For instance, much of my research focuses on mainstream Anglo-Canadian publishing; and yet, Chinese language newspapers offer a powerful counternarrative. In the Winter of 2018, I worked with a Vancouver-based Chinese Canadian activist on behalf of Simon Fraser University Library's Special Collections division. The prospective donor showed me a scrapbook containing newspaper clippings—in both English and Chinese—detailing community responses towards a gentrification project that targeted Vancouver's Chinatown in the 1960s. As the prospective donor explained the contents contained within the book, I witnessed a sort of dialogical interaction between narrative and counternarrative, as enacted through print culture. In Eaton's case, Chinese and Japanese language publications, particularly those produced in Canada and the United States, might provide great insight into how Chinese and Japanese Canadian (or American) readers received and interpreted the writer, or whether they noticed her at all.

As I face my limitations as a white, English-speaking settler scholar who has worked within the traditional constraints of Canadian print culture studies, I am confronted by the real and possible danger that I may contribute to a monologic echo chamber. Fortunately, the possibility of a new edition of *Autobiography* coincides with emerging editorial practices that harness the possibilities presented by digital technologies. For instance, searchable databases may foster unexpected connections between disparate texts and paratexts (McGregor 109) and between authors (such as those that form the basis of this project) who may not normally be read in confluence. In the case of Eaton, a broadly encompassing database or digital archive may, most usefully, place her work in dialogue with white settler epitextual materials *as well as* critical materials gleaned from Chinese or Japanese Canadian periodical publications. Notably, as of the time of this dissertation's writing (Autumn 2019), the Canadian Writing Research Collaboratory (CWRC) has hosted a digital project that is centred upon Eaton's Alberta writings. The project, titled *Winnifred Eaton/Onoto Watanna-The Alberta Years* includes a small body of texts pertaining to Eaton's prairie writings, including some of the newspaper reviews used in his project.<sup>113</sup> If developed further, such a project could place Eaton in conversation with other writers who also participated in the construction of the Canadian prairies, thus potentially resulting in the identification of new, and perhaps unexpected, literary constellations. A digital approach could also facilitate collaborative editing practices that disrupt colonizing hierarchies and systems of knowledge. For instance, Humphreys is currently working with gaming technologies in order to construct an interactive version of *Cogewea* in which players may contribute their own knowledge to what the critic refers to as an "Indigenized cyberspace" ("Creating"). It is easy to see how such an approach could foster a new understanding of *Autobiography* that takes into consideration a wide breadth of histories and epistemologies.

While I acknowledge the constraints inherent in my particular dissertation project, I intend my work to function as a sort of signpost, or guiding star (at risk of stretching

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<sup>113</sup> Unfortunately, this digital archive was not available to me when I was deeply embedded in the research process.



Leanne Simpson's stellar metaphor to its breaking point) directing critics towards de-centring possibilities. Through this dissertation, I strive to alert readers and critics to a body of texts that make visible the various mechanisms and institutions complicit in the construction of colonizing narratives about western settlement and territorialization. By placing these writers—and their surrounding paratextual discourses—*in conversation with* and *in connection to each other*, I have articulated a constellation of texts that disrupt colonial and patriarchal readings of early twentieth-century Canadian literary production as a “barren terrain.” To ignore this work is to enforce a collective forgetting of the very voices that troubled, contested, and complicated the colonial imaginary.

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