(Un)Learning Citizenship in Canada:
Iranian Immigrant Youth's Silences, Contradictions, and Expressions

by

MARYAM NABAVI

M.ED., University of Toronto, 2005
B.A., University of Calgary, 2001

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Educational Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

December 2011

Abstract

This study examines the meanings, interpretations, and experiences of citizenship in the lives of young Iranian immigrants in Canada in order to (1) offer a conceptual approach to migrant youth citizenship that fills gaps in dominant conceptualizations of citizenship in Canada, and (2) provide recommendations for the improvement of models of citizenship education relevant to lived experiences of migrant youth. Contemporary conceptions of citizenship in Canada are underpinned by assumptions closely aligned with a multicultural national identity and stress formal aspects of citizenship, which undermine substantive aspects of citizenship. Moreover, citizenship education is traditionally conveyed within formal schooling contexts, thereby neglecting the informal processes of learning citizenship for immigrants. To address these weaknesses, this study examines how citizenship is learned within and across diverse informal sites for Iranian immigrant youth. This understanding helps to situate more effective approaches to education that account for culture, locality, and the social, and political contexts in which learners are embedded.

In 2010, I conducted a six-month ethnographic study with 12 first-generation immigrant Iranian youths aged 19-30 in Vancouver, Canada. Analysis of semi-structured interviews and participant observation disclosed citizenship as a process of learning within individuals' lived experiences. In-depth engagement with the research findings, informed by concepts associated with cultural studies, diaspora studies, and cultural citizenship, reveal three conceptual commitments that aid understanding of citizenship and learning for citizenship: (1) identity as situated within multiple, shifting, intersecting, and interlocking dimensions; (2) citizenship as situated within multiple constructed boundaries of membership; and (3) citizenship as an iterative process of learning.

This inductive framework situates citizenship discourse within the national and global contexts in which immigrant youth are embedded. This study contributes to theoretical and empirical literature on substantive and social citizenship and citizenship learning for immigrant youth in formal and informal contexts. It also offers practical recommendations for improving models of learning citizenship within formal schooling contexts by including: a conceptual commitment to move beyond a nation-based focus on citizenship, a curricular commitment to focus on the lived experiences of learners, and a pedagogical commitment to focus on informal and experiential modes of learning.

Preface

Ethics Approval:

This study was approved by the Behavioural Research Ethics Board at The University of British Columbia on January 28, 2010. Approval number: H09-03229

Publications:

A version of chapter 2 is published in:

Nabavi, M. (2010) Constructing the 'Citizen' in Citizenship Education. *Canadian Journal of New Scholars in Education*. 3(1). Retrieved September 22, 2011, from http://www.cjnse-rcjce.ca/ojs2/index.php/cjnse/article/view/135

Sections of chapters 3 and 5 are published in:

Nabavi, M. (forthcoming, 2011). Identity roots and political routes: Canadian immigrant youth and the political poetics of multiculturalism. In. R. Race, M.Singh, & H.Wright (Eds.). *Multicultural Education*. Netherlands: Sense.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Glossary of Terms

- *Ahmadinejad, Mahmoud* – The president of the Islamic Republic of Iran since 2005.

- *Baha'i* – The Baha'i Faith is a religion founded in 19th Century Persia. Under the current regime in Iran, members of the Baha'i Faith have minimal social, cultural, political, and religious freedom.

- *Chelow Kabab* – The national dish of Iran consisting of Persian rice and kabab (meat) of which there are several distinct varieties.

- *Evin* – Evin House of Detention is a prison in the north part of Tehran, notorious for its political prisoner's wing which jails political prisoners.

- *Farsi* – The term used by Persian people to refer to their native form of verbal communication.

- *FOB (Fresh Off the Boat)* – A term that is used by young migrants in the West to describe newcomers who lack cultural capital of the diaspora context.

- *Green Movement /Green Revolution* – A movement that grew out of the 2009 presidential elections – primarily by young Iranians – demanding social and political change in Iran.

- *Irani* – The term which would be used in Farsi to refer to a person from Iran.

- *Khatami, Mohammad* – A reformist politician who served as the president of Iran from 1997-2005.

- *Mousavi, Mir-Hossein* – The reformist forerunner of the 2009 presidential elections of Iran.

- *Mullah* – A Muslim man educated in Islamic theology. Under the current political regime in Iran, all levels of governments are governed by high-ranking Mullahs.

- *Mujahideen* – An international Islamic movement which translates directly to 'people doing jihad' or 'people on the path to God'. In Iran, the People's Mujahideen of Iran is an Islamic socialist militant organization that advocates for the overthrow of the current Iranian regime.

- *Persian* – A term that is broadly used to describe the people, culture, history, and language of Persia (current day, Iran).

- *Sefid* – The word 'white' in Farsi (Persian).

Acknowledgements

I feel immense gratitude to the twelve young men and women who participated in this study. Your candid and moving reflections have significantly contributed to the scope of this research and have provided me with a renewed lens through which to explore the compelling issues you each highlighted. The analysis which reveals itself in the following pages is of the structures in which you are a part of, not directly of you. Thank you to Alireza Ahmadian and Ramin Joubin for graciously facilitating access to diverse groups of young Iranians in the Vancouver area.

My committee members, Professor's Handel Kashope Wright, André Elias Mazawi and Dr. Jennifer Chan have provided insightful comments and sound direction during the various phases of this study; I am indebted to each of you for encouraging me to engage with my research from compelling conceptual and methodological angles. I am grateful to Professor Darren Lund (University of Calgary) for his mentorship – his unassuming and friendly advice, judicious feedback, and opportunities for ongoing collaboration have significantly informed my scholarship.

My time in the program has been enriched because of the friendships and supports I received from fellow students. I am honoured for the intellectual and academic guidance, moral support, and friendship I have received from my 'writing group': Genevieve Creighton, Tara Gibb, Erin Graham, Isabeau Iqbal, Nora Timmerman, and Hanae Tsukada. Our weekly meetings have made this process enjoyable and completing a PhD all the more attainable.

Dedication

Simply and unconditionally, for my parents,

Mahin and Hamid Nabavi.

Only because of your journey of migration, have my journeys been made possible.

For Justin Page, my life partner in all things that matter.

1 Introduction

> *In khane ghashang ast, vali khaneye man nist. In khak faribaast, vali khake vatan nist.*
> (This home is beautiful, but my home it is not. This land takes my breath away, but my homeland it is not) – [Sattar, Persian singer and songwriter]

The tension felt by Iranians populating the diaspora are beautifully captured in the lyrics of the above popular Persian song. Iranian migrants' appreciation for 'home' found through forced and free migration is marked by the reminder of the 'home' they left behind. Yet, migrants' yearning for their homeland is marked by a certain nostalgia for a place to which it may be impossible or undesirable to return. No longer fully belonging to the home they left behind, nor to the new homes they have adopted, Iranian migrants in many respects inhabit a space in between.

This dissertation explores the ways in which young Iranian migrants in Canada negotiate their lives in between 'here' and 'there' and how that shapes the meanings, interpretations, and experiences of citizenship in their lives. Two objectives undergird this exploration. The first objective is to offer a conceptual approach to citizenship for migrant youth that fills the gaps in existing dominant conceptualizations of citizenship in Canada. The second objective is to offer recommendations for the improvement of models of citizenship education in Canada that are relevant to lived experiences of citizenship for migrant youth.

1.1 Migrant youth and citizenship in the current global moment

In the current globalized era, youth are steeped in a dizzying array of influences as they negotiate their place within global consumer markets (Nayak, 2003a), virtual and geographic spaces (boyd, 2007; Massey, 1998), and the influence of a variety of subcultures and styles

(Werbner, 2001). Migrant youth have the added task of negotiating the already complex dimensions of youth identity with the social, cultural, and national geographies of migration. These experiences, as constituted between emigration/immigration, local/global, familial/peer, and ethnic/main-stream, inform migrant youth's engagement with two or more national identities and belongings. Migrant youth are in constant struggle in their pursuits to reconcile two, if not more, different cultures and build a new hybrid culture (Massey, 1998). Given the unclear relationship between the local and global spaces and places in which immigrant youth develop their identities, it is appropriate to consider the ways in which national and non-national frames of reference are central to their lives.

Immigrant youth today are embedded in what Hall (1996) poignantly calls *new ethnicities*, in which locality, culture, migration, and language within an increasing globalized landscape inform the ways in which dominant markers of identity are articulated. Engagement with their *new ethnicities* entails that immigrant youth are not "passive recipients of social transformations, as may have been assumed, but are responding to change in a variety of ways that draw upon the signs, symbols and motifs made available at local, national and international scales" (Nayak, 2003b, p. 167). All youth, as Giroux (2006) argues, are made to be political subjects and take on political identities as a way to belong. Thus, it can be argued that for immigrant youth, *new ethnicities*, coupled with the current realities facing youth in general, contribute to the ways in which they engage with and learn to be citizens.

In Canada, citizenship learning is framed within the context of official multiculturalism. At the level of discourse, this policy celebrates the ability of new immigrants to maintain their national identity while adopting a new one. However, official multiculturalism presents challenges for new immigrants due to its inherent nationalist purpose and orientation. Long-

standing critiques of Canadian multiculturalism draw attention to its proceduralist model of liberalism which was developed in the context of British philosophy and cultures (Mitchell, 2001). Other critics point out historical and current forms of racism and exclusion in connection with the policy (Bannerji, 2000; Gunew, 2004; Thobani, 2007). In effect, immigrants' socio-political experiences that take place outside of the boundaries of the Canadian liberal democratic system are neglected and undermined and, consequently, immigrants' identities are made vulnerable.

This dissertation explores the strategies that immigrant youth employ in negotiating the multiple influences that shape their identities and belongings and, by extension, how that shapes their experiences of citizenship in Canada. The framework of citizenship provides a useful lens through which to view the relationship between *new ethnicities,* national and non-national identities and identifications, and the central role of the nation in the lives of young immigrants in Canada.

1.2 Situating a citizenship framework

In an era in which the lines between national and global identities and belongings increasingly blur, there is an urgent need to situate citizenship in ways other than those that emphasize status, rights, and duties. I use the concept of citizenship to explore its foundational dimensions – the interplay of civil, political and social rights (Marshall, 1965) – as they intersect with historical and contemporary contexts of individual, cultural, and institutional identities and belongings. This approach to citizenship responds to the limitations of contemporary conceptions of citizenship in Canada, which are associated with particular moral, political and cultural claims closely aligned with a multicultural national identity (Mitchell, 2003).

In order to make the concept of citizenship pertinent to Canadian immigrant youth, I use both national and non-national frames of reference. From a national lens, I explore formal dimensions of citizenship, such as status and voting, vis-à-vis informal dimensions of citizenship, such as belonging within a multicultural landscape. From a non-national lens, I examine issues such as the contexts and conditions prior to migration, individuals' relationship with their native land, and social identities. The use of both a national and non-national lens provides a rich conceptual landscape from which to understand the direct and indirect ways that the participants in this study understand and engage with citizenship.

At the same time, my goal of developing practical recommendations for improving Canadian citizenship education necessitates little deviation from a conceptual exploration of citizenship apropos the nation. Thus, I strategically explore citizenship in its connection to identities and belongings, using a diaspora lens with cultural dimensions of citizenship at the forefront. The common thread across these approaches is my commitment to explore citizenship as an issue of identity, representation, membership, and engagement (Nabavi, 2010).

A key assumption guiding this study is that citizenship is an ongoing process of learning. This assumption opposes the dominant view of citizenship as something that one has a duty and responsibility to practice in effect of age and status – such as voting duties upon reaching adulthood. The dominant view of citizenship is also traditionally conveyed within formal schooling contexts, thereby neglecting the informal processes of learning citizenship. In contrast, I assume that citizenship is learned within and across diverse educative sites, while recognizing that not all experiences have the same pedagogical potential and all genuine education comes about through experience (Dewey, 1964). Thus, I emphasize informal ways in which citizenship is learned for this population. This understanding helps to situate more effective approaches to

education that account for culture, locality, and the social, and political contexts in which learners are embedded (Mazawi, 1998; Wright, 2006).

1.3 Research scope

1.3.1 Overview of study

This study examines the processes of learning to be citizens and experiences of citizenship within multicultural Canada through an ethnographic study with twelve first-generation Iranians between the ages of 19-30 in Vancouver. Through encounters with schools and schooling, individualized and institutionalized inclusions and exclusions, and national and global identities and belongings, I examine the particular strategies that shape what I am calling an 'immigrant youth citizen identity' and how that bears on the constructions of the boundaries of citizenship in their lives.

The context for an 'immigrant youth citizen identity' – borne from the findings in this study and developed within a conceptual framework – reveal the nuanced ways in which participants engage with different dimensions of their citizenship that is specific to the contexts and conditions of being an immigrant youth. There are three commitments of an immigrant youth citizen identity: 1) identity is situated within multiple, shifting, intersecting, and interlocking dimensions, 2) citizenship is situated within multiple constructed boundaries of membership, and 3) citizenship as an iterative process of learning. These commitments, discussed at length in chapter 3, will be used as a launching pad for, first, addressing the conceptual gaps in immigrant youth citizenship that account for the social, cultural, and political subjectivities which inform citizenship learning and, second, modifying existing models of citizenship education.

An exploration of citizenship as a process of learning is complicated by what I refer to as the silences, contradictions, and expressions of citizenship – each of which is explored at length in the three empirical chapters. Three research questions underpin this exploration:

1   How do individualized and institutionalized experiences in Canada inform participants' sense of citizenship and experiences of citizenship learning?

2   What is the role of migration with regard to the formation of social citizenship?

3   In what ways do participants' 'globalized' experiences bear on their understanding of citizenship and inform their learning for citizenship?

1.3.2 Situating the research group and geographic context

The rationale for researching Iranian immigrant youth in Vancouver is two-fold. Firstly, Canadian census figures suggest that Metro Vancouver[1] (hereafter referred to as Vancouver) is home to 27.5% of the total Iranian population in Canada. Iranians constitute the sixth highest immigrant population in Vancouver at 4.2% (Stats Can, 2006a, 2006b). Although high, these figures do not reflect the notable diversity within the Iranian diaspora (Bozorgmehr, 1992; McAuliffe, 2005). The sixty-plus dialects of Farsi[2] as well as religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity – including Armenian Christians, the Baha'i faith, and various sects of Islam – are not evidenced within census

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[1]Includes Anmore, Belcarra, Bowen Island, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Delta, Langley City, Langley District, Lions Bay, Maple Ridge, New Westminster, North Vancouver City, North Vancouver District, Pitt Meadows, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Richmond Surrey, Vancouver, West Vancouver, White Rock.

[2] Although Persian is the official language of Iran, Farsi is the term used by the people of Iran to refer to the Persian language (see Yarshater, 1989). Since the 1979 revolution, Farsi is the term used by non-Persian peoples to mean the same thing. In this dissertation, Farsi is used to refer to the language of Iran, as it is colloquially referenced by Persians and non-Persians.

figures. Additionally, for ideological and political reasons, some Iranian émigrés identify only as Persian[3] rather than with the 'Islamic Republic of Iran'[4] as their country of emigration.

Secondly, the Islamic revolution in 1979 intensified the cultural politics of gender and sexuality, increased economic hardships and led to political, social, and ethnic persecution by the state and a seven-year war between Iran and Iraq (Swanton, 2005). These circumstances account for the diverse waves of emigration from Iran and, in effect, diverse pockets of Iranian communities across Canada. The plethora of rich and unique identities and trajectories of migration within the Iranian immigrant community constitutes a microcosm of the diversity of other immigrant groups in Canada, providing a strong methodological foundation for an in depth exploration of this population. Iranian immigrant youth, embedded in these complex identities, can offer a nuanced investigation into the experiences of citizenship learning for other immigrant youth communities.

Additionally, the 2009 Iranian presidential elections resulted in a strong protest movement led by youth within Iran and Iranian youth living outside of Iran (Dabashi, 2010). This development provides a rich context for research on citizenship learning for Iranian youth living in the diaspora. In Vancouver, young Iranians have been pivotal in grassroots awareness-raising and advocacy movements. The social and political underpinnings of these movements are worthy of exploration, particularly vis-à-vis the (trans)national ways in which Iranian immigrant youths' citizenship and learning for citizenship is constructed. Consideration of youth who are active in this movement enriches exploration with other categories of Iranian immigrant youth in this study.

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[3] The official name given to the country, which was then known as 'Persia', in my 1935 by the Shah (equivalent to the Western rank of Emperor), Reza Pahlavi.

[4] The new name given to the country by the religious oligarchy after the 1979 revolution.

1.3.3 Expanding the concepts of 'first generation' and 'youth'

The terms 'first generation' and 'youth' are politically inflicted and thus it is necessary to discuss how they are used in this study. The social and political weight of the concept of 'first generation' is problematic on two accounts. Firstly, children who have immigrated to Canada, irrespective of their parents' immigrant status, are referred to as first generation immigrant youth. However, the experiences of first generation immigrant youth varies considerably based on their age at time of migration as well as the traversals of migration. These differences account for diverse identities and belongings; thus, a blanket term to categorize a variety of migratory experiences is not useful. While efforts are made to differentiate the experiences of immigrant children who migrated prior to their teenage years (i.e. the 1.5 generation) there is a lack of scholarly consideration given to the experiences of immigrant youth based on age of migration and the ways in which they are embedded in globalized experiences of migration.

Secondly, the fact that Canada's earliest immigrants date back only 144 years makes the categorization of Canadians into 'generations' problematic. Coupled with a policy of multiculturalism that encourages celebration and diversity of one's heritage, the notion of generational identities does not necessarily recognize that recent generations are less connected to their heritage than the generations preceding them. In spite of the shortcoming and for consistency with existing literature, the term 'first generation' is used to include youth who self-identity as immigrants to Canada, regardless of their age at time of migration and the ways in which they are embedded in the complexities of global migrations.

The socially constructed category of 'youth' is informed by social, economic, cultural, and political parameters. While a range of categories define youth, such as economic dependence, school age, and stage of social and cognitive development, these traditional

categories are often contested (Harris, 2004; Wyn & White, 1997). For example, social and economic independence is influenced by wider economic context and employment opportunities (Lund, in press). For young immigrants, the impacts of migration – such as delayed completion of formal schooling and intergenerational interdependence – punctuate existing delays in social and economic independence. Thus, participants in this study are impacted by both the traditional categories as well as migratory contexts defining 'youth'. In this study, 'youth' is used to capture the broad contexts and conditions relevant to participants in this study who range in age from 19-33 (see chapter 4 for thorough explanation).

1.4 Layout of dissertation

In Chapter 2, I review the literature on citizenship and citizenship education in Canada. Discussing the ideological premise, concepts, and goals underpinning citizenship education, I argue that the current citizenship education is not as effective as it should be for immigrant youth. I then zero in on 1) the relationship between citizenship, identity, and belonging, and 2) the multicultural nation as central issues for this study. Addressing limitations identified in the literature, in Chapter 3, I develop a multimodal theoretical framework of identity. The framework draws on cultural studies, diaspora studies, and cultural citizenship as tools with which to unpack the commitments of an 'immigrant youth citizen identity'. In Chapter 4, I discuss my methodological approach and research methods, situating my critical ethnographic stance and the contexts and conditions of my indigenous-insider location (Banks, 1998). I conclude the chapter with a discussion of issues arising out of the production of knowledge and associated ethical concerns.

The three empirical chapters explore the 'silences', 'contradictions', and 'expressions' of citizenship, respectively. Chapter 5 unpacks the complex and contradictory ways that participants experience citizenship and anti-citizenship messages within and across individualized and institutionalized sites in Canada and in Iran. In Chapter 6, I show how participants are embedded in a web of 'contradictions' vis-à-vis the meanings and interpretations they ascribe to citizenship. I argue that these contradictions are informed by the silences discussed in the preceding chapter. In Chapter 7, I discuss the different 'expressions' of citizenship in the lives of participants. Specifically, I unpack their political expression, the role of real and imagined geographies wherein they situate their citizenship, and how language is used as a site of citizenship. This chapter demonstrates the ways in which the silences and contradictions of citizenship serve as a catalyst for their expressions of citizenship.

In Chapters 8 and 9, I speak directly to the two objective of this study. Chapter 8 discusses the central findings of the study vis-à-vis the three research questions. Revisiting the theoretical underpinnings introduced in Chapter 3, I expand on the ways that the data supports the theory and additional considerations that bear on an 'immigrant youth citizen identity'. In so doing, I expand the concept of citizenship for this population. In the final chapter (Chapter 9), I discuss the methodological and conceptual contributions of an 'immigrant youth citizen identity' before providing concrete conceptual, curricular, and pedagogical recommendations for the improvement of citizenship education for immigrant youth.

2 Literature review

As I noted in the Introduction, the social dimensions of citizenship can be understood to include identity, belonging, and experiences of migration as experienced between the national and global. In this chapter, I expand on this thesis through a review of conceptual and empirical literature related to citizenship education, immigrant youth citizenship, and the interlocking dimensions of citizenship, identity, and belonging. This review provides a starting point for articulating an immigrant-youth-specific approach to citizenship, or what I am calling an 'immigrant youth citizen identity'.

To this end, I first review the current context of citizenship education in Canada and its critiques before considering existing models of citizenship education in global contexts. I show how ideologically-driven citizenship education in formal schooling contexts result in a failure to consider identity and belonging as central dimensions of citizenship for immigrant youth. I argue that alternative approaches to citizenship education differ from formal approaches to citizenship education, but continue to be bound by systems of inclusion and exclusion. I suggest that such systems are closely connected with extant socio-political structures of the nation-states in which they operate and are thus at odds with the contexts of immigrant youth in the contemporary moment.

I then review empirical literature on the intersections of immigrant youth and citizenship – and more specifically, Iranian immigrant youth and citizenship – before reviewing conceptual literature on citizenship from the perspectives of identity, belonging, and national/non-national contexts. I argue that youth citizenship literature fails to draw on the interlocking dimensions of identity and belonging, and instead focuses on singular identities and identifications. I conclude

the chapter with a review of the central gaps in the conceptual and empirical literature, and

consider how addressing these gaps impact my conceptual project of envisioning and 'immigrant

youth citizen identity' and my empirical project of improving existing models of citizenship

education for immigrant youth in Canada.

2.1 Citizenship and schooling – Canada and international contexts

2.1.1 Contextualizing citizen and citizenship education

Recent discourses of citizenship have shifted the focus from definitions that highlight

legal, civil, and political components to consider social components such as identity, virtue, civic

attitudes, and knowledge. British sociologist T.H. Marshall provides one of the earliest

articulations of social citizenship. In his seminal piece *Citizenship and Social Class* (1965),

Marshall defines citizenship as a "status bestowed on those who are full members of a

community" (p. 18). This definition created a rupture in contemporary Western understandings

of citizenship between formal and substantive or social terms. For Marshall, citizenship is

accorded individually, yet the collective components of civil, political, and social rights make

citizenship a social phenomenon that can be contextualized within the interests of the collective.

Marshall's (1965) understanding of citizenship led to an interrogation of the complex and

dynamic relationship between formal and substantive citizenship. His theory of citizenship is

based on the liberal democratic tradition, which emphasizes universally-held rights that negate

socio-political, economic, and cultural rights. Furthermore, he demarcates different aspects of

citizenship in his writing, creating rigid boundaries that are not amenable to the iterative nature

of citizenship. His approach has been critiqued as vague, exclusionary, Anglocentric and

outdated (Dwyer, 2004). Leaving aside the post-war discourse driving Marshall's approach to

citizenship, his work continues to be important for contextualizing the reciprocal relationship between formal and substantive components of citizenship within the nation state (see Shafir, 1998).

There are many disciplinary points of entry for considering conceptual frameworks of citizenship in relation to the interplay between substantive and formal citizenship. Gagnon and Pagé (1999) offer a framework of citizenship that includes the major components of national identity; cultural, social, and transnational belonging; a system of rights; and political, and civic participation. Sears and Hughes'(1996) *elitist* to *activist* spectrum is popularly used across educational contexts. Elitist conceptions of citizenship maintain that elected officials are responsible for matters governing the state while activist conceptions of citizenship assume the status-quo must be disrupted to provide space for all voices. Their typology of citizenship has been instrumental in building the foundation for conceptual and practical approaches to citizenship in educational contexts in Canada.

Models of learning to become a citizen and for citizenship include citizenship education, civic literacy, civic education, political education, global education, transnational education, moral education, and character education (Banks, 1998; Castles, 2004; Evans, 2006; Osborne, 1996; Steiner-Khamsi, 2002). The discourses that shape these models are the result of the socio-political, historical, and cultural ways in which citizenship is understood as a concept. An important outcome of learning for citizenship is learning to become a citizen, yet the process of becoming a citizen – oriented towards Sears and Hughes' (1996) activist conception – is itself a political process. The process of becoming a citizen requires working against dominant conceptions of citizenship to critically engage in social, political, and ecological concerns both locally and globally. It further requires a commitment to challenging dominant institutions and

structures and working alongside individuals to whom social structures offer the least. In a Western context, this traditionally includes individuals who are positioned outside the boundaries of Anglo-European, liberal-democratic norms and ideals. Thus, through the exercise of engaging politically to harvest an activist conception of citizenship, citizenship learning takes place.

In Canada, the term 'citizenship education' is commonly employed across formal schooling contexts. This term responds to problematic discourses of citizenship that have long been significant to notions of identity (Osborne, 2001). For example, in its earliest iterations, the concept of citizenship was used as an assimilation tool against Canada's Indigenous peoples by Anglo-European colonizers (Joshee, 2004). Later, the Citizenship Act of 1947 provided citizens an identity separate from British subjects. More recently, the concept of citizenship fuels notions of identity in the Québec separatist movement (Pagé, 1997 in Wall, Moll, & Froese-Germain, 2000). In the interest of promoting a positive association with the term citizenship and shifting the focus of citizenship education from a formal to a substantive concept – such as moving toward multicultural citizenship (Kymlicka, 1995) – the term citizenship education is popularly employed in educational policy.

2.1.2 International contexts of citizenship education

Across western democratic states, citizenship education is a major component of formal schooling. The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), launched in 1995, undertook a major study on Civic Education. One aspect of the study, which included participation of countries, aimed to reveal the ways that citizenship education is framed and contextualized. The comprehensive review was informed by an exploration of issues pertaining to democracy, national identity, social cohesion, diversity, environmental issues, economic mechanisms, and mass media. The findings reveal that conventional notions of

citizenship were not only challenged by the students, but that they articulated new orientations toward citizenship. The major themes of the new orientations included: an emphasis on the self in defining citizenship; humanistic, and universalistic definitions of citizen identity; challenging the role of the state; individual and group rights; and a shift away from political ideologies apropos citizenship (Lee, 2002).

Findings from the IEA study are consistent with studies proposing accommodation for citizenship education across different contexts. Mitchell's (2003) study of the evolution of citizenship education across three countries – Canada, Britain, and the United States – concludes that emerging forms of education are deeply neoliberal in nature, so that "educating a child to be a good citizen is no longer synonymous with constituting a well-rounded, nationally oriented, multicultural self, but rather about attainment of the 'complex skills' necessary for individual success in a global economy" (p. 399). These approaches to citizenship education, as I argue below, have been and continue to be dominant with Canadian models of citizenship education.

2.1.3 Developments of citizenship education in Canada

In Canadian formal schooling, the trajectory of citizenship education can be traced back to the 1890s. Osborne (1996) posits four distinct yet overlapping periods in the delivery of Canadian citizenship education as influenced by social, economic, and political circumstances. The first of the four periods existed until the 1920s and focused on the Canadianization of students and assimilationist nationalism. The second period, until the 1950s, emphasized democratic living, the depoliticization of citizenship, and increased American progressive values. The third period, lasting until the 1980s, was a response to the perceived lack of knowledge among the populace. It involved concern for the quality of civic education and a celebrated shift

from assimilation to multiculturalism. The fourth period, from the 1990s onward, moves the focus of citizenship from possessing a goal of schooling to promoting an economic agenda for preparing students to become consumers. Throughout its young history, Canadian citizenship education has been concerned with instilling students with knowledge, values, attitudes, and behaviours about the nation as deemed necessary for democratic living (Broom, 2007).

Sears and Hughes (1996) describe the evolution of Canadian citizenship education as moving from an elitist to an activist focus. Inspired by this model, I have developed a trajectory of citizenship education – moving from formal to substantive citizenship – as informed by existing critical articulations of citizenship education in the curriculum (see Nabavi, 2010). The below table represents the evolution of citizenship education.

Table 1: Development of Canadian Citizen Education			
Formal Citizenship **Elitist**	**→**	**→** **→**	**Substantive Citizenship** **Activist**
Informed by Confederation 1867	Citizenship Act 1947	Multiculturalism Policy 1971	Social, political, economic, cultural globalization 1990s onward
Focus on Nation-building	Democracy	Diversity (soft multiculturalism)	Social cohesion (simplifies emergent tensions of diversity)

In what follows, I articulate how the dominant linear model of citizenship education fails to take into account the subtle and varied tensions in citizenship education. In the interest of exploring developments in citizenship education in relationship to substantive/social citizenship, I focus on developments since the inception of the Multiculturalism Policy (1971).

The notion of national identity – or lack thereof – has been the primary channel through which citizenship is articulated in Canada. Perceived lack of national identity has been a common issue in Canadian citizenship and literature on citizenship education (Sears et al., 1999). Longstanding criticisms that Canada is made up of hyphenated Canadians (i.e. Iranian-Canadian) with respect to regional connections, class, ethnicity, and culture had dampened the context for citizenship education (Osborne, 1996). The conservative view that multiculturalism further fragments already limited identities and is ultimately divisive (Bissoondath, 2002) contributes to the above mentioned criticisms. However, the official policy of multiculturalism and increasing immigration from non-European countries (Statistics Canada, 2006a) has, in recent years, provided a renewed context for articulating citizenship education.

The focus on diversity and social identities within the Multiculturalism Policy (1971) and Multiculturalism Act (1988) has informed citizenship education. However, the political nature of citizenship within a multicultural state, such as the ways in which diverse social identities and interests are articulated, is largely absent in citizenship education. Thus, citizenship education is depoliticized insofar as the complexities of *differentiated citizenship* (Kymlicka, 1999) – in which the needs of the individual are considered vis-à-vis their group membership – are concerned.

The realities of international migration, environmental change, economic globalization, and significant political changes that accelerated in the 1980s provided the ground for a renewed commitment to citizenship education in Canada, particularly one informed by global education (Goldstein & Selby, 2000). Most recently, the overarching goals of citizenship education across western nations has focused on instilling skills, attitudes, and dispositions that develop the capacities of individuals to engage critically, not only as citizens of a country, but also as global

citizens (Banks, 2004a). Canadian citizenship education is conceptually aligned with the above approach. However, nation-building approaches to citizenship education that are informed by a liberal-democratic agenda of building the capacities of democratic citizens within the nation state are at odds with more global approaches to citizenship education.

2.1.4 Education in between federalism and nationalism

The challenges facing citizenship education in Canada stem from the long-standing underpinnings of Canadian federal policies. Since the inception of the Constitution Act in 1867, aspects of the Canadian state have been structured by a division of power between provincial and federal governments (and later territorial governments). While efforts were made as part of the patriation of the 1982 constitution to decentre provincial power, education has remained purely within provincial legislation[5]. In effect, jurisdictional discrepancies in education are evidenced by local funding for education ranging in contributions from 1 percent in five provinces and up to 44 percent in four provinces (Stats Can, 2009). Additionally, inconsistent educational reforms, and different academic standards and accountability across different jurisdictions (Vergari, 2010) inform not only the educational outcomes but a disjointed national identity with respect to education.

However, formal and informal national policies play a role in the ways in which education is articulated across different jurisdictions. Citizenship education curricula developers – committed to instilling the underpinning tenets of national identity and belonging, turn to the national policy of multiculturalism in articulating an approach to citizenship education. However, citizenship within a multicultural framework is often explored in relation to the

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[5] The exception to this includes Aboriginal students living on reserve, military personnel and their dependents, and federal inmates.

celebratory dimensions of national identities. The complexities of social citizenship, such as the ways in which different populations are positioned differently, remain invisible in discourses of citizenship education (Sears & Hughes, 2006). Thus, it can be argued that discourses of citizenship and, by extension, citizenship education, are depoliticized in the shadow of multiculturalism. In effect, citizenship education serves as a platform for building moral character and emphasizing community service rather than political activism (Joshee, 2004). Lee (2002) contends that "as groups of different interest live together in a national or political entity…the need to de-emphasize difference and emphasize commonality in citizenship education is obvious" (p. 47). However, because the process of citizenship (in all of its manifestations) is political, the connection between multiculturalism and citizenship must be explored in greater depth.

Joshee (1995) suggests three areas of emphasis in policies of cultural diversity – citizenship, identity, and social justice. These areas of emphasis are, however, bound to national interests that "aim to provide every citizen regardless of origin…an equal chance to participate in all aspects of the country's collective life" (Sears, Clarke, & Hughes, 1999, p. 113). Joshee suggests that the original underpinnings of the multiculturalism policy, which emphasized national unity and human rights, supersede later developments concerned with ethnic diversity, anti-racism, and religious rights. As a result, the tenets of differentiated citizenship (Kymlicka, 1998) are not only negated, but progressive trends such as activist citizenship education and global education, become increasingly difficult to enact within a well-established, tightly-gripped liberal framework. Citizenship education researchers suggest that the rhetoric of multiculturalism is at odds with the ubiquity of Anglo-conformity (Sears & Hughes, 1996). More recent

contributions articulate these tensions but with increased concern for its implications in an

increasingly diverse Canada (Blades & Richardson, 2006; Joshee, 2004; Osborne, 2004).

2.1.5 Conceptual and practical gaps in citizenship education

Lively debates about citizenship education in Canada have provided the impetus for

considering the conceptual and associated curricula and pedagogical challenges in social studies

curriculum across Ministries of Education in Canada. Current citizenship education policy and

curricula development advocate for innovative and critical approaches to citizenship education.

The rhetoric of citizenship education emphasizes the importance of the relationship between

nationalism-globalization and an overall commitment to develop knowledge, skills, and

dispositions. Yet there is little by way of empirical evidence suggesting this. Further, the rate at

which recommendations for reform in citizenship education have shifted into practice has been

dismal (Hughes & Sears, 2008; Joshee, 2004).

Canada is the only country in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and

Development (OECD) that does not have federal presence in education. The deregulation of

education and, in effect, provincial rather than federal funding for education has resulted in

minimal importance at the provincial level. Most notably Canada withdrew from the second

phase of the internationally renowned International Association for the Evaluation of

Educational Achievement (IEA) initiative, giving the nation an international reputation of having

a piecemeal, unaccountable, uncoordinated, and episodic approach to citizenship education

(Sears, 2009). Related to the above is the dearth of research support for citizenship education.

Support for citizenship education is provincially mandated and there are no indications of

forthcoming federal support for citizenship education among policy makers or curriculum developers, making it near impossible to build capacity for citizenship education.

Moreover, researchers unanimously posit that there is a misalignment between the conceptual and pedagogical approaches to citizenship education (Evans, 2006; Joshee, 2004; Osborne, 1996; Sears & Hughes, 1996). Osborne (1996) notes "there is often a considerable gap between what a department of education mandates and what actually gets done in the classrooms, so that to describe citizenship education policy is not necessarily to describe citizenship education" (p. 31). In the report of the Committee for Effective Canadian Citizenship (1994), *Educating Canada's 21st Century Citizens: Crisis and Challenge* (Evans, 2006), contributions from across the country emphasize the importance for citizenship education material to be meaningfully connected to students' lives. Such materials can promote the possibility for active citizenry whereby authentic issues facing students are central to teaching and learning for citizenship.

Although conceptually citizenship education is activist-oriented, practically, it does little to instil the skills, attitudes, and dispositions that have activist leanings. Sears and Hughes (1996) demonstrate this point in their critique that "although information from the official curricula suggests that conceptions of citizenship education in Canada may constitute leading-edge thinking, we suspect that the actual practice of citizenship education in the nation's classrooms remain closer to trailing edge" (p. 138). The rich, forward thinking recommendations in policy documents, they suggest, are add-ons to outdated forms of character education.

Ten years after this important study was published, the authors assert that Canada continues to falter in its commitment to educating for citizenship nationally and internationally (Hughes & Sears, 2006). Arguably, the failure of citizenship education curricula to articulate

different models of citizenship education for varied identities results in pedagogical interventions that negate the ways in which students' social identities might inform pedagogies for citizenship education. A combination of factors including the relationship between the multiculturalism policy and the conceptually progressive yet practically disjointed and patch-work approach to citizenship education has led citizenship theorists to the conclusion that development and implementation of citizenship education in Canada is cause for concern and arguably in a state of crisis (Sears & Hughes, 2006).

2.1.6 Federal responses to citizenship education

Sears and Hughes (1996) 'activist' conception of citizenship which seemingly widens the discourse and practice of citizenship can be seen as problematic as it is widely argued that citizenship education in Canada is designed to instil national culture (J. W. Lee & Hebért, 2006; Osborne, 2001; Sears & Hughes, 1996, 2006). The emphasis on nationalism reflects the neo-liberal model of multiculturalism in which all who contribute to making the nation diverse are benefiting. Castles (2004) calls this the *controllability of difference,* whereby policy approaches are used as a tool to hinder the ways in which ethnic diversity can be a source of social transformation. To this end, citizenship education, as positioned within the dominant paradigm, is based on strengthening the concept of nation rather than the individuals who are members of the nation. This is reflected in the attempts to position citizenship education within the *social cohesion* framework – a liberal-democratic approach to citizenship.

As a project of the federal multiculturalism program, social cohesion positions diversity at its centre. At first glance, it appears that social cohesion addresses the newest conceptual visions for citizenship education – to be critical, to engage citizenship from a global perspective, and to instil a sense of agency. Yet, the social cohesion model is critiqued in so far as it is an

attempt to cover up the neoliberal policies and programs that resulted in citizens' loss of faith in

institutions and government (Jenson, 1998, as cited in Joshee, 2004, p. 147). Bickmore's (2006)

nationally comparative study looks at students' relationship with a set of criteria that reflect

democratic social cohesion. Her finding reveals that the model remains a hegemonic project of

the state. She suggests that the tenets of democratic social cohesion are undermined as the

curricula appears to be more assimilationist than democratic in its focus on social control,

homogenization, and silencing dissenting voices.

Most problematic is the fact that the complexities of citizenship are negated in this

model. Diversity is centrally framed as a threat to the country and arguably, compatible with

assimilation (Joshee, 2004). Diversity, as taken up in the social cohesion model, is in the absence

of a social justice analysis; citizens' responsibilities to social issues are framed from a charity

lens where they "must develop shared values, mutual trust, and the willingness to care for those

less fortunate" (Joshee, 2004, p. 184). The above view of citizenship education places the onus

of responsibility on individual citizens, independent of the broader socio-political structures that

position them differently.

Notwithstanding the tension between the policy and practice of citizenship education,

curriculum developers and educators continue to strive to push the boundaries of pedagogical

approaches that address the complexities of citizenship education (Evans, 2006). Included are

curricula attempts to infuse justice oriented approaches in citizenship education such as

multicultural and anti-racist education, ecological education, and critical explorations of

globalization (Dei, 1996; Evans & Hundley, 2000; Goldstein & Selby, 2000; Joshee, 2004).

The above efforts are a response to growing concerns with policy and pedagogical

approaches to citizenship education as influenced by the decentralization of education, federal

interests in preserving the policy of multiculturalism, weak and at times non-existent research supports, and the social cohesion model. The Canadian approach to citizenship education remains antithetical to the recommendations of significant international (Torney-Purta et al., 1999) and national studies (Sears & Hughes, 1996), independent policy recommendations (South House Exchange 2001), and theoretical contributions (see Bellagio Citizenship Education and Diversity Conference in Banks, 2004b).

These international understandings of citizenship education thrive on issues of social-justice, democracy, and human rights; they represent progressive views toward citizenship education and the view that democracy and political voice need be central to democratic citizenship (Sears & Hyslop-Margison, 2006, p. 21). However, due to the implementation of educational reforms and limited understanding of students' knowledge of democratic citizenship and what types of educational programs are effective, it is necessary to increase knowledge in these areas prior to the development and implementation of educational reforms (Sears & Hyslop-Margison, 2006). To this end, considerations for improving citizenship education, it is necessary to engage in a sociological project of unpacking *how* young people's experiences inform their understanding of and experiences with citizenship.

2.2 Situating the field of immigrant youth citizenship

2.2.1 Overview

Studies focusing on the sites that account for the formation and practices youth identity and, by extension, citizenship, are vast. These discourse are represented within schools (Bettie, 2003; Willis, 1977), activist movements (Kennelly, 2008), consumerism (Nayak, 2003b) and most popularly, civic and political engagement (Hebert, 1997; Levinson, 2003; Osler & Starkey,

2003). However, there are few studies that focus specifically on the historical, institutional, and cultural sites which account for the silences, contradictions and, expressions of citizenship experienced by immigrant youth within the cultural sphere.

Research on youth citizenship tends to focus on individuals' views about citizenship within traditional configurations of rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis how they are situated within the nation state (Kenndey, Hahn, & Lee, 2007; Steiner-Khamsi, 2002). For example, Kennedy, Hahn and Lee's (2007) study on youth citizenship in Australia, Hong Kong, and the United States highlights the ways in which students' attitudes and beliefs toward the political life of their society is shaped by socialization processes within that society. While students can articulate a rich understanding of active and passive dimensions of citizenship (using Hughes & Sears, 1996 vernacular), they are inclined to situate themselves and their loyalties in traditional conceptions of citizenship that are tied to political processes. Similarly, other studies of youth and immigrant citizenship are contextualized in relation to engagement with issues of identity in relation to ethnicity, belonging, social, economic success, and familial relations in the adopted country (Basit, 2009; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Hebert, 1997). There is little if any attention given to the role that structures of inclusion and exclusion have in informing processes of identity formation and how that bears on experiences with citizenship.

Using the metaphors 'from above' and 'from below' (Singh, Kenway, & Apple, 2005), in the next section I review key literature that provides insights into how immigrant youth's attitudes and experiences with citizenship are learned. I discuss how citizenship is simultaneously informed by immigrant youth's lived experiences, 'from below', which inform identity and belonging, as well as 'from above' through the formalized discourses of citizenship nationally to which they ascribe or resist. The major themes across these studies include young

immigrants' experiences with discrimination, their views toward the polity and their critique of the nation. Following this, I review literature to help situate the context and conditions of Iranian immigrant youth, in particular.

2.2.2 Citizenship from above and from below

Burke, Wood, and Wortley's (2010) study of alienation experienced by native-born and immigrant youth of colour in Canada reveals that "racism is a dominant obstacle to self-identification with the nation-state, and that this finding is entirely logical and consistent with the history of nation-building in Canada and elsewhere" (p. 1). It is noteworthy that the data for this study was collected prior to 9/11 (the attack of the World Trade Towers on September 11, 2001), after which there has been a significant rise of discrimination against racial minority youth nationally (Roach, 2003) and globally (Maira, 2004; Modood, Triandafyllidou, & Zapata-Barrero, 2006). Burke et al.'s study provides a launching pad to move beyond the idea that positive feelings of citizenship are contingent on integration and belonging, as promoted in the social cohesion model (Reitz & Banerjee, 2007). Aligned with the critiques of the social cohesion model as it impacts learners (Joshee, 2004), Burke, Wood and Wortley's study points to the ways in which feelings of citizenship are directly correlated to perceptions of discrimination. This study is particularly helpful for highlighting that there has been little focus in the literature on the substance of immigrant youth's experiences with the nation and how that informs their experiences of citizenship.

However, the authors' conclusions about participants' attitudes toward citizenship vis-à-vis perceptions of discrimination are methodologically problematic. Questions delineating feelings of being 'Canadian' fail to explore the nuanced dimensions of citizenship in the lives of

participants. Such nuances would be revealed through the specification of whether 'Canadian' is an ethnicity, nationality, racial category, or citizenship status. Moreover, this study ends with a understanding that immigrant youth experience discrimination, rather than the ways in which they experience discrimination, what drives discrimination for particular populations and not for other populations, and how that knowledge can be used for practical and political interventions.

In the US context, Maira's (2009) study with South Asian immigrant youth's experiences in a post 9/11 era reveals that, while cultural citizenship is produced across participants' schooling, familial, working, and popular culture contexts, their experiences are punctuated by the effects of US imperialism. What Maira calls the 'imperial feeling' of participants' experience is linked to how they are situated within the top-down discourse of war and terrorism as much as in their daily lived experiences. Cultural citizenship is thus shaped between the tension of the imperial discourse and the everyday, culminating in a lack of national belonging, alienation and exclusion. Similarly, Abu El-Haj (2007) shows that for Palestinian American high school students, feelings of citizenship and belonging are riddled with tensions in their schooling contexts, where the sentiment of US patriotism, teacher harassment, and disciplinary measures taken against them due to being framed as "terrorists" (p. 285) are pervasive. This insight is valuable to compare with the Canadian context, where immigration patterns and social and educational policies are distinctly different than in the US context.

The tension between top-down citizenship (informed by national policies and an imperial discourse) and participants' own experiences across various sites, highlights the ways in which the complex categories of identity, belonging, and the nation are further complicated in their nuanced relationship with one another.

2.2.3 Iranian immigrant youth

Empirical research on Iranian immigrants, although increased over the past ten years, continues to be limited. Quantitative studies focusing on culture, race and identity (Chaichian, 1997) and qualitative studies focusing on the experiences of migration (Swanton, 2005), trauma and ethnic identity formation (Mobasher, 2006) constitute existing empirical research with adult Iranian immigrants. Dominant themes across studies include the notion of non-belonging and nostalgia for 'home', struggling to 'fit in' and conceptions of race and class. Research on Iranian immigrant youth is more restricted. Quantitative studies examining psycho-social dimensions of adaptation and belonging and post-traumatic stress disorder have made general recommendations for the promotion of integration in multicultural and immigrant settings (Almqvist, 1997; Khanlou, Koh, & Mill, 2008). Although these studies are useful for understanding culture-specific considerations, they are limited in sociological analysis of migration, intersections between globalization and nationalism, and social dimensions of identity, all of which are central to conceptualizing an (Iranian) immigrant youth citizenship.

The most notable study to date on the intersections of the national and intra-national as they impact identity for Iranian immigrant youth is McAuliffe's (2005) investigation of the lives of second generation Muslim and Baha'i Iranian immigrant youth in Vancouver, Sydney, and London. The only study to date on the life of Iranian youth in Vancouver, McAuliffe explores intersections between hegemonic discourses of national identity and other forms of identity such as identities based on religion, race, class, gender and subculture. Exploring issues of multiculturalism in relation to identity, nation and geography, McAuliffe challenges 'entrenched

and invisible assumptions of national homogeneity in migrant communities'[6] and concludes that the national project of multiculturalism interrupts the potential that the concept of multiculturalism holds. McAullife's study usefully highlights issues of representation, multiculturalism, and identity for Iranian immigrant youth in Canada. However, dimensions of citizenship are left unexplored.

2.3 Citizenship: Identity, belonging and the multicultural nation-state

For the conceptual goal of this project, it is first necessary to explore the ways that citizenship is conceptualized in relation to the central issues that inform citizenship 'from below' – identity and belonging – and 'from above' – the role of the citizenship within a multicultural context. To this end, I will discuss the range of conceptual debates of citizenship within a multicultural state apropos identity and belonging and how they can help form a conceptual frame of the citizenship for immigrant youth.

2.3.1 Citizenship and the politics of identity in a multicultural state

In its most basic connection with citizenship, identity is described as the relationship between individuals, the community, and the state (Marshall, 1965). Political theorists of citizenship argue that the separation of social identities from other dimensions of citizenship is ineffective and perpetuates the subjugation of already marginalized groups within the nation (Kymlicka, 1995). However, citizenship is traditionally explored within a nationalistic framework while the focus of identity is on diverse identity categories rather than in the ways identities are embedded in social and political structures. Heater (2004) demonstrates the ways that the ethos of identity is inseparable from the nation:

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[6] Email correspondence: Nabavi-McAuliffe, October 02, 2009

[identity] can often generate intense emotions, even dangerous antagonisms; hence the melancholy history of the subjugation of women, religious wars, racist persecution, nationalist conflict and class hatred. Citizenship can help satisfy the human need for identity without arousing the perils of such animosities. For, despite the persistence of second-class levels of treatment for many citizens, at least the accepted model is for the status to be egalitarian and all-embracing, not hierarchical and divisive (p. 189).

While Heater accurately articulates the role that citizenship can have within national identity politics, his approaches to citizenship – as focused on the state – and identity are static. This common failure to connect the ways that identity is evolving – commonly in the contemporary moment, by virtue of transnational migrations and loyalties – maintains traditional assumptions that the politics of *an* identity can be equalized within the configuration of national citizenship.

Efforts to conceptualize identity vis-à-vis the new dimensions of citizenship exists across social, geographic, and political sites. As evidenced by the array of approaches to identifying citizenship identity, such as *human identity* (Parekh, 2008), *flexible citizen* (Ong, 1999b) *cosmopolitanism citizen* and *differentiated citizenship* (Young, 2000) amongst others, these models share a commitment to thinking about identity differences as a strategy to both affirm recognition and belonging while transcending singular categories of identity. In other words, there is a commitment to "an ongoing struggle for recognition waged by various groups around the world against each other as well as against the hegemonic 'other'" (Isin & Wood, 1999, p. 15).

Notably, feminist citizenship theorists offer insights into the conceptual relationship between citizenship and identity. The notion of identity is theorized based on oppressions against women that impede social, cultural, reproductive, and political rights (Lister, 2003; Ong, 1999b; Young, 2000; Yuval-Davis, 1997). Fixed, homogenous or singular notions of identity – based on gender, culture, race, ethnicity, and class – within citizenship discourses are troubled to engage

with the theoretical and political dilemmas of the ways in which women's multiple and, at times, competing loyalties are negotiated. As such, the process of identity formation is informed in the context of private/public (Yuval-Davis, 2002); inclusion/exclusion (Lister, 2003) and local, national, and transnational (Ong, 1999b). Doubly important for feminist scholars are the ways in which the politics of citizenship identity are inseparable from *group rights*, referring to concessions made to particular groups based on social, religious, political, or cultural contexts. Considered an international leader in 'democratic citizenship' discourse, Canada has applied group rights to issues of social identity wherein ethno-cultural diversity and an official policy of multiculturalism necessitate questioning the ways in which rights and representation are considered.

Important to the relationship between social identities, belonging, and the state are the rights of minority individuals and groups. Leading scholar on cultural group rights Kymlicka (1998) differentiates between two kinds of group or differentiated rights: internal and external. He writes that "most of the group-differentiated policies that have arisen under the 'multiculturalism' umbrella, and are aimed at accommodating these new ethnic/religious groups, are not about withdrawing from the larger society" (p.170). Okin (1999a), in her now famous piece, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* critiques proponents of group rights, suggesting two reasons why advocates of group rights have fallen short. First is in their negation of power hierarchies within cultures, particularly with respect to the subjugation of women. Second is a negation of the private sphere in which cultures demand gender-specific roles, resulting in an ability for women to exercise their agency. Similarly, political theorist and advocate of differentiated group rights, Iris Marion Young (2000) cautions that obscuring differences within groups "wrongly reduces all members of the group to a common essence, and thereby also

divides groups so much from each other that understanding and co-operation across the differences may become impossible" (p. 143).

Kymlicka (1999) notes that critiques of group rights derive from a focus on internal group rights which are damaging to democracy and "restricts the ability of individuals within the group (particularly women) to question, revise, or abandon traditional cultural roles and practices...they violate the autonomy of individuals and create injustice within the group" (p. 31). Alternatively, external group rights, according to Kymlicka (1999), address concerns put forth by feminists and draw on the intersections between feminism and multiculturalism, particularly in their shared critique of liberal conceptions of individual rights. Theoretically, feminist and multicultural citizenship camps diverge in their emphasis on cultural rights versus women's equality (Okin, 1999a; Yuval-Davis, 1997). External group rights, as advocated by Kymlicka (1999) are:

> rights that a minority group claims against the larger society in order to reduce its vulnerability to the economic or political power of the larger society…[and] can take the forms of language rights, guaranteed political representation, funding of ethnic media, land claims, compensation for historical injustice, or the regional devolution of power. All of these can help to promote justice between ethnocultural groups, by ensuring that members of the minority have the same effective capacity to promote their interests as the majority (p. 31-32).

Responding to the central tenants of external group rights, Okin, (1999b) suggests that "what we need to strive toward is a form of multiculturalism that gives the issues of gender and other intragroup inequalities their due - that is to say - a multiculturalism that effectively treats all persons as each other's moral equals" (p. 131). Similarly, Williams (1998), sensitive to the limitations of group rights, argues for harvesting institutional supports that secure representation for minority groups whilst maintaining autonomy and equality for the majority. Identity politics inform approaches to group rights within the political structures of a state; yet this is complicated

when belonging and membership are not only informed by identity but also geographic and imagined places.

2.3.2 Citizenship and the politics of belonging in a multicultural state

Citizenship across national (Kymlicka, 1998), post-national (Soysal, 1998) and supra national conceptions (Heater, 1999), informs what Ong (1999b) refers to as the *transnationality of citizenship*. As both a spatial and imaginative shift, the transnationality of citizenship challenges the conventional conception of citizenship as a shared identity informed by common national boundaries. Castles (2004) notes that as the "world changes from *a space of places* to a *space of flows* and people's activities are increasingly focused on 'transnational social space'…this is has important consequences for personal identity and political belonging" (italics original, p. 18). This idea serves as a useful point of entry for considering the tensions between national and international conceptions of citizenship and identity and its associated meanings for belonging.

Notions of belonging within a citizenship that is unbound by place is informed by a commitment to justice, shared values, and sovereignty where distinct cultures within and across national borders are constituted by the contexts and conditions from which individuals arise. Soysal (1998) argues that the plurality within national boundaries is "an identity politics, energized by narrations of collective pasts and accentuated cultural differences [which] becomes the basis for participation, and affords the means for mobilizing resources in the national and world polities" (p. 209). In this sense, while national borders do not necessitate the formation of social, political, and cultural affiliations, a sense of national identity is not necessarily at odds with professing oneself as world citizen. This idea is expressed in that "nationality is a feeling of

relative cultural homogeneity [wherein] a mature nation-state is capable of containing a medley of cultures, yet all consciously sharing a capacious nationality" (Heater, 2004, p. 199).

The conceptual commitment to move beyond nationalist boundaries apropos belonging and membership, while largely absent in North America, has been highly theorized in European and Asia-pacific contexts. The social, political, and economic impacts resulting from the formation of the European Union has constituted three distinct yet overlapping areas in which citizenship is formed. These include the *transnational* level in which all European countries are involved, the *national/member* state level, and *local/regional* context. While European citizenship theory has been articulated as a political process and considered within the national, it is widely underpinned by nuanced cultural constructions of citizenship (Triandafyllidou, Modood, & Zapata-Barrero, 2006). In light of the transnational effects resulting from the formation of the European Union and subsequent changes to the ways in which citizenship is conceptualized and practiced – particularly pertaining to guest-workers and ethnic migrants – the cultural underpinnings of citizenship in its connections to the nation need be problematized (Triandafyllidou et al., 2006). Similarly, in the Asia-pacific context, increasing economic relations and transnationalism has resulted in the "cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel, and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions" (Ong, 1999 p. 6). For Ong, this enables *flexible citizens* to wrongfully access abundant rights without exercising necessary responsibilities.

While the three spaces of identity and governance – transnational, national, local – are embedded in the Canadian context, a different set of issues drive citizenship theory. Particularly, the policy of multiculturalism in its ongoing iterations and debates has defined theories of citizenship, both in the liberal democratic tradition as well as its critiques. In Canada,

immigration laws, governance, and various public institutions are shaped by the discourses of multiculturalism and citizenship. This demands that citizenship theory be contextualized within the realms of the local and national whilst recognizing that aspects of transnational conceptions of citizenship are useful for contextualizing citizenship. Moreover, with Canada's recent entry into the international arena as a nation-state that is 144 years old, 'new' identities constitute something quite different than in European or Asian contexts. Thus, in Canada the separation of social citizenship from that of the nation, while plausible as a conceptual exercise, is implausible for any grounded interventions.

2.3.3 Critical multiculturalism

Critical scholars of the Canadian nation-state have rigorously critiqued the image of the cohesive multicultural nation as racist, exclusionary, and 'haunted' by a colonial past (Bannerji, 2000; Gunew, 2004; Thobani, 2007). Critical educational scholars in Canada have picked up on these critiques and have offered useful interventions for interrogating the role that multiculturalism has for moving beyond 'sari's and samosa's' (Carr & Lund, 2007; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997; Steinberg, 2009).

Specifically, critical multiculturalism provides a rich landscape with which to fill the gaps of liberal multiculturalism within the nation. Its commitment to notions of difference, not just between inclusion and exclusion but also how history, culture, power, and ideologies produce differences (McLaren, 1994; Steinberg, 2009), is useful for exploring identities and belongings with the nation from a critical social and political lens. Thus, critical multiculturalism is useful for unpacking the pervading tensions within liberal universalism where "identification

cannot be constructed in relation to a political system alone; it has to be constructed on cultural meanings. It has to be embedded, that is to say, in an imagined community" (Hall, 2002, p. 28).

However, while the nation is central to how citizenship is articulated in Canada, it also serves as a limitation which I aim to transcend for conceptualizing citizenship for immigrant youth. This dissertation is committed to critical explorations of multiculturalism for its conceptual and grounded commitments, yet the focus rests in existing debates of citizenship as an iterative and substantive concept that *simultaneously* exists beyond the nation. To this end, in this dissertation, critical multiculturalism serves as a valuable theoretical platform for critically positing an alternative national imaginary to popular multiculturalism. Additionally, conceptual approaches that enable an exploration of multiculturalism beyond the nation will be explored at length in the following chapter.

2.4 Summary of arguments

In this chapter, I have articulated through the literature the ways in which the ideological premises, concepts, and goals of citizenship education perpetuate the dominant discourse of citizenship and are ineffective within the current global era. I have made the case that citizenship education must be critically interrogated through an understanding of the shifting meanings and values ascribed to citizenship and the ways in which immigrant youth are impacted in that process. I have shown that while immigrant youth are particularly embedded in the globalized dimensions of citizenship, literature on youth and immigrant youth citizenship continues to rest on traditional conceptions of how young people can participate and become full members of a democratic society. Through a review of empirical and conceptual literature, I then discussed the ways in which the dimensions of identity, belonging, and the nation are central for the

conceptual goals of this project – to begin to articulate an immigrant youth citizen identity – and the practical goal of intervening in the project of citizenship education.

In the following chapter, I expand on the above in order to build a conceptual lens through which to situate Iranian immigrant youth's experiences of citizenship. I will use this lens as a launching pad with which to trouble the relationship between the multicultural nation, migrant youth, and citizenship. While this is a difficult task, it is necessary before a call for an 'immigrant youth citizens identity' can be made. Moreover, if an 'immigrant youth citizen identity' is a viable conceptualization, it is not necessarily a realistic or even desired component of citizenship education, rather a starting point from which to challenge the liberal underpinning in which citizenship education is situated.

3 Theoretical framework: Identities, diasporas and cultural citizenship

In the preceding chapter, I discussed the conceptual and educational commitments of citizenship in Canada. I highlighted the central tenets of the liberal model of citizenship as focusing on democratic processes within a political community. I explored citizenship in relation to the nation state and issues of identity in relation to civic membership and engagement. I argued that the liberal model negates social dimensions of citizenship whereby structures of power and oppression and inclusions and exclusions within both national and global contexts inform meanings and interpretations of and engagement with citizenship.

Conceptualizing citizenship outside of the political sphere of the nation state to one where the focus is on the social contexts within and across national and global communities provides a point of entry for engaging with the shifting and evolving ways in which identities and belongings are central to citizenship. To this end, I borrow from a range of theories to guide an exploration of citizenship that is relevant for the subjectivities of immigrant youth. I posit that understanding the features of what I have introduced as an 'immigrant youth citizen identity' can facilitate conceptualizing a model of citizenship and, by extension, approaches to citizenship education for this population.

Based on the findings from this study, I have inductively derived at three central commitments for unpacking an immigrant youth citizen identity as a conceptual apparatus for articulating citizenship. Firstly, there is an understanding that *identity is situated within multiple, shifting, intersecting and interlocking dimensions*. In the first subsection of this chapter, I unpack this approach to identity by drawing on scholarship committed to an exploration of identity with a focus on those to whom social structures are least favourable. I am primarily indebted to Hall

(2003, 2010) for providing conceptual clarity for situating a commitment to identity within the particular contexts and conditions that are relevant to the lived experiences of immigrant youth.

Secondly, I posit that a commitment to an immigrant youth citizen identity *situates citizenship within multiple constructed boundaries of membership*. In the second subsection of this chapter, I draw on the conceptual underpinnings of diaspora studies, as informed by the early works of Safran (1991) and Cohen (2008), to unpack the conditions for multiple boundaries and memberships within the current global era. Focusing on central issues of dispersions, homeland orientations, and boundary maintenance (Brubaker, 2005) from both geographic and imaginative sites, this commitment responds directly to the limitation of citizenship as focused within the nation state and which, in turn, undermines individuals' globalized experiences.

Lastly, a commitment to an immigrant youth citizen identity situates *citizenship as an iterative process of learning*. In the last subsection of this chapter, I draw on the conceptual underpinnings of cultural citizenship to unpack the ways in which citizenship is learned within and across different sites. I argue that as a process of learning, citizenship bears on individuals' potentials to engage with substantive dimensions of citizenship. Conceptual developments of this commitment of an immigrant youth citizen identity has been informed by the works of Rosaldo (1999) and Delanty (2003).

The above three commitments of an immigrant youth citizen identity, while not limited to the conceptual apparatus I draw on in this chapter, are useful for the proposed conceptual foci as they enable not only a new theoretical lens from which to explore citizenship for this population, but also facilitate practical considerations of citizenship, such as models of citizenship education.

3.1 Citizen identity in global times

> You are born partly into a set of affiliations you didn't choose; so the affiliation of your knowledge is less the product of free choice than something to negotiate…this is how identity politics may be fruitfully understood now: as a site of struggle, rather than as sites of 'identity'.
> (Chicago Cultural Studies Group 1994, p. 130)

The above quote captures the ways in which modern conceptualizations of identity are situated within contested subjectivities, structures of power, and politics of representation. In this dissertation, the concept of identity is explored from the cultural everyday experiences of individuals and groups and is concerned with structures of power and oppression as they impact individual experiences. As such, the approach to identity in this dissertation is informed by a commitment that it is a *shifting process situated across spatial and temporal sites and as multiple, intersecting and interlocking*. This understanding to identity is useful for moving beyond citizenship as a formal concept, concerned with rights and duties, to one that takes into account the ways in which individual and group identities inform substantive dimensions of citizenship.

3.1.1 Identity as shifting, multiple and unstable

Stuart Hall (2003) has long been reminding us that identity is metamorphic and contradictory. Identity is dominantly conceptualized within collective histories that yield shared frames of reference, cultural codes, and notions of self. In this sense, cultural identities are viewed as "stable, unchanged, and [produce] continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting vicissitudes of our actual history" (Hall, 2003, p. 234). While this approach to conceptualizing identity maintains an important role in situating how history shapes relations

of power and oppression, it falls short in taking into account how differences inform individual identities.

Conceptualizing identity within and across individual differences maintains that identities are never fixed nor static, rather they are shifting and unstable. In effect, "like everything which is historical, [cultural identities] undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power" (Hall, 2003, p. 236). Thus, while historical representations of identity define collectively who and what 'we are', the contemporary context of individuals' experiences define who and what 'we are becoming'.

For immigrant youth, the historical contexts which shape patterns of migration and national, cultural, and ethnic histories are important in a collective identity of being an 'immigrant youth'. However, by virtue of being 'youth', identity is in constant transformation and through this they are continually shifting in their process of 'becoming'. To this end, spatial and temporal sites are important in how identities come to bear for immigrant youth. Their status as 'youth' evokes its own processes of identity formation, as positioned not just within a historical context but also a historical context of a particular temporal stage of social, emotional, cognitive, and cultural development. Their identities as constructed in differences of subjectivities, informed by an array of spatial and temporal conditions, contribute to individualized memories, meaning-making and engagement. Grossberg (2010) elucidates:

> identity is always a temporary and unstable effect of relations which defined identities by marking differences. Thus the emphasis here is on the multiplicity of identities and differences rather than on a singular identity and on the connections or articulations between the fragments or differences (p. 89).

Moreover, geographic and virtual belongings and identities associated with living in two or more countries, cultural globalization, youth consumer culture, and the digitized social revolution (boyd, 2007; Nayak, 2003b; Pilkington & Johnson, 2003; Werbner, 2000) all contribute to processes of identity formation that are specific to the subjectivities of being both youth and immigrant. Identity, within these processes, is iterative and as Pilkington and Johnson (2003) argue, situated within taste communities where they can choose which identities to access as it serves them at that time.

Immigrant youth, in particular, are doubly impacted by this phenomenon as their social identities are cause for both celebration and marginalization within multicultural Canada. Using Pilkington and Johnson's (2003) vernacular, they negotiate multiple identities and belongings of their 'real communities' – rooted in class, ethnicity and race while managing 'taste communities' as represented in the cultural practices of their everyday lived experiences. These combined aspects reinforce that identity for immigrant youth is an iterative process of 'becoming' whereby no aspect is necessarily stable or complete (Hall, 2010).

3.1.2 Identity as intersecting and interlocking

The starting point of theorizing identity as unstable, rooted in nuanced dimensions specific to immigrant youth and – as Hall (2010) reminds us – incomplete, yields another conceptual layer for interrogating identity: identity as is intersecting and interlocking. Early contributions of intersectionality focused on the ways in which the politics of social identities compliment and contradict one another (Crenshaw, 1991). For example, while a struggle for social equality is central across social identity groups and a starting point for strategic solidarity

efforts, the politics of representation, social, and institutional structures dictate how identity politics are engaged with and by whom.

More recent critical discourses of intersectionality place the focus not just on the compatibilities and contradictions of social identities but on the enunciative politics of each of these categories (Grabham, Cooper, Krisnadas, & Herman, 2009). In other words, intersectionality is concerned with how the politics of identities are increasingly complicated and contested. Moreover, the politics of identities exist apropos broader systems of inclusion and exclusion and it would be incomplete to explore the intersections of identities and identifications without engaging the ways in which they are embedded, inseparable and interlocking with these broader contexts. Identities and identifications intersect in that they exist in relation to one another and they interlock. They exist because of one another.

In the context of this study, identities and identifications are informed by multiple intersecting and interlocking sites. For example, the multiple identities and belongings of a Muslim, Mujahideen, refugee woman intersect to yield particular subjectivities. Additionally, her identities and identifications interlock with the broader structures in which she is embedded; her relationship with the nation (Taylor, 1994), experiences of migration (Tölölyan, 2005) and as a Muslim youth living in a post 9/11 landscape (Maira, 2009) all contribute to her process of identity formation. Thus, identities and belongings exist in relation to one another and within and across histories, geographies and social and cultural contexts (Anthias, 2009; Gilroy, 2000; Grossberg, 2010).

3.2 Geographies of citizenship

In the previous chapter, I discussed the central limitations of citizenship in Canada as focusing solely on the liberal-democratic underpinnings of the nation-state. In this sense, citizenship negates the ways in which individuals' globalized contexts inform their citizen identity and relationship with citizenship. This limitation is particularly germane for immigrant youth who are connected with two or more nations. The second commitment of an immigrant youth citizen identity maintains that *citizenship is situated within and across multiple constructed boundaries of membership*. Drawing on diaspora studies, I will unpack the nuances of this commitment and its implications for citizenship.

3.2.1 Situating diaspora studies

The concept of diaspora was initially introduced as a tool for understanding the forced emigration and expulsion of Jewish, Armenian, Greek, African, and Irish migrants (Cohen, 2008). It was later associated with political categories for diverse migrant groups wherein the focus was not on the ethnicity of the migrant but rather on categories such as "expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities *tout court*" (Safran, 1991, p. 83) in relation to a homeland.

This understanding yielded an array of critiques of diaspora studies, including the contesting meanings and interpretations given to 'homeland' (Brah, 1996), neglect of internal divisions within diaspora communities (Anthias, 2009), and privileging of the nation-state (Soysal, 2000) models of membership. These well established social-constructionist critiques which arose from the underpinnings of the early phases of diaspora have provided an array of

conceptual tools to engage with issues of transnationalism. For example, cosmopolitanism (Gunew, 2004), post-nationalism (Soysal, 2000), transnational citizenship (Ong, 1999b) and translocational positionality (Anthias, 2009) all address issues of identity, ethnicity, nationalism, and globalization facing diaspora communities.

However, each of these transnational discourses are situated within particular politics facing diaspora communities and thus require their own set of considerations vis-à-vis issues of social identity, economic globalization, and geopolitics. Diaspora studies, while by no means encompassing of the experiences of all migrant groups, remains the theoretical discourse most committed to the lived and experienced dimensions of migration. Thus, the changing global landscape – which has largely been articulated in the above critiques – calls for nuanced considerations to conceptualizing diaspora that accounts for the multiple identities and identifications, belongings, and formal and informal networks across the globe that constitute the myriad of migratory processes and experiences of the diaspora individual.

There are a dizzying array of contesting conceptualizations of diaspora across academic disciplines and popular-culture sites (Brubaker, 2005). Uncritically removed from its historical and political roots, the concept is often used as a catch-all phrase for anyone migrating. Though as Cohen (2008) reminds us, not everyone is a diaspora because they self-identify as such: "social structures, historical experiences, prior conceptual understandings, and the opinions of other social actors (among other factors) also influence whether we can legitimately label a particular group a diaspora" (p. 16). Leading scholars of diaspora maintain its steadfast commitment to historical and political contexts whilst focusing on the underpinnings of global issues of the 21st century (Clifford, 1994; Cohen, 2008; Safran, 1991; Tölölyan, 2005). Gilroy (2000), reminds us that recent scholarship of diaspora "is a response to the vague and amorphous

notion of 'global' and contributes to the analysis of intercultural and transcultural processes and forms" (p. 123).

Using this contemporary understanding of diaspora as a starting point, in this dissertation, diaspora studies provides a foundation from which to explore the notion of citizenship as situated within and across constructed spatial and imaginative boundaries. It is used as a conceptual tool with which to explore the cultural tensions and contradictions experienced by diaspora individuals (Braziel & Mannur, 2003) and the conditions of the multiple boundaries and memberships that young diasporas negotiate. To this end, I draw on Brubakers's (2005) three useful constitutive elements of 'diaspora' – dispersion, homeland orientation, boundary-maintenance – as a starting point to unpack the key features of diaspora in the current moment of history and in relation to the population under study to theorize a more sophisticated home-diaspora relationship that helps to situate the notion of citizenship.

3.2.2 Dispersions

A critical point of departure in diaspora studies is forced or free migration across national borders. However, the nuances of 'forced' and 'free' are complicated by the context of migration. For example, although emigration may be voluntary, the ideological, political, economic, and other structural circumstances of the home nation ultimately dictate the choice to migrate and by extension, the circumstances under which immigration takes place can duly impact the diasporas' relationship with the adopted country. Cohen (2008) identifies five classic types of dispersion through which a diaspora identity is borne. What he refers to as the victim, labour, imperial, trade and deterritorialized diaspora aptly engage with classic conditions of

migration underpinned by colonization, geo-politics, global economics, religious and ethnic hegemony.

While these dispersions continue to be central to notions of diaspora, in the current global era, dispersion often takes an added layer of complexity. The diaspora individual is rarely the foreigner 'Other' who moves from Point A to Point B without an existing globalized diaspora network into which she can embed herself. Rather, she has a 'diaspora capital' that positions her favourably within an increasingly globalized world. In the current global landscape, diaspora individuals are as Gungwu (1992) articulates:

> New classes of people educated in a wide range of modern skills [who] are now prepared to migrate or emigrate and respond to the pull of centres of power and wealth and the new opportunities in trade and industry. Even more than the traditional sojourners of Southeast Asia, these people are articulated, politically sensitive and choose their new homes carefully. They study the migrant states, especially their laws on the rights of immigrants and the economic conditions for new comers (p. 3).

For diaspora individuals, the web of formal and informal global networks arising from various types of dispersion make "their language, skills, familiarity with other cultures and contacts in other countries – highly competitive in the international labour, service and capital markets" (Cohen, 2008, p. 146). Thus, the shrinking global landscape shifts the lens through which we view traditional diaspora dispersions as based on East-West or North-South relations. Rather, global economic markets effortlessly drive migration of skilled and unskilled labourers to numerous destinations across the globe. Sojourners skilfully position themselves in various locations to reap cultural, economic, political benefits within the diaspora and for whom, as Ong (1999b) poignantly describes, the notion of citizenship is 'flexible'.

An understanding that dispersion is informed by a range of circumstances and has varying implications on how diasporas' experiences are articulated in the adopted country is a

useful point of entry for engaging with notions of citizenship beyond the dominant role of the

nation state. For example, sense of belonging in and investment toward Canada – and in effect

sense of citizenship – is different for a young Iranian immigrant whose obligatory migration for

reasons of political asylum than it would be for someone whose voluntary migration is to gain a

Western education or ultimately hold a Canadian passport. Thus, the notion of dispersion is

useful for probing the concept of citizenship from a range of identities and belongings that

"forces us to rethink the rubrics of nation and nationalism, while refiguring the relations of

citizens and nation-states" (Braziel & Mannur, 2003, p. 7), as I discuss in detail below.

3.2.3 Homeland orientations

An orientation to homeland is central to critical discourses of diaspora. In Safran's (1991)

heuristic of diaspora, four out of six characteristics are concerned with homeland. These include:

> [first,] maintaining a collective memory or myth about the homeland; second, 'regarding
> the ancestral homeland as the true, ideal home and as the place to which one would (or
> should) eventually return'; third, being collectively 'committed to the maintenance or
> restoration of the homeland and to its safely and prosperity'; and fourth, 'continu[ing] to
> relate, personally or vicariously', to the homeland, in a way that significantly shapes
> one's identity and solidarity' (Safran, 1991 in Brubaker, 2005, p. 5).

These criteria of orientation to homeland are not just a simple yearning for an imagined or real

nation. As Werbner (2002) argues, "many diasporas are deeply implicated both ideologically and

materially in the nationalist projects of their homelands" (p. 120); thus a central feature of

organizing as a diaspora community is to mobilize around national and ethnic symbols that serve

as a resource to strengthen a diaspora identity (Anthias, 2009).

In the case of Iranians living in Canada, the very notion of diaspora has been remapped

through activist engagements with the 2009 presidential elections in Iran. The limitless

boundaries of the World Wide Web and, in particular, social networking sites provided a space for diasporas to dissent homeland politics without repercussions that they would have faced in Iran. In an attempt to reinvent the state as informed by the anti-Islamic revolution ideologies, the diaspora serves as a safe space to engage as an active citizen of the home country, as I will expand on in Chapter 7. This phenomenon provides valuable insights into the ways that citizenship as a transnational site operates within national boundaries and begs further exploration into the role of the adopted nation in supporting citizenship of migrants apropos their real and imagined affiliations with the home nation.

More interesting however is to explore why, in some cases, an active orientation to homeland exists in the absence of an orientation to the adopted country? What implications does this have on a diaspora individual's feelings of citizenship toward the adopted nation? How do we rearticulate notions of citizenship to better accommodate the ways in which homeland orientations play out for individuals? An exploration of homeland through the conceptual lens of diaspora helps to unpack the tensions embedded within these questions.

3.2.4 Boundary maintenance

Gilory (2000) argues that the diaspora "disrupts the fundamental power of territory to determine identity by breaking the simple sequence of explanatory links between place, location, and consciousness" (p. 120). This poignant statement supports the final constitutive dimension of diaspora – the maintenance of boundaries. Distinct differences of the diaspora community from members of the host country such as cultural, language, religious, and social solidarity commitments (amongst other categories) constitute boundary-maintenance (Brubaker, 2005).

Canada's multicultural identity lends itself well to a diasporic consciousness that supports boundary-maintenance insofar as cultural expressions of difference are celebrated. Canada has been a leader is addressing issues of group and differentiated rights and its implications for citizenship (Kymlicka, 1995). However, critiques point to the ways in which the commitment to promoting formal dimensions of citizenship undermines a commitment to protecting culture (Triandafyllidou, 1997) and, by extension, substantive dimensions of citizenship. Thus, Canada's commitment to difference poses the worthwhile question of what is an acceptable limit of difference and how can it be articulated within the boundaries of a liberal-democracy.

From a sociological lens, boundary-maintenance can be explored in relation to the ways in which diasporas maintain boundaries, why they are committed to do so and what implications their attempts to preserve a distinct identity has on substantive dimensions of citizenship. While scholars of diaspora elucidate the tension between boundary-maintenance as it is concerned with the preservation of identity and the conditions of identity in a globalized world – such as hybridity, fluidity and creolization (Brubaker, 2005) – I argue that for young diasporas, in particular, disrupting dominant boundaries of identity does not undermine the importance of boundary-maintenance. In an increasingly global landscape where young diasporas are confronted with a vast array of identities and belongings to choose from (Pilkington & Johnson, 2003), boundaries are maintained within the box of being a hybrid, global, creolized, or any other combination of mixed identity and belonging. For example, the ways in which participants in this study draw on a hybrid Farsi, English and slang vernacular to intentionally exclude both members of the host nation as well as Iranian diasporas of a different generation suggests the ways in which hybridity contributes to new forms of boundary-maintenance.

For the participants in this study, expressions of boundary-maintenance unfold through language, social and cultural exchanges such as their involvement in social networking sites where attempts are made to publically maintain boundaries (for example through a Facebook group that highlights characteristics of the Iranian diaspora individual). These forms of boundary-maintenance provide insights into how the ways in which boundary-maintenance is connected to their sense of needing to be Iranian and not being too Canadian. In effect, the ways in which boundaries are maintained and reinforced provides a launching pad for exploring the meanings and interpretations that young diasporas give to citizenship.

3.3 Cultural citizenship

3.3.1 Citizenship as a process of learning

The last constitutive element of an immigrant youth citizen identity, I suggest, is a commitment to *citizenship as an iterative process of learning*. This understanding of citizenship is borne in response to the popular conception of citizenship that suggests that citizenship is something that one becomes through an official process of identity and membership – such as possessing a passport or a duty, such as voting. While these dimensions of citizenship are central, they are the static dimensions that reinforce rigid boundaries around what constitutes citizenship and, in effect, an inability to meet specific criteria suggests that one is not a citizen. For example, a pillar of formal citizenship is the right to vote by a particular age as determined by the state; thus one becomes a citizen by a certain age and prior to that age one is not deemed to be a citizen. In the words of Delanty (2003) citizenship "is constructed by codes, categories and modes of classification that reflect a governmental strategy into which the individual citizen is

inserted. Thus, an immigrant comes a citizen by participating in a discourse that redefines social relations according to fairly fixed categories" (p. 599).

Moving beyond singular definitive categories of what constitutes citizen and citizenship, I posit that citizenship is not a something that one becomes through state-imposed criteria, rather citizenship is a process that is constantly changing based on an individual's stage in development and circumstances through which it was acquired. There may be a significant differences between two citizens of Canada in how they engage with their formal citizenship based on their process of acquiring citizenship. For example, the processes of understanding and even engaging with citizenship are different for an individual whose citizenship was granted as a birth right versus for a refugee who has been grated asylum and has after a lengthy bureaucratic process acquired formal citizenship. Thus, substantive dimensions of citizenship both inform and are informed by formal dimensions of citizenship. For migrant youth, these processes are doubly informed by the contexts of identity formation and boundaries of membership, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

The conceptual lens of cultural citizenship helps to situate an exploration of how migrant youth in Canada 'learn' to constitute themselves as citizens in relation to socially-determined markers of inclusion and exclusion. I draw on cultural citizenship to engage with citizenship not just as a shifting process but also a process of learning. Cultural citizenship extends beyond an accommodation of minorities and problems of cultural diversity within the nation state to one that focuses on the wider dimensions of culture. In this sense, citizenship is not achieved, as Pawley (2008) articulates, "merely as a potential outcome of the structural change, but as a new way of being in the world, as set of symbolic understandings about our status on which we base

our interactions" (p. 601). Below, I situate models of cultural citizenship as a conceptual tool for unpacking citizenship as a process of learning.

3.3.2 Situating cultural citizenship

In general, cultural citizenship has contributed to theoretical debates concerning issues of membership, identity, and rights within the realm of political theory. In the last two decades, the rise of contemporary globalization has invigorated a flurry of conceptualizations of cultural citizenship and in recent scholarship with attention to its ethnographic application (Maira, 2009). The broad palette of works in cultural citizenship is systematically Balkanized apropos disciplinary biases and their commitment to, and deviation from, the liberal rationality roots of citizenship. The foci of cultural citizenship, while not exhaustive, include the commitment to cultural policy (Bennett, 1998), an accentuated relationship between cultural and political rights for minorities (Rosaldo, 1999), group and differentiated rights under the auspices of liberal democracy (Kymlicka, 2007), a struggle for a communicative society (Stevenson, 2003), culture and media (Miller, 2007), and cosmopolitan self interest (Rorty, 1995).

Across these models, the commonality rests in their focus on the public sphere and working through differences, cultural diversity and equitable membership within a community (Pawley, 2008). In Miller's (2002) words, regardless of the political agenda within cultural citizenship, there is a focus on the "maintenance and development of cultural lineage via education, custom, language, and religions, and the positive acknowledgement of difference in and by the mainstream" (p. 231). Furthermore, there is a general consensus in the ways that varied and complex identities resulting from cross-class migration, the international division of cultural labour, and geopolitical relations inform the ways that traditional markers of identity are

politicized. Although sociological and philosophical critiques of cultural citizenship pervade its theoretical developments (Turner, 2001), aspects of it lend itself to an ethnographic exploration of dimensions of identity, belonging, and group rights amidst the national and intra-national tensions experienced by Iranian immigrant youth.

In Canada, the discourse of cultural citizenship is positioned within political theory wherein the focus rests on minority rights as opposed to cultural rights (Kymlicka, 2007). Namely, cultural citizenship in Canada focuses on issues of differentiated[7] rights for minority individuals and groups. Underpinning the argument is that marginalized groups do not have to succumb to the totality of universal values, which can have a homogenizing effect (Young, 2000). This approach provides a foundation from which to interrogate the 'national imaginary' (B. Anderson, 1983) through which culture and citizenship are articulated in Canada, in addition to the impacts of institutionalized homogeneous approaches to citizenship such as citizenship education. In this vain, cultural citizenship can help to redefine citizenship as "the struggle for rights and social justice with the quest for recognition and cultural respect" (Stevenson, 2003, p. 331).

However, because of its commitment to the liberal multicultural framework, the Canadian model of cultural citizenship (though not referred to in these terms) focuses on normative aspects of culture, in which diverse identities need to be accommodated within the

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7 There are two kinds of differentiated rights: internal and external (Kymlicka, 1999). This study considers external group rights, which challenges liberal conceptions of individual rights and is namely concerned with "rights that a minority group claims against the larger society in order to reduce its vulnerability to the economic or political power of the larger society…[and] can take the forms of language rights, guaranteed political representation, funding of ethnic media, land claims, compensation for historical injustice, or the regional devolution of power. All of these can help to promote justice between ethnocultural groups, by ensuring that members of the minority have the same effective capacity to promote their interests as the majority" (p. 31-32).

public sphere to enhance citizenship. As such, there is a bias toward citizenship as concerned with minority rights as opposed to cultural rights and thus the broader concerns of culture within citizenship are undermined. An exploration into more sociological dimensions of cultural citizenship that ask, for example, how citizenship is a cultural product that arises out of lived experiences of individuals and groups or how individuals and groups 'learn' to be citizens and what role cultural differences play in the production of and access to citizenship are absent within the Canadian model of cultural citizenship.

Below I turn to theorists of cultural citizenship whose focus on cultural rights is a political tool for cultural recognition and economic, social, and political rights as an access point to answer the above questions. I further unpack citizenship as a site of learning beyond a focus on the nation as it contributes to a conceptual understanding of how diasporic identities and membership are implicated within and across national as well as global sites.

3.3.3 Cultural citizenship as a site of learning

My starting point for exploring cultural citizenship as a site of learning is borne from Delanty's (2003) argument that the "governmentalization of citizenship" (p. 599) fails to take into account the ways in which learning occurs through the "linkages of individual and collective or societal learning processes" (p. 600). For Delanty, citizenship as a process of learning entails generative processes, connecting different concepts, an evolution of change, an ongoing process of construction, and has the potential for transformation. I extend Delanty's 'citizenship as a learning process' thesis that bridges individual and collective learning processes to situate citizenship as a relational process that engages with not just 'self' and the 'Other' but *also* in the ways in which the systems and structures in which individuals are implicated contribute to

processes of learning citizenship. To this end, I suggest that learning citizenship happens in

formal and informal contexts from both the top-down and bottom-up. Top-down influences

include structures and institutions in which inclusion and exclusion are pervasive – such as

schools and schooling, discourses of multiculturalism, and the formal codes and categories of

citizenship. Bottom-up influences include informal or substantive ways in which citizenship is

articulated in people's daily lived experiences. This can include how language, culture, and

individualized inclusions and exclusions are articulated.

Understanding how both of these approaches to citizenship contributes to cultural,

economic, and political rights of citizenship is useful for situating cultural citizenship as a

comprehensive conceptual tool with which to unpack citizenship learning for the research sample

in this study and, in effect, to contribute to practical interventions such as more effective models

of citizenship education in formal schooling. To illustrate this point, I first draw on Ong's

(1999a) perspective on cultural citizenship, which for her are:

> cultural practices and beliefs produced out of negotiating the often ambivalent and
> contested relations within the state and its hegemonic forms that establish the criteria of
> belonging within a national population or territory. Cultural citizenship is a dual process
> of self-making and being-made within webs of power linked to the nation-state and civil-
> society (p. 264).

Ong's Foucauldian commitment to cultural citizenship suggests that part of the process of

becoming – or learning to be – a citizen is constituted by the extent to which one submits to

'webs of power'. Thus, the process of learning to be a citizen is a project of "self-making in

shifting fields of power that include the nation-state and the wider world" (p. 264). Findings in

this study widely reveal the ways in which processes of situating multiple identities and

belongings – or 'self-making' – are largely informed by the underpinning discourses of what

constitutes a good citizen as articulated within institutionalized national discourses of the multicultural citizen (as I discuss in Chapter 5) and the riddled responses to the influences of institutionalized power in their lives (as I discuss in Chapter 6).

On the other hand, cultural citizenship's commitment rests in cultural inclusion within the mainstream without willingness to sacrifice political and economic rights (Maira, 2009). In efforts to preserve identity, exercise full membership and political and economic equality within the wider community, citizenship is 'learned' through a concern for "the maintenance and development of cultural lineage through education, custom, language, and religion and the positive acknowledgement of difference in and by the mainstream (Miller, 1999 in Pawley, 2008, p. 598).

This commitment to cultural citizenship – most notably theorized within American Latino/a community with Renato Rosaldo (1999) at the vanguard – are concerned with how "cultural phenomena – from practices that organize the daily life of individuals, families, and the community, to linguistic and artistic expression – cross the political realm and contribute to the process of affirming and building…identity and political social consciousness" (Flores & Benmayor, 1997, p. 6). This conception of cultural citizenship is supported by the findings in this study where participants' identities and belongings come to bear through acts of citizenship such as their involvement in political activism, social networking, use of language and situating spatial and imaginative belongings (as I discuss in Chapter 7).

Cultural citizenship as a learning process from the top-down and bottom-up situates the political and sociological dimensions of identities and belongings as a "medium of social construction by which individual learning becomes translated and coordinated into collective learning and ultimately becomes realized in social institutions" (Delanty, 2002, p. 66). In effect,

as a learning process, cultural citizenship moves beyond definitive solutions such as 'rights' for minorities to one that engages with citizens as active agents committed to processes that have the potential to contribute to transformative citizenship experiences.

3.4 Summary of key arguments

In this chapter, I situated the three commitments of an 'immigrant youth citizen identity' within the conceptual foci of identity from a cultural studies tradition, diaspora studies, and cultural citizenship. In the first subsection, I explored the first commitment of an immigrant youth citizen identity, that *identity is situated within multiple, shifting, intersecting and interlocking dimensions*. This understanding of identity responds directly to the one-dimensional, static notion of identity that is pervasive in dominant conceptions of citizenship. A focus on a cultural understandings of identity is a valuable conceptual point of entry for engaging with substantive dimensions of citizenship. In turn, the nuanced dimensions of identity within the cultural everyday of learners supports diaspora studies and cultural citizenship's commitment.

The key features of diaspora studies – dispersion, an orientation to homeland, and maintenance of boundaries – provide a theoretical foundation for unpacking one of the commitments for an immigrant youth citizen identity – *citizenship as situated within and across multiple constructed boundaries of membership*. Diaspora studies pushes the envelope to explore the *particular* strategies employed by individuals that trouble processes of citizenship between the boundaries of the national and global. In effect, a diaspora lens situates the sociological dimensions of citizenship, which in turn can help to inform models for and about citizenship and citizenship education. In the last subsection, I drew on the conceptual underpinnings of cultural citizenship to make the case that citizenship is a learning process rather than an end in itself; this

situates the third commitment of an immigrant youth citizen identity, that *citizenship is an iterative process of learning*. Specifically, I discussed citizenship as a learning process that is informed by top-down national political and politicized discourses of citizenship as well as from bottom-up sociological practices of citizenship.

The multi-modal conceptual framework provides a launching pad from which to interrogate state-driven focus of citizenship vis-à-vis models of formal citizenship education. This framework supports an immigrant youth-specific citizenship that is informed by the specific identities, diasporic experiences, and contexts of learning for citizenship. In the following empirical chapters, the three commitments of an immigrant youth citizen identity will be examined in relation to the conceptual underpinnings proposed in this chapter. While the three commitments overlap and intersect, the empirical findings in Chapter 5 primarily support the conceptual focus on identity, while the findings in Chapter 6 support the underpinnings of diaspora studies and Chapter 7, cultural citizenship.

4 Methodological approach and research methods

4.1 Overview of study

This six-month long ethnographic study took place in the Vancouver metropolis with twelve participants; six males and six females between the ages of 19-30 who emigrated from Iran to Canada prior to the age of 19 participated in this study. Data was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and participant observation, culminating in 370 pages of transcribed interviews and 70 pages of field-notes. This research is borne from my commitment to understand the ways that citizenship learning takes place for 'first generation' Iranian immigrant 'youth' in Canada. It is based on the core assumptions about the value of researching this particular group and a political frame through which I understand what constitutes youth, citizenship, and learning.

My approach to this study is informed by three overlapping commitments. Theoretically, I am committed to expanding notions of citizenship and citizenship learning for immigrant youth. Politically, I am committed to research as a social justice intervention, which in this study is by way of offering recommendations for improving models of citizenship learning for this population. Finally, as an Iranian immigrant, I am personally committed to better understanding the contexts and conditions of Iranian immigrant youth as a means with which to bring in an engaged, empathetic, and highly reflexive approach to research.

I acknowledge that my epistemic assumptions inevitably shape this study and am thus sensitive to the ethical concerns of the production of knowledge and how I situate myself within the research and the text. To this end, this chapter addresses the ethics and politics of research

throughout the different phases of the study. I discuss the paradigm underpinning my commitments to research, the research strategies, methods, and interpretations in each phase of the study. My hope is that the reader will gain an understanding of the methodological commitments in this study as elucidated by the symbiotic relationship of each piece of the methodology.

4.1.1 Research questions

This study is guided by an exploration of the national, intra-national, and identity contexts that inform Iranian immigrant youth's experiences with learning for citizenship. The research questions have been developed with an understanding that discussions of 'Canada' and 'Iran' are apropos individuals' experiences in a particular city in that country. Thus, reference to the national is understood to be limited to participants' experiences of their particular geographic contexts; in cases where it underpins the meanings and interpretations of the discussion, the distinction is made.

Three research questions undergird this study. The first research question asks: *How do individualized and institutionalized experiences in Canada inform participants' sense of citizenship and experiences of citizenship learning?* This research question is concerned with participants' individualized and institutionalized experiences of inclusion and exclusion and how discourses of Canada and 'Canadianness' informs citizenship and discourse of citizenship; the findings in Chapter 5 provide insights into this research question. The second research question asks: *What is the role of migration with regard to the formation of social citizenship?* This research question is concerned with the social, cultural, and generational impacts of migration such as how migration bears on identity formation, belonging and integration. Additionally, it is

concerned with ways that social and cultural language barriers, inter-generational tensions, and family stresses associated with migration have on participants' experiences of citizenship learning. The findings in Chapter 6 address this research question. The third research question asks: *In what ways do participants 'globalized' experiences bear on their understanding of citizenship and inform their learning for citizenship?* Specifically, this research question explores how participants are political and politicized within globalized social, cultural, and political dimensions of their lives. This research question is unpacked in Chapter 7 through an exploration of how participants engage with spaces and places of citizenship, the role of social networking in their lives, and political activism.

4.2 Methodological Approach

I approach this study with the view that there are multiple constructed realities: these realities are created by structural and cultural contexts wherein individuals participate as political and politicized agents. I am committed to research process as relational between the researcher and her subject. It is through this collaborative relationship that meaning-making occurs. It is with this understanding that I explore the ways in which social and political identities shape notions about groups and individuals as well as systems of power and oppression. To this end, the research strategies that underpin this study are drawn from a critical paradigm, wherein empirical and theoretical arguments are evaluated by way of their social justice implications. Based on the above, the methodology that shapes this study is drawn from an interpretive critical-constructivist epistemology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

4.2.1 Situating a critical ethnographic stance

I draw on a critical ethnographic approach as the key research genre with which to explore the cultural and material conditions of research participants and unpack the relationship between the cultural construction of meaning and the ways in which social structures, power, culture, political and economic interest impact human agency (Anderson, 1989; Carspecken, 1996). In the context of this study, I explore agency in terms of participants' citizenship learning.

Critical ethnography, as a methodological approach, is concerned with what Willis (2000) aptly calls 'sense making practices'. It is rooted in the understanding that for ethnographic research to be of value, it "should be concerned not simply with understanding the world but with applying its findings to bring about change" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 15). As a methodological approach, critical ethnography is built on the foundation of critically interrogating the 'cultural everyday' (Williams, 1989) to systemically and critically unveil the conditions of research participants (Anderson, 1989). Most importantly, the knowledge produced is used as a tool for social, political and cultural emancipation.

While conventional ethnographies have been situated within a single site, the rise of ethnographic research that examines cultural meanings and identities are increasingly situated across multiple spaces (Marcus, 1995). This new wave of ethnographic research is particularly common across studies that examine the lived dimensions of transnationalism (Kearney, 1995; Vertovec, 1999), ethnographies of urban spaces (Venegas & Huerta, 2010) and online ethnographies (Hine, 2000; Kendall, 2004; Leung, 2005).

Aligned with the above approaches to ethnography that trace cultural formations and meanings within and across multiple sites, this study draws on classic ethnographic approaches –

such as participant observation – to employ a hybrid critical ethnography mixed with a cultural studies approach.

The reason for using a hybrid approach is two-fold. Firstly, critical ethnography has been critiqued both from within and outside of the tradition as depicting research participants in ways that are not representative of their reality. By placing popular labels such as 'resistance' or 'marginalized', they serve to support the critical ethnographers' theoretical and political framework rather than the lived reality of participants (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Saukko, 2003). This critique is particularly germane in light of my own position with the research process (discussed below).

Secondly, a hybrid approach provides a point of entry for critically examining the ways in which the multiple sites in which Iranian immigrant youth are embedded contribute to the meanings and interpretations they give to a particular phenomenon. This approach demands the research to engage with notions of justice and interrogate the ways dominant ideologies construct them and critically analyze the structures out of which experiences are made.

Denzin & Lincoln (2005) note that "cultural studies research is historically self reflexive, critical, interdisciplinary, conversant with high theory, and focused on the global and the local; it takes into account the historical, political, economic, cultural, and everyday discourses. It focuses on questions of community, identity, agency, and change" (p. 187). At the heart of the relationship between the two is that ethnography is invoked by cultural studies as a means by which abstract theory can be contextualized apropos the 'real world' and in turn, critical ethnography is influenced by diverse theoretical perspectives developed by cultural studies (Saukko, 2003; Van Loon, 2007).

To this end, the symbiotic relationship between cultural studies and critical ethnography provide a useful methodological approach for exploring lived experiences, discourse, and social contexts to bring to unpack the microcosm of individuals' experiences vis-à-vis the macrocosm of the power structures in which they are embedded. I borrow from Kelly (2004) in indicating that a multimodal methodological approach assists in dealing with the complexity of experiences of research participants "whose lives (like most lives) do not follow the logic and coherence of an abstract one-dimensional theoretical model" (p. 2-3). Below I expand on the interplay between cultural studies and critical ethnography within this study.

4.3 Research methods and the participants

4.3.1 Participants and their recruitment

Several months before recruitment of participants, I began sharing information about my study with the Iranian community and informally with fellow Iranians in Vancouver. I colloquially contextualized my study as an exploration of the individualized and institutionalized sites wherein citizenship learning takes place, as framed by the research questions. Upon ethical approval for the study, I provided a recruitment poster (Appendix 1) on email to my network of Iranians across the county, asking them to distribute it to potential participants in Vancouver. I also set up a Facebook group entitled "The Voices of Iranian/Persians in Research" (now defunct) with identical information as the poster. I asked my Facebook networks to share the information with others on Facebook.

Individuals who were interested to learn more about the study joined the Facebook group and contacted me seeking information. The 'snowballing' approach yielded interest from thirty-three people on the Facebook group, nine of whom were selected to participate. Two additional

people learned about the study through acquaintances who had been selected to participate and contacted me to learn more. One person in the study was my hair stylist and through informal chit-chat at the salon, she expressed keen interest and emailed for more information. As above, thirty-six individuals expressed interest in participation. Using purposive sampling (Creswell, 2007), I administered a self-complete questionnaire (Appendix 2) to assist in identifying a range of belongings and identities[8] relevant to the methodological and conceptual framework for this study. Through this questionnaire, thirteen participants were selected. One participant withdrew and at the time of completion. Six females and six males accounted for the total sample.

Two central considerations were given in selecting participants. Firstly, in light of the centrality of the (trans)national dimension of this study, participants were selected based on the temporal period in formal schooling that corresponds to the rise of contemporary globalization[9]. As epistemologies are, in part, informed by social, cultural, political experience, the cultural and social revolution of globalization such as digital media/communication and time/space compression (Harvey, 2006), are necessary considerations for understanding citizenship learning in the current era.

Secondly, one of the goals of this study was to explore the processes of citizenship learning to better account for formal citizenship education. The lower age limit of 19 years of

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8 Although participants in this study belong to diverse identity categories and efforts were made to engage diverse groups and individuals, the religious, ethnics and linguistic diversity of the Iranian population is not reflected in this study.

9 In this study, contemporary globalization refers to the time period of 1995 onwards and corresponds to the early (popular) uses of digital mediums such as email and mobile devices. It was during this period that the gap between time and space was increasingly decreased for industrialized countries, resulting in rapid shifts in social and cultural relations (Aitken, 2001; Harvey, 2006).

age[10] includes those who have completed at least their last year of high-school in Canada, where citizenship education is traditionally taught. The rationale for the upper limit of 33 years of age is if a participant immigrated to Canada in 1995 and was in his/her last year of schooling, they would have been at least 19 years old, bringing them to 33 years during the study period.

In addition to these two central considerations for selection, participants were selected from 2-3 overlapping identity categories that reflect diversity varied by identified categories. The participants represented a plethora of identities and unique experiences that enriched an understanding of citizenship learning. Appendix 3 provides a short description of notable features of each participant in the study. Ethnographic research is more concerned with depth than breadth, thus focusing on a few individuals facilitated developing a rich conceptual and methodological approach that would not be possible if data was spread taxonomically (Clarke, 2008). In the following chapters, I include biographical information about participants to help the reader contextualize the participant across the spectrum of different identities. I also include the participants age following his/her name – such as *Ideen (19)* – primarily to help the reader contextualize each participant in relation to others and situate the number of years since he/she has acquired 'formal' citizen status.

4.3.2 Data collection

I employed in-depth, semi-structured interviews and participant observation between January and June 2010. One pilot interview was conducted in December 2009 to ensure effective use of language and that questions were not complex or repetitive. As a result of the pilot

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10 In British Columbia, students older than 19 are required to attend adult education classes for high school level courses.

interview, I modified how to approach different dimensions of citizenship. For example, in asking direct questions about citizenship, the respondent would articulate an understanding of citizenship that was linked with citizenship as a political concept. Recognizing the importance of unveiling participants' knowledge of substantive citizenship, the questions were modified to tease out the nuanced notions of loyalties, identities, belongings and active engagement apropos citizenship. Thus, both direct and indirect questions pertaining to citizenship are included in the final interview guide. The first interview, which focused more on national and cultural identities was followed up by a second interview which focused on participants' relationship with Canada and understanding of citizenship (see Appendix 4 for both interview guides).

The interviews ranged from 1 to 1.5 hours in public places selected by participants; the locations included coffee shops, restaurants, pubs, and public parks. Prior to the first meeting, I administered a consent form (Appendix 5) via email. At the time of the first interview, I outlined the data collection procedures and answered questions before the participant signed the consent form, a copy of which was given to the participant. All interviews were audio-recorded for transcribing purposes using an iPod touch. After each interview, I took notes on the key themes and early interpretations to assist in jogging my memory at a later time. For consistency and cross-comparisons, I used a template for post-interview notes that included categories such as 'key themes', 'initial analysis', 'unexpected discussion topics'. A total of twenty interviews were conducted and participants were interviewed 1-3 times. If needed, I requested a follow up interview within 24 hours of the first. Interviews that were primarily spoken in English were transcribed by a professional transcriber. I transcribed three interviews that had large Farsi content. I reviewed all transcripts against the audio recordings for consistency.

The interviews were casual and, following Iranian social protocol, involved lengthy introductions. I openly discussed my interests in the research as both a personal and intellectual journey and shared details about my own experiences of immigration and the path that led me to the study. During the interviews, it was not uncommon for me to empathize or share information about myself. These methods helped the participant to feel comfortable and share details about their own experiences. A number of times during the interviews, participants stated that they had never shared their experiences before and had never thought out loud about the topics we were discussing. While this open dialogue format generally facilitated depth to the answers, on several occasions, participants asked my opinion, at which time I had to put the interviews back on track and go back to the interview questions.

Participant observations took place in both geographic and virtual sites, providing a *tacit knowledge* (Polayni, 1974) whereby social processes and contexts facilitated depth of interpretation, evaluation and judgement of participants. No tensions arose between my 'participant' and 'observer' roles in the study. I drew on Junker's (1960) categories of participant observation and strategically negotiated between *complete observer*, *participant as observer*, *observer as participant* and *complete participant* depending on the appropriateness of the circumstances. In light of my insider status, I often employed an *observer as participant*, whilst being flexible to shift to any of the other three categories based on the context and content.

During the first interview, I requested to 'hang out'(Gray, 2003) with the participant as part the data collection and explained the different approaches to participant observation. Firstly, participant observations were conducted using a combination of participation, observation, participant as observer, just 'being around', group discussion, and unfocused interviews (Willis, 1980 in Gray, 2003, p. 82). Participant observation transcended the constraints of formal

interviews in order to 'make the strange familiar and the familiar strange'(Wolcott, 1999).

Specifically, it provided a rich descriptive context of participants' daily lived experiences. I

participated in social gatherings in public spaces like restaurants, parties, and in organized

political events and cultural gatherings surrounding the Persian New Year on March 20th.

Additionally, I was invited to a number of formally organized events and Facebook groups

wherein participant observation took place (Appendix 6).

The social networking site, Facebook (www.facebook.com), as was used by eleven of the

twelve participants served a space for socializing and a medium through which to conduct

participant observation. Participants made public: information about themselves, conversations

with friends, opinions on a range of topics, and their social meanderings. Those participants who

had a Facebook account all requested to be Facebook friends with me. My interaction with

participants on Facebook provided insights into their social and political interests, the ways in

which they use language, and the extent to which they engage with their different national and

cultural identities.

I took extensive field notes, using a thick description of the place, experiences, and

discussions that took place (Atkinson, 1992). Through these notes, upon every visit, the field

came alive in my memory and served as a conceptual apparatus through which to compare

different experiences, identify themes, link to theory, and pose questions. Reading and re-reading

the field notes along with the interview transcripts, I was able to draw similarities and differences

between what was articulated with in the formal interview structure and what was expressed in

informal contexts. This was particularly useful in helping to map out the tensions and

contradictions that existed within and across participants when I reached the formal data analysis

stage.

The six months of ethnographic field work culminated in 22 individual interviews, totalling 25 hours of audio-recording and 370 pages of transcribed interviews. Additionally, ongoing participant observation on virtual forums and 12 informal 'hang out' sessions where I conducted participant observations sessions contributed to the 70 pages of field notes. All of the raw data was analyzed.

4.3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

Critical ethnography's commitment to situating the research within a stance that signals the theoretical perspective (Creswell, 2007) informed my approach to interpretation and analysis. I engaged with theory from the early stages of analysis; after each interview, I would take notes on the key ideas, theoretical questions, and areas to consider more broadly. I would engage in a similar process with the interviews that I transcribed myself. This early data analysis was useful as it generated some broad themes to begin unpacking and connecting back to theory. These themes, along with the research questions, facilitated the development of some preliminary codes.

I simultaneously read and listened to each interview to pick up on any intonations, pauses, or contexts where participants would speak Farsi or English as it may have shaped the meaning behind what the participant was saying. For example, while interviews were predominantly in English as were participant observation settings, there were instances when a participant would use a particular word or phrase in Farsi that carried a cultural and political weight. These nuanced expressions were instrumental in analyzing participants' cultural and national identities and worldviews. By taking into account the context of the discussion, the social setting, and the ways in which a choice of a particular language facilitated meaning-making, positioning oneself

in relation to Canada or Iran, or a performance amongst peers, I was able to begin unpacking how language, amongst other more nuanced expressions, contributed to the meanings and interpretations that they ascribed to their sense of citizen identity and citizenship. Using this method, I went through five interviews and the field notes to identify the key ideas apropos the preliminary codes. In effect, I identified other categories and subcategories to explore further. I then used the emergent codes to code the rest of the interviews and my field notes. I used Atlas.ti (www.atlasti.com), a qualitative data analysis software, primarily to organize the data. I specifically used this software as it was the most popularly recommended and I had access to colleagues who could teach me how to use it.

What emerged were a broad range of categories that I used as a launching pad to develop some key themes and theoretical ideas. At that point, I felt that I needed more succinct categories to bridge the research questions with the data. I connected each code with research question and identified codes that had emerged from the data that were not in the research questions. I then reorganized the codes and went through a second iteration based on the inductive and deductive categories. Additionally, I felt that my emic point of view – as someone who is in many ways from within the culture – while central to the study was absent in the analysis; I found affirmation with Madison (2005) who posits that creating a point of view is central to the phases of data analysis. Thus, by revisiting the data, I went deeper in situating the research within theory as well as within my interpretations of the lived experiences of participants. In other words, I engaged with data by revisiting the social settings, events, and actors, and through that lens new themes and codes began to reveal themselves. In both the analysis and writing, I emerged as a "storyteller, inviting the reader to see through your[my] eyes what I have seen" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 28).

The process of recoding and simultaneously embedding my insider perspective yielded three overarching categories that allowed for a deeper analysis of the data and refined theories. The three categories ultimately framed the three empirical chapters of the dissertation. While this process was instrumental in my interpretations and analyses, it was only the beginning of the interpretive and analytic process. Each of the three empirical chapters went through several iterations and I continued to interpret each chapter vis-à-vis the others. Thus while the early stages of analysis and interpretation were more formulaic, the later (writing) stages were more conceptual and iterative.

4.4 Production of knowledge and associated ethical concerns

Throughout the research process, I questioned the core assumptions underpinning my analysis and interpretations and how to ethically engage in the production of knowledge. As a critical researcher and a member of the research group, validities of truthfulness, representation, responsibility and reflexivity have guided this study. Below, I trace the tenets of these validities and circumstances that informed their application throughout this study.

4.4.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is pivotal to critical research. While commitments to social views of power and difference are central starting points for engaging in reflexivity (Lather, 1991; Smith, 1987), I extended this commitment by engaging in reflexivity as a methodological tool wherein the values embedded in the desire to know shape the interpretations and analyses of my data. The *reflexive turn* (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Foley, 2002) engages the methodological dimensions of reflexivity as it involves:

> Directing one's gaze at one's own experience makes it possible to regard oneself as 'other'. Through a constant mirroring of the self, one eventually becomes reflexive about the situated, socially constructed nature of the self, and by extension, the other…the self is a multiple, constructed self that is always becoming and never quite fixed, and the ethnographic productions of such a self and the 'cultural other' are always historically and culturally contingent (Foley, 2002, p. 473).

To this end, I turn to the ways in which reflexivity is taken up within critical ethnographic research in order to interrogate the political relationship between myself as researcher and my participants. I draw on four simultaneous components of reflexivity – social, temporal, spatial, and cultural (Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, & Tincknell, 2004) to engage with the reflexive turn.

Social reflexivity explores positionality and differences vis-à-vis systems of power and oppression. It involves exploring the ways in which values, assumptions and interpretations are informed by differences between researcher and participants while recognizing that the research is embedded in individuals' lives (Johnson et al., 2004). *Cultural reflexivity* extends this idea to interrogate the ways in which the researcher is embedded within the cultural structure of the group she is studying. This serves as a resources for exploring the nuances of power and difference within a culture in a way that surpass conventional reflexivity, which primarily focuses on social views of power and difference. The pervasiveness of cultural geography and the reflexive turn have introduced *spatial and temporal reflexivity* (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Harvey, 2006; Massey, 1999). To allow the researcher to 'go deeper' and 'know better', it is necessary to create a temporal distance for interrogating memory and knowledge and recognize that "cultural formations have a geographical scope and location and [that] researchers need to understand in what kind of local world they stand and *where* they are related, in social space-time, to the others they research" (p. 55).

While various social, cultural, spatial and temporal locations inform how I approach this research, my position as a member of the group that I studied was most central. I was a child immigrant to Canada from Iran and am only slightly older than the participants in this study. I speak Farsi fluently and occupy various locations that participants could identify with; I came to this study with a background in activism and was peripherally involved in the Iranian youth social movement in Vancouver. As a young, educated, engaged Iranian-Canadian, I was requested to give talks and interviews in local television to provide a perspective on initiatives taking place by young Iranians in Vancouver. Additionally, my social and cultural capital as an Iranian-Canadian who is privy to popular culture contexts in which participants are embedded makes me sensitive to immigrant-specific trajectories which inform Iranian immigrant youth's experiences of citizenship learning. The culmination of these standpoints position me as a legitimate member of the research group, wherein my *indigenous-insider* (Banks, 1998) position facilitated access, rapport and trust with participants. For example, I was often invited to social gatherings and often 'hung out' with participants if I ran into them at the University of British Columbia campus or at a formally organized event such as a rally.

However, in the process of negotiating my position in the research, my indigenous-insider position proved to be a double-edged sword. While I was viewed as an insider by participants, I often grappled with how to authentically engage with this position, when at times, it felt more like a performance. This tension was informed by managing the seemingly similar position as the participants in the study with fundamental differences in our immigrant experiences, values, and worldviews. For example, while some participants engaged with compelling questions about their identities and belongings, for others, the research process provided a space to engage those questions for the first time. In effect, I found myself

highlighting different aspects of my identity in order to leverage trust and rapport and to maintain an insider status; I struggled with how much of my own story to share and not cross the line between empathy and giving advice.

Additionally, during the six-month period of data collection, I had opportunities to 'hang out' (Gray, 2003) with participants in various social contexts. As friendships ultimately formed, I constantly negotiated between criticality and authenticity. I was embedded in the social and cultural dimensions of their lives. For example, some participants invited me to spend time with them well after the data gathering period was over, others sought personal and academic advice, while some visited my Facebook page and made comments on pictures I had posted. Being slightly older than most participants and having won their trust, they were equally invested in me as a friend and mentor as I was in them as a friend and mentee. Thus, I often negotiated the tension between being their friend and studying them. This challenge came to a head when I was called on it and felt like I had to defend myself, as I discuss in my field notes:

> Shortly after I came to the party, Nazila took my hand to go outside. She wanted to smoke and find her 'boys' – as she called them. As we were walking toward the group of guys, she commented 'you can get great material for your research'. I lightly joked back and said it wasn't like that. I saw Nader and we kissed each other on the cheeks – a common Iranian greeting amongst friends. I exchanged hellos with the others I'd met at a different party and was introduced to a couple of new people. A couple of guys lit up a joint and momentarily hesitated as they weren't sure how I'd feel about it; Nazila said 'she's one of us', suggesting that I wouldn't judge them for smoking marijuana. She also commented that I was a researcher and that was the reason I had started hanging out with the group. One person asked what I was researching and I joked 'pot smoking habits'. Everyone laughed at the joke and the query was dropped (April 17th, 2010).

In an effort to maintain a balance between the social context and data collection to ensure that the individuals in that situation did not feel like I was a researcher viewing them under a microscope, I made a deliberate choice to not reveal my study. The challenge of ethnographic work is to be in the throws of fieldwork while maintaining a reflexive stance. While I struggled

for sometime with whether withholding information about the study and facetiously joking that it was about something other than what it was, was deceitful, I found solace with Habermas's (1996) argument that *legitimacy is guaranteed only through communicative action,* wherein people have to decide for themselves what is comprehensible, true, sincere and morally right (in Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Further, through investigating my actions, I was made aware of the reflexive rigour that ethnographic work demands and, in effect, began the process of how to situate myself in the study.

Through these critical reflections, my poignant realization was that while my social, cultural and political trajectory – at face value – positions me as an indigenous-insider, I ultimately positioned myself and was, perhaps at times, positioned differently than the participants in the study. Thus, I am *also* an *indigenous-outsider* (Banks, 1998) in that my values, perspectives, and knowledge were often not aligned with the participants and this often 'othered' me during the research process. While I do not fully subscribe to the indigenous-outsider typology whereby the researcher is disliked by the community, I often hesitated to provide a dissenting perspective on issues in order to be neutral and maintain being liked by participants. At the same time, my lack of engagement, support or affirmation on some discussions was indicative of my difference. Simultaneously self-identifying and being perceived by the research community as an insider and an outsider, I struggled with how to embed myself in the research process.

These dilemmas, while not unique to ethnographers, facilitated a spatial and temporal reflexivity. In efforts to separate my genuine investment in the lives of participants from the data I had collected, I first took several months away from deliberate interactions with the individuals in the study and completely stepped away from the data. I minimized my involvement in social

and political engagements and did not include content on my own Facebook page that was in any way directed toward the study. An unanticipated outcome of this distance was a critical reflection of the nuanced ways in how to separate the individuals that I was studying from the structures in which they were a part of. In light of straddling an insider and outsider position, I have chosen to minimally embed myself as a participant in this study. Throughout the empirical chapters, I have included minimal reflections from my field notes to guide the reader in my interpretations and analyses while allowing the text to speak for itself.

4.4.2 Responsibility

At every stage in this study, I have felt a great onus of responsibility toward the participants. As with any ethnographic study, there is natural relationship that forms between the researcher and the participant. This relationship is complicated within a critical ethnographic approach as it requires that the researcher interrogate the systems and structures in which individuals are embedded and, in effect, how that impacts the ways in which they locate themselves. I was doubly burdened as the relationships developed throughout the research felt authentic and – outside of the research context – it would be likely that I would have a friendship with some of the participants.

Thus, my responsibility toward the participants revealed itself in two central ways. Firstly, I constantly negotiated how to have a researcher-participant relationship wherein I was critically engaging in the nuances of their lives while developing relationships that ultimately succeeded data collection. Although participants were fully aware that during the six month period, any of our interactions had the potential to be included as data, this did not necessarily

stop some from disclosing personal information and investing themselves as 'friends' would with one another.

While some of the data collected during these informal interactions provide fertile ground for digging deeper into the themes in this study, I have not directly included them in the text as doing so could potentially undermine the sincerity of the relationships I have with the individuals and, in some cases, reveal their identities. However, I recognize that all research is biased and even if I do not disclose the details of the interactions, I have been impacted by *all* contributions made by participants and my overall analysis is informed through an interpretive position with the knower and known collaborating on meaning-making (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Secondly, I strived for transparency throughout different stages of the research. Once the raw data had been transcribed, I conducted a member-check through individual emails with the interview transcripts attached. I requested feedback on any part of the transcripts where they felt the intention behind what they were saying was not made clear. I also provided an opportunity for them to make changes to the pseudonym I had given them and provide additional comments as a follow up to what was in the text. I received confirmation from all participants and a few provided editorial comments and a change to their pseudonym. One participant withdrew from the study at that time and his transcripts were deleted. I engaged in a lengthy email exchange with him seeking clarification for his withdrawal, to which I gathered that he did not want his story exposed.

Finally, while my responsibility to the individuals directly involved in the study was most central, I also had a responsibility to the broader Iranian community in Vancouver, to which the participants belong. As with researching any community, and particularly one's own community, I deemed it necessary to express my intentions and receive a nod of approval to conduct this

study. Prior to commencing research, I attended a meeting of the Iranian-Canadian Congress, an umbrella organization of seven non-partisan associations and groups representing Iranians and Persians to discuss my study and hear of any concerns they had. I received full support for the study. I have since been provided invitations to public forums where I have spoken about the research findings. Upon successful defence of the dissertation, I will provide an abstract of the study – in Farsi – to be printed in the monthly community paper serving the Vancouver metropolis.

4.4.3. Truthfulness and representation

Part of the rigour of critical ethnography is for the research to be valuable in bringing about change for those involved in the study. Framing a study around the voices of a small sample of participants demanded not only an in depth exploration into their processes of citizenship learning, but also an ongoing conversation with myself with whether I was justly representing them; this was particularly germane as Iranian immigrant youth are underrepresented in critical scholarship and there is a dearth of critical research focusing on substantive citizenship for migrant youth.

I recognize that the knowledge claims I make are situated in my vantage point as a member of the group being studied. On the one hand, this provided a layer of truthfulness of the nuances, complexities and politics of participants. For example, recognizing the importance of class position in Iranian culture, I was able to unpack participants' class status with the cultural references, use of language, and their geographic loyalties within cities of Iran, that I would not be privy to as an outsider to the culture. Writes Van Loon (2007) "if ethnography is the writing of difference, and thereby takes place as a problematization of the representational, then the

situatedness of the ethnographer becomes affirmed as, rather than a limitation to, the formation of 'understanding'" (p. 281).

On the other hand, while my insider location shapes how I frame the study, I realize that the extent to which I am 'speaking for' participants and representing their realities is critical for the politics of unpacking differences across participants. Kincheloe and McLaren (2005) aptly remind us that "claims to truth are always discursively situated and implicated in relations of power…does not suggest that because we cannot know truth absolutely, truth can simply be equated with the effect of power" (p. 327). This provides a context from which to articulate that the claims I make – while laced with my subjectivities – are grounded in the lives of the participants and myself. Thus, these emic accounts serve as political entry points of how to engage with representation.

4.5 Summary of arguments

In this chapter I situated my approach to critical ethnography as it draws from a cultural studies approach. The combined approach provides methodological and theoretical grounding for unpacking social and political change in the lived experiences of participants – as central to critical ethnography, and critically analyzing the structures out of which experiences are made – as central to a cultural studies methodology. They overlap in their commitment in unpacking culture and the experiences of the everyday. Both are concerned with exploring the notion of justice with research participants while interrogating the ways in which dominant ideologies construct them. The above traditions are borne from my paradigmatic stance and inform my

research methods. Specifically, I draw on validities from within critical ethnography and cultural studies traditions to articulated my commitments to reflexivity, responsibility, truthfulness, and representation. I discussed in depth my research methods and how I have infused a critical emic perspective in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

It is my hope that this chapter provided the reader with an understanding of the biases and assumptions that I bring forward and the ways in which I have strived to apply judicious methodological rigour throughout the different phases of this study. There has been a very natural flow from the political choices that drove me to this study to the theoretical paradigm, the research strategy and the methods. In a way, it was each phase that dictated how I would move forward to the next. I saw my responsibility to engage with each phase with rigour and reflexivity. In the next three chapters, I will draw on the data to build on the interpretations and analyses that emerged throughout the theoretical methodological processes.

5 The Curriculum and null curriculum: Silences of citizenship

This chapter primarily addresses the first research questions in this study: *how do individualized and institutionalized experiences in Canada inform participants' sense of citizenship and experiences of citizenship learning?* I examine how participants' experiences of citizenship contradict official, top-down discourses of citizenship. I indicate that while discourses of citizenship are a curriculum for promoting the underpinning values of the 'nation', they are also a *null-curriculum* (Beyer & Apple, 1988; Eisner, 2001) in so far as they fail to teach aspects of citizenship that are relevant to participants' lived experiences. I do this by highlighting how nuanced trajectories of immigration, experiences with schools and schooling contexts, and discourses of multiculturalism are not only silenced within the curriculum of citizenship but are also sites in which they receive negative citizenship messages.

This chapter is divided into four subsections. In the first subsection, I discuss how the contexts under which participants migrated to Canada provides insight into their attitudes and interpretations of citizenship. I illustrate how citizenship is a site of inclusion and exclusion wherein politicizations of identities are pervasive. In the second subsection, I draw on schools and schooling to show how pedagogy is a site which both harvests and silences citizenship. I then draw on the ways in which participants trouble the curriculum of citizenship to yield unanticipated outcomes of the curriculum. In the third subsection, I draw on the ways in which participants trouble top-down discourses of multiculturalism, which are at odds with their experiences of national and cultural belongings. In the last subsection, I discuss how the findings from this chapter can inform new approaches to citizenship and citizenship learning.

5.1 Becoming Citizen

5.1.1 The anti-citizenship of legal citizenship

While different contexts and conditions drive migration, participants express similar

attitudes toward formal dimensions of citizenship. Participants who come from socio-

economically privileged backgrounds, as evidenced by their cosmopolitan lifestyles of jet-setting

vacations to Europe and Asia, multi-million dollar West Vancouver homes, and frank disclosure

that their families migrated to enhance – not to acquire – social, economic, and cultural comforts,

undermine the values of legal citizenship. Although aware of the benefits of legal citizenship, for

young cosmopolitans, it remains unimportant what their legal status is, so long as they can

continue to exercise their interests within the migratory global arena. Bahar (20), who has have

lived in Canada for four years, although eligible, has chosen to not apply for citizenship. She is

dismissive of the opportunity to become a Canadian citizen, commenting that she has not gotten

around to applying. For her, Canadian citizenship is a means to afford her freedom of

international mobility; however, a Permanent Resident (PR) card serves the same purpose:

> It's about how other cultures will treat you. Like getting a visa. There was a time when
> my father was in the Frankfurt airport and I don't know exactly what was happening, but
> they were judging him for being Iranian and he took out his PR card and their respect for
> him completely changed.

Similarly, Ideen (19) expresses apathy toward citizenship as it pertains to notions of

identity, belonging, rights, and duties. His apathy is evidenced by his poor English skills after

four years of living in Canada, dismissal toward social, political and cultural issues pertaining to

Iran or to Canada, lack of awareness of the rights he has as a landed-immigrant in Canada, and of

the additional rights he could have as a citizen. For Ideen, Canada is a temporary place that

serves his social and educational interests. When I ask about his social experiences in high

school, where he attended his last year, he prefers to focus on the academic struggles and

pressures to perform so that he could gain entrance into a post-secondary institution. Socially, he

migrates toward fellow Iranians and generally disengages from the social and cultural

dimensions of high school and has no non-Iranian friends. Thus, his status as Permanent

Resident is the only important dimension of citizenship as it enables him to come and go freely,

gain an education, and make the choice of where he will go next. Ideen sheds light on this

phenomenon by describing his family's flexibility and freedom of choice during the migration

period:

> So my parents, they came to Canada for the interview and they seen Toronto and
> Montreal. So, we arrive in Montreal…for 3 or 4 days, our parents didn't want to stay in
> Montreal even though they really like it, because of the language first, and secondly
> because of the cold weather, so they heard about Vancouver, so they decided to come
> here. They came here, no plan, anything…We stayed in a hotel for one month…Finally,
> my dad didn't want to buy a house, at the beginning because we weren't sure if we were
> going to stay or not, so he rented a place in _____ Avenue in West Van. So, we stayed
> there for, I think, one year, and then we bought a house.

For Bahar and Ideen, their privileged socio-economic and class positions provides the

opportunity to reap the benefits afforded by a Canadian education and national affiliations, by

way of a PR card, without pause to consider the ways in which they are embedded within those

structures. The popular discourses of citizenship are not only unknown to them, but also

dimensions of social citizenship are seemingly insignificant in light of their particular citizen

identity. In effect, the values and meanings that they ascribe to citizenship as informed by their

cosmopolitan identities are silenced within the existing configurations of citizenship.

Similarly, participants whose families have not only made great personal and professional sacrifices to migrate to Canada, but also have renounced their legitimate legal status as Iranians, also dismiss the legal dimensions of citizenship. Citizenship is often associated with a piece of paper that does not determine their feelings of belonging in Canada; more so, citizenship – as a legal status – negates the struggles of their lived citizenship experiences. Farhad (27) describes the arduous journey he and his mother took to get to Canada, while Nazila (29) recounts a telling memory of destroying her passport in order to claim refugee status:

> We didn't have clearance to come to Canada, we didn't know anybody here but we knew that the destination was this and so we had to take particular roots that were safer and easier to penetrate in terms of national borders and what not. We went from Iran to Turkey, and Turkey to Singapore, Singapore to Malaysia, Malaysia to China, and then China to Canada. – Farhad

> We landed in Toronto, and I remember it because she [mother] took me to the bathroom with her when we were on the plane. She shredded the passports and flushed them down the toilet. – Nazila

In their poignant childhood memories of migration that are associated with sacrifice, both Farhad and Nazila are schooled to interpret citizenship as something that separates legal affiliations with identities and belongings. Farhad articulates an understanding of citizenship committed to a sense of duty, whereas for Nazila, citizenship is an apolitical sense of belonging:

> Canadian citizenship is being proactive about your community. If you think there are things that affect not just yourself but structurally affect a group of people that are part of society, or should be brought to the attention of society, it's your responsibility as a citizen to try to do what you can to bring it to people's attention. – Farhad

> Whether you have the title or not, whether you have a piece of paper or a card stating that you are a citizen of whatever country, that doesn't make a difference. Even when we first moved here, I was really young but after about a year, after two years and we weren't citizens we were still just immigrants, I still felt like I was becoming a Canadian citizen. – Nazila

Despite their different interpretations, both Farhad and Nazila understand citizenship as a

social process rather than a legal status. The dominant messages that citizenship is, foremost, a status negates migratory experiences of sacrifice and a feeling of belonging by virtue of no longer belonging to one's home country. What Bahar, Ideen, Frahad, and Nazila share in common is their view that legal dimensions of citizenship neither shape them nor play a significant role to their sense of belonging and identity. However, the differences in commitment to citizenship, as I will discuss for the remainder of this chapter, across participants experiences are informed by various individualized and institutionalized inclusions and exclusions.

5.1.2 Between inclusion and exclusion

Mahsa made an announcement that a young person at Evin Prison – whose cause everyone was familiar with – was to be executed over the weekend. She asked that we have one minute of silence to honour him and others fighting for democracy in Iran. 'I'll pour all of you a drink after'. Someone turned off the music, everyone bowed their heads and closed their eyes. I heard one person cry. – Field notes from a party, January, 2010

The above reflection during the early phases of my data collection was useful for understanding the ways in which participants are all embedded, if not also invested, in the political contexts of Iran, which have directly and indirectly contributed to their emigration. The meanings and interpretations given to citizenship are significantly contextualized vis-à-vis participants' non-existent citizen rights in Iran. Thus, meaning and interpretations, as they intersect status, belonging, rights, and duties are not always straight forward, rather citizenship is a politicized site in light of inclusions and exclusions experienced in both Iran and in Canada.

Homa (23) whose Mujahideen affiliations granted her and her mother refugee status in Canada, reveals that involvement in Mujahideen mobilization efforts in Vancouver is an important expression of her citizen identity. The forced silence of Mujahideens in Iran and her ability to break that silence in the diaspora, in spite of being marginally positioned with non-

Mujahideen Iranians, ultimately provides complex meanings of citizenship. She discusses her

ambiguity toward her involvement in various mobilization efforts:

> Yeah, it like confused me so much, where am I from, am I Canadian? This is where I really got lost. What am I standing for, really? These protesters that I'm protesting with, do I really, like am I really standing by that? What side am I on? And who are these people and can I even trust them?

Homa ascribes characteristics of inclusion and exclusion to citizenship; on the one hand,

she interprets citizenship as a right that was taken away from her in Iran, based on her

Mujahideen identity and on the other hand, citizenship is a sense of belonging, wherein she can

freely exercise her right to belong and to participate political movements in Canada. She was

actively involved in the Iran's 2009 post-election efforts that took place in Vancouver. When I

asked her why she feels compelled to be involved, she responds that it's because she's always

been involved and that it gives her a sense of meaning and a feeling of belonging:

> I've always wanted to. Ever since I was little, my Mom would take me to those Mujahideen protests…she was like your Dad didn't die in vain and stuff like that. But then, I guess I grew up, I didn't like that group, I didn't believe in that fully so I didn't want to stay there, so I was like I'll go find something for myself.

Homa's ambiguity toward her national and political identities coupled with her

marginalized Mujahideen identity within the Iranian diaspora community and comfort in being

involved in political movements, sheds light on the ways in which she constantly negotiates

inclusions and exclusions apropos identity, belonging, and duties. By virtue of these lived

experiences, citizenship is a politicized site for Homa, which is unaccounted for within the

traditional discourses of belonging, rights, and duty in Canadian citizenship. Rather citizenship is

associated with managing multiple *politicized* identities and belongings that have been the source

of individualized and institutionalized exclusions in her life.

5.2 Experiences in schooling

5.2.1 The (anti)citizenship of pedagogy

For some participants, schooling experiences are complicated in light of having at least one other schooling model to compare with their Canadian experience. They discuss the difference between their Iranian and Canadian experiences of classroom pedagogies and provide rich insights as to how a 'good' student is perceived within these different approaches. For example, in their experiences with schooling in Iran asking questions in the classroom, challenging ideas, and critical thinking are reprimanded. Participants highlight this as a key difference to their Canadian schooling experience, where students' active engagement and interaction is suggestive of a good student and, within the schooling context, an active citizen. Adel (23), whose first schooling experience in Iran was in the third grade, after he and his family returned to Iran from the United States, describes his challenges and frustrations in the classroom:

> I'd miss this [Iranian school] sort of setting and I wasn't really a good student at school because I got into a lot of trouble, most of the teachers complained about [me] asking too many questions, which you would think that school is a good place to ask questions, but it's not, apparently.

Similarly, Donya (21) shares how vocalizing her politics in the classroom in Iran got her into trouble, and thus she seizes the opportunity to articulate herself in her Canadian schooling experiences:

> You have to grasp the opportunity that you are given, and I learned about that when I came here. Not because I didn't have the same support back in Iran, I did but I knew that back in Iran, I did actually get into trouble, once or twice for talking political stuff, but I knew that the same thing was not going to happen to me [here].

Classroom norms and pedagogies are shaped by cultural, political and social contexts. Adel and Donya's critique of classroom norms in their Iranian experience is informed by an understanding of classroom norms that they have experienced in the West. Thus, as a traditional goal of schooling is to nurture good citizens (Steiner-Khamsi, Torney-Purta, & Schwille, 2002), a good student is someone who complies with the broader underpinnings of the values and meanings of citizenship within that context. In Iran, hegemonic constructions of democracy impede opportunities for contesting ideas and approaches, whereas in Canada the structures on which a multicultural democracy is borne model good students as those who are 'active citizens'(Sears & Hughes, 1996). Thus, Donya and Adel's articulations of their experiences and subtle comparison suggests that their understanding of classroom pedagogies, as experienced in Canada, are a site of citizenship learning.

5.2.2 The unanticipated outcomes of curriculum

Curricular content in Canadian schooling is a site that reinforces participants' sense of being Iranian and, by extension, understanding of citizenship. In discussing their learning about the concept of citizenship in formal schooling, participants vastly draw attention to a vague memory of Social Studies courses where they learned about Canadian history. For students who had had formal schooling in Iran, their recollection of learning about Canadian history was followed by a comparison to a history of Iran. Through a critique of the short (documented) history of Canada, Adel and Vahid display a pride for being affiliated with Iran's vast history and, in effect, undermine the value of and disengage their affiliations with Canadian history.

Social Studies is all about Canadian history, so who are the Canadians, the original

Canadians, what did they do. I think that maybe it was a sense of pride for me back then, that you guys are talking about a fur trade, and we had the silk trade for thousand of years, so I had a bit of pride in that sense. – Adel

Let me start with why I make fun of it [Canadian history]. It's just that when we are talking about history in Iran, we're talking about what happened 2000 years ago, over here when we're talking about history it's what happened 50 years ago. I mean our contemporary history in Iran is the last 200 years, all of Canada is the last 200 years. – Vahid

The comparison between the two histories and Adel and Vahid's pride in Iranian history is important for unpacking the unintended impacts of the curriculum. In the process of learning about Canadian history and the marked events that have shaped notions of citizenship – such as legal entitlements, rights, and belonging – they do not feel pride in the accomplishments of their adopted nation; rather it reinforces their pride for the depth and breadth of Iran's history. In effect, in the process of learning about Canadian history, their Iranian citizen identity and cultural belonging are strengthened. Moreover, the curricular content brings to bear Canada's colonial past and contributes to the anti-citizenship dimensions of the imagined nation, which they learn about in their informal citizenship learning, as I discuss in the following chapter.

Additionally, participants draw attention to the ways in which curricular content fails to take into consideration the contexts and conditions of their immigrant citizen identity. Nilofar (30) and Farhad (27) discuss the ways in which the curriculum is institutionally structured for native English speakers and negates cultural and previous schooling contexts of learners:

I went directly to grade 12 – Shakespeare! I can't even speak English. You know last week, I was studying Qur'an in high school in Iran, all my classmates were girls, we were dancing, you know, we were comfortable [with one another]. I came here two weeks later and everything was changed. – Nilofar

Those forms of standardized testing, I don't think they're fair. I think they're biased towards someone who has gone through a particular kind of education and I'm still trying to articulate or understand what those characteristics are. It was a huge personal dilemma

for me – how I can write like this, how I can argue like this, and how I can think like this but I can't perform in this test? Farhad

Their frustration with the structure and content of the formal curriculum is framed within a bigger discourse of the ways in which schooling institutions not only favour Anglo-European paradigms, but also negate the broader socio-cultural, political, and educational contexts of diverse learners. Thus, curricular content operates as a set of inclusive and exclusive delineations and situate learners like Farhad and Nilofar on the margins to the Canadian liberal-democratic centre, wherein education is situated.

5.3 Multiculturalism from the top-down

5.3.1 Troubling the discourses of multiculturalism

A central tenet of Canadian identity is a commitment to multiculturalism, which is framed as inclusive of all cultures and ethnicities. This view of national identity moves beyond traditional conceptions of a nationalist citizen, which has pejorative connotations (e.g. racist, xenophobic) and is antithetical to core Canadian 'multicultural' values. Thus, a 'good' citizen is one who is committed to the multicultural project; to not embrace Canadian multicultural model of national identity suggests favouring a 'backward' national context over the progressive tenets of national identity on which Canada prides itself.

Questioning one's position within the Canadian multicultural milieu is thus frowned upon as it suggests a cosmopolitan, non-committal view of the nation wherein, for example, one is a guest in Canada and not committed to the multicultural project. However, there is a bifurcation between the discourse that shapes the multicultural national identity and the cultural contexts and conditions in which individuals are uncomfortably situated within the nation. Participants expound their misgivings about the discourse of multiculturalism and the ways in which it is a

site of tension in their lives. After speaking about the geographic, socio-economic and class

disconnects he has experienced between the policy of multiculturalism and his own experiences,

Farhad (27) expresses dissent toward the policy:

> I definitely feel that there's a strong sense of a dual hosting nation syndrome and
> everyone else can also play along and the fight is always between English Canada and
> French Canada where the strong patriarchal, British culture that is definitely the
> predominate culture here, and it's like it's a policy of tolerance, and minimal celebration,
> and integration and adaption.

> Similarly, Adel (23) contextualizes the shortcomings of the multicultural mosaic, yet he

alludes to the value of normative hegemonic structures of culture by suggesting that each person

has to find his place in the current configuration of multiculturalism:

> In Canada, as much as we say it is a mosaic, it's not necessarily a mosaic because people
> do keep their cultural heritage, but at the same time we adopt the normative culture here.
> So, the majority of people still tend to be part of this, part of what Canadian identity is.
> Maybe it's just because of *my* experience here, I'm not quite sure, but from what I've
> seen…it doesn't necessarily mean that you have to totally change and it doesn't
> necessarily mean that you need to change the system. It just means that you have to find
> your place [emphasis original].

> Both Farhad and Adel's misgivings about multiculturalism sheds light on the ways in

which – despite an official policy – it remains questionable to them what role non-British and

French cultures have in the national project and ambivalence. While Farhad critiques the rhetoric

of multiculturalism and the ways in with it is marred with inconsistencies, he recognizes that his

critique is ultimately silenced by the ways in which the policy of multiculturalism is popularly

framed. Adel is equally ambivalent but, in light of the inclusive 'mosaic' rhetoric, complies with

the ways in which the structures of multiculturalism are imposed, suggesting that the onus of

responsibility is on individuals to 'find a place' within the system.

5.3.2 Multiculturalism and the 'other' nation

Participants do not stop short of questioning multiculturalism as it impacts their sense of identity and belonging in Canada: they draw attention to their Iranian national and cultural identities (even blurring the line between the two) as they compare Canada and Iran. They articulate a superiority of their Iranian identity by emphasizing Iran's depth and history, which, for them, Canadian history lacks. Homa (23), whose political past marks her Iranian identity, emphasizes her passion for Iran through an 'oriential' orientation:

> I just love the, I don't know how to explain it, the exoticness of it [Iranian culture]. I just love the history, especially the good part, I try to focus on the good, like king Cyrus and all that, I just feel so empowered when I read about that stuff and see that stuff.

Kiana (25) hesitantly alludes to the superiority of Iranian culture and argues for the importance of maintaining a strong Iranian cultural identity as, by not doing so, one would go into a "black hole" of non-existent Canadian culture.

> I've grown to like the positive things in my own culture more and more. Because our culture has a longer history and has more roots and depth, I value it more than what I would call the Canadian culture. There are positive things in the Canadian culture too; however understanding the nature of Canada and how everyone was an immigrant, there is no sense of a united Canadian identity per se. So, you kind of know that you're going into a black hole, in a way, if you want to completely become just Canadian because it could be anything.

Leaving aside the colonial underpinnings of Kiana's perspective, both her and Homa's emphasis and appreciation for Iranian culture is informed on the one hand by an acknowledgement that their Iranian culture can be celebrated and favoured within a multicultural framework and, on the other hand – and in light of the multicultural framework – the depth and breadth of their Iranian cultural identity is absent in favour of more shallow representations of culture. In effect, Kiana's comparison of the two cultures and romanticizing of Iran's history is

94

an attempt to emphasize her Iranian heritage in light of the ways in which it is absent within the discourse of multiculturalism.

Similarly, the uncertainty toward multiculturalism is further complicated by participants' relationship with their national identities and belongings. Farhad (27) questions what it means to be Canadian and offers a reading of what constitutes a multicultural Canadian. He articulates that the relatively young national identity of Canada impedes the possibility of a Canadian cultural identity and that a multicultural identity on its own is insufficient for being 'Canadian'. He moves beyond simply questioning what it means to be Canadian by envisioning its possibilities – which he frames within shared values – although when later probed, he is unable to articulate what those shared values are.

> it's [Canada] such a young country that you can't say I love hamburgers, therefore I'm Canadian. But if I say I love Chelow Kabab, that's more or less an Iranian thing. [Being Canadian] is a celebration of the food, of the culture, of the history. It's something you're proud of, it's all in one and you enjoy it, you share it with other people. In Canada I think – the things that stand out the most are the values that people share with each other, those are the things that they can gather around and share. It's not language, very few people are bi-lingual…it's not a particular culture, it's a culture based on value. More than a culture based on a particular shared history, or – even a destiny.

While the framework of multiculturalism provides Farhad a means with which to choose the dimensions of his identities, belongings and affiliations, it is also a source of confusion. Articulations of multiculturalism overtly suggest celebration and acknowledgement of difference; however, the uneasiness rests in not knowing what it means to be Canadian and how he fits within the Canadian milieu.

Similarly, Vahid sheds light on the tension he experiences in his loyalties to both his Iranian and Canadian culture and nationality. He articulates the contradiction he feels toward 'the

nation' through an astute reflection of the two national anthems:

> It's kind of unfortunate for me that I feel like the two countries that I belong to and I'm a citizen of, I don't want to sing their national anthem ever. Iran for obvious reasons because 'Bahman' is not [my Iran]…Canada as well, is not *my* native land. It's kind of unfortunate to see that with a lot of people here that don't think…it's no one's [no immigrants] native land and so it's gonna put me in a situation that singing the national anthem is equal to lying.

The misgivings Vahid feels toward the two national anthems not only provides insights into how he positions himself in relation to both his Iranian and Canadian national and cultural identities, but also how he feels excluded within both his national contexts. While Vahid expresses a strong appreciation for Canadian multiculturalism (see Chapter 6), the collective articulation of belonging to Canada – as depicted in the anthem – silences his proud status as a multicultural citizen, as an immigrant, and as an hyphenated Iranian-Canadian and is, in short, unreflective of his 'other' national context. In the following chapter, I will discuss participants' lived experiences with multiculturalism and its tensions vis-à-vis their national and cultural identities in greater detail.

5.4 Implications for citizenship and citizenship learning

In this chapter I have attempted to highlight that while participants actively engage with the concept of citizenship, the slippage between top-down discourses driving citizenship and everyday lived experiences with citizenship are pervasive and, in effect, a null-curriculum; popular discourses of citizenship are at odds with participants' lived experiences within and across migratory experiences, schools and schooling and multiculturalism.

To this end, we can begin to contextualize the ways in which citizenship as articulated for immigrants – first as a legal dimension and then a social dimension – is problematic insofar as

the contexts driving migration do not lend themselves to a linear succession of citizen identity. The insights from this chapter bring to bear the ways in which normative Anglicized structures of identity and belonging contribute to demarcations based on migratory, ethnic, and racial categories and, in effect, contribute to problematic meanings and interpretations of citizen and citizenship vis-à-vis Iran and Canada.

The findings in this chapter highlight how migratory processes, as driven by global economic and political inclusions and exclusions, drive complex identities and belongings to both the home and adopted nation. This understanding of identity is central for articulating a model of citizenship that moves beyond traditional conceptions of becoming a citizen and citizenship (primarily concerned with one's allegiance to the nation) to one where identity is situated within multiple, shifting, intersecting, and interlocking dimensions (the first commitment of an immigrant youth citizens identity discussed in chapter 3) that inform the meanings and interpretations of citizenship.

In the following chapter, I further unpack how these contradictions within and across participants' lived experiences contribute to their processes of learning citizenship. Specifically, I show that how they engage with their identities and belongings between national and cultural dimensions are a response to the 'silences' discussed in this chapter.

6 National and cultural identities and belongings: Contradictions of citizenship

I'm in between, I'm neither, I'm both. - Nazila

In the previous chapter, I discussed how dominant discourses of citizenship are at odds with participants' experiences. I showed the ways in which the top-down discourses of citizenship within and across contexts of immigration, schools and schooling, and multiculturalism yield anti-citizenship messages. This well established picture tells us that identities and belongings of participants are not reflected in the discourse of citizenship and that there is a gap between the rhetoric and reality of citizenship, which informs how participants engage with and understand citizenship.

This chapter provides insights into the second research question of this study: *What is the role of migration with regard to the formation of social citizenship?* Specifically, this chapter aims to unpack the ways in which participants bridge this gap as they challenge top-down discourse of citizenship through their lived experiences. I explore how participants are unbound by normative national and cultural identities and identifications, but rather, they negotiate citizenship across multicultural, diaspora, and global identities and belongings. However, I unpack the tensions and contradictions that riddle their process of engaging with their nuanced identities and belongings across national and cultural sites. Through the findings, I reveal that views and attitudes toward citizenship are informed by the dynamic relationship between national and cultural identities, further complicated by resistance to one or both of their national and cultural identities and ambiguous notions of the 'nation'.

This chapter is divided into four sub-sections. In the first subsection, I discuss how participants engage with their national and cultural identities through an exploration of inclusions

and exclusions as brought to bear in the contexts driving everyday multiculturalisms. In the second subsection, I discuss how the diaspora is both a geographic and imaginative site wherein participants engage with their identities and belongings. In the third subsection, I draw on the ways that participants move beyond the nation to explore global identities and belongings. In the final subsection, I discuss how the findings from this chapter can offer insights for new approaches to citizenship and citizenship learning. In all four subsections, I offer a reading of the ways in which these cultural, diaspora, and global sites of citizenship are filled with tensions and contradictions.

6.1 Ambiguous (multi)cultural identities

> *Right now I see myself partially Canadian and accept that and think I've got to get more involved in the Canadian community. Before that I saw myself as an Iranian who is here for a short period of time. – Vahid*

6.1.1 Romanticizing multiculturalism

Rich and nuanced understandings of multiculturalism ranging from romanticized expressions of diversity to critical interrogations of the 'project' of multiculturalism are pervasive. Generally, participants express the ways in which multiculturalism promotes diversity as represented through the Four D's of multiculturalism – dress, dance, dialect and dining. For Nazila (29), multiculturalism is absent of any shortcomings, rather it is a site of acceptance and integration based on ethnic and racial differences. For her, identity differences are only based on easily identifiable markers, such as skin tone, language, and types of cuisine, as she articulates:

> When you go into a restaurant and it's an East Indian restaurant and you see a table of Chinese people, you see a table of white people, you see a table of Iranian people, you see a table of black people all sitting having Indian food. That to me is incredible! You don't get that in too many countries that everybody can get along with everybody. It doesn't matter what your skin tone is, it doesn't matter what other languages you speak, to me you're a person and accepting that is part of multiculturalism.

Nazila's romanticized view of multiculturalism is common across a number of participants' experiences. However, participants whose experiences have been at odds of celebratory multicultural sensibilities are the ones who most appreciate multiculturalism. Salar (26), whose Baha'i-Muslim religious background was the reason his family was forced to emigrate from Iran, discusses the ways in which his parents' inter-religious marriage was the source for familial, social, and political discrimination. Salar uniquely identifies on the margins of racial, religious, cultural, and national belongings. He paints a very distinct 'us-them' picture where the 'us' are racialized Canadians and 'them' are, as he commonly refers to, 'Sefids' or 'white Canadians'. The racialized view through which he views the world makes him weary of the discussions about citizenship, which for him is nothing more than a piece of paper which grants him entry into different countries. He believes that his racialized Iranian background trumps any 'status' that he has with his Canadian citizenship. He describes the first time he was made aware of his dark skin-tone:

> I think I remember the first time I felt discriminated, or I just felt different was when everyone was doing colouring, like you had to draw yourself in grade one and like I was the only non-white kid in the class, right, and then I drew myself and I didn't use a brown colour for my skin, and somebody was like, what are you doing, you're not supposed to use that colour, you're not white. That's when it hit me – I'm different.

Salar's choice to first name his experience of being singled out as feeling 'discriminated', which he immediately changed to an experience where he 'just felt different' indicates that although he understood his early formative experience as an act of discrimination, naming it as discrimination would suggest his differences, which under the guise of multiculturalism are to be celebrated, are *also* a basis for being negatively singled out. For Salar, the ways in which his social identities – as based on race, religion, and circumstances of migration – position him on

the margins with both Iranians and Canadians – contribute to the tensions in his interpretations of citizenship as a status, as belonging, and as a right. At the same time, when I asked what multiculturalism meant to him, he responds with great penchant, as the context of multiculturalism allows for positive acknowledgement of his racial, ethnic, and cultural identities and thus he can reap the benefits of his differences, which are otherwise scrutinized, as described in the above quote. However, with the exception of his work colleagues and one friend, he does not interact with white Canadians and his view of multiculturalism is devoid of the presence of Anglo-Canadians. He emphasizes his appreciation for multiculturalism, as based on the opportunity to interact with other ethnic Canadians.

> I guess the only thing I would say is I'm a firm believer in multiculturalism. I think cultures have so much they can learn from each other, for example I have that band where we combine Persian, Arabic, and Indian [music], I've learned so much, it's helped me so much as a musician, I think that can be applied to anything, whether it's cooking, or literature, business, I think that's probably one of the greatest strengths that Canada has.

Salar's romanticized view of multiculturalism suggests that it is a 'seemingly' positive site of inclusion and, by extension, citizenship. His appreciation for day-to-day multiculturalism is absent of Anglo Canadian presence and thus for him, multiculturalism is a discourse that validates his 'us-them' attitude. Romantic views of multiculturalism legitimize being 'othered' within mainstream Anglo structures by its focus on diversity; thus it is a concept that overrides individualized discrimination due to difference – as he described in his experience of colouring a picture of himself – to one that celebrates difference, as he describes as the reason he likes multiculturalism.

6.1.2 The Olympics as a site of multiculturalism

The Vancouver winter Olympics of 2010, which took place during the fieldwork period for this study, provides valuable insights into the interplay between national and cultural dimensions of being Canadian. Varied reactions to the Olympics reveal not only how citizenship can be expressed through a cultural site, but also how a cultural site can contribute to a process of citizenship learning. Discussions about the Olympics are nuanced with feelings of patriotism, belongings and expressions of identity. For Donya (21), the Olympics was not about the sporting events, rather that she was part of the masses with thousands of Canadians, regardless of any political identities which she is sensitive to otherwise. She describes the deep emotion that singing the Canadian national anthem invoked:

> It was really interesting back in the Olympic atmosphere...we won the gold right, and I was downtown on Robson, I was crying when they started the Canadian anthem.

Some participants express surprise that they got into the Olympic spirit and had feelings of patriotism for Canada. Kiana (25) shares that she might be Canadian because of her response during the Olympics:

> Especially when it came to Olympics, I didn't think that I would be that excited, maybe because I was always busy but, once the Olympic time came around, I was definitely into it and I felt patriotic for Canada. That's another indication, I suppose.

Similarly, Salar, (26) reluctantly expresses his pride for Canada:

> [W]hen the Olympics were going on, I think I felt more of that sense, like I was actually proud of Canada's accomplishments and that stuff.

The above engaged and appreciative responses to the Olympics are akin to the celebratory underpinnings of multiculturalism, wherein national and cultural belonging are enmeshed. The multicultural discourse of celebration of differences and belonging to the

multicultural nation are heightened by the Olympic 'spirit', which evokes a sentimentality rooted in national pride, cultural celebrations and belonging, which is otherwise absent in participants' lived experiences (see Chapter 5). Thus, the Olympics serve as a platform for expressing oneself as 'Canadian' within the broader discourses of multiculturalism. A lack of enthusiasm toward the Olympics would be an explicit rejection of Canada and, by extension, a rejection of the tenets of social citizenship.

Nilofar (30) describes her apathy for the Olympics as a means with which to express her apathy for Canada. Having been seconded to work on one of the Olympics sites as part of her job, she shares how she did not feel any excitement for the Olympics. Through her description, she shares that her excitement about the Olympics would indicate a loyalty to Canada that she knows she does not have, as she compares it to the World Cup (in which the Iranian team was a finalist some years earlier).

> You know how involved I was in Olympic. I didn't even get emotional about Canada…I remember the World Cup, four years ago. When I saw Iran, I was [rooting] for Iran. But I was really involved in the Olympic and [I did not feel anything] nothing.

Once the recorder was turned off, the conversation turned back to the Olympics and Nilofar described both her pride and shame of the Iranian Olympic team during a ceremonial event in Vancouver. Each Olympic national team presented the host nation (Canada) with a cultural artifact from their nation. Nilofar proudly shares that the Iranian team presented the host country with a high quality Persian miniature painting. As part of the ceremony, members presenting the gift would engage in a short dance on stage with representatives from the First Nations host community. However, the Iranian team did not engage in the dance and walked off the stage, to which Nilofar felt mortified. She recognizes that the team was a representative and endorsed by the orthodox Islamic government of Iran and could thus not engage in public dance

(as it would be considered immoral based on the interpretations of Islam by the orthodox regime). Despite this knowledge and her pride for the team by the presented gift, the ensuing cultural *faux pas* brought her great shame as it represented a connection to a nation which others associate her with and at the same time which she rejects and for similar reasons she emigrated from. Thus, while her Canadian diaspora context frees her from the misgivings she feels towards Iran, she is only proudly Iranian when she is not burdened by popular depictions of Iran within her diaspora context.

While the Olympics evoke ambivalent feelings toward both of her national identities, albeit for different reasons, Nilofar is equally ambivalent about both her Iranian and Canadian cultural identities, as I will discus later in this chapter (see Section 6.2). First, however, I turn to how – despite their embrace of the Olympic spirit – participants are ambivalent about Canadian national identities and belongings.

6.1.3 Narratives of exclusion

While there is an understanding of Canadian values that are rooted in the tenets of multiculturalism, participants lived experiences with exclusions in Canada complicate their already ambiguous interpretations of citizenship. Experiences of citizenship are linked with disparaging feelings of individualized and institutionalized exclusions. *All* participants in the study highlight experiences of individual discrimination, most often by those in positions of authority in their lives. For example Adel (23) describes an experience of discrimination by which he was shocked, given that it happened in Canada:

> I started working at this call center in my first year in university…and my boss walks up to me and he goes, what's your name? And I'm like, 'I'm Adel', and he's like 'that too complicated, I'm going to call you Peter, you should call yourself Peter on the phone'.

In a similar case of discrimination, Donya, describes how the Iranian students in her class are stereotyped by her teacher as a result of 9/11.

> It was September 11th, 2001, and we're sitting in social studies …we had a sub [substitute teacher], she put the TV on, everyone else in the class was watching it and us Iranians were talking and laughing, we had no idea what was going on. The sub apparently had told my teacher that we were happy that this had happened, and the teacher was like, 'why would you laugh and enjoy instead of mourning for people who died?' I'm like, 'we didn't understand what was going on'…. She was like, 'you were laughing, there is something probably going on there'.

The above narratives contextualize the ways in which overt discrimination plays out in so far as placing the onus of responsibility on the individuals; for Adel, he is positioned to defend his cultural heritage by way of ensuring that normative Anglo cultural comforts – as represented in this case within a name – do not trump his identity as a multicultural citizen and belonging within a multicultural context. Similarly, Donya's identity at the age of 12 is marked by Western hegemonic construction of the Middle-Eastern immigrant – and the baggage which she continues to carry with her until her current age of 21. While these experiences give pause to participants to consider how the discourses of multiculturalism are at odds with their lived experiences, they are further problematic in the binary of being 'either-or' a particular identity (Canadian-Iranian) or belonging (with us or against us). These in effect harvest an anti-citizenship sentiments of singular belongings and identities, from which other experiences of citizenship are contextualized.

Farhad (27) contextualizes the tension between the rhetoric of Canadian citizenship – which for him is associated with values of belonging and rights, framed with in a multicultural context – and the structural barriers to success, which immigrants are faced with. He articulates his early experiences of not fitting in and that he was negated by the schooling 'system' that he

was a part of . He says that "I didn't feel as though the system made me feel comfortable either. It's not the purpose of the system to comfort me, but it's the purpose of the system to understand". He goes on to describes the tension he experiences between his appreciation for the broad discourses of Canadian citizenship and his lived experiences. Through a narrative of his parents circumstances in Canada, he discusses how he needs to navigate the system on their behalf:

> The psychological baggage children have to carry around with them, everyone is in different circumstance and a different position, but just the thought of thinking that do my parents have life insurance, do they even know what significance life insurance has to this society here, and to the economic system here? Why is it that they don't know? Is it their fault? Is it, is there some onus of the State to make these sort of things more and more an issue? – How much of the resources of the State does it take up for them to deal with all these cases of neglect, for example, and explain hey, it's your responsibility, instead of putting a program that can introduce these types of things. I think the psychological pressure of it is fairly significant, almost on a day-to-day basis.

He goes on to express his frustrations with the ways in which systems enforces exclusions and divisions:

> Knowing something based on what's written on the Canadian Government's website and actually pursuing it to see what happens are two very different things. For example, everyone has the right to health care but lets say you have a health care problem and you try to get to the end of it, well your right to a service is curtailed by all the bureaucratic bullshit that's put in the way…I'm not saying that it's set up in this way on purpose to curtail people's ability to take advantage of those rights, maybe it's part of the culture, maybe it's part of the Government culture here, maybe it's part of the bureaucratic culture here. I'm just saying those things do exist.

Farhad's narrative brings to bear the ways in which there is a disconnect between the rhetoric of multicultural inclusions and systems of exclusion within multicultural Canada. On the one hand, values of a multicultural citizenship take into account 'differentiated rights' (Kymlicka, 1998) wherein all citizens cultural rights are considered within the structures of citizenship. On the other hand, the rhetoric of multiculturalism is absent within the social systems that all citizens must navigate – such as schools and health care. Thus, Farhad is faced

with negotiating an understanding of Canadian citizenship as a set of shared values by members of society with the reality that the rhetoric on which these values rest are, in practice, not conducive to all members of society.

6.2 Diaspora identities

6.2.1 Not too Canadian and not Canadian enough

Participants constantly negotiate what it means to belong within their diaspora context in between their Iranian culture and a Western youth culture. Adel (23) articulates this tensions as he describes a formative experience of moving out of his parent's North Vancouver home to his own apartment in a trendy Vancouver neighbourhood. He describes a conversation he had with his mother about a popular Persian practice of blessing a home before officially moving in:

> Yeah, like when I was moving to my new place, my Mom called me up and she was like 'don't forget to take the candle and the mirror to set it up – to bless the place'. I was like 'that's kind of stupid, why do I need to do that?' So I just went there and the first thing I took with me was my record player because I just wanted to party.

Adel's description of the rituals of 'blessing' a home and setting up a record player to 'party' in a new home provides insights into the ways in which space – in this case his private space – is a site in which he can select which cultural and social practices to engage with and, in effect, which aspects of identity he highlights in that space. Additionally, his description sheds light into his tension of negotiating social and cultural differences across two cultures. Although his decision to move out came with trepidation – as he feels a duty to his mother in his father's absence – he did so as a means to assert his independence through a Western social convention of 'moving out of the nest', which is unorthodox in Iranian culture. However, he has always been on the margins and considered socially different than his peers. His social and cultural capital is

informed not only by his diaspora identity as a young immigrant, but rather the context of his transnational migrations contributes to *how* he articulates his diaspora identity.

He self identifies as an outsider with his Iranian peers; having been born in Iran, his family moved to the US during his early youth and back to Iran for several years, before coming to Canada when he is was twelve years old. Thus, Adel's maintains an outsider status within the Iranian community in both Iran – by virtue of being armed with American social and cultural capital – as well as in Canada – by virtue of being a new immigrant with existing Western social and cultural knowledge. Equally, he recognizes that he is socially and culturally different from his predominantly Canadian peers as he describes characteristics such as chivalry toward his female friends and making tea when friends come to his home, as astutely associated with his Persian roots. Thus, he is an outsider amongst Canadian friends in light of the presence of his Iranian identity as well as ambiguous geographies of belonging.

Adel is tasked not only with negotiating the tensions and contradictions between social and cultural conventions but also situating the idiosyncrasies of the trajectories that have shaped his diaspora identity. In effect, his compounding dimensions of identities and belongings contribute to tensions and contradictions across social and cultural sites. One the one hand, his social and cultural context positions him as overtly Canadian by fellow Iranians, on the other hand, he is not quite Canadian enough by fellow Canadians.

Additionally, participants experiences within 'popular' culture provides valuable insights into how their engagement across different sites can be a source of tension and contradiction. Participants vastly suggest that by engaging with 'Canadian' culture and, in the process, disengaging from 'Iranian' culture, it is an indicator of a superior and more integrated immigrant

identity to that of other immigrants. However, the contradiction rests in their attempt to 'be' Canadian, they do so by engaging in social and cultural expressions that are unique based on their immigrant identity. For example, in response to the ways in which he views himself as Canadian, Nader (25) suggests that he is *more* Canadian than his Iranian friends because he is a hockey fan and it is only because of his persuasion that his Iranian friends watch hockey with him.

Nader: I like hockey, I like hockey, I watch a lot of hockey when I get a chance… Iranian people in general would not like hockey.

Maryam: But the other night we were all watching hockey together…the guys seemed like they were into it.

Nader: It's mostly because I'm into it, and I kind of forced them to watch the Olympics hockey because they all hang out at my place so we watch what I want to watch.

For Nader, while he may genuinely like watching hockey, he suggests that he is Canadian because he participates in the national pastime of watching hockey. For him, enjoying hockey is an indicator of being Canadian and even belonging that makes him – as he alludes to – superior to his friends. In the above said hockey game, which I had watched with Nader and his friends, I observed a collective, genuine interest in the game; more interesting however, was how they engaged with the game. They transferred Iranian cultural demeanours of watching a sport together; they facetiously bantered the players on the Vancouver team, for whom they were cheering, and made comments at every opportune moment. One person said something to the effect of (in Farsi): *Those guys don't even have ice and the temperature is 37 degrees year-round and we're going to lose to them?* He said this with a strong Iranian demeanour – raising his voice and his hand at the television, to which everyone laughed hysterically.

Just as they were invested in the game, they were equally invested in the experience of watching the game with each other. While Nader and his friends recognize that engaging in hockey is the benchmark of 'being Canadian', they do so in an unconventional 'Canadian' way. In effect, the hockey game could have been any other sport as they engaged with it through idiosyncratic Iranian social and cultural demeanour and only, as I would later learn, with other Iranians.

Although Nader highlights that he is 'Canadian' because he likes hockey, it begs to be further explored whether he would enjoy watching hockey in similar vein if it did not include the performance that goes with it. Thus, on the one hand, Nader is Canadian enough for liking hockey but perhaps not Canadian enough as that would entail engaging with a game in a way that is at odds with his social and cultural sensibilities and comforts.

6.2.2 Not 'that' kind of Iranian nor 'that' kind of Canadian

Participants' attempt to define the ways in which they possess a social and cultural capital that is neither fully Iranian nor Canadian, but rather a hybrid of the qualities of each that they possess or don't possess. However, their critiques of each culture proves to be imbued with tensions and contradictions. For example, differences between Iranian and Canadian cultural identities are expressed through a description of stereotypes of Canadian people. These include familial relationships, the belief that Canadian's are tree-hugging environmentalists and occupy a desolate lifestyle. In her description of Canadian culture, Nilofar (30) objects to what her lifestyle would be like:

> I go to bed at 10:00 pm, drink beer, spend most of time in bars and watch hockey. Not being funny - very simple sense of humor. Selfish - let my kids leave my house when

110

they're 17. Not support my kids. Just think about myself. Married ten times, single moms.

In spite of the above undesirability's, she goes on to say that while she appreciates Canada for the opportunities that it yields to its residents, she rejects her North American lifestyle wherein she is always busy, does not socialize with anyone but her boyfriend, and routinely goes to work and is in bed by 10:00 pm, just as she describes above. Similarly, her love for the history and culture of Iran and Iranians living in Iran is overshadowed by her criticism of Iranian's living in the diaspora. She describes how she is unlike the stereotypical Iranian living in Vancouver who complies with social hierarchies:

> I don't drive. I don't have a car - I don't *have* to have a car. I like to travel - not to resorts. I don't tan. I'm not wearing Louis Vuitton[11], I don't have long hair or that Jessica Simpson[12] look. Or I don't see the same stylist because all my friends see him. Or let's go to this club or 'house music' is in so everyone listens to house music.

Nilofar's rejection of status symbols is coupled with her disdain for Iranians who talk behind each other's backs and compare themselves with one another in attempts to gain social leverage in the Iranian community. However, the contradiction between her rhetoric and actions comes to light the day we met at a downtown coffee shop for an interview. At the table over from us, are a group of young Iranian women that meet Nilofar's above description. Nilofar is quick to bring this my attention and says, in Farsi, "look Iranians", with the undertone of *look, the types of Iranians I do not like*. Throughout our meeting, Nilofar occasionally looks over to – what appears like – 'check them out' and compare herself to them in the same way that she vehemently objects to. She simultaneously rejects and accepts aspects of both cultures and, in

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11 A haute-couture designer whose lavishly expensive products are a popular symbol of socio-economic status

12 A well known American pop singer, revered as sex symbol in mainstream popular culture

effect, neither wants to identify with the 'typical' Canadian nor the 'typical' Iranian immigrant. Her framing of the cultures in which she is a member as stereotypical binaries, infringes on her social and cultural capital with both Iranians and Canadians and subsequently feeds tensions and ensuing contradictions of her own diaspora identity.

6.3 Negotiating global identities

6.3.1 Cosmopolitanism as a site of resistance

In the first subsection of this chapter I revealed participants' ambiguous relationship between national and cultural dimensions of identities and belongings. In the previous subsection, I expanded on this to highlight the ways in which popular social and cultural contexts further contribute to participants' riddled identities and belongings across national and cultural sites. In this subsection, I will unpack participants' understanding of identities and belongings against Iranian and Canadian national and cultural contexts. I will show that while they offer an alternative to the silences that underpin their experiences with citizenship (chapter 5) and attempt to manage the existing tensions across the national and cultural sites, discussed earlier in this chapter, their self-identifications as 'cosmopolitan', 'global', and 'worldly' are conflated with tensions and contradictions.

Participants are vocal about the ways in which they transcend the national and cultural identities to which they have been bound. They do this by expressing a worldly persona. For example, Farhad (27) shares his desire to belong in a cosmopolitan place:

> I feel like I belong in a cosmopolitan place, wherever it is; the more cosmopolitan [it is], I feel a greater sense of belonging to it. So, when I travel to places like New York, or Montreal, or San Francisco, or Washington, I feel a great sense of comfort and ease – the whole reality resonates much more with me than here [Vancouver].

He goes on to describe the characteristics of a cosmopolitan person:

> Cosmopolitan is a global citizenship, that's a culture as well, has attributes and characteristics. I think those [cosmopolitan] centres of geography as attracting a particular person, a worldly person, someone who can empathize, and see things from different lenses, and appreciates diversity anywhere that thrives.

As he articulates his preference for cosmopolitan places and, by extension, that Vancouver is too provincial for his taste, Farhad suggests that he is a 'worldly person'. In other words, his self-defined cosmopolitan identity troubles the idea of a single (or rooted) place from which he has come or in which he lives, rather it is informed by a diaspora experience, appreciation for diversity, and an ability to thrive anywhere. In effect, the global routes he has been exposed to allow him to transcend a singular identity and belonging where he can freely engage with his diverse identities and belongings without spatial or temporal boundaries. While his nuanced identities and belongings are on the one hand informed by his professional commitment to global issues, that commitment is also borne from the structures in which he has been implicated. His poignant critiques of multiculturalism, citizenship, and systemic oppressions (see Chapter 5), provide the backdrop for the ways in which 'the nation' represents boundaries of identities and belonging that are starkly at odds with the 'cosmopolitan place', in which he feels most comfortable.

Farhad's tumultuous relationship with the nation is evidenced, on the one hand, by the dramatic circumstances that forced him and his family to emigrate. He shares how his Uncle's involvement in a national coup to overthrow the Islamic regime resulted in him being jailed and tortured for five years and, in effect, resulting in his family's marginalization within the bureaucracies of the government of Iran. To illustrate the challenges, he articulates the challenges faced by his brother:

[my brother] was in his final year of high school – and word had gotten around to who we were and who my uncle was and what he had done and how un-nationalistic it was and all this nonsense and basically – the principal of the school, was telling my brother that there is no way we're letting you go to university, you're despicable, you're this and that. He [brother] felt like all the doors were closed on him already.

By virtue of the political struggles faced in Iran and subsequent trajectory of emigration – wherein he was informally schooled of the role of geographic borders –when he and members of his family spent one-year 'penetrating borders' to come to Canada, Farhad is sensitive to the ways in which 'the nation' can be a site of exclusion. While Canada afforded political refuge, he discusses the dramatic social, emotional and financial circumstances that ensued immigration:

> [W]e sold a lot to be able to afford the unknowns of here but it was very, very difficult, we were in poverty for the majority of maybe the first decade that we were here. My mother and my aunt took jobs at McDonalds to try to support the family…I remember my father telling me his entire pension, or his entire salary, monthly salary that he would earn from his Government post would be spent on telephone calls to Canada, every month… these are things that I'll never forget, they actually shaped my entire world here and my entire context, my socio-economic context, at that time.

Thus for Farhad, while Canada is a site of inclusion – granting him and his family amnesty, social, and educational opportunities to which he feels indebted – it is equally a site of exclusion, riddled with contradictory discourses and practices. In effect, he occupies a cosmopolitan identity, where he can be free of the structural boundaries of the nation while armed with an 'official' citizenship that trumps the exclusions with which his life has been burdened.

6.3.2 Multiculturality as a site of globality

The range of responses to multiculturalism, reviewed earlier in this chapter, provides insights into the ways it facilitates and is also a source of challenge for how participants engage

with their cultural and national belongings. Additionally, because participants are embedded within the 'global' by virtue of not just their experiences with migration, but also youth culture and social and political issues in which they are implicated (see chapter 7), for some, the meanings and interpretations that they ascribe to multiculturalism are closely aligned with their meanings and interpretations they ascribe to what it means to be 'global'. In other words, multiculturalism serves as a metaphor for the global and the ways in which they engage with the multicultural in their lives serves a site wherein they manage their 'global' identities. However, self-perceptions of being a 'global' or 'worldly' citizen are filled with contradictions.

For example, Vahid (24), whose race-free existence, appreciation for national, cultural difference, and romantic view of multiculturalism, constitute his Canadian experiences, articulates how he is indebted to Canada for his self-professed 'global' identity.

> I tend to see myself as a global citizen…I feel like Canada has done a lot for me as a person, a lot of views that I have right now it's because I've lived in this country and I really like Canadians so I feel responsible towards Canada…Canada is shaped by people like me and you, people who are immigrants…

His simultaneous identifications as a global citizen and a legitimate Canadian who feels a sense of responsibility towards Canada are followed up with a nuanced articulation of what it means to be Canadian:

> First of all I'm an Iranian-Canadian, not a Canadian citizen. What I see as Canada, basically is a combination of many cultures…if there is any hope for a global village, which I am for it…it should start from Canada because we already live in a global village inside Canada… I'm really fascinated by seeing different perspectives on different things and through multiculturalism you can easily see that.

While Vahid is proud of living in the 'Canadian global village' and, within that framework, to be a global citizen, he can simultaneously draw on popular multicultural

discourses to maintain he steadfast commitment to being an Iranian-Canadian. Thus, being a global citizen an Iranian-Canadian, and living in multicultural Canada are – for him – conflated national, cultural, and political categories. Together these different identities and belongings provide a good starting point for engaging with citizenship as a response to the 'silences' and making sense of the 'contradictions', as will be discussed in the following chapter.

6.4 Implications for citizenship and citizenship learning

This chapter has shown how participants' lived experiences in Canada are paradoxical and contested sites of citizenship, at odds with the national discourses that inform meanings and interpretations of citizenship. I have shown the ways in which responses to top-down discourse of citizenship, as they exist within engaged interventions of negotiating identities and belongings between national and cultural contexts, are marred with tensions and contradictions. While critical leftist multiculturalists in Canada (Giroux, 2006; Steinberg, 2001) provide us with a rich theoretical landscape for representing Canadian discourses of multiculturalism between inclusion and exclusion, this chapter demonstrates the slippages between theoretical discourses and the lived experience of the participants in this study.

This chapter has highlighted that while multiculturalism is central to participants' processes of meaning-making of their place within the nation, 'citizenship is situated within and across multiple boundaries of membership' (the second commitment of an immigrant youth citizens identity discussed in chapter three); this understanding yields a useful tension for conceptual explorations of the ways in which the constitutive elements of diaspora studies – dispersions, homeland orientations and boundary maintenance (Brubaker, 2005) – are central to participants experiences of citizenship as well as for envisioning citizenship as a process of

learning (Delanty, 2003) informed by the tensions and contradictions discussed in this chapter. In the following chapter, I will tease out the overt and covert ways that participants challenge state-constructed notions of citizenship that 'riddle' their lived experiences to discuss how their challenging of conflicting messages of inclusion and exclusion, citizenship manifests as a process of learning.

7 Performing as learning: Expressions of citizenship

In the previous chapter, I traced how participants negotiate their identities and belongings within and across cultural, national, diaspora, and global dimensions. I showed that the ascribed meanings and interpretations of citizenship are informed by both ambiguous feelings toward dominant discourses of citizenship and the nuanced contradictions within their lived experiences. This understanding helps to situate the ways that young Iranian migrants are caught in between multiple and competing loyalties of citizenship and tasked with negotiating their citizen identity.

This chapter attempts to unveil the ways in which citizenship is expressed and how these expressions are a response to the 'silences' and 'contradictions' described in the preceding two chapters. I unpack the ways in which expressions of citizenship are a 'performance' that take place within political, geographic, and communicative sites and, in effect, how these experiences contribute to processes of learning citizenship.

The findings in this chapter are borne from the third research question in this study: *In what ways do participants 'globalized' experiences bear on their understanding of citizenship and inform their learning for citizenship?* I elucidate that participants' engagement with the social dimensions of citizenship – such as solidarity, belongings, identities, and recognition – foster new meanings and interpretations of citizenship that are constituted by their lived experiences. To this end, an understanding of the iterative process between performing and learning citizenship helps for a more thorough understanding of the dimensions of an 'immigrant youth citizen identity'.

The chapter is divided into four sub-sections. The first documents the sociological dimensions of participants' political choices in activism and the nuanced dimensions of solidarity and belonging. The second turns to geographic and imagined spaces of being a citizen and performing citizenship, which challenge conventional geographies of citizenship. The third subsection explores how participants literal and figurative engagement with language are attempts to elucidate the nuances of their immigrant identity and finally, as in the previous two chapters, I will discuss how the findings from this chapter can bear on new approaches to citizenship and citizenship learning. The combined expressions of citizenship, I suggest, enable an exploration of the simultaneous relationship between learning and performing citizenship.

7.1 The politics of political expressions

7.1.1 Situating political expressions of citizenship

> *Natarsid! Natarsid! Ma hame ba ham hastim.*
> Don't be afraid! Don't be afraid! We are all together.

The above chant echoed throughout Iran as thousands of civilians poured into the streets of major cities throughout the nation to protest the outcome of the June 12th 2009 presidential elections[13]. The collective call to not fear was for freedom of expression, democracy, equal opportunities and social, political, cultural, religious and economic rights. The demonstrations were unique, not only because they were the largest in Iran's post-revolution history or that it

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13 Iran's tenth presidential election was held on 12 June 2009,with incumbent Mahboud Ahmadinejad running against three challengers. The Islamic Republic News Agency, announced that with two-thirds of the votes counted; Ahmadinejad had won the election with 62% of the votes and Mir-Hossein Mousavi had received 34% of the votes cast. Following the results, citizens demanded for the annulment of what was widely regarded as a fraudulent election. Retrieved March 08 2011, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran_2009_elections

was young people[14] who led the demands for change – just was the case in Egypt, one and half years later. It was unique because of the global nature of the call for change. The Iranian diaspora played a significant role in creating awareness of the civil rights movement in places as far from Tehran as Tokyo and as close as Istanbul. The movement for change, started by young Iranians in Iran with young Iranians across the globe joining in was coined the *Green Movement*; it has no leader and it is committed to democracy, human rights and non-violent resistance (Ahmadian, 2009; Hashemi & Postel, 2010). The movement's name was ignited as green was the campaign colour of the forerunning challenger, Mir-Hossein Mousavi; green eventually came to symbolize an international unity for those asking for change in Iran.

In Vancouver, numerous grassroots efforts - both formal and those more loosely organized – committed to the Green Movement arose in the days immediately following the elections in Iran. Similar to Iran, these efforts were orchestrated by young diasporic Iranian, some of whom had been living outside of Iran longer than they had lived inside Iran. One of the first displays of activism in Vancouver was the creation of 'Silent Scream for Iran' – a series of ten candle-light vigils held at the Vancouver Art Gallery in June 2009 to, as the title suggests, silently protest the regime in Iran. The vigils attracted thousands of supporters as well as high-profile civic, provincial and federal politicians[15]. Following the events, a number of the organizing members maintained a steadfast commitment to organizing events under the auspices of the 'Green Student Movement of Vancouver'.

14 According to the CIA World Facebook, 60% of the total population of Iran is under the age of 30, retrieved March 08 2011 https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html

15 "In addition to more than 30,000 concerned Iranian-Canadians, high profile provincial and federal politicians including 14 Members of Parliament, a Cabinet Minister, a Member of the Senate, several mayors, the Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, and supportive non-Iranian citizens attended these events" Retrieved March 08 2011, Green Student Movement of Vancouver: https://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=173131237009&v=wall

In light of the emergence of the Green Movement during the fieldwork period of this study, interview and informal discussions often turned to the events surrounding the events in Iran. While some participants were supporters of the Green Movement, others rejected the efforts taking place and did not wish to align themselves with it. Participants' commitment to or renunciation of events falling broadly under the auspices of the Green Movement serve as a useful point of entry for considering the ways in which political choices are themselves expressions of citizenship and, by extension, how they serve as sites of citizenship learning.

In this study, political expressions of citizenship are explored through the underlying motivations driving individuals' involvement in the Green Movement. I suggest that there is an iterative relationship between political expressions of citizenship and learning for citizenship, whereby political expressions contribute to a process of learning informing new meanings and interpretations of citizenship. Below, I will discuss the politicization of a population through an exploration of what political expressions entail, how they are performed and the ways in which they are sites of citizenship learning.

7.1.2 A movement to belong – The politicization of a population

A number of the research participants in this study were actively involved in the Green Movement. While they recognize that their activist efforts would not necessarily create change in Iran, they are compelled to be involved. They discuss the ways in which patriotism for Iran, as sense of citizen duty, an affirmation of their Iranian identity, and a search for sense of belonging drive their involvement. Farhad (27) articulates his motives as altruistic and charitable:

> [T]heir [Iranian's] general struggle really resonates with me, maybe because our whole reality, not our but *our* has been a struggle, just to live at peace and to have stability…It's

really just a sense of feeling like it's part of our responsibility as civic minded individuals and also as global citizens. I would do the same for Palestine. [emphasis original]

While Kiana (25) explains how her involvement yields a sense of belonging:

There was a sense of belonging, not just to the group that got formed, but also to the Iranian community. An interesting thing that happened afterwards is that a lot of us, our faces are known in the Iranian community, especially between the organizers of community events, just like cultural events. They know us now, and we've grown a bond with each other, between my generation and the older generation who are running certain cultural events.

Bahar (20) who has not had a politicized life, shares that while she is not politically active, her involvement in the Green Movement gives her a sense of purpose.

Maryam: Why did you get involved?
Bahar: For the politics.
Maryam: Are you political?
Bahar: No. Not at all.
Maryam: Why did you get involved then?
Bahar: Well after the elections, I felt like I needed to do something. I knew that it can't help Iran, at all - us going into streets. It made us feel good about ourselves, not sitting here, enjoying the weather and not doing anything.

Thus, for her, a political involvement is a ritualistic performance of belonging. She later mentions that she closed her Facebook account during a post-election visit to Iran as it had political content and she feared she would get stuck in Iran because of it. Thus, while she joined the Green Movement in order to gain a sense of purpose, she was ultimately politicized in the process:

The only thing I was scared of was that people were saying that you would get in [to Iran] but they [the government] wouldn't let you out, or something like that. Like I closed my Facebook and stuff, because my Facebook was very political. – Bahar

More common, however, is the desire to demonstrate that they were unwilling to let geographic distance and the period of time they had lived outside of Iran determine their loyalty and commitment to the 'imagined' Iran of their past. Activist commitments are rooted in the

122

strong anti-revolutionary discourse that has been pervasive in their lives and a driving force for

their parent's emigration. Donya (21) expresses her patriotism as she passionately articulates that

her activism is an effort to create a 'perfect Iran' – albeit, an Iran that she has actually never

experienced.

> I want this imaginary country [Iran] to be real, for me at least. I have this idea of perfect
> Iran for myself, and I want it to be that. I want my kids to go, to feel free to go back and
> forth, to feel comfortable, to love their country. You know what I'm saying? That's
> what I want.

7.1.3 Making choices – stepping up, stepping aside

While there is satisfaction and excitement associated with involvement in the Green

Movement, the decision to participate comes with trepidation. This trepidation is borne of a fear

that the organizing activists in Vancouver might be connected to the regime in Iran and possibly

be serving as informants for the Iranian regime, as described by Adel (23):

> For some reason, there's always a sense of fear when there's a protest [that takes place in
> Canada] with regards to Iran that what if someone is here that's going to blacklist me over
> there…It's something that my dad doesn't really approve of, he's like, I don't mind if you
> go to eco [environmental] protests, I don't mind if you go to Canadian political things, but
> just don't get mixed with the Iranian crowd because you never know who they are.

Despite their decision to be active, some who were initially active later chose to withdraw

as the uprisings increased in Iran. Kiana (25) describes the precautions she took to shield her

identity, revealing that her fears are not only based on how she might be implicated when she

goes back to Iran but *also* how she could be labelled in Canada:

> There was a lot of fear in terms of your picture being taken and then if you want to visit
> back home, or even here [having your identity revealed] would work against you, because
> you're gonna get labelled as someone political. Because there were a lot of people from

other political backgrounds there, we were always scared to be in the same picture as them because we would get labelled as Mujahideen or whatever. So there was a lot of paranoia when every time we saw a camera, we would hide our face – it was that bad. So they [organizers] kept on telling us every time that you don't have any obligation, if you feel uncomfortable, don't do it. So some of us, we're still friends, but we told them that from now on, I don't want to be involved in the political events.

While Kiana's involvement in the movement was an exercise of citizenship learning, her choice to withdraw is, arguably, more significant in her process of citizenship learning as it was motivated by ideological fears of how she may be labelled and implicated in both Canada and Iran.

Similarly, there was a sentiment that the political situation in Iran, while interesting as a world affair, is not *their* cause. Salar (26) states his lack of desire to be involved in Iranian politics and through this, shows the ways in which for him, a performance of citizenship is not situated between Iranian and Canadian national identities:

Like even all the political stuff that's going on in Iran, I don't give a shit about Ahmadinejad, I don't give a shit about Mousavi, or what not, I think that's the Canadian side, growing up here, it's not my fight, like I don't care if the Shah is in Iran or a bunch of Mullahs or whatever, it's not my fight anymore, so I don't care about that at all.

Rather, he is vehemently critical toward those Iranians in the diaspora who have chosen to be involved. Unlike Bahar whose involvement in the Green Movement is driven by a sense of responsibility and desire to belong, Salar does not think that that the movement belongs to those in the diaspora *anymore* and thus they should not be involved:

A lot of these people have no idea about the history, they don't understand, I don't think they understand it, I don't live there, I have no right, personally I don't think I have a right to express an opinion on the subject.

Adel (23) echoes in a similar vein:

I've never voted in Iran and I've never actually lived there as an adult, and I've never had a say. So, I'm interested in Iran in the same way I'm interested in the politics of Peru, or the politics of Argentina. So, I'm a citizen the same way I'm a citizen of the States…when people ask me if I'm Iranian, I always have a hard time justifying that because I don't interact with the Iranian society over there. That's probably one of the reasons that I can't see the Green Revolution as something that is belonging to me because I had nothing to do with it.

These varied attitudes toward involvement in the Green Movement give pause to consider how diverse political expressions contribute to the broader ways in which citizenship is performed. As noted in chapter six, participants' national and cultural identities are riddled with tensions and contradictions; while cultural identifications with Iran vary, participants' all claim some sort of Iranian cultural identity. However, it is not unusual for varied attitudes toward an Iranian national identity. Participants are careful about how they articulate their Iranian national identity; on the one hand they renounce an Iranian national identity, as they do not align themselves with the anti-Western, anti-democratic ideologies driving the regime. On the other hand, they claim a strong national identity, rooted in an imagined Iran, for which they pine. Thus, an Iranian national identity is a site of tension, where the current context is not desirable and the alternative is only imagined.

At the same time, in Canada, their Iranian identity has always been articulated outside of their national affiliations. Discourses of multiculturalism, which focus on the celebratory aspects of culture and national identities (such as possessing dual citizenship) undermine the ways in which national identity can exist beyond official citizenship, as discussed above. Thus, for participants of this study, the possibilities that are afforded through the Green Movement enable a new way to be a hyphenated (Iranian-Canadian) citizen. For the first time in their lives, participants feel that they can exercise citizenship duty where their hyphenated national identities

are concerned; they can reap the benefits of the diaspora as a space to safely articulate their politics while being able to un-silence how their Iranian national identity is popularly depicted.

However, the diaspora is not necessarily a haven for an activist, as participants find it difficult to reconcile their political expressions with their safety, as described above. These tensions are evidenced as participants reveal the ways in which technological mediums that compress time and space serve as a tool for citizenship engagement and a medium for citizenship expression.

7.1.4 Mobilize, recognize, belong: the role of social networking

In Iran, the Green Movement was unprecedented in its use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter as well as text messaging and Skype to broadcast to the world the most recent developments on the frontlines. In the diaspora, events orchestrated by internet activists as part of the Green Movement facilitated what was colloquially referred to as a *digital revolution*. Social mediums served as the lifeline for organizing efforts in both Iran and abroad.

During the early days of my fieldwork, I was sent a text message by an activist acquaintance letting me know that he was organizing a gathering at his place for 'young' people interested in the issues in Iran. He was interested in exploring the possibility of creating a cadre of young people dedicated to the Green Movement, under the auspices of a 'youth organization'. I was invited on account of involvement in youth activism. I was keen to attend this event, not only to get a sense of what would emerge but, for the first time, to socialize with young Iranians who could potentially be participants in the study. The following is an excerpt from my field notes after that gathering:

I met several people at ----'s house and shared my research with them. Each of them took time to chat with me. Interestingly, shortly after they asked if they could be my 'Facebook friend' and added me on to Facebook (via their iphone or the laptop that was being used by a number of people at the gathering, including me) they would move on to a different conversation. There was a real networking feel to the gathering and their use of technology was very present. Once a connection had been made, there wasn't the same level of interest in continuing the dialogue. (January, 2010)

This early reflection later helped me to contextualize the role that social networking played in self-identity. Mediums such as Facebook have a dual function; they serve as a tool for networking, belonging and mobilizing; as well as serving as a platform where citizenship is performed through political, cultural, and social expressions and interpretations of citizenship that are public. On the other, Facebook also serves as a site of citizenship learning; through voyeuring into 'friends' Facebook profiles and learning how others engage with the issues and what their perspectives may be. This has become a medium and a method through which opinions and critiques are formed. In effect, opinions made public on Facebook become an extension of identity, which facilitate how citizenship is performed. Bahar (20) shares how during this volatile time, while she would be able to *get in* to Iran, she feared that the authorities would not *let her out* if she had political content on her Facebook account while Kiana (25) shares the ways in which Facebook offered news, a place to gather, and a place that belonged to the collective.

> The only thing I was scared of was that people were saying that you would get in but they wouldn't let you out, or something like that. Like I closed my Facebook and stuff, because my Facebook was very political. – Bahar

> Facebook changed everything when the political breakdown happened because a lot of videos were being posted. It became *our* media, it became *our* news source instead of people waking up in the morning and going to the BBC website, we were going to Facebook to check the news. – Kiana [emphasis added]

The simultaneous relationship between performing citizenship and learning citizenship, as described in the use of social mediums such as Facebook, point to the ways in which interpretations and perspectives learned are borne not just from what is shared on Facebook, but also the ways in which Facebook is a forum that enables performance. It is a space of belonging, articulating different aspects of identity, and engaging in the messiness of citizenship by selectively choosing what politics to perform and with whom. The use of Facebook is a space for learning through which one can sample a multiplicity of perspectives and opinions and, through a voyeuristic glance, choose how she performs within that space.

7.2 Geographies of citizenship and belonging

7.2.1 Troubling spaces and places of citizenship

"I feel like before being a citizen of anywhere, I'm a citizen of the world" – Vahid

Spatial and imagined geographies play an important role in expressions of citizenship. While participants' discuss the value that these geographies of belonging have for their sense of citizenship, they are equally honest about the challenges that it poses for them. On the one hand, they express the ways in which they are unbound by geographic allegiances and a commitment to being a global citizen. In the below passage, Nazila (29) describes that feelings of citizenship are associated with period of time living in a place and alludes to how geographic allegiances are insignificant for belonging:

Nazila: It doesn't matter where I was born, just because I was born in Iran doesn't mean that I'm an Iranian citizen, it's just wherever I am, wherever my family is, wherever my friends are, where home is….If I went to Australia or something and I was there long enough and built a home there and built relationships in Australia then that would be where my citizenship lies. Even if I had dual citizenship, where I would have Canadian and Australian, at that

point I would consider myself an Australian.

Maryam: What if you didn't have a passport, would you still feel like you were a citizen of a place?

Nazila: Yeah, paperwork doesn't matter.

It is not only verbal articulations of the ways in which geography does not contribute to a sense of identity and belonging, but participants also show this through the ways in which they live. For example, Farhad (27) moved to Europe during the course of this research and had he not told me this, I would have never known as he continued to be socially tapped into happenings in Vancouver and politically active in mobilizing his Facebook friends on various initiatives taking place locally. Farhad who seizes the opportunity to preach his cosmopolitan identity practices the tenets of what it means to be global in both his international meanderings, his 1000+ Facebook friends from all corners of the world and interest and involvement in world affairs beyond Canada or Iran. Farhad express that for him cosmopolitanism is tied to a certain globally minded view of the world; it is not tied to belonging to one place or culture.

> [Being cosmopolitan] is not defined by geography at the moment. It's not defined by culture in a sense of language and traditions, in the traditional form of culture. Cosmopolitan is a global citizenship, that's a culture as well.

Despite his admirably grand view of what it means to be cosmopolitan and, by extension, embrace global citizenship, he passionately articulates his connection to place. In clarifying whether he lived in North or West Vancouver, he makes clear that his loyalties are in North Vancouver, as affiliating as a West Vancouverite for him has particular socio-economic and cultural connotations: "I live in North Van, I've always lived in North Van, I *will* always live in North Van, I'm *not* living in West Van" [emphases original]. Similarly, participants' sense of citizenship as informed by their global trajectories and pride that they are citizens of the world are starkly at odds with their sentimentality of geographic spaces of belonging – which in all

129

cases were in Canada. To illustrate this, point, Kiana (25) talks about her attachment to North

Vancouver, where she has lived since she moved to Canada:

> There is definitely that sense of attachment. Maybe it's something about the North Shore, the mountains, I don't know, so attachment is there. Sometimes, again maybe come back to a sense of comparison…that's when I know that I have called Canada, especially North Shore, my home. It may be the comfort; it may be the ease of which I can live my life.

> Contradictions that manifest on the one hand by self-identifying as global and

challenging the limits of geographic allegiances and on the other hand interpreting belonging as

place-based brings to light the tension of how belonging is and is not simultaneously tied to the

national and the global. At the same time, depictions of national belonging are articulated vis-à-

vis local belongings – such as the North Shore in general and North Vancouver, in particular.

Arguably, constructions of the nation as tied to a particular place help to reconcile the widely

expressed tension and ambiguity of not being able to belong to *a* place as no place allows them

to fully express their complex sense of citizen identity. Thus a tangible geographic identity (such

as the North Shore) becomes an anchor for expressing a national identity. Nader (25) discusses

how his hybrid identity results in both belonging to multiple spaces while not belonging

anywhere and Adel (23) captures how he is reconciled with a local affiliation and considers

Vancouver home amidst the confusion of his global trajectories.

> I feel comfortable here, I feel comfortable in Iran, I feel comfortable in France, but I don't really think I belong anywhere. There's not one place where everything is my way, or the way I expect it to be. That's probably mostly because I immigrated so my ideals, my ideas, my personality is hybrid. – Nader

> I don't really like allegiances to a geographical place. I think that one of the factors I think is that I've moved around in my life, quite a bit. I was in the States when I was younger, and then I went to Iran, and then I grew up here. I like to think, you know, I call

this place home, so I guess I am Canadian. It's easier for me to define myself as a Vancouverite than it is for me to say I'm Canadian. – Adel

Thus, while the diversity of geographic belongings provides insights into how expressions of citizenship manifest – such as linked with global sense of citizenship or an absence of being a citizen of any place – geographic belonging is inseparable from participants' expressions of citizenship as imagined belongings. Participants express strong sentiments of the ways in which Iran is home based on a sentimentality of *jus soli* (soil rights). However, Iran remains an imagined place of belonging, where culture, nationality, and family – those aspects of themselves that are either absent or they feel they cannot express in Canada – provide the context for a geography of belonging, as described by Kiana (25):

> Suppose every time that I visited back, Iran, there's that warm feeling in the streets, amongst the people, despite all the negative things that go on in the streets, if it's traffic, if it's people's attitudes, but as soon as I step foot in there, there's that feeling that you're never alone, there's that warm feeling that you're amongst your *own* kind, you're within your own culture again. There's that homey feeling, which is quite different from what I experience here. So, you can say that I have two different homes, with two different definitions, but both of them are equally home for me, if that – makes sense. –emphasis original

Thus in situating their complex geographies of belonging against traditional views of citizenship as allegiance or identification to a place, they are creating new meanings of belonging as simultaneously tied to multiple geographic and imagined spaces.

7.3 'Articulations' of belonging – language as a site of citizenship

Participants draw on language as both a tool for communication as well as a tool for engaging with the cultural everyday. Together, these provide insights into how language is used for expressing a citizen identity and, by extension, how it is an expression of citizenship. In his

description of the contexts in which he uses Farsi and English, Salar (26), points to the ways in

which language is not just a tool for communication, but also a tool to assert different aspects of

his identity based on a hierarchy of who he is speaking with. Additionally, it is a tool that

facilitates socialization with his friends – as he describes through their idiosyncratic dialect and

Farsi accent:

> Nima, he's half white, half Irani and we speak, we probably speak a mix, probably 75%
> English, 25% Farsi. My brother we speak English to each other. The group of high
> school kids, we just go on and off, English, Farsi, English, Farsi and we've known each
> other for so long we almost have our own dialect. So, there was a time where we'd make
> fun of the [Farsi] accent so much that it started to stick, and we noticed it going into
> college.

In making fun of the Farsi accent, Salar is asserting his nuanced diasporic identity, both

linguistically and culturally. He recognizes that an accent is an indicator of ethno-linguistic

identity and, in effect, the degree of integration in Canada. Making fun of the Farsi accent

enables him to assert the heterogeneity of the Iranian diaspora and accordingly, situate himself

within that context. On the one hand, a linguistic reading suggests that his facetious engagement

with the accent is a socialization process, where he can 'regress' to the accent of those Iranians

who are less integrated in Canada. On the other hand, a cultural reading of his description that

the accent 'stuck', suggests that it is not the accent itself that stuck, rather the *habit* of the accent

that stuck. Through both his capacity to speak Farsi and English with ease and go as far as

teasing out the nuances of the Farsi accent with his friends, Salar indirectly explains that not only

is he not burdened by language barriers or a Farsi accent, but that he can assert a citizen identity,

driven by linguistic and cultural hierarchies.

Similarly, I was at a participant's birthday party where the Iranian crowd was speaking a

mixture of Farsi and English throughout the evening. A birthday card was being passed around

and signed by a number of people. One person made a spelling mistake in the card which was brought to the attention of everyone at the table; rather than spelling the word 'liar', the writer wrote 'lier' in the card – his mistake resulted in malicious laughter, as the phonetic reading of his spelling of the word was akin to how one would say to the word with Farsi accent. The laughter continued as people began speaking English with a thick Farsi accent, taunting him as they said 'lie-rrrrr' over and over again. The said person pulled out his iphone to look up the correct spelling of the word. While most of the people at the table had immigrated to Canada within the last ten years, they are generally more comfortable speaking Farsi and speak English with a Farsi accent. Thus, they consider an accent to be an 'impediment' and construct hierarchies of diaspora identity and the extent to which one is not Canadian enough.

Through a different lens, the ways in which language is used serve as a public performance of diaspora identity, in that the use of language is a metaphor for public expressions of identity, loyalties, and citizenship. To illustrate this point, I reflect on a party I attended, at the invitation of one of my participants. At one point in the evening, I joined a group of six friends, where one person was telling a story to which others listened and commented as he spoke. As he was telling the story, one woman objected, in Farsi, *'Chera Engilisi harf meezanim?'* (Why are we speaking English?) at which point the storyteller without a moment's pause, switched to Farsi and the listeners continued to comment, but this time in Farsi. The public objection of using English insinuates everyone's – and especially the storyteller's – disloyalty to their Iranian identity, while publically positioning the woman who objected as invested to her Iranian identity.

As above, how one uses language is a distinct indication of where cultural loyalties lay and an indication of how one is positioned within the diaspora. Farhad (27), unpacks how learning to speak English is an expression of values, associated with belonging, integration and

an unmarginalized citizen identity. He eloquently provides examples of cultural and systemic forms of discrimination and how he and his family have been implicated. Thus, he is aware of the role that language has in citizen identity and is critical of his parents' limited English capacities:

> In the sense like, my father doesn't speak English that well, he barely speaks English, and for someone who has lived here for 17 years, I find that completely unacceptable, especially when I look around and see other Iranian families, not all of them, but some of them, have been able to integrate quite well. It makes me questions their [mother and father] sense of foundation, their personal values, and it doesn't make me hold them in a good light.

Thus, language is not simply a marker of Iranian or Canadian identities, rather the ways in which participants engage with language are politicized expressions of social and cultural identity and belonging. The combination of moving between languages, the meanings and interpretations ascribed to accents and perceived relationship between being able to speak English and belonging and integration, provide insights into the ways in which language is a politicized site of learning and performing citizenship.

7.4 Implications for citizenship and citizenship learning

In this chapter I have discussed the diverse expressions of citizenship within and across political, social, and cultural sites. I have shown how 'citizenship is an iterative process of learning' (the third commitment of an immigrant youth citizen identity discussed in chapter three) through expressions that not only responses to the silences (chapter 5) and contradictions (chapter 6) of citizenship but provide insights into the ways in which participants are building new discourses of citizenship. These new discourses of citizenship are informed by complex,

evolving and overlapping dimensions of their Iranian, Canadian, and dual cultural and national loyalties and belongings.

While Canadian multiculturalism acknowledges citizens' citizenship status and cultural practices, it is framed within a rhetoric that negates the ways in which the nation-state of the home country is significant to the lives of diaspora subjects. The political choices informing their processes of activism, mobilizing, and social recognition, provides a lens with which to explore how participants' citizen identities exist within and in between national and cultural loyalties. Their political expressions of citizenship, in effect, trouble the parochial view of the multicultural citizen, wherein only celebratory aspects of identity, culture, and nationality are accounted for. Thus, we can begin to conceptualize the ways in which the diaspora serves a site of transnational social formations (Werbner, 2002) that challenges the multicultural constructions of the citizen and citizenship.

Additionally, participants' voices reveal the ways in which belongings exist within geographic boundaries of the nation-state as well as imagined contexts of the nation and world. This understanding provides a point of entry for exploring how participants' trouble conventional discourses of citizenship as allegiance to the state. These geographic and imagined allegiances enable an understanding of citizenship that transcends conventional citizenship talk. Participants' relationship with language sheds light on how language is a site of citizenship wherein the nuances and diversity of identities, identifications, and belonging are revealed. Through this, we can begin to analyze how participants are challenging homogenous constructions of the 'Iranian immigrant' and the internal differences within the Iranian diaspora.

The multiple expressions of citizenship shed light on how participants *speak back* to the silences and contradictions of their citizenship experiences and, in the process, *speak to* missing dimensions of citizenship talk and how these processes are sites of learning. In the following chapter, I will build on the overlapping dimensions of the silences, contradictions, and expressions of citizenship as they contribute to the formation of an 'immigrant youth citizen identity', which informs new meanings and interpretations of citizenship and, in effect, can contribute to improved models of citizenship learning.

8 Discussion and findings

The findings from this study are a useful starting point for meeting the two objectives that underpinned an exploration of citizenship for a broad spectrum of immigrant youth identities in Canada. This chapter is concerned with the first objective of this study, which is to offer a conceptual approach to citizenship that that fills the gaps in the existing conceptualizations of citizenship in Canada. In this chapter, I will expand on the concept of an immigrant youth citizen identity by bridging the conceptual and empirical discourses undergirded in this study. The second objective of this study, to offer recommendations for improvements of models of citizenship education in Canada that are relevant to the lived experiences of citizenship for immigrant youth, will be explored in the following chapter.

8.1 Overview of findings

This study has revealed that, as a concept, citizenship is complicated by the gap between the discourses of citizenship and participants experiences with citizenship. There is a range of ascribed meanings and interpretations of citizenship, which include at one end of the spectrum an official status that is a trump card for international mobility and freedom from the constraints of being identified as an Iranian national. On the other extreme, citizenship is a substantive concept that is brought to bear through participation in the public sphere, belongings, and identities.

The wide range of meanings and interpretations of citizenship are informed by the extent to which the underpinnings of citizenship have been prevalent in the lives of participants, how it has impacted their lived experiences, and how they're positioned in Canada. Additionally, the geographic and imaginative boundaries that constitute identities and belongings and experiences

with inclusion and exclusion across the national and intra-national sites into which participants come into contact shape the varied meanings and interpretations given to citizenship.

Despite these varied understandings of citizenship – as a formal or substantive concept – the findings from this study show that the ways in which participants come to their respective understanding of citizenship is through informal lived experiences. These experiences are revealed through the *silences* of citizenship wherein experiences with citizenship are absent within the dominant discourses of citizenship; the *contradictions* of citizenship that ensue as participants attempt to challenge the top-down discourses of citizenship between multiple identities and belongings; and within *expressions* of citizenship, where participants speak back to the silences and contradictions of citizenship through various sites outside of the dominant scope of citizenship. Below, I expand on the different ways in which citizenship is articulated throughout the empirical chapters and in relation to the three research questions in this study.

8.2 Social structures and the politics of belonging

The first research question in this study is: *how do individualized and institutionalized experiences in Canada inform participants' sense of citizenship and experiences of citizenship learning?* An inquiry into this question provided insights into participants' experiences of schools and schooling and articulations of Canada's official policy as well as their own lived experiences of multiculturalism in between inclusion and exclusion.

8.2.1 Curricula and pedagogy as sites of 'learning citizenship'

Participants' description of the implicit social norms within the institutional context of schooling sheds light on how schools are sites of citizenship learning. For instance, their understanding of what constitutes an engaged and 'good' student in a Canadian schooling

context is expressed in relation to what constitutes a 'good' student within an Iranian schooling context. Contrary to their Iranian schooling experiences, in Canada, pedagogical approaches, social hierarchies between student and teacher and the extent to which students are encouraged to be critical are aligned with the much celebrated conception of the 'active citizen'(Hughes & Sears, 2006). In this sense, culturally specific pedagogical approaches and social dimensions of schooling instil the benchmarks of the progressive citizen – someone who is engaged and actively contributes to the social fabric of the nation – or in this case of schooling,

While the sociological dimensions of schooling facilitate citizenship learning aligned with progressive views citizenship, the curricular content informs a different understanding of citizenship. As participants are schooled about the historical contexts of citizenship in Canada, their point of reference in situating their learning is in relation to similar trajectories of history in Iran, such as one participant compares Canada to Iran: "you guys are talking about the fur trade and we had the silk trade for thousands of years". In effect, the curriculum not only fails to create a sense of identification or belonging with Canada, but it highlights Canada's colonial past and situates a point of comparison between the two nations, where, for participants in this study, Iran's long history and culture are ultimately superior. Safran (1991) reminds us that an effect of being a diaspora individual is a connection to homeland, which significantly shapes a sense of identity and solidarity. In effect, for young immigrants whose worldviews are constructed in between two or more national contexts, curricular content that builds points of comparison between the national contexts of their home country and Canada, ultimately reinforces their connection to 'home'.

Additionally, the shortcomings of the curricular content are expressed in the ways in which it is structured within an Anglo-European framework favours native English speakers, and

139

which undermines the socio-cultural, political, and educational contexts from which learners come and how they learn. In effect, immigrant youth for whom language abilities, cultural sensibilities, and social processes of learning are markedly different than Anglo learners are pushed to the margins of the curricular framework. While educational theorists have long been debating class and gender-specific curriculum and pedagogies (Anyon, 1980; Bettie, 2003; Osborne, 2000; Willis, 1977), there has been a dearth of attention given to the curricular and pedagogical needs of immigrant youth.

Novoa's (2002) argument of the *excess of past* and *excess of future* to describe the ways that education is conceived in a European context is useful for extending to how Canadian immigrant learners' failed experience with the curriculum is a condition of the ways in which the institutional structure with which they come into contact fail to provide opportunities for their success. Excess of the past are the grand narratives about the traditions and destiny of Europe, which legitimize existing institutions while excess of the future is the popular trend to construct positive illusions of the future that are not necessarily likely but rather personally and socially desirable and which gives support political decisions. The problematic, as highlighted by Novoa, is that in both the excess of the past and future concerns of identity are central as "the citizens are not evoked as a whole, but as fragments where past and future are fused in the same movement to imagine the *nation-Europe"* (p. 137).

This study has highlighted the ways in which the excess of the past and future plays out in the Canadian context, where the official discourses aim to inscribe citizens to be part of a 'movement to imagine the *multicultural nation-state*'. As recapped above, within the Canadian schooling context, the overemphasis of the 'good citizen', curricular content that euphemistically addresses Canada's colonial past, and pedagogies that reinforce Anglicized teaching and learning

140

fail to engage the needs of immigrant learners and thus marginalize the important narratives of immigrant youth's journeys.

In effect, the excess of the past and future results in a failure to build notions of citizenship that are either applicable or useful but rather fragmented constructions that do not apply to the journeys taken by the 'new' Canadians. Delanty's (2003) well established argument that citizenship is a process of learning that exist within the systems and structures in which individuals come into contact provides valuable insights into how negative schooling experiences can contribute to an understanding of citizen identity as marginal, and which in effect yields an antagonistic framework of 'us' and 'them' in their process of citizenship learning.

8.2.2 Multiculturalisms between inclusion and exclusion

The institutionalized discourse of multiculturalism evokes strong sentiments as participants question the extent to which the multicultural rhetoric of inclusivity extends beyond celebration and adapting to the liberal-democratic framework underpinning the nation. Recognizing that the positive popular framing of multiculturalism ultimately trumps its shortcomings, as evidenced by the ways in which socio-economic, geographic, and political interests are silenced within the rhetoric of inclusion and cultural celebration, participants generally express tension toward the discourse.

Similarly, more overt institutionalized exclusions faced by immigrants shed light on how the rhetoric on which discourses of multicultural inclusion rests are not conducive to all members of society. This is evidenced by frustration toward the education system (as discussed above) and navigating complex bureaucratic labyrinths such as health benefits that, indirectly "curtail

peoples ability to take advantage of those rights" as articulated by a participant. The effects of these subtle exclusions facilitate negative citizenship experiences where the immigrant citizen is unable to adequately belong to the institutionalized frameworks within Canada.

The theoretical and empirical landscape highlighting contemporary institutionalized racist and exclusionary practices toward immigrants in Canada (Bannerji, 2000; Burke Wood & Wortley, 2010; Nabavi & Lund, 2011) reveal the ways in which immigrants are positioned to defend themselves within the bureaucratic webs of exclusion of the nation. These cultural everyday experiences of power and oppression inform not only individuals understanding of the nation but more so, how they situate themselves within the nation. As state-imposed labels of their migrant status define and determine what is institutionally afforded to them and because their lives are marked by managing these opportunities, in the process, immigrants are robbed of their intersecting and interlocking identities and belongings that exist despite the national project.

Thus, for immigrant youth, despite identities that evolve based on the particular moment of their experience as a youth or the multiple choices afforded to them within a global landscape, within the institutionalized frameworks of the nation, they remain simply 'an immigrant', or the Other. While it has been earlier argued that various models of nationalism are used to manage diversity (such as the social cohesion framework), institutionalized exclusions further perpetuate the nationalist project where the immigrant citizen exists as someone who contributes merely to exotic flavours of the Canadian mosaic but is otherwise a burden on the structural frameworks undergirding the nation.

Additionally, the discourse of multiculturalism supports participants' expressions of a superior Iranian culture to Canada. The dominant framework on which the discourse is situated –

142

cultural celebration and difference – provides a legitimate means through which participants can compare and contrast the two cultures. The emphasis on the superiority of their Iranian culture is evidenced not only by their ambiguity of what constitutes Canadian culture but also implicit and explicit indications that Canada lacks culture. Although this popular depiction supports the conservative view that a multicultural Canada fragments already disjointed communities (Bissoondath, 2002), it also highlights the ways in which Canada is viewed in the absence of its founding nations. Thus, as multiculturalism epitomizes their understanding of the Canadian national imaginary, rooted in difference, it yields a narrow picture of what constitutes Canadian differences and ambiguity of simply not knowing what it means to be Canadian. The tensions with multiculturalism as a concept and lived experiences facilitate a shift toward a focus on their Iranian identity.

The emphasis on their Iranian culture is not, however, only because of the 'lack' of 'Canadian' culture, but also informed by the individualized experiences of exclusion in Canada. An exaggerated romanticized view of multiculturalism is informed by experiences of overt individualized exclusions vis-à-vis ethnic, racial, or cultural backgrounds. The view that Canada is made of diverse cultures whom come into contact with one another – albeit through superficial markers such as eating the same cuisine – helps to reconcile the tensions they have experienced as racialized immigrants within a dominantly Anglo Canadian context. Thus, positive acknowledgement of multiculturalism is an effect of being excluded within the mainstream.

While their experiences of exclusion in Canada position them as the (racialized) Other, the discourse of multiculturalism – in its celebration of a multiplicity of exoticized cultures – positions Anglo Canadian (who as, they believe lack culture) as the Other. In effect, justifications of exclusionary experiences are in relation to the ways in which multiculturalism

facilitates a (superficial) discourse of inclusion positioned within celebratory aspects of their culture. This suggests the ways in which multiculturalism fails both racialized immigrants and Anglo Canadians where a sense of inclusion exists only in relation to being excluded or excluding others.

Similar to how the official discourse of multiculturalism bears on their daily-lived experiences, participants experiences of unofficial multiculturalism provides additional insights into their processes of inclusion and exclusion. As the most grandiose expression of unofficial multiculturalism, the winter Olympics in Vancouver evoked strong responses to their Canadian cultural and national identities. Participants' responses revealed how, as a 'cultural' site, the Olympics facilitated feelings of being Canadian. Noteworthy is that the instances during the Olympics when participants expressed admiration for Canada, were in public spaces wherein they were sharing similar sentiments for and an experience of Canada with Canadians whom would they would not otherwise interact with. Thus, the Olympics served as both a metaphor and space for belonging amongst 'Canadians'. Overwhelmingly, the sentiment that they felt proud of Canada during the Olympics suggests how an institutionalized framework of *cultural celebration* facilitates feelings of belonging and identification with the adopted nation despite institutionalized experiences of exclusion. Engagement in the Olympics yielded an unintended outcome of ownership, commitment to, and belonging in Canada and in effect served as a site of informal learning of citizenship.

8.2.3 Review of key findings

For participants in this study, the process of engaging with citizenship is negotiated by managing identities and belongings within and across the 'rhetoric' and 'reality' of citizenship.

Their reality is informed by sociological, cultural, ethnic, historical, and migratory subjectivities, which define and determine how they engage with and respond to their experiences of, for example, schools, schooling, and multiculturalism. Participants have elucidated the ways in which their engagement with individualized and institutionalized sites in Canada are in relation to either their lived and imagined experiences of Iran and its culture and history. This knowledge provides insights into the inevitable notion of orientation to a lived or imagined homeland for migrants, as emphasized by theorists of diaspora studies (Boyarin & Boyarin, 2003; Safran, 1991).

For young migrants, an orientation to homeland is rarely within the traditional focus of geographic identity and identification, as they may have lived the better half of their formative years in the diaspora. Rather, through stories, histories, familial relationship, language, and cultural practices, they orient themselves to a constructed notion of 'home'. Coupled with deep experiences of exclusion that overshadows their shallow experiences of inclusion, their orientation to 'home' is further intensified. Thus, the findings from this research question help to redefine not just what constitutes 'home' for young migrants but more importantly, how an 'orientation' to home develops within and across the various sites that young migrants come into contact. This understanding contributes directly to how citizenship is learned for young migrants globalized identities and belongings.

8.3 Negotiating a citizen identity – from the local to the global

The second research question in this study is: *What is the role of migration with regard to the formation of social citizenship?* An inquiry into this question provided insights into participants' experiences of managing conflicting geographic boundaries of membership and

cultural and ethnic identities and belongings. While this research question and accompanying interview questions specifically sought to engage the ways in which the 'role of migration' – such as the contexts and conditions surrounding migration – affected participants' experiences of social citizenship, the interview discussions, and subsequent analysis pointed to a more nuanced focus on the 'construction of the migration narrative', as I recap below.

8.3.1 Process and politics of migration

Regardless of the range of reasons driving migration, participants' citizenship status does not inform on how they situate themselves as citizens. Those whose families come from privileged backgrounds and have transferred their social and economic lifestyle to a Canadian context as well as those whose migratory process involved a great deal of risk and sacrifice express similar sentiments toward citizenship as an official status. While the difference across the two spectrums rests in how individuals understand the social dimensions of citizenship, in neither extreme do the legal dimensions of citizenship reflect their lived experiences with citizenship and is thus not the focus of how they situate a citizen identity.

Nazila's childhood experience of destroying her passport on the airplane in order to claim refugee status upon landing in Canada, contributed to her feelings of being Canadian long before she had official citizenship as her process of "becoming a Canadian citizen" was informed by no longer 'belonging' to Iran. While for Ideen whose choice of migration was seemingly as trivial as the weather in that country and for whom, a citizen identity is not connected to any form of official belonging, alludes to the ways in which his status as a citizen is only a passport to satisfy his international sojourns. While their different trajectories of migration have shaped distinctly

different interpretations of what it means to be Canadian, they share in common a commitment that legal dimensions of citizenship are insignificant to their feelings of being Canadian.

Experiences with inclusion and exclusion in both Canada (as discussed in the preceding section) *as well as* in Iran also contribute to the ways that they situate a citizen identity. The ways in which participants' human rights were taken away from them under the current regime in Iran informs how citizenship is a politicized site of inclusion and exclusion that is shaped by how identities and belongings are situated. However, popular discourses of citizenship in Canada – which for immigrants is within the context of official citizenship – fail to account for the politicized social dimensions of citizenship that inform pre and post migration experiences. These experiences, in effect, shape the meanings and interpretations that young migrants ascribe to belonging, rights, duty, and identity within their national framework.

Theorists of identity remind us that processes of identity formation are shaped within multiple, intersecting, and often contradictory sites (Grossberg, 2010; Hall, 2002). As discussed above, for these young migrants, a citizen identity is complicated by virtue of their history, migratory experiences, socio-economic, and political contexts as well as the age at which they migrated. These complex and nuanced dimensions of their experiences contribute not just to how they situate citizenship in relation to their own identities but also directly and indirectly inform their process of learning citizenship.

Delanty (2002) writes "as a learning process, citizenship takes place in communicative situations arising out of quite ordinary life experiences. It appears that an essential dimension of the experience of citizenship is the ways in which individual life stories are connected with wider

cultural discourses" (p. 65). Hall's (2010) notion of identity builds on the learning dimensions of citizenship insofar as:

> Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies. Moreover, they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity – an 'identity' in its traditional meaning (p. 4).

This constructivist understanding of identity sheds light on citizenship as learning process in which an exploration of citizenship must extend beyond the individual to wider cultural, political and historical dimensions of inclusion and exclusion.

8.3.2 Rhetoric: local, the global and everything in between

Across participants' diverse migratory experiences, an understanding of what it means to be a citizen and how citizenship is practiced (as a social concept) is largely connected to notions of identity. On the one hand, there is a general appreciation for Canada as a multicultural country that has contributed to their worldly sensibilities. On the other hand, self-identifications as global, cosmopolitan, and worldly, while pervasive, are not necessarily contextualized within a national context. I suggest that ascribing to a 'globalized' identity is an effect of migration, wherein their experiences elucidated that identifying to *an* identity or *a* belonging would be inconsistent, if not inaccurate, of their lived experiences being embedded in a complex web of social and political traversals by the time they arrived to Canada.

Additionally, the post-migration period – which brought various individualized and institutionalized forms of exclusion in their new national context – contributes to non-national identifications. These identifications, I suggest, are a response to the ways in which participants

have experienced the limits of the nation, such as their experiences with the gap between the rhetoric of multiculturalism and their lived experiences – as discussed in the preceding section. Thus, armed with a Canadian passport, participants can *formally* mark their official citizenship within the global forums they traverse while *informally* disassociating themselves from a national identity and belonging – which if they associated with would suggest that they accept the exclusionary experiences within the nation, which they are vocal critics of.

8.3.3 Managing diaspora identity

The impacts of migration are evidenced in how participants strive to engage with the nuanced dimensions of the cultural everyday in between their Iranian and Canadian identities. In the process of managing competing, and at times, contradictory cultural practices, they are forming a diaspora identity; a central dimension of diaspora is the notion of boundary-maintenance, which points to the distinct (and often intentional) differences between the diaspora community and the host community, such as evidenced with language, cultural practices, or religion.

Participants attempt to highlight their belonging in Canada by emphasizing how they reject or do not comply with aspects of Iranian culture. In the case of Adel, he suggests that the Iranian cultural practice of blessing a home before moving in is 'stupid' rather he emphasizes his desire to 'party' upon moving in. At the same time, he is proud of having maintained aspects of his Iranian culture, such making tea when friends come over. While Adel chooses to accept some aspects of his Iranian cultural while rejecting other aspects, he is creating a distinct identity that that is bound by both not just the Iranian and Western culture in which he is embedded, but also

by an identity borne from the middle space of managing the two cultures as well as an identity specific to his generation.

In effect, as participants straddle two national and cultural identities, they selectively choose which aspects of each national and cultural identity they depict in a positive or negative light, and ultimately, how they situate themselves in relation to that identity. In other words, in the process of developing a citizen identity that is informed by their immigrant experiences, participants both blur the lines between nationality and culture and in the process, occupy a middle space of being both culturally and nationally Iranian and Canadian while being neither. This phenomenon provides valuable insights into how, not just the process of migration but also the ensuing cultural negotiations marked by the generational context of individual's yields a diaspora identity.

8.3.4 Review of key findings

The findings from the second research question in this study, concerned with the relationship between migration and social citizenship, reveal that notions of identity are central to the meanings and values ascribed to citizenship. Identity as a culture, nationality, or an affiliation is inseparable in its connection to citizenship; these expressions of identity are neither within national or non-national sites, rather they are negotiated in between the two.

While critical and universal conceptions of citizenship emphasize the centrality of identity in citizenship (Heater, 2004; Lister, 2003; Soysal, 2000; Young, 2000), the commitment rests in how diverse social identities are implicated within the dominant configurations of citizenship, and by extension, the special concessions granted for diverse identity groups. Moving beyond this approach, the findings from this study have elucidated that intersecting

identities and identifications trouble the dominant conception of citizenship as a status that is connected to singular identities and identifications. In effect, social citizenship is shaped generally by pre and post migratory experiences and more specifically by the ways in which migratory experiences inform globalized identities and identifications.

As I have argued throughout this dissertation, within a liberal-democratic framework of the nation, dominant conceptions of citizenship take into consideration aspects of social citizenship. However, the dominant framework undermines the ways in which citizenship is, in fact, shaped by the most dramatic experiences in the lives of these young people, such as leaving ones homeland forever and relinquishing an official citizen identity in order to be granted social citizenship. Thus nuanced – and too often unacknowledged – migratory experiences that shape a citizen identity ultimately inform the meanings and interpretations that individuals give to citizenship. In an effort to manage their multiple and intersecting identities within the dominant framework, participants strategically accept/reject aspects of each of their identities. This phenomenon reinforces boundaries between the dominant framework of how citizenship is learned and how citizenship is expressed. Werbner (2002) captures the process of maintaining distinct boundaries: "as trans-national social formations, diasporas challenge the hegemony and boundedness of the nation-state, and indeed, of any pure imaginaries of nationhood" (p.120). In other words, in the process of maintaining a distinct diaspora identity, a tenuous relationship with the host nation is borne.

8.4 Learning citizenship

The final research question in this study is: *in what ways do participants 'globalized' experiences bear on their understanding of citizenship and inform their learning for citizenship?*

In inquiry into this question provided insights into the ways in which participants engage with the social dimensions of citizenship vis-à-vis political, geographic, and communicative sites.

8.4.1 Choosing politics, becoming political

Participants' varied involvement in the political and politicized Green Movement provides insights into the ways in which the choices that drive the reasons for involvement were all equally grounded within their globalized experiences of citizenship. Some participants highlight that their commitment to the Green Movement is not partial to Iran, rather it is partial to social justice issues everywhere. For others, aware that news of their involvement in the Green Movement may result in being labelled in Iran and in Canada and thus have negative consequences, informs their decision to not be involved. While for others, they reject involvement in a cause that they are not implicated by, which is in sharp contrast to those who feel they should contribute in some way because the issues implicate citizens of their home country.

The diverse responses to the Green Movement elucidates the ways in which involvement in transnational politics is a site of citizenship that is politically motivated and largely informed by individuals' pre and post migratory contexts. Existing social formations of the home country are often replicated transnationally, defining how diaspora individuals exist within local contexts (Cohen, 2008). This phenomenon is complicated as Werbner (2002) notes that "diasporic identities in today's globalized world are typified by multiple citizenships and loyalties, which are markedly different than earlier pre-national diasporas" (p. 130). This is particularly germane for immigrant youth, who as I've argued earlier, are deeply implicated within the social, cultural, and political structures of citizenship.

These varied forms of engagement are processes of citizenship that are informed in part by, what I referred to in chapter 3 as, top-down influences. Top-down influences such as the formal codes and categories of citizenship, manifest in the ways in which the state has dictated the lives of participants in this study. These begin with the social and political contexts driving their migration and are followed by experiences of navigating their way through institutionalized sites of the nation. Thus, the Green Movement is a response to the Iranian national context which they reject and as well as a global movement wherein they experience a sense of belonging within their riddled diaspora context; their involvement or rejection of the movement serves as a symbol of how they are embedded within the global webs of power of the nation and the wider global context (Ong, 1999a).

In effect, their globalized experiences, rooted in structures of inclusion and exclusion inform the choices driving their involvement in a political context that is based both within social and substantive dimensions of citizenship as well as with dimensions of their national and global identities. In the process of making a choice in how to be involved as a 'global citizen'who is invested in a broad range of issues, a process of citizenship learning unfolds.

8.4.2 Space, place, and language as 'glocal' sites

Anthropologist Lok Siu (2001) reminds us that cultural citizenship consists of "behaviors, discourses, and practices that give meaning to citizenship as lived experience" (p. 9). This ethnography provides evidence to suggest that for young migrants, meaning is derived within and across the local and global contexts in which their belongings, engagement with language, and socialization processes are situated. These experiences are informed by processes of citizenship learning rooted within Robertson's (1992, 1994) early introduction of the *glocal*.

My use of the term glocal stems from its broad sociological origins that considers the ways in which a local culture (in this case Iranian immigrant youth in Vancouver) critically adapts to or resists global phenomena (such as how they situate themselves within the socio-cultural dimensions of their globalized experiences). The glocal is typically interested in how the co-presence of the local and global shape new meanings and interpretations of a particular phenomena; thus, as a glocal process, citizenship learning takes into account "the commonly interconnected processes of homogenization *and* heterogenization" (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007, p. 134). In this study, participants' emphasis on place and language deployment serve as prominent markers of citizenship learning informed by a glocal frame.

The findings demonstrate that the immigrant experience is informed by rich and nuanced understandings of place as a marker of citizenship. On the one hand, participants' lived experiences within the diaspora and implicit and explicit negotiation of their two identities trouble the notion that citizenship is connected to a single geographic belonging. Rather, it is understood as a sense of belonging to imagined spaces and places, such as an Iran that they pine for, while they may not have actually experienced in their adult life or to the world, in popular self-descriptions of being a 'global citizen'. At the same time, this study provides evidence that the notion of place maintains an importance in their lives. Participants ascribe spatial divisions and distinctions of belonging such as feelings of rootedness in the North Shore or making a clear distinction between their affiliation for North Vancouver versus West Vancouver.

What these simultaneous and seemingly oppositional expressions of spatial belongings tell us is that young immigrants, as discussed in the findings chapters, are embedded in the social, cultural, political, and economic realities on a global scale and thus adopt a citizen identity reflective of that. However, they also question what it means to belong and where their

citizen identity is most grounded. In effect, place becomes an important marker of identity and belonging, which grounds the complexities of managing a placeless global identity. Geographic boundaries, thus, facilitate a construction of national belonging (to Canada), which are articulated and bound by local belongings (to a city). These "place-based notions of identity" (Yue, 2009, p. 779) rooted in the complex configurations of a diaspora identity are useful for capturing the complex ways in which the participants in this study strive to manage the local from the global. This process is, as Massy (1998) argues "a reworking of the geographical imagination of culture which has been well captured in the formulation, from 'roots' to 'routes'" (p. 123).

Similarly, language deployment is one site in which the immigrant experience is constructed within the glocal. It is both a means of situating a citizen identity and a process of citizenship learning that provides insights into how participants assert a hierarchy of integration and loyalty to their Iranian roots. Pennycook's (2003, 2007) analysis of the ways in which language is constructed within popular cultural flows of local and global geographies is helpful for understanding how the participants in this study draw on language as a way to situate their nuanced immigrant experiences. These experiences are informed by the temporal period in Canada, their age, and the popular cultural context with which they identify. Thus, as they negotiate how they use Farsi and English in particular contexts and with whom, they are making a choice to assert a particular identity as a means of belonging. In effect, the immigrant youths engagement with language is akin to Giulianotti & Robertson's (2007) typology of glocalization as *transformation*, wherein individuals positively engage with new cultural practices and meanings, as evidenced by the use of a hybrid Farsi-English language, adopting a Farsi accent, or using textual interfaces such as Facebook, to showcase their linguistic (amongst other)

differences. Transformation, thus "involves social actors generating a conceptual relocation of their local culture within a global cultural ecumene" (p. 147). This phenomena is particular relevant to diaspora youth who, as Massey (1998) reminds us are in constant struggle to situate themselves within the 'cultures' that the find themselves and to build a hybrid culture that speaks to the complex dimensions of their lives.

The above analysis begins to unpack the ways in which place and language are interwoven dimensions of citizenship learning within the immigrant experience; both are constituted within a glocal sphere wherein participants' strive to situate belonging, cultural capital, and identity. Cultural citizenship, as a learning process from *bottom-up influences* helps to situate participants engagement with the cultural everyday, as informed by their exposure to and experiences with migration, the webs of power in by which they are implicated, and their socialization processes. In effect, their experiences result in negotiating their global affiliations while maintaining a relationship with the home nation and preserving cultural lineage and a social consciousness (Flores & Benmayor, 1997).

8.4.3 Review of key findings

The findings from the third research question in this study, concerned with participants 'globalized' experiences, has elucidated that influences from the top-down and bottom-up equally inform their understanding of and learning for citizenship. Their glocal experiences yield different forms of engagement within the diaspora and how they engage with the notion of citizenship. The central notion of *dispersions* from ones homeland, as articulated in discourse of diaspora studies, is useful for troubling the dominant understanding of citizenship as connected to the nation and nationalism. The reality of dispersion in the current global era results in, what I

call, a 'diaspora capital' in which the experience of dispersion no longer isolates individuals from the home country. Rather the web of connections to 'home' from different global sites provides renewed meanings for how diaspora individuals ascribe meaning to and articulate their citizenship. In effect, in this study, the ways in which participants responded to the Green Movement is informed by varied dispersion, and by extension, contributes to the meanings and interpretations they ascribe to citizenship.

Additionally, the findings have revealed that participants' global experiences are not just sites of learning citizenship, but politicized sites of citizenship learning informed by both the structures governing their lives and the social processes in which they participate. Participants global experiences are politicized insofar as it is a process about "the learning of the self and of the relationship of self and other…it is articulated in perceptions of the self as an active agency and a social actors shape by relations with others" (Delanty, 2003, p. 602). In effect, this research question has highlighted that the ways in which participants engage with social citizenship is informed by their varied global and local experiences, which by extension, inform their processes of engaging with and learning citizenship.

8.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have made the case that citizenship is a process of learning within individuals' lived experiences across inclusion and exclusion, migratory, and glocalized contexts. This process of learning informs an understanding of and engagement with citizenship. While experiences are varied, the findings confirm three constitutive dimensions across participants' experiences and engagement with citizenship, as introduced throughout the dissertation. Firstly, the meanings and interpretations given to citizenship are informed by the

ways in which varied dimensions of identity are central in the lives of Iranian immigrant youth. Secondly, geographic and imaginative boundaries of membership inform participants' attitudes, interpretations of and engagement with citizenship. Finally, participants' informal experiences across social, cultural, political, national, and intra-national sites yield processes of learning citizenship. Together, these dimensions yield the framework of an *immigrant youth citizen identity*. In the following chapter, these three dimensions will be the starting point for offer recommendations for the reform to existing models of citizenship education, as is bears on the lives of immigrant youth in Canada.

9 Recommendations and conclusions

This study illuminates young Iranian immigrants' experiences with citizenship and learning for citizenship. Earlier, I proposed the concept of an *immigrant youth citizen identity* as a tool with which to make sense of this study's empirical findings, as informed by theoretical approaches to citizenship associated with diaspora studies, cultural citizenship cultural studies. Chapter 8 discussed this study's main findings in relation to the concept. In the concluding chapter, I use the heuristic of an immigrant youth citizen identity to highlight the methodological and theoretical contributions of this study. Additionally, I offer recommendations for the improvement of existing models of citizenship education for immigrant youth in Canada. I conclude with a discussion of how this study can be used as a launching pad for further theoretical and practical interventions in this area.

9.1 Contributions of an immigrant youth citizen identity

9.1.1 Contribution of ethnographic methods

This study lends support to the use of ethnographic methods for data collection in qualitative research of citizenship with young immigrants. Methods such as 'hanging out' enabled a rich, in-depth exploration of immigrant youth's formal and informal experiences of migration, identity, intergenerational issues, inclusions and exclusions, and social lives. Not only did this provide an opportunity for participants to share important issues in their lives, but it also enabled me to unpack the concept of citizenship as a substantive concept. Issues of citizenship came to light in the subtlest ways and in the most fleeting of moments. Ongoing involvement in the lives of individuals provided opportunities for me to pick up on the subtle moments and expressions specific to immigrant youth identity, such as the moment when a participant

159

switched from speaking English to Farsi or how public/private they would make aspects of their identities within the mainstream.

Additionally, I found the use of social networking forums as sites of participant observation useful for unpacking how social dimensions of citizenship are expressed. Social network forums – as an extension of (or, in some cases, as primary) social networks and gathering places – provided rich textual material that revealed the nuanced ways that immigrant youth's identities and belongings are articulated. This material adds to interview data which reveals rich understanding of citizenship as expressed through narratives of immigrant youth's experiences across various sites. Researchers seeking to collect qualitative data with youth on substantive dimensions of citizenship should consider using ethnographic methods as a window into seemingly mundane daily experiences in order to augment interview data.

9.1.2 Theoretical contribution

To interpret the findings summarized in the previous chapter, I drew on elements of cultural studies, diaspora studies, and cultural citizenship. By integrating these theories, I aim to provide an explanatory framework that focuses on three elements of an *immigrant youth citizen identity*.

A cultural studies approach provides a framework with which to explore identity as a *shifting process situated across spatial and temporal sites and which is multiple, intersecting and interlocking*. This approach allowed me to unpack immigrant youth's identity in relation to history, geography, and social and cultural context at strategic and enunciative sites (Hall, 2010). Specifically, the framework reveals how immigrant youth citizenship identity is constituted by migratory experiences. In effect, participants' identities between two or more nations, and within

the global, trouble dominant conceptions of citizenship that are focused on singular identities and identifications.

The critical diasporas studies' concept of dispersions (migration from homeland, homeland orientations and the maintenance of boundaries) (Brubaker, 2005) serves as a framework with which to explore citizenship *as situated within and across multiple constructed boundaries of membership*. A diaspora framework allows me to examine how the meanings and interpretations of diaspora are in constant flux for the population under study. Specifically, this framework reveals how participants redefine what constitutes 'home' and how orientations to home are developed. Consequently, the idea that citizenship can be equated with the nation or nationalism is troubled insofar as Iranian immigrant youth demonstrate their engagement with citizenship across geographic and imaginative boundaries.

Finally, cultural citizenship's focus on cultural recognition, as well as political and economic rights, provides a framework for engaging with *citizenship as an iterative process of learning*. Expanding on the notion of citizenship as a process of learning (Delanty, 2003), I demonstrated that citizenship is a relational process between individuals and the systems and structures in which they are implicated. The framework conceptualizes citizenship both within formal and informal contexts and also as constituted top-down and bottom-up. Specifically, the framework provides a theoretical landscape on which to explore how both the structures and social processes in which individuals are implicated are politicized as sites of learning citizenship.

9.2 Recommendations for citizenship education

This dissertation analyzed young immigrants' informal experiences of citizenship learning with the goal of offering recommendations for models of learning citizenship within formal schooling contexts. Education theorists emphasize that schools are sites of teaching informal and formal citizenship to youth (Buckingham, 2000; Osler & Starkey, 2003). However, in Canada it is increasingly clear that citizenship education fails to address informal dimensions of citizenship, while teaching of the formal dimensions of citizenship is limited. To address this issue, the recommendations below aim to offer alternative approaches to citizenship education for Canadian formal schooling.

My recommendations are three-fold. First, I emphasize the need for a conceptual commitment to move beyond citizenship as conceptualized within the national context. Second, I highlight the importance of a curricular commitment to the lived experiences of learners. Third, I advocate for a pedagogical commitment to informal and experiential modes of learning. While these recommendations derive from my analysis of the experiences of Iranian immigrant youth learners, they also serve as a heuristic for improving citizenship education for a broad spectrum of learners.

9.2.1 Recommendation: Citizenship education for situating a citizen identity

While young immigrants express a rich understanding of formal citizenship, this understanding does not inform the ways in which they situate themselves as citizens. Rather, social dimensions of citizenship – constituted by the ways in which young immigrants engage with aspects of their identities – are central to how they situate themselves as citizens. To address

this dynamic, citizenship education must emphasize substantive dimensions of citizenship that are relevant to the lived experiences of learners. The focus ought to be on the different ways in which identity – as a dimension of citizenship – are articulated.

This would involve curricular content that highlights not just *a* citizen identity, vis-à-vis geographic affiliations or cultural, ethnic, or linguistic ties, but rather curricula that engages citizenship as a practice that entails occupying multiple identities and multiple spaces in which these identities operate and come into contact with one another. In other words, the curricula should strive to engage with central notions of identity – such as how identities are formed, the historical and contemporary context of identity politics, and identities as competing sites – as they inform current contexts of formal and substantive citizenship.

Pedagogically, this commitment requires models of learning that allow learners to explore their multiple identities (such as identifying as a Baha'i-Muslim, refugee to Canada) and the ways in which the overlapping, contradictory, or complimentary aspects of their identities shape their citizen identity. Highlighting differences within and across identities as an analytic tool facilitates, as Dlamini (2002) points out, "an understanding of the fragile nature of identities that are transforming into borderlands characterized by different languages, voices and experiences" (p. 53). This can be achieved through mapping exercises, narratives, or story telling. First-hand understanding of how identities are situated can then be used as a starting point for unpacking the ways in which identities inform the different ways that people are permitted to or choose to engage with citizenship. In effect, the conceptual and curricular commitments coupled with pedagogies that enable learners to unpack their identities enables movement beyond superficial multicultural identities to explore the tensions and contradictions

within and across identities and how that informs a citizen identity and articulations of citizenship.

9.2.2 Recommendation: Citizenship education as a meeting place of the 'glocal'

Canadian citizenship education's primary focus on citizens' relationship with the nation has been widely critiqued (Joshee, 2004) and contrasted with alternative critical models of citizenship education (Eidoo, Ingram, MacDonald, Nabavi, Pashby & Stille, in press). Migrant youth's experiences with citizenship are not necessarily bound by a nationality or nationalism towards one place, However, migrant youth's two or more national contexts, in addition to their global trajectories of migration, are unacknowledged within popular conceptions of citizenship and in their learning for citizenship. Thus, conceptual approaches to citizenship education that integrate the glocal (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007) can provide a space from which to engage with their unique relationship with the nation.

Curricular models of citizenship education that engage national aspects of citizenship by way of glocal issues can provide a rich framework for building connections between substantive and formal citizenship. For example, curricula can expand a focus of citizenship within the 'nation' by addressing: the social, economic, and political contexts of migration as a component of how citizenship is articulated in peoples lives; the conditions driving forced and free border-crossings; citizenship as soil or blood rights; and the varied political contexts of citizenship within Aboriginal communities. In effect, while the nation remains an important dimension within such curricula, it places the focus on global *and* local issues, thus allowing learners to situate their own lived experiences in relation to these broader topics.

An exploration of citizenship as a glocal concept can be pedagogically addressed through experiential approaches where learners engage with a conceptual issue that they then link back to local issues in their communities. Experiential learning approaches that engage learners with issues through a service learning model in their communities can be useful and would serve two purposes: firstly, making a direct connection between abstract concepts of citizenship and lived dimensions of citizenship, and, secondly, engaging citizens who are learning citizenship in the process of engaging with the local issues.

9.2.3 Recommendation: Citizenship education as education for justice

This dissertation addressed how the lives of young immigrants are shaped by individualized and institutionalized exclusions, affecting their attitudes toward, and interpretations of, citizenship. These experiences are often unacknowledged and unaccounted for within the framework of Canadian multiculturalism. To address this flaw, a conceptual shift in citizenship education that engages with notions of justice ought to take place. This engagement should take place from both national and global dimensions. Additionally, it should approach citizenship not as something solely linked with individual rights and responsibilities, but rather as the condition which facilitates individuals' positions within structures of inclusion and exclusion.

Curricular content that highlights historical and current contexts of justice and injustice in both the multicultural context of Canada and the globe from political, economic, social, and cultural spheres (Dei, 1996; Giroux, 2006; Rezai-Rashti, 1995) is a useful for making the connection between webs of power and oppression and formal and substantive dimensions of citizenship.

Pedagogically, this can include engaging learners to share individualized and institutionalized experiences of inclusion and exclusion as 'moments' of positive and negative learning of citizenship within their formal, informal, and non-formal educational experiences. Additionally, engaging learners in community-based projects that address a wide variety of topics on issues of justice and oppression, which can then be connected to conceptual commitments of citizenship – as a site of justice – can provide meaningful opportunities for citizenship education praxis.

9.3 Conclusion

It is my hope that this dissertation provided the reader with a thorough understanding of ways in which citizenship – as a concept and as a practice – exists in the lives of young Iranian immigrants in Canada. Throughout this dissertation, I endeavoured to articulate the meanings and interpretations ascribed to citizenship by my research participants, culminating in the concept of an *immigrant youth citizen identity*.

However, the work does not end here. This new conceptual approach to citizenship for migrant youth can be applied within the under-theorized area of 'migrant' youth studies at the intersections of transnational approaches to citizenship, culture, identity, and learning. More practically, the central findings of this study can inform improvements for existing models of citizenship education in Canada. The next step is to build on these recommendations to create renewed models of citizenship education that are relevant to the contexts and conditions of its learners and the current moment of time which it is taught. The recommendations arising out of this study provide a starting point for curriculum developers in this endeavour.

Perhaps the most important insight that this study offers is how young immigrants, despite their all too often tenuous relationship with the nation, as well as their complex geographies of belonging and their bombardment with expectations about how to 'be' citizens, maintain resilience, hope, and a vision for what citizenship has the potential to be. This vision is something borne from the middle space between two or more belongings and a recognition of the opportunities available within the current moment of history. As described by Farhad:

> I think there's some seismic shift happening in the world, in how issues are approached, your role in the world, your path in the world. You're given so many more tools to get something across that may [otherwise] be stuck in the back of your mind for years and years and years. I think, as these things shift, I think the concept of citizenship will shift as well and you'll see much more – the trend is that people are becoming much more conscious of the rights that they have and they're becoming much more conscious about the tools that exist, and the mediums that exist for expressing their discomfort, their dissatisfaction, or their questions, more or less. I think this is really the essence of citizenship: it's to have the right to do these things.

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Appendix 1 - Recruitment poster

Are you an Iranian immigrant to Canada?

Are you between the ages of 19-33?

Have you completed at least one year of high-school in Canada?

If you answered yes to <u>all</u> of the above questions, then you may want to be part of a research study exploring the experiences of Iranian/Persian immigrants in Canada. As part of my PhD degree in Education, I would like to learn about *your* experiences of identity, belonging and citizenship.

Your commitment will involve one individual interview for about an hour. With your permission, I will also spend time with you to observe and take notes on personal and social events. We can discuss the details of your commitment, in order to assist you with making a decision to participate.

If you are interested in participating or would like to learn more, you can either:
- Email me at [XXX](XXX)
- Call me at XXX
- Add me as a Facebook friend (Maryam Nabavi)

Thank you for considering being a part of this study and contributing to building unprecedented academic knowledge about young Iranian/Persian immigrants.

I hope to hear from you!

*Maryam

Appendix 2 - Self-complete questionnaire

Do you identify as an Iranian immigrant to Canada?

Are you between the ages of 18-33?

Have you completed at least one year of high-school in Canada?

If you answered yes to <u>all</u> of the above questions, then you may wish to be part of a research study exploring experiences of identity, belonging, citizenship and being Iranian/Persian in Canada.

To fulfill the requirements of my PhD degree, I am investigating the key ways in which 'citizenship learning' takes place for Iranian immigrant youth (ages 18-33). Citizenship learning is the process which refers to the social, political and cultural processes by which an individual gains a sense of identity, belonging and integration. Specifically, I am interested in learning about the relationship between local, national and global influences in the lives of Iranian immigrants and the impacts this has on identity and belonging.   I will then use this knowledge to offer considerations for the reform of citizenship for immigrant youth in Canada.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please fill out the below questionnaire and send it back to Maryam Nabavi at mnabavi@interchange.ubc.ca so that we can arrange a time to meet. All information provided will be kept strictly confidential and will only be reviewed by Maryam Nabavi for the purposes of participant selection.

---

1.   Name: _____

2.   Contact info (email/phone): _____

3.   Gender: □ Female   □ Male

4.   Age: _____

5. I identify as (mark all that apply): □ Iranian □ Persian □ Canadian □ Other _____ [16]

6. What year did you leave Iran? _____

7. What year did you come to Canada? _____

8. I am a Canadian citizen □ Yes □ No

9. How often, if at all, do you visit Iran? _____

10. Do you have immediate family living in Iran (e.g. parent, siblings)?
□ Yes (whom: _____) □ No

11. The religion(s) I was born into is/are: _____

12. Religion is a part of my spiritual life: □ Yes (what religion _____) □ No

13. I speak the following languages: _____

14. Me and/or my family left Iran because
_____
_____

15. How many years of high school did you complete in Canada? _____

16. My highest level of education is _____

17. Is there anything you would like to share about yourself that will assist me in learning more about your position as an Iranian immigrant in Vancouver?
_____
_____

Appendix 3 – Profile of participants

Adel is 23 years old. He immigrated to Canada at the age of 12 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. His family moved from Iran to the US when he was 6 years old and back to Iran for 3 years before moving to Canada when he was 12. He primarily socializes with non-Iranians and has an 'unconventional' lifestyle for a young Iranian, such as living on his own at a young age and leaving university to make money.

Bahar is 20 years old. She immigrated to Canada at the age of 16 and completed one year of high school in Canada. She comes from a socio-economically privileged background in Iran, which her family has maintained in Canada. Academic success is very important to her and she is currently completing an undergraduate degree. She does not socialize with non-Iranians and openly expresses her dislike of Canadian culture. She travels back to Iran at least once a year.

Donya is 21 years old. She immigrated to Canada at the age of 12 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. She comes from a socio-economically privileged background in Iran, which her family has maintained in Canada. She primarily socializes with Iranians and considers herself an activist. She is active in the Green Movement, a university student, and volunteer of various causes. She openly expresses pride of her Iranian and Canadian identities.

Farhad is 27 years old. He immigrated to Canada at the age of 4 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. His comes from a politically active family in Iran. Members of his immediate family were separated during the migration period and it took several years before they were reunited. He is active in political issues concerning Iran as well as issues elsewhere. He has strong social and political views and was planning on moving to Europe for further education at the time we met.

Homa is 23 years old. She came to Canada at the age of 3 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. Her Mujahideen father was killed in combat in Iraq and She arrived in Canada with her mother as a refugee from Iraq. She has been active with the Mujahideen community her whole life and feels ambiguous about her involvement beyond a social level. She lives with her mother and completing an undergraduate degree. She has been actively involved in various social causes and most recently with the Green Movement.

Ideen is 19 years old. He came to Canada at the age of 15 and has completed three years of high school in Canada. His comes from a socio-economically privileged background in Iran, which his family has maintained in Canada. He emphasizes his Iranian cultural identity and dismissive of politics. He has traveled extensively and sojourns to Iran regularly.

Kiana is 25 years old. She immigrated to Canada at the age of 11 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. Her family was socio-economically comfortable in Iran and they lost the status and financial security in Canada. Her experiences are largely constituted by the ways

in which she and her family have been excluded in Canada. She is active in the Green Movement and found it to be a meaningful place to bring to bear her Iranian identity.

Nader is 25 years old. He immigrated to Canada at the age of 13 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. His father died within a year of moving to Canada and he experienced academic and social challenges. He dropped out of high school for a period of time and currently in university completing an undergraduate degree. His friends are primarily Iranian and he also considers being culturally and socially savvy with non-Iranians. His mother works overseers and he lives with his sister.

Nazila is 29 years old. She immigrated to Canada at the age of 9 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. She came to Canada with her mother and sister and several years later her mother sponsored her father to join them. Her parents got divorced shortly after and she has a strained relationship with both her parents. Her primary circles of friends were non-Iranians and in recent years, she has made some male Iranian friends. She left her post-secondary education to work.

Nilofar is 30 years old. She immigrated to Canada at the age of 17 and has completed one year of high school in Canada. Her parents were both professionals in Iran and lost their social and economic stability in Canada. She moved to Toronto shortly after high school and back to Vancouver. She is unconventional compared to Iranians such as leaving post-secondary education to become a hair stylist. She lives with her boyfriend.

Salar is 26 years old. He immigrated to Canada at the age of 1 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. His father is Muslim and his mother is Baha'i. His parents interreligious marriage inhibited professional opportunities in Iran and hence a motivating factor of migration. His parents are now divorced and he lives with his mother. He is an avid musician or Persian classical instruments. He learned to speak Farsi with the other children in school when his family moved to Vancouver from Ontario at the age 11.

Vahid is 24 years old. He immigrated to Canada at the age of 16 and has completed four years of high school in Canada. He comes from a socio-economically privileged background in Iran, which his family has maintained in Canada. He an avid spokesperson for preserving Iranian history and culture and has been involved in several large-scale initiatives of such nature at UBC. He frequently travels and often to Iran. He expresses pride for being Iranian as well as Canadian.

Appendix 4 – Semi-structured interview protocol

First Interview:
1. Tell me a bit about yourself – If I said, who is XX, what would you say?
   - How long have you been in Canada for? What do you do? Who do you live with? Ask questions about those areas that they highlighted in questionnaire

2. Who are your friends? Do you hang out with mostly Persians or non-Persians? What do you do for fun? What sorts of things are you involved in?

3. Tell me about your and your families experiences of coming to Canada.
   - Why did they leave Iran?
   - How/when did it happen?
   - What do you remember?
   - Tell me about the initial days in Canada

4. How has your family adjusted to being in Canada?
   - What have been some of the good things that have come of it?
   - What have been some of the struggles?
   - What do your parents do here?

5. What is your relationship like with your family?
   - What are some things that you don't share about yourself with them?

6. Is being in a romantic relationship an important part of your life? Are you currently in a relationship?

7. In what ways do you think your (or your families) social class has or hasn't changed as a result of coming to Canada? In other words, do you think your social class would have been different if you had stayed in Iran?

8. When you left Iran, do you feel like you left any part of yourself there? How so?

9. How do you identify yourself culturally? And how about nationally?

10. In what ways is being Iranian and Canadian part of your daily experiences?

11. What are some things about your Iranian culture that is a struggle for you? Is it a struggle for you to be Iranian in Canada?

12. What have been some instances when you've felt proud/ashamed of being Iranian? Can you give some examples?

13. What are the things about your Iranian identity that your Canadian friends would not get? And how about aspects of your Canadian identity that your Iranian friends/people don't get? In what ways has this been a challenge for you?

14. Can you share some of your experiences of being in Canada? _or_ What does it mean to be an Iranian in Vancouver? (what are some good/bad experiences?)

15. Tell me about your experiences in school. In what ways was it a positive/negative experience? [in what ways have different parts of your identity been absent/present?]

16. In what ways have you experienced discrimination (as a child or adult)? What were the contexts in which these happened? [in Iran and/or Canada]

17. Have you experienced any other barriers to being in Canada (individually, culturally, institutionally) [build on intersections from previous questions]

18. If you were transported back to Iran, do you think you'd be accepted for you who you are? (socially) [why/not?]

19. Are you familiar with the idea of citizenship education and, if so, what does it mean to you?

20. Tell me about your experiences in school (formal and informal).

21. What does multiculturalism mean to you?
    - What role does it play in your life in relation to your Iranian identity?

22. Can you share an experience you've had in which the ideas of multiculturalism was really central to you?

23. In what ways do you feel like you can express aspects of your identity in Canada, that you wouldn't have been able to in Iran?

24. How Iranian do you feel in relation to Canada? And vice-versa?

25. In what ways do you feel Canadian? _Or_ what does being Canadian mean to you?

26. In what parts of the world does your extended family live? How do you keep in contact with them? Do you have a relationship with them?

27. In what ways are you connected with issues going on in Iran?
    - Tell me more about why you do/don't feel connected
    - In what ways do you feel like those are also your issues?

28. What other social issues are important to you?
    - How are you involved in these issues?
    - How did you gain interest in these issues?

29. What does 'home' mean to you? Where is 'home' for you?

30. Where do you feel like you belong? _Or_ What is your community?

31. How, if at all, do you use social media (social networking sites, text, youtube)?

32. In what situations do you identity as Iranian? In what situations do you identify as Canadian?

33. Are there other things you'd like to share about yourself.

<u>Second Interview</u>

1. Tell me what citizenship means to you?
   [status, identity, agency? Probe further on their citizenship]

2. What does Canadian citizenship mean to you in your life?

3. How did you come to have this understanding or experience of Canada? Where did you learn this?)

4. What does it mean to feel Canadian?

5. In what ways do you feel Canadian?

6. In what ways have you experienced the need to 'become [more] Canadian'? in what contexts?

7. Tell me a bit more about the ways that Canada is or is not home for you?

8. Last time we talked about being and Iranian-Canadian, tell me more about how you identify yourself ?

   • When do you first start to feel Canadian? / Do you want to feel (more) Canadian?

9. What are some of the main things that you would think of Canada? _or_ how would you describe Canada to someone?

10. Is there anything more you want to share with me about your perceptions of Canada and your experiences of citizenship?

Appendix 5 – Consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Educational Studies
University of British Columbia
2125 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4
Tel: (604)822-5374
www.edst.educ.ubc.ca

Consent Form

**National and Global Analysis of Citizenship Learning for Immigrant Youth:
Toward a New Pedagogical Model**

PhD Candidate: Maryam Nabavi
Department of Educational Studies
University of British Columbia
Phone: XXX
Email: XXX

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Handel K. Wright
Department of Educational Studies
University of British Columbia
Phone: XXX
Email: XXX

Dear Participant,

My name is Maryam Nabavi and I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia under the supervision of Professor Handel Wright (the principal investigator for this project). I would like to ask you to participate in a research study, which I am conducting for my doctoral dissertation. This document is intended to inform you about your rights and responsibilities if/when you decide to participate in this research project. Please keep this document for your records, for my contact information, and for future reference if/when your participation in this project changes. What follows is an explanation of my research project and a detailed description of what it means to participate in this project. Please read this document to decide if you are interested and willing to participate and feel free to contact me if you have further questions/concerns regarding this document or the project itself. Thank you for your time and consideration in this research.

1.Purpose of the Study: To fulfill the requirements of my PhD degree, I am investigating the key ways in which citizenship learning takes place for first generation Iranian immigrant youth, directly embedded in the social and cultural dimensions of globalization. Specifically, I will explore the relationship between local, national and global influences in the lives of Iranian immigrant youth and how that impacts their citizenship learning. The second objective my study is to use the knowledge gained from the first part of the study to offer pedagogical considerations for citizenship education that accounts for the social, cultural and political differences which inform citizenship learning for immigrant youth in Canada. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are an Iranian immigrant youth (self-identified as a first generation immigrant born outside of Canada, aged 18-33) who currently lives in Metro Vancouver. Your involvement will be approximately 8-12 hours over a six-month period. You participation in this study is voluntary; no payment for your participation is offered.

2.Research Procedures: Interview, focus group and observation - You are being asked to participate in one individual interview and one focus group interview, each of which will be approximately one hour. Interviews will be in either Farsi or English (whichever you prefer) and with your permission, I would also like to audio record the conversation so as to not worry about taking notes while talking, but will not do so if you do not wish to be recorded. You will have access to all interview transcripts of you so desire. During the interviews you will be asked to share various aspects of your experiences of migration to Canada as well as social, cultural and educational experiences in Canada. Should there be a need for a follow up interview, we will meet a second time for approximately one hour. You are also requested to participate in one focus group discussion with other research participants where we will discuss similar themes which may have arisen during the individual interviews. Finally, with your consent, I will observe and take ethnographic field notes on personal, social and community events (e.g. parties, cultural celebrations, activist gatherings) or any meetings that you may be involved in during the six month period.

3.Benefits to Participation: This research project has been constructed with both the participants' and the researcher's interests in mind. I have tried to create a project that will be enjoyable and enlightening. I hope that your participation will provide enhanced awareness of your sense of identity and belonging in the context of your interactions with family, school, national and non-national communities. Also, your participation means that you are participating in the creation of sociological knowledge about the diverse experiences of an understudied population – Iranian immigrant youth in Canada, and in effect contributing to the reform of citizenship education.

4.Potential Risks or Discomforts: If at any time during the research you wish to withdraw, please let me know. You are under no obligation to participate and you can terminate your participation at any time. If you decide to take part in this project, you can decide on the terms of your participation and renegotiate them at any time.

5.Confidentiality: All of the information that you share with me will be kept strictly confidential. No names or identifying information whatsoever will be used on copies of individual files and recordings. My notes will have only your pseudonym (or false name) for the purpose of identification. The files will be kept for five years, as per UBC policy, in a locked filing cabinet as well as in computer files protected by passwords known only to the researcher. The only other person who may have access to the data will be my supervisor, Professor Handel Wright, who is subject to the same terms and conditions of

confidentiality outlined in this document. All researchers have a legal obligation to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of research participants, unless the participant reports any of the following: (1) The desire to harm himself/herself, (2) the intent to harm others. All other information will remain confidential.

6.Dissemination of Information: This study forms part of the requirements for the PhD degree sought by Maryam Nabavi. The thesis, once completed and accepted, will be a public document. In addition, journal articles may arise from the data and the dissertation may be adapted into a book-length publication. All materials pertaining to the dissertation, as well as the dissertation itself will be available for you if you wish to see them.

7.Contact for information about the study: If you have any questions or desire further information with regard to this project, you may contact Maryam Nabavi or Professor Handel Wright at the email addresses and phone numbers above.

8.Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects: If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research participant, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at (604) 822-8598.

9.Consent: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

I have read this subject consent form and understand what it says. I am participating freely without any pressure from the researcher, Maryam Nabavi. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form. The researcher has further reviewed this informed consent form with me, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions concerning all aspects of my participation in this project.

By signing this form I agree to participate in this research project, and to give the researcher, Maryam Nabavi, permission to record information as outlined in this consent form.

Signature of Participant_____   Date_____

Please Print Your Name _____

Appendix 6 – Organized participant observation sites

Event	Date	Location	Description
Human Rights Thru Arts	December 14, 2009	Vancouver Public Library	This is a non-partisan event focusing on human and civil rights in solidarity with the people of Iran. Why Arts? Musicians, performers, artists, writers, and concerned citizens will use Arts as a medium to express their solidarity with the Iranian people.
Green Movement	January 2, 2010	Pacific Cinematheque	Fundariser: Film screening of two Iranian films
Kereshmeh Ensemble With The VSO	January 10, 2010	Chan Centre for the Performing Arts	The Kereshmeh Ensemble is one of Canada's foremost Persian music ensembles. In this extraordinary concert, they will perform music of profound beauty and spirituality with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.
Open Letter to free Iranian Students	January 21, 2010	Online	Open Letter to the Head of Judiciary asking for the release of Student Activists in Prison
Iran's Fight for Democracy-- Discussion	January 26, 2010	West Vancouver Library	The Northshore Greens host a discussion to highlight the world's largest pro-democracy movement – taking place in Iran today. The local North Vancouver Green Party association has invited several well-informed speakers to discuss human rights, election events, social media and the democratic protest.
Protest Against Executions of Political	February 6, 2010	Vancouver Art Gallery	To stop the machine of execution in Iran and to continue our protest against Islamic Regime, we will hold our weekly protest in Vancouver and

Prisoners			in Victoria.
Rally & March in Solidarity with Massive Demonstrations in Iran on Feb 11ᵗʰ	February 11, 2010	Vancouver Art Gallery	We invite you to join us for a rally in Vancouver in solidarity with the people's ongoing struggles for a free, equal and humane Iran. We will be working with all the different organizations in the city to send a united message of solidarity and resistance on this historic day.
Wear GREEN for freedom in Iran!	February 11, 2010	In Iran and elsewhere	On February 11, the Revolution day, people in Iran will take to the streets in peaceful protests for democracy and against the human rights violations of the security forces. Wear GREEN for Iran on Thursday, February 11th 2010!
HUMAN CHAIN- in Support of the Iranians' Struggle for Freedom	February 13, 2010	Marine Drive and Taylor Way, West Vancouver	Human Chain on the Lions Gate Bridge in the aftermath of 22 Bahman and in support of Iranians' struggle for freedom.
GOLD for Canada, GREEN for IRAN	February 27, 2010	Olympic Cauldron at Vancouver Convention Centre	Sign "The Green Scroll of Democracy for Iran" and rally on Granville
Rally for International Women's Day	March 6, 2010	Vancouver Art Gallery	In Support of Women's Struggle for Freedom, Equality & Humane Society
Nowrooz Gala	April 3,	Centennial Theatre,	This is a fund raising event in support of human rights and to celebrate the Persian new year as a

	2010	North Vancouver, BC, Canada	part of a two-week long Norooz Art festival organized by a non-profit organizations
Dr. Shirin Ebadi Lecture	Apr 23, 2010	Kay Meek Centre	The first Iranian and the first Muslim woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, Dr. Shirin Ebadi brings her message of peace and justice to West Vancouver's Kay Meek Centre

Facebook Groups:

Group	Description of Group
UBC Persian Club	UBC Persian Club is an independent, non-profit organization with the goal of promoting Persian related activities for students of UBC and community in general
Green Vancouver Persians	Vancouver Persians is an independent, non-profit organization with the goal of promoting Persian related activities for Iranian in B.C and community in general
Hafez Literature Club	To promote Farsi and international literature among all communities To bring people together for humane causes. To promote love, respect and understanding between all
Social and Cultural Events – Vancouver	This site provides up-to-date information on what is currently going on in the Vancouver Iranian scene.
XXX for GSS President	Information pertaining to the campaign efforts of an Iranian UBC graduate student running for the president of the Graduate Student Society.
Green Student Movement Vancouver	The Green Student Movement of Vancouver is not affiliated with any political party or faction and is only committed to supporting the ever growing Green Movement of the people of Iran. We believe in a gradual home-grown reform

	process which would result in a polity that not only adheres to the principles of Human Rights, tolerance, and inclusiveness, but also firmly opposes sexist, racist and ethnic discriminations.
Vancouver 1 Million Signatures Campaign	Let's advocate for the largest non-violent and civil women's campaign at the heart of The Middle East called "One Million Signatures Campaign" in IRAN.
I am a Green Peaceful Iranian	I am a member of Iran's Green Movement, I announce my commitment to a nonviolent civic resistance
Not Your Typical Persian Group	This is your non typical Persian group on Facebook: • You like googoosh, but you also like the Roots and Feist...but you still feel like listening to Benyamin sometimes. • Your friends aren't necessarily persian and you tend to get along just as well with non-persians (most of the time you get along better). • Your main ambition isn't to become a doctor or a lawyer or an engineer (although some of us choose to do so on our own) and your parents support your alternative career choices. • Your parents still make you feel guilty about how you're not acting like a typical Persian. • You don't wear designer handbags/ glasses when you can't really afford to...and your main ambition in life isn't to own a BMW/Mercedes/Audi. • You go to art shows and museums and rock shows and hip hop shows and hipster parties and your friends-of-other-races' parties, but you still love cha-ee and noon paneer-o- sabzee and chelo-kabab. • You don't have a nose-job, boob job, lip injection, botox, tattooed makeup, or any other sort of superficial 'job' although you have been told by other Persians that you should really consider it. • Looks are not of the utmost importance and you are interested in other more important things like politics, society, art, culture, humanity... • You place more importance on personal merit and quality rather than on living through your parents money/name. • You would know if you belong in this group because it has been a constant struggle throughout your life to try to figure out where you fit in.