

# **Negotiating Citizenship(s) in Young Adult Speculative Novels**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION: GENRE (THEORY) AND CITIZENSHIP

In a 2011 article titled “Cormac McCarthy and the Aesthetics of Exhaustion”, Andrew Hoberek, in his discussion of McCarthy’s novel *The Road* (2006), observes a “return to genre fiction” by McCarthy and other writers that are generally considered as ‘literary authors’ (486). He describes this process as “an emergent phenomenon in which genre fiction resumes its status as a respectable terrain for serious writers” (486). Leaving aside the fact that this comment mirrors “the widespread and persistent prejudice against genre” (484) that Hoberek seeks to challenge in his article, it is interesting to note that while a ‘turn to genre’ by authors of ‘literary’ adult fiction causes considerable academic interest and leads some critics to proclaim a ‘generic turn’ (cf. Lanzendörfer 1), the fact that authors of young adult literature have produced genre fiction for decades – and, one might add, that academics have produced critical works about these fictions<sup>1</sup> – seems to be almost disregarded by critics such as Hoberek. The last two and a half decades alone have seen the incredible success of J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007), Stephnie Meyer’s *Twilight* series (2005-2008) and, more recently, the dystopian and/or post-/disaster<sup>2</sup> worlds displayed in many novels, such as Suzanne Collins’s *Hunger Games* trilogy (2008-2010), to name only the most prominent example. Speculative literature thus clearly has been at the forefront of fiction produced for young people for a while, yet in terms of addressing questions of genre especially with regards to the recent success of dystopian and/or post-/disaster novels, the discussion so far has been curiously reductive, especially in public media discourses but also, to a certain extent in academic ones.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, Hintz and Ostry’s edited volume *Utopian and Dystopian Fiction for Children and Young Adults* dates from 2003 and thus predates Hoberek’s observation regarding ‘adult’ and ‘literary’ speculative fiction as well as the publication of young adult speculative publishing phenomena like the *Twilight* series or the *Hunger Games* trilogy by several years. Also cf., for instance, Michael Levy’s article “The Young Adult Science Fiction Novel as Bildungsroman”, dating from 1999, Farah Mendlesohn’s article, “Is There Any Such Thing as Children’s Science Fiction? A Position Piece” from 2004 as well as her monograph, *The Intergalactic Playground: A Critical Study of Children’s and Teens’ Science Fiction*, published in 2009, Yvonne Hammer’s 2004 article “Confronting Ecological Futures”, Elaine Ostry’s article ““Is He Still Human? Are You?”: Young Adult Science Fiction in the Posthuman Age” or Kay Sambell’s article “Carnivalizing the Future: A New Approach to Theorizing Childhood and Adulthood in Science Fiction for Young Readers”, both also published in 2004, to name only a few examples. Bradford et al.’s *New World Orders in Contemporary Children’s Literature: Utopian Transformations* (2011) was published in the same year as Hoberek’s article.

<sup>2</sup> A term that is used alternatively and probably more frequently is ‘post-/apocalyptic’ fiction. In this study the term ‘post-/disaster’ is used throughout to denote more clearly the adaptation of the religious idea of ‘apocalypse’ for a now predominantly secular context. Throughout this study, the writing ‘post-/disaster’ with a hyphen and a forward slash is used to refer to textual categories of ‘disaster’ and ‘post-disaster’ simultaneously. When the term ‘post-disaster’ is used without the forward slash it is only this category that is referred to.

Publishers' media and marketing departments have often pitched the fast-paced and "gritty" (Cooper) as well as "edgy, thought-provoking books" (Sarah O'Dedina, children's publisher at Bloomsbury at the time, in Cooper) by Collins and others directly against "the escapism of *Twilight* and its ilk" (O'Dedina, quoted in Cooper) and also of the wizard world created in the *Harry Potter* novels by proclaiming that "[w]izards and vampires are out" (Craig).<sup>3</sup> As can be seen from the publication dates listed above, however, series participating in different speculative genre traditions have appeared with temporal overlap, thus invalidating the claim implied in above media and marketing statements that the 'more serious' dystopian and post-/disaster narratives constitute a critical reaction to the fantastic worlds of *Harry Potter* and, especially, *Twilight*. In fact, other prominent examples like Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993) and Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (1993) have even preceded the fantasy series. Extensive criticism already exists on both of the above mentioned fantasy series, and academic research has been equally quick to take up the most recent publishing trend of dystopian and post-/disaster narratives as a topic for discussion. It is intriguing, however, that it echoes the position Collins's *Hunger Games* trilogy has been assigned in popular culture – namely that of both origin and pinnacle of this (publishing) trend – by having focused especially on her novels.<sup>4</sup> This is furthermore reflected in the speedy canonisation of this trilogy, which now frequently appears on school and university reading lists. Among the titles that have also received repeated academic attention, albeit not in full book studies, are Westerfeld's *Uglies* trilogy and Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy, both considered in this study, as well as Reeve's *Mortal Engines* series and Anderson's title *Feed*. A number of these and other series and titles have actually been published simultaneously

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<sup>3</sup> This is a typical distinction drawn between fantasy on the one hand and other speculative genres, like dystopia or post-/disaster on the other hand, as is further explained in chapter 2.3.

<sup>4</sup> Monographs and edited volumes that deal exclusively with Collins's trilogy: Dunn and Michaud (eds.), *The Hunger Games and Philosophy* (2012); Garriott, Jones and Tylor (eds.), *Space and Place in the Hunger Games* (2014); Henthorne, *Approaching the Hunger Games Trilogy* (2012); Pharr and Clark (eds.), *Of Bread, Blood and the Hunger Games* (2012). Edited volumes that contain a number of articles focusing on Collins's trilogy: Booker (ed.), *Contemporary Speculative Fiction* (2013) (Blackford's, Kniesler's and Connors and Shepard's respective articles); Day, Green-Barteet and Montz (eds.), *Female Rebellion in Young Adult Dystopian Fiction* (2014) (Gilbert-Hickey's, Green-Barteet's, McDonough & Wagner's, Montz's, Pulliam's and Sawyer's respective articles); Hintz, Basu and Broad (eds.), *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults* (2013) (Broad's and Couzelis's respective articles). Curry has also included the trilogy in her monograph *Environmental Crisis in Young Adult Fiction* (2013) and Voigts and Boller have chosen this trilogy as their example of a young adult dystopia in their contribution to their edited volume *Dystopia, Science Fiction, Post-Apocalypse. Classics - New Tendencies - Model Interpretations* (2015). Further articles that discuss Collins's trilogy include (but are not limited to): Brost, "Who Are You When No One's Watching?" (2016), Kurtz, "The Dark Side of Hope" (2017) and Lucey, "Dimensions of Citizenship through the Lens of the *Hunger Games*" (2013).

with or have even preceded Collins's trilogy<sup>5</sup>, underlining the fact that, in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, her trilogy "is only the most visible example of a recent boom in dystopian fiction for young people" (L. Miller).

Apart from a few exceptions, like Anderson's *Feed*, the most successful novels in terms of circulation and general (and academic) recognition have appeared as a series of three or more titles<sup>6</sup>, and while Lloyd's *Carbon Diaries* only has two instalments it is still, importantly, not a stand-alone. It is also the series, not the stand-alone titles, which have been adapted for the screen to immense financial success.<sup>7</sup> As Judith Mohr has pointed out, sales figures are a major reason for the serialisation of titles not only but especially in the segment of young adult literature (cf. 219). The fact that many of the recent young adult novels labelled 'dystopian' appear as part of a series, therefore, can be at least partly attributed to the economic interest of the publishing industry, i.e. increasing profits, which is less concerned with marketing individual authors and/or stand-alone titles than with creating 'brands' by establishing and commissioning from a select few best-selling authors (cf. Falconer, "Cross-Reading" 370; also Taxel 482).<sup>8</sup>

Adolescent readers are therefore targeted as consumers, as for example Mary Hilton and Maria Nikolajeva point out in the introduction to their edited volume *Contemporary Adolescent Literature and Culture: The Emergent Adult* (2012, 1). Many critics have highlighted the commodification of childhood and youth culture<sup>9</sup>, and publishers further this development through very conscious marketing strategies (Hilton and Nikolajeva, 1), for

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<sup>5</sup> For example, Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy: 2002-2011; Dashner's *Trials* trilogy: 2009-2011; Lloyd's *Carbon Diaries* titles: 2008 and 2009; Malley's *Declaration* trilogy: 2007-2010; Reeve's *Mortal Engines* quartet: 2001-2006; Westerfeld's *Uglies* trilogy: 2005-2006.

<sup>6</sup> Four instalments are not uncommon: cf. Jeff Norton's *MetaWars* series (2012-2014), Philip Reeve's *Mortal Engines* series (2001-2006) and Neil Shusterman's *Unwind* series (2007-2014). Malorie Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* series (2001-2008) even comprises five novels. Note that academic research even on Blackman's work, who, as recent Children's Laureate (2013-2015), is certainly well-known, has largely neglected her stand-alone titles and focused on her *Noughts and Crosses* series.

<sup>7</sup> Notably Collins's *Hunger Games* trilogy – four film instalments: *The Hunger Games* (2012), *Catching Fire* (2013), *The Mockingjay Part 1* (2014), *The Mockingjay Part 2* (2015); Roth's *Divergent* trilogy – three film instalments (as per novels): *Divergent* (2014), *Insurgent* (2015), *Allegiant* (2016); Dashner's *Trials* trilogy – three film instalments (as per novels): *The Maze Runner* (2014), *The Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (2015), *The Maze Runner: The Death Cure* (2018). Note that film versions of pre-millennium titles like Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1994) – film version 2014; or Orson Scott Card's *Enders Game* (1985) – film version 2013 have appeared during the same period of time.

<sup>8</sup> For an analysis of the "kinds of of serial storytelling" and their "adapt[ation] and/or [expansion] into other media" (Heinze 153) cf. Heinze's article on "Young Adult Dystopias as Fictional Universes" (2024).

<sup>9</sup> For example Bullen and Mallan, "Local and Global: Cultural Globalization, Consumerism, and Children's Fiction" (2011), Falconer, *The Crossover Novel* (2009), Hintz et al., *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (2013), Hunt, "The Same but Different: Conservatism and Revolution in Children's Fiction" (2009) or Taxel, "The Economics of Children's Book Publishing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (2011).

instance via social media, blogs by a novel's/series's characters, authors' homepages etc.<sup>10</sup> Peter Hunt (2009) criticises this "commercial logic" of twenty-first century young adult publishing when he contends that

the bulk of children's book publishing is in the hands of a small number of large companies, and even those who maintain smaller publishing units within them are driven by the demands of mass-marketing. [...] today, the big sellers [...] are carefully planned, designed and marketed, almost (and sometimes literally) before they are written. The percentage of books that are *not* commissioned is tiny and the 'sameness' is now quite deliberate: the cart of marketing is driving the horse of creativity. (81)

Bullen and Mallan explicitly state that "contemporary young people lack sovereignty over the formation of their culture" and, by quoting Naomi Klein, argue that present-day adolescents are subject to a "colonization not of physical space but of mental space" (66)<sup>11</sup>. The notion of a 'colonisation of the mind' usually refers to a situation in which, "[u]nder colonialism, a colonised people are made subservient to ways of regarding the world which reflect and support colonialist values" (McLeod 16). With regards to the situation of young readers this notion highlights two crucial points: the unequal (binary) power relationship between young reader and adult author and questions of ideology. Thus, while aspects of commodification like marketing campaigns and economic interests play a significant role in the proliferation and distribution of literary 'trends' and the discourses they entail, it would be far too simplistic and superficial to reduce the success and popularity of dystopian and/or post-/disaster narratives with young readers and adult authors alike to such strategies and interests. Such arguments neglect the fact that young adult literature in general is a cultural field in which a dominant group (i.e. adult writers, publishers and gate-keepers like librarians, teachers, parents) "impos[e] specific knowledges, disciplines and values upon dominated groups" (i.e. adolescent readers) (Ashcroft et al. 51). Adult authors participate in and also create discourses they regard as interesting and relevant for young readers. Through the genres they choose to draw on they also choose a certain frame of reference for the young readers which is supposed to help them to make sense of the world and "to socialize [them] by presenting desirable models of human personality, human behavior, interpersonal relationships, social organization, and ways of being in the world" (McCallum and Stephens

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<sup>10</sup> The author of this study speaks from personal experience of having worked for a British children's and YA trade publishing house from 2008 to 2011. Also cf. Taxel's article on "The Economics of Children's Book Publishing", especially from p. 487 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Klein's quote is taken from her book *No Logo: No Space, No Choice, No Jobs*. 2000. Picador, 2002. Here p. 66.



361). Therefore, the discourses and ideologies responded to, created and distributed by such a cultural (and economic) force as represented by the recent dystopian and post-/disaster narratives, which additionally incorporate conventions and functions of the *Bildungsroman*, must be considered carefully and critically.

The interrelation between discourse, genre and ideology is close and well-established, so that, for example, Jameson contends that “genre is [...] an ideology in its own right” (*Political Unconscious* 141). As discursive structures, according to Todorov, genres represent the institutionalisation and “codification of discursive properties” (17-18), and it is because of their institutional character that genres can “function as ‘horizons of expectation’ for readers and as ‘models of writing’ for authors” (18). In other words, genres constitute a shared framework that both (or all) parties of a communicative process are aware of and thus bridge the different positions (in time and space) of speaker and addressee, author and reader. Therefore, they serve a very pragmatic purpose (cf. Hallet 56). As Wesseling explains, “[g]eneric repertoires may be regarded as bodies of shared knowledge [...] [and] [a]s sets of norms of which both readers and writers are aware” (18). Genres thus function as schemata or blueprints for interpretation, not only for the aesthetic, narrative world, but also, and importantly, for the world at large (Neumann and Nünning 11). They serve as structuring tools that help to better understand and contextualise that which is communicated and experienced.

Genres, however, do not merely serve a communicative, representative function but also have to be considered as performative, active “structures that shape the world in the very process of putting it into speech” (Frow 18). Genres are thus neither merely stylistic devices nor simply representative of a society’s world view but “create effects of reality and truth which are central to the different ways the world is understood” (Frow 19). In this, they resemble that which Foucault has described as discourses, namely “‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’” (*Archaeology* 52) and thus do not only articulate and represent already existing values and world views but are engaged in actively producing them as well. In other words, they are not only influenced by the socio-cultural context but also influence it in turn (cf. Gymnich and Neumann 39). By examining genre in this way, the underlying power-structures both in a communicative situation between author and reader and in a wider socio-cultural context become clearly visible. Genre implies boundaries, to other genres and, more generally, between culturally accepted and deviant positions (cf. Neumann and Nünning 14). Genres are both bearers of existing ideologies (cf.

e.g. Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 164) and may also create new ones, which may be either supportive of or challenging existing cultural values.

Nevertheless, if genres are regarded as discursive structures that imply, represent and create power-relationships, this entails that they can also be resisted, as “there are no relations of power without resistances” (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 142). In this sense, genres can be said to be ambivalent, because while on the one hand they create binary divisions and thus a hierarchy between ‘normal’ and ‘deviant’ positions, on the other hand they also produce the possibility to resist this hierarchy. Thus, genres are not, or not only, exclusionary and prescriptive, as Baccolini criticises (“Gender and Genre” 15), but also challengeable and changeable, as becomes obvious when considering the diachronic development of genres.

Genre’s reflection on and establishing of a given society’s norms and values can be seen as a participation in and contribution to specific conditions in a given historic situation. This can mean, on the one hand, a favouring of certain genres over others at a given time, or even in a given culture, as not every genre is always relevant (cf. Gymnich and Neumann 39). On the other hand, a change of use of genre in a specific historic situation may constitute a different approach to or appropriation of a traditional genre or the creation of new and often hybrid or mixed genres, thus blurring and transgressing the boundaries and hierarchies that a given genre may have established. In this way, genre’s capacity to not only react to but actively engage in generating discourses and shaping knowledge, its very discursiveness, can also be used actively and even subversively to bring certain issues or topics onto the public agenda in a given culture’s historic situation. This again highlights the ambivalent character of genres as both creating a hierarchy and being able, at the same time, to create resistance towards it.

Consequently, in the introduction to their edited volume titled *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (2013), Hintz, Basu and Broad pose the questions whether the texts discussed in their collection “espouse political change” or whether “their progressive exteriors mask an inner conservatism” (2).<sup>12</sup> While I consider it as problematic that the authors have adopted the buzzword ‘young adult dystopia’ without paying much attention to different speculative traditions contained in series as diverse as Collins’s *Hunger Games*, Susan Beth Pfeffer’s *Last Survivors* trilogy (2006-2010) or Julie Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy (2002-2011), they share the opinion represented here that “it is necessary to ask whether this genre as a whole charts new territory, remains rooted in old

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<sup>12</sup> Hunt, too, speaking especially about children’s books, warns of “a bland, safe, neo-conservatism” that may “reinforce the sorts of stories that we have seen a million times before” (81-82).

conventional forms, or reflects a combination of both past and future” (Hintz et al. 9). Examining the way in which genre conventions are employed, i.e. traditionally or more creatively, can help to identify whether a given text offers space for deviant positions or whether it merely repeats that which is already culturally accepted.

Despite having criticised genre for its prescriptiveness and exclusiveness, Baccolini emphasises that by mixing genres and appropriating genre conventions, “radical re-visions of conservative genres” emerge that can turn into an oppositional practice and function “as a form of political resistance” (“Gender and Genre” 15; also cf. Gymnich and Neumann 38) through which the culturally accepted norms and dominant ideologies represented by genre conventions are challenged. One obvious example is feminist literature (cf. e.g. Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia, 163-64), which has appropriated numerous previously male-dominated genres for its own purposes, for example the *Bildungsroman* and the dystopia. Similarly, as Voigts, among others, has already stated, “the field of contemporary dystopian narratives is marked by generic hybridity” (6), and this is not least true for the young adult novels discussed in this study. Most of them contain elements of the *Bildungsroman* and romance, which has already been pointed out by some critics (cf. e.g. Hintz et al., 6), and many mix elements of dystopia with those of other speculative genres, for example post-/disaster<sup>13</sup>, science fiction<sup>14</sup> or fantasy and horror<sup>15</sup>, or unrelated genres, such as the epistolary novel and travelogue<sup>16</sup>. The label of ‘dystopia’ can thus be regarded as an easy categorisation that reduces the thematic and also generic complexity of these novels since all of the young adult novels examined here are clearly generically hybrid.

While it is understandable that publishers, their marketing departments and also booksellers are drawn to clear and less complex categories<sup>17</sup>, it is surprising that this aspect has not received more attention in academic research so far. Usually, only a very short definition of the term ‘dystopia’ is given (if at all), and other generic influences like that of the *Bildungsroman*, romance or adventure story might be mentioned, but again are not closely

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. especially Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy, Baggott’s *Pure* trilogy, Foon’s *Longlight* trilogy, Lloyd’s *Carbon Diaries* duology and Young’s *Dustlands* trilogy.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. especially Baggott’s *Pure* trilogy and Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. especially Baggott’s *Pure* trilogy, Dashner’s *Trials* trilogy, Foon’s *Longlight* trilogy and Young’s *Dustlands* trilogy.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Lloyd’s *Carbon Diaries* duology.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Gymnich and Neumann: “Die Literaturwissenschaft trägt sicherlich maßgeblich zur Etablierung von Gattungsbegriffen bei, aber die Rolle, die Verlage, Autoren und Autorinnen und nicht zuletzt der Buchhandel bei der Verbreitung von Gattungsbegriffen spielen, sollte nicht unterschätzt werden.” (32, footnote no. 2).

examined.<sup>18</sup> A more thorough contextualisation of these novels in the traditions of the genres they reference is not offered. The scholarship on these speculative texts targeted at a young adult readership thus follows what Seibel identifies as a general shortcoming in genre theoretical analyses, which is that “generic mixtures and hybrids” are often “ignore[d]”, “marginalised” or “overlooked” (137). In contrast, the category of post-/apocalypse, for example, has recently received considerable attention in research on adult novels<sup>19</sup>, but when it comes to young adult literature the label ‘dystopia’ usually supersedes all other generic influences in the analyses, and the category of post-/disaster (in the form of environmental disaster) is frequently described as a “thematic thread” (Hintz et al. 3-4) and not allocated the status of a genre in its own right<sup>20</sup>. Therefore, Lanzendörfer’s claim that, in the context of adult ‘literary’ genre fiction, questions of genre “have remained under-theorized, both with regards to understanding how and what genre is and does, and to the extent of the turn to genre” (3) holds especially true for recent young adult speculative literature. It is crucial to include genre as a category of analysis to be able to deepen and extend the understanding of those issues that have dominated the discussion about these novels so far, such as issues of gender, of violence and environmental issues, and to be able to broaden the discussion in general by identifying further discourses. Nevertheless, Hintz et al.’s volume is here considered to offer a starting point for the discussion on the role that genre and generic conventions play for these novels and whether these conventions are engaged with critically or whether the novels rather support the current status quo.

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<sup>18</sup> Some exceptions, generally articles or book chapters that look at the relevance of genre, need to be mentioned: Lauer’s article “Coming of Age in Dystopia: Reading Genre in Holly Black’s Curse Workers Series” in Hintz et al. as well as Hicks’ chapter “‘The Raw Materials’: Petromodernity, Retromodernity, and the Bildungsroman in Paolo Bacigalupi’s *Ship Breaker*” in her monograph (2016) both examine the *Bildungsroman* genre. Braithwaite examines the genre of post-/disaster in young adult literature in two articles: “Post-disaster Fiction for Young Adults: Some Trends and Variations” (2010) and “‘The hope – the one hope – is that your generation will prove wiser and more responsible than mine’: Constructions of Guilt in a Selection of Disaster Texts for Young Adults” (2012). And Gooding’s article “Our Posthuman Adolescence: Dystopia, Information Technologies, and the Construction of Subjectivity in M.T. Anderson’s *Feed*” in Grubisic et al. examines the critical dystopia in young adult literature.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Germanà and Mousoutzanis (eds.), *Apocalyptic Discourse in Contemporary Culture. Post-millennial Perspectives of the End of the World* (2014); Grubisic et al. (eds.), *Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase. Contemporary North American Dystopian Literature* (2014); Hicks, *The Post-Apocalyptic Novel in the Twenty-First Century. Modernity beyond Salvage* (2016); Machat, *In the Ruins of Civilizations. Narrative Structures, World Constructions and Physical Realities in the Post-Apocalyptic Novel* (2013); Manjikian, *Apocalypse and Post-Politics. The Romance of the End* (2014).

<sup>20</sup> For the discussion of this term also see Kathryn James, who regards post-/disaster as a sub-category of fantasy (7), while Voigts (via Curtis) places “[p]ostapocalyptic fiction [...] at a genre crossroads between science fiction, horror and utopia/dystopia” (5; he in turn quotes Claire P. Curtis. *Postapocalyptic Fiction and the Social Contract*. Lanham etc.: Lexington Books, 2010. p. 7.). Others, like Reynolds (2011) and Curry (2013) respectively, do not clarify or even address generic relations or affinities of the category they discuss at all.

In her article “What’s the Matter with Dystopia?” (2015), Ursula Heise takes the latter position when she makes the general claim that dystopian novels’ “visions of the future serve mostly to reconfirm well-established views of the present” (n.p.). By contrast, Alice Curry celebrates the novels she analyses in her monograph *Environmental Crisis in Young Adult Fiction. A Poetics of Earth* (2013), many of which are also examined in the articles in Hintz et al.’s volume<sup>21</sup>, as “rejecting existing ideologies to make room for new, and different, world orders” and as representing a “dismantling of the old world order [that] is discursively radical and transformative in its potentiality” (42). Curry comprehensively argues from an ecofeminist standpoint, but she largely disregards genre-theoretical aspects in her analysis, which might be a reason for the optimistic reading of the selected novels in her study. However, the position taken here is that it is crucial to establish this link in order to be able to approach the questions formulated by Hintz et al. and quoted above.

McCallum and Stephens understand “ideology in its neutral meaning of a system of beliefs which a society shares and uses to make sense of the world and which are therefore immanent in the texts produced by that society” (360). They continue by explaining that two functions of ideology in literature especially for younger readers are “the social function of defining and sustaining group values” and “the cognitive function of supplying a meaningful organization of the social attitudes and relationships which constitute narrative plots” (360). Therefore, they argue, “[i]deologies may [...] serve to establish or maintain social dominance, as well as to organize dissidence and opposition”, both of which can be expressed through narrative discourse (360).

Exposing and interrogating the ideologies that are overtly or covertly at work in literary texts intended for an adolescent readership is especially important as one of the key functions of adolescent literature is the socialisation of young readers (cf. chapter 2.1) as well as the formation of their subjectivity. Following Smith in *Discerning the Subject* (1988), McCallum describes subjectivity as an individual’s conception of personal identity as both a subject, i.e. as being subject to external ideology, and as an agent who is able to resist ideology (4). In the case of young adults, the question of attaining and/or being able to exercise agency is one of the most important aspects of growing up. It has to be borne in mind that adolescents are a social group with both limited power and limited responsibility in most areas of life until they come of age (cf. Morton and Lounsbury 54). The struggle for subjectivity that entails possibilities for and experiences of agency is therefore potentially curtailed by the unequal

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<sup>21</sup> For example, Anderson’s *Feed*, Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy, Collins’s *Hunger Games* trilogy, Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy.

power relationship between adults and adolescents highlighted above. Nevertheless, subjectivity can only emerge and develop in exchange and negotiation with other people, points of view and discourses, in short, that is, in exchange with society. Because of this and also because subjectivity accommodates two (or more) positionalities of personal identity, it can be regarded as dialogical (cf. McCallum 4). These two (or more) positionalities with their emphasis on both a passive subjection to and an active resistance against hegemonic discourses are mirrored in differing ideas about – or ideologies of – citizenship.

As Dedeoglu and Dedeoglu observe, citizenship is “both an idea and a form of practice” and has “developed within various historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts” (2). As an identity and/or subject position it is discursively situated between a rather passive “possession of formal national membership status or nationality” (Bosniak 2449), linking it to ideologies of the nation-state and understanding the individual predominantly as subject, and more actively constructed ideas like “the enjoyment of rights of various kinds, [...] political and civic engagement, [and] experiences of collective identity and solidarity” (Bosniak 2449). While the notion of a (passive) membership status highlights the “institutional dimension” of citizenship (Guillaume 150), the more active and less restrictive attributes point towards the “diverse dynamics of its multiple spatialities” (Guillaume 150). How dynamic the debate on questions of citizenship has been and still is becomes evident when considering that in the period “between 1997 and 2019 [...] at least 40 distinct conceptualizations of citizenship have been made thus far” (Dedeoglu and Dedeoglu 3), among them “green citizenship”, “digital citizenship”, “cultural citizenship”, “active citizenship” and many more (3, footnote no. 1). Some of these different conceptualisations of citizenship are examined in the analysis chapters of this study.

Janoski and Gran highlight that membership status depends on “establishing ‘personhood’” (13), i.e. on determining who out of the total number of people living in a given country is “recognized as being citizens with specific rights” (13). Such definitions of ‘personhood’ status and of citizenship rights obviously are dependent on the (historical, social, political) context from which they emerge, so that they “reflect the societies in which they are created” (25). Implied in this observation is the fact that both the definition of rights and that of who is granted ‘personhood’ are negotiable and changeable (cf. 35). For example, social groups that have been excluded from full citizenship rights in the past due to stigmatisation such as “incompetence” and inability “to perform the duties and accept the rights of citizenship” (women) or “cultural or value dissensus” (e.g. ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ groups) (35) have achieved or are still struggling for full membership and thus citizenship

rights. Citizenship, therefore, has to be regarded as both “a site and a source of struggle over what being a citizen means” (Guillaume 150).

Hildebrandt and Peters argue similarly but emphasise the performative aspect of citizenship that is implied in Guillaume’s explanation when they contend that citizenship “has to be claimed, performed, and therefore is permanently subject to revision and considerable modification” (3).<sup>22</sup> They continue to explain that “‘performing citizenship’ first means to act in accordance with the protocols and systems of citizenship, and thereby successfully constitute and produce pieces of civic reality. Secondly, performing citizenship today also means to claim and enact citizenship in new ways beyond already given subject positions and institutional networks” (5). The second aspect they mention highlights the fact that, as such ‘new ways’ of performing citizenship can and most likely will include challenges to and subversions of the status quo, “the citizen as a role and as a subject position” (5) can be reinterpreted. While these explanations favour the aspect of performativity that is concerned with “the conditions and possibilities for acting” (Butler, “Vulnerability in Resistance” 18), the reference to the “protocols and systems of citizenship” (Hildebrandt and Peters 5) also at least implicitly acknowledges that citizens (and non-citizens) are “being acted on” (Butler, “Vulnerability in Resistance” 18) by such protocols and systems. Since “the extent of citizenship rights and obligations is directly connected to independence” (Janoski and Gran 38), adolescents will have limited access to full membership status until they come of age, unless, that is, their status is further curtailed by markers such as gender or (foreign) nationality, as explained above. Therefore, adolescents occupy a liminal position in the context of citizenship and performing citizenly subject positions and can be considered as ‘citizens in waiting’ as debates about youth suffrage are still ongoing<sup>23</sup>.

It becomes evident from these explanations that the concept of citizenship and the way it is employed in any given context creates insiders (to the nation-state) on the one hand and outsiders on the other (cf. Hepworth 110), thus implying a spatial dimension. Similar to genre, citizenship is, at least in its ‘realpolitik’ conceptualisation, to a great extent concerned with setting up and maintaining boundaries and containment. Apart from adolescents, another, in itself hugely heterogeneous group of outsiders or non-citizens (or ‘not-yet’ citizens), is that of

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<sup>22</sup> Also cf. Egin Isin’s article “Performative Citizenship” in the *Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*.

<sup>23</sup> See for example Zeglovits (2013). Incidentally, similar arguments that have once been voiced against the vote for women are now brought forward against lowering the voting age to 16 to 17 years in many (European) countries as “opponents doubt if 16- and 17-year-olds are mature enough to be given the right to vote.” (Zeglovits 250).

irregular migrants (Hepworth 111).<sup>24</sup> Their frequent “discursive criminalisation” (Hepworth 111) through the state points to a further strategy for delimiting space, namely that of defining mobility as either legitimate or illegitimate (cf. Hepworth 111). Complicating this apparently easy binary of citizens vs. non-citizens is the existence and/or production of subject positions “that are neither wholly included nor excluded from the political community” (Hepworth 112), towards which Hepworth counts positionalities such as the ‘abject citizen’ or the ‘abject cosmopolitan’, which imply specific trajectories of ‘inside-out’ or ‘outside-in’ respectively in their relationship to the state (cf. 115). The question arises whether adolescents could also be regarded as moving ‘in’ from the ‘outside’ with regards to the development of their rights and duties, albeit from a differing starting point than that of irregular migrants.

Due to the reality of transnational migrations, the permeability of borders and further globalising processes, the ‘realpolitik’ understanding of citizenship in terms of easy binaries is hardly tenable and urgently needs to be revised. Therefore, Guillaume argues that citizenship itself needs to be re-conceptualised as a process “that is constituted by global and globalized institutions, procedures, practices, and acts participating in the constitution of citizens and non-citizens alike” (150). Even if, as Guillaume points out, it is not possible to set citizenship “outside normative questions [...] because [it] enacts a social order” (153), it is no less crucial to develop and establish conceptualisations of citizenship that are not confined to the space of the nation-state but can also be thought of in a transnational, global context.

One such notion of a transnational, globalised form of citizenship is that of cosmopolitanism. Similar to nationally delimited constructions of identity and citizenship, Appiah describes cosmopolitan citizens as “participants in a common story” (“Citizens of the World” 197), thus emphasising the narrative aspect that is integral to the construction of any form of (personal, national, cultural) identity (cf. e.g. Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*). He explains that, in a global context, there are two “conditions for making citizenship real: knowledge about the lives of other citizens, on the one hand; and the power to affect them, on the other” (“Global Citizenship” 2378). As the condition for ‘membership’ thus moves away from achieving (legal) personhood, this notion of citizenship is not only potentially more open to irregular migrants and other excluded minorities, but also to young people since technically, no minimum age is required. Thus, seemingly, cosmopolitanism more easily allows for the individual’s capacity to develop full subjectivity as both subject and agent. One could argue that, for young people, especially those growing up in a European or North

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<sup>24</sup> Hepworth uses the term ‘irregular’ instead of ‘illegal’ to underline the necessity to discursively move beyond descriptions of migrants’ relationship to the state as defined by the state (cf. 111).



American context, to develop into “engaged citizens of the world” instead of into “socially uninformed and inactive citizens of the West” (Mousseau 257), an awareness of a transnational idea of citizenship is crucial.

However, such an argument disregards the fact that in this conceptualisation the question of accessibility is not solved but rather only transferred from aspects of legal status (including age) to those of affordability. If cosmopolitan citizenship depends on being able to gain knowledge about and affect the lives of other people globally, then it has to be taken into consideration that by far not everybody has the necessary means to participate as not everyone has equal access to travel (cf. e.g. Snell 255), to print and online media or is able to overcome the language barriers to be found in such media (cf. Laddaga 453). In this way, ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ to this form of citizenship can emerge as easily as to nationally bound forms of citizenship. Therefore it transpires that, if cosmopolitanism does not include what Mignolo calls a perspective of “exteriority [...] of those ‘to be included’” (but who have not been included yet) (724), this globalised and seemingly more accessible form of citizenship runs the risk of turning into a managerial “‘global design’” that is “driven by the will to control and homogenize” (723) and of “exporting local ideologies in the name of the global” (Snell 252). Whether or not a critical form of cosmopolitanism that includes a perspective of ‘exteriority’ can be achieved in some of the selected novels through the representation of ‘othered’ positions and perspectives remains to be ascertained in the textual analysis.

Like citizenship, memory as a (public) discursive practice is closely linked to the nation-state since the way in which certain historical events are officially and/or publicly remembered serves the construction of a shared identity (cf. e.g. Phillips and Reyes 2f.; Erll, 5). Erll points out that at the collective level of society the term ‘memory’

is used metaphorically. Societies do not remember literally; but much of what is done to reconstruct a shared past bears some resemblance to the processes of individual memory, such as the selectivity and perspectivity inherent in the creation of versions of the past according to present knowledge and needs. (5)

Because of such processes of selectivity and perspectivity “memory contains singular visions of the past” (D. Levy 18), which renders national figurations of memory/memories and their “‘invented traditions’” (Erll 2) contingent. D. Levy further extends his explanations on memory at the societal level by stating that “collectivized memory practices inexorably implying forgetting as their ability to mobilize and constitute mass identifications is largely based on a process of de-contextualisation” that shifts the focus “away from the concrete (and

particular) experience toward a more abstract (and universal) message” (23). This process “can serve the purpose of institutionalizing memories of a particular historical past in order to bracket competing narratives” (22). Thus, similar to the hitherto discussed categories of genre and citizenship, practices of memory can be utilised to establish borders, regulate inclusion and exclusion as well as define compliance with or deviation from existing norms and values.

A further similarity between discourses on citizenship and discourses on memory is that also in memory studies there is an increased interest in transnational forms of memory practice. D. Levy, for example, makes use of the same terminology that has been discussed in the context of transnational conceptualisations of citizenship when he speaks of “cosmopolitan memories”, which he defines as “based on and contribut[ing] to nation-transcending idioms, spanning territorial and linguistic borders” (25). He argues that while the “national perspective” does not become redundant, a cosmopolitan approach “suggests that particular orientations toward the past need to be re-evaluated against the backdrop of global memory-scapes” (26), a term that is also used by Phillips and Reyes (without a hyphen) to extend the “shifting and often conflicting cultural ‘scapes’” (13) in the framework developed by Arjun Appadurai<sup>25</sup>. Although neither D. Levy nor Phillips and Reyes refer to Mignolo it becomes evident from their argumentation that they consider such transnational movement and transfiguration of memories and/as knowledge as well as mnemonic practices to bear the potential of achieving a ‘perspective of exteriority’ that is deemed so crucial by Mignolo. However, neither argumentation seems to fully acknowledge that the question of access, i.e. of “which/whose memories will be made visible and in what ways” (Phillips and Reyes 14) remains unresolved with regards to this discourse on a global scale, as it does with that on citizenship.

Notwithstanding this, as has already been noted above in the discussion of genre theory, any discourse that is formed to support hegemonic dominance implies the possibility to resist it, and in a like manner discourses of memory include the “notion of counter-memory” (D. Levy 15), which can be an “empowering resource for a wide variety of groups” (17) such as ethnic or gender minorities in their struggle for political and/or cultural citizenship. Such counter-mnemonic practices may be located at any of the levels that Erll comprises in her understanding of cultural memory as “the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts” (2), i.e. at the level of individual or small group “remembering in a social context”, of national or transnational memory (2). Furthermore, counter-mnemonic practices are crucial

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Arjun Appadurai. “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy.” *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 7, no. 2-3, 1990, pp. 295-310.

for the significance memory can have for the future, as Baccolini argues when she emphasises “the importance to distinguish [...] between a conservative, or anti-utopian, and a progressive, or utopian, use of memory” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia”, 171). She highlights that “the utopian value of memory rests in nurturing a [critical] culture of memory”, which is important for “a political, utopian praxis of change, action and empowerment” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia”, 172) because “[c]hoice, responsibility, and action are linked to memory and knowledge of the past” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia”, 171). Approached in this way, “commemorative forms” can indeed serve to educate and may contribute “to the strengthening of democratic culture in the present and – especially – the future” (Bickford and Sodaro 69).

One way in which memories and/as knowledge and/or stories can be shared, whether nationally or transnationally, is, of course, via literature and literary genres. The literary canon, for example, represents one form of “actively circulated memory” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 98) that helps to construct, circulate and maintain cultural memory and identity (cf. Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 100). Similarly, Humphrey describes literature in general as a verbal museum of those parts of the past which are deemed valuable and worthy to be remembered; genre, according to him, then serves to structure and archive literature in a museum-like way (cf. 92).<sup>26</sup> Despite this use of spatial terminology to explain the relation between genre and memory Humphrey argues against the frequent ascription of genres as spaces or “repositories of cultural memory” (van Gorp and Musarra-Schroeder; qtd. in Neumann and Nünning 12<sup>27</sup>), which he considers a metaphor gone awry (eine “verunglückte Metapher”) (Humphrey 82), and claims that only single examples of a genre can be regarded as ‘spaces of memory’ (83). This study, however, considers the analogy between genre and space as valid since genre, as “typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations” (C.R. Miller 56), constitutes and is constituted by “social action” (C.R. Miller 56) similar to the way in which space depends on and is produced by social action or practice (cf. Lefebvre 233). Whereas the (literary) canon as discussed by Assmann predominantly refers to a national context and includes only works regarded as ‘classics’ (cf. the debate on ‘literary’ vs. ‘genre’ fiction touched upon earlier in this chapter), it is specifically speculative fiction that holds the potential to contribute to a transnational and transcultural expansion of discourses on citizenship and memory as Rorty contends when he states that “[s]cience-fiction stories [and

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<sup>26</sup> The distinction between canon and archive is explored in more depth in chapter 4.2.

<sup>27</sup> Neumann and Nünning refer to the title of van Gorp and Musarra-Schroeder’s edited volume *Genres as Repositories of Cultural Memory*, published in 2000.

by extension speculative genres in general] [...] fill the need for inspiring narratives about our species, rather than just about our tribe or nation” (236).

As can be derived from the above explanations, questions of ideology and conceptualisations of citizenship, space and spatiality as well as memory and mnemonic practices intersect in multiple ways. The use and representation of these conceptual frameworks belong to some of the defining features of the genres focused on in this study. With regards to the *Bildungsroman*, for example, Slaughter emphasises that the genre provides “the narrative terms by which the individual might recognize and confirm itself in the socio-political structures of democratic citizenship” (“Enabling Fictions” 54), thus highlighting the inextricable connection between the two discourses of genre and citizenship in this case. Furthermore, the crucial importance of aspects of space and time (of which memory, as looking to and gaining knowledge of the past, can be considered an element) to any discussion that involves genre is evident in the concept of the chronotope, which “in literature has an intrinsic *generic* significance” (Bakhtin, “Forms of Time” 84-85). Bakhtin continues to argue that “it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the chronotope is time” (“Forms of Time” 85). In the case of the example of dystopia, which carries the importance of spatiality in its very name – ‘topos’ of course meaning ‘place’ –, place is just as important as time, as Nikolajeva points out when she contends that “[t]he chronotope, or time-space, of dystopia is in an enclave, distanced from the reader by a span of the future” and that, furthermore, “[t]here is always a world beyond the dystopia, such as ‘Elsewhere’ in *The Giver*” (“The Identification Fallacy” 200). However, and similarly true for post-/disaster narratives, it is not only the representation of a future place and the suggestion of a space beyond it that defines this genre but also, and equally important, the ways in which spaces within the narrative are constructed as contested and fought over through different and competing interpretations of a certain space or via the subject’s positionality in and towards certain spaces. In terms of the time-frame, the images of the past that are evoked in the represented society are just as crucial as said society’s location in the implied readers’ future. Although these conceptual frameworks of genre, citizenship, space/spatiality and memory and commemorative practices may therefore appear as obvious topics of analysis with regards to the novels under discussion, they have so far not been discussed extensively, and especially not in convergence with each other. Therefore, this approach promises to constitute a fruitful broadening of the discussion on these novels.

The major objective of this study is to analyse in which ways a selection of speculative novels for adolescent readers represent, interpret, shape and encode different forms of

citizenship. In setting this focus, this study takes up Neumann and Nünning's assumption that highly conventionalised genres are drawn on especially in historic moments in which a recourse to known formulae is perceived as helpful or necessary in order to make sense of collective experiences that are difficult to interpret or to encode social values and norms (cf. 14-15), both aspects that can be found in recent and ongoing debates about citizenship. The genres of dystopia and post-/disaster, as well as a further highly conventionalised genre that is of importance in the context of this study, the *Bildungsroman*, are often employed to represent and negotiate societal crisis in various ways, for example a crisis of conceptualising citizenship (as a form of belonging, as participation and representation and as responsibility), of national and international security or of ecological and climate crisis.<sup>28</sup> Even adolescence itself is constructed as a time of crisis (cf. Kristeva, "The Adolescent Novel" 9). Differing dimensions of citizenship, such as political, cultural or ecological, and the ways in which they are threatened, contested and negotiated are intricately connected to all of these crises.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, the main assumption of this study is that in the selected novels, citizenship positions are interrogated and challenged but also reaffirmed and that this occurs through the challenging of or compliance with genre conventions relating to aspects of space and memory. Such conventions may include the characters' genre-specific spatial practices and movements through space as well as their enactment, recovery or revision of forms of memory or remembrance. This study seeks to determine in how far the treatment of such conventions is relevant for the characters', and by extension the adolescent readers', movement towards enfranchisement and which forms of enfranchisement are imagined as necessary or possible at all, i.e. which 'spaces' are opened up (or closed down) for the performance of (differing kinds of) citizenship.

It is expected that the respective novels and/or series contain within them "ideologically diverse, even antithetical positions" (Midalia 91) towards various forms of citizenship, so that one form may be represented as progressive in the text while others appear as more conservative. Such conflicting positions may be due to the incorporation of different generic traditions within the novels, which include different ways in which citizenship is traditionally

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<sup>28</sup> See Slaughter ("Enabling Fictions") and chapter 2.2 of this study for a discussion of the link between the *Bildungsroman* and a crisis of citizenship. See especially Manjikian for an elaboration of post-/disaster narratives as representations of a crisis of national and international security (cf. chapter 2.3 of this study). See especially Curry (*Environmental Crisis*) for a book-length analysis of environmental crisis in post-/disaster and dystopian novels (cf. chapter 5 of this study).

<sup>29</sup> The representation of sexual or gendered citizenship are not analysed in this study as gender-conscious analyses constitute a considerable part of the existing research on these texts. However, gender is of course considered in so far as it intersects with the forms of citizenship examined in this study.

represented. For instance, whereas the genre of *Bildungsroman* traditionally represents citizenship as achievable, with the individual successfully integrated, this is often not the case in the dystopian convention, where the individual is defeated in the end. This study seeks to determine to which extent the ideologies of citizenship provided for adolescent readers in these novels remain steeped in “patriotic senses of national particularity” as “[h]istorically [cultivated by] the Rights of Man and *Bildung*”, thus having rendered these concepts complicit “with nationalism and colonialism” (Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 55), or whether genre hybridisation in these novels manages to create an “impure [...] genre [...] that represents resistance to a hegemonic ideology” (Baccolini, “Gender and Genre” 18), thus contributing to challenging the ‘colonisation of mental space’ criticised by Bullen and Mallan (via Klein) as quoted above. Nevertheless, despite genre hybridisation, it is expected that even though a form of citizenship may be represented as progressive in the textual world, the societal change that is achieved through its enactment in said textual world may still bear conservative overtones in the actual world as activism in the textual world often leads to a (reformed) system that is very close to the present status in the actual world (i.e. liberal democracy). As McCallum and Stephens state, “[t]ransgressive action must evoke the cultural dominant [...] but in doing so its function may be to reinscribe the dominant: In other words, transgression often implies, or even depends on, the strategies that contain it” (367). The results of the analysis thus may show that, in contrast to some of the enthusiastic marketing claims cited earlier in this chapter, there can be attested a discrepancy between “textual reception” and “textual aesthetics” (Midalia 103) as many of the novels are actually engaged in “the struggle for the survival and hegemony of the North Atlantic” (Mignolo 740) and can be regarded as “a carnivalesque space where dissent is contained rather than propagated” (Fuggle 33).<sup>30</sup>

The genre-theoretical lens employed here is situated in two approaches to conceptualising genre outlined by Gymnich and Neumann in their article “Vorschläge für eine Relationierung verschiedener Aspekte und Dimensionen des Gattungsbegriffs: Der Kompaktbegriff Gattung” (2007), which are postcolonial and feminist approaches on the one hand and approaches emphasising a culture of memory on the other (cf. 33). Due to their orientation towards spatial, cultural and ideological aspects, the application of these

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<sup>30</sup> Also cf. Morton and Lounsbury, who argue that “by experiencing power vicariously through their identification with YA protagonists, adolescents may also sate their desire for action, and return to everyday life with less of a desire for political action” (65), and Muller, who voices the concern that “there [is] a danger that the texts become what they condemn, a simulacrum that eventually fails to move beyond its own terms of reference” (62).

theoretical approaches to the analysis of how a variety of forms of citizenship is represented in the novels selected for this study promises to yield productive and meaningful results. According to the authors, postcolonial and feminist approaches highlight the cultural and ideological dimension of genres, while seeing genres as culturally determined and as determining culture at the same time (33). Approaches to genre that emphasise aspects of a culture of memory conceptualise genres as spaces of individual and, of course, also cultural memory (33). Postcolonial concepts and approaches, for example, have already been effectively applied to a range of children's and young adult novels, speculative and otherwise<sup>31</sup>, and this study seeks to contribute to this field of research from a so far largely neglected genre-theoretical perspective.

In order to conduct the analysis, representative novels and series from the Anglophone North Atlantic region were selected for this study. Although Britain, Canada and the US are by far not the only Anglophone regions that have brought forth a considerable number of relevant publications in recent years and/or serve as settings of such narratives<sup>32</sup>, those novels that have appeared in and are set in the Anglophone North Atlantic region do not only represent a "boom" in speculative fiction (cf. Booker, "On Contemporary Speculative Fiction" xv) or the hottest publishing trend specifically "on both sides of the Atlantic" (Craig), but have also attained a very high level of international visibility<sup>33</sup> (not least through film versions) and thus exert especially strong influence globally in terms of disseminating ideologies of citizenship. Because of this wide-spread international distribution of these narratives this study considers it as especially relevant to examine the citizenly subject positions that are thus 'promoted' to a global young adult readership.

Due to the vast amount of titles for adolescent readers published in this genre recently, some additional criteria for limiting the corpus had to be set up. For reasons of practicality,

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<sup>31</sup> Examples include Bradford and Baccolini's article "Journeying Subjects: Spatiality and Identity in Children's Texts" (2011), Curry's monograph *Environmental Crisis in Young Adult Fiction* (2013) or Grzegorzczuk's monograph *Discourses of Postcolonialism in Contemporary British Children's Literature* (2015). Also see Langer's monograph *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction* (2011), which does not discuss young adult literature but offers an extensive analysis of the ways in which postcolonial discourses and speculative genres intersect.

<sup>32</sup> Examples include (but are obviously not limited to) Manjula Padmanabhan's dystopian young adult novels *Escape* (2008) and its sequel *Island of Lost Girls* (2015), set in a future version of India; Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death?* (2010), which mixes several speculative genre traditions and is set in a future/fantastic version of Nigeria; or Alexis Wright's *The Swan Book* (2013), set in a future version of Australia and drawing on dystopian and post-disaster/climate-fiction generic influences (among others).

<sup>33</sup> This is, of course, especially true for Collins's *Hunger Games* trilogy: "Foreign publishing rights for *The Hunger Games* trilogy have been sold into 55 territories in 50 languages to date." In: "Scholastic Announces Updated U.S. Figures for Suzanne Collins's Bestselling *The Hunger Games* Trilogy." *Scholastic News Room*, 19 July 2012.

only novels that were first published after the millennium are analysed here. As a consequence, earlier prominent examples, for example Lois Lowry's *The Giver* of 1993 or Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, also 1993, are not included. Furthermore, only series of up to three titles have been included. This means that popular and well-known titles like Shusterman's *Unwind* series, Reeve's *Mortal Engines* series or Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* series (all cf. footnote 10) have not been considered here. If a series officially comprises more than three titles but these 'more than three' constitute companion books to the original series<sup>34</sup>, the original titles may have been included while the companion books are ignored here. To additionally reflect the popularity and success of the dystopian and post-/disaster genres in young adult fiction in recent years, titles have been chosen that have appeared on bestseller lists and/or because they have been nominated for and/or received acclaimed prizes.<sup>35</sup> This study thus seeks to bring forth new aspects in novels that have already seen widespread or at least considerable academic attention on the one hand, like Collins's, Westerfeld's and Bertagna's trilogies, and on the other hand to broaden the (academic) canon for discussion in this particular genre by including titles that so far have apparently received no academic attention yet, like e.g. Foon's *Longlight* trilogy, or on which very little criticism exists so far, like e.g. Condie's *Matched* or Young's *Dustlands* trilogies. An overview of the novels discussed, to which duology or trilogy they belong, which characters are used as focalisers, type of focalisation, generic affiliation and main geographic setting is given in Table 1 at the end of this chapter.

The column titled 'narrative situation' highlights a feature frequently commented on with regards to the most recent 'wave' of speculative novels for young adults that emphasise dystopian and/or post-/disaster generic traditions, namely that many of them include female protagonists and/as focalisers and are also often written by female authors. Even some male authors, for example Scott Westerfeld in his *Uglies* trilogy, choose a female protagonist and thus seem to target a predominantly female young readership. While the emphasis on strong female protagonists is often proclaimed as a new development in comparison to classic (male-authored) dystopias and is alternatively seen as a contrast to the female protagonist of

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<sup>34</sup> 'Companion books' are novels that are prequels to or feature different characters than the original series. An example of a companion book is Westerfeld's *Extras* (2007), which is set in the same future society as the *Uglies* trilogy but features a different set of characters.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Young's *Blood Red Road* was the winner of the Costa Book Awards in 2011, Lloyd's *Carbon Diaries 2015* was shortlisted for the Costa Children's Books Award in 2008, Bertagna's *Exodus* was shortlisted for the Whitbread Children's Book of the Year Award in 2002, while Foon's *The Dirt Eaters* was a Red Maple Honor book in 2004 and Condie's *Matched* appeared on the ALA-YALSA list (Young Adult Library Services Association) of Best Fiction for Young Adult Books in 2011.



*Twilight* or is linked to the idea of “New Woman” and “Girl Power” (as a more recent ‘re-incarnation’ of the idea of “New Woman”) (Day et al. 2 ff.)<sup>36</sup>, the fact that in speculative literature there is already a tradition of female authors representing strong female protagonists is usually disregarded.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, the continued engagement with (adolescent) female identities embedded in the narrative structures of *Bildungsroman*, dystopia and post-/disaster suggests a continued necessity to negotiate and (re-)frame female adolescent subjectivity, and even citizenship, possibly to a greater extent than male adolescent identities.

The novels discussed in this study thus participate in the discourse on female adolescent subjectivity and citizenship that Harris extensively discusses in her monography *Future Girl. Young Women in the Twenty-First Century* (2004). Here, Harris convincingly argues that at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries, young women are constructed, on the one hand, “as a vanguard of new subjectivity” and, on the other hand, are increasingly scrutinised, so that “this new interest in looking at and hearing from girls is not just celebratory, but it is, in part, regulatory as well” (1). She goes on to argue that while the ‘future girl’ discourse centres on the idea that young women are “best able to handle today’s socioeconomic order” (2) and the demands towards and constraints on citizenship this entails, it glosses over or marginalises “the struggles, disappointments and barriers experienced by many young women [...] as the aberrant experiences of a minority of youth” (9). By putting the struggles and barriers to achieving enfranchised citizenship centre-stage and, in doing so, focusing on a female perspective, the novels discussed in this study contribute to challenging this homogenising discourse about adolescent female identity and enfranchisement. The many female protagonists in these novels both mirror and complicate ways in which “young women are imagined and constructed as the ideal new citizen for a changing world [...] who] lead the way for new modes of civic life” (94) as they focus on “new kinds of political engagement” rather than on “the seductive lure of unlimited self-making” (9).

However, as Day et al. observe, “there are quite a few contemporary dystopian young adult novels and series that do not focus exclusively or even primarily on adolescent women

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<sup>36</sup> The phrasing Day et al. use when they explain the ‘New Woman’s’ “experience of *emerging* as a new kind of female adult” (4; emphasis added) and its relevance for contemporary (adult or adolescent) women hints at Bakhtin’s concept of emergence without naming it. This concept and its relationship to the *Bildungsroman* genre is discussed in chapter 2.

<sup>37</sup> Prominent examples would be Butler’s *Parable of the Sower* (1993), Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985), Percy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976), to name only a few.

protagonists” (8)<sup>38</sup>, even though titles that seem to be more explicitly targeted at male readers are, in comparison, harder to find. Many novels selected for discussion in this study reflect the apparent desire to emphasise female adolescent identity on the one hand without wanting to neglect the adolescent male perspective entirely. The *Exodus* and *Dustlands* trilogies, while concentrating on adolescent female perspectives, also include to a greater (*Exodus*) or lesser (*Dustlands*) extent, male viewpoints. The *Matched* trilogy starts out with an adolescent female point of view in volume one, alternates between female and male in volume two and includes one female and two male points of view in volume three. The *Longlight* trilogy, in comparison, starts from an adolescent male point of view in volume one, alternates between male and female points of view in volume two like the *Matched* trilogy and includes a considerable number of points of view in volume three. Out of the set of narratives selected for this study it is only the *Hunger Games* and *Uglies* trilogies as well as the *Carbon Diaries* duology that exclusively use female focalisation.

In the following, in order to extend and deepen the genre-theoretical background for this thesis, chapter two gives a concise outline of the most relevant ‘genres’ or forms of writing in relation to the novels to be discussed. The emphasis is placed on explaining the discursive functions of these categories, especially with regards to adolescence and aspects of citizenship, but also at this point important notions of space and/or memory are addressed. One difficulty lies in the question whether one of the ‘genres’ listed, young adult literature, can actually be regarded as such. This study aims to achieve a working definition for this contested term by discussing it in comparison to other problematic or “anomalous” (Falconer, “Cross-Reading” 367) categories like children’s literature and crossover literature. With a view to the many female protagonists in the novels under discussion, this presentation of the generic framework also briefly discusses issues around the construction of adolescent female identity.

The textual analysis is divided into three major chapters, each examining distinct forms or ideologies of citizenship and their ties to specific generic traditions through the representation of a range of spatial and memory-related aspects and issues. Due to the thematic emphases of the selected novels, the focused citizenship categories are political,

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<sup>38</sup> Examples include the *Trials* series by Dashner or Shusterman’s *Unwind* series. Of the titles discussed in this study, Foon’s *Longlight* trilogy can be considered as the one most directly targeted at boys as well, although less explicitly than the other two series.

cultural and ecological citizenship.<sup>39</sup> As with all constructed categories, there is no clear-cut line separating political, cultural and ecological citizenship but, in contrast, they overlap considerably. Moreover, these categories often influence and/or challenge each other, so that, for example, cultural citizenship can be used to resist conceived norms of political citizenship or to achieve awareness for aspects of ecological citizenship. This conceptual overlap is partly due to cultural and ecological citizenship being much newer concepts that have arisen because the older tripartite division into political, social and economic citizenship has been deemed insufficient to explain and situate many contemporary citizenly practices. Furthermore, these differentiations take into consideration the huge political impact that for example cultural institutions (museums, archives, theatres, schools, universities etc.) may have, or the equally huge impact that political decisions have on ecological questions. In this study, cultural and ecological citizenship are therefore understood as necessary differentiations of and/or supplementations to especially political and social citizenship to accommodate the ever increasing terrain of citizenly concerns.

Chapter three focuses on the earliest conceptualisation of citizenship, political citizenship and civil activism, and demonstrates that the protagonists' gain of political awareness and turn towards forms of activism is closely linked to the *Bildungsroman* convention of leaving home and the spatial dichotomy of rural and urban spaces, or periphery and centre, that it often evokes. The fact that many of the series discussed here invert this pattern of movement and start in an urban centre can be attributed to the blending of *Bildungsroman* and dystopian conventions. Beyond this dichotomy, the novels feature many ambivalent and liminal spaces which often constitute sites of memory, remembrance and contestation of differing versions of past events. This study argues that, through a negotiation of legitimate vs. illegitimate movement and mobility, these spaces emerge as contact zones despite the often cruel and violent functions ascribed to them. The respective authority's power and their version of a collective history/memory are at the same time enacted and contested in these spaces. To conclude chapter three, the focus is placed on the analysis of representations of cosmopolitan citizenship and transnational forms of mobility in order to determine in how far such experiences can lead to a critical socio-political activism on a more global level.

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<sup>39</sup> Isin lists political citizenship as one of three "conventional" citizenship categories, the other two being civil and social. Ecological and cultural citizenship, according to him, constitute two of three "expanded" citizenship categories, the third one being sexual citizenship (cf. "Doing Rights with Things" 49).

Chapter four debates options of and possibilities for cultural citizenship in and through spaces of memory and mediality as represented in the selected novels. As cultural citizenship is very similar to (if not synonymous with) cultural representation and participation, it is crucial to examine forms and spaces of representation, including aesthetic and virtual spaces, and possibilities for participation on both a collective, i.e. societal, and more personal or age-group defined level. Here it is especially relevant to distinguish between cultural or collective memory on the one and individual memory on the other hand and the physical, virtual and aesthetic spaces in which they are stored, enacted and also created as these kinds of memory often oppose each other in the novels under discussion and mirror the struggle between (adult) oppression and the (adolescent) will to cultural citizenship. These negotiations and contestations are embedded in the dystopian generic convention of memory manipulation and re-interpretation of the past by the authorities to maintain their position of power. The analysis examines such contestations firstly on the macro-level of societal remembering and forgetting, secondly on the micro-level of the individual (female adolescent) body and thirdly discusses strategies the novels offer for achieving enfranchisement through creativity and literacy.

Chapter five analyses visions of and possibilities for ecological citizenship in conjunction with the generic conventions of dystopian and post-/disaster narratives, especially that of the negotiation between anthropocentrism and posthumanism. Accordingly, the discussion in this chapter moves from the explicitly anthropocentric ecological citizenly practices of risk management in socio-ecological crisis situations to the, at least potentially, more encompassing practices of stewardship and care and, lastly, to questions about transgressing the space of species into posthuman corporealities in ecoprecarious socio-ecological contexts. The wide range of conceptual approaches to ecological citizenship that the selected novels draw on and engage with, and that this study consequently discusses, mirror the plurality of positions and disunity between approaches in scholarly as well as popular discourses on this form of citizenship.

This study concludes, in chapter six, by highlighting the continued relevance of the concepts of citizen and citizenship also years (in some cases decades) after the novels' first publication. Furthermore, it offers a reflection on and discussion of the novels' contribution to this often controversial debate as well as to the way(s) in which they may serve (or not) the implied young readership as orientation or inspiration for their own journeys towards citizenly enfranchisement and engagement by providing a discursive liminal space in themselves.

**Table 1**

| Author                | Title(s)  | Narrative Situation   | Time of Narration | Major Generic Affiliations                    | Further Generic Affiliations          | Setting   |
|-----------------------|---|---|-------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Bertagna, Julie (UK)  | <i>Exodus</i> (2002)  | Heterodiegetic narration with shifting focalisation; main focaliser = protagonist (Mara), further focalisation via Fox          | Present tense     | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> |                                       | UK (Scotland) and Greenland   |
|                       | <i>Zenith</i> (2007)  | Heterodiegetic narration with shifting focalisation; main focaliser = protagonist (Mara), further focalisation via Tuck and Fox | Present tense     | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> |                                       | UK (Scotland) and Greenland   |
|                       | <i>Aurora</i> (2011)  | Heterodiegetic narration with shifting focalisation via a range of characters   | Present tense     | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> |                                       | UK (Scotland) and Greenland   |
| Collins, Suzanne (US) | <i>The Hunger Games</i> (2008), <i>Catching Fire</i> (2009), <i>Mockingjay</i> (2010) | Autodiegetic narration; narrator = protagonist (Katniss)  | Present tense     | Dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i>                | Post-disaster as unspecified backdrop | North America (Panem in novels)   |
| Condie, Ally (US)     | <i>Matched</i> (2010)   | Autodiegetic narration, narrator = protagonist (Cassia)   | Present tense     | Dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i>                | Post-disaster as unspecified backdrop | North America (The Society in novels)   |
|                       | <i>Crossed</i> (2011)   | Autodiegetic narration with focalisation alternating between 2 characters (Cassia, Ky)  | Present tense     | Dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i>                | Post-disaster as unspecified backdrop | North America (The Society in novels)   |
|                       | <i>Reached</i> (2012)   | Autodiegetic narration with focalisation alternating between 3 characters (Cassia, Ky, Xander)                                  | Present tense     | Dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i>                | Post-disaster as unspecified backdrop | North America (The Society in novels)   |
| Foon, Dennis (Canada) | <i>The Dirt Eaters</i> (2003) ( <i>Longlight</i> trilogy)                             | Heterodiegetic narration, focalisation via protagonist (Roan)   | Present tense     | Post-disaster, quest                          | Gothic/ horror, fantasy               | North America (city of Armstrong, British Columbia, is mentioned in <i>Keepers Shadow</i> , p. 307) |

|                          |  |  |   |   |  |   |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|---|
|                          | <i>Freewalker</i> (2004)<br>( <i>Longlight</i> trilogy)                    | Heterodiegetic narration; focalisation predominantly alternating between 2 characters (Roan, Stowe)  | Present tense   | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> | Gothic/ horror, fantasy  | North America (city of Armstrong, British Columbia, is mentioned in <i>Keepers Shadow</i> , p. 307) |
|                          | <i>The Keeper's Shadow</i> (2006)<br>( <i>Longlight</i> trilogy)           | Heterodiegetic narration; focalisation alternating between a range of characters   | Present tense   | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> | Gothic/ horror, fantasy  | North America (city of Armstrong, British Columbia, is mentioned in <i>Keepers Shadow</i> , p. 307) |
| Lloyd, Saci (UK)         | <i>Carbon Diaries 2015</i> (2008),<br><i>Carbon Diaries 2017</i> (2009)    | Autodiegetic narration, narrator = protagonist (Laura)   | Present tense   | Disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i>      | Diary novel, Travelogue, <i>Künstlerroman</i> (the latter two in book 2) | UK (London); Italy and France in book 2   |
| Westerfeld, Scott (US)   | <i>Uglies</i> (2005),<br><i>Pretties</i> (2005),<br><i>Specials</i> (2006) | Heterodiegetic narration, focalisation via protagonist (Tally)   | Past tense  | Dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i>                | Post-disaster as explicit backdrop                                       | North America   |
| Young, Moira (Canada/UK) | <i>Blood Red Road</i> (2011)<br>( <i>Dustlands</i> trilogy)                | Autodiegetic narration, narrator = protagonist (Saba)  | Present tense   | Post-disaster, quest                          | Horror/ fantasy (monsters)   | Unspecified (presumably North America)  |
|                          | <i>Rebel Heart</i> (2012)<br>( <i>Dustlands</i> trilogy)                   | Autodiegetic narration as above, framed by heterodiegetic narration at beginning (focalisation via Jack) and end (focalisation unspecified/ anonymous) | Present tense   | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> | Horror/ fantasy (monsters)   | Unspecified (presumably North America)  |
|                          | <i>Raging Star</i> (2014)<br>( <i>Dustlands</i> trilogy)                   | Autodiegetic narration as above dominates, frequently interspersed by heterodiegetic narration and focalisation via multiple characters                | Present tense for autodiegetic narration, past tense for heterodiegetic narration | Post-disaster, dystopia, <i>Bildungsroman</i> |  | Unspecified (presumably North America)  |

## 2. GENRE CATEGORIES AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

### 2.1 Young Adult Literature, Children's Literature, Crossover Literature

The debate about what young adult literature actually is and how this field of study can be defined has been ongoing for years and is still far from being concluded, and to provide a definitive answer to all the open questions that brings together all the disparate opinions is hardly feasible. Therefore, this chapter seeks to give an overview on the ongoing debate and positions held by various critics, to position this study within the discussion as well as to propose a working definition for the term 'young adult literature', and finally, to present some of the most prominent features of young adult literature.

Before turning to the question of whether 'young adult' literature can be considered as a genre, it is necessary to address an even more general point of categorisation. In much academic writing so far, it is often not at all clear whether young adult literature should be treated as distinctly separate from or rather as part of children's literature. The consideration of the term 'YA literature' as a mere marketing term by some only supports this tendency. Often, 'young adult' is simply subsumed under the supposedly more general category of 'children's literature', for example when Nikolajeva writes of the trait and motif of power as being "present in all children's literature, from ABC-books to young adult novels" (*Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 7). The fact that 'children's literature' is here conceptualised as comprising everything from board books for babies and toddlers to the often intricate and elaborate novels for teenagers is not even problematized. Reynolds, too, includes 'young adult' in her title *Children's Literature. A Very Short Introduction* (2011), but she also draws attention to the fact that "the label 'children's literature' is increasingly problematic" due to "the age range catered for mov[ing] steadily upwards" (27). Despite emphasising this, Reynolds nevertheless does not set out to clearly distinguish the one (young adult) from the other (children's). These are only two examples of the common practice in research on children's and young adult literature of treating these two categories as part of the same package.

Of course, there are some important features that children's and young adult literature share, such as the motif of questions of power (cf. Nikolajeva qtd. above) or the discrepancy in age, experience and knowledge between the author and the implied readership. However, it is not only the difference in the "age range catered for" that renders it appropriate, if not necessary, to treat 'children's' and 'young adult' literatures as separate categories. The same

critics who subsume these two under the one umbrella term of ‘children’s literature’ also underline the fact that both ‘child’ and ‘childhood’ on the one and ‘young adult’ or ‘adolescent’ and ‘adolescence’ on the other hand are constructed categories. Furthermore, these categories are constructed with different meanings and connotations and, moreover, have emerged at different times. The (still dominating) idea of childhood is usually said to have emerged from Romanticism, and Reynolds points out that not only was “[c]hildhood [...] strongly associated with nature” at least until the mid-twentieth century but that furthermore society in general has been engaged in a “cultural romance with the idea of childhood” (*Children’s Literature* 19). Similarly, Curry describes how childhood and ‘the child’ have been linked to ideas of a ‘naturalness’ consisting of purity, innocence and harmony ever since Romanticism and the works of Rousseau and Locke (*Environmental Crisis* 7). Furthermore, the idea or construction of childhood is often said to be imbued with a sense of nostalgia for a past featuring this supposed ‘naturalness’ on the part of adult authors in particular and society in general (e.g. Reynolds, *Children’s Literature* 19; Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 88; Hunt 72).

While such ideas of childhood and ‘the child’ have thus endured for over a century, the construction of adolescence and the ‘young adult’ is frequently argued to have occurred much more recently, and ideas attached to this construction differ significantly from those linked to ‘childhood’ and ‘the child’. In *Disturbing the Universe. Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* (2000), Roberta Seelinger Trites explains that the social concept of ‘adolescence’ became popular only from the early twentieth century onwards after G. Stanley Hall’s publication on *Adolescence* (1904) (8; also cf. Hilton & Nikolajeva 2). It then took until after World War II for this social concept to become noticeable in the literary field as well, which concurred with the rise of teen culture in general (cf. Trites 9; Reynolds, *Children’s Literature* 20). Kristeva, in her article “The Adolescent Novel” (1990), presents a noteworthy divergence from this time-frame of the construction of ‘adolescence’. She states that while “[c]ertain epochs were in love with childhood [...] [o]ther epochs recognized themselves willingly in the problematic incompleteness of young page-boys, picaros, delinquents, or terrorists” (8), thus establishing a much longer and recursive history of thinking ‘adolescence’. Nevertheless, the meaning or function that she attributes to this category concurs with that of those critics who argue for ‘adolescence’ as a more recent cultural category.

As social concepts, ‘adolescence’ and ‘the adolescent’ or ‘young adult’ are linked to and express “some of present day society’s most painful anxieties and contradictions” (Hilton & Nikolajeva 1) and represent “a ‘crisis’ structure [...] through the eyes of a stable, ideal law”



(Kristeva, “The Adolescent Novel” 9), that is, hegemonic (adult) society. Constructed as representing insecurities and “different forms of cultural alienation” (ibid.), ‘the adolescent’ or ‘the young adult’ is perceived as a “borderline identity, situated on the threshold between childhood and adulthood” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 6) and as “occupy[ing] an uncomfortable liminal space” in society (Trites xi). While Kristeva, too, speaks of adolescence as “this in-between space, this *topos* of incompleteness” (“The Adolescent Novel” 14), she also highlights the more positive aspect of this space as, at least seemingly, containing “all possibilities, [...] the ‘everything is possible’” (“The Adolescent Novel” 14).

Falconer uses the term ‘crossover’ to refer to literature, especially novels, as well as reading practices that ‘cross over’ the border between children’s and adult literature.<sup>1</sup> Conspicuously, she largely avoids the terms ‘adolescent’ or ‘young adult’, but when she argues that through crossover literature “we can become more aware of the ways in which our culture is developing and moving towards new concepts of self, of childhood, of aging and dying” (“Cross-Reading” 369) and that “readers are hybridising different readerly identities [that of adult and that of child reader] when they ‘cross over’ to reading a book that was intended, at least ostensibly, for someone other and elsewhere” (“Cross-Reading” 370), this sounds very much like an enactment of the borderline identity ascribed to adolescents as outlined above. Therefore, the term ‘crossover’ could also be applied to the category ‘young adult’ in that the adolescent borderline or liminal identity ‘crosses over’ from childhood to adulthood and thus occupies an interstitial and potentially subversive position. An element of transgression is thus central to the conceptualisation of both adolescent identities in general and of young adult literature.

Youth or adolescence are thus perceived as “disruptive categor[ies]” (Reynolds, *Radical Children’s Literature* 84), which is quite removed from the notions of innocence connected with ideas of childhood and ‘the child’. If, thus, the discourses on childhood and ‘the child’ differ from those on adolescence and ‘the adolescent’ or ‘young adult’, it seems to be more accurate to also regard the literatures produced for these differently constructed readerships in terms of separate categories. While it is, of course, not always feasible to clearly place a particular work in one category or the other (which is true for all categorisations), the stance is here taken that ‘children’s literature’ and ‘young adult literature’ should be treated as two categories in their own right instead of one subsumed under the other.

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<sup>1</sup> “[...] the term ‘crossover literature’ has been used over the last decade by publishers and reviewers to refer to the specific, recent phenomenon of large numbers of adults reading children’s literature.” However, ‘crossover’ also can “flow in more than one direction” (Falconer, “Cross-Reading” 366).

The next question to be examined is whether these categories can, in fact, be considered as literary genres, as quite a few critics claim. Trites focuses especially on the young adult *novel* (as opposed to young adult literature in general) during the course of her analysis. The difficulty with her line of argumentation is that on the one hand she speaks of the young adult novel as part of “the whole of adolescent literature” (7) but, two pages on, then speaks of “YA literature” as “a distinct literary genre” (9). Her understanding here is, it seems, that ‘YA literature’ and ‘YA novel’ are synonymous. This is underlined by her quoting part of an ALA (American Library Association) definition for young adult literature as the basis for her understanding of the term ‘young adult novel’: ““Books Written Specifically for Adolescents”” (qtd. in Trites 7). There are several problems with this definition, resulting, as it appears from a failure to distinguish the terminology clearly.

First, according to her definition based on the ALA quotation, all books written for adolescents are novels. There seems to be no room for other forms of writing, such as non-fiction, in the term ‘books’; and while it can be assumed that the novel is by far dominating the literary production for young adults, it should not be taken for granted that it is the only one. Because of this confusion of terminology, unfortunately Trites’ explanations cannot ultimately answer the question whether young adult or adolescent literature (and also children’s literature) can be regarded as a genre according to the understanding of genre laid out in the introduction to this study.

A further difficulty with the definition above is the phrasing ‘written specifically for adolescents’ as it is not always clear and cannot be always naturally assumed that a certain literary work has been intentionally written for an adolescent audience. For instance, Philip Pullman, author of the highly successful *His Dark Materials* series, states that while he “very much want[s] an audience [...] [he doesn’t] believe [he] ha[s] the right [...] to say what sort of audience it [is] to be.” Instead, he prefers “welcoming everyone [to his books], of any age, who [is] able to make out the words” (314). Furthermore, it has to be taken into consideration that not all potential readers within one age bracket engage with and progress through literature in the same way. One reader might read a given novel aged thirteen while another reader might not read the same book until aged seventeen. Trying to define a literary genre by referring to the age group of the intended audience therefore does not seem a satisfying solution to the problem, which complicates the question whether young adult literature is, in fact, a genre even further. Falconer, too, expresses doubt that literary categories such as ‘children’s literature’, ‘young adult literature’ or ‘crossover literature’ can be regarded as

genres, because, in her words, it is “anomalous” to “define[] a set of books by its readership rather than by any internal or formal characteristics” (“Cross-Reading” 367).

Referring back to what has been said about the functions of genre in the Introduction might be helpful to shed some light on the issue. Young adult literature certainly contributes to reproducing and actively constructing images of adolescence and may thus be regarded as an “ideological tool” (Hilton & Nikolajeva 8) or “another ideological institution created for the purpose of simultaneously empowering and repressing adolescents” (Trites xii) and thus shares some of the functions that have been attributed to genre above. However, it is also possible to say that adult literature in general reproduces and constructs images of adulthood, but in contrast to young adult literature it is not commonly referred to as a genre. When considering that genres also serve as a shared framework of reference and blueprints for interpretation, it transpires that the categories of ‘young adult’, ‘adult’ or ‘children’s literature’ are far too wide to be useful in this respect. While they might provide a certain very general ‘horizon of expectations’ (cf. Todorov 18) with regards to the age of the characters or style of writing, genres are much more specific in this way and often imply information about plot development, the setting, movement of the characters and problems to be faced by them. It is therefore more adequate to understand young adult literature as a body of writing in which, similar to adult or children’s literature, various different genres or a mix of several genres are employed. Thus, it is possible to speak of, for example, young adult romance novels and adult romance novels, of children’s adventure stories and of young adult adventure stories. The age-group is re-accentuated in this understanding of the terms, but rather than to define a genre the age group is accentuated in order to reference the different cultural constructions and conceptions of ‘child’ and ‘adolescent’/ ‘young adult’ (and ‘adult’) as explained above and, linked to these conceptions, to indicate a difference in, for example, style of writing or mode.

Literary mode is a useful concept in the attempt to grasp the term ‘young adult literature’ and its use. Cadden explains how literary mode can actually serve as an indication for differentiating between children’s and young adult literature. Drawing on Northrop Frye’s analysis of the modes of irony, comedy, romance and tragedy, Cadden shows that only two out of these, comedy and romance, are frequently to be found in children’s literature (“Genre as Nexus” 306), while young adult literature also “represent[s] [the] modal possibilities” of irony and tragedy (307). Furthermore, he argues that it is possible to differentiate between children’s and young adult literature by determining the genre(s) in which a given text participates. The epistolary novel and the dystopian novel are examples of genres that appear

frequently in young adult literature but rarely in children's literature (307-8).<sup>2</sup> His drawing on mode and textual performance of genre(s) is highly useful for positioning a text either within the body of children's or that of young adult literature. Frow approaches the question of mode from a slightly different angle and explains the relationship between genre and mode by suggesting to consider the latter in an "adjectival" sense [...] in which modes are understood as the extensions of certain genres beyond specific and time-bound formal structures" (65). He explains further that thus, "modes are usually qualifications or modifications of particular genres [...]; they specify thematic features and certain forms of modalities of speech, but not the formal structures or even the semiotic medium through which the text is to be realised" (65). Therefore, the categories 'children's' and 'young adult' in literature could be regarded as modes, as they provide a "thematic and tonal qualification" (67) of genres such as the adventure story or the dystopian novel. In this study, this is, in fact, regarded as the most useful approach to the term 'young adult' with regards to literature, as it not only avoids defining 'young adult literature' as a genre but also explains similarities in thematic and other features across a diverse range of genres within the entire body of literature for adolescents. To complete this chapter, some of these features are explored in the following.

As has been illustrated above, young adult or adolescent literature occupies the interstitial position between children's and adult literatures in a similar way that the idea of adolescent identity is situated in-between those of the child and of adult identity. As McCallum argues, "the relations between [childhood, adolescence and adulthood] are primarily determined by processes of education, enculturation and maturation" (9), and due to its interstitial position, young adult literature shares features with both children's and adult literature on functional as well as thematic levels.

A clear similarity between young adult and children's literature is the function of each "to socialize its audience by presenting desirable models of [...] human behaviour [...] and ways of being in the world" (McCallum & Stephens 361). The strong educational aspect of young adult literature is emphasised by many critics, e.g. when Hintz, Basu and Broad claim of young adult dystopian novels that the "didacticism of their content is reminiscent of that of Victorian novels for children" (5; also cf. Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 7; Massey & Bradford 109-10). With regards to both young adult and children's literature, the element of didacticism is linked to "the authority of the author over the reader" (Trites xii)

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<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, despite his position that the age-based category is not very useful to define a genre and that children's and young adult literature should be instead differentiated via the mode or genre chosen for a given text, he still maintains that the children's and young adult novels are in themselves genres (303, 310), which seems to run counter to his line of argumentation.

and thus to the “top-down (or vertical) power relationship” between the two (Cadden, “The Irony of Narration” 146). As Nikolajeva contends, “children’s literature is a unique art and communication form, deliberately created by those in power for the powerless” (*Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 8), an argument that, of course, also holds true for young adult literature. This relationship is “fundamentally different from [that] between adults” because “an adult writer speaks through a young adult’s consciousness to a young adult audience” (Cadden, “The Irony of Narration” 146), thus only imitating the limited point of view of the implied audience while actually having much more experience and knowledge at his or her disposal. Because of this discrepancy in knowledge and experience between adult writer and implied young adult reader, the author is in a position to manipulate the reader (cf. Trites xii; Cadden, “The Irony of Narration” 147). Nikolajeva even links this to the aspect of oppression when she claims children’s and young adult literature to be a “refined instrument [...] to educate, socialize and oppress a particular social group” (*Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 8). Thus referring back to the point of view that young adult literature can be used for the ‘colonisation of mental space’ of the adolescents (cf. Introduction), such power to manipulate or even to oppress entails a distinct responsibility for the author and at least partly explains why young adult literature can become an ideological tool and can be regarded as a literature of “control and conformity” while also representing “breaking away and becoming” (Reynolds, *Radical Children’s Literature* 79). It is the author’s responsibility which models for socialisation or “ideologies of identity” (cf. the title of McCallum’s monograph) s/he wants to offer to his/her readers.

In *Radical Children’s Literature. Future Vision and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction* (2007), Reynolds identifies three major models of adolescence (she calls them “spheres of activity”, *Radical Children’s Literature* 77) offered via young adult literature. The first one trivialises adolescents by displaying them only as consumers, thus encouraging “a sense of complacency about anything but appearance” and naturalising dominant ideologies (*Radical Children’s Literature* 79-80). The second model or sphere is described as nihilistic in tone and ultimately pessimistic, implying “that things will only get worse” and that for this reason there is no point in attempting change, therefore risking to also support “conformity and disillusionment” (*Radical Children’s Literature* 81). Both of these models concur with McCallum’s finding that much of “contemporary adolescent fiction [...] situates [the] individual within dominant social and ideological paradigms” in which the adolescent “is ultimately represented as disempowered and passive” (7). McCallum continues to argue that, alternatively, adolescent fiction creates “the image of empowered individuals capable of acting independently in the world”, thus propagating “a worldview which for many

is simply idealistic and unattainable” (7). In contrast to this, Reynolds takes a more optimistic stance when she describes the third sphere identified by her as offering young readers a positive model for socialisation as here adolescent creativity and agency are celebrated by representing “young people as ethical, engaged, and effective” and by including the notion that “change is necessary and, crucially, possible” (*Radical Children’s Literature* 82). While “in recent years, it has been quite hard to find endings that are not reassuring” in books for children (Hunt 81), Belbin’s insistence on a “kernel of hope” in his (and any) writing for young adults (137) according to these models does not seem to be shared by everyone. The possibility for hope might not be a defining feature of young adult literature in general, but it has played, and still does, an important role for the genres that are explored in the following two chapters, especially the *Bildungsroman*, which implies the hope for successful identity formation, social integration and, ultimately, citizenship, the dystopia, which implies the hope to overcome oppressive social circumstances, and post-/disaster narratives, which can imply the hope for a new and better beginning after the disastrous event.

In the themes it explores, young adult literature is often more closely aligned to adult literature, even if the two are different in the respective author-reader-relationship and often also in aspects such as point of view and focalisation. For instance, the themes of romance and sexuality, but also of violence, frequently appear in both of these literatures but they will take different forms and teenage and adult characters will deal with them in different ways. Such “thematic content [that] stretches the boundaries of what has been considered by the previous generation to be appropriate reading matter for young readers” is termed ‘crossover content’ by Falconer (“Cross-Reading” 373). Falconer goes on to explain that such themes “are likely to continue to provoke controversy amongst adult readers” because they “implicitly challenge dominant cultural myths of the innocence of childhood” (“Cross-Reading” 375). However, “[i]n an era in which many young people grow up surrounded by violence and crime, it is important that the books and films they read and watch should address the reality of their lives” (“Cross-Reading” 375).<sup>3</sup>

These experiences as well as other forms of social pressure, on the narrative level, lead to the young protagonists’ alienation from society and their search for identity, which according to Hilton and Nikolajeva represents the most prominent thematic features of young adult literature (8; also cf. Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 5). Similarly, and to come back to the

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<sup>3</sup> Also cf. Craig’s newspaper article (2012), in which both teenagers and their parents are quoted, the former drawing connections between titles like Westerfeld’s *Uglies* and the daily pressure they experience, the latter expressing worries that their adolescent children predominantly engage with seemingly gloomy narratives.

element of transgression inherent in adolescent identities, both actual and narratively constructed, it is possible to say that adolescent identities are marked by displacement and dislocation. Following McCallum, the displacement of characters in a narrative can be cultural and ideological, as indicated above, as well as spatial and temporal, the most important function in each case being the destabilisation of the displaced character's sense of identity (cf. 100). In effect, the ways in which this influences "the formation of subjectivity" can be examined (ibid.). Nikolajeva claims that the experience of displacement as disempowering and humiliating is unusual for children's literature ("The Identification Fallacy" 194), however, this is rather the norm in young adult literature. The adolescent character thus can be regarded as what Bradford and Baccolini term "the 'misfit' protagonist", who, as they argue, represents "a convention of the [dystopian] genre", because s/he "is the quintessential 'displaced' person: the citizen who feels out of place and at odds with the otherwise generally accepted values of the society" (49). This links on to a further "chief characteristic that distinguishes adolescent literature from children's literature [which] is the issue of how social power is deployed during the course of the narrative" (Trites 2). Trites derives her understanding of power mainly from Michel Foucault and Judith Butler and explains that "the social power that constructs them [young adults] bestows upon them a power from which they generate their own sense of subjectivity. As acting subjects, they assume responsibility for their position in society" (7). The development of the adolescent protagonist consequently frequently implies "an increasing awareness of the institutions constructing the individual" (19), one of which, one might add, is citizenship.

Since this discussion clearly leads on to an examination of the genre of the *Bildungsroman* (and this is, indeed, how Trites continues), I examine this category as the genre that traditionally was able to resolve the protagonist's 'misfit' status before introducing the speculative genres under consideration in this study in more detail.

## **2.2 The Young Adult Novel and the *Bildungsroman***

Since the amount of research existing on the genre of the *Bildungsroman* is extensive, the discussion in his chapter concentrates on introducing and examining those functions and characteristics of the genre that have particular relevance for this study. Thus, both the (ideological) aspect of citizenship and its relationship to a spatial dimension and the genre's link to young adult literature are foregrounded. In doing so, the often established difference

between *Bildungsroman* and *Entwicklungsroman* (novel of development) is more closely examined, too. With a view to the many female protagonists represented in the novels to be analysed, the chapter concludes by focusing on representing female identity development both in young adult literature and in the *Bildungsroman*.

The *Bildungsroman*, or novel of (trans)formation, deals with and depicts the identity formation of an individual in relation to the society he or she lives in and is surrounded by in very specific ways. Young adult literature or, to be more specific, the young adult novel, to a certain extent necessarily shares patterns with the *Bildungsroman*: here, too, young protagonists often have to face problems, overcome obstacles to their development and negotiate their role in society, be that represented by the family, school or other state institutions. In both cases a dialogical and a psychological process are emphasised, and it is only through the interplay of both processes that development can take place. Very generally and ideally speaking, the *Bildungsroman* depicts the development of a young person from adolescence to maturity and thus could be regarded as predestined to be employed as a genre within the body of young adult literature (cf. Trites). The classic template of this genre has only one protagonist, who is traditionally male and white, although it is noteworthy that in the British *Bildungsroman* tradition female biographies are depicted from very early on (for example in the novels of Jane Austen or in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*) (cf. Hillmann and Hühn 10). The protagonist starts out being an outsider to the social norm, but despite this deviant initial position, s/he manages to become a fully respected and integrated part of society in the end (cf. e.g. Schoene-Harwood 159). The idealist *Bildungsroman*, therefore, representing successful development and reconciliation, can be regarded as "reformist rather than revolutionary" and as containing "social-preservationist impulses" (Slaughter, "Enabling Fictions" 47).

The genre's reconciliatory, preservationist and reformist character, its spatially and temporally very specific origin and its initial focus on male, white and middle-class identity has often gained it the criticism of being conservative, outdated and limited to the German literary canon. However, since the genre's inception in eighteenth-century Germany it has prominently featured elements of transgression, both in terms of geographical and of social and political space, for example the permeation of hitherto fixed and static class boundaries by the bourgeoisie, with its emancipatory aspirations borne of the Enlightenment *zeitgeist* (cf. Hillmann and Hühn 8f.; also Slaughter, "Enabling Fictions" 46f.). Additionally, the importance of political space has been addressed from the beginning by linking "literary and national conceptions of Bildung" (McWilliams 6) in eighteenth-century Germany. Slaughter



describes the idea of *Bildung* at the time “as a project of civilization [...] naturally inclined to express itself through the media of the nation-state and citizenship” (“Enabling Fictions” 47). The *Bildung* or development of the individual was thus perceived to be closely interconnected with the development and formation of the (German) nation-state. The subject position thus develops *in relation to* the social and geographical space the individual is embedded in, and vice versa.

It was argued above in the introduction that genres are performative, active structures, and this includes, of course, the genre of the *Bildungsroman*. Bakhtin, with reference to Goethe (and other authors) has called it the “novel of emergence”, in which ‘man’ “emerges along with the world and he reflects the historical emergence of the world itself. He is no longer within an epoch, but on the border between two epochs, at the transition point from one to the other. This transition is accomplished in him and through him” (“The Bildungsroman and its Significance” 23). The element of transgressing a border or boundary is made explicit in this quotation. Because the protagonist changes and emerges or, to use another expression, comes into representation, his/her socio-cultural environment is also changed, the process of development thus becoming a political one. Mark Stein describes exactly this process in his monograph *Black British Literature. Novels of Transformation* (2004) when he shows that in the British ethnic minority *Bildungsroman* not only does the main character transform him-/herself, but in doing so s/he also transforms the surrounding society, in this case Britain (cf. 30). While Stein claims that “[t]he feature of finding a voice and the relationship between the individual and a larger group is, in [his] view, the main distinction from the traditional bildungsroman” (30), Slaughter demonstrates that the *Bildungsroman* has always been a “genre of demarginalization” (“Enabling Fictions” 48). He argues that

[t]he genre provides the normative literary technology by which social outsiders narrate affirmative claims for inclusion in the franchise of the nation-state, the story forms of incorporation through which the historically marginalized individual is capacitated as a citizen-subject [...]. (“Enabling Fictions” 48)

Slaughter continues to argue that through their revision and appropriation of the genre various historically marginalised social groups have facilitated the continued relevance of the *Bildungsroman*, so that the description of the “social outsider” claiming inclusion is no longer limited to the bourgeois white male of eighteenth-century Germany but includes “ethnic, religious, gender and sexual minorities” (“Enabling Fictions” 48) in all parts of the world and

indigenous peoples or citizens of formerly colonised countries.<sup>4</sup> The fact that genres are historically changing entities that can be (re-)actualised in diverse socio-cultural contexts and that not every genre is always relevant at every time and in every cultural context as discussed in the Introduction is underlined in this argumentation.

The ways in which emergence or demarginalisation occurs and inclusion is claimed of course varies depending on the situatedness of the protagonist in terms of, for example, geography, socio-political circumstances or gender. Traditionally, demarginalisation and inclusion as reconciliation with society are expressed via the protagonist's spatial movement from a rural home to an urban centre, not only entailing a separation from the protagonist's parents but also mirroring the colonial/imperial ideology of the Enlightenment era, and in the narrative situation of "a later narrator self" recounting his/her experience as "the earlier protagonist self" (Slaughter, "Enabling Fictions" 54). Slaughter goes on to explain that "[t]his narratorial agency bends teleological linear development into a reflexive structure of narrative self-sponsorship that repairs the initial diagetic [sic.] split between protagonist (man) and narrator (citizen)" ("Enabling Fictions" 54). However, with the development of the genre, reconciliation between protagonist and society becomes more difficult to achieve within the confines of the narrative, as for example the anti-*Bildungsroman* and also especially early female *Bildungsromane* with their often "ambivalent endings" of compromise (Labovitz 6) show. Other variations of the genre that represent difficulties with or even unattainability of reconciliation are the postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, often following the protagonist from childhood onwards (cf. Lima's article as well as LeSeur's monograph), or the novel of awakening, representing deferred maturation and usually focusing on adult female identity (cf. e.g. Abel et al. 11f.; Rosowski). Nevertheless, instead of taking such developments as an indication for the genre no longer being valid or useful, they should be regarded as reflections and emphasis on contemporary circumstances, issues and changes in thought, such as different conceptions of identity and subjectivity, or different social and political conditions. Even if reconciliation and inclusion are not (fully) achieved by the protagonist within the novel, the fact that his/her (critical) voice and experience is represented can still support the emergence and inclusion of the social group the protagonist represents in society in the actual world.

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<sup>4</sup> McWilliams makes the same point for the postcolonial contexts of Canada (example Atwood) and Ireland (example Joyce) (16) while Lima focuses on the Caribbean context in her article "Decolonising Genre: Jamaica Kincaid and the *Bildungsroman*" (1993), to name only a very few examples.

The “growing internationalism” (McWilliams 13) of the genre underlines the fact that the “narrative pattern for participation in the egalitarian imaginary of the [...] nation-state, a plot for incorporation of previously marginalized people as democratic citizen-subjects” (Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 47-48) that the *Bildungsroman* constitutes, can still be highly relevant and made useful for particular social groups and in national contexts other than Germany. As the re-emergence of the genre in various social and national contexts “corresponds to periods of social crisis over the terms and mechanics of enfranchisement, the meaning and the scope of citizenship” (Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 48), it can be argued that the link between individual and social/national development is still strong and not limited to the time and space of the genre’s inception, even if the genre is “laden with the burden of its history” (McWilliams 13) of national particularity and eighteenth-century ideologies (cf. Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 55 as qtd. in the Introduction). McWilliams refers especially to feminist criticism when she argues that “[i]nsisting on a definition based on Enlightenment philosophy, or rejecting the genre out of hand because of the burden of its history, leaves no room for the current inflections that characterize [it]” (23), but this argument also holds true for postcolonial criticism, for example. Thus, the appropriation of this narrative pattern that is traditionally “concerned with the legitimacy of social institutions – with their propriety, preservation, and promotion – and with the institutional formation of the type of socialized individualism upon which their perpetuity depends” (Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.* 116) can be regarded as an act of revision and reclamation, a “looking back [and] seeing with fresh eyes” (Rich 35), a “self-conscious revisiting of the past” (Huggan 3), that is also a political (speech) act (Huggan 9) which helps to form new subject positions within society.

In her monograph, Trites argues that “YA novels evolved historically from the *Bildungsroman*” (10) and goes on to claim that in a postmodern era “the traditional *Bildungsroman* with its emphasis on self-determination gives way to the market dominance of the Young Adult novel”, which according to her “allows for postmodern questions about authority, power, repression, and the nature of growth in ways that the traditional *Bildungsromane* do not” (19). This study cannot agree with the latter part of this argument since, as has been made clear until now, it is not only the (postmodern) young adult novel that investigates “how the individual exists within society” (19), but that this has been very much inherent in the *Bildungsroman* genre from the very start. Furthermore, despite her earlier explanation of the historical relationship between this genre and the young adult novel, Trites then complicates the discussion by claiming that, in fact, “most YA novels are *Entwicklungsromane*” (19) for the reason that in most instances the protagonist does not reach

adulthood by the end of the novel (cf. 10, 14), thus distinguishing the terms *Bildungsroman* and *Entwicklungsroman* simply by the protagonist's age at the end of the narrative. In this respect, she continues by pointing out that during the decades following World War II, "adulthood [...] ceased to be privileged as the narrative goal in literature written for youth" (19), again linking this to the dominance of the *Entwicklungsroman* in adolescent literature. In contrast, she contends, the *Bildungsroman* tends "to allow for adolescents to overcome the condition of adolescence by becoming adults" (19). Instead of regarding the *Entwicklungsroman* as a separate entity that focuses on a shorter time span, ends before the protagonist is fully adult and is thus necessarily "truncated" (14), and instead of implying in this distinction that both terms refer to binary, fixed and static generic constructs, this study argues for an understanding of these two terms as part of the same generic continuum that is flexible and changeable depending on the situatedness of both author and protagonist. This study thereby both follows Lima's rejection of "the common practice of dismissing as 'truncated *Bildungsromane*' both the female and the post-colonial novel of development" (435-6) and extends this argument to the young adult speculative novels to be discussed in this study. Furthermore, the fact that in these novels adulthood is not an altogether desirable category, as it is usually the adults who are responsible for disaster and chaos, political oppression and submissiveness to or even complicity with the authorities, additionally emphasises the point. Gaining awareness, undergoing change and engaging in negotiations with society are thus not necessarily linked with reaching adulthood anymore. Nevertheless, many of these novels to a certain extent share the element of emergence or performativity with the traditional 'adult' *Bildungsroman*, and it is especially (a revised image of) female adolescence that emerges and is performed in this literature.

Referring to the historical development of adolescent literature, Kimberley Reynolds convincingly argues that "[t]he first books for teenage readers provide evidence of [a] deeply rooted connection between terms such as 'youth', 'adolescence, and 'youth culture', and 'masculinity'" (*Radical Children's Literature* 73). She goes on to describe how in the 1950s and 1960s, adolescence was perceived as "emphasis[ing] attributes traditionally associated with hegemonic masculinity, such as independence and public displays of power" (*Radical Children's Literature* 73). Femininity, both adolescent and adult, was constructed in opposition to this heroic masculinity "in terms of dependency, passivity, weakness, and purity" (*Radical Children's Literature* 73). This argument is supported by Pratt's observation that in many novels of female development in the past the heroine was often denied the elements of choice, self-determination and psychological development (cf. 25, 36) and instead

experienced “a regression *from* full participation in adult life” (36). Similar to Reynolds, Pratt argues that in the past “growing up female” often implied “auxiliary or secondary personhood [and] sacrificial victimization” (36).

The recent young adult dystopian and post-/disaster novels, especially those with a focus on female characters, now ostensibly appropriate the traditional heroic image of masculine adolescence and, in doing so, engender the contestation of traditional and conservative gender roles as well as the emergence of rebellious and heroic female adolescents. In this way, the ‘heroic’ and independent image of adolescence is retained or even reclaimed against more recent criticism that has pictured adolescence as rather complacent, puerile and impotent (Reynolds, *Radical Children’s Literature* 71; also cf. Hintz et al. 5). However, the process of “reconsider[ing] and redefine[ing] adolescent womanhood” (Day et al. 5) represents more than a simple inversion of gender roles or transfer of formerly masculine-connoted character traits onto female characters. Instead, Day et al. argue that many female protagonists are positioned “at the crossroads of vulnerability and power” (5) and locate themselves between traditional gender characteristics “rather than blindly accepting or rejecting either masculine or feminine traits” (1). This claim has to be at least partly questioned considering that quite a number of the novels represent their female heroines in the very traditionally female roles of either being pregnant or of being mothers and/or as being in successful heterosexual relationships already during or at the end of a given series.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the female protagonists’ situatedness between “vulnerability and power” reflects not only a complication of traditional notions of gender but also references the dichotomous way in which discourses about young women at the turn of the millennium have positioned them either as “can-do” ‘girls’ or as “at-risk” ‘girls’ (cf. Harris 10). Harris explains that while the ‘can-do’ position is constructed as marked by economic success, self-confidence and “competitive individualism” (20), traits that have traditionally been considered as masculine, the ‘at-risk’ position is constructed as one of individual “failure” (25) and as belonging to “an underclass” (26). To a certain extent, the novels discussed in this study challenge such a construction of an ‘at-risk’ position as solely dependent on a lack of “personal competencies” by highlighting the role “economic and cultural resources” (32) as

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Bertagna’s trilogy, especially *Zenith* and *Aurora*, and Collins’s *Hunger Games: Mockingjay*, for representations of pregnancy/motherhood and/or heterosexual relationships (a further example not discussed in this study is Malley’s *Declaration* trilogy). Cf. Condie’s *Reached* and Young’s *Raging Star* for (the potential for) successful relationships. Of the series with female protagonists analysed here, Westerfeld’s *Specials* and Lloyd’s *Carbon Diaries 2017* are notable exceptions, the latter representing a relationship of sorts but with unresolved problems.

well as “new kinds of political engagement” (9) play in the process of enfranchisement. The fact that the novels and series with female protagonists draw heavily on the genre of the *Bildungsroman* indicates not only the degree of interest in female adolescent identity in general but more crucially the interest in the ways in which female adolescents may contribute to either revised or reconfirmed images and conceptualisations of citizenship.

### 2.3 The Young Adult Novel and Speculative Literature

Despite the fact that the novels analysed in this study are usually designated to the category of ‘dystopia’, the term ‘speculative literature’ has been consciously chosen for the heading of this chapter. Therefore, this chapter focuses firstly on pointing out some of the difficulties with the existing terminology and on clarifying in which way the term ‘speculative literature’ is used in this study. Following that, the basic relationship between the genres subsumed under the term ‘speculative’ are briefly discussed before turning to the genres in focus, dystopia and post-/disaster, in more detail. Since dystopia is undeniably the generic category that is most frequently assigned to the novels analysed in this study, both in popular culture and in academia, its most relevant characteristics are examined first before turning to the second generic category of post-/disaster. As it is more useful to examine the genres under discussion “in relation to other, similar genres” than “in isolation” (Petzold 13)<sup>6</sup>, the categories of ‘utopia’<sup>7</sup>, ‘science fiction’ and ‘fantasy’ are used as points of comparison and contrast for the other two genres. Subsequently, frequent points of critique voiced against these genres are presented before this chapter concludes with more positive interpretations and appropriations of their function and potential, not only but also for a young adult readership.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Petzold seeks to define “fantasy fiction”, to use his term, and contrasts it with related genres, including dystopia, but the argument is valid also the other way around.

<sup>7</sup> Some critics, e.g. Baccoloni and Moylan (2003), distinguish between ‘utopia’ and ‘eutopia’, referring to the terms’ etymology and translating them as ‘no place’ and ‘good place’. However, even these scholars are not consistent in the use of their terminology across different articles, and across most research literature studied for this work the term ‘utopia’ is commonly used to refer to representations of (supposed) ‘good places’. I concur with the majority in this case and use the term ‘utopia’ in this sense, even if strictly speaking this might not be entirely correct.

<sup>8</sup> For more extensive discussions of the genres’ (traditional) characteristics or their historical development see for example Atwood’s *In Other Worlds* (2011), Hicks’ *The Post-Apocalyptic Novel in the Twenty-First Century* (2016), Manjikian’s *Apocalypse and Post-Politics* (2014), Mohr’s *Worlds Apart?* (2005) or Moylan’s *Scraps of*

As with the other categories introduced so far, there is no clear consensus as to what constitutes the category of speculative literature. The terminological uncertainty is aptly illustrated by Margaret Atwood in her introduction to *In Other Worlds* (2011) when she recounts an anecdote about the debate at a public discussion she took part in together with fellow writer Ursula K. Le Guin: “In short, what Le Guin means by ‘science fiction’ is what I mean by ‘speculative fiction,’ and what she means by ‘fantasy’ would include some of what I mean by ‘science fiction’” (7). Le Guin’s understanding of ‘science fiction’ “is speculative fiction about things that really could happen, whereas things that really could not happen she classifies under ‘fantasy’” (6). This point of view seems to be more in alignment with predominant academic categorisations than Atwood’s, who understands “‘speculative fiction’ [as] plots that descend from Jules Verne’s books [...] – things that really could happen but just hadn’t completely happened” at the time of writing (6). Most scholars of the field would probably agree that this last description by Atwood denotes what is commonly thought of as science fiction.

In addition to Atwood’s definition and use of the term ‘speculative literature’, several further definitions are in use across scholarly research in this field of study. While Booker, in his edited volume *Critical Insights: Contemporary Speculative Fiction* (2013), seems to regard “the rubric of speculative fiction” as an umbrella term encompassing the generic categories of science fiction, fantasy and horror, with utopia and dystopia in turn regarded as part of science fiction (cf. “On Contemporary Speculative Fiction” xiv, xviv), Gill considers ‘speculative fiction’ as a genre in its own right, which he defines as inclusive and “marked by diversity” (72-73) and thus in contrast to traditional taxonomies with clear boundaries. Both understandings point towards an aspect that is even more strongly emphasised by Dunja Mohr in her slightly different explanation of the term ‘speculative’ when she speaks of it as an “alternative term” for the categories of “utopia, dystopia, and sf [which] are no longer easily distinguishable” (27). This ‘alternative’ term also includes fantasy (cf. D. Mohr 27). Thaler’s formulation of a position similar to D. Mohr’s clearly suggests a subversive potential of the category of ‘speculative’ when she describes speculative fiction as “a flexible genre term that *defies* clear-cut boundaries and *revels* in the mixing of tropes and genres” (9; emphasis added).<sup>9</sup> All of these explanations move towards an increased emphasis on genre-hybridity

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*the Untainted Sky* (2000), to name only a few examples, for a much more detailed engagement with these generic categories.

<sup>9</sup> However, I do not agree with Thaler’s distinction between science fiction as more science and technology oriented and speculative fiction as more concerned with aesthetic strategies and politics than science fiction (cf.

and thus refer to the breaking down of generic and therefore also hierarchical boundaries, but Booker still seems to imply at least some hierarchies when he speaks of utopia and dystopia as part of (and therefore subordinate to) science fiction. Mohr's as well as Thaler's understandings are more immediately useful in the context of this study than Gill's, who in his explanation of several categories of speculative fiction does not focus on ways in which previously defined exclusive genres are diluted but instead on how single literary works fit into and exemplify his categories for speculative fiction (cf. Gill 79-82).

Of course, there are suggestions for alternatives to the term 'speculative'. Milner, for example, uses the term "'non-realistic' genres" (104) to refer to genres like science fiction, fantasy, the Gothic and utopia/dystopia, but since all of these genres are still "related to reality", even if "in an oblique rather than straightforward, 'realistic' way" (Petzold 14), Milner's term could be slightly misleading. Yet another term is suggested by author and critic China Miéville, who describes the genre-blending in his literary works and those of like-minded colleagues as 'weird fiction'. However, the emphasis in his understanding of 'weird fiction' is on "a dark fantastic ('horror' plus 'fantasy') often featuring non-traditional alien monsters (thus plus 'science fiction')" (Miéville 510). As the two major traditional genres examined here (dystopia and post-/disaster) do not feature in this definition of 'weird fiction', unless implied in Miéville's understanding of 'science fiction', this term is not applicable to the novels analysed in this study. The term 'speculative' is the most useful as it points towards some of the mechanisms the genres subsumed under this term employ that characterise their relationship to 'reality', such as extrapolation in science fiction, utopia, dystopia and post-/disaster (cf. e.g. Petzold), or the inclusion of supernatural, unnatural or inexplicable events in fantasy literature (cf. Lynn xvi-xvii) to a greater extent than the other suggested terms do.

As becomes obvious from the above discussion, the question of a generic hierarchy is not relevant anymore when discussing the relationship between these categories. However, while Gill's claim of the "impossibility of one classification that accounts for all the important aspects of a piece" (82) is considered as valid here, it is still useful to think of genres like "SF, utopia and fantasy [...] as distinct but cognate forms" (Milner 104) and to examine their traditional characteristics and functions, many of which differ but a number of which may be shared, and the different ways in which they relate to reality in order to better understand the changes and/or challenges effected by such hybridisation.

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Thaler 8-9). Such a distinction ignores the considerable – politically conservative as well as progressive – potential of science fiction.



All genres within the category of speculative literature share “[t]he imagination and articulation of a temporal and spatial elsewhere [that] provides the basis for cognitive estrangement [and] consciousness raising” (Bradford and Baccolini 54). However, the ways in which this estrangement effect is achieved and therefore the forms this ‘elsewhere’ takes differ between the respective categories. One of the main distinctions between the ‘elsewheres’ represented in these genres is the way in which they relate to the actual world: while science fiction, utopia, dystopia and post-/disaster on the one hand represent varying degrees of the ‘not-yet-possible’ and/or ‘not-yet-occurred’, fantasy on the other hand represents the ‘never-possible’ (cf. e.g. Milner 103, Lynn xvi), as per Le Guin’s understanding of the terms cited above. Petzold argues similarly and distinguishes between “four different ways of relating to reality” for what he terms “fantasmatic texts” (17), a designation that is similar to Booker’s understanding of the term ‘speculative fiction’. These categories are described as, firstly, ‘subversive’, challenging “the reader’s concept of reality and his sense of security based on it”; secondly, ‘alternative’, “arrived at by rational mental activities such as analysis and extrapolation” and aiming at “appearing theoretically possible”; thirdly, ‘desiderative’, functioning “to provide an imaginary escape from the dreary constraints of reality”; and fourthly, ‘applicative’, meaning that the “secondary worlds may look radically different from everyday reality, but [...] are governed by rules or embody principles that (they implicitly claim) apply to reality as well” (Petzold 17-18). Despite the fact that the way in which these ‘relations’ are defined seems to be inconsistent as, for example, ‘alternative’ seems to depend on objective observation while ‘subversive’ and ‘desiderative’ are linked to potential effects on the readers, these categories still maintain a certain usefulness for pointing out basic generic relationships and differences. Most genres blending in the category of ‘speculative’ represent a combination of at least two of Petzold’s ways of relating to reality: dystopia, utopia, post-/disaster and science fiction share the category of ‘alternative’ but theoretically possible, which is not allocated to fantasy (cf. Petzold 19). Instead, according to Petzold, fantasy shares the category of ‘desiderative’ with utopia and that of ‘applicative’ with science fiction, while dystopia and post-/disaster share the additional category of ‘subversive’ (cf. Petzold 19). After this brief examination of the most important similarities between the latter two categories, the following paragraphs discuss in which ways the ‘elsewheres’ represented in these two genres are set up differently despite usually being located on a future planet Earth and which implications this may have for underlying functions and ideologies of citizenship.

Starting with dystopia, one of the most famous and most widely quoted definitions of this genre is Sargent's description of it as "a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived" (9). While this widely-quoted description explains what a dystopia *represents*, it does not give any information on what this genre *does*. Hintz et al. describe dystopia's discursive function as "a rhetorical *reductio ad absurdum* of the utopian philosophy, extending a utopia to its most extreme ends in order to caution against the destructive politics and culture of the author's present" (2-3). However, the direct relationship to utopia in this definition rather points towards Sargent's definition of anti-utopia than of dystopia (cf. Sargent 9)<sup>10</sup>. Further definitions of dystopia's functions are offered, for example, by Baccolini and Moylan (2003), Nikolajeva (2012) and Grubisic et al. (2014). Baccolini and Moylan describe dystopia as a "prophetic vehicle" to voice "ethical and political concern" and to warn the readers "of terrible socio-political tendencies" (2). Similarly, Nikolajeva contends that "a dystopia is a picture of fear, a picture of a society which we would prefer to avoid, a warning" (*Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 74), and Grubisic et al. argue that dystopias "address familiar developments [...] in order to forewarn, illustrate, and dissuade" (8).

Emphasised in all of these descriptions is the function of socio-political critique, which is expressed via the method of "social dreaming" (Baccolini and Moylan 5), which dystopia shares with utopia. The difference between both genres is that while in utopia the 'dreaming' produces positive images and articulates a "vision of an alternative to the ills and inequities of the present" (Bradford and Baccolini 39) (cf. Petzold's 'desiderative'), the dreams turn into nightmares in dystopian representations (cf. e.g. Baccolini and Moylan 5) (cf. Petzold's 'subversive'). As Baccolini has pointed out repeatedly, in the classic dystopian novels, such 'nightmares' usually conclude in "the victory of the state over the individual" ("Breaking the Boundaries" 140) and the "subjugation of the individual at the end of the novel" ("Finding Utopia in Dystopia" 166), thus running counter to the traditional *Bildungsroman* narrative of the achievement of full citizenship. Furthermore, most of the canonical male-authored novels of the genre have endorsed traditional gender roles, with women characterised as passive and silent (cf. Baccolini, "Breaking the Boundaries" 137), which also prevents the attainment of enfranchisement and agency.

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<sup>10</sup> The non-existent society represents an anti-utopia according to Sargent when "the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view [it] as a criticism of utopianism or of some particular eutopia" (9).

Because of their focus on society and its dysfunctions and discontents, dystopias are frequently set in metropolitan or at least urban spaces, and are often “removed from all contact with Nature” (Beauchamp 90) through “[s]patial segregation” (D. Mohr 93). “[I]n dystopias, the spatial distribution accounts for the maintenance of social inequality, an exclusionary version of citizenship, and an erosion of spatial justice”, as Bradford and Baccolini highlight (54). With regards to mobility, and again in contrast to the *Bildungsroman*, the protagonist’s journey in the dystopia will, if at all, lead away from the urban centre (cf. e.g. *Matched* and *Uglies* trilogies) in “the lone rebel’s attempt to escape from his mega-civilization and return to Nature” (Beauchamp 91). As can be seen, despite mobility taking opposite directions in dystopia and *Bildungsroman*, an element of transgressing boundaries is common to both. Overcoming the spatial segregation and gaining a more positive relationship to the non-urban environment is often represented as an important means to counter a further “key dystopian trope”, which consists in “[t]he erasure, denial, and rewriting of personal and collective history” (Grubisic et al. 15; also cf. Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 81f.). Baccolini further observes on the function of memory in dystopian narratives that it

is [...] an important element for change. Whereas, in the classical dystopia, memory remains too often trapped in an individual, regressive nostalgia, critical dystopias show that a culture of memory – one that moves from the individual to the social and collective and one that can also include a critical nostalgia – must be part of a social project of hope. (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 185)

While dystopia and utopia, in their different ways, engage in ‘social dreaming’, thus emphasising social structures and focusing explicitly on a superimposed metanarrative that, in the case of dystopia, is usually oppressive (cf. Hicks 8), apocalyptic or disaster narratives represent the “breakdown of government and structures of authority”, resulting in a “collapse of state” (Manjikian 42), while post-disaster fiction again extrapolates further and is marked by the very absence of “physical structures, social formations, and values of modern life”, as Hicks convincingly argues in her monograph *The Post-Apocalyptic Novel in the Twenty-First Century. Modernity Beyond Salvage* (4). Whereas the “concepts of citizenship [and] rule of law” might not yet be entirely absent in disaster narratives, as Manjikian argues (42), but are certainly eroded and diluted, the disastrous event leads to an “absence of security for the long term”, and “the state and society’s likelihood of recovering from this absence of security and rebuilding functioning institutions is low” (45). Curry phrases this slightly more positively when she contends that “apocalypse as tipping point is shown to result in environmental

change, but more radically, perhaps, it is shown to target the values, relationships and social structures on which human life as we know it is based” (*Environmental Crisis* 25), which implies “the erasure of cultural normativities” (21).<sup>11</sup>

Due to disaster fiction’s reproduction of “the characteristics of the failed state – including mounting demographic pressures; the movement of refugees; [...] uneven economic development [...] and a widespread violation of human rights” (Manjikian 52), it necessarily often still focuses on urbanised spaces or sufficiently large communities, similar to dystopian narratives. In post-disaster narratives, in comparison, such spaces and (physical, social) structures have largely been destroyed before the onset of the narrative and are therefore often absent from the represented worlds. For this reason, Hicks continues, a coherent narrative in post-disaster fiction can only be maintained on the microlevel of small communities (8), as the means to achieve a wider or even global perspective have been destroyed in the disaster. This would imply that questions of enfranchisement and agency can only be negotiated on a microlevel in such narratives, too. A number of the novels analysed in this study differ in this respect as they frequently manage to achieve a wider global perspective despite their settings showing considerable destruction. This deviation from much adult post-disaster fiction includes finding surviving urban spaces or establishing new settlements and can be regarded as a consequence of the blending of this genre with that of dystopia (and the *Bildungsroman*). Furthermore, narrative techniques such as alternating focalisation contribute to changes in the (generic) spatial representation.

Post-disaster narratives present the reader’s present world as a distant memory, if it is actively remembered by any of the characters at all. Due to their focus on destruction and absences, such texts are often concerned with what can be salvaged and reclaimed from the disaster, a process that includes words and ideas (including literature), material objects and even subjectivities (cf. Hicks 3). However, according to Hicks (who refers to Walter Benn Michaels for her argument), it is crucial to distinguish between memory and knowledge when

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<sup>11</sup> Apart from the terms ‘disaster’ and ‘post-disaster’ fiction (as used in this study), other terms in use are ‘apocalyptic’ and ‘post-apocalyptic’ fiction (cf. e.g. Hicks), ‘climate fiction’ (cli-fi) (cf. e.g. Goodbody and Johns-Putra), ‘eco-dystopia’ (cf. Reynolds, *Children’s Literature*) and ‘ecoscience fiction’ (cf. Huffman). The latter three terms imply varying degrees of generic hybridity, with ‘climate fiction’ recently having gained most traction as a term that refers to fictional works which thematically focus “on climate change and the political, social, psychological and ethical issues associated with it” (Goodbody and Johns-Putra 2). Although the generic hybridity implied in the way the term ‘climate fiction’ “borrow[s] from and often embrac[es] elements of different existing genres” (Goodbody and Johns-Putra 1) fits with the aim of this study to analyse the effects of such genre hybridity on the representation of citizenship, in this study, the more general and overarching term of ‘post-/disaster’ fiction is preferred because, while many of the novels analysed here fit into the category of ‘climate fiction’, not all represent “the future impact of climate change” (Goodbody and Johns-Putra 5) but human-made disasters of a different kind.

analysing the treatment of the past in such narratives. The past should be treated “as an object of knowledge” in order to maintain a critical or intellectual distance to the events instead of laying false claim to a memory that may be only inherited, especially in the form of collective remembrance (cf. Hicks 15; Michaels 138)<sup>12</sup>. Hicks seems to criticise a notion of memory that is close to the idea of recollection (anamnesis), which is perceived as “conservative and preclud[ing] new knowledge” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 170), as against recognition (anagnorisis), which “involves judgement and leads to knowledge” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 170; also cf. Geoghegan 22-23, Zipes 4). Thus, in order to facilitate (positive) change and ascertain that “history is not [...] cyclical” (Geoghegan 23), engaging with the past has to lead to recognition and leave “room for novelty” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 170; also cf. Zipes 4).<sup>13</sup>

The recent popularity of dystopian and post-/disaster narratives is variously explained as a reaction either to specific events, such as the attacks of September 11, 2001, hurricane Katrina in 2005 or the global financial crash in 2008 (Manjikian 1), explanations that Manjikian dismisses as “simplistic” (6). Other critics more generally interpret the popularity of these genres as a reaction to the anxieties around the effects of globalised modernity as expressed in Ulrich Beck’s idea of ‘risk societies’<sup>14</sup>. These “concerns about perceived vulnerabilities” include “ends of water, oil, food, capitalism, empires, stable climates, ways of life, non-human species, and entire human civilizations” (Grubisic et al. 11). Adopting and adapting especially the originally religious idea of apocalypse to address the many risks globalised modernity has produced, from nuclear catastrophes to climate change and complete environmental destruction makes sense, Hicks argues, since according to her ‘apocalypse’ as a narrative category (cf. Book of Revelation) represents “the first narrative form to attempt to encompass the fate of the world in its entirety” (13). Manjikian refers to the wealthy nations of the global north when she argues that “[t]hose who appear to be most fascinated by the study and imagination of disaster [...] are the least likely to actually suffer the consequences which they fear” (4). Following this argumentation, the genre may thus be regarded as an expression of the fear of such nations not to be able to maintain their current – relatively safe and stable – status quo due to the ‘risks’ these countries have contributed to themselves.

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<sup>12</sup> The full reference for Michaels is: Michaels, Walter Benn. *The Shape of the Signifier*. Princeton University Press, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Baccolini, Geoghegan and Zipes all base their argumentation on the work of Ernst Bloch.

<sup>14</sup> This link is established, for example, by Hicks (2016), McCulloch (2011), Voigts (2015) and Weik von Mossner (2013).

However, such claims disregard the fact that there is a substantial amount of post-/disaster or eco-dystopian fiction produced from perspectives often marginalised by majority cultures in the global north, either within their own societies<sup>15</sup> or in the global south<sup>16</sup>.

Such implicit conservatism of the genre has been addressed by many researchers, for instance Kathryn James, who claims that “post-disaster texts” have the “inclination [...] to fall back on patriarchally gendered systems of meaning and to position readers to view the future in terms of its return to a masculinist past” (8), mirroring Baccolini’s criticism of classic male dystopias. A further criticism similar to that brought against dystopian literature is that post-/disaster texts “provoke fatalism, conservatism, and survivalism” (Nordhaus and Shellenberger 131). Reynolds claims that post-/disaster texts, “by focusing exclusively on the negative ways in which people have impacted on the planet”, create a “master plot which insists that humans will only have a future if they reject new developments in science and technology and return to the ways of the past” (Reynolds, *Children’s Literature* 108)<sup>17</sup>. Nodelman comments similarly on children’s science fiction when he argues that such novels show an “anti-technological and even anti-evolutionary bias” (288).

The above allegations voiced against both dystopian and post-/disaster fiction show that the opposition between fantasy as “reactionary” (Jameson 60) or even “proto-Fascist” (Suvin 69) due to its ‘desiderative’ aspect and representation of the ‘never possible’ on the one hand and science fiction, dystopia, utopia and related categories that emphasise ‘alternative’ or ‘subversive’ aspects as more progressive on the other hand, which is frequently evoked by especially Marxist critics, is hardly tenable any longer. Nevertheless, more recent criticism by Voigts and Boller seems to repeat this claim when the authors argue that fantasy represents “‘secondary worlds’ populated by [...] generic clichés” (411)<sup>18</sup> while contemporary (young adult) dystopian literature allegedly does not employ such ‘clichés’ or, to use a more neutral term, conventions. All of these comments disregard the fact that, firstly, science fiction,

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<sup>15</sup> See for example the US-based Indigenous author Rebecca Roanhorse’s novel *Trail of Lightning* (2019), the Canada-based Métis author Catherine Knutsson’s novel *Shadows Cast by Stars* (2013) or Caribbean-Canadian author Nalo Hopkinson’s novel *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1998).

<sup>16</sup> See for example Kenyan writer and director Wanuri Kahiu’s short film *Pumzi* (2009) or US-Nigerian author Nnedi Okorafor’s novel *Who Fears Death* (2010).

<sup>17</sup> She actually uses the term “eco-tragedies” (108) but this can be regarded as a synonym for ‘post-/disaster’ literature.

<sup>18</sup> The authors seem to limit fantasy for young adults to “the socially conservative romance of the *Twilight* series ilk” (411), thus completely disregarding other works of young adult fantasy, such as J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series or Philip Pullman’s *His Dark Materials* series, to name only two highly prominent of many further examples.

utopia, dystopia and post-/disaster can and do also include ‘reactionary’ elements, as both writers and critics have shown<sup>19</sup>, and that, secondly, like fantasy, these genres have their conventions. Moreover, such comments suggest that fantasy is a homogeneous genre while the other three are not, a notion that has to be strongly rejected.

The social dreaming of utopia and dystopia, whether ‘desiderative’ or ‘subversive’, the engagement with potential risks of globalised modernity in post-/disaster fiction and “the conflict between good and evil, the struggle to preserve joy and hope in a cruel and frightening world” (Lynn xvi) in fantasy literature are usually ideologically explicit, which points towards one of the main functions of speculative literature in general: a didactic element serves to educate readers about potential outcomes if certain malpractices continue or certain desiderative practices are enforced and perpetuated (cf. e.g. Grubisic et al. 3). Didacticism thus can be regarded as a link between or common element of speculative literature and young adult literature, thus rendering speculative genres easily adaptable for a young adult readership. Many authors of young adult speculative fiction seem to emphasise a further function of this genre, which is related to the first but extends it. When Grubisic et al. argue that dystopias represent “vehicles for preemptive political activism” (8) they point out the genre’s mobilising element, which aims at convincing the readers to work towards “radical systemic change” (Grubisic et al. 3; also cf. Bradford and Baccolini 40) by moving them “to a new critical awareness” (D. Mohr 17). Other critics argue similarly with regards to post-/disaster fiction: Machat contends that such narratives serve not only as warning but also as “stories of empowerment and emancipation” in which “[s]ocial and political ideas can be worked out on a clean slate” (28), and Curry explains that “[t]hese [post-/disaster] novels are caught in tension between discourses of control that advocate dominance over an increasingly unruly planet and counter-hegemonic narratives” (*Environmental Crisis* 21). In fact, numerous critics have underlined such mobilising and resilient functions for different categories within ‘speculative literature’, which emphasises that actually all genres subsumed under the alternative term ‘speculative’ share this function.

This potential as a vehicle for change and as “counternarrative to hegemonic discourse” (Baccolini, “The Persistence of Hope” 519) has been especially (but not only) developed in the appropriations and re-actualisations of speculative genres by feminist authors like Atwood

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<sup>19</sup> For example, cf. the critical work of Alice Curry (*Environmental Crisis*, 2013), Jessica Langer (2011) or Dunja Mohr (2005), who all point out aspects of colonial discourse that are included in much (classic) science fiction and challenged in some more recent literary works, and the critical work of scholars like Raffaella Baccolini or Jane Donawerth on feminist appropriations of the previously male-dominated genres of science fiction and dystopia.

and Le Guin, but also, for example, Marge Piercy or Octavia Butler. While Baccolini ascribes this potential especially to science fiction due to its perceived opposition to ‘high literature’ (cf. “The Persistence of Hope” 519; also “Gender and Genre” 15-16), Nikolajeva underlines that, similarly, dystopia also represents “an excellent strategy for subverting normativity” (*Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 74), and Milner argues that fantasy, too, “can provide a way into thinking alterity” (103). Correspondingly, the genre of post-/disaster is described by Curry as potentially representing “the erasure of cultural normativities” (*Environmental Crisis* 22) and by Manjikian as offering “a way of thinking beyond our own situatedness – geographically, politically, and temporally” (28). Both Manjikian and Hicks furthermore link the present re-emergence of post-/disaster (adult) literature especially in wealthy nations like the USA, Canada or Britain explicitly to “the legacy of colonialism” (Hicks 18; similarly Manjikian 26), considering such narratives “as the basis for a critique of imperial foreign policy and the discourse of exceptionalism” (Manjikian 8). Dunja Mohr has commented similarly on feminist science fiction and dystopia (71ff.). That the ‘legacy of colonialism’ does not only inform the production of speculative literature from the perspective of the wealthy Western ‘coloniser’ is demonstrated, for example, by Langer in her monograph *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction* (2011), in which she includes, for instances, Indigenous as well as diasporic Canadian fiction and widens the geographic perspective to include Japanese fiction, too.

With regards to dystopia especially, Baccolini and Moylan suggest the adoption of Sargent’s term ‘critical dystopia’ to denote the adaptations that have been made to the traditional version of the genre, especially by feminist writers.<sup>20</sup> Whereas in classic dystopias there is usually no space for hope or escape for the protagonist (Baccolini and Moylan 7), thus preventing development (and by extension, it is argued, a mobilisation of the readers), critical dystopias maintain a utopian impulse within the text by resisting closure through open or ambiguous endings (Baccolini and Moylan 7). Baccolini further argues that because of such open or ambiguous endings, “critical dystopia opens a space of contestation for those groups – women and other ‘ex-centric’ subjects whose subject position is not contemplated by hegemonic discourse – for whom subjectivity has yet to be attained” (“Gender and Genre” 18), a central function that critical dystopia shares with appropriations of the *Bildungsroman* genre (cf. Slaughter and previous chapter). This similarity can be regarded as a possible reason for these genres frequently being employed together in young adult literature.

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<sup>20</sup> Dunja Mohr uses the term ‘transgressive utopian dystopia’ (D. Mohr 8) to express this development more explicitly, but the term ‘critical dystopia’ is more widely used and is therefore employed also in this study.



Since adolescent identities in formation are regarded as liminal or interstitial (cf. chapter 2.1), adolescent subjects, especially when female, thus also represent such ‘ex-centric’ subjects who need to contest hegemonic discourses to attain subjectivity and agency. In this way, the concept of ‘critical dystopia’ can be useful for the analysis of young adult novels in the dystopian genre, as Gooding has also pointed out (2014), or as is argued here, a hybrid mix of dystopia with other genres. Gooding argues that “[t]he incorporative capacity of the critical dystopia [...] allows for an integration of YA and dystopian elements” (112), which, as Nikolajeva explains, should be “impossible” due to the pressure to represent positive or at least hopeful endings in fiction for children and young adults (cf. *Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 73). While this study partly agrees with Gooding, there are also at least two issues that need to be addressed. Firstly, Gooding seems to disregard the emphasis on open or ambiguous endings in critical dystopias, which most of the young adult novels analysed here (and many of the others published but not included in this study) do not contain, at least not on a structural level. Secondly, the concept of ‘critical dystopia’ is generically narrow and applies, as the name suggests, to only one of the speculative genres focused here. Moreover, Milner questions if the “elaborate taxonomy” of distinguishing between dystopia and critical dystopia is actually necessary as, according to him, a utopian impulse can also be found in classic dystopian texts like Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (120). Finally, it has to be borne in mind that the *Bildungsroman* with its reconciliatory function is another major generic influence in the novels examined here, therefore suggesting that the positive or utopian impulse contained in many of the novels under discussion – although, in terms of gender roles, the ‘utopianism’ is certainly debatable – is at least as much due to this influence than to the critical revision of dystopia or any other speculative genre.

### 3. POLITICAL CITIZENSHIP, CIVIL ACTIVISM AND SPACES OF CONTESTATION

#### 3.1 Introduction: Political Citizenship, Political and Social Space(s) and Questions of Memory and Power

It has already been stated in the Introduction to this study that there is no clear-cut line separating political, cultural and ecological citizenship but conceptualisations of political citizenship as enfranchisement and participation in political processes precede discourses on social, economic, cultural, ecological and other forms of citizenship. As what might be termed the ‘ur-form’ of citizenship, it “codifies the relationship between the individual and the state” (Jones et al. 136) or any other spatial “‘container’ of citizenship”, like “the municipality [or] the city-state” (Dobson and Bell 6). Political citizenship is often considered as largely procedural and entails the right to participate in the public arena and political decision-making as well as oppositional rights (cf. Janoski and Gran 15). Such rights usually include the right to vote as well as “rights to free speech, association and mobility”, which are “counterbalanced by duties to avoid slander, libel, sedition and public disorder” (Smith and Pangsapa 30). This combination of certain rights with certain responsibilities represents the “legal notion of citizenship” (Jones et al. 136) that guarantees the “*passive* rights of existence under a legal system” (Janoski and Gran 13). However, participation in political processes, of course, not only necessitates the existence of passive rights and duties, but these need to be translated into active practice and “political activity in the public realm” (Dobson and Bell 7; also cf. Jones et al. 136). Smith and Pangsapa argue similarly when they contend that “citizenship is expressed through lived experience” (32).

In “What Kind of Citizens? The Politics of Educating for Democracy” (2004), Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kane more specifically distinguish between three conceptions of political citizenship that are varying in the degree of agency and responsibility they allow and ask of the citizens as well as the radius of activity within the public realm allowed for, with the first one being the most conservative and the last one the most progressive form. They describe the core assumption of the first idea of citizenship, the “personally responsible citizen”, as resting mostly on the individual’s character: “To solve social problems and improve society, citizens must have good character; they must be honest, responsible, and law-abiding members of the community” (240). Such a conceptualisation allows the citizens only a narrow frame for responsible action on a personal level and certainly does not encourage them to challenge existing ideologies, for example to question whether the existing

laws in their given society are just or not. The citizen is therefore regarded as a subject rather than an agent in the sense that s/he is subject to discourses and ideologies of citizenship instead of being able to challenge them (cf. McCallum 4). The second idea of citizenship according to Westheimer and Kane is “participatory citizenship”, which assumes that “[t]o solve social problems and improve society, citizens must actively participate and take leadership positions within established systems and community structures” (240). Even though the individual is allowed a wider frame for being or becoming an active agent in this conceptualisation, there is still the restriction that action might only be taken “*within established systems*” (cf. above; emphasis added). It is only the last form of citizenship described by Westheimer and Kane, that of the “justice-oriented citizen”, that allows individuals full enfranchisement and agency. Here, the core assumption is that “[t]o solve social problems and improve society, citizens must *question, debate, and change* established systems and structures that reproduce patterns of injustice over time” (240; emphasis added). The underlying ideology therefore is that ideologies in the form of existing norms, values and institutions have to be questioned, making this the only form of political citizenship that allows for full individual subjectivity.

Jones et al. use a different terminology with slightly different connotations to describe nevertheless similar subject positions. Their explanation of ‘active citizenship’ as “something that is [not] passively received from the state, but as something that must be actively performed by individuals through participation in governance and sharing responsibility for the defence of citizenship rights” (142) has similar implications as Westheimer and Kane’s notion of ‘participatory citizenship’. The term as Jones et al. use it denotes a replacement of direct state intervention with community initiatives in certain areas of the public arena, which is hailed by some as “an *empowerment* of local communities” (144), while critics consider this process “a privatisation of responsibility” (144)<sup>1</sup>. Harris, for instance, criticises that in such an approach, active citizenship is a ruse for personally responsible citizenship when “[s]ocial rights are [...] reconstructed as personal responsibilities, which only if successfully discharged entitle the individual to full citizenship status in other respects” (65). In either case, the citizens’ activity is performed within the established framework of society and therefore represents a “shift in *governmentality* – or the way in which government renders

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<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Harris speaks of a devolvement of “responsibilities of the state [...] onto individuals” in this context (80).

society governable” (Jones et al. 142) rather than a challenge to the system.<sup>2</sup> The second term used by Jones et al. is ‘citizen action’, which is explained as “non-conventional methods [of citizenship], such as protest, direct action and radical citizens’ action” (148), and corresponds more closely to Westheimer and Kane’s understanding of ‘justice-oriented citizenship’ as that which questions and openly challenges established structures. Similarly, Isin speaks of “making particular rights claims” as “claiming rights and duties yet to come as a result of social struggles”, which involves “stag[ing] creative and transformative resistances and articulat[ing] claims against domination [...] and the injustices it precipitates” (“Performative Citizenship” 506). These latter conceptualisations by Jones et al., Westheimer and Kane and Isin also suggest a more inclusive form of political citizenship since the performance of protest against established structures opens a participatory space for counter-narratives by those situated on the margins or even the outside of the ‘container of citizenship’ to a much greater extent than the other positions.<sup>3</sup> As Hildebrandt and Peters argue, “to perform citizenship [...] means to act *as* citizen in a way that potentially reinterprets the citizen as a role and as a subject position” (5).

Jones et al. further argue that it is especially young people who represent “the population group that has become most detached from conventional politics” and who are instead more involved in ‘citizen action’ (148-49). This is understandable when considering that especially adolescents who are not yet of age, as ‘citizens in waiting’ do not yet possess the right to participate in political decision-making by voting or running for office, for instance. Consequently, Isin lists “[y]outh [and] children” as one of the disenfranchised groups who are engaged in the performative process of making rights claims (“Performative Citizenship” 503). They have to resort to ‘non-conventional methods’ of acting politically for the simple reason that the conventional methods are not yet available to them. This may be a reason why, according to Harris, it is especially young people who are “often targeted as scapegoats who are perceived as the cause of broad social changes, civic disintegration, or unrest” (67). The adolescent protagonists of the novels analysed in this study, who are usually fifteen to seventeen years old at the beginning of the narratives, thus mirror this age group that is less involved in ‘conventional politics’ and more engaged in protest and direct action. Hintz

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<sup>2</sup> Also cf. Harris, who emphasises that in this model, “direct intervention and guidance by institutions have been replaced by self-governance; power has devolved onto individuals to regulate themselves through the right choices” (2). This form of self-governance shifts people’s attention away from critiquing and disrupting structural issues and injustices through a “devolving of responsibility” (9).

<sup>3</sup> See especially Isin’s article “Performative Citizenship” for an elaboration of this point. Also see Bhabha’s essay “DissemiNation” in his work *The Location of Culture*.

et al. correspondingly point out that “[t]he YA dystopia presumes that adolescents should be idealists, offering a gratifying view of adolescent readers as budding political activists – a portrayal that flatters adolescents and reassures adults that they are more than apathetic youth” (5).

However, this study argues that the “‘citizenly subject positions’” (Smith and Pangsapa 36) offered in these novels oscillate between different positions instead of only subscribing to one or another as different positions are enabled or become necessary at different parts in the narratives. Frequently, the adolescent protagonists are first shown as engaged in ‘citizen action’ or ‘justice-oriented citizenship’ as the oppressive and brutal systems they live in necessitate this, only to be conferred to a position where this form of involvement is seen as no longer required at the end of the narratives so that they are supposed to revert to the more conciliatory position of ‘active’ or ‘participatory citizenship’ that does not challenge the system as such any longer. Oziewicz refers to this pattern as the “social justice script”, which “is characterized by four signature phenomena” and very predictable in terms of structure, as “the goal projected by this script is ‘social change’” (208).<sup>4</sup> Transferring the idea of ‘script’ to the genres relevant to this study, it can be observed that the ‘social justice script’ is in large parts inherent to the dystopian genre while the outcome of a transformed society (through the transformation of the protagonist) is implied in Bakhtin’s idea of ‘emergence’ as one of the key functions of the *Bildungsroman*. Furthermore, a constant shift or interplay between the notions of community empowerment on the one and privatisation of responsibility and governance on the other hand, sometimes down to the level of the individual (as an exceptional protagonist), can be noted. This illustrates Isin’s argument that “subject positions of citizens [...] [as well as] outsiders [...] are neither static nor impermeable” (“Performative Citizenship” 504). Similarly, Smith and Pangsapa observe that citizenly subject positions have to be regarded as “temporary respites in ongoing confrontations” and therefore as “provisional” (36).

So far it has become apparent that firstly, as already discussed at greater length in the introduction, political citizenship is usually seen as operating within a space or ‘container’ with clearly designated boundaries (municipality, city, state) and therefore can be regarded as

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<sup>4</sup> The four characteristics concern the society represented and the protagonist’s behaviour within it: 1) the society represented is built on social injustice; 2) the protagonist first accepts and then challenges the status quo; 3) the protagonist takes action; 4) society is either transformed or the protagonist leaves to find an alternative society (cf. Oziewicz 208). As will be discussed in chapter 3.2, not all protagonists in the novels analysed in this study adhere to the first part of point 2, i.e. there are a number of protagonists who at least question the status quo from the beginning.

“intrinsically geographical [as it] identifies us with particular territorial units and the validity of rights and responsibilities of citizenship have spatial limits” (Jones et al. 137). As Collyer points out, “even [the] global”, for example in conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism or transnationalism, is still “a territorial referent” (577). Secondly, the practice or performance of political citizenship is delegated predominantly to the public sphere (cf. Dobson and Bell 7), so that major “spaces of political action [...] are the sites of state and economic power - parliaments, government buildings, factories, workplaces [...] [and] the spaces of social and environmental power and spaces of consumption and communication” (Jones et al. 152). This argumentation disregards the immense political implication of the public-private divide, especially from a gendered perspective, as the proverbial feminist slogan “the personal is political” readily testifies (cf. Hanisch 76). The fact that political action and the performance of political citizenship frequently cross the supposed line between public and private is underlined especially when citizenship rights are endangered or absent. Thus, Jones et al. contend that “the absence of citizens’ rights in totalitarian states is manifested in restrictions on the use of ‘public’ space and in the routine invasion of private space by state agents” (155). The novels analysed in this study offer numerous illustrations of the “routine invasion of private space”, including the acceptance of a spouse selected by the authorities and state-prescribed poisoning of citizens on their eightieth birthday in the *Matched* trilogy (3-4, 69ff., 287) or the obligatory beauty operation on each person’s sixteenth birthday in the *Uglies* trilogy (cf. *Uglies* 40ff.), to list only a few examples.

It thus becomes evident that “power/government [...] seek[s] to use space for particular ends” (Huxley 149), not least to “remind[] people of who is in charge, or of what the dominant ideology or philosophy is” (Jones et al. 116). Jones et al. refer to spaces used in such ways as “landscapes of power” (116), which operate “through the ordering of space, for example in the central location of royal palaces, government buildings, monuments [...] Other monuments and buildings express power through their visibility - they are meant to be [...] constant reminders to the subordinate population of an elite’s power” (117-118). They further explain that “the ordering of landscape can also be employed as a means of physically exerting power by restricting the movement of people, imposing divisions between groups and controlling development and standards of living” (125), an aspect that is very visible in most novels examined in this study, for example in the division of future Glasgow (called New Mungo in the novel) into sky city (the safe haven), netherworld (marginalised space

underneath the towering structure)<sup>5</sup> and refugee boat camp (outside the city boundaries) in *Exodus* or the division of Panem into districts and their situation and management in the *Hunger Games* trilogy.

Nevertheless, according to Huxley, “spaces and environment are not simply delineated or arranged for purposes of discipline or surveillance, visibility or management” (195). She argues that just as much “appropriate bodily comportments and forms of subjectivity are to be fostered through the positive, catalytic qualities of spaces, places and environments” (195). Cresswell argues similarly when he contends that “ideas about what is right, just, and appropriate” (8) intersect with aspects of space and place so that a set of expectations is created in a given society that relates “a [subject’s] position in a social structure to actions in space” (3). While in Huxley’s argument the fostering of ‘appropriate bodily comportments’ seems to be connoted positively as against using space for more restrictive purposes, Cresswell explicitly speaks of “a normative landscape” (8) that represents the way in which “value and meaning” that are, of course, “not inherent in any space or place”, are “created, reproduced, and defended” in a given society (9). When a subjects acts ‘out of place’, Cresswell argues further, s/he transgresses the “geographical setting of actions” and thus, intentionally or not, “question[s] that normative world” created through the expectations of propriety linked to space and place (9). Normative landscapes thus share a number of points with genres in that both “provide a structure for experience” (8), both represent inherent socio-cultural ideologies that may be affirmed or contested and both are “not simply formed and molded but play[] an active role in the formation of society” (12) (cf. Introduction). Whereas landscapes of power are often rather obvious, for example through spatial segregation in Apartheid South Africa, the existence of national borders or the set-up of many state capital cities around the world, normative landscapes operate at a more subtle level of social and cultural expectations. Either conceptualisation of space proves Foucault’s claim that “[s]pace is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power” (“Space, Knowledge, and Power”, 252), and both landscapes as actual as well as discursive structures work together to shape the individual’s subjectivity.

With regards to citizenship, Smith and Pangsapra argue that ‘the democratic citizen’ is constituted “through ensembles of practices” (32), and ‘memory’ can be understood as such a “set of systems and practices” (Geoghegan 15). However, practices centred on aspects of

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<sup>5</sup> It might be added that the netherworld represents a liminal space, geographically and socio-politically situated in between the privilege of the sky city and the destitution in the refugee boat camp outside of the walls surrounding it.

memory and commemorative culture often combine with ‘preferred readings’ of places, for example in the erection and design of monuments, which in turn may be employed to support landscapes of power and normative landscapes. As Said has noted, “[m]emory and its representations touch very significantly upon questions of identity, of nationalism, of power and authority” (“Invention, Memory and Place” 176), and Geoghegan emphasises “the conservatism involved in many forms of the political use of memory, and its use by the right. Historically, fascism thrived on the politics of memory” (27). Nevertheless, “collective memory” has to be regarded as “a field of activity in which past events are selected, reconstructed, maintained, modified, and endowed with political meaning” (Said, “Invention, Memory and Place” 185) so that there is always the opportunity of challenging and subverting such conservative mnemonic practices through counter-mnemonic practices, such as “a complex revisionist process that allows the relationship between past and present [...] to be productively reassessed” (Huggan 4). Huggan speaks of the field of postcolonial criticism when he says that “[o]ppportunistic presentism [...] is as much a danger [...] as unreflective historicism” (4), but this is certainly true for a diverse range of fields of study and issues of public relevance, and not least for the political use of mnemonic practices. For citizens to become fully enfranchised, especially in the novels discussed in the following chapters, they need to see through the “ideological malleability of the historical past” (Huggan 7) and engage in “performative mode[s] of critical revisionism” (Huggan 10) that, as will be demonstrated, are intricately linked to a range of citizenly subject positions.

In the following, this chapter will commence by analysing the representation of citizenly subject positions at the intersection of genre conventions pertaining to spatial aspects and mnemonic practices both on the story level and with regards to ‘genre memory’. The first section will concentrate on the spatial model of centre and periphery inherent in both the dystopian and the *Bildungsroman* genre traditions and the overall development of citizenly subject positions facilitated by mobility between and transgression of these segregated spaces (chapter 3.2). In a second step, since both genres are closely tied to discourses of the nation, the analysis will focus on the representation of the actual and ideological spaces of national rituals, narratives and/or histories and how these are challenged by the performance of justice-oriented citizenship as a form of contestation (chapter 3.3). Finally, and moving beyond the space of the dystopian nation and the segregated spaces within its boundaries, the possibilities for a wider global perspective and the potential for forms of transnational or cosmopolitan citizenship within these novels will be examined (chapter 3.4). I will argue that most of the novels analysed in this chapter display a persistent tension in the validation of specific



political citizenly subject positions for the adolescent protagonists that can be traced back to a tension between especially the dystopian genre and the traditional *Bildungsroman* as well as dominating young adult literature features. Representing political citizenship as a lasting form of engagement, at least on a city-periphery, national level, is shown to pose a creative challenge as hardly any (if at all) enduring enabling positions for young adults are envisioned in these novels. Whether this is different in further configurations of citizenship (cultural and ecological) will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

### **3.2 Leaving Home as Politicising Journey: *Bildungsroman* Mobility, Spatial Transgression and Shifting Citizenship Positions in the *Exodus*, *Dustlands*, *Hunger Games*, *Matched* and *Uglies* Trilogies**

As has already been briefly indicated in the introduction, spatial arrangements are highly relevant in all genres under discussion here to the extent that they have become a significant part of these genres' 'memories' or conventions. To begin with the *Bildungsroman*, in the classic version the hero (or heroine) often moves from a rural setting to the city, a place that in the early tradition of the genre is represented as holding many promises and is set in stark contrast to the rural environment of the protagonist's upbringing, thus creating a significant spatial dichotomy between these two spheres. Analysing *Bildungsromane* "from Dickens to Golding", as the subtitle of his study states, Buckley explains the typical pattern of mobility and development as follows:

[The protagonist], sometimes at a quite early age, leaves the repressive atmosphere of home [...], to make his way independently to the city [...]. There his real 'education' begins, not only his preparation for a career but also [...] his direct experience of urban life. [...] His initiation complete, he may then visit his old home, to demonstrate by his presence the degree of his success or the wisdom of his choices. (17-18)

This quotation underlines the fact that the spatial dichotomy established in the traditional *Bildungsroman* is an unequal one in terms of which opportunities are offered to the protagonist and the way in which these opportunities are (ideologically) evaluated. The unequal binary opposition between city and more rural environments thus mirrors the spatial model of centre and periphery established by imperialism, which Said defines as "the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory" (*Culture and Imperialism* 8), indicating the geographical as well as ideological segregation of

these two spheres. In this model, the colonial ‘centre’ perceived itself as the centre of “culture, power and civilization” (Ashcroft et al. 43), while the areas marginalised in this concept were, at least partly, defined by a lack of the above, mirroring the “repressive atmosphere” the *Bildungsroman* protagonist seeks to escape by relocating to the city (cf. Buckley). In later adaptations of this genre, the city ceases to be the place of promise and success and, depending on the respective socio-political, historical and geographical context, turns into the opposite: a place of downfall in which the protagonist is trapped in vicious circles of powerlessness and self-alienation. Postcolonial *Bildungsromane*, for example, often represent the city as a place like a two-edged sword: within the existing social hierarchy it is necessary to be successful on the terms of the hegemonic power, but this does not lead to a successful integration and enfranchisement of the subject.<sup>6</sup> The city thus turns from a place of promise to the space of the protagonist’s “awakening to limitations” (Rosowski 332).

In the classic dystopia, as in the *Bildungsroman*, the city is usually the place of power. Whereas in the traditional *Bildungsroman* this was initially connoted positively as the place of Enlightenment culture, the ruling power in dystopia is always oppressive and often exploitative. In dystopia, the authorities aim at preventing the enfranchisement of the population, who are often subjects rather than citizens, so that subjectivity (which includes agency) cannot be developed. This is also the case for the novels discussed in this study, an observation that is shared by Ames when she explains that “[a]t the core of many of the most popular YA novels published in the last decade is a government that seeks to quell rebellious impulses. This is accomplished, for example, in [...] *Uglies* (2005) via distraction and in *The Hunger Games* (2008) [...] through direct punishment” (9). In this respect, the dystopia shares an element with the anti-*Bildungsroman* and the postcolonial *Bildungsroman*, which similarly represent conditions that prevent the protagonist’s positive development. In contrast to the (traditional) *Bildungsroman*, in which the rural setting is a place to be left behind and only eventually later to be returned to after the successful development has taken place, in

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<sup>6</sup> The term ‘postcolonial *Bildungsromane*’ refers to *Bildungsromane* that narrate an individual’s formation of a (citizenly) subject position within colonised or formerly colonised, now independent states as well as in diasporic contexts within former centres of imperial power. Examples for the more negative treatment of the urban space in such narratives can be found, for example, in Merle Hodge’s *Crick-Crack, Monkey* (1970; Trinidad), Tsitsi Dangarembga’s *Nervous Conditions* (1980; Zimbabwe) or Joan Riley’s *The Unbelonging* (1985; UK), where the young protagonists suffer the effects of a colonial education system that is on the one hand the only way for upward social mobility (and, in the case of Riley’s novel, safety from an abusive father) but on the other hand triggers a process of self-alienation and feelings of dislocation. The previously marginalised experience of these subject positions is thereby narrated into representation. For more in-depth discussions of this form of *Bildungsroman* see, for example, LeSeur’s *Ten is the Age of Darkness* (1995), Lima’s article on “Decolonizing Genre” (1993) or Stein’s *The Black British Bildungsroman* (2004).

dystopia rural or remote places, wilderness etc. are often given a crucial relevance as they offer a space away from the authorities in which to interrogate social norms, establish counter-practices and from which to organise resistance.

While the unequal spatial binary opposition established in the *Bildungsroman* is thus also a crucial element of dystopian narratives, the ideological connotations linked with the respective spaces are contrary in the traditional versions of these two genres. Moreover, both genres draw attention to the ways in which “the notion of citizenship has connoted belonging (*within* the city) and simultaneously conjures up ‘the other’ (*without* or beyond the city)” (Smith and Pangsapa 47). Therefore, both genres mix well in terms of the representation of both landscapes of power and normative landscapes operating through the often times (seemingly) strict spatial segregation of dominating centre and neglected or even oppressed periphery. The characters’ making claims to citizenly subject positions and challenging those positions they start out with is directly connected to their transgressions of (spatial) boundaries through the journeys they – voluntarily or not – undertake within these segregated landscapes. As Chambers remarks, “the ‘I’ is constantly being formed and reformed in such movement in the world” (24). This transgressive mobility, as in the traditional *Bildungsroman*, is crucial for the process of the protagonists’ politicisation and eventual enfranchisement, a process that implies various inside-out and/or outside-in trajectories. ‘Transgression’ is here understood as explained by McCallum and Stephens, who see

[t]he possibility of transgression [as] premised on the existence of social, ideological, legal, or cultural codes and conventions, which constitute boundaries or constraints upon a person’s actions, speech, thoughts, or sense of identity. These boundaries imply the construction of subjectivity as subjection to a particular set of constraints. The action of either countering or violating them would thus enable the construction of a sense of identity as agent, [...]. (367)

They go on to explain that, “[h]owever, the act of transgression does not simply constitute agency. Such actions also function to position and construct a person, [...] they also imply the status of that person as a subject” (367-68). Transgression, even if not immediately equating agency, is thus essential for a person’s growing awareness of their subject status within a “particular set of constraints” (cf. above), which is a necessary first step on the path to enfranchisement.

The landscapes of power represented in the *Exodus*, *Hunger Games*, *Matched* and *Uglies* trilogies are, in typical dystopian fashion, first and foremost characterised by the spatial segregations the authorities in the respective novels establish and maintain, even

though on a much more confined scale. The imperial spatial model is thus evoked<sup>7</sup>, as already explained above, or even explicitly referred to when Mara, the protagonist in *Exodus*, recognises that the authorities of the “New World” sky cities exploit the disenfranchised as “slaves to build [their] empire” (*Exodus* 161). In this way, the allocation of power to the (urban) centre is retained while the moral and cultural superiority implied in the term ‘civilisation’ and reflected in the role of the city in traditional *Bildungsromane* is relinquished, so that the ‘repressive atmosphere’ that Buckley allocated to the rural home of traditional *Bildungsroman* heroes has now become a marker of urban life. Dunja Mohr is one of several critics who have commented on this generic spatial segregation in dystopian literature, and her argument that “the narrowing of geographical space on Earth – the isolation and segregation according to class and/or gender – [...] leads to a lack of interaction and furthers prejudices” (93-94), brought forth in her discussion of Suzette Haden Elgin’s *Native Tongue* trilogy, is thus applicable to a wide range of speculative narratives, including the young adult novels examined in this study. Wezner, for example, comments on “the districts’ segregation” (150) from the Capitol and from each other in Collins’s *Hunger Games* trilogy, a practice which ensures that no contact between the districts and thus no “sharing information or joining forces” is possible (149). Similarly, Curry highlights that the society of New Mungo in Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy “cocoons the elite few in self-enclosed sky cities” while it at the same time “expels the socially ‘useless’” and that these “[s]egregated living spaces [...] invoke the imbalanced geographic systems of privilege” (*Environmental Crisis*, 24-25).

This spatial segregation allows the city authorities in the dystopian societies to form the city as a space that is both “artificial”<sup>8</sup> and has a “corrupting influence” on (Cronon 80) and “infantilizing control” (Ostry 102) of its inhabitants, which is enforced via a number of strategies. The most commonly represented strategies are distraction through entertainment (*Hunger Games*, *Uglies*, *Exodus*) as well as intentional misinformation and withholding of information by a multitude of means (cf. *Dustlands*, *Exodus*, *Matched* and *Uglies* trilogies),

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<sup>7</sup> While Kniesler, with an ecofeminist approach to the *Hunger Games* series, argues that “[t]he subjugation of the districts to the Capitol echoes the historical patriarchal oppression of women, in turn resonating with the hierarchy between culture and nature” (19), this study contends that due to the generic spatial set-up and its political implications it might be more fruitful to equate the Capitol’s power as well as the power of the urban centres in other novels analysed here with imperial power since this actually encompasses patriarchal power and territorial subjugation.

<sup>8</sup> This point is emphasised in most of the trilogies, for example in *The Hunger Games* when Katniss remarks that “[a]ll the colours [in the Capitol] seem artificial” (*Hunger Games* 72) or in *Uglies* when Tally reflects that “the city [...] made everything fake, in a way [...] nothing was quite real there” (*Uglies* 71). In a similar manner, New Eden in the *Dustlands* trilogy “don’t seem entirely real” (*Raging Star* 111), as Saba’s friend Mercy argues, and Saba agrees that at its core “[i]t ain’t natural” (*Raging Star* 82).

the latter of which may even be achieved by physical mutilation in order to delete any critical capacity from their brains (*Uglies*). In this way, city inhabitants are encouraged to “spend their time idly in search of hedonistic pleasures” (Kniesler 21) and/or ignore “the human catastrophe right outside their wall” (*Exodus* 72).<sup>9</sup> The choice of name, Panem, for “the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America” (*Hunger Games* 21) in Collins’s trilogy, which, of course, references Juvenal’s phrase “panem et circenses” to criticise Roman citizens’ complacency about politics if only they are entertained and fed, renders this tactic most explicit, as has been pointed out by a number of critics.<sup>10</sup> The crucial point is that in this model the ruling centre’s citizens *voluntarily* relinquish their responsibilities to the authorities and are not even interested in maintaining major political rights. Active citizenship positions here are not only limited or not available at all, they are also not sought after or made claims to. If a citizenly subject position is discernible at all, it mostly resembles ‘personally responsible citizenship’, which focuses on good character and conduct as well as abiding by the laws and implies that citizens will not question or even challenge established norms and rules. Thus, the Capitol citizens in the *Hunger Games* trilogy are not, as Baker claims, “[u]naware of the power structures that contain them” (207), since they must be aware of the fact that Panem’s twelve districts have to send tributes to the annual, title-giving Hunger Games<sup>11</sup>, while they, importantly, do not. On the contrary, like those few citizens in *Uglies* who have undergone the plastic surgery but do not suffer from “[p]retty [m]inds” (*Uglies* 249ff.) or those in *Matched* who work for the Officials, including Cassia’s parents and grandparents, Capitol citizens in the *Hunger Games* trilogy are complicit in their own as well as their fellow citizens’ continued political disenfranchisement and in the entrenching of the landscapes of power set up by their authorities, even if this is to protect themselves and their family.

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<sup>9</sup> Ames argues similarly that the Capitol in the *Hunger Games* trilogy represents “a place of rich and ridiculous abundance” and displays an “aura of excess” (11).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. for example Martin 231. Interestingly, Kniesler does not mention this despite describing exactly the situation criticised by Juvenal as represented in the *Hunger Games*.

<sup>11</sup> The Games and further rituals that are linked to them like the Reaping ceremony and the Victory Tour are usually capitalised in the novels, therefore this spelling will also be applied in this study. When the terms “Hunger Games” or simply “Games” are used in this study without italics, they therefore refer to the event of the Games taking place in the novels. When the term “Hunger Games” is used with italics, it refers to the title of the trilogy or the trilogy’s first instalment respectively. These annual Games, in which each of the twelve districts have to send one female and one male adolescent (aged 12 to 18) to the Capitol to participate in a fight to the death until only one victor remains not only violate the right to bodily integrity but crucially represent a major tool the Capitol employs to create division between the citizens. As Katniss’s friend Gale notes, “[i]t’s to the Capitol’s advantage to have us divided among ourselves” (*Hunger Games* 16). The authorities in the Capitol thus employ the imperialist strategy of rule and divide to maintain their power over the districts.

As the protagonist's situatedness in the beginning of the first novel determines her initial viewpoint to a major extent, Cassia, the female protagonist and autodiegetic narrator in *Matched*<sup>12</sup>, and Tally, the female protagonist and main focaliser of a heterodiegetic narrator in *Uglies*, both situated within the urban setting in their respective societies, initially have a limited point of view not only due to their adolescent age but also due to their spatial 'insider' status. Having been indoctrinated and kept 'in place' by the oppressive authorities and their norms from birth, Cassia and Tally only slowly awaken to the limitations presented by the norms and rules of their societies. Cassia, a "normal, healthy citizen[]" (*Matched* 38) of the Society<sup>13</sup>, is initially proud to be "a part of it all" (*Matched* 19), and Tally, similarly, "would happily remain in the cities indefinitely", as McDonough and Wagner observe (160). Therefore, a challenging of the system in political terms seems not necessary or desirable to them as they are both eligible to the only personal choice or common right available in their world: Cassia may choose whether she would like to get matched or not<sup>14</sup> (*Matched* 44, 46) and Tally may undergo the mandatory plastic surgery operation that will turn her from an ugly<sup>15</sup> into a pretty (e.g. *Uglies* 36). Additionally, behaving like a 'personally responsible citizen' is necessary as Cassia is well aware that trying to "break the rules" of the normative landscapes underlying these societies and "'causing a disturbance'" (*Matched* 321)<sup>16</sup> would result in social "suicide" (*Matched* 164) and therefore everyone does what "he or she is supposed to do" (*Matched* 114). In *Uglies*, the act of "[c]rossing the river" between Uglyville, home of adolescents aged 12 to 16, and New Pretty Town is described as "serious business" (*Uglies* 7), underlining the extent to which adolescent behaviour and movement is restricted and even policed. This aspect is further highlighted by the fact that "the [...] bridges into New

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<sup>12</sup> In the later parts of the trilogy, *Crossed* and *Reached*, the narrative situation branches out to additionally encompass first Cassia's love interest Ky (*Crossed*) and finally also her best friend Xander (*Reached*), so that there is one additional autodiegetic narrator per instalment in the trilogy.

<sup>13</sup> This is the name of the country Cassia lives in, therefore here as in the novel the term 'society' is capitalised when referring to the fictional country. In general, with regards to the *Matched* series, (the) 'Society' with capital 'S' refers specifically to the country/state that the protagonist of *Matched* lives in; 'society' with lower-case 's' refers to the protagonist's social context, i.e. society in general.

<sup>14</sup> In the Society, partners are not freely chosen but determined by the authorities based on each person's individual statistics to achieve "'optimal results'" (*Matched* 8). A person of citizen status may only choose whether they would like to be matched with a partner or whether they would like to remain single (*Matched* 46).

<sup>15</sup> This is the term used in Tally's world to refer to adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16. The perceived deviance of adolescents from an ideal norm and their liminal status between cute 'littlies' (children) and beautiful 'pretties' (adults) is thus especially emphasised (cf. chapter 2).

<sup>16</sup> Most of these rules invade people's private lives and comprise not being allowed to run in public (*Matched* 25) or not being "allowed to go into one another's residences" (*Matched* 56).

Pretty Town [are able to] report trespassers” (*Uglies* 5) due to the technology they are equipped with. Ultimately, as Moran observes, “[t]hese divisions function to prevent uglies from realizing that pretties have had their brains modified to make them incurious and docile, and to keep the pretties too distracted to notice the changes in themselves” (127).

The very generic representation of the power-wielding cities is contrasted with the equally rather generic depiction of the geographic periphery as disadvantaged economically and in terms of personal safety and security. Nevertheless, in contrast to the protagonists originating from urban centres, protagonists like Katniss in the *Hunger Games* trilogy or Mara in the *Exodus* trilogy, who originate from a more rural, marginalised setting, are more critical of the authorities from the start due to their ‘outside’ perspective. Katniss, the protagonist and autodiegetic narrator of *The Hunger Games*, and Mara, the protagonist and main focaliser of a heterodiegetic narrator in *Exodus*, are both initially situated in the periphery of their respective worlds. Katniss’s home district 12 is one of the most deprived districts of Panem and thus is not only remote from the Capitol in terms of distance<sup>17</sup>, but also in terms of wealth and critical understanding of the power relationships characterising Panem’s society. Furthermore, as several critics have noted (e.g. Ames 11), Katniss is twice marginalised, firstly within the centre-periphery dichotomy of Capitol and districts, and secondly because within her home district 12 she is situated in the so-called Seam (*Hunger Games* 5). The people living in this area at the edges of the district are even more poverty-stricken than the merchant class in town, a fact that significantly increases the odds of the adolescents’ being drawn for the annual Hunger Games as they can add their names multiple times to the drawing pool in exchange for food (*Hunger Games* 9, 15). Sawyer Fritz thus fittingly describes Katniss as “an outsider, a girl from the wrong side of town, even within her own impoverished district” (22).

On the other side of the North Atlantic, in a future world that has largely drowned, Mara has lost her island home in the north of Scotland to the ever rising sea levels that have already swallowed most of Europe and created Eurosea instead (*Exodus* 35, 49). She and her people become refugees in search of a new home, which they hope to find in the sky city of New Mungo, built on the drowned ruins of Glasgow. However, upon arrival there, Mara and her remaining friends (her family has drowned on the way, *Exodus* 83f.) find themselves in the

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<sup>17</sup> District 12 is described as a coal-mining area situated in the Appalachian region, the Capitol is located in the Rocky Mountains (*Hunger Games* 50). The Capitol’s geographic location in itself contributes to Panem’s landscape of power as the “geographic advantage” of its strategic situatedness “was a major factor in the districts losing the war” (*Hunger Games* 71).

refugee boat camp that has grown outside the wall fencing off the sky city (*Exodus* 66). The refugees have to realise that citizenship as membership in one of the so-called sky cities, towering, tree-like structures that have been built above some of the drowned cities, is an exclusive privilege and not a common right (*Exodus* 67f.). Like Katniss, Mara is twice marginalised, firstly in her loss of home resulting from climate catastrophe and secondly in her relegation to refugee status, which renders her at the mercy of the unsympathetic city authorities of New Mungo.

Thus it becomes evident that these two protagonists' 'outsider' status is not only confirmed by their geographic situatedness and their understanding of the way in which this intersects with unequal power relationships but also by the precarity<sup>18</sup> of their respective situation. Both Katniss and Mara therefore could, at a first glance, be read as representations of "at-risk" girls or young women, a term used by Harris to examine dichotomous constructions of girlhood and young womanhood in popular discourses around the millennium (cf. Harris 10, 13-36). In contrast to the successful and socially well-integrated "can-do" girls, 'at-risk' girls are conceptualised as "rendered vulnerable by their circumstances – living in poverty, in unstable homes, in communities known for violence" (25), which in turn is taken as a reason to discursively construct them as "an underclass" (26) of (potential) socio-political failures. By emphasising these protagonists' highly critical stance against the respective authorities as well as their subsequent engagement in challenging an unjust system and bringing about change, these novels participate in subverting and deconstructing such polarising and simplistic conceptions of young adult female subjectivity. Sawyer Fritz's remark that "Katniss's ability to resist internalizing these traits ["passivity, voicelessness, vulnerability"] is made all the more significant by her own marginalized social class and ambiguous racial/ethnic background" (22) is therefore only partly accurate. Katniss, like Mara, is able to resist passivity and voicelessness not despite but *because of* her marginalised, outsider position. Moreover, they are both fully aware of their outsider status and the necessity to overcome this to at least a certain extent if they want to survive.

Place and space thus not only determine "the identities of its citizens" "[i]n dystopia", as Bradford and Baccolini have noted (49), but are also "powerful force[s] in [...] ongoing hegemonic and counterhegemonic struggles" (Cresswell 13). In order to overcome the situation of citizenly disenfranchisement and to start marking claims to rights, the

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<sup>18</sup> I refer to Judith Butler's definition of precarity as "that politically induced condition in which certain populations suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death" (Butler, *Frames of War* 25).



protagonists from both urban centres and marginalised spaces in the novels emphasising a traditional dystopian setting have to embark, in generic *Bildungsroman* fashion, on a journey of displacement, transgressing the entrenched segregating boundaries towards and into the respective ‘other/ed’ space.<sup>19</sup> In *Exodus*, the refugees are not granted access to the sky city unless selected as slave labour for the authorities’ plans for expansion (*Exodus* 81, 161). Nevertheless, Mara, who feels a responsibility to change her people’s lives to the better, illegitimately transgresses from the refugee boat camp to the other side of the city wall and into the towering structure of New Mungo (*Exodus* 92-94). She resolves to find a way to alleviate the boat refugees’ suffering by continuing her search for a new home for them (*Exodus* 144-45). Thus, she decides to take on responsibilities that should be performed but are consciously neglected by the authorities in the sky city.

Katniss’s initial spatial boundary-crossings are limited to crossing over the (sometimes) electrified fence marking her district’s boundaries into the woods that lie on the other side of it. Like Mara’s crossing into the inner wall of the sky city, this spatial transgression is motivated by a feeling of responsibility, if not for her entire community, then for her family and that of her friend Gale’s. On a more personal basis than Mara, she acts ‘out of place’ both in regards to the normative and to the power landscapes of Panem to be able to go hunting and thus provide for her family (*Hunger Games* 11). The illegitimate act of crossing over the fence combined with the possession of weapons (a bow and arrows are stashed in a hollow tree) and the illegal hunting and gathering of food that is not distributed by the Capitol, can, like Mara’s action, be understood as a compensation for the lack of the authorities’ involvement in, or rather their conscious prevention of, care and security for the population and thus as participatory or active citizenship. In both cases this form of citizenship is performed by the protagonists at this point out of an existential necessity rather than in order to actively challenge or subvert the authorities’ power. Nevertheless, even though their personal motivations may point towards active citizenship, the way in which these actions are read within the repressive systems they live in, by the authorities and the population at large

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<sup>19</sup> A number of the novels discussed in this study already carry the importance of this element of journey and transgressions in their titles: the titles *Exodus*, *Zenith* (Bertagna bk. 1 and 2), *Crossed*, *Reached* (Condie bk. 2 and 3) and *Blood Red Road* (Young bk. 1) all refer to mobility or to a situation that has been preceded by mobility. While the titles *Blood Red Road* and *Exodus* indicate journeys of a certain kind that the characters have to undertake, the title *Crossed* explicitly refers to the element of transgression that is inherent to crossing boundaries, whether material or not. The titles *Reached* and *Zenith*, in contrast, imply the protagonists’ arrival (practical or metaphorical) at a (provisional, intermediate) goal, aim, or destination point of a journey.

alike, as well as by the readers of these novels, shows that depending on the situation there is strong overlap of this form of citizenship and that of justice-oriented citizenship.<sup>20</sup>

Katniss's crossing over into the urban centre of the Capitol occurs as part of the annual Hunger Games, for which she, her fellow district 12 tribute, Peeta, and the tributes of the other eleven districts of Panem are forcefully displaced to the Capitol as pawns in the authority's power games. Significantly, however, at this stage their transgressive journey across district boundaries is sanctioned, even demanded by the authorities and therefore legitimate. As Baker has formulated it, "only 'tributes' are formally invited [...] to venture inside [the Capitol]" (204), which exposes a certain degree of ambivalence in Panem's landscape of power.<sup>21</sup> On the one hand, the Capitol keeps the districts apart from itself and from each other to maintain its position of power, as explained above, but on the other hand it brings a number of district representatives into the centre as well, undermining its own landscape of power while simultaneously enforcing it through the 'hosting' of the annual Games<sup>22</sup>.

As in the case of *Exodus* and *The Hunger Games* discussed above, in *Uglies*, Tally's displacement from her home, the city of New Pretty Town, is not voluntary. Thus McDonough and Wagner observe that she is "commanded by Special Circumstances" to "face the wilderness" (160) and return her friend Shay<sup>23</sup> to the city from the so-called Smoke, a hidden settlement of rebels far away from the city's control. If Tally does not oblige, she faces the threat of remaining an ugly, and thus basically being excluded from her community forever as Special Circumstances are withholding the operation from her until she brings her friend back. It is important to note here that thus, while Shay's flight from the city is illegitimate, Tally's pursuit, which initialises her journey, is not only sanctioned but actually demanded by the authorities (*Uglies* 128ff.) and therefore clearly within the realm of legitimate movement, just like Katniss's journey into the city in *The Hunger Games*. In

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<sup>20</sup> Also cf. Green-Barteet's remark that "[u]nder ordinary conditions, such roles [of protector and provider] would not necessarily be associated with rebellious behaviour, but to survive life in District 12, Katniss has had to hunt and to trade, illegal acts that are punishable by death" (38). Furthermore, "she does not yet recognize that her determination to survive at any cost can be read as a subversive act" (39).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. McLeods explanations on ambivalence in colonial discourse: "The colonised are considered [...] essentially *outside* Western culture and civilisation. Yet, on the other hand, the discourse of colonialism attempts to [...] bring[] them *inside* Western understanding [...]" (52-53).

<sup>22</sup> The several ways in which the ritual of the annual Hunger Games represents a contact zone and/or ambivalent, liminal space will be further analysed in chapter 3.3.

<sup>23</sup> In a desire to resist the mandatory plastic surgery, Shay has absconded to the Smoke on her own accord and has left Tally instructions should she wish to follow (*Uglies* 91).

contrast to her friend Shay, Tally has not committed a transgression by leaving the city but can be regarded, in this instance and despite her affinity to playing tricks, as a ‘personally responsible citizen’ who is fulfilling a task set by the authorities.

In contrast to Tally in *Uglies*, who has to leave the city to be able to “change[] all of [her] ideologies, including her awareness for consequences and repercussions” (McDonough and Wagner 161), in *Matched*, Cassia grows more aware of the Society’s injustices and controlling regulations while still residing in her home city in Oria Province. She realises that, so far, “the odds have been on [her] side” only because she “happened to fall in the majority” (*Matched* 239), a privilege that her love-interest Ky does not enjoy as he is classified as an Aberration. Citizenly de-classification is a threat their society uses to ensure everyone’s compliance with the rules. A lower citizenly status is conferred “due to an Infraction [sic.]” (*Matched* 46) committed by the respective person as a form of punishment for “question[ing] that normative world” by “transgress[ing] [...] expectations” and “being in places they do not belong” (Cresswell 6-7). Nevertheless, those of Aberration status are allowed to live within the communities but are forced to do menial and even dangerous labour and, because of that, usually have shorter live spans (*Matched* 46). Furthermore, the few rights the system grants its citizens, like the choice of being matched or not, is stripped away from those of Aberration status (*Matched* 46). Cassia’s political awakening is thus a result of a deeper understanding of the workings of her society facilitated by gaining access to Ky’s ‘outsider’ experience. While their meetings initially take place on “the Hill”, a piece of landscape that is part of the city’s arboretum and “has been left forested and wild” (*Matched* 66), this is by no means a place of “nature removed from Society”, as McDonough and Wagner contend (163). Instead, it represents an ambivalent, outside space, both in the sense of ‘out of doors’ and in the sense of ‘outside of the common radius of the community’, that, while still partly monitored by the Society, offers an alternative to the “stuffiness and crowds” (*Matched* 217) of other recreation facilities and social life in general.

Cassia’s spatial displacement to a “work detail [...] in a Western Province” (*Matched* 363) close to the Outer Provinces, an area initially described as situated “on the geographic fringe of the Society” (*Matched* 56) and also nicknamed “the Lesser Provinces, or the Backward Provinces, because they have so little order and knowledge there” (*Matched* 56), is intended as a disciplinary punishment by the authorities in a similar way to Tally’s displacement from New Pretty Town in *Uglies*. However, since Cassia has already been able to revise her assumptions about the world she lives in, in contrast to Tally, she is able to appropriate the authorities’ norms and rules with the help of her parents. Whereas Tally is

forced on this journey against her will, Cassia and her parents devise a plan to bring her closer to the Outer Provinces, where she intends to search for Ky, who has been taken to fight there by the authorities (cf. *Matched* 361ff.). Therefore, despite the appearance that her displacement is legitimately enforced and thus compliant with the Society's rules, it is in fact Cassia who subverts the rules for a voluntary re-placement and thus takes a crucial step towards exercising her political agency. She has started to make rights claims to "[her] own choices" and has realised that "[t]his is bigger than us now" (*Matched* 356), as she confides to her friend Xander.

Moira Young's *Dustlands* trilogy offers an interesting comparison to the novels hitherto discussed as it represents a new society in the making on the backdrop of a post-disaster landscape. In contrast to Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy, which despite the strong focus on a post-disaster setting and theme at the same time and to the same extent emphasises the dystopian world order that has arisen from the aftermath of disaster, *Blood Red Road*, the first novel of Young's trilogy, instead focuses on representing scattered communities, and the absence of social structures and any kind of state institutions is foregrounded. This changes in book two in the trilogy, *Rebel Heart*, when the formation of a "new totalitarian regime" (Sawyer Fritz 25) and their territorial project New Eden, led by a tyrannical ruler called DeMalo and his gang, the Tonton, is taking shape. New Eden's evolving landscape of power does not operate so much through spatial segregation but, almost to the contrary, through "[t]erritory expansion" and "[c]ontrol of resources" (*Rebel Heart* 11) by swallowing up all the land until "[t]here won't be nowhere to run" (*Raging Star* 146). Nevertheless, it is still a landscape that, like New Mungo in *Exodus*, excludes those deemed unworthy (the old and frail) and thrives on "slave labour" (*Raging Star* 146).<sup>24</sup> The role ascribed to the urban centres in the other novels as seats of oppressive authorities thus in this trilogy is expanded to the entire territory of New Eden, and Saba, the autodiegetic narrator-protagonist, must encounter this de-centred landscape as ideological 'other' to her (destroyed) home and the values she has grown up with in order to not only grow as a person but also on a political level. Whereas the protagonists of the other four trilogies have to face a system that has been in place for at least three generations<sup>25</sup> and therefore has been properly ingrained in the minds of its citizens, Saba is

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<sup>24</sup> The ironic comment of one minor character, Molly, on New Eden as a "brand new shiny world" (*Rebel Heart* 16) furthermore clearly references *Brave New World* as a classic dystopian text and thus positions New Eden within a dystopian context.

<sup>25</sup> In *The Hunger Games* and *Catching Fire*, Katniss competes in the 74<sup>th</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> games, which have been implemented when Panem was founded. In *Matched*, Cassia's great-grandmother was a member of one of the 100-committees who selected which 100 items of, for example, poetry, painting, dresses etc. should be saved

witness to the establishment of a new social and political structure in her world. For this reason, citizenship positions are still being developed as well, but even so it becomes obvious early on in the development of New Eden that citizenship is conveyed almost exclusively in the passive notion of belonging to a specific territory as well as in having to fulfil certain duties and obligations without any rights to match these.

Similarly to Mara, who crosses through the city walls illegitimately, Saba repeatedly transgresses onto “Tonton soil” (*Rebel Heart* 147), i.e. New Eden, or even into “the middle of the spider’s web” (*Rebel Heart* 327), the Tonton headquarters housed in the structure of an old barrage. However, as Saba emphasises, she is initially not concerned with “makin [sic.] the world a better place” (*Blood Red Road* 251). In contrast to her friend Ash, who is aware that thwarting the plans of the Tonton “could affect all of [them]” and that they “gotta stop the whole thing” (*Blood Red Road* 249) instead of only focusing on rescuing Saba’s brother, Saba herself insists that she is interested in “[n]uthin [sic.] else” (*Blood Red Road* 249). Thus, while her friend clearly leans towards justice-oriented citizenship early on in the narrative, Saba at this stage can at best be regarded as a participatory or active citizen who performs the necessary actions to ensure the safety of her family and friends. Sawyer Fritz’s reading that “*Blood Red Road* traces Saba’s transformation from an isolated and passive girl [...] into a socially – and politically – active rebel [...] who has the power and determination to shape her own future as well as that of the society in which she lives” is therefore partly inaccurate as the process of Saba’s politicisation actually is highly contested territory throughout *Rebel Heart*, and Saba only becomes politically active for the sake of achieving real change in society in the last instalment of the trilogy, *Raging Star*.

With regards to her status as either ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ to the newly developing society, Saba’s position is much more ambiguous than that of the protagonists in the four trilogies discussed so far. Firstly, this is due to citizenship positions not yet having been finalised and fixed for everybody. Secondly, in contrast to everyone else in her world, Saba has a choice as she is “[t]he one that the Pathfinder [i.e. DeMalo] seeks” (*Rebel Heart* 304) as his life companion. She is thus positively invited by the leader of the new system to join his society, but at the cost of having to renounce her previous identity (*Rebel Heart* 312, 316-

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from destruction by the authorities. Therefore it can be concluded that her society is running already in the fourth generation. Also in *Uglies*, the existence of ‘wrinklies’, that is old pretties, indicates that the system of the pretty operation has been ongoing for at least three generations. In *Exodus*, members of the grandparent generation (Caledon, Fox’s grandfather, and Candleriggs, the oldest Treenester) were among those who envisioned and started to build the sky cities.

17).<sup>26</sup> However, Saba's political alliance is highly sought-after and contested, not only by DeMalo but also by Auriel, a shaman who leads and protects those who flee from DeMalo's totalitarian rule. The fact that both ends of the political divide use almost the exact same words to ascertain Saba's support furthermore mirrors her own indecision as to where to position herself.<sup>27</sup> Whereas the protagonists of the other trilogies discussed here are mostly displaced against their will, Saba has to actively and consciously choose to re-place herself in opposition to DeMalo's tyrannical rule to be able to overcome her indecision and begin performing citizenship in a justice-oriented way.

A first conclusion can be drawn as to the representations of the development of citizenly subject positions in the novels discussed. While McDonough and Wagner argue that the protagonists' "maturation occurs because of their arduous and life-changing journeys into *nature*" (159; emphasis added), this study argues that, in *Bildungsroman*-fashion, it is the journey as such that furthers growth as well as personal and citizenly development, whether this journey is made into the non-urban space or not. In order for the protagonists to be able to develop their political consciousness and start to make claims to rights, an act of displacement that both constitutes a spatial and engenders normative transgression is necessary – the protagonists have to be literally expelled from their community, or, in the case of Saba, have to expel themselves from a community in the making. In her article "The Making of the Citizen and the Politics of Maturation" (2014), Susan Shau Ming Tan also uses the term 'expulsion' when she analyses the position that is assigned to the adolescent tributes in the *Hunger Games* trilogy (84ff.). She explains that in a society which "relegates all children [...] to the role of sacrificial victim [...] [t]o grow up, then, is innately political" (88). According to her, as the adults in this trilogy are relegated to the status of a silent and "impotent political community" (87) and are thus politically disempowered, "adolescents emerge as the only figures capable of significant political action" (90), mirroring Jones et al.'s claims that, in the real world, it is especially young people who engage in forms of citizen action in order to question established rules (cf. chapter introduction).

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<sup>26</sup> For instance, the overtly patriarchal structure of New Eden is furthermore emphasised by DeMalo's insistence that Saba change into a dress every time he meets her, something she "ain't never wore [...] in [her] life" (*Rebel Heart* 301), thus forcing her to relinquish her identity as a fighter and rendering her almost unrecognisable to herself (cf. *Rebel Heart* 361).

<sup>27</sup> Auriel tells Saba that she regards her among those people "who have within them the power to change things. The courage to act in the service of something greater than [themselves]" (*Rebel Heart* 102). These words are later echoed by DeMalo, who tells her that, like him, she has "the courage to act in the service of something greater than [herself]" (*Rebel Heart* 311) and that "[t]hat's the power that changes the world" (*Rebel Heart* 312).

Such a forced expulsion and displacement as represented not only in *The Hunger Games*, but, as illustrated above, also in the *Uglies*, *Matched*, *Exodus* and the *Dustlands* trilogies leads to citizenship positions that can be regarded as abject (cf. Hepworth 115). On the one hand, Tally, Cassia, Katniss and Saba represent, at least initially, what Hepworth terms ‘abject citizens’, someone who “begins within the juridical order of citizenship and is then symbolically (or even literally) expelled from that order” (Hepworth 115). Mara in *Exodus*, on the other hand, with her drive to overcome the wall separating the refugee boat camp and the towering sky city, can be read as an ‘abject cosmopolitan’. This term describes “[t]he ways in which irregular migrants and asylum seekers contest the juridical order of citizenship by making claims of that order through their unauthorized mobility across borders” (Hepworth 115). Thus it can be seen that for the young adult protagonists, becoming citizenly abject, in one way or another, is a prerequisite for achieving a position from which to move politically from mere passive belonging or compliant personally responsible citizenship into justice-oriented citizenship and making claims to rights.

Whereas McCallum and Stephens argue that the usual “social assumption [is] that life without agency is tantamount to abjection” (370), these novels show that in the dystopian world orders represented the protagonists in fact need to achieve a citizenly abject status in order to be able to interrogate and actively challenge their respective societies. Citizenly abjection thus does not diminish their agency but, contrarily, helps to develop it. This finding concurs with Christine Wilkie-Stibbs’s explanation that “the abject is not only the product of subjection [...], but the very process through which the individual self achieves the status of becoming what Sigmund Freud has defined as ego” (319). By taking on subject positions that are citizenly abject, the protagonists furthermore create ““alternatives to bloc [i.e. large-scale dominant forms of] subjectivity”” (16beaver Group, qtd. in Mezzadra and Neilson 54)<sup>28</sup> as promoted in their societies, which is inseparably linked to their “working through the ambivalences that characterize practices of mobility: the forms of domination, dispossession, and exploitation forged within them as well as the desires for liberty and equality they often express” (Mezzadra and Neilson 54). Becoming an abject citizen is thus usually enacted upon the subject by the authorities and linked to dispossession and exploitation, as can be seen from the protagonists’ developments detailed so far. This outward trajectory of being expelled from society (which in the case of *The Hunger Games*, as explained above, is at the same time a geographic trajectory into the centre of power) usually represents the authorities’ self-declared

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<sup>28</sup> The full source is: 16beaver Group. “Introduction to Continental Drift.” 2005. Accessed 31 May, 2023. <http://www.16beavergroup.org/drift/intro2005ny.htm>.

legitimate means to enact a “processes of illegalization” (Mezzadra and Neilson 144) on the subject which aims at turning the subject into a “jettisoned object [that] is radically excluded” (Kristeva, “Approaching Abjection” 309). This supposed process of illegalisation, however, is variously appropriated by the protagonists in the novels discussed in this chapter and turned into a performative process of and strategy for politicisation.

The most overt reference to the strategy of appropriating citizenship positions is made in *Crossed* as Cassia is aware that in order to achieve her aim of following Ky into the Outer Provinces it is actually advantageous for her to make others think her citizenship status is lower than it really is at that point. Therefore, she tries “to conceal the fact that [she is] a Citizen [sic.]” (*Crossed* 13) and “to get rid of as many signs of Citizenship as [she] can” (*Crossed* 59). Once she has entirely broken away from the forced placements as worker and, later, as a pawn in the Society’s war, she realises she does not even have to lie about this anymore: “If the Society has discovered my escape, I’ll certainly earn Aberration status” (*Crossed* 113). Furthermore, she recognises and explains to her fellow travellers that “[she] caused [her] own Reclassification” (*Crossed* 113). This is also the point at which Cassia’s agenda changes from mostly personal motivations to also including political reasons: she is searching not only for her love-interest Ky anymore, but also for a way to join the Rising [sic.], a group of dissenters and/or rebels against the Society (*Crossed* 117). Despite her almost certain citizenly declassification it has to be borne in mind that her position is still a privileged one as, in contrast to other characters like Ky, she consciously chooses this path towards citizenly abjection. However, as soon as she reaches the Rising, in an ironic twist the rebels decide that Cassia ““would best serve the Rising from within the Society”” (*Crossed* 357) and, by appropriating the Society’s dislike of losing track of any of its citizens, replace her in “the capital of Central” (*Reached* 17). Her citizenly subject position is rendered more ambivalent in this process as, on the one hand, she accepts the Rising’s order for her spatial re-placement but, on the other hand, by doing so, is enabled to resist the Society from within, a theme that is also recognisable in the *Uglies* trilogy.

In Westerfeld’s *Uglies*, as explained above, Tally is threatened with citizenly abjection, that is remaining ugly forever, if she does not comply with the authorities’ request of finding her friend and disclosing the position of the Smoke, but the threat implies the possibility of re-acceptance into the community of New Pretty Town as a full citizen. However, as Tally gains agency through increasing knowledge about the mind-altering effects of the operation (*Uglies* 251-259), she is able to disavow the pressure and norms of the city authorities and to consciously render her citizenly abjection final (or so she thinks) by destroying the device



Special Circumstances has equipped her with to transmit the Smoke's location to them (*Uglies* 267f.)<sup>29</sup>. In this way, her decision is at least partly voluntary, similar to Cassia's in *Crossed*. Her development towards justice-oriented citizenship is triggered when the Smoke, her chosen home (*Uglies* 286), is destroyed. Realising that despite her resolve against complicity with Special Circumstances she has ultimately triggered this destruction nevertheless enables her to move forward with "a purpose" (*Uglies* 335). Subsequently, she decides to appropriate the authorities' desire to prettify every single one of their subjects, that is the operation that maintains the system, in order to undermine the system from within by agreeing to become a test subject for finding a cure to the cognitive effects of the operation (*Uglies* 395). McDonough and Wagner observe that "[t]he novel ends with what would ordinarily be a tragic conclusion: the main character has turned herself into the authorities. Yet she is not defeated; rather, for perhaps the first time, Tally has become a protagonist of meaningful action, full of agency and purpose" (162). By showing the protagonist as handing herself over to the authorities, the novel mirrors classic dystopias in which the hero is defeated by the system in the end and either found out/caught or giving up on his own accord. This trope is then subverted, however, by the fact that Tally has made a conscious choice, aware of the risk this will place her at, in order to create an opportunity for those from the Smoke to subvert the system from within. Instead of having given up, the actual resistance begins now with her handing herself over to the authorities. It can therefore be argued that Tally appropriates the role of a compliant, personally responsible citizen in order to create a liminal space within the ritual of the beauty operation and within New Pretty Town itself in which to actually be able to practice and perform her version of justice-oriented citizenship.<sup>30</sup>

In the *Hunger Games* trilogy, Katniss, too, has to begin her performative making of rights claims and challenge of the system by operating within its narrow structures. Here, one of the key struggles in the entire trilogy is that President Snow tries to keep Katniss in an individualist survival mode for as long as possible to prevent her from successfully appropriating her status as abject citizen. In the preparation for the 74<sup>th</sup> Hunger Games (the first games in which Katniss 'competes'), she acts 'out of place' against the oppressive,

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<sup>29</sup> It turns out that the device was programmed to transmit a signal not only when activated, but also upon its destruction, thus placing Tally in the position of spy and traitor which she sought to avoid by destroying the device (cf. *Uglies* 292).

<sup>30</sup> This process is mirrored in *Specials* after Tally has been force-transformed into a Special. As Sawyer Fritz observes on the two operations Tally is subjected to: "In both cases, Tally is placed under the knife by her government in an effort to control her behavior and exploit her as a resource." Nevertheless, "the real Tally, empowered, independent, and aware, lurks beneath the surface of each new façade and proves capable of rising up again despite the efforts of her government" (20-21).

normative pull of the games in her transgressive performance for the game makers but she acts more out of anger than as a statement against structural injustices as well as out of the desire to maintain and reassert her identity even after having endured a makeover that has tried to “erase [her] face” (*Hunger Games* 145, 171). During these games, Katniss resists the forced individualism of a pure survival mode which at most allows for a strategic and temporal co-operation between tributes by instead accepting proper co-operative practices when she teams up with Rue in an environment that is actually supposed to foster rivalry and competition (*Hunger Games* 112). In an oppressive and deadly context like the annual Hunger Games, which leaves the individual with little room to act intentionally and purposefully instead of simply to react based on a survival instinct, questioning and defying the structure of the games like Katniss, Rue and also Peeta do can already be considered as a way to perform rights claims and thus as the beginning of her struggle over the terms of citizenship. It is through such practices that resist the isolation of citizenly abjection intended by the authorities that Katniss recognises that a co-operation between tributes and, by extension, the districts is both necessary and possible (*Hunger Games* 282-296). Only because of these experiences is she later able to formulate her desire to “cause all kinds of trouble” (*Catching Fire* 147), finally changing her goals from personal survival to political struggle. When she proclaims to herself that she has “got a rebellion to incite” (*Catching Fire* 152) she declares herself ready to move fully into justice-oriented citizenship.

In the *Dustlands* trilogy, especially the latter two instalments, *Rebel Heart* and *Raging Star*, Saba, like Tally, experiences an identity crisis (*Rebel Heart* 380). When she is reminded by her love-interest, Jack, that while she cannot “choose the times [she is] born in” she has the possibility to choose “what [she does] while [she’s] here” (*Rebel Heart* 390f.), she is reminded of her own agency. She and her friends decide to stay in New Eden, but on their own terms, which means that they become “[g]uerillas [...] [s]et to fight fer [sic.] the right to live in New Eden” for “all that share the earth. Not jest [sic.] [DeMalo] and his Chosen ones” (*Raging Star* 2). By making this decision and claiming these rights for herself and everyone else, Saba thus consciously chooses to relegate herself to a citizenly abject position. It is only after she has rendered herself citizenly abject that Saba realises she has to “stop thinkin [sic.] like [DeMalo]”, that is, in terms of countering violence and oppression with more violence, and in fact, has to “change the game” and do “somethin [sic.] completely different” (*Raging Star* 82), thus resisting and challenging the terms of citizenship and belonging he tries to establish. Like Cassia, Katniss and Tally, she has to devise her own strategy for

making rights claims, which is founded on destabilising the system and debunking its myths and lies.

In contrast to these four protagonists, Mara in *Exodus* is represented as an ‘abject cosmopolitan’ who actively seeks unauthorised access to the ruling centre of the sky city by transgressing the border which separates it from the refugee boat camp. Despite this difference in the form of citizenly abjection Mara experiences compared to the characters previously discussed, she shares with them the will to make a choice even if the circumstances only allow a very narrow frame for decision-making. While all the other boat refugees seem to accept their situation of being refused entry to the sky city and try to survive outside its walls, Mara decides to take action in spite of the physical, even mortal danger the attempt to cross the border will place her in (*Exodus* 92) in order to contest the subject position allocated to her by the sky city’s authorities. However, it is important to note that, also in contrast to the protagonists discussed earlier, while she does question the sky city’s system and takes direct action, this is not so much directed at changing the given order but rather to enable herself and others, such as the Treenesters and sea urchins living in the netherworld as well as as many of the city’s slaves and boat refugees as she can reach, to escape from this order and find a new home (cf. *Exodus* 178-79). As she considers herself primarily responsible for those in need but not compelled to change the system, her character can be regarded as situated in between what Jones et al. have termed active citizenship, that is taking on responsibilities actually supposed to be performed by the government, on the one and justice-oriented citizenship on the other hand. This notion of “a privatisation of responsibility” (cf. Jones et al. 144, qtd. above) attached to the idea of active citizenship, which is often regarded critically, is clearly visible in Mara’s case. In *Exodus*, the character who is more directly linked with citizen action in the form of protest or direct intervention is Fox, Mara’s love interest and resident of the sky city. Like Cassia in the *Matched* series and Tally in the *Uglies* series, after having learned from Mara about the reality of life outside the sky city Fox decides to forego his privilege as a full citizen. He first helps Mara to escape with one of the city’s supply ships before he himself jumps from the sky city into the netherworld in order to start organising resistance to the unjust leadership (*Exodus* 308, 330-31). Like other city-situated characters discussed so far he appropriates the process of citizenly abjection and spatial displacement to move into a position from which he can start making rights claims for his society. However, the fact that it is the male character, Fox, who is cast as potential revolutionary and the female character, Mara, who is constructed

predominantly as a carer who organises escape for the disenfranchised, reveals the *Exodus* trilogy a much more gender-stereotypical than other narratives discussed in this study.

Even these brief glimpses into the novels discussed here show that the protagonists move between different citizenly subject positions or even occupy multiple such positions simultaneously. Thus, characters may move from personally responsible or participatory into justice-oriented citizenship while simultaneously also moving from full citizenship, however limited this may be in their respective societies, or, in the case of Mara in *Exodus*, no citizenship, to a position that can be regarded as citizenly abject. The process of shifting citizenship positions and turning or being turned citizenly abject furthermore disturbs both the landscapes of power and the normative landscapes so carefully established by the respective authorities. The protagonists' voluntary or involuntary spatial re-placement, which mirrors the process of citizenly abjection, enables them to claim a right to act differently in certain places and spaces. Thus, they are able to thwart the authorities' attempts to maintain these landscapes through the protagonists' expulsion from the community by starting to transgress geographical and normative boundaries and to question their normative world (cf. Cresswell and the introduction to this chapter). Spatial re-placement, citizenly abjection and the possibility to engage in justice-oriented citizenship as making claims to rights are therefore inextricably connected.

The change that is achieved in this way at the end of the respective trilogies is always represented as politically hopeful on the story level, but the novels differ considerably in the way in which this hopefulness is defined on the discourse level. Consequently, with regards to political citizenship the marketing – or even critical – claims of these novels' radicalness are proven inaccurate at least for some of the trilogies discussed in this chapter. When Martin claims for the *Hunger Games* series that it provides “a glimpse of an alternative, radically different, future”, that Katniss develops a “radical personal and political identity” and that the trilogy is “a vision of a radical political possibility” (228), he seems to disregard the fact that at the end of the final novel, *Mockingjay*, the system that is implemented is ““a republic where the people of each district and the Capitol can elect their own representatives””, as Plutarch Havensbee, the ex-head game maker turned rebel explains (*Mockingjay* 99). Havensbee adds that it has ““worked before””, and despite some doubts Katniss has to concede that it “sounds like an improvement over our current government” (*Mockingjay* 99). Therefore, while on the story level this might be presented as a radical idea, on the discourse level there is surely nothing radical in re-inscribing the system of the implied reader's present-day society as the only possible solution. This conservative note is emphasised by the fact that, after having

exercised her justice-oriented citizenship to the extent that she has even killed the leader of the rebellion to achieve actual change, Katniss is no longer politically involved anymore at all. Instead she not only moves back to her home district 12 but is “*confined* there until further notice” (*Mockingjay* 442; emphasis added). For her moving from citizenly abjection back into full citizenship at the same time means that she has to relinquish the most engaged form of citizenship and contend herself with personally responsible or, at most, participatory citizenship, both of which do not actively challenge the system any longer.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, in *Reached*, the process of voting a representative “to lead the people” (*Reached* 506) is considered ““a beginning”” and the possibility ““for a new world”” (*Reached* 498) by Ky and described as “such a large and impossible task, such a beautiful and terrible experiment” (*Reached* 507) by Cassia. However, neither of them is running for office, and after having gone through a process of citizenly abjection in order to make a change and challenge the old system, both of them are, in the end, shown as contenting themselves with “putting [their] names to paper, making a choice about who [they] want to lead” (*Reached* 506) – but crucially not leading themselves any longer.<sup>32</sup>

Moirra Young’s *Dustlands* trilogy is slightly more creative and presents more options and possibilities for both its protagonist and for the society that emerges after the rule of DeMalo and his Tonton is abolished. Instead of re-instating the political system that the implied present-day reader knows well, *Raging Star* presents “a council of nine wise women” (*Raging Star* 334) which will oversee decision-making processes in a new, reformed New Eden, thus envisioning a transition from a tyrannical, patriarchal rule to a benevolent, matriarchal rule. Even if this idea for a new system is not entirely free of cliché, it still opens a space for adolescent readers to imagine – and to question – what such a different model of government might entail. The fact that “[t]hey [the community] try to choose [Saba], but [she] won’t be chosen” (*Raging Star* 334) emphasises that, in contrast to Katniss in *Mockingjay* and Cassia in *Reached*, here the protagonist at least has the option to continue to play an extended role in the newly developing system. The decision not to do so is entirely her own, and the implied reader is prepared for the fact that she has no permanent interest in leadership throughout the last instalment of the trilogy, for example when Saba reflects that being a

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<sup>31</sup> The final scenes in which Katniss is presented are, moreover, emphatically domestic: “Peeta bakes. I hunt.” (*Mockingjay* 452). While this is explained as a way to deal with trauma, it also prevents the protagonist from further engaging in political (public) processes.

<sup>32</sup> Also see Jeffrey Williams, who argues that “[i]n both the *Harry Potter* and *The Hunger Games* series, [...] the corrupt powers [...] are defeated but [...] these children, who have the agency to address social crises with moral integrity, do not assume political, social, or financial power” (84).

leader of a peaceful resistance is “[m]uch harder’n fightin [sic.]” and generally “not easy” (*Raging Star* 206, 212) and that the “quarrel, [...] quibble, [...] trade-offs” (*Raging Star* 205) of the political arena are not for her. Thus, in spite of her “victories hav[ing] earned her a new leadership role” (Sawyer Fritz 29), once her task of ending DeMalo’s rule is completed, Saba feels she “ain’t fer [sic.] this land no more” (*Raging Star* 335) and, with her love-interest Jack, leaves for new shores to “where [the wind] takes [them]” (*Raging Star* 344). Even if this development is presented as Saba’s choice on the story level, discursively it still results in the protagonist being denied an active role in a positively changing society.

This pattern of adolescent protagonists relinquishing their highly empowered roles in their communities and taking a step away from direct involvement in political processes can be explained if the protagonists’ actions and their citizenly practices are read as “social movements [that] are not interested in assuming power, in taking over government: rather they seek to change political practice and policy” (Jones et al. 152). This is rendered explicit, for instance, by Saba, who frequently explains that her ideal is that she does not have to tell people what to do, that instead they “become [their] own leaders” (*Raging Star* 199) and will “all be able to carry it forwards on [their] own. [They] won’t need [her]” (*Raging Star* 175) or by Cassia, who wants everybody to be able to make their own choices about their partner (*Matched* 300). It is thus repeatedly emphasised throughout all of the trilogies discussed in this chapter that the young adult protagonists do not only fight for more political rights for their own age group, who especially in the *Hunger Games* and the *Uglies* trilogies is the most marginalised one, but for all of society. These novels therefore do not represent youth suffrage and enfranchisement as much as overall societal suffrage from a tyrannical and unjust system. The young adult protagonists are represented as being key in the process of achieving this and enjoy more freedoms at the end of the narratives but not a greater degree of political participation and responsibility. However, as the protagonists’ “awakening and agency” are triggered by a recognition “that [they] must be responsible for the changes [they] wish[] to see in [themselves] and [their] world” (McDonough and Wagner 158), the novels clearly link a desire for and acceptance of choice with the responsibility to act on that choice in order to exert agency and thus place an emphasis on the narrative that more responsibility also means more agency. Consequently, the representation of a low degree of political participation also means a low(er) degree of agency for the protagonists – and by extension for the implied adolescent readers.

This authorial reticence to represent more empowered engagement for adolescents in first reconciliatory and then everyday democratic political processes is mirrored in their

hesitation to envision a working political system radically different from that of representative democracy, as shown above. In these novels, the notion of ‘emergence’ discussed by Bakhtin, that is the ideal function of the traditional *Bildungsroman* genre to facilitate change and progress in the actual world via representing the enfranchisement of the protagonist in the fictional world, is to a certain extent undermined by the presentation of the implied reader’s present political system as a ‘progressive’ future solution. As much as this can be regarded as a conservative element to the respective trilogies, this issue may also be an expression of the “deep crisis” of the “metanarrative of progress” attested by Dirlik (352), which is also interwoven with the current “social crisis over the terms and mechanics of enfranchisement, the meaning and the scope of citizenship” (Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 48). According to Harris, this crisis finds expression at least in part in a shift in the “relation between the individual and society from citizen-state to consumer-corporation”, a shift which de-emphasises justice-oriented citizenly engagement and, instead, reconceptualises “[c]ivic rights [as] [...] consumer choices” (69), thereby considerably narrowing the scope for performing agency. In the novels, such a narrowed scope is mirrored when, instead of leaving room for more creative political alternatives, the closing scenes of *Mockingjay* and *Reached* offer a certain regressive nostalgia for a better-working present, while *Raging Star* is torn between, on the one hand, representing Saba as “free” (*Raging Star* 342) of the duties of exceptionalism and privatised responsibility and, on the other hand, by her choice to not become a part of New Eden’s society, re-inscribing an individualism that the trilogy has exerted itself to dismantle.

The other two trilogies discussed in this chapter, Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy and Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy, are less “concerned with [...] social institutions [like republicanism] – with their [...] preservation, and promotion” (Slaughter, *Human Rights, Inc.* 116; also cf. Introduction) than Collins’s and Condie’s trilogies are. *Specials*, the last instalment in Westerfeld’s trilogy, focuses on the process of transformation without predetermining its end result. While the reader learns that “[t]he old static bubblehead culture [induced by the pretty operation] had been replaced by a world where change was paramount” (*Specials* 339), leading to the end of the rule of Dr. Cable, the major proponent of the pretty operation, there is no alternative political system in place yet to substitute the old one. Tally acknowledges that the process of “the city transforming at last” (*Specials* 345) will entail “convulsions about to unsettle her city” (*Specials* 348), but this is regarded as a necessary step into a “liberated” (*Specials* 349) future. Interestingly, this trilogy’s ending envisions a very active role for its protagonist, but this lies, crucially, outside the confines of her community.

While her old friends all try to get Tally involved in their new society-changing projects (*Specials* 339f.), she is convinced that “[t]ogether, [they]’re more than enough to change the world without [her]” (*Specials* 349). She consciously situates herself outside of any new (political) system that might arise from the awakening of the cities and resolves to stay “in the wild” (*Specials* 349) to prevent the newly developing society from “push[ing] too far into the wild” and “destroying things” (*Specials* 350). Thus, she politically maintains a citizenly abject status in order to be able to continue exercising her agency and justice-oriented citizenship, with the difference that now she is not fighting to end an unjust system but to protect the environment. Nevertheless, despite the protagonist’s enfranchised status at the end of this trilogy, the emphasis on a privatisation of responsibility also remains an unresolved issue here. The political and social community can be re-built by a community of people, symbolised by her friends, but maintaining justice for the environment, or wilderness, is a task Tally and her friend David take upon themselves.<sup>33</sup>

Similarly, *Aurora*, the final instalment in Bertagna’s trilogy, prescribes no certain political order at the close of the narrative but leaves the ending more open. While there is the danger of an approaching war (cf. *Aurora* 280f., 292f.) to end the rule of “the sky empire” (*Aurora* 301), the stronger focus is placed on the possibility of change for the better and for something new, expressed via now adult Mara’s questions of “what else is possible?” (*Aurora* 291) and “[w]ho knows what might happen?” (*Aurora* 292). Fox, who is part of the active revolution against the sky cities, witnesses the beginning of “a whole new blend of citizens” (*Aurora* 287), consisting now not only of the hitherto shut-in sky city inhabitants but also of the rebels against the empire and the hitherto shut-out boat people and slaves. Together, they will be able “to imagineer [sic.] a new city from the ruins of the old” (*Aurora* 287). Instead of re-inscribing an already well-known political system, the future in *Aurora* is described by Fox much more vaguely “as [...] a glorious chaos of tomorrows [that] can’t wait to tumble into today” (*Aurora* 299). As has been the case for feminist critical dystopias in the past, it is exactly this vagueness that carries the potential for a more complete enfranchisement of the implied adolescent reader as s/he is encouraged to develop ideas about what such a ‘glorious chaos of tomorrows’ might look like and how s/he might be able to contribute to it.

As has been demonstrated, in terms of representing a politicising journey, Tan’s comment on the *Hunger Games* trilogy as constituting “a radical text and a reactionary one” (“Making of the Citizen” 97) is to a greater or lesser extent true for all five trilogies discussed

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<sup>33</sup> This aspect will be discussed in detail in chapters 5.2 and 5.3 of this study.



in this chapter. This is all the more relevant since the protagonists' politicising journey and especially their performance of justice-oriented citizenship as their "personal destiny is identical to [their] responsibility to save the nation" (McCulloch, *Children's Literature* 130). Therefore, the following chapter will discuss in which ways and to which extent the young adult protagonists are able or enabled to intervene in hegemonic national discourses.

### **3.3 Imagined Communities, Liminal Spaces and Political Activism: Challenging Hegemonic National Discourses in the *Dustlands*, *Hunger Games*, *Longlight* and *Matched* Trilogies**

In order to provide insight into the representation of the development of shifting citizenly subject positions and their link to movement through space the previous chapter has focused on patterns of mobility and spatial transgressions between urban centres and their peripheries that are inherent to both the *Bildungsroman* and the dystopian genre traditions. For the purpose of widening the spatial and political scope this chapter will move on from this dichotomy to the concept of the nation, not least because this is often regarded as the central 'container' of citizenship (cf. Introduction). To recapitulate briefly what has been discussed in detail in chapter 2 of this study, both genres are deeply invested in questions of citizenship on a macro-level, the dystopia as social dreaming (as nightmare) in which the individual and the state are antagonists, and the *Bildungsroman* by offering "a plot for incorporation of previously marginalized people as democratic citizen-subjects" "in the franchise of the nation-state" (Slaughter, "Enabling Fictions" 47-48). As with the ideological connotations attached to city and periphery, also with regards to the space of the nation both genres seem to contradict each other, which makes for a highly interesting tension between what Bakhtin has termed 'emergence', i.e. the reciprocal development of the subject and the social and geographical space s/he is embedded in in relation to each other on the one hand, and the individual's struggle against an oppressive superimposed metanarrative (cf. Hicks 8) in the dystopian state on the other hand.

As many critics have pointed out, a basic function of the nation is to establish community identity – Benedict Anderson's by now proverbial concept of the 'imagined community' is widely known (cf. e.g. Anderson 7). Thus, like citizenship, the nation, both as concept and as geographic space, is a frame of reference to denote belonging and non-belonging. Belonging, that is community identity, is often established via "the performance of

various *narratives, rituals and symbols*”, “the invention of national traditions” and a “sense of the *shared history and common origins* of” the people (McLeod, 69). The title-giving Hunger Games in Collins’s trilogy can be considered as such a narrative, ritual or national tradition but have so far predominantly been discussed as a form of spectacle<sup>34</sup>, which Koenig defines by referencing Rogin as ““the cultural form of amnesiac representation [...], short lived and repeatable”” (42)<sup>35</sup>. These Games are thus more than “both a symbol of an ideology of oppression and a means of controlling the populace through a stylized act of violence” (Pavlik 30). Tan speaks of the Games as having the function of a “social contract – a promise that the disciplining attention of the government will be focused on the bodies of the tributes, not the community at large” (“Making of the Citizen” 85). This study seeks to extend on the ideas of spectacle and social contract by arguing that the Hunger Games in Collins’s trilogy as well as the matching ceremony in *Matched* and the process of creating and disseminating a new national narrative in the *Dustlands* trilogy function not only as a rite of passage and acceptance into the respective community (whichever cruel form this might take) but also as their respective societies’ popular symbols or distinctive narratives.<sup>36</sup> In order to maintain their significance for national or community culture, they must be “*continually rehearsed* by the people” and “must be *endlessly performed*” (McLeod 118), which echoes the repeatability of spectacle and the connective element of the social contract. In the *Longlight* trilogy, a similar role is ascribed to the distorted or even fully invented public narratives of the (various) antagonistic parties in the struggle over hegemony, and even though these may not necessarily be tied to specific rituals their constant repetition and performance and the normativity that they thus create clearly aligns them with the rituals in the other trilogies in that they establish a hegemonic discourse. While individual instances or renderings of these rituals and distorted narratives might be ‘short lived’ and thus adhere closer to spectacle, the necessity to constantly rehearse and perform them reveals their function as their respective society’s hegemonic symbol or narrative of identity.

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<sup>34</sup> For example, cf. Amy Montz’s article “Costuming the Resistance. The Female Spectacle of Rebellion” (pp. 139-147), Gretchen Koenig’s article “Communal Spectacle. Reshaping History and Memory through Violence” (pp. 39-48) or Kelley Wezner’s article “‘Perhaps I am Watching You Now’. Panem’s Panopticons” (pp. 148-157), all in Pharr and Clark’s edited volume *Of Bread, Blood and The Hunger Games. Critical Essays on the Suzanne Collins Trilogy*. McFarland, 2012.

<sup>35</sup> The original reference is: Rogin, Michael. “‘Make my Day!’: Spectacle as Amnesia in Imperial Politics.” *Representations* 29 (Winter 1990), pp. 99-123. Here p. 106.

<sup>36</sup> Examples for the endless performance of rituals that are linked to the respective society’s definition and understanding of itself in other novel series not further considered in this chapter or the overall study are the beauty operation in *Uglies*, the choosing of faction ceremony in Veronica Roth’s *Divergent* trilogy or the mandatory surgery to remove the capacity for love (defined as illness) in Lauren Oliver’s *Delirium* trilogy.

However, in the case of the dystopian societies/nations depicted in the novels analysed in this study, and as has been shown in the previous chapter, the spatial dichotomies and segregations are set up to entirely prevent the successful establishment of a sense of community throughout the 'nation'/society. Additionally, the 'narratives, rituals and symbols' represented in the novels cannot work to unify the nation as they either exclude parts of the population from the ritual, as is the case in *Matched* and the *Dustlands* trilogies, or victimise them through the enforced and cruel performance of it, as is the case in the *Hunger Games* trilogy.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, there is little to no sense of a 'shared history' as that history which is officially narrated, for example in the *Hunger Games* trilogy or the *Longlight* trilogy, again marginalises significant parts of the population. The novels thus clearly highlight that which national or any other hegemonic discourses often seek to gloss over: the internal differences and fissures within the community that highlight its ambivalence (cf. Bhabha, 2003), which in turn "disrupts the clear-cut authority of [the dystopian rulers'] domination because it disturbs the simple relationship between [oppressor and oppressed]" (Ashcroft et al. 13). This ambivalence is not only mirrored in the tension between the traditional dystopian and *Bildungsroman* genres but also draws attention to the combined role of these symbolic and ideological spaces as both landscapes of power and normative landscapes. In each trilogy, the respective hegemonic discourse as ritual, symbol or narrative "wants to produce compliant subjects who reproduce its assumptions, habits, values" (Ashcroft et al. 13) but is at the same time "compelled to create an ambivalent situation that will disrupt its assumption of monolithic power" (Ashcroft et al. 14). Thus, through this ambivalence, liminal spaces, literal and ideological, emerge within the landscapes of power and normativity in the novels and thus open the possibility for the elaboration of "strategies for personal or communal self-hood", "at the edges of the presumed monolithic" (Ashcroft et al. 145) of the dystopian regimes represented in the novels.

Such "[s]eams, stitches, margins, borders, transitional and liminal spaces weave through" (Baker 212) not only the narrative of the *Hunger Games* trilogy but through all novels discussed in this chapter. They provide a space in which to "challeng[e] the assumptions and dynamics of spatial control strategy [and] can be a tool of external opposition to contentious regimes" (Jones et al. 126). Furthermore, they contest and distort

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<sup>37</sup> It is indicative that many of the novels directly reference the identity-producing rituals of the novels' respective societies in their titles, for example the first instalments of Collins's and Condie's trilogies respectively, *The Hunger Games*, referencing the ritual of the annual Games, and *Matched*, referencing the Society's matching ceremony.

the “symbolic order” (Jones et al. 120) of what Wilkie-Stibbs calls the binary logic of “political certainties” (318) but are at the same time created by these seeming political certainties of dystopian rule in an attempt to “disavow[], and expel[]” (319) that from “the national ego” (324) which is perceived as a threat.<sup>38</sup> Notwithstanding this, as McLeod explains (by paraphrasing Bhabha), the “performative necessity of nationalist representations enables all those placed on the margins of its norms and limits [...] to *intervene* in the signifying process and *challenge* the dominant representations” (119) so that the respective ritual or distorted public narrative in the above mentioned trilogies turn into spaces in which power is both enforced and contested at the same time. In this way, the dystopian society or nation itself and its dominant ritual and/or narrative in the respective novels “become[s] a liminal signifying space that is internally marked by the discourses of minorities” (Bhabha 212), which in the context of the novels analysed here is not actually the minority but the oppressed, marginalised majority group or groups. Furthermore, while on the story level such groups might be relegated to spaces that are invisible or at least marginal to hegemonic society, they are, of course, always visible for the implied reader and often a central setting for the respective novels’ action so that the novels on a discursive level counteract the process of marginalisation.

These marginalised groups may “‘steal’ from the culture of the majority” (or dominant group) within which they “must operate” in order to make themselves heard (Sunstrum 144), and “to proceed on a future position, [they may] claim everything that precedes it” (Adrienne Edwards qtd. in *African Futures* 151), which highlights the relevance of discourses of history and memory for future change. As in many dystopian narratives, “in most of these novels, resistance is maintained through the recovery of history [...], together with individual and collective memory” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 166–167)<sup>39</sup>. Such an intervention in or appropriation of hegemonic (memory) discourses represents a tool to work against a hegemonic practice that Anderson terms “to remember/forget” (201). It refers to a semantic ellipsis of (continuously) referring to and commemorating an event but glossing over those details that might be uncomfortable.<sup>40</sup> By practices such as this, the representation

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<sup>38</sup> See the discussion on citizenly abjection in chapter 3.2.

<sup>39</sup> While in her article Baccolini does not discuss young adult speculative literature, the argument is as valid here as it is for the texts chosen by her.

<sup>40</sup> Anderson bases this notion on Renan’s theories and speaks of “[h]aving to ‘have already forgotten’ tragedies of which one needs unceasingly to be ‘reminded’” as “turn[ing] out to be a characteristic device in the later construction of national genealogies” (201).

of past events may be reconstructed and modified by those in power (cf. Said, “Invention, Memory and Place” 176), linking back to the ‘amnesiac’ aspect of spectacle and emphasising that “forgetfulness, amnesia, can be a powerful weapon in the armory of existing society” (Geoghegan 25). Challenging such representations as well as the dystopian authorities’ practices based on such constructions is one key element of justice-oriented citizenship across almost all of the novels analysed in this chapter and is essential for the protagonists’ development of agency and the entire community’s enfranchisement. Justice-oriented citizenship can thus be regarded as a form of counter-hegemonic discourse within the dystopian nation or society as its performance can create that which Bakhtin terms “the border between two epochs” (“The Bildungsroman and its Significance” 23; cf. chapter 2). As the analysis in this chapter shows, it is especially the female protagonists who are represented as, firstly, understanding and deconstructing the liminality of the ritual or common narrative of their respective societies and, secondly, as making use of this potential to disrupt and subvert dominant representations by initiating counter-hegemonic practices. In this way, the novels clearly work against popular discourses of the time which, according to Harris, constructed a new citizenship for girls and young women based on compliant consumerism and self-made socio-economic success and at the same time “delegitimize[d] other forms of enacting rights such as making demands on the state or participating in political protest” (95). By way of contrast, the novels show adolescent and predominantly female protagonists who employ “practices and maneuvers [...] that trouble dominant images [...] and expectations” (152-53) directed towards their marginalised communities and/or themselves as individual adolescent women.

In the following, this chapter will analyse the ways in which citizen action or justice-oriented citizenship creates and is created in liminal signifying spaces represented by the respective dystopian nations’ rituals and/or narratives. This most engaged form of political citizenship is strongly emphasised by both the authors of the novels and the publishers’ marketing departments (without actually referring to the concept of citizenship), even though, as has been shown above, its continuance until the end of the narrative and beyond it is at best problematic. Nevertheless, as the citizenly subject position that is and has to be performed in the novels at “the transition point from one [epoch] to the other” (Bakhtin, “The Bildungsroman and its Significance” 23; cf. chapter 2), that is, in order for a new social and political order to become possible, the analysis of its representation deserves special attention.

The fact that the potential of both this form of citizenship and of liminal signifying spaces is especially explored and exploited by the (female) adolescent protagonists of the

novels, and thus by identities which are in themselves constructed as liminal, only underlines the centrality of the concept of liminality to the representation of citizen action or justice-oriented citizenship more forcefully. For the adolescent protagonists of the narratives discussed in this chapter, most of them female, these highly engaged forms of citizenship constitute “new kinds of political engagement and communities” (Harris 9) to resist and challenge the dominance of hegemonic national narratives perpetuated by the nation’s rituals on the one hand and the danger to be “utilized as symbols of the nation” themselves (Harris 63) on the other hand.

Furthermore, the complicated role of memory discourses/mnemonic aspects especially with regards to justice-oriented citizenship and notions of belonging and nationhood will be explored. This chapter argues that while on the story level mnemonic practices are often used to resist marginalising discourses, as is typical for dystopian narratives, on the meta-narrative level ‘genre memory’ in the form of conventions and “patterns of represented behaviour” (Stephens 85) especially of the *Bildungsroman* tradition and literature for adolescents in general still has a tendency to ultimately keep adolescents in a marginalised position. These conflicting effects of different forms of memory on the novels’ story and meta-narrative levels mirror a central tension in imagining the nation, which is on the one hand “always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail” (Anderson 7), as expressed in the *Bildungsroman* tradition, and on the other hand, as highlighted in the dystopian tradition, has to be recognised as a “space [...] [that] is never simply horizontal” (Bhabha 202). The representation of justice-oriented citizenship in these novels thus underlines both contemporary discomfort with the idea of “nation-ness” (Anderson 3) and the fact that it is one of the most enduring narratives at least of North Atlantic culture, with its end “not remotely in sight” (3).

Moirra Young’s *Dustlands* trilogy serves as a starting point to the discussion since, as has been already mentioned above, it offers an interesting vantage point by representing a dystopian society that is still in the making. The implied reader thus is able to witness the process of forming and implementing new institutions as well as (national) rituals and stories as the narrative of the trilogy progresses, a process that is already several generations in the past in the *Hunger Games*, *Matched* and *Longlight* trilogies. As with citizenship and citizenly subject positions that have only begun to be assigned in the newly developing society of New Eden, so the new institutions and rituals, the foundations of hegemonic discourses, are still in their infancy. In contrast to the other trilogies discussed in this chapter, the protagonist in the

*Dustlands* trilogy and her friends thus do not face a ‘master narrative’<sup>41</sup> (cf. Hall, “Old and New Identities” 46) as normative landscape that has been ingrained in their society for decades or even centuries but are among those who witness – and resist – the very formation of such a new national narrative and its accompanying rituals. Nevertheless, all trilogies discussed in this chapter show that “[t]he erasure, denial, and rewriting of personal and collective history is a key dystopian trope”, as Grubisic et al. have observed (15). The struggle over New Eden therefore emerges as a struggle between the establishment of a national story as a “collectivized memory practice” (D. Levy 23; also cf. Introduction) on the one hand and counter-mnemonic practices sustained through personal memories, especially when shared with others, on the other hand. In this way, Young’s trilogy highlights the fragility and artificiality of mnemonic processes as ‘grand narratives’ and exposes their strategies of defining in- and exclusion or compliance and non-compliance.

It is of course DeMalo, New Eden’s tyrant, self-styled ‘Pathfinder’<sup>42</sup> and quasi-messiah of “Mother Earth” (cf. *Rebel Heart* 309) who seeks to solidify his power by re-defining in which ways people will consider and remember the foundation and expansion of his society. As a stark example of Said’s argument that a “refashioned memory” can serve to create a “coherent identity, a national narrative, a place in the world” for any group of people (“Invention, Memory and Place” 179), DeMalo ultimately aims at the erasure of people’s concrete experiences linked to their lives before New Eden so that he can replace these personal memories with his new ‘grand narrative’ of his own chosen-ness and justify the necessity of re-forging the new society in the way he does, thus illustrating the close link between memory and forgetting (cf. D. Levy 23). His strategy of de- and re-contextualising people’s experiences (cf. D. Levy 23) includes the tearing apart of families, the re-education of young people and children, and taking away the identity of those people that are forced to work as slaves (e.g. *Raging Star* 160). In order to replace those memories that he requires the people to forget and to achieve his aim of creating a unified society which accepts his rule

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<sup>41</sup> Stuart Hall speaks of ‘master concepts’, a term that he ironically describes as “wonderfully gendered” (46). Discourses of nation and national identity or belonging for Hall clearly belong among the ‘master concepts’, which he lists as “the great collective social identities of class, of race, of nation, of gender, and of the West” (44).

<sup>42</sup> DeMalo is one of only few literate characters in the *Dustlands* trilogy, but nevertheless, it is never disclosed if he has borrowed this chosen name, the Pathfinder, from Cooper’s novel *The Pathfinder, or The Inland Sea* (1840) or from John C. Frémont (1813-1890), nicknamed ‘the Pathfinder’ and strongly associated with the ‘exploration’ of the American west (cf. Chaffin’s biography of Frémont). While DeMalo’s choice of this name is not further commented on on the story level, the strong parallels between events in the narrative and the historical events of white settlement and Indigenous displacement in North America suggest that the author consciously included this intertextual reference.

unquestioningly, DeMalo counts on the power of symbols and a communal experience in the form of a ritual to tie in with his narrative of himself and the purpose of New Eden. His practice thus corresponds to that of “official nationalism” as “a conscious, self-protective *policy*, intimately linked to the preservation of imperial-dynastic interests” (Anderson 159).

The story he tries to establish as the hegemonic one in New Eden evolves around his persona as the ‘Pathfinder’ who receives visions of a pre-destruction planet earth by the grace of ‘Mother Earth’, who has “revealed to [him], through [him]” (*Rebel Heart* 309) a way to restore the environment. However, he has actually appropriated a film from pre-disaster days which he has found by chance in an old bunker and the showing of which is triggered automatically every day by the morning sunlight (*Raging Star* 149-150). Pretending this film is a vision “radiat[ing] through [his] body” (*Rebel Heart* 309), DeMalo invents a ritual in which newly recruited/captured Stewards are introduced to these images that seemingly are produced by DeMalo himself (*Rebel Heart* 303-309) instead of commonly sharing this “memory of the past” that is held by “the walls” of the bunker (*Raging Star* 149) with everyone. DeMalo as a character is thus constructed as supremely aware that the “[r]itualization [of memories] depends on mediation” (D. Levy 23). The mediation in the form of DeMalo’s performance to each new group of Stewards and, later, an entire “crowd”, as a proper “spectacle” (*Raging Star* 324), underlines the significance he attributes to the dissemination and repetition of his narrative.

The establishment of his narrative of New Eden is further supported by a symbol which is branded on the forehead of new Stewards (i.e. citizens). As Jack, one of the characters challenging DeMalo’s rule, realises, this “[b]randing mark[s] you out permanently” and it moreover also “[s]hows what group you belong to” (*Rebel Heart* 11). The combination of the communally experienced ritual and the visualisation of belonging show the desired effect: the Tonton and the Stewards of the Earth “breathe [DeMalo’s] name like he ain’t even human. They say he makes miracles” (*Rebel Heart* 16), thus accepting his value-system and identifying with the project of New Eden. In this way, a memory that was meant as “a gift to the future [...] fer [sic.] all of us” (*Raging Star* 151) – that of pre-destruction planet earth – becomes “manipulated and intervened in” (Said, “Invention, Memory and Place” 179) for the purpose of the consolidation of DeMalo’s power. Nevertheless, he unwittingly risks losing this power due to his desire to win Saba for his project by performing the ‘vision’ to her, too. When Saba later discovers that the vision is in fact a film, the repeated performance of DeMalo’s ritual turns into a liminal space of contestation in which the symbolic order he seeks to establish is subverted.



In the meantime, in order to maintain resistance and destabilise DeMalo's rule based on fear and brainwashing, Saba and her friends engage in counter-mnemonic practices to oppose the experience of displacement and threat of erasure resulting from DeMalo's practice of 'refashioning' a dominant, communal version of memory. On a very personal level that is at the same time a communal experience within the very spaces that are designed to strengthen the new hegemonic narrative, that is, in the dormitories of the slave sheds and the re-education centre for children called Edenthorne, those who are captured and threatened with the erasure of their identity begin to recite "[their] name and where [they] come from. [...] To remind [them]selves. So's [they] didn't forget," as Saba's friend Mercy recounts after her escape from slavery (*Raging Star* 44). The same strategy is later implemented by Saba's younger sister Emmi in the re-education centre and "*help[s] her remember who she [i]s. [...] It help[s] keep them strong*" (*Raging Star* 282). In this way, the communal recital of personal memories of the life lived before captivity and the enforced resettlement of New Eden "helps to break hegemonic historical discourse, the master narratives that have erased [their] historical memory" (Baccolini, "Finding Utopia in Dystopia" 171) or at least threaten to erase it and highlights that "the word 'memory' [...] is best conceived of, not as a thing, or place, or object, but as a varied set of systems and practices" (Geoghegan 15). The recital of basic markers of people's identities constitutes the nucleus of a practice that is akin to an "oppositional reading position[]" (McCallum and Stephens 367) that makes it possible for those that Baccolini terms 'ex-centric' (cf. chapter 2) and that Smith and Pangsapa call "the disenfranchised and de-citizenized" (33) to "question and challenge the [dominant] discourses" and illustrates that "[w]hereas forgetting is often associated with loss and disempowerment, memory is connected with emancipation" (Baccolini, "Finding Utopia in Dystopia" 170). Saba's plan to subvert DeMalo's rule through "[d]isobedience" by "mak[ing] a little rumble" (*Raging Star* 160) at Edenthorne and the slave quarters is only possible because she and her friends dare to question and debate the structures that DeMalo seeks to establish. Their resolve to pursue non-violent disobedience thus has to be understood as a claim to and performance of justice-oriented citizenship/citizen action. The practices of sharing memories and personal experience and transforming these into knowledge for the community thus create "covert 'spaces of resistance' as sites of organisation and mobilisation" (Jones et al. 155).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> The interdependence of personal memory and experience on the one hand and (communal) direct action as resistance on the other hand is, on a smaller scale, already emphasised in book one of the trilogy, *Blood Red Road*. When Saba is imprisoned in Hopetown and forced to fight for the city crowd's entertainment it is the knowledge and experience shared by fellow prisoner Helen that enables her to develop a plan for escape and

The final intervention and ultimate demasking of the DeMalo as “‘a thief’” and “‘a liar’” (*Raging Star* 151) and thus the ultimate deconstruction of the new national narrative he wants to establish becomes possible because of his own insistence on performing the ritual that supports his narrative in front of not only a handful of people at a time but in front of the entire community of New Eden. In this way, he seeks to increase the persuasiveness of his performance of a ‘miracle’ by harnessing the power a communal experience like “witness[ing] it [all] together” (*Raging Star* 323) can have. However, because he disregards the ambivalence of the situation due to its performative necessity, he instead creates the stage for his “own downfall” (Ashcroft et al. 14). Saba, who is forced to be present and ‘perform’ as his bride, is also very conscious of the potential such a public display, which DeMalo regards as “the first great event in the history of New Eden” (*Raging Star* 313), can hold. She is convinced that as much as the hegemonic narrative needs to be publicly and repeatedly rehearsed and performed, the counter-narrative does, too, so that everyone has to see the deception for themselves (*Raging Star* 152) to make it effective. While DeMalo thinks that the narrative of the ritualistic ‘vision’ and of his and Saba’s wedding “will bind us all together” and that “the story will be told for generations to come” (*Raging Star* 313) and thus turn into a further shared history providing identification, Saba refuses to be utilized by him as an “[a]mbassador for the [emerging] nation” (Harris 79) of New Eden. Instead, she uses her knowledge of how the mechanism behind the ‘vision’ works and the public platform to distract DeMalo and show that “[t]he walls play without DeMalo” (*Raging Star* 327) and even “play on” (*Raging Star* 328) after she has killed him in self-defence. Saba’s justice-oriented intervention thus disturbs and ultimately defeats DeMalo’s “ideological manoeuvres through which [his] ‘imagined communit[y]’ [is] given essentialist identities” (Bhabha, “DissemiNation” 300) to create a (national) space in which all citizens can be included without the erasure of their lives and/or identities.

While in the *Dustlands* trilogy the new national narrative cum ritual is stopped at its supposed inauguration, the Hunger Games in Collins’s trilogy can be regarded as the most prominent and probably also the most complex national ritual as liminal signifying space across the titles analysed in this study.<sup>44</sup> As a national ritual, the Games are performed

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gain valuable background information on the Tonton organisation that will ultimately help her to recover her kidnapped brother (*Blood Red Road* 143-47).

<sup>44</sup> As already pointed out in the introduction to this study, research on Collins’s series is extensive, with the Games as such and the arena space often being the focus of attention. Nevertheless, as far as could be ascertained in the research conducted for this study, a direct connection to discourses of citizenship and national identity construction so far has not been made, and the mnemonic aspect of the Games is usually ignored. The inclusion

annually – when the narrative sets in, they take place in the seventy-fourth year (*Hunger Games* 23), underlining the repeatability and predictability of the event. The fact that it is ‘continually rehearsed’ is emphasised by the narrator-protagonist Katniss when she comments that “[i]t’s the same story every year” and that the Games serve as a “yearly reminder” (*Hunger Games* 21) of the Capitol’s power<sup>45</sup>, with viewing being mandatory. The Games thus represent the underlying power structures in miniature. As Henthorne argues, “[t]he Gamemakers’ absolute control over resources in the arena is presumably meant to mirror the Capitol’s control over the resources of Panem, the Games thereby reinforcing the existing social order by reproducing it symbolically in the arena” (98). Moreover, the Games are also linked to hegemonic and distorted representations of national history by recalling a civil war between the Capitol and the districts seventy-four years previous to the events narrated in the first part of the trilogy (*Hunger Games* 21), at the end of which the Hunger Games were devised as a continued commemoration of the war and a warning to the districts to refrain from any form of rebellion in the future.<sup>46</sup> Whereas oftentimes, as Koenig states, “those in power shape the cultural memory of significant events as a means of invoking their citizens’ loyalty” (39), the commemoration via the ritual/spectacle of the Games is not geared towards loyalty but towards submission and oppression. As Tan comments, “nation has become a space of punishment” in Panem (“Burn” 69). The fact that official history has been modified to serve the authorities’ power interests is emphasised from the beginning of the trilogy, when narrator-protagonist Katniss remarks that “[she] know[s] there must be more than they’re telling [the citizens]” and that “an actual account of what happened during the rebellion” (*Hunger Games* 50-51) must be very different from this official version disseminated both via the Games and in school. Koenig accurately observes that “the Capitol’s dominance does not end with the present power of observation; instead, it reaches back into Panem’s collective memory and tells the districts what to think of their own history. [...] this process of

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of the *Hunger Games* trilogy in this chapter and the entire study despite its having been widely discussed already serves to extend on some points in the current debate and to offer a point of comparison to the other trilogies discussed in the context of national ritual or narrative.

<sup>45</sup> Further comments on the proceedings at the Reaping, the ceremony during which the district’s candidates are selected, emphasise the event’s repetitiveness: the Capitol representative is “[b]right and bubbly *as ever*”; “As reapings go, [...]” (*Hunger Games* 23; emphasis added); “Effi Trinket says *as she always does*, [...]” (*Hunger Games* 24; emphasis added).

<sup>46</sup> “He tells the history of Panem [...]. Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. [...] The Treaty of Treason gave us the new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games” (*Hunger Games* 21).

reobserving and re-creating history is dangerous as it leads citizens to develop a violent, normalized narrative of their country's past" (40).

Although the multi-layered signifying space of the Games affects all citizens in Panem and creates a community of sorts as "[a]ll are united by the viewing event of the Games[,] [a]ll are spectators, all bear witness" (Tan, "Burn" 67), it creates identities in the plural rather than one national identity. In spite of the narrative supposedly including all sides, Capitol and district citizens, it simultaneously renders the citizenship positions of district citizens abject and forces an identity upon them that no-one would willingly choose for themselves. While often, as Hepworth argues, citizenly abjection is relegated to "abject spaces", that is spaces which render people invisible and inaudible (115-116)<sup>47</sup>, the Hunger Games, in contrast, render citizenly abjection highly visible through their stylised and ritualised character and, of course, via their being broadcast to the entire nation. The notion of silence and voicelessness of abject spaces, however, is retained in the Hunger Games, as, for example, Tan argues when she contends that "[a]rticulation in Panem is denied – there is no safe or sanctioned space for any expression of self or identity" ("Burn", 57). Thus a key ambivalence of the Hunger Games as ritual and narrative clearly emerges: whereas on the one hand the Games serve to maintain the enforced divisions within the country and to continuously marginalise the district citizens through exploitation, punishment and citizenly abjection, on the other hand and at the same time the Games put district citizens centre stage on an annual basis, from the broadcasting of the Reaping ceremony to the Games proper and the subsequent Victory Tour. This hyper-visibility of at least a number of district citizens – the twenty-four tributes and, later, the sole victor of the Games – clearly underlines their relevance for the continuous telling and re-telling of the national story and highlights, as "Kristeva argues[,] that what we exclude as society or nation is interior to our very identity as a society or nation (*Etrangers* 183-84)" (quoted in Wilkie-Stibbs 324).<sup>48</sup> As part of Panem's landscape of power, the "sacrificial ritual" (Martin 231) of the Games thus to a certain extent constitutes a "violent

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<sup>47</sup> Hepworth defines "abject spaces" as either "the peripheral and marginal spaces of the city, [like] the so-called 'nomad camps' [for Roma and Sinti in Italian cities]" (115) or, more narrowly phrased and via recourse to Isin and Rygiel, "'spaces in which *the intention is* to treat people as neither subjects [...] nor objects [...] but as those without presence, [...] because their existence is rendered invisible and inaudible through abject spaces' (Isin and Rygiel, 2007, pp. 183-4)" (116).

<sup>48</sup> Also see Stuart Hall's explanations on identity and identification in his numerous texts on the subject, for example his article "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities": The "structure of identification is always constructed through ambivalence. Always constructed through splitting [...] between that which one is, and that which is the other. The attempt to expel the other to the other side of the universe [...] This is the Other that belongs inside one" (47-48).

spectacle of border reinforcement”, which in itself represents “a kind of ‘ritualistic performance’” (Mezzadra and Neilson 145). The performative, repetitive and ritualistic character of the Games establish them as a liminal signifying space that “also creates the opportunity for the subversion of the logic of sacrifice and domination on which that power [of the Capitol] depends” (Martin 226).

In Ally Condie’s *Matched* trilogy, the community-defining ritual of “the [Matching] Banquet is the most important celebration in the Society. [...] it’s the Society’s crowning achievement” (*Reached* 29). It is at least initially less overtly used to maintain a landscape of power and ‘border reinforcement’ against those who are excluded from the national body and is instead ‘sold’ to the citizens as the optimal solution for many societal ills. The result is that “[w]e live longer and better than any other citizens in the history of the world” because the title-giving “Matching System [...] produces physically and emotionally healthy offspring” (*Matched* 19). Statistics and, based on these, a culture of optimising life in a strictly rational, utilitarian way are what constitute the national narrative and official history, and the Matching System is a crucial component of this story. In contrast to the Hunger Games, which are repeated publicly every year, the matching ceremony is repeated monthly but with less visibility as only those who are matched on that particular day, their parents and any older siblings they might have are allowed to be present (*Matched* 8). The fact that this ritual is linked to power after all is revealed when Cassia reflects that those living in the community who are classified as Aberrations are not allowed to be matched (*Matched* 47). While it seems less violent in comparison to the Hunger Games, which flaunt state violence and domination publicly and unashamedly, the violence connected to the ritual in *Matched* and the normative landscapes it creates enforces boundaries of belonging and non-belonging as effectively, even if less spectacularly, as the Hunger Games do. Similarly, even though the Matching System is also not as overtly linked to discourses of memory and forgetting as the Games in Collins’s trilogy are, the national narrative around this ceremony can be regarded as an instance of the practice of ‘remembering/forgetting’ (cf. Anderson 201). Through the Matching System, the citizens of the Society are constantly ‘reminded’ of the plight of previous generations who had to live without this ritual but the fact that this practice (and others) very severely limits their life choices is ‘forgotten’ or glossed over.

Like the authorities in the *Hunger Games*, those in *Matched*, too, keep close those members of their society which they have marginalised. As has been stated before in chapter 3.2, those classified as Aberrations are allowed to stay in the cities but forced to do menial labour until they are needed as canon-fodder in the obscure war the Society is fighting with

the Enemy [sic.] (*Matched* 287, 322). While they are not put centre-stage like the districts' tributes in the Games, those of Aberration status are still crucial for the upholding of the Society's functioning: they are condemned to fulfil tasks deemed too dangerous for everyone else, and also hidden from the rest of the population. Thus, the urban centre in which Cassia grows up has in itself to be regarded as an ambivalent and liminal space containing those who it seeks to control<sup>49</sup>, which counter-acts the authorities' intention to render certain groups or individuals invisible despite the fact that they are excluded from the ritual of matching and thus from an integral part of the national narrative. Therefore, as with the Games in Collins's series, the Matching System and the entire narrative of utilitarian optimisation of all aspects of life cannot serve to create one unified communal identity. However, this representation of the city not only as the seat of power but also as an inherently liminal space when it comes to the struggle over power highlights the fact that "border and labor struggles [...] are increasingly carried out in urban spaces far from territory's edge" (Mezzadra and Neilson 54). This ambivalent situation makes the performance of counter-discourses possible.

In the *Hunger Games* trilogy, the subversion of the logic of the Games as hegemonic narrative through the performance of counter-discourses is possible because, as Tan observes, "[w]hile the arena itself is a prison, it ironically acts as a space of unprecedented freedom between the tributes. [...] Katniss is forced into contact with others from outside her district" ("Burn" 58). The entire choreography of the Games, from the pre-Games training centre and televised introduction of the tributes, to the arena proper and the Victory Tour after the Games constitutes the only instance in which people from different districts are allowed to meet legitimately. While the enforced segregation of the districts is always present in the deathly rivalry between the tributes, the same tool that is meant to keep the districts apart, almost ironically is also the very means that brings them together, thus providing a space for the exchange of information and knowledges that is otherwise impossible. Whereas Henthorpe focuses on the aspect of separation when he contends that "any sort of national rebellion becomes all but impossible" when "the people of Panem are prevented from identifying themselves as a people" (47), Martin emphasises the aspect of the Games' ambivalence when he suggests we read the trilogy, and especially the Games, progressively along the lines of "political alliance" (230).

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<sup>49</sup> A further example for a marginalised yet spatially included group are those ex-citizens in the *Hunger Games* trilogy who have been turned into Avoxes, a demonization for people who are rendered into literally silenced others by cutting out their tongues. They are sentenced to a life in servitude with no voice of their own. Having to wait on either Capitol citizens or tributes before the beginning of the Games, Avoxes live within the Capitol and thus contribute to its ambivalence (*Hunger Games* 94-95).

A further and no less important reason why Katniss and her allies are able to challenge the ritual cum hegemonic narrative of the Games lies in the very fact of its ritualistic and performative character. Due to the necessity of its annual performance and the obligation of every citizen to watch this performance, every citizen can have a thorough understanding of the mechanisms of this ritual, which makes intervention in the signifying process possible. One of these recurring mechanisms is the fact that “they *have* to have a victor”, as Peeta observes towards the end of the first Games he and Katniss participate in (*Hunger Games* 417; emphasis added). It is then, however, Katniss, the female protagonist and only focaliser, who understands that she can subvert the rules exactly by making use of them because “[w]ithout a victor, the whole thing would blow up in the Gamemakers’ faces” (*Hunger Games* 417-18). While Katniss thus “must operate” (Sunstrum 144) within the hegemonic discourse (as performed ritual) of the Games, the fact that the cruel rules of the Games are also, crucially, always the same rules, enables her to appropriate this knowledge not only for turning the odds in her favour<sup>50</sup> but also for forging alliances and friendships within and beyond the space of the arena. When Panem’s authorities consider the Hunger Games as “their weapon” the young tributes “are not supposed to be able to defeat” (*Hunger Games* 435), they fail to recognise that the repetitive performance of this ritual and its consequent predictability (at least to a certain extent) also makes intervention possible. Thus, Katniss is able to appropriate the hegemonic discourse of oppression, punishment, physical violence and extreme individualism (as there can only be one survivor) into a counter-hegemonic discourse of subversion, compassion and friendship and to fully exploit the ambivalence of the space of the arena and the Games as such.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The rather sarcastic “And may the odds be *ever* in your favour!” (*Hunger Games* 23) is introduced by the character of Effie Trinket, who conducts the Reaping ceremony in Katniss’ home district 12. It is taken up several times throughout the trilogy.

<sup>51</sup> Several critics have discussed Katniss’s practices in the arena as a form of resistance, but usually not explicitly in the context of political citizenship and the arena and Games as such as liminal signifying spaces. See especially the articles by Koenig, Montz (“Costuming the Resistance”) and Wezner, all published in Pharr and Clark’s edited volume *Of Bread, Blood and the Hunger Games*. Both Koenig and Montz emphasise the aspect of visibility and the influence on the viewers this facilitates, for example when Koenig argues that Katniss’s “strength resides in the ability to shape what people see and feel” (43) or that “she dares to rewrite the script he [Snow] owns” (44), thus highlighting the context of reality TV and media criticism within the trilogy. Montz argues similarly when she points out that Katniss takes “control what viewers see and comprehend”, thus appropriating “the power over the gaze” (“Costuming the Resistance” 141). Both she and Wezner furthermore highlight that the prerequisite for appropriating this visibility is “knowledge [...] of the spectacle” (Montz, “Costuming the Resistance” 141) and an “understanding of how the Capitol and District 13 function” (Wezner 148).

A number of critics have referred especially to the friendship of Katniss and Rue, a young girl from district 11, in the arena as an example of such an alliance or even friendship as this “interaction between the citizens of Districts 11 and 12” (Martin 230) represents “an unprecedented moment of communication between the districts” (Tan, “Burn” 59).<sup>52</sup> Further instances of such solidarity occur between previous victors of the Games in the aftermath of the 74<sup>th</sup> and the run-up to the 75<sup>th</sup> Hunger Games. Over the years of annual repetition, the context of the Games has offered a meeting opportunity for previous victors in the Capitol, where they function as mentors to the new tributes from their district each year, are able to attend the Games “[e]ven if they are not mentoring” (*Catching Fire* 212) or are exploited by the Capitol authorities as prostitutes or in other ways (*Mockingjay* 198-99). Nevertheless, their regular coming together has also resulted in the formation of friendships (cf. *Catching Fire* 212, 215, 222, 229-31). Tan argues that the victors and their relegation within their home districts to a separate Victors’ Village means that they represent the permanently expelled ‘other’ who “can never integrate back into their communities” and “remain objects” (“Making of the Citizen” 89). However, the position is taken here that the victors’ ‘othered’ status and their ability to move between their own district and the Capitol comparatively freely constitute major factors in rendering the Capitol as well as the Hunger Games liminal spaces by creating and nurturing these in-between subject positions that ultimately allow for regular contact across district boundaries and the formation of alliances.<sup>53</sup> The authorities have failed to realise that they have engendered the formation of this unique subject position as especially empowered to practice and perform acts of justice-oriented citizenship, and that by drawing the tributes for the 75<sup>th</sup> Games from the pool of living victors, they are giving them an unprecedented stage to showcase their alliance and friendship. In this way, the victors/tributes use the pre-Games televised interviews and their meeting in the training centre to openly display a sense of “camaraderie” (*Catching Fire* 258) and even to “join hands” and “stand in

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<sup>52</sup> Both Martin and Tan also refer to the gift of bread Katniss, a tribute from district 12, receives from the citizens of district 11, which is Rue’s home district. While the bread was initially meant for Rue, redirecting it to Katniss after Rue’s death and thus “sponsoring Katniss while she is in the arena becomes a means [for the people of district 11] of defying the Capitol’s power” (Henthorne 104). Katniss notes the extraordinariness of this event as “a first. A district gift to a tribute who’s not your own” (*Hunger Games* 289). In a later scene, she explicitly states that by sponsoring her, district 11 “has [...] broken all the rules to thank [her]” (*Hunger Games* 350). As this scene has already been covered extensively in the existing research on Collins’s trilogy, I will not discuss it any further in this chapter.

<sup>53</sup> The alliance that helps to keep Katniss alive and manages to break her out of the Quarter Quell arena includes victors/tributes from several districts (both tributes/victors from district 3, district 4 and district 11; Johanna Mason from district 7; as well as Haymitch Abernathy, the mentor for district 12, and the new head gamemaker and Capitol citizen Plutarch Havensbee.



one unbroken line in what must be the first public show of unity among the districts since the Dark Days” (*Catching Fire* 311). This instance of citizen action (or justice-oriented citizenship) can simultaneously be regarded as an instance of “civil society practice[ing] collectivity [...] and [in which] dissent is made visible” (Wildner 152).<sup>54</sup>

In a like manner to the Games in Collins’s trilogy, the Matching System in *Matched* provides the very possibility to subvert the narrative of social optimisation. This ritual needs to be constantly repeated for national social cohesion because it “makes the other ceremonies possible” but, moreover, especially because “people will know that something is very, very wrong” “[i]f they stop having it, even for a month” (*Reached* 29). It is for this reason that the rebels of the Rising order Cassia to “Match incorrectly” (*Reached* 29) in a data sort for an upcoming Matching Banquet once she has joined the Rising. It also explains Cassia’s initial confusion when the micro card that contains the information on her supposed match, her childhood friend Xander, additionally contains information on another boy, her neighbour Ky, which is all the more unlikely as Ky is of Aberration status and thus not eligible to be matched (*Matched* 46-47). Not only does she suddenly seem to have a choice as to who she is matched with, there also, moreover, seems to be a glitch in the system. This glitch is especially disruptive because it destabilises the hegemonic narrative of functional perfection and exposes the artificiality and fragility of the ritual and the overarching narrative, which leads to further doubt in other parts of the system.

Because of the Society’s ambivalence about those of minor citizenly classification, Ky is allowed to take part in the same recreational activity that Cassia has also chosen, which is hiking (*Matched* 92). The Hill they and the rest of their group climb again and again during this repeated activity becomes a liminal space within the city boundaries as it is here that Cassia gains a fuller understanding as to how the authorities in her world operate. Like in the *Dustlands* trilogy, also here “the recovery of individual and collective memory[,] becomes an instrumental tool of resistance for [the] protagonists. [...] individual recollection therefore becomes the first, necessary step for a collective action” (Baccolini, “The Persistence of Hope” 520–21). It is on the Hill that Ky manages to share snippets of his own story, that is at

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<sup>54</sup> An earlier instance of the representation of inter-district solidarity as citizen action is Katniss and Peeta’s visit of district 11 during their Victory Tour, which entails a “staged” “public performance” (*Catching Fire* 69) that is as predictable as many other aspects of the Games are (*Catching Fire* 71). Both Peeta and Katniss make use of the performative aspect of this part of the ritual to once again intervene into the hegemonic narrative of forced celebration. While Katniss publicly thanks the dead tributes of district 11 and their families (*Catching Fire* 74-75) and thus acknowledges a shared pain and trauma, Peeta declares they should receive ““one month of our winnings every year for the duration of our lives”” (*Catching Fire* 72), a gift which is, once again, unprecedented and of which Katniss is not even sure “if it’s legal” (*Catching Fire* 73).

the same time the story of many of his status, with Cassia, who increasingly recognises not only the limits of choice the Society imposes upon its citizens, but also its internal ambivalence and underlying cruelty. Ky's sharing of his childhood memories in the Outer Provinces with Cassia "helps to break hegemonic historical discourse, the master narratives that have 'managed to erase historical memory so that it is almost impossible to see that what is going on around us was not always the same' (Moylan, *Scraps* 26)" (Baccolini, "Memory and Historical Reconciliation" 118). Like in the *Dustlands* trilogy, it is the sharing of individual memory and knowledges that enables Cassia to engage in justice-oriented citizenship and start to seek an alternative to the system's hegemonic narrative, which excludes those whose stories and whose desires do not match the proclaimed optimal conditions for the Society.

The point that both individual and collective memory are embattled spaces and intricately linked with the performance of justice-oriented citizenship is moreover highlighted by the fact that every citizen has to carry a tablet container with three pills, one of which eliminates experiences that could unsettle the social order from people's minds and has to be taken on demand (cf. *Matched* 323-24). However, the effect of this red pill is not common knowledge. Cassia finds out about its memory-erasing effect from Ky, who, like their friend Xander, is immune to it. Unlike their parents and their friends, these two characters can "know what *really* happened" (*Reached* 52) and remember all the disturbances, dramas and injustices they have experienced and which the authorities pretend do not exist in their optimised Society. Xander realises that in his world, being able to remember things that other people cannot is an important tool in the struggle to change that "[t]hings aren't fair" as he can "use that knowledge to make a difference" (*Reached* 52). Considering himself very lucky, Xander concedes that "when you're lucky [...] it's your responsibility to do the right thing" (*Reached* 52). He thereby accepts the self-imposed duty of exercising a degree of agency that cannot be taken for granted in the Society and that immediately, if initially secretly, challenges the authorities' hegemonic practices and discourses.

Nevertheless, a counter-discourse that achieves 'only' oppositionality to the hegemonic discourse does not necessarily offer any solutions to the underlying ailments of society. This position is strongly emphasised in *Mockingjay*, the final novel of the *Hunger Games* trilogy, where the rebels' counter-discourse to that of the Games seeks to create community identity via the symbol of the mockingjay, a "funny bird[]" that represents "a slap in the face to the Capitol" (*Hunger Games* 51) as it came into being outside of the Capitol's control and against its plans. As Katniss informs the implied readers, the mockingjay is the accidental result of

Capitol-engineered birds called “jabberjays mat[ing] with female mockingbirds, creating a whole new species” (*Hunger Games* 52). It comes into prominence – and into fashion – when Katniss wears a pin with the image of this hybrid bird in the first arena in book one. While the mockingjay symbolises hybridity due to its emergence and therefore actually has the potential to become the symbol of a unified nation, representing a merging of both the Capitol and the districts, the propaganda discourse of the rebellion that its leaders create around this symbol soon becomes as homogenising and excluding as the ritual of the Games. Nevertheless, the symbol itself retains its ambivalence, and since it, too, like the Games, has to be continuously performed in order to fulfil its function of creating a community, it, too, can be appropriated. The symbol of the mockingjay is merged with the figure of Katniss, who reluctantly agrees to impersonate the symbol for the propaganda TV clips (*Mockingjay* 45).<sup>55</sup> As the nation thus comes to accept the symbol of the rebellion and the person of Katniss as the same thing, it is almost logical that Katniss is supposed to execute President Snow once the rebels have conquered the Capitol. The symbol and/as person is supposed to discharge the personification of the old system. However, Katniss manages to turn this act in which she is expected to represent a symbol into a performance of justice-oriented citizenship when, instead of President Snow, she kills the leader of the rebellion, Alma Coin (*Mockingjay* 434). Only by rejecting both the Capitol’s ritual and the rebellion’s equally excluding counter-discourse can real change, which is more than a simple reversal of the situation, be facilitated.

As the only trilogy among those selected for this study, the *Hunger Games* trilogy hints at the practices of remembering and commemoration that are involved in building new common, national narratives or symbols after the old and oppressive ones have been dismantled. When an older Katniss informs the reader more than fifteen years after the end of the main storyline that “[t]he arenas have been completely destroyed, the memorials built” (*Mockingjay* 454) this implies a process of “transitional justice” (Gutman et al. 3; Meyer 173) having taken place or still ongoing that “focuse[s] on transforming past violence and conflict into future peace, reconciliation and democratic culture” (Gutman et al. 3) so that “knowledge of the past – and especially its traumas and violence – [can be used] to create a better present and future” (Bickford and Sodaro 67). The narrator-protagonist hopes that the “teach[ing] about them [the Games] at school” will help the next generation to “understand in a way that will make them braver” (*Mockingjay* 454-455) so that the future citizenry of Panem can enjoy

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<sup>55</sup> This aspect will be further explored in chapter 4.2.

the more inclusive and just nation by understanding the complexities of past events and commemorating them responsibly.

Like in the trilogies discussed so far in this chapter, in the *Longlight* trilogy the dismantling of hegemonic and assembling and performing of counter-hegemonic discourses is deeply intertwined with the personal ‘stories’ of the trilogy’s two main protagonists. While it shares a number of structural features with Young’s *Dustlands* trilogy<sup>56</sup>, the extent to which the two protagonists are almost entrapped by the competing discourses is much closer to the representation of Katniss as the mockingjay in the *Hunger Games* trilogy. Set in a post-disaster world “in which the disaster has made Earth into a kind of secondary world” (Braithwaite, “Post-disaster Fiction” 5), Foon’s *Longlight* trilogy generically often appears closer to (high) fantasy than to those speculative genres that focus more recognisably on extrapolation.<sup>57</sup> The story centres on two siblings, Roan and his younger sister Stowe, whose home settlement, the trilogy’s title-giving Longlight, has been destroyed (*Dirt Eaters* 2ff.). While Roan, the protagonist and main focaliser in the first novel, negotiates his way through a number of scattered and warring (or at least quarrelling) factions in the so-called Farlands, Stowe, who becomes the second main focaliser from book two onwards, has been abducted to the City by its masters, the title given to its oppressive ruling authorities.

Similar to the trilogies discussed so far in this chapter, in the society Roan gets to know after the destruction of Longlight there is no real community or national identity; instead the heterogeneous interests of a multitude of groups is foregrounded which both actively prevent community from being established and make resistance to the City’s power highly ineffective. It is thus easy for the City masters to disseminate a narrative representing themselves as all-powerful and omnipresent while establishing a hegemonic discourse that precipitates the citizens’ compliance, obedience and even devotion. Their quasi-religious cult of Our Stowe (e.g. *Freewalker* 20, 22), which as the name suggests is built around the child-figure of Stowe, represents the discourse which, together with an advanced mind-controlling technology, is used to mollify and distract the masses. The City masters want to capture Roan,

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<sup>56</sup> Both trilogies start out as a quest narratives, and both focus on siblings torn apart as the centre of the plot, at least initially. Furthermore, in both cases the first part of the trilogy focuses predominantly on the introduction to a post-disaster society of scattered communities.

<sup>57</sup> Although some developments in Foon’s fictional world, like the formation of a group of vampire-like people called the Hhroxhi, who are “blood-drinking albinos” and “dwell beneath the earth” (*The Keeper’s Shadow* ix), may seem fantastic their decision to shed as many human traits as possible (*Freewalker* 161-62) is explained as a consequence of the environmental disaster and ensuing war that has hit earth generations before and therefore have to be considered as an example of extrapolation in the same way that the destruction of the environment itself is.

too, in order to prevent the key counter-hegemonic discourse, a prophecy (*Dirt Eaters* 25) made by Roan and Stowe's great-grandfather, Roan of the Parting, predicting the defeat of the City masters by two siblings from Longlight, from coming true. Both discourses, that of the prophecy as well as that of Our Stowe, function as "external discursive pressures [that] are used to shape" (Lisle 76) Roan's and Stowe's subject positions and to keep them 'in place'. Such a "process of *subjectification* [...] literally [*makes*] [individuals] into subjects" (76) instead of agents. Like Katniss as the symbol of the mockingjay in the *Hunger Games* trilogy, Roan and Stowe thus become the embodiments of the community's hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses. Since the prophecy comprises both Roan and Stowe, her subject position is marked by – and creates – a liminality which that of her brother lacks as she has to navigate both sides of the nation's divide. While such "external forces [primarily] construct hegemonic subject positions" (Lisle 76) it is especially Stowe who manages to resist and subvert the citizenly subject position as "poster-girl for the Masters" (*Freewalker* 41) she has been assigned.

When Stowe finds out that Darius, the most powerful City master and her surrogate father not only "controls her" (*Freewalker* 23) but is also responsible for the destruction of her home and the death of her parents (*Freewalker* 5), a situation of ambivalence is produced that disrupts his assumption of unlimited power. As Stowe resolves to fight Darius and find her brother on her own terms while outwardly continuing to play "the City's own true daughter" (*Freewalker* 22) she makes use of her liminal subject position to actively reposition herself as a justice-oriented citizen who seeks to undermine the established landscape of power and dismantle the hegemonic discourse both she and her fellow citizens are subjected to. As especially in the *Dustlands* and the *Matched* trilogies, reclaiming her personal memories of the anger and distrust she had felt upon being brought to the City (*Freewalker* 5-6), before "[s]he began to forget, and all of Darius's words became her own" (*Freewalker* 6), becomes a key strategy in her struggle for both personal and community identity. Once again, Stowe's strategy for and performance of justice-oriented citizenship demonstrates that "[c]hoice, responsibility, and action are linked to memory and knowledge of the past" (Baccolini, "Finding Utopia in Dystopia" 171).

In contrast to Stowe, Roan's subject position is rather unambiguous to himself and to those around him, too. He is variously cast as the only one who can unite the different factions of the Farlands, as a leader or even Prophet (e.g. *Freewalker* 370; *Keeper's Shadow* 20, 269) and as the one who can succeed in bringing about the "new world" (*Dirt Eaters* 309) which the prophecy promises. Whereas in the overall situation of the antagonism between

City and Farlands and their respective competing discourses his position might appear as that of a justice-oriented citizen, for him the prophecy, like the mockingjay symbol for Katniss in Collins's trilogy, emerges as another hegemonic narrative and normative landscape. By having "internalis[ed] the mechanisms of [...] control" (Lisle 77) of this discourse, he has subjected himself to the burden both the prophecy itself and those believing in it place upon him and performs his citizenly subject position more out of a sense of duty than choice. This is also visible in the slightly different connotations that memory has for Roan in comparison to Stowe. For Roan, personal memory frequently means the recollection of his family ties to Longlight, its peaceful practices and the peace and hope that the prophecy promises (e.g. *Dirt Eaters* 1, 190). Memory in his case is thus intricately linked to his accepting that "THE PEOPLE OF LONGLIGHT LIVE [...] IN [HIS] BLOOD, [...] IN [HIS] MIND" (*Keeper's Shadow* 25) and that with this bloodline comes a responsibility to the society he lives in and the one he seeks to forge. While he accepts his role of having to bring about justice for everyone he nevertheless gets increasingly frustrated that "there are already so many stories about [him]. It's like [his] life is one of your [a storyteller's] scripts, and there's nothing really left for [him] to do except act it out" (*Keeper's Shadow* 71) "as if he d[oes] not have a choice" (*Keeper's Shadow* 115). While Roan is thus keenly aware of representing a common (national) symbol he is not able to transgress this position in the way his sister is, so that ultimately the counter-hegemonic and freedom-oriented discourse of the prophecy proves almost more entrapping than the City's oppressive discourse.

So far, the discussion in this chapter has focused on the representation of how justice-oriented citizenship in the dystopian societies depicted usually emerges as a form of intervention in national, community-defining narratives, symbols, rituals or even technologies and is facilitated by and facilitates the formation of liminal spaces. These can be actual spaces on the story level like the arena in the *Hunger Games* trilogy or ideological spaces like the rituals, symbols and narratives linked to the respective hegemonic discourse in each trilogy. As has been demonstrated, more often than not, the 'burden' of or responsibility for recognising the subversive potential of this spatial liminality and translating this into (initial) interventions rests on the narratives' female protagonists. These interventions into the hegemonic narrative are often linked to mnemonic practices on both a personal and community level and can be regarded as examples of "[w]hat happens to the centrality of national memory when 'peripheral' or 'marginal' pasts penetrate into the center and discontinuities command legitimate attention" (D. Levy 24–25), with the term 'pasts' in the context of this study comprising alternative personal or communal experiences and

knowledges. In traditional dystopian fashion, these novels highlight on the story level that “a society that is incapable of recollection, recognition, and remembrance” and “shows no concern for the often silenced histories of the oppressed, the marginalized, the dispossessed” is “without hope for the future” (Baccolini, “Memory and Historical Reconciliation” 119).

The questioning, challenging and ultimately changing of the hegemonic discourse as national and/or community-defining narrative, ritual or symbol is, as Tan argues in the case of the *Hunger Games* trilogy, a “call[ing] into question” of the “nation – the ultimate body, the sovereign body” (“Burn” 65). She continues by positing that “[a]s the Hunger Games have destabilized notions of self and humanity, a national self and body are troubled” (“Burn” 65). While I agree that the ‘national body’ is certainly questioned and troubled throughout the greatest parts of all the trilogies discussed in this chapter, it is still, in most cases, not dispensed of. On the contrary, at the end of most of the trilogies, a national or community ‘body’ is re-instated, not in the classic dystopian pattern of having the individual defeated, but in a pattern that emphasises the process of subjectivation in the traditional *Bildungsroman* that moves in a “progressive temporality” from “socialization, apprenticeship, assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation” to, finally, reconciliation (Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 47). The “genre DNA” (Martin 222)<sup>58</sup> of the *Bildungsroman* tradition implies the seeking to create a unified nation and its citizenry by representing the de-marginalisation of formerly marginalised experiences. Such marginalised experiences, in the tradition of the dystopian genre, are those that highlight injustices and perform dissent, rights claims and thus justice-oriented citizenship. This form of citizenship is required, accepted and even celebrated for as long as the dystopian regimes’ hegemonic discourses keep the nation oppressed and its population divided. As justice-oriented citizenship is predominantly created in and creates liminal and ambivalent spaces of contestation it at least temporarily unsettles the dystopia’s spatial dichotomy and fractures the genre’s own normative landscape, which is the genre convention that dissent and resistance (as crucial components of justice-oriented citizenship) are a “value and meaning” (Cresswell 9) that are always attached to the margins or at least to a marginalised point of view. Nevertheless, towards the end of the novels, the notion that dissent – and therefore justice-oriented citizenship – can only emerge from the margins is re-inscribed, not least due to *Bildungsroman* conventions. In a move parallel to the protagonists’ exclusion from political participation outlined in the previous chapter, the ‘emergence’, to use Bakhtin’s term, of the new nation or community and its revised narrative from the process of

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<sup>58</sup> Martin uses this term to explain the influence of the dystopian genre tradition on the *Hunger Games* trilogy but in his analysis he completely ignores the influence of the *Bildungsroman* tradition.

resistance against the oppressive regime requires that justice-oriented citizenship itself and the rebellious, liminal (female) adolescent identity inextricably linked to it be sacrificed for the sake of national cohesion, however fragile this might initially be.

This ‘sacrifice’ takes two different forms, both effectively writing the adolescent liminal identity out of the story. Whereas in the *Hunger Games* and *Matched* trilogies, Katniss and Cassia respectively are narratively ‘allowed’ to remain in and thus belong to the newly changed imagined community, especially the epilogue in *Mockingjay* shows that in order to belong, female adolescent liminality, and with it a questioning form of citizenship, has to be ‘outgrown’. When a Katniss who is now in her thirties narrates the final scene, a reference to the social reconciliation process and her contribution towards it by educating her children about past traumas suggests that justice for society has now been achieved and citizens can participate *within* the boundaries of the newly established national narratives. Furthermore, an explanation of her choice of partner that seems to echo Jane Eyre’s laconic statement “Reader, I married him” (Brontë 397), strongly emphasises the traditional *Bildungsroman*’s assertion of inclusion through adaptation and assimilation, for instance by performing traditional, narrowly defined gender roles. On the story level it may be the (formerly) dystopian society that has to adapt first, but ultimately it is the justice-oriented, liminal adolescent identity that has to be assimilated into the revised norm of the (adult) nation (cf. Hilton and Nikolajeva 13). Enfranchisement as “citizen-subjection [...] in the socio-political structures of democratic citizenship” in these novels follows the “tendentially reformist and normative” (Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 54) pattern of the traditional *Bildungsroman*. Hintz et al.’s suspicion that “[t]he use of the *Bildungsroman* form [...] may also create ambivalence about the role of rebellion in facilitating growth” and that “[t]he ability of the protagonist to really envision something new might [...] be circumscribed by the conventions and forms of the *Bildungsroman* itself” (7) certainly proves correct in most trilogies analysed here.

In the *Dustlands* and *Longlight* trilogies, where the adolescent, justice-oriented protagonist is not assimilated into the reformed nation, a belonging to the community they have fought for is itself sacrificed as Saba in the *Dustlands* trilogy (cf. *Raging Star* 337-38) and Roan in the *Longlight* trilogy are literally written out of the newly imagined community altogether. While this may be regarded as a rather typical development of narratives employing a quest pattern<sup>59</sup>, a generic tradition that both of these trilogies recognisably draw

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<sup>59</sup> For instance, see Frodo in *The Lord of the Rings*, who leaves Middle-earth after it has been saved from Sauron and thus is also written out of the narrative. He explains to his friend, Sam, that “the Shire [...] has been saved, but not for [him]” and that “[i]t must often be so [...] when things are in danger: some one has to give them up,



on, in terms of conceptualising citizenship positions this study considers such a development as a questionable and problematic strategy. In the *Longlight* trilogy, this mechanism represents a two edged sword as on the one hand it liberates Roan from a subject position he has accepted out of duty while on the other hand it almost disowns his (adolescent) performance of justice-oriented citizenship by de-linking it from agency and choice. When the epigraph to the final chapter of the trilogy, assigned to the usually subversive storytellers, claims that “Roan of Longlight has been living his great-grandfather’s story and now he must search for a story of his own” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 407), his subordination to the discourse of the prophecy is acknowledged but at the same time his ownership of the process of struggle against the City, fighting for justice and personal growth is practically denied as not having been his own “story”. This narrative strategy exposes the apparent authorial and social uneasiness around the subversive or even explosive potential of (not only female) adolescent justice-oriented citizenship, even if only as a transitional citizenly subject position. By discursively aligning it with the righting of wrongs of previous generations and thus linking it to duty and responsibility rather than rebelliousness and subversion, the threat adolescent liminal citizenly subject positions might still pose to community cohesion is diminished. Even the fact that Roan’s sister Stowe is ‘allowed’ to contribute “to mend City and Farlands alike” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 408) as part of a new council and thus to remain in and moreover actively shape the nation cannot fully balance this sense of uneasiness as it is Roan’s perspective the final novel in this trilogy closes with and thus emphasises.

Thus, what remains ‘troubled’, to use Tan’s expression, is not so much the idea of nation as such but both the tension between the dystopia’s and the *Bildungsroman*’s different ‘genre memories’ of how community and citizenly identities and relationships are conceptualised on the one hand and adult authors’ apparent lingering discomfort with (liminal, dissenting) adolescent identity on the other. While the dystopian aspects dominate both the story level and academic discussion of these novels, it appears that with regards to representing political citizenly subject positions it is actually the *Bildungsroman* which dominates the ways in which adult authors envision possible subjectivities for especially, even if not exclusively, female adolescents. Thus, at the end of the respective trilogies, the (newly) imagined communities might be more diverse in terms of experiences and (memory) discourses included but this comes at the loss of liminal spaces of contestations and the dissenting notion of justice-oriented citizenship, which is subsumed in a more passive form of

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lose them, so that others may keep them” (Tolkien 1067). Saba’s and Roan’s positions at the end of the respective trilogies thus certainly mirror the subject position of the quest hero after the quest has been completed.

belonging. Not unlike the hyper-visibility assigned to the nevertheless silenced tributes in the *Hunger Games* trilogy, these novels also afford hyper-visibility to a politically marginalised group, i.e. (female) adolescents, but then ultimately fail to represent actual youth suffrage in political terms<sup>60</sup> by accepting the traditional *Bildungsroman* pattern as another hegemonic narrative and/or normative landscape. As child characters in children's literature "are allowed [...] to become strong, brave, rich, powerful, and independent – *on certain conditions and for a limited time*" (Nikolajeva, *Power, Voice and Subjectivity* 10), young adult characters in these novels are allowed to be "agents whose mobility embodies desires, habits, and forms of life that rewrite the normative scripts of [...] belonging" (Mezzadra and Neilson 55) – for a limited time.

One of the reasons why trilogies like *Dustlands*, *The Hunger Games*, *Longlight* and *Matched* are "at once conservative and revolutionary" while still "pushing at the boundaries imposed upon" (Hunt 72) them, may be that they predominantly focus on "official and public memory discourses" that are still situated "within a sort of national container" (D. Levy 18). Novels like the *Exodus* trilogy and the *Carbon Diaries* novels, which incorporate more "global iterations" (18) of citizenship and memory discourses, also afford their protagonists a higher degree of agency and potential political involvement until and beyond the end of the narrative, as will be explored in the final section of this chapter. By "exceed[ing] [the] notion of people sacrificing themselves for the nation's well-being" (McCulloch, "A New Home" 70) – or, one might add, sacrificing a specifically engaged form of citizenship for the nation's cohesion – such narratives emphatically engage with the "necessity to rethink national borders" (McCulloch, *Children's Literature* 130).

### **3.4 Travelling, Migrancy, Cosmopolitanism: Globalised Citizenships and (Global) Memoryscapes between Privilege and 'Border Thinking' in the *Carbon Diaries* Duology and the *Dustlands* and *Exodus* Trilogies**

To conclude the chapter on political citizenship, this final part will engage with transnational citizenly subject positions that go beyond the spatial boundedness of the nation and encompass a wider global perspective. It is of course difficult, not to say impossible, to situate

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<sup>60</sup> As will be explored in chapters 4 and 5 of this study, some novels seem to compensate for the lack of new and especially lasting forms of adolescent direct political engagement by relegating direct and lasting practices of participation to the domain of cultural and/or ecological citizenship.

such positions as transnational or cosmopolitan citizenship solely within the realm of the political. As Linklater explains, one aspect that has been criticised, for example, with regard to the notion of cosmopolitan citizenship within the field of political theory is that “there is no reference to traditional conceptions of politics which stress rights of representation or participation in politics – the rights which distinguish subjects from citizens” (323). This line of argumentation within political theory (which Linklater himself does not endorse), underlines that “national conceptions of rights and duties still shape our conception of being a citizen” despite the fact that “many aspects of human experience, such as cultural identity, scientific knowledge, political influence, economic independence and personal security, are no longer guaranteed through the space of nationhood” (Smith and Pangsapa 51). Linklater adds “rising levels of intrastate violence and violations of human rights, and continuing environmental degradation” (320) to the list of issues that nation-states are increasingly unlikely to handle independently. Therefore, concepts such as transnational citizenship or cosmopolitanism are discussed as possible challenges to the spatially “almost exclusive focus on the state (or its homologues) as ‘container’ of citizenship” (Dobson and Bell 6). Furthermore, as Gunew points out, “Bhabha also refers to the concept [of vernacular cosmopolitanism] as attempting to capture the ‘growing, global gulf between political citizenship, still largely negotiated in “national” and statist terms, and cultural citizenship which is often community-centred, transnational, diasporic, hybrid” (Bhabha, “Unsatisfied” 202; qtd. in Gunew 142)<sup>61</sup>. For this reason, this discussion of forms of citizenship that seek to transcend national borders is situated in the almost-liminal space, so to speak, between the chapters on political citizenship on the one hand and cultural citizenship on the other.<sup>62</sup>

With regards to the novels analysed in this study, it is again important to distinguish between the characters’ strategies on the story level and the texts’ strategies on the discourse level. Furthermore, while some novels on the story level might not contain obvious references to transnational, cosmopolitan forms of citizenship, they may comment on these on the discourse level. Out of the novels selected for this study these are especially the North American-authored novels which, at least on the story level, predominantly blank out any

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<sup>61</sup> The full original reference is: Homi K. Bhabha. “Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism.” In *Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities*, eds. Laura García-Moreno and Peter C. Pfeiffer, Camden House, 1996, pp. 191-208, here 202.

<sup>62</sup> This study considers it the more elegant solution to include the discussion on such forms of citizenship as part of one of the bigger chapters instead of opening up an entirely separate chapter for this one point. Also, this positioning highlights the fact that despite its aim to transcend borders, politically, culturally, and in more recent years also ecologically, it still evokes and implies geographically (including nationally) specific experiences.

explicit reference to a world existing beyond the borders of the society these novels represent. Either they do not represent the world beyond the borders of their respective societies at all, as in Collins's *Hunger Games* trilogy, or if they do then only in the vaguest terms, as in the *Dustlands* trilogy when, at the very end of the narrative, Saba and Jack set sail on the ocean to explore what else the world holds beyond the borders of New Eden. The *Matched* trilogy also only alludes to places beyond the Society's borders, first as the realm of the Enemy and later as the so-called Otherlands, a place whose existence is doubted or believed in depending on which citizenly status group a person belongs to (*Reached* 285). Thus, they form a stark contrast to the selected British-authored novels, which overtly stress an international or even transnational experience, whether that be as a migratory movement in the *Exodus* trilogy or as touring Europe in the *Carbon Diaries* novels.

This very noticeable difference can be better explained by taking into consideration the genre traditions favoured in the respective novels than by focusing on their geographic origin.<sup>63</sup> Whereas Collins's *Hunger Games* and Condie's *Matched* trilogies clearly favour the dystopian tradition, which usually displays societies closed in on themselves, Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy and Lloyd's *Carbon Diaries* novels strike a balance between dystopia and post-/disaster. Whereas 'traditional' adult post-disaster or disaster narratives tend to place their focus on the rebuilding of small communities (e.g. Atwood's *MaddAddam*) or individuals struggling for survival of (e.g. McCarthy's *The Road*) and thus focus on establishing a coherent narrative at the microlevel of a destroyed civilisation (cf. Hicks 8), the young adult eco-dystopias of Bertagna's and Lloyd's novels explicitly deviate from this genre convention. They thereby present "a stark warning against insularity – if you fail to look beyond your borders, then you will become extinct, [...]" (McCulloch, *Children's Literature* 131) – and offer a sounding critique of "the discourse of exceptionalism" (Manjikian 8) prevalent in many North Atlantic nations. Young's *Dustlands* trilogy is interesting in this constellation because while, like the British-authored novels, it balances between dystopia and post-disaster (and a number of other generic influences), unlike them it does not move beyond the borders of the society of New Eden until the very end.

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<sup>63</sup> The inclusion or exclusion of transnational forms of mobility and/or citizenship cannot be determined along geographic lines as there are a number of British-authored novels or trilogies falling in this genre that do not include such representations, and a number of North-American-authored novels that do. British-authored novels or trilogies that stay within the realm of national space are, for example, Gemma Malley's *Declaration* trilogy or Meg Rosoff's stand-alone title *How I Live Now*. A US-authored trilogy that includes transnational experiences is, for example, Julianna Baggot's *Pure* trilogy.

In the following, differing approaches to the concept of cosmopolitanism will be introduced in order to be able to examine in the textual analysis which citizenly subject positions are enabled by the interplay of differing forms of cosmopolitan privileged or marginalised forms of mobility, specifically travel and migration. Secondly, those novels that overtly emphasise international or transnational engagement and travel on the story level, Julie Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy (especially *Zenith* and *Aurora*) and Saki Lloyd's two *Carbon Diaries* titles (especially *Carbon Diaries 2017*) will be examined by juxtaposing Mara and her fellow characters' experience in *Zenith* with Laura's experience in *The Carbon Diaries 2017*. Finally, the representation of indigenous subject positions in the context of critical or vernacular cosmopolitanism will be considered. I will focus on Bertagna's trilogy and its representation of the population in Greenland and on the *Dustlands* trilogy by Moira Young because of its implied reference to white invader/settler colonialism. Both narratives can be read as examples of "how globalizing nations deal with the 'difference within'" (Bhabha xv). With regards to the intersection of the discourses of genre, space and memory and their influence on the representation of citizenly subject positions I seek to demonstrate that, as has been the case in the previous chapters, not all novels succeed in ultimately representing more inclusive (political) citizenly subject positions despite the transcending of narrow national boundaries. This chapter will show that to a large extent this depends again on generic influences, for example the *Bildungsroman* and travelogue genres in *Carbon Diaries 2017*, which work against the intended increased openness of the (global) post-disaster framework. Furthermore, the extent to which the novels engage in a revaluation of "particular orientations toward the past [...] against the backdrop of global memory-scapes" (D. Levy 26) by either implicitly or explicitly evoking the experiences of (formerly) marginalised and disenfranchised groups on a global scale<sup>64</sup> largely determines whether the perspective of "exteriority [...] of those 'to be included'" that Mignolo deems necessary for cosmopolitanism to be more than an empty term (724) is taken into account for a broadening of the concept of citizenship.

The concept of cosmopolitanism, as Forte states

has become fragmented into multiple contending conceptualizations. There is the spatial definition where the cosmopolitan is someone who moves across global space; the social definition of the stranger who never really belongs to any community; the political definition of a 'citizen of the world' whose rights are liberal democratic and individualist ones supported by international institutions; the structural definition of the class position of the cosmopolitan; the

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<sup>64</sup> These are, for example, slavery or refugee-ism in the *Exodus* trilogy or the systematic attempt at erasure of indigenous culture in the invader/settler colonies in the *Dustlands* trilogy.

moral definition, featuring someone who shows solidarity with strangers; and the essentialist definition [...]. (5)

For the discussion of the novels in this chapter I am most interested in the spatial, political, structural and moral aspects of this term and the ways in which these aspects relate to the migrant or, in the case of the *Dustlands* trilogy, (transnational) indigenous subject positions represented. Interestingly, especially the achievement of the political notion of cosmopolitan citizenship is represented as challenging since in the novels considered for this chapter, ‘international institutions’ that could protect the rights of ‘citizens of the world’, to reiterate Forte, are absent due to having been destroyed in the post-disaster frameworks of these narratives. Nevertheless, the spatial, structural and moral aspects of cosmopolitanism hold considerable political impact, especially in the way in which spatial and structural aspects intersect, leading to questions of who (rich, poor, marginalised, privileged) moves in which ways (travel, migration), where and why (for fun, employment, safety, survival). These are questions that “Appiah’s humanist approach” (Knowles 7), which focuses predominantly on the moral aspect of solidarity within a global community in which “we display our concern for our fellow humans without demanding of them that they be or become like ourselves” (Appiah, “Citizens of the World” 200) cannot answer. His explanation that, in a global context, there are two “conditions for making citizenship real: knowledge about the lives of other citizens, on the one hand; and the power to affect them, on the other” (Appiah, “Keynote Address” 2378) does not take into consideration that both knowledge and the power to affect others may be the prerogative of those holding privileged positions within the global community, wherever they may be geographically situated.

Two scholars seeking to address this conceptual gap are Walter D. Mignolo and Homi K. Bhabha, who each in slightly different terminology refer to the unevenness and inequality that especially the spatial and the structural notions of the concept of cosmopolitanism entail. Bhabha’s term “global cosmopolitanism” (xiv) denotes “a cosmopolitanism of relative prosperity and privilege founded on ideas of progress that are complicit with neo-liberal forms of governance, and free-market forces of competition” (xiv)<sup>65</sup> and can be regarded as similar to Mignolo’s term “*global designs*” (Mignolo 722), which refers to a “managerial” form of global citizenship that is “driven by the will to control and homogenize” (722-23). Part of the drive to homogenise is, according to Snell, a reduction of the concept of cosmopolitanism to

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<sup>65</sup> He continues by explaining that “[s]tates that participate in such multicultural multinationalism affirm their commitment to ‘diversity’, at home and abroad, so long as the demography of diversity consists largely of educated economic migrants [...] rather than refugees, political exiles, or the poor” (xiv).

superficial “core values” like “an interest in and a willingness to travel, an openness to cultures other than one’s own, and a desire to cultivate the sense of worldliness that presumably accompanies affective connections beyond the local” (252-53). On the other side of the conceptual spectrum are “critical cosmopolitanism” (Mignolo 723) or “vernacular cosmopolitanism” (Bhabha xvi), both of which can be regarded as forms of ‘cosmopolitanism from below’<sup>66</sup> and, according to these two scholars, can only arise from the position and perspective of those marginalised in and by modern societies. For Bhabha, this is “the world of migrant boarding-houses and the habitations of national and diasporic minorities” (xvi) while Mignolo formulates it more generally as “the perspective of coloniality” (723). Both scholars argue that a ‘cosmopolitanism from below’ includes, in Bhabha’s words, “[a] right to difference-in-equality” (xvii), a point that is also important to Appiah (cf. “Citizens of the World” 215)<sup>67</sup>. Mignolo contends that this entails “the need to discover other options beyond both benevolent recognition [...] and humanitarian pleas for inclusion” (724), which are the options presented to the marginalised in a cosmopolitanism that is not ‘critical’ or ‘vernacular’ and, one may add, which keeps the marginalised individual or group in a rather passive position. He therefore argues against a ‘simple’ inclusion of “‘those to be included’” as “[i]nclusion is always a reformative project” (724, 736), a point that the genre of the *Bildungsroman* in its traditional appearance aptly demonstrates, as the previous two sub-chapters have shown. Instead, in order to achieve transformation rather than an inclusion that potentially silences the right to ‘difference-in-equality’, he and also Bhabha favour the (active) practice of “border thinking” (Mignolo 736) which, in Mignolo’s words constitutes “the recognition and transformation of the hegemonic imaginary from the perspectives of people in subaltern positions” (736-37) and in Bhabha’s words entails “identifying ourselves with the ‘starting-points’ of other national and international histories and geographies” leading to a process of “historical and cultural re-visioning” (xx). Such re-visioning has to be regarded as a practice of questioning, challenging and seeking to change existing structures and systems and therefore can be understood as roughly equivalent to the function of justice-oriented citizenship (on the national level). In order to achieve transformation both nationally and transnationally, also but not exclusively for issues that cannot be solved on a national

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<sup>66</sup> Also cf. Bullen and Mallan, who discuss the “disjunction between globalization from above and globalization from below” and frame globalisation from above as producing “disparate material conditions and responses” (Bullen and Mallan 59).

<sup>67</sup> Similarly also Forte by recourse to Beck: “Cosmopolitanism is not about a ‘universal culture’ of sameness, as Beck argues, but is instead about ‘recognition of the otherness of the other, beyond the false understanding associated with territoriality and homogenization’ (2004, p. 143)” (Forte 7).

level alone, such as the climate crisis or social and economic justice, the performative practice by “silenced and marginalised voices” of “bringing themselves into the conversation” (Mignolo 736) is indispensable, as the engaging in conversation on a transnational level is in general (also cf. Appiah, “Citizens of the World” 214).

The ‘transformation of the hegemonic imaginary’ and/as ‘historical and cultural re-visioning’ on a transnational scale demands an engagement with “those knowledges subjugated by colonialism in relation to globalism itself” (Gunew 143), which includes memory discourses as part of such knowledges. Thus D. Levy explains that, like the concept of cosmopolitanism itself, “[c]osmopolitan memories refer to a process that shifts attention away from the territorialized nation state framework that is commonly associated with the notion of collective memory” (25). Nevertheless, in this process “[l]ocalized and even national memories do not so much disappear within the context of the transnational movement of peoples, images, and ideas as become rendered differently and in a different context” (Phillips and Reyes 15)<sup>68</sup>. As part of a “global memoryscape”, which Phillips and Reyes understand as “a complex and vibrant plane upon which memories emerge, are contested, transform, encounter other memories, mutate, and multiply” (14), local or national (or, I might add, personal) memories are re-contextualised by “moving across national boundaries transported by individuals and technologies and the movement of these memories along a global landscape” (19). In the case of the speculative novels analysed in this chapter, the representation of such “global memoryscapes” does not only stretch across physical (fictional) space as well as across time as possible futures are envisioned by re-contextualising ‘other national and international histories and geographies’, but also emerges as a textual strategy that intersects with the post-/disaster genre, different forms of mobility and the respective protagonists’ structural positioning. The analysis will show that while the novels mostly successfully manage the ‘re-contextualising’ demanded by Bhabha, the re-visioning is often more problematic due to textual strategies such as genre conventions or point of view.

Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy and Lloyd’s *Carbon Diaries* novels both ‘remember’ the international histories of migration, but they do so in very different ways. While Lloyd’s duology endorses an image of cosmopolitan citizenship that corresponds to Bhabha’s conceptualisation of “a cosmopolitanism of relative prosperity and privilege” (xiv; cf. above), Bertagna’s trilogy succeeds at least to a certain extent in representing the “perspectives of people in subaltern positions” that Mignolo demands (736-37; cf. above) and thereby to re-

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<sup>68</sup> Levy also points out that “[t]he formation of cosmopolitan memories does not eliminate the national perspective, but renders nationhood into one of several options of collective identification” (D. Levy 26).



contextualise “the hegemonic imaginary” (736; cf. above) of migratory processes. As the following will show, this contrast is due to major differences in the representation of spatial and structural notions of cosmopolitanism, i.e. in the modalities of movement across national boundaries and the structural positions of the respective protagonists. While Mara’s citizenly subject position in *Exodus* as an ‘abject cosmopolitan’ has already been hinted at in chapter 3.2, Laura in *The Carbon Diaries 2015* and *2017* starts out from a position of white, middle-class, metropolitan privilege. This position is not least possible because, in contrast to Mara’s world, the climate catastrophe has not yet completely happened. Instead, the *Carbon Diaries* novels represent the situation of “[s]tanding at the fragile moment before the devastation begins” (*Exodus* i) that Bertagna describes in the prologue to *Exodus*. The story sets in with a new system of carbon rationing being introduced in Britain, which thereby sets a world-wide precedent. In what follows, Laura, her family and friends have to come to terms with a lifestyle that is changing significantly, extreme weather conditions like drought and flooding<sup>69</sup> and a local and state government that is both overwhelmed by the circumstances and often unsympathetic to the plight of the general population, resulting in mismanagement of a range of crises and Draconian measures to keep the situation under control (e.g. *Carbon Diaries 2017* 368ff.). Although this representation can be interpreted as drawing attention to the similar plight of people in those regions of the world who already now, in the implied readers’ present, are heavily affected by the world’s rapidly changing climate, it does not constitute an incident of ‘border thinking’ as Laura is still positioned as privileged, which is not least continuously underlined by her insistence of being “sick of politics” (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 67; also cf. 14, 24, 35, 48, 67), a luxury that Mara as a refugee cannot afford.

Mara’s experience of being displaced from a home that is irretrievable and her hopeful journey first to the sky city of New Mungo, then northwards to Greenland in order to find a place to build a new home and a new life mirrors the countless migratory journeys that people have undertaken for centuries in order to survive, politically, economically or, as in Mara’s case, ecologically. It is this hope that sustains Mara despite the fact that she often feels close to despair “between a lost past and a non-integrated present”, a feeling that Chambers describes as “[t]he migrant’s sense of being rootless” (27). By transferring an experience that

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<sup>69</sup> In view of the floods in Britain e.g. in 2015/16 or 2019 and in Germany in 2021 as well as the severe drought throughout northern and western Europe in the summer of 2018 Lloyd’s novels, published in 2008 and 2009, were uncannily prescient. The same can be said with regards to the refugee situation and discourses around it which has intensified since 2015 and which Lloyd already discusses in *Carbon Diaries 2017* (published 2009).

in polemic discourses is often ascribed especially to men<sup>70</sup> from the global south to a girl from north-western Europe, the narrative of the *Exodus* trilogy counters the positioning of ‘the migrant’ as having “no face, no status, no protection and no story” (Kureishi, “The Migrant”). As the implied (Western, privileged) readers are asked to, in Bhabha’s words, “identify[] [them]selves with the ‘starting-points’ of other national and international histories and geographies,” the trilogy “turns the abjection of modern history into the productive and creative history of the minority as social agent” (Bhabha xx) through an act of re-contextualising the experience of migration. As the trilogy progresses, Mara’s citizenly subject position is thus constantly evolving. While in *Exodus*, in the struggle between the nation’s centre and periphery and through her unauthorized crossing over into the sky city she turns from refugee to abject cosmopolitan according to Hepworth’s definition, her migratory journey continues at the end of *Exodus* and into the first part of *Zenith*, which emphasises Hall’s claim that the experience of displacement and dispersal is “the representative modern experience” (“Minimal Selves” 134) and firmly brings migrant citizenly subject positions ‘into the conversation’.

This experience is also reflected on in *Carbon Diaries 2017*, albeit from a very different angle and with a very different effect. While Mara occupies the citizenly subject position of migrant and refugee herself, Laura ‘only’ encounters others who do. This experience occurs while she and her friends, who together form the music band the *dirty angels*, get the opportunity of a “European tour” (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 63), which initially takes them to France. Although they have some difficulty organising reliable transport, they meet no major problem in entering France (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 187). The extension of their journey to Italy is unplanned but occurs when they have to flee from France for political reasons (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 209, 211). The novel thus self-consciously and, to a degree, also ironically, retraces the traditional Grand Tour of the long eighteenth century. Like the traditional model, this journey also serves as an educational rite of passage, especially for Laura. Although this trope is appropriated, first ironically, then more seriously, to underline the intersection of climate crisis and political unrest on a more international scale, for example when Laura recounts that she and her band “are tramps, basically” (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 211) and only ““pretend to be *turisti*”” when they are waiting for a boat smuggling them from

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<sup>70</sup> This discursive strategy of many Western media of representing migration as a predominantly male experience is acknowledged, for instance, by Hanif Kureishi when he states that he “will call the immigrant he, while being aware that he is stripped of colour, gender and character” (“Hanif Kureishi: The Migrant has no Face, Status or Story.” *The Guardian*, 30 May 2014.).

Sicily to Genova (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 256), the fact that they are able to visit the continent at all, and at least initially for cultural purposes (i.e. spreading their band's music), speaks of the choice of free movement that only privileged world-citizens have. Thus, despite the cognitive estrangement from what travelling in Europe usually looks like for the implied reader, including sleeping rough in deserted warehouses (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 218) or riding a train hidden in the toilets for want of a ticket (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 219-20), the novel, both as a *Bildungsroman* and, through the narration via the protagonist's diary entries, as a form of travelogue, evokes a very traditional and moreover very privileged idea of *Bildung* and/as transnational mobility. Consequently, especially the socio-political and environmental landscape they encounter in Italy constitutes an example of the way in which "the Third World, or impoverished spaces within the First World, can become simultaneously a site of adventure and learning: a virtual classroom in which one can, via a circuitous route that leads one to the Other and back again, find *oneself*" (Snell 256). Laura's diary entries can be regarded as those of a "cosmopolitan travel writer[] [...] [who] want[s] to learn about difference, protect the environment and respect the cultural heritage of the local communities they visit" (Lisle 82). Thus, like the "contemporary travel writer", Laura as a fictional character "becomes a site of struggle between a masculine, imperial subjectivity [of the traditional, colonial travelogue] [...] and a liberal, cosmopolitan subjectivity that actively resists the colonising and patronising aspects of cultural encounter" (Lisle 69).

This struggle, which is both Laura's and that of Lloyd's novel in general, becomes most apparent in the encounters she has with migrants from Liberia and other West African countries in Italy. She and her friends first run "into a group of young African guys" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 220) on their way south to Sicily. While initially the roles of 'poor Africans in need' and 'generous Europeans' are reversed in a very Last Supper-esque image of one "boy" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 220) sharing his bread with Laura and another one sharing his wine (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 221), it soon becomes clear that their situation is utterly precarious. When one of the group, Abraham, recounts the harrowing story of journeying through the desert and across the Mediterranean, only to arrive in a country that allows them to be "free, as long as [they] don't try to work" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 223), it seems slightly inadequate and also patronising that Laura describes them as "the best people we've met since being away" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 221). Abraham's remark that for him and the others "there is no home any more" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 223) remains uncommented on in Laura's diary/travel notes. Instead, she talks about a dog and receiving a text message, demonstrating a complete lack of awareness and empathy for citizenly subject positions unlike her own.

She is only able to recognise her own privilege when she herself is threatened with uncertainty as to when and if at all she will be allowed to return home to London. In a typical abject space of invisibility, the space of a refugee camp in Italy, she meets ‘the Other’ (as per Snell’s argument above) again, this time in the person of a “girl about [her] age” who has “arrived from Ghana” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 290) and tells Laura the story of her crossing the Mediterranean to Italy, losing her brother and sister to the sea on the way (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 290-91). Although Laura is an inmate of the same camp and has suffered the same humiliations as everyone there (cf. *Carbon Diaries* 2017 289), confronted with this girl’s story she acknowledges that she “never felt so divided from someone in one moment”, and “[t]he difference between [them] [...] nearly [makes her] choke with shame” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 291). She realises that she is “just another spoilt, stupid, white girl” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 298) and that her usual choice of not getting involved in any political activism is an expression of the privilege she has so far taken for granted. Nevertheless, the representation of Laura’s cosmopolitan citizenly subject position is at best ambiguous. Although the anonymous refugee girl, whose name Laura does not ask, gets to tell her harrowing story, she in the end remains a facilitator for the (white, European) protagonist becoming more politically aware and active. Once her story is told and the protagonist has been able to experience a moment of personal epiphany resulting from this, the refugee girl shrinks into the background again and her fate is not further known.

Resulting from this it has to be observed that despite the novel’s attempt to highlight the situation of non-European migrants to Europe by both representing encounters between the protagonist and migrants from Ghana and Liberia and having the protagonist endure some experiences similar to that of the transnationally disenfranchised group, the global memory-scape of migration in this case is certainly not interrogated from a critical or vernacular perspective. Lisle’s argument that “embedded in the cosmopolitan vision of many travel writers is a reconstructed framework of colonialism and patriarchy” (70) and that “travel writing [still] requires the production of difference” (71) is also true for the production of Laura’s citizenly subject position. In contrast to the people she has met during her travels in Italy, she, like a traditional male *Bildungsroman* hero, returns home, and like “the travel writer [she] returns home safely intact – even stronger as a result of being tested by the hardships of travel” (Lisle 91-92). Those ‘hardships’ have turned her from a “socially uninformed and inactive citizen[] of the West to [a] socially ‘aware’ and engaged citizen[] of the world” (Mousseau 257). Back home, Laura is thus finally able to make a decision to become politically active locally while still thinking globally. On the one hand, this has to be

regarded as a way to circumvent the awkwardness of the ‘white saviour’ narrative, which is briefly referred to when Laura accuses her on-off boyfriend Adi of not caring about the problems and eco-political unrest in Britain because he prefers to help “‘some dying people somewhere hot’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 329). On the other hand, however, the fact that her international journey and experience of an entitled form of cosmopolitanism in the end does not primarily serve to include excluded perspectives but to facilitate awareness for and resistance to circumstances at home predominantly emphasises the enfranchisement of the European protagonist. When her friends ironically address her as “‘Boadicea’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 377), a symbol of (national) British resilience, during a street fight, it ultimately transpires that the idea of the (nation) state as a bounded entity in itself is never really transcended. The novel thus undecidedly sways between “[t]aking account of ‘social position’ in a hierarchical and unequal global context [that] prompts us to think again about the complexity of citizenship and the precise balance of entitlements and obligations in each social location” (Smith and Pangsapa 32–33) and the re-endorsement of a traditional white, European, middle-class and globally entitled citizenly subject position that, through the novel’s heavily drawing on very traditional notions of the *Bildungsroman* genre and *Bildung* and travel as such, cannot escape the colonial and patriarchal legacy implied in these notions.

By way of contrast, a very different effect is achieved in the *Exodus* trilogy by not positioning the spatial movement of Mara and her friends within the privileged context of travel but instead re-contextualising it in the often marginalised context of migration. From the outset when Mara and her fellow islanders leave their home island of Wing in order to find land that is not drowning, she is aware that “[m]igration is a one way trip” (Hall, “Minimal Selves” 135). Unlike Laura, who still has her home in London to return to even if the city is getting increasingly embattled, Mara can never return to Wing. She has to trust that “beyond dislocation lies the redemptive promise of relocation” (McCulloch, “A New Home” 77), and she seeks this relocation for herself and the others travelling with her – the Treenesters, boat refugees, sky city slaves and some of the sea urchins of the netherworld – in Greenland as she is convinced the melted ice has created a landscape that is not hostile to human life. Despite the trilogy’s focus on migrant citizenly subject positions, however, the representation of such more structurally disadvantaged forms of citizenship is not one-dimensional or uncritical.

Already during the journey to Greenland Mara’s citizenly subject position becomes conflicted as her ship unwittingly destroys a floating settlement of pirates, “the gypsea city of Pomperoy” (*Zenith* 7; also cf. 60ff.), thus turning Mara from a victim of loss of home and

displacement into a perpetrator, even if accidentally. As a consequence, while Mara's citizenly subject position might be abject and justice-oriented in the context of the sky city and remains justice-oriented in the sense that she continues to seek spatial and political justice for herself and her friends and fellow migrants, this more conflicted representation of the protagonist and the others who travel with her highlights issues around justice-oriented citizenship that so far have not been addressed, namely the question of 'justice for whom?'. In the local or national contexts that especially those novels with a stronger focus on the dystopian than on the post-disaster genre tradition represent (e.g. *Hunger Games*, *Matched*, *Uglies*), no world outside the represented society is envisioned and therefore it is assumed that the citizen action that has been performed in order to create a politically more just society will serve *all* within the society's scope. Bertagna's trilogy, in contrast, emphasises the important point that in a transnational, global context the enfranchisement of one group – politically, spatially – might threaten to lead to the disenfranchisement and/or dislocation of another group, leading to further conflict.

This theme continues when the ship arrives at the coast of Greenland. The migrants are regarded as potential invaders by the local inhabitants and their ship is wrecked, so that Mara and her friends ultimately arrive on the island as captives to be sold as slaves (*Zenith* 123ff.) and Mara has to realise that Greenland is "not the homeland she hoped for" (*Zenith* 160). Although this situation only lasts briefly and Mara and most of her friends manage to escape during the ensuing actual invasion of the irate pirates (*Zenith* 144, 152), it demonstrates succinctly that Greenland in this novel is not simply a "vast icy wilderness", a "blank canvas" or a "stark silent landscape [that] also provides an ideal trope for unchartered 'new forms' of citizenship to emerge", as McCulloch argues ("A New Home" 81). It is the protagonist, not the author (as in McCulloch's argument) who constructs the Arctic as a terra nullius after having read in an old book that it is "*one of the emptiest, most forgotten places on Earth*" (*Exodus* 154). Thus, up to the actual point of arrival, her and her friends' plans never include the possibility of meeting other people (cf. *Zenith* 54, 112). Mara's transnational citizenly subject position is thus increasingly rendered ambivalent and liminal as "[p]aradoxically, [her] fantasies for the future of her community involve embracing a mode of thinking strangely reminiscent of the imperialist assumptions that led colonizers to appropriate the ancestral territory of indigenous peoples for their own use" (Grzegorzczuk 81), while falling victim to their practice of slavery upon arrival. The protagonist is thus constructed as occupying subject positions on multiple sides of the discourse cum memory-scape of imperialism, from invader-coloniser to semi-voluntary migrant to slave. All of these highlight

the multiple “conditions of existence, real histories in the contemporary world” that “narratives of displacement have [...] which are not only exclusively psychical, not simply ‘journeys of the mind’” (Hall, “Minimal Selves” 136).

One of these ‘conditions’ and ‘real histories’ that are ‘remembered’ and re-contextualised is the emergence of what Pratt calls ‘contact zones’, which she defines as “the space of colonial encounters [...] in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict” (6)<sup>71</sup>. Greenland in the *Exodus* trilogy can be regarded as such a space in which the ‘intractable conflict’ between Mara and her friends on the one and the indigenous population on the other hand leads to the former searching for a way through the mountains to establish a new settlement away from the coast and its inhabitants. Furthermore, ‘radical inequality’ increases when Tuck, a young pirate who has discovered that “there’s something Lander in him too” (*Zenith* 144), establishes himself as the new leader of Ilira, the coastal settlement that Mara and her friends are so keen to leave behind (*Aurora* 102). It is thus not Mara herself but one of those whose gypsea-city home she has destroyed who styles himself as the imperial patriarch, or “Pontifex” (*Aurora* 94) of Ilira. Like the patriarch of the sky city Mara and her friends have left behind, he creates a system that is beneficial to some but is built on injustice, inequality and a certain degree of misogyny. Despite being a newcomer to Greenland and the only one of his pirate community who has “Landed”, he fashions himself as the new hegemonic ruler. However, unlike the sky city rulers, he does not close Ilira off from the rest of the world but instead conducts trade with other “budding ports” “across the Northlands” and thereby turns Ilira into a “magnificent new mountain metropolis” (*Aurora* 96).

On the other side of the spectrum, Mara and her friends manage to build a settlement in the country’s inland. In spite of Gorbali the Treenester-poet’s initial optimistic declaration that all of those travelling on the ships escaping the sky city are not separated in groups of Treenesters, refugees or sea urchins anymore but “are all people now. People of the free world on the way to our home” (*Zenith* 97), the majority of the urchins, the feral children, are later banned from the new settlement of Candlewood on the grounds of being too wild and “not human” (*Aurora* 24). Where McCulloch argues that “Bertagna’s characters go beyond national frontiers to embrace a supranational or cosmopolitan citizenship” and the trilogy “imagines the nation as a cosmopolitan community insofar as Mara’s people must tolerate

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<sup>71</sup> See for example Mark Hall and Mary Rosner’s article “Pratt and Prattfalls” for a critique of this term.

cultural diversity in order to build a home” (*Children’s Literature* 132), the example of the sea urchins shows that apparently some identities are too different and are therefore excluded from the construction of a new common ‘we’ (cf. Brah 193). Although the new normative landscape of the Candlewood community is built by those who have experienced displacement, exclusion and inequality themselves, they perpetuate this attitude in regard to the feral children.<sup>72</sup>

A further aspect of the global memoryscape of transnational mobility and citizenship positions that is addressed in the *Exodus* and also the *Dustlands* trilogy is the representation of indigenous populations and the migrants’/settlers’ interaction with them. While the *Exodus* trilogy employs opposing strategies on the level of story and the level of language or terminology, the *Dustlands* trilogy aims for the implied readers to identify with ‘othered’ “national and international histories” (cf. Bhabha xx; qtd. above), and, by articulating the perspective of a national minority within former invader/settler colonies, seeks to encourage the implied readers to “question[] the very sovereignty of national traditions and territories” (Bhabha xv). Nevertheless, as will be shown in the following analysis, both trilogies do not entirely succeed in “revis[ing] the customary components of citizenship” (Bhabha xvii) for different reasons.

In the *Exodus* trilogy, it is noticeable that as the trilogy progresses, more and more perspectives are included via a narration that focalises an increasing number of characters. From Mara and Fox as the sole focalisers in *Exodus*, in *Zenith* focalisation additionally includes Tuck, the young pirate. In *Aurora*, finally, focalisation occurs through a variety of characters now also including a grown-up sea urchin (Pandora) in the sky city’s netherworld as well as Lily, Mara’s daughter, and Clayslips, a Treenester boy who is a slave to an inhabitant of Ilira in Greenland. The only perspective that is not represented is that of the indigenous population of Greenland themselves. They do not receive a voice and thus cannot ‘bring themselves into the conversation’ as per Mignolo’s argument. Instead, they are represented in a number of clichéd ways. The first intimation about Greenland’s population is found by Mara in a book in the old and half-drowned library of Glasgow University. There she reads that “[t]he Athapaskans [...] have not devastated the natural world around them as so-called civilized societies have, but have co-existed in fine balance with the land and its animals” (*Exodus* 154). The book seems to both idealise and homogenise the Athapaskan

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<sup>72</sup> Chapter 5.4 of this study will analyse the exclusion of these children in detail and link it to themes of posthumanism and the children’s perceived transgression of the (space of the) human species.



people, and Mara, who understandably is more concerned about finding dry land, does not question this description.

As has been indicated above, the situation Mara and her friends find on Greenland is very different to the expectations developed from this book, not with regards to having found land, but with regards to the people they encounter there. While it might be to a certain extent refreshing to encounter an indigenous population defending themselves and their territory against the unclear intentions of newcomers, the fact that the newcomers are refugees and the implied reader is clearly asked to identify and sympathise with Mara's refugee, migratory citizenly subject position clearly aligns the Greenlanders with the unsympathetic practices of current wealthy nations' governments. Furthermore, despite this unflattering alignment of subject position the Greenlanders nevertheless remain within the stereotype of 'savage' as they are turned from the homogenising image of 'noble savage' in the book Mara has read into the equally homogenising image of 'just savage': "this race of people" (*Zenith* 152) is represented as wreckers and slavers who are repeatedly described as "brutal", "dangerous" and prone to violence, beating, whipping and branding their captives (*Zenith* 125, 129, 138, 185, 196). The image is completed by Mara describing a man wearing a "tunic [...] covered in teeth and claws" (*Zenith* 137), and even her concession that "[t]hey've found a way to survive" (*Zenith* 160) does not encourage the implied reader to identify with the othered history of indigenous populations. As much as the trilogy succeeds in re-contextualising the historical and present experience of migration, at least on the story level this comes at the cost of reproducing hegemonic images of indigeneity instead of transforming them. Whereas the newcomers are shown to – at least initially – embrace the diversity of their group and focus on 'being human' (cf. above) instead of being divided into different national or cultural groups, thus accepting a transnational form of citizenship, the Greenlanders, in a similar way to the sky city inhabitants, are shown as insular and intent on including others into their society only as slaves.

The only, and very subtle, alleviation of this stereotypical representation occurs at the level of language. First of all, in *Zenith*, the section titles are Greenlandic words that are translated as "north" (*Zenith* 1), "darkness" (*Zenith* 145) and "maybe" (*Zenith* 329). The last one, "imaqa", apparently is one of the most frequently used words in Greenland (cf. Grossharth, n.p.) and implies both hesitation and possibility, thus echoing both the feeling of being suspended "between a lost past and a non-integrated present" described by Chambers (27) and hope attached to a new beginning in terms of finding a new home as well as in political terms. A further indication that the Greenlandic language is given some relevance is

Mara's explanation that after the boat with the refugees has left the sky city it is going to "*Kalaallit Nunaat*, the land of the people" (*Zenith* 57). Only when asked does she add: "Its *other* name is Greenland" (*Zenith* 57; emphasis added). In this formulation it is thus not the English name that is evoked as the standard but the Greenlandic term, relegating the English term, and by extension the English language, to the position of 'other'. The monolingualist "homo-hegemony" of "[w]orld English" (Gunew 144; with recourse to Derrida<sup>73</sup>) is thus challenged, indicating that linguistic transformation is part of transnational citizenly subject positions as familiar terms are exchanged with different ones that refer to different knowledges, experiences and perceptions of the world. It is therefore almost ironic that in the first contact situation between Mara and her group on the one and the Greenlanders who have captured them on the other hand, a version of 'world English' is re-instated in a pidgin variety, for instance when Mara is told "[n]o tok!" by her captor (*Zenith* 125) or when "[t]he tooth-and-claw man" (*Zenith* 137) examines whom he wants to buy as slaves and mutters "[y]oung, huh ... mibbe, mibbe. [...] Un, doo, tree. Tree for un" (*Zenith* 137). Nevertheless, this pidgin English is also peppered with a number of words that Mara, and with her the implied reader, does not understand (*Zenith* 131), emphasising that while in theory a subversion of a language's hegemony might be laudable, in practice finding oneself in a situation in which it is hardly possible to make oneself understood can be terrifying despite one's willingness to become part of a new, diverse, transnational society. The implied reader's sympathy is again directed towards the migrants' experience while the representation of the Greenlanders remains at best ambiguous.

In contrast to *Exodus*, Young's *Dustlands* trilogy can be argued to make use of "indigenous cosmopolitanism [that] offers both a critique of and a way to situate oneself outside familiar conceptual ideologies as well as glimpsing alternative imagined worlds" (Gunew 143) by focusing on how "particular [national] orientations toward the past need to be re-evaluated against the backdrop of global memory-scapes" (D. Levy 26). Although indigeneity or indigenous experiences are not referred to explicitly, this is achieved by the discursive alignment of the strategies the tyrant DeMalo uses to solidify his power and to expand the territory of New Eden *westward* with the history of white settlement in North America and other invader/settler-colonial contexts. The practices of land-grabbing (*Rebel Heart* 7, 16), re-settling it with young and healthy couples (*Rebel Heart* 5-8, 49, 106), displacing or even killing old and sickly people (*Rebel Heart* 49, 51) as well as separating

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<sup>73</sup> Gunew quotes the following work by Jacques Derrida: *Monolingualism of the Other or The Prosthesis of Origins*, translated by Patrick Mensah. Stanford UP, 1998. Here pp. 39-40.

healthy children from their parents to raise them in re-education centres (*Rebel Heart* 110, also *Raging Star* 112) are strongly reminiscent of atrocities committed against indigenous populations during the process of invasion and white settlement.

In a strategy similar to that of re-contextualising the migrant experience in the *Exodus* trilogy, the violent displacement and threat of extinction faced by indigenous populations in former invader/settler colonies globally is transferred onto those who are marginalised in DeMalo's New Eden. Since these events are predominantly narrated from the points of view of Saba and her love-interest Jack, characters that the implied readers sympathise with, and since these characters vilify DeMalo's practices as immoral and unethical, the implied (privileged, non-indigenous, Western) readers, by accepting this point of view, are asked to situate themselves outside of the 'familiar conceptual ideology' of the conquering and settling of vast 'empty' spaces and consider the 'othered' (global) histories within. Thus, they are encouraged to take on a perspective that has for a long time been kept exterior to definitions of invader/settler national identities.

In the *Dustlands* trilogy, the 'othered' experience includes that of those who are displaced and rendered homeless through DeMalo's land-grabbing. If they are lucky, they find themselves in the camp of the shaman Auriel, who tries to uphold their hope and courage as best as she can. In many ways, Auriel is constructed as the positive image to DeMalo's negative: she is female, he is male; she is called the 'Sky Speaker' by the people who seek her help (*Rebel Heart* 87) while DeMalo calls himself the 'Pathfinder'; she possesses shamanic abilities and powers (*Rebel Heart* 89-91; also 96-97) while DeMalo pretends to possess gifts bestowed by 'Mother Earth'; she leads with love while he rules with fear. While DeMalo only seeks to use Saba for his own ambition, Auriel is the one who helps Saba to overcome her traumatic and increasingly disabling memories of all the people she has lost – and killed – already. Despite the very stereotypical gender roles that are created here, the opposition between the characters of DeMalo and Auriel and the clear ethical judgement that is passed on both by the focalisers of the narrative facilitate at least to a certain degree the 'recognition and transformation of the hegemonic imaginary from the perspectives of people in subaltern positions' as requested by Mignolo through a re-contextualisation of the practices of expansion and re-settlement as dystopian and those of the shaman as inclusive and fostering hope.

Auriel's ritual for helping Saba comprises preparing a sweat in a "vision lodge [...] atop a firepit" (*Rebel Heart* 115) as well as "her shaman's drum" (*Rebel Heart* 116) and chanting and singing (*Rebel Heart* 117). Before that, she and Saba go "on walkabout" together (*Rebel*

*Heart* 107), which in the context of the novel means taking a tour through the camp of the dispossessed and “speak[ing] to each one” who comes up to them (*Rebel Heart* 107). Without explicitly labelling practices such as a sweat in a vision lodge or a walkabout, whichever function this may have, as ‘indigenous’, the novel nevertheless evokes a global memory-scape of indigeneity in which such practices are remembered, adapted and transformed. The implicit reference to rituals that are associated with North American indigenous practices on the one hand (the sweat) and Australian indigenous practices on the other hand (the walkabout) furthermore de-territorialises such practices while at the same time ‘bringing them into conversation’ with the “territorialized nation state framework that is commonly associated with the notion of collective memory” (D. Levy 25; qtd. above). Even if these practices are only fleetingly referenced their inclusion in the narrative provides a bridge to the socially and politically marginalised history of violent settlement. Their relevance is underlined as it is only by embracing such practices that Saba is able to fully perform her (evolving) citizenship as justice-oriented. Embracing ‘border thinking’ and thus paying attention to and taking into consideration a ‘perspective of exteriority’ is thus shown as crucial for the development of a – globally and nationally – fairer community.

Concluding it can be observed that the novels analysed in this last sub-chapter are ambitious to represent citizenship positions that endorse political agency for their protagonists, which is connected to their transnational journeys and/or vernacular or critical cosmopolitan perspectives or practices. While this enfranchised citizenly subject position of the traditional white, middle-class European protagonist Laura in the *Carbon Diaries* novels represents an example of privileged ‘global cosmopolitanism’, to use Bhabha’s term, Mara’s conflicted citizenly subject position in the *Exodus* trilogy opens up an in-between perspective that, although emphasising the usually exteriorised experience of migration, also occasionally crosses over into the position of perpetrator or settler-coloniser. The *Dustlands* trilogy, finally, transforms hegemonic (national) conceptions of indigeneity by rendering a (transnational, cosmopolitan) version of indigenous-like practices indispensable for the positive development of individual and collective citizenly subject positions. The fact that such forms of transnational and/or cosmopolitan citizenship and ‘perspectives of exteriority’ are sometimes included more implicitly than explicitly might be “less a political failure and more a deliberate narrative strategy to engender reflexive ethical engagement with the text” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 14). However, it has to be conceded that especially in the case of the *Dustlands* trilogy, depending on the age and the background knowledge of the reader, such rather implicit discourses that are not overtly represented on the story level might not be

easily accessible to the target audience without mediation, a point that Ames also makes when she asks “[h]ow effective [...] these texts [are] when they are consumed without the guidance of a teacher” (17). Notwithstanding this, the potential for critical reflection and debate on political issues as well as political citizenly subject positions – both national and transnational – is certainly a topic the novels strongly invest in.

#### 4. CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP AND SPACES OF MEMORY AND MEDIALITY

##### 4.1 Introduction: Cultural Citizenship, Cultural Institutions, Media and Memory

The previous chapter has shown that political citizenship in the traditional understanding of political inclusion and an enduring engagement and participation in political processes poses certain challenges for the young adult identities in the novels discussed. Excluded from full participation due to their age or/and, in the case of these novels, due to the oppressive societies they grow up in, they have to engage in non-conventional methods of political participation, such as defiance of rules, open protest or full-on rebellion. However, as has also been shown, such a form of political citizenship is hardly sustainable over a long period of time, not least due to the constraints of the traditional *Bildungsroman* genre that demands reconciliation rather than revolution, and usually becomes superfluous towards the end of the respective narratives, by which often a version, however modified, of the implied readers' society's political status quo is re-instated. This development mirrors the perception in 'real life' that traditionally conceptualised political citizenship (as well as the other two traditional notions of citizenship, social and civil/economic) does not accommodate the range of experiences and expressions in a given society due to legal restrictions pertaining to age, ethnicity, geographic origin, gender or sexual orientation and, furthermore, does not allow for all the possible vantage points from which such marginalised experiences might 'bring themselves into the conversation' (cf. Mignolo and chapter 3.4) and exercise agency.

As one of the additional categories that have been developed to broaden the range of discussion about citizenship, cultural citizenship takes into consideration that the "public sphere cannot be divided and is always and at the same time created by political as well as cultural discourses" and that "[t]hus citizens operating in the public sphere are politically as well as culturally located" (Klaus and Lünenborg 199). While the performance of cultural citizenly subject positions can, of course, be part of politically justice-oriented acts or movements, it also leaves the space to be performed in a political climate that is reconciliatory rather than revolutionary, as for example at the end of the *Hunger Games* or *Matched* trilogies. Thus, the performance of cultural citizenly subject positions as a form of making claims to rights may have more lasting effects for the development and exercise of agency and thus for the active and enfranchised participation of the adolescent protagonists in their society since it allows the individual a degree of self-expression and agency that the more conciliatory political position of participatory citizenship does not. Depending on the way and

the spaces in which the performance of cultural citizenship is used to make such claims, it can be argued to be more accessible to marginalised groups, including adolescents, and is potentially less territorially restrictive. As will be discussed in this chapter, this may apply in the context of modern (and future) media and communication technology spaces (but it may also not), but access is still a difficult and contentious topic with regards to both institutionalised cultural spaces and media technology.

A principal difficulty with the concept of cultural citizenship is that it “is not well defined and different authors refer to diverse aspects when using it” as Klaus and Lünenborg point out (200). One reason for the difficulty of clearly defining a concept like cultural citizenship probably lies in the multifacetedness of the term ‘culture’ itself. Since a thorough engagement with the discussion of the term ‘culture’ would necessitate a book-length study in its own right, out of the myriad definitions and approaches to this term that are available, this study has chosen a few that highlight aspects of ‘culture’ that are relevant to the further structure and the argumentation of this chapter. Stevenson, for example, contends that “[t]he term ‘culture’ is usually associated with a mix of public and private institutions, including museums, libraries, schools, cinemas and the media, while more specifically being connected with the dialogic production of meaning and aesthetics through a variety of practices” (*Cultural Citizenship. Cosmopolitan Questions* 4). Both aspects that this very broad description of ‘culture’ emphasises, the relevance of institutions on the one and the necessity of (embodied) practices on the other hand, are crucial for the analysis of representations of cultural citizenship in the selected novels. Erll’s approach via “anthropological and semiotic theories” is more structured than Stevenson’s when she argues that “culture can be seen as a three-dimensional framework, comprising social (people, social relations, institutions), material (artifacts and media), and mental aspects (culturally defined ways of thinking, mentalities)” (“Cultural Memory Studies” 4), although it has to be noted that these three dimensions of culture are obviously not strictly separate from each other, as for instance the collection of artefacts (material dimension) in institutions (social dimension) like museums illustrates. Assmann concentrates on what ‘culture’ *does* instead of what ‘culture’ *is* when she argues that “[t]hrough culture, humans create a temporal framework that transcends the individual life span relating past, present, and future. Cultures create a contract between the living, the dead, and the not yet living” (“Canon and Archive” 97), which echoes the notion of social contract on a political level as discussed in chapter 3.3 and re-emphasises the overlap of political and cultural aspects within conceptualisations of (nationally bounded) citizenship.

There are two major branches of studying and conceptualising the interplay between culture and citizenship as cultural citizenship, which stem from political theory on the one hand, with the emphasis here lying on questions of diversity, and from cultural sociology on the other hand, which is “more generally concerned with ‘cultural resources, identities and the cultural presuppositions of the polity’” (Klaus and Lünenborg 201, with reference to Delanty 64)<sup>1</sup>. The first branch, situated within political theory, seeks to emphasise questions of diversity and “the right to be different [...] with respect to the dominant national community, without compromising one’s right to belong” (Rosaldo 57) and thus is very similar to Stuart Hall’s explications on issues around representation, especially of the representation of socially (and politically) marginalised groups (cf. e.g. Stevenson) and ties in with past and present practices of refusing certain groups full citizenship rights due to “cultural or value dissensus” (Janoski and Gran 35; cf. chapter 1 of this study). For both this conceptualisation and the second one, situated within cultural sociology, “[e]ducation and media in all their different facets [...] move to the forefront of the realization of citizenship rights,” as Klaus and Lünenborg (202) contend. In a similar way, T. Miller frames cultural citizenship as concerning “the maintenance and development of cultural lineage via education, custom, language, and religion, and the positive acknowledgement of difference in and by the mainstream” (231).

Focusing on approaches emphasising education and the media is useful, as Klaus and Lünenborg argue, “for revealing those aspects of culture and cultural meaning production that are essential for excluding some people or groups of people from full participation in society” (202), which, of course, also significantly impacts a right to be different and positive acknowledgement of difference by mainstream society. This is also especially relevant in the context of young adult literature and the representation of adolescent (embodied) experiences as due to their socially liminal position as ‘other’ both to images of the child and to the general conceptualisation of adulthood (cf. chapter 2.1), their ‘difference’ is a state of being that cannot be discarded until adulthood is reached. As has already been discussed in detail in chapter 3, difference in ways of thinking and acting is politically not accepted in the dystopian societies within which the adolescent protagonists have to act. This chapter continues from the discussion in the previous chapter by analysing the ways in which difference is

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<sup>1</sup> The full reference to Delanty’s article is: Delanty, Gerard. “Review Essay. Two Conceptions of Cultural Citizenship: A Review of Recent Literature on Culture and Citizenship.” *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, vol.1, no. 3, 2002, pp. 60-66. Here p. 64.



represented as enforced or appropriated on the level of a personal, often very physical, embodied experience as well as on the levels of cultural institutions and creative practices.

Whether the focus is placed on questions of difference and diversity or more generally on cultural resources, and whether the social, material or mental dimensions of culture are emphasised, a crucial notion to be considered is, as Stevenson highlights, that of “cultural power” that is available to groups or individuals or withheld from them by the government or hegemonic culture in general. Those who hold cultural power hold the power to define what counts as ‘culture’ at all, for instance separating ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture (cf. Stevenson, “Cultural Citizenship” 407) or determining which cultural expressions are worthy of being remembered, and to define “whose culture counts as ‘the culture’” (Stevenson, “Cultural Citizenship” 406) and thus becomes normative. Chakrabarty has succinctly summarised the interplay between cultural institutions (of education) and cultural power of definition in the formation of a citizen in what he terms the “pedagogic model of democracy”<sup>2</sup> (457):

It was assumed that becoming a citizen, possessing and exercising rights, called for appropriate forms of education. [...] Education provided the capacity for discernment [...] [between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture] that the citizen needed. [...] it was thought that it fell to the educational institutions of modern societies to provide citizenly competence. Universities, museums, libraries, exhibitions and other comparable bodies assumed this task. (455)

Furthermore, those who hold the cultural power of definition also hold the power to represent and thus to determine how, for instance, people and cultural products are seen and interpreted, in which ways language is used to support such representations, which kind of knowledge is produced and disseminated about people, groups and cultural products and which spaces are opened or closed to specific representations. Only from such a superior position of power is it possible to install such an interpretation as truth, to naturalise cultural control and to use both to stabilise the hegemony of a specific group or government by establishing a normative cultural landscape at the cost of minorities, political dissenters and any voices that seek to contest the dominance and privilege of those in power. The fact that ‘culture’ can thus be abused as a normative tool against the claims for enfranchisement of disadvantaged groups and to justify the dominance of specific groups in society connects cultural citizenship with political citizenship as well as hegemonic vs. counter-hegemonic discourses (as discussed in chapter 3.3). Because cultural power over the production of knowledge and meaning “is one

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<sup>2</sup> As the counterpart to this model is “a performative model of democracy” (Chakrabarty 456) the parallel to Bhabha’s conceptualisation of a pedagogic and a performative aspect of national discourses (cf. chapter 3.3 of this study) is obvious.

of today's central structural divisions", Stevenson argues that "the locus of cultural citizenship will have to occupy positions both inside and outside the formal structures of administrative power" (*Cultural Citizenship. Cosmopolitan Questions* 4).

This structural division that Stevenson speaks of is strongly referenced in the dystopian genre tradition, in which culture and cultural power represent one further way for the dystopian authorities to consolidate and secure power and to curb free, individual, creative and critical expression by reducing, withholding, preventing, manipulating or downright obliterating cultural products and individual creativity. For this reason "the process of [the protagonists'] taking control over the means of language, representation, memory, and interpellation is a crucial weapon and strategy in moving dystopian resistance from an initial consciousness to an action that leads [...] to change society" (Baccolini and Moylan 6). Working along the same fault lines as the spatial divisions discussed in the previous chapter, the 'inside' of formal structures of administrative power in the novels analysed in this study is situated on the side of those ruling the centres and is marked by a narrowing and/or falsification of institutionalised cultural expression, production and memory, exemplified in the version of culture and history distributed in the virtual space of the Noos in the *Exodus* trilogy, the City propaganda in the *Longlight* trilogy and the Society propaganda as well as an extremely narrowed down cultural canon in the *Matched* trilogy. In those novels which display genre hybridisation between dystopian and post-disaster conventions to a considerable degree, such as the *Dustlands*, *Exodus* or *Longlight* trilogies, these structural divisions are aided by the destruction of the environment, which has led to the additional destruction of large parts of the respective societies' cultural heritage. Nevertheless, in so far as the destruction of cultural heritage can be regarded as a disaster in one way or another, whether it was induced wilfully by governments via enforced erasure or has occurred due to adversary environmental conditions, even the *Matched* trilogy, which is overtly much less generically hybrid between the dystopian and the post-/disaster traditions than other trilogies are, can be regarded as a post-disaster narrative in this sense, and the dystopian Society is at the same time a cultural post-disaster Society.<sup>3</sup> Positions external to formal structures established by the respective authorities that are associated with marginalised groups and spaces and

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<sup>3</sup> In this way, for instance, many North American indigenous or First Nation peoples regard their existence in terms of post-disaster survival, the disaster, of course, being the white invasion and settlement of North America and the subsequent attempt to erase indigenous peoples by not only targeting their lives but also their languages and cultures. This is a major reason for the post-disaster and other sepculative genres gaining popularity among North American indigenous writers (cf. e.g. Weaver or the roundtable discussion "Decolonizing Science Fiction and Imagining Futures"). See for example Rebecca Roanhorse's recent *Sixth World* series (book 1 and 2, *Trail of Lightning* and *Storm of Locusts*, were published in 2018 and 2019 respectively).

representing marginalised or even forgotten cultural knowledge and memory are therefore crucial to the claiming of rights via and in the field of cultural citizenship.

As can be seen from these explanations, questions of cultural power and how this is negotiated are intricately linked to aspects of memory, remembering and commemoration as well as, crucially, forgetting. If cultural memory is considered as “creat[ing] a framework for communication across the abyss of time”, as Aleida Assmann argues (“Canon and Archive” 97), this framework is represented as disrupted or even discontinued in the narratives discussed in this study. ‘Cultural memory’ as a form of meaning-making for the past, present and future thus has to be regarded as an important factor of cultural citizenship. In the novels analysed here, its recovery, negotiation and appropriation are enacted in and on spaces as various as that of the human body, (nationally specific) institutions like museums, libraries or the literary canon, and more open and potentially globally out-reaching practices like artistic production and/as story-telling. On a meta-narrative level, the intense drawing on and negotiation of generic conventions in these novels can also be regarded as a reference to cultural memory as a shared framework across time (and space) (cf. chapter 1).

In the same way that the term ‘culture’ itself bears a plethora of connotations, Erll points out that the term “[c]ultural’ (or, if you will, ‘collective,’ ‘social’) memory is certainly a multifarious notion, a term often used in an ambiguous and vague way.” She goes on to explain that “[m]edia, practices, and structures as diverse as myth, monuments, historiography, ritual, conversational remembering, configurations of cultural knowledge, and neuronal networks are nowadays subsumed under this wide umbrella term” (“Cultural Memory Studies” 1). Furthermore, she argues that “two levels on which culture and memory intersect” need to be differentiated, which are “the level of the cognitive on the one hand, and the levels of the social and the medial on the other” (“Cultural Memory Studies” 5). These levels differentiated by Erll in turn can be brought into conversation with Aleida Assmann’s conceptualisation of two kinds of memory, a working memory (*Funktionsgedächtnis*) on the one hand and a reference memory (*Speichergedächtnis*) on the other (“Canon and Archive” 99; also *Erinnerungsräume* 134ff.). On the level of cultural memory (vs. individual memory), Assmann equates working memory, which is understood as active and process-oriented, with the space of the cultural canon and associated institutions like museums, monuments or literary reading lists, and reference memory, which is regarded as a passive ‘storage facility’, with the space of the (cultural) archive and related institutions such as libraries or store houses (“Canon and Archive” 99). The issue of cultural power already addressed above becomes crucial when analysing, interrogating and contesting which cultural expressions and products

are canonised and thus actively remembered and repeatedly reproduced and performed and which ones are relegated to the passive space of archive. The way in which the dichotomy between the spaces of canon and archive thus creates another landscape of power cum normative landscape mirrors the centre-periphery dichotomy that has been discussed in detail in chapter 3.2.

However, as with the geographic-ideological version of centre and periphery, the border between canon and archive, or cultural working and reference memory, is not impermeable. In a similar way that the geo-political centre is marked by ambivalence, the cultural centre of the canon is, too. As Assmann explains, (passive) reference memory “provides a rich background for the working memory, which means that elements of the canon may be ‘estranged’ and reinterpreted by framing them with elements of the archive [...]. Elements of the canon can also recede into the archive, while elements of the archive may be recovered and reclaimed for the canon” (“Canon and Archive” 104). Crucially, (collective) memories that are relegated to the archive are not lost or entirely forgotten, but are deemed useless or obsolete for the time being by a group, society or a society’s authorities (Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume* 137). This means that they can be made useful again by constituting a resource for future working memory so that previously ignored options or alternative possibilities are brought back into a cultural consciousness and cultural knowledge can be renewed and updated (Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume* 140). The historical archive can therefore be regarded “as a space that is located on the border between forgetting and remembering” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 103) and thus as a liminal space.

As the notion of liminality implies, such recovered elements from a society’s reference or storage memory can also be used to question and challenge legitimising discourses supported by a society’s active working memory (Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume* 138-139). Consequently, it comes as no surprise that “[i]n totalitarian states”, like the dystopian societies represented in the novels analysed in this study, “there is [...] no storing memory [...] every scrap that is left over from the past has to be changed or eliminated because an authentic piece of evidence has the power to crush the official version of the past on which the rulers base their power” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 105). Baccolini therefore rightly observes that “[m]emory, then, to be of use for Utopia, needs to disassociate itself from its traditional link to the metaphor of storage and identify itself as a process” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 172), that is it needs to cross over or be transferred from reference to working memory in order to be culturally powerful and potentially transformative.

It is this negotiation between working and reference memory and the cultural practices and performances that bring aspects from the storage-space of reference memory back into active working memory that establish a strong link between mnemonic practices and cultural citizenship by making claims for cultural inclusion, expression and agency. As will be discussed in the following sub-chapters, these aspects are variously addressed in the speculative novels chosen for this study as the dystopian societies depicted seek to control that which is remembered and thus informs the respective society's cultural working memory on an individual cognitive and physical level, for example through an interference with characters' minds in the *Matched* and *Uglies* trilogies, as well as on a social and medial level, for example through the destruction of knowledge or the limitation of creative products to a certain number of items.

A further point of interest in the discussion of culture in general and cultural citizenship in particular is the notion of culture as something actively produced, as 'doing something' vs. the notion of culture as something that is passively consumed (cf. McGillivray et al. 725, 728). McGillivray et al. especially concentrate on what they call (critical) digital citizenship and related terms such as 'DIY citizenship' and 'creative citizenship' when they analyse in how far "the process of digital media making can be viewed as a productive, creative and even political act" (725). As these terms are covered by notions of 'culture' and 'cultural citizenship' referred to above this study regards them as sub-categories of cultural citizenship that, however, place a stronger emphasis on active engagement rather than passive consumption. McGillivray et al.'s term also highlights the fact that, as Jones et al. argue, "the key difference between older and newer forms of political action [is] the way in which contemporary struggles are 'postmodern' in their extensive mediation and symbolic nature" (Jones et al. 152). Of course, McGillivray et al. are not the only critics who point out the potential of digital media and communication technology for the active engagement, creative expression and enfranchisement of adolescents. Similarly, Stevenson contends that the change brought about through the information economy and new technologies "offers a number of possibilities in respect to the organization of resistance across national boundaries through new technology" ("Cultural Citizenship" 409), and Bullen and Mallan argue that "[v]arious online environments enable young people to communicate and interact across spaces that are simultaneously 'real' and 'virtual'. Online environments and digital products provide markers for youth identity in globally networked societies" (73).

"[M]aking and connecting go hand in hand" (McGillivray et al. 727) in these approaches to cultural citizenship as performed in a (digital) media environment, and they

offer a stark contrast to those voices who regard especially digital media as exclusively geared towards commercialisation, consumerism and individualism, which are regarded as posing a potential threat to an effective performance of cultural citizenly subject positions (cf. Stevenson, “Cultural Citizenship” 409-410). This tendency to either praise new media developments and technologies as providing better and easier access and participation for a greater number of people on the one or to demonise such developments as contributing to an accelerated demise of culture on the other hand is one of a number of what Siegfried J. Schmidt has called ‘recurrences of media history’ (*Rekurrenzen der Mediengeschichte*) (cf. e.g. “Mediengeschichtsschreibung” 310ff.). Since it is in the dystopian ‘genre DNA’ to provide warning against potentially negative tendencies, dystopian narratives are traditionally sceptical of technological progress, or what is proclaimed as such, and thus more strongly support the voices demonising such developments. Most novels analysed in this study subscribe to such rather negative visions of uses of especially digital media technology and instead re-validate older technologies like handwriting or radio. However, as will be discussed, the *Exodus* trilogy offers a more nuanced approach in its representation of digital and analogue technology and their uses in order to highlight both possible dangers and a creative and enabling potential for the development and performance of cultural citizenly subject positions.

In the following sub-chapters, the expression and performance of cultural citizenship as well as the challenges to imposed notions of culture and cultural memory is analysed along a number of different tangents. In a first step, chapter 4.2 examines questions of cultural power at the broader institutional level. The notion of hegemonic discourse and counter-discourse already examined in chapter 3.3 is relevant again here, albeit the territorial focus includes both national and (potentially) transnational spaces, ranging from (national) museums or libraries to (transnational) digital media spaces. On the level of the narrative, the representation of the role of public and, within the dystopian societies, more secret or forgotten spaces of cultural knowledge and remembering is analysed in regard to their function as spaces of cultural working or reference memory and challenge to dominant cultural discourses by transitioning from the one to the other. Thus, this discussion echoes the analysis of the transgression of spatial boundaries in chapter 3.2. While those memories, knowledges and artefacts recovered in such spaces usually create new opportunities for the protagonists to challenge the authorities’ legitimising discourses, thus fulfilling Baccolini’s demand that cultural memory needs to be thought of as process-oriented, it is argued that on a meta-narrative level many of these ‘recoveries’ in the protagonists’ fictional future are in

danger of representing a regressive, nostalgic look at the authors' and implied readers' present, at worst risking a re-inscription of contemporary structures of cultural power in the implied readers' world. In order to attempt to avoid the creation of a rather conservative image of cultural citizenship, the novels employ a range of strategies that are discussed towards the end of that sub-chapter.

In a second step, the discussion in chapter 4.3 moves on from the analysis of mechanisms of cultural power on the institutional level by focusing on methods implemented to maintain cultural power at the microlevel of the space of the human body. As a site that is both discursively and thus socially constructed and material in that it represents "our medium to have a world and – as our perception of the world depends on the actions we perform with our bodies – [...] also our medium to actively create a world with the help of, and as a consequence of, bodily actions and practices" (Velsing 79), the body can be regarded as "at the same time the *interface*, *material* and *object* of citizenship practices, rights and claims" (Netz et al. 640). Cultural citizenship becomes a corporeal, embodied experience as well as struggle when the authorities of dystopian societies devise strategies of biopolitical manipulation enacted on individual bodies as well as populations at large in order to maintain not only political but also cultural power. Once more, notions of transgression and the struggle between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses can be recognised here, transferred to the space of the individual body. The dynamic between canon (sanctified working memory) and archive (potentially challenging reference memory) is transferred to the space of the human body-mind unit in a conflict over the power of definition vs. the right to be different, both materially visible and ideologically. The analysis in chapter 4.3 demonstrates in which ways dystopian authorities aim to manage, curtail and control difference at the micro-level of the individual human body and which strategies the protagonists devise to combat or appropriate these practices to reclaim their agency and their 'right to be different' as vital elements of their cultural power of self-representation.

Finally, chapter 4.4 turns to the representation of culture and cultural citizenship as a creative process of 'making', connecting as well as learning and sharing creative skills, which range from literacy (*Matched*; *Dustlands* trilogy) to creative or non-fictional writing (*Matched* trilogy, *Mockingjay*), from oral story-telling (*Exodus* trilogy) to making music (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 and 2017) and painting/drawing (*Matched* and *Hunger Games* trilogies). It is argued that, on the level of the narrative, the protagonists profit not only personally from their creative acts and processes but also, by performing these, contribute to challenging and resisting the cultural and political status quo within their societies. The discussion here links

back to that in chapters 3.3 and 3.4 with regards to the ways in which hegemonic and legitimising discourses can be dismantled via self-expression and self-representation and in how far this offers opportunities for those marginalised to ‘bring themselves into the conversation’. On the meta-narrative level, however, it is striking how little attention is paid and thus relevance given to positive uses of contemporary digital media (and fictional extrapolations of these) as spaces of and methods for cultural production. In novels such as the *Dustlands* trilogy, which has a very strong post-disaster focus, this might be explained by referring to genre conventions: digital media simply have not survived the disaster. In novels such as the *Matched* trilogy or the *Hunger Games* trilogy, in which various (digital) media from television to technology collecting and analysing data feature prominently, the fact that positive and empowering creative uses of such technologies are either represented only in passing or not at all leaves the impression that the implied readers’ contemporary lived reality in a digital media environment and the potential this may carry for active engagement and the formation of positive cultural citizenly subject positions is largely ignored by the authors of these novels. As has already been indicated, the *Exodus* trilogy takes a rather rare different stance.

## **4.2 Citizenship and Cultural Power: Dystopian Forgetting, Cultural Memory and Agency between the Spaces of Canon and Archive in the *Exodus*, *Longlight* and *Matched* Trilogies**

Taking up two strands of the analysis in chapter 3, this chapter focuses on cultural institutions that are spatially situated along the segregated yet ambivalently liminal lines of centre and periphery (cf. chapter 3.2) and ideologically situated within the narratives between facilitating and/or legitimising hegemonic or counter-hegemonic discourses (cf. chapter 3.3). Thus, it will be possible to demonstrate the proximity and intersection of aspects of political and cultural citizenship while shifting the focus to less overtly political practices, i.e. practices that are not directly involved in a traditional sense of political participation both on the side of the dystopian societies’ regimes and on the side of the protagonists contesting them. At the institutional level, cultural power as the power to define and represent a society’s cultural heritage and collective memory in terms of what is included and how it is interpreted, is often associated with the spaces of analogue as well as digital libraries and museums. Their work of collecting, storing, maintaining, exhibiting and safeguarding a society’s cultural products and



heritage is both necessary to uphold culture's function of communicating across time within a given society (cf. Assmann above) and ambivalent because it necessarily involves processes of selection and cultural sanctification. Similarly to the community-defining rituals discussed in chapter 3.3, these institutions that can be associated with the cultural canon are thus involved in the construction of a shared cultural identity. Via the committing of certain cultural products to a shared cultural memory, community cohesion and identity is ascertained, which, on the other side of the coin, of course leaves out those whose cultural productions are not deemed worthy to be collectively remembered and maintained for and communicated to posterity. Just as political citizenship thus works via the inclusion and exclusion of subjects and groups in political processes and spatialities, cultural citizenship on the institutional level also works via similar processes of inclusion and exclusion.

Especially the museum has been discussed as a “specifically Western invention[] [...] performing specific social functions”, for example “creating and maintaining a general sense of order in Western society, [...] organizing the consecration and performance of material culture, and also [...] organizing the audiences who perpetuate processes of cultural sanctification and consume museum products” (Farkhatdinov and Acord 498). As this quotation implies, and as Chakrabarty also highlights, the museum and other “public institutions are situated” within “consumerist practices” (456). Furthermore, as Anderson states, “museums, and the museumizing imagination, are both profoundly political” (178) and can shape and express “the way in which the [...] state imagine[s] its dominion” (163-164). While Anderson speaks about the way in which museums structured the imagination, i.e. the meaning- and knowledge-producing processes, of colonial empires of the past, the same can be said about the function and effect of museums and related cultural institutions in the present day and in fictional dystopian futures. The institution of the museum is thus a prime example of “[t]he active dimension of cultural memory” which, according to Assmann, “is built on a small number of normative and formative texts, places, persons, artifacts, and myths which are meant to be actively circulated and communicated in ever-new presentations and performances. [...] Whatever has made it into the active cultural memory has passed rigorous processes of selection [...]. This process is called canonization” (“Canon and Archive” 100). As this quote implies, the text-based literary canon is a further example of such selection process that “presupposes decisions and power” (“Canon and Archive” 100).

The library as a further cultural institution and one that is even more relevant in the context of the novels analysed in this study is often associated with what Assmann terms the archive as a storage space of passive reference memory. In this vein, Rieger et al. argue that

libraries serve as storage spaces for a collective, cultural memory and that their predominant task is to collect written knowledge (cf. 14), a function that Assmann ascribes to the archive. Nevertheless, she situates the institution of the library across the canon-archive-divide (cf. Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 99, esp. the diagram), and also Rieger et al. ultimately attest the library a liminal function of bridging the antinomies of forgetting and remembering, time and space, as well as of canonised and non-canonised literature (cf. 15). While the library can thus be regarded as serving to collate and store collective cultural knowledge and/as memory, aligning it with the function of the archive, it is at the same time subjected to processes of selection and validation to a greater extent than the archive. Furthermore, its function as a public institution which usually facilitates the interaction between a public audience and the knowledge it stores (via the consumption of texts and other stored cultural media products) in a much more accessible way than the archive does aligns the library more closely with the museum. Both public institutions, at least ideally, “should attract all social groups in order to provide equal access to their collections and thus to contribute to broader [...] educational processes” even though in actuality “museums have contributed to processes of social differentiation by strengthening the social position of elites” (Farkhatdinov and Acord 499). This “ongoing tension in the social function of museums” (Farkhatdinov and Acord 499) is less pronounced in the context of the library, but to the extent that libraries are also partly involved in the re-iteration of the literary canon they can still to a certain extent become or be abused as normative tools of cultural power.

Since the archive is the space holding potentially subversive cultural reference memory, those who control the archive also control “what can be said in the future about the present when it will have become the past” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 102). As already outlined above, the dystopian authorities in the novels analysed here have an at best fraught relationship to the cultural archive of their respective societies, overlaying and diluting passive remembering with passive forgetting via “non-intentional acts such as losing [...], dispersing, neglecting, abandoning, or leaving something behind” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 98). Depending on the structures they establish and maintain to legitimise their dominance and to be able to stay in power, the inventory of the archive changes (cf. Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume* 344). At worst, the cultural forgetting instigated by dystopian authorities is an active form of forgetting via material destruction and censorship of cultural products (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 98). While generally, an active form of forgetting is necessary to both make room for the present and “to open up the possibility of the future” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 168), it also “clashes with the choice of what can

be forgotten, what must not be forgotten, and who makes the decision. In fact, what renders forgetting problematic is the issue of positionality”, as Baccolini contends (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 169). The forgetting mandated from the positionality of dystopian authorities precludes the formation of an informed general public and of any form of critique (cf. Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume* 344), severely limits or entirely prevents the possibility of counter-representations and establishes that which has been canonised in a given society’s extremely narrowed down working memory as the truth. Everything else is ‘out of place’ in this culturally normative landscape.

In its position of bridging the conceptual divide between canon and archive, remembering and forgetting, the library, as mentioned above, is frequently ascribed a special function in speculative narratives with a dystopian focus. In her article on representations of the library in twenty-first-century young adult dystopian fiction, Sabine Planka convincingly argues that in contemporary young adult dystopian novels, libraries usually appear in pairs of distorted mirror images: on the one hand, there is a virtual, digital library controlled by the authorities and highly selective, on the other hand there is a ‘real’, analogue library, usually hidden and/or (partly) destroyed, representing forbidden or overwritten knowledge that challenges the system built up by the authorities (cf. 12-13; 30). She goes on to explain that in fictional dystopian societies, knowledge is often stored in two ways. One possibility is an actual library with ‘analogue’ books that can be either under state control or hidden away from society. The other possibility is represented by digitally held knowledge that is usually state-controlled and highly selective (cf. 30). Both versions of the state-controlled library, either in its analogue or its digital manifestation, can be regarded as corresponding to Assmann’s conceptualisation of the canon, whereas the version of the analogue library hidden away from society corresponds to the archive and usually offers the only chance to uncover the hidden truth censored by the dystopian regime (cf. Planka 30). Literature that is retrieved from such secret, non-controlled libraries can thus become “the bearer of actual and the transmitter of historical knowledge” and also “recovers and revives knowledge in reincorporating some of its formerly rejected unofficial or arcane traditions” (Lachmann 306). Nevertheless, it is crucial to bear in mind that also “[a]rchives are fragile repositories at the best of times, particularly so when linked to subaltern knowledges”, as Gunew highlights (148), and Assmann, too, emphasises that “archives are selective as well. They are in no way all-inclusive but have their own structural mechanisms of exclusion in terms of class, race, and gender” (“Canon and Archive” 106). The adolescent protagonists of the novels analysed in this study as well as the implied adolescent readers therefore have to negotiate not only the

discrepancy between a highly selective and controlled canon and a potentially subversive archive, they also have to recognise and handle the gaps they might find in both.

In this context it is important to emphasise that Assmann differentiates between political and historical archive, with the political archive containing bureaucratic data on a society's population that can "provide important tools for political power (*Herrschaftswissen*)" ("Canon and Archive" 102) and the historical archive containing "information which is no longer of immediate use" and thus "can be reframed and interpreted in a new context" ("Canon and Archive" 103). As becomes evident from the functional possibilities connected with these two types of archive, it is especially the historical archive that is of relevance for the revision of the canon as society's working memory by revisiting the historical archive as society's reference memory. Successfully navigating and actively engaging with and negotiating the cultural reference memory to be found in the spaces of historical archives thus emerges as the key strategy for adolescent protagonists and implied adolescent readers alike to be able to form an enfranchised cultural citizenly subject position. Hicks uses the term 'salvage' to indicate a "process of reclamation" that spans "from the immaterial realm of words and ideas to the physical detritus of objects and machines" (3) and in which "the characters salvage both physical and epistemological elements of the world that has passed" (15). Although Hicks refers to the post-disaster genre and to elements that have survived the catastrophe more than to dystopian traditions, the fact that the idea of 'salvaging' links to the spaces of archive and library both on the conceptual and the material level make the notion of 'salvaging' a useful addition to the terminology used here. Hicks goes on to argue that the act of "scavenging becomes a crucial motif [...] because of its construction of the future *from* the past" (145). Scavenging is thus constructed as a form of "looking back [and] seeing with fresh eyes" (Rich 35; also cf. chapter 1 of this study), which once again becomes an important method for achieving the delegitimisation of dystopian rule, in the cultural as much as in the political field, and for the development and performance of an enfranchised cultural citizenly subject position.

While representations of engaging with the respective society's historical archive dominate the fictional texts selected for this study, especially Condie's *Matched* trilogy shows that an engagement with the political archive in the form of data collected about each citizen can also be used to undermine the system. However, the political archive is usually subverted by manipulation rather than revision and reinterpretation, as the manipulation of the data for the Matching Ceremony demonstrates (*Reached* 25ff.). Whether the protagonists engage with their respective societies' political or historical archive, a crucial question is what they

actually *do* with the knowledges and memories recovered through having gained access to these either hidden or highly policed spaces. When they share the information they have gained and/or use it to reveal the faultiness of their respective societies (cf. Planka 32), the performative character of all forms of citizenship is underlined once more. Moreover, as Erll points out, “a ‘memory’ which is represented by media and institutions must be actualized by individuals, by members of a community of remembrance [...]. Without such actualizations, monuments, rituals, and books are nothing but dead material, failing to have any impact in societies” (“Cultural Memory Studies” 5). The performance of engaged (culturally) citizenly practices thus has to be regarded as essential to actively transfer forgotten aspects back into the protagonists’ societies’ working memory. Insofar as remembering, too, “can be modeled as *performance* which operates on the basis of memory as a structure of competence” and requires that “actors actually make use of” it (Schmidt, “Memory and Remembrance” 196-197), both (cultural) citizenship and remembering (as negotiating the cultural archive) can be regarded as mutually dependent performances. Since such actualisations of knowledges and memories imply a social and emotional component, they enable the protagonists to move beyond the purely cognitive notion of accumulating and storing information and foster crucial social and emotional (citizenly) skills such as co-operation, empathy and resilience.

In Condie’s *Matched* trilogy, the authorities of the Society exert cultural power by having “limited cultural artifacts such as songs, artwork, and poems to a hundred of each” (McDuffie 148). “The rest were eliminated. Gone forever” (*Matched* 29). Such an extreme canonisation, the authorities’ argument goes, was necessary in the past as a supposedly preventive strategy to avoid societal collapse because “our culture was too cluttered” and “*overwhelmed with too much*” (*Matched* 29). In this way, this dystopian regime has abused the potential Grabes attests to the (literary) canon of “serv[ing] the most basic and indispensable function of turning the overwhelming plenitude of what has survived into a ‘usable past,’ a corpus of texts that can be surveyed and retained in collective memory” (314). The ‘usable past’ as defined from the positionality of the Society’s authorities is thus at least in cultural terms extremely limited. As Ni observes: “The canon has closed” (169). Those cultural products that have not successfully passed through this rigorous selection process are not only passively forgotten in the sense of being neglected or disregarded but are, instead, actively forgotten in that they are censored and, when non-canonical texts or other material artefacts are discovered, even destroyed. In this way, a very “clear distinction between the forbidden and canonized literature” (Ni 167) emerges and, moreover, “the creation of anything new” is banned (Ni 168), thus severely curtailing citizens’ possibilities for self-

expression. Together with the political archive of data collection about each individual citizen, this extremely limited canon forms “a totalizing classificatory grid” (Anderson 184) that ensures the continued maintenance of the authorities’ cultural and political power, the former serving to achieve the latter.

The closed canon of “the one hundred best of everything” (*Matched* 29) thus represents a state-controlled and moreover, in the case of literature at least, purely digital library as per Planka’s argument (cf. 12-13; 30; also 15-16) which is countered, in the early stages of the narrative, with the image of an old, analogue library being destroyed. In a euphemism that is reminiscent of Orwell’s ‘newspeak’, the site where “the rubble of the old library” is all that remains after “[t]he rest of the building has all been torn away” (*Matched* 125) is called a “Restoration project” (*Matched* 9). The way in which the autodiegetic narrator Cassia describes the destruction of cultural objects on the one hand clearly shows her limited point of view and her limited understanding at this stage of the implications such a cultural policy by the authorities has on her society. On the other hand, however, the details the author has her narrate and the phrasing used emphasise the fact that she, and through her the implied reader, is witnessing a catastrophic disaster. When Cassia tells of “steel boxes of books [having been found] buried down in the basement. Almost as though someone tried to hide and preserve the books against the future” (*Matched* 125), the reader is not only given to understand that this is exactly what the purpose of hiding these books had been but also that books – as bearers of knowledge and cultural memory – are worth being preserved in the first place. Consequently, the act of active forgetting via their destruction is rendered in graphic terms that allude to the crime of torturing or even killing of people or other animate beings: “The books’ backs are broken: their bones, thin and delicate, fall out. The workers shove them toward the incineration tube; they step on them. The bones crackle under their boots like leaves” (*Matched* 127). In this instance, Cassia is bearing witness to the continued elimination of the historical archive of her society, which, through the imagery used, is linked to the (global) memoryscape of genocide. Moreover, her own father is complicit in this wilful and prescribed act of cultural forgetting because, as a “Restoration specialist” (*Matched* 125), he “sifts through the relics of a society that is not as far in the past as it seems. [...] He sorts out the things the Society has marked as valuable from the things that are not” (*Matched* 9).<sup>4</sup> Instead of worrying about and regretting the loss of cultural material, he only “laments the waste of paper that could be recycled” (*Matched* 127) when instead it is incinerated.

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<sup>4</sup> Also cf. Ni: “He [Cassia’s father] collects and destroys books and other items from the pre-Society past so that Society can better govern the present” (167).

While this old, analogue library is shown as being destroyed in the early stages of the narrative and thus cannot serve as a cultural archive anymore, the idea of such an historical archive as potentially subversive and de-legitimising of the cultural hegemony of the authorities is introduced in this trilogy by two poems that Cassia's great-grandmother, who was part of the so-called Hundred committee (*Matched* 29), has secretly passed on to her family. These two poems, "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas and "Crossing the Bar" by Alfred Lord Tennyson, are hidden in Cassia's compact mirror, a family heirloom in itself, as her grandfather reveals on his death day. Cassia immediately realises that the "heavy and thick and creamy" paper with words in "type [that] is not one in use anymore" (*Matched* 82) indicates that these pages are old and must pre-date the establishment of the Society. The fact that they have been hidden and that her grandfather only dares to reveal this secret with no one else but Cassia in the room suggests that they are not included in the sanctioned canon of the Hundred Poems. This tiny cultural, historical archive has a fundamental impact on Cassia. Once she dares to read the poems herself during a hiking exercise in which she believes herself unobserved, she consumes these poems like nourishment: "[g]reedy", she "eat[s] [them] up, drink[s] [them] up" (*Matched* 97). By immediately realising that "[t]here's a reason they didn't keep this poem [Thomas's]. This poem tells you to fight" (*Matched* 98), Cassia understands that the way in which certain cultural artefacts and products can provoke thought and address people on an emotional level (cf. Planka 20-21) might not be advantageous to the ruling authorities. As has been outlined above, however, the recovery of cultural memory alone is not sufficient to realise its subversive potential. The crucial aspect is how citizens make use of this knowledge.

A group of citizens that are situated in a prime position to challenge the cultural and political status quo are the so-called Archivists, professionals who officially oversee the exhibitions in the cities' museums and who covertly trade in not only forbidden literature but all kinds of desirable items that are otherwise censored and/or difficult to obtain (*Matched* 267ff.). While Planka argues that the museums in the *Matched* trilogy serve the authorities' legitimising purposes similar to the digital library of the Hundreds (cf. Planka 16), this study argues for a different reading of the museums as liminal cultural spaces in which the sanctified canon and the potentially subversive archive meet and cross over. Thus, for instance, the presentation of "'the Glorious History of Oria Province'", which could be used as a legitimising tool for the authorities' cultural hegemony, is arranged in "'the basement'" and "[n]o one ever goes there'" because "[n]o one here wants to know about the past'", as Ky explains to Cassia (*Matched* 269). Instead, this display serves as a contact point for black

market activities in which anything “that didn’t get selected” for the one hundred best of everything, that is to say anything that is excluded from the Society’s cultural working memory, has “become a commodity” (*Matched* 267). Thus, instead of sharing and disseminating the secret cultural products, the excluded knowledges and information they obtain, the Archivists have saved and seek out such items not to preserve them for posterity but because they can use them as currency (*Matched* 268; also cf. Planka 17)<sup>5</sup>. Despite the fact that they have unique access to a host of archival material that could expose the fragility of the Society’s cultural and political system, the Archivists therefore choose to keep silent and profit from the situation. Belying the potential of their professional denomination, the Archivists, who, as Ky stresses, “aren’t altruistic” (*Matched* 268), constitute a stark contrast to Cassia and her friends, and their behaviour emphasises the threat that commodification can pose to the performance of cultural citizenly subject positions (cf. Stevenson qtd. above).

Notably, the Archivists do not forget cultural products that have not been officially sanctified, but neither do they help the public to recover, remember and (re-)interpret the knowledge and information they hold. It is in this sense that the space they create at the museums and their other hiding places can be considered “a space that is located on the border between forgetting and remembering” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 103) and thus as a liminal space. Nevertheless, as has been shown, as actors, to use Schmidt’s phrasing, they refuse to make use of these cultural memories and largely keep “the knowledge that is stored in the archive [] inert” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 103) so that it fails to have an impact on the society they live in (cf. Erll qtd. above).

In order to achieve such an impact, Assmann explains, “the academic researcher or the artist [has] to examine the contents of the archive and to reclaim the information by framing it within a new context” (“Canon and Archive” 103). In Condie’s trilogy, this task is performed by the adolescent protagonists, most notably by Cassia and Ky.<sup>6</sup> Although Cassia destroys the papers with the poems bequeathed onto her by her grandfather out of fear of discovery (*Matched* 127), she subsequently shares the words, which she has committed to memory, with Ky. Furthermore, she engages in practices of revision and reframing when she transfers the messages she interprets from these poems as well as a further one, by Emily Dickinson, which

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<sup>5</sup> Also cf. Ni, who likewise observes that “[s]ome archivists [...] start an underground business of selling forbidden poems and other objects for profit. For these archivists and their customers, poems are not just artefacts but commodities” (173).

<sup>6</sup> In how far the female protagonist, Cassia, can indeed be read as an example of an artist will be discussed in chapter 4.4. The aspect of sharing as a performative practice will also be taken up again there.



she later on finds in another (hidden) library in a mountain region called the Carving (*Crossed* 258ff.), onto the context of her own situation as well as that of her society in general. On a larger scale, this reframing occurs when individuals as well as rebel groups utilise the myth of Sisyphus (*Matched* 187) or the image of the ‘Pilot’ referred to in Tennyson’s “Crossing the Bar” in order to maintain defiance against the authorities or even to organise resistance. By actively transferring such narratives salvaged from the cultural archive to a new context, Cassia, Ky and other like-minded citizens use these texts as maps or guides for actively performing their (cultural) citizenship by sharing and performing the values, ideas and knowledges contained in these media of cultural memory.

In Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy, the sky city, similar to the Society in the *Matched* trilogy, focuses its attention predominantly on the present as well as the future. This is symbolised in the virtual Noospace, which denotes an updated and extended version of the present-day implied readers’ internet and represents the sky city and entire sky empire’s canon or cultural working memory. It connects all the sky cities globally and is described by Fox, Mara’s love interest and ally within the sky city, as “the brain of the New World” and a space in which “information and ideas [...] are traded between sky cities all across the Earth” (*Zenith* 51). The only ‘usable past’, to use Grabes’ term again, that the Noospace allows for is a sanitised version of it, “a synthetic Theme Park of the past – caring nothing for truth, only for fun” (*Exodus* 216), a representation that commodifies the past and thus picks up on the idea of Disneyfication, i.e. a commodification of desire, especially for happiness (Baccolini and Moylan, “Critical Dystopia and Possibilities” 236), and prevents critical engagement. The “real, authentic past” that would be found in the cultural reference memory of the historical archive has been “remade or banished” (*Exodus* 216) by the sky city authorities so as to be able to “remember/forget” (cf. Anderson) that the foundation of the sky cities world-wide has been and still is not only a history of survival and technological triumph but also of exclusion and injustice (*Exodus* 194-97).<sup>7</sup> Since the Noospace is the only space for cultural representation and thus is not only a space for commerce or the trading of news but has also taken over the function of a (highly selective and manipulated) museum, there is no room to contest the sky city’s practice of “leav[ing] out ‘embarrassing’ memories of an unjust past [...] and thus extend[ing] injustice into the future” (Baccolini, “Memory and Historical

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<sup>7</sup> Also see Curry, who argues that “the past in New Mungo has *purposefully* been forgotten. Deletion of the past constitutes a purposeful strategy for delimiting any lingering guilt, anguish or longing for the drowned world of the previous social order or hope for an embodied and embedded return to the earth” [original emphasis] (*Environmental Crisis* 25).

Reconciliation” 118-19). As Grzegorzczuk fittingly summarises, the sky city’s “loss of memory precludes the possibility of the social and political transformation of the New World” (80).

Positioned as a contrast to this artificiality of a Disneyfied version of the past and the sky city’s cultural power over representation is an embodied mnemonic practice that is allocated to the netherworld, one of the ‘othered’ spaces New Mungo is surrounded by and towers over like an “arrogant monolithic structure[s]” (McCulloch, *Children’s Literature* 133). The space of the netherworld is inhabited by a group of people who call themselves Treenesters (*Exodus* 111) and who have made it their mission to live outside the sky city in order to preserve the memory of the lost Glasgow, the foundation on which New Mungo is built. Even if all within the group except for “Candleriggs the Oldest” (*Exodus* 111) are too young to actively remember the city before it drowned, they all carry names that refer to streets or areas in the drowned city.<sup>8</sup> The Treenesters recite their names twice every day in order to “remember [their] lost name places,” as the Treenester Gorbals explains to Mara (*Exodus* 132). To Mara, this group of people seem like “the living limbs of the lost city” (*Exodus* 132), rendering memory a literally embodied experience as human bodies merge with geographical places. Sunstrum’s argument that landscape can be involved “in activating memory” and that “landscape can operate as a mnemonic device” (150) is thus turned the other way around as it is the memory inscribed in a person’s name that re-activates the drowned landscape of Glasgow. Thus, in the oral culture of the Treenesters “cultural memory is embodied and transmitted through performance and practices” (Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 105). While McCulloch argues that this “perpetuation of a living oral tradition maintains Glasgow’s memory and legacy for future generations” (“A New Home” 80) it has to be pointed out that, as Assmann emphasises, such a form of cultural memory “is kept within human limits and cannot expand indefinitely” (“Canon and Archive” 105), a point that becomes evident in the trilogy’s second volume, *Zenith*. Here, the inextricable link between the practice and the place in which it is performed is re-emphasised when Mara and the Treenesters arrive in Greenland, where the practice is given up as “[n]o one can be bothered to shout out their names any more” (*Zenith* 229) due to their living in a different geographic context now.

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<sup>8</sup> For example, Gorbals, the Treenesters’ poet (*Exodus* 107), explains to Mara: “My name is Gorbals. My name-place is over there.’ Eagerly, he points across the waters of the drowned city. ‘You can still see the tips of its towers [...]. One of them is a foundation tower for the sky city.’” (*Exodus* 105)

Nevertheless, in *Exodus*, the knowledge and memories of Candleriggs and the embodied practices of her entire group of Treenesters represent one of the “alternative realities” the sky city authorities seek to “exclude” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 115), similar to the forbidden poems Cassia finds in the *Matched* trilogy. As Curry convincingly argues, the old Treenester’s stories “function as counter-hegemonic narratives, foregrounding beliefs, ideas and understandings that challenge” (*Environmental Crisis* 116) the sky city’s working memory and (cultural) power over definition and representation. While this study agrees with this observation it argues further that, nevertheless, this counter-mnemonic practice on its own is unsuited to achieve positive change for both the netherworld and the sky city. As has been already demonstrated with regards to the Archivists in the *Matched* trilogy, the retrieval or salvage of hidden or secret knowledges and cultural memories is shown as unsuited to engender positive change if it is not shared with others and translated into performative acts of what might be termed cultural disobedience against the authorities’ dictum.<sup>9</sup> Despite the alternative memory and knowledge provided by the Treenesters being crucial to understanding the extent of the sky empire’s humanitarian failure, the Treenesters themselves do not act on this knowledge but exclusively look into the past and passively await their fate. As McCulloch phrases it, the Treenesters “have failed to set themselves free” (“A New Home” 83).<sup>10</sup>

A virtual space that bridges the preservation of the past in Candleriggs’s oral storytelling and the forgetful fun- and future-oriented technological creation of the Noospace is the Weave, via the characters of Mara and Fox, who are both constructed as active (against the Treenesters’ passivity) and curious (against the sky city’s rather docile population). The Weave constitutes a slightly more advanced and immersive version of the implied readers’ internet, now an abandoned virtual space that has almost died with the pre-disaster societies (*Exodus* 16, 25). As one of the “two important knowledge institutions” Mara has to navigate, “the internet (in its first incarnation as ‘the Weave’ and in its reincarnation as ‘the Noos’) and the library of Glasgow University” (Curry, “Navigating the Visual Ecology” 18), the “vast datascape” (*Exodus* 27) of the Weave appears like a cyber-gothic landscape, “a cobweb in an

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<sup>9</sup> This mirrors a point made in chapter 3.3 on the *Hunger Games* and *Uglies* trilogies, where it was shown that a counter-discourse that is simply oppositional to the hegemonic one is not conducive to change if it is not translated into justice-oriented citizen actions. Furthermore, there are also those characters who do not share their knowledge in order to gain and maintain a position of power, such as Saint in the *Longlight* trilogy, Tuck in the *Exodus* trilogy or Vicar Pinch and DeMalo in the *Dustlands* trilogy.

<sup>10</sup> McCulloch argues further that Candleriggs’s “outlook is regressively conservative and static, and blatantly at odds with Mara’s championing of mobility” (“A New Home” 83).

abandoned house, a ghostly electronic network” (*Zenith* 23). It is here that Mara and Fox meet for the very first time (*Exodus* 31),<sup>11</sup> and in *Exodus*, the Weave becomes the virtual space that connects the worlds outside and inside the sky city: Mara would not have learned about the sky city and as a result would not have set out on her journey without it, and Fox would not have realised that the hegemonic version of the sky cities’ culture and history is very selective and glosses over crucial aspects. While Curry considers the Weave as a “ghostly graveyard of recorded knowledge” (“Navigating the Visual Ecology” 19), McCulloch contends that “[t]he in-between crevices of cyberspace allow the young people to interact in radically new ways” (*Children’s Literature* 133). Both statements have to be modified slightly: although the interaction between Mara and Fox in the Weave cannot be regarded as ‘radically new’ as it basically constitutes a more immersive version of a chatroom exchange, it has to be emphasised that these two characters’ use of a digital space constitutes a rare instance of a positive and empowering use of digital media.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, against Curry’s comment this study argues that the Weave represents a form of (digital) historical archive that contains ‘inert knowledge’ until Mara and Fox make use of it by reclaiming its contents to achieve changes in the present (cf. above; also Assmann, “Canon and Archive” 103 and *Erinnerungsräume* 134). Planka’s argument that the digital library (or archive, one might add) is always controlled and only the analogue library represents forbidden or overwritten knowledge that challenges the system built up by the authorities (cf. 12-13; 30)<sup>13</sup> is thus not entirely correct, at least not in the context of the *Exodus* trilogy. The Weave, at least initially, is as little controlled and at least as crucial to Mara and Fox’s attempts to regain their agency and cultural power as are the remainders of the old library of Glasgow University, now an almost-drowned place in the netherworld.

It is also the Weave and the images of a suppressed past it holds that give Fox the idea for his act of sabotage ““to disable the city”” (*Exodus* 278), designed to provide the cover for Mara to steal several boats and escape from the sky city together with the Treenesters, slaves

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<sup>11</sup> This occurs before Mara and her people leave their island home. Mara is able to access this space because she owns a rare set of gadgets necessary to do this, and Fox has found the Weave by digging deeper into virtual space than the Noospace usually allows.

<sup>12</sup> This point will be further discussed in chapter 4.4.

<sup>13</sup> Planka’s concession, at the very end of her article, that formerly hidden and forbidden knowledge ‘salvaged’ from analogue libraries can be distributed via state-controlled technological channels that have been infiltrated by rebels (“indem es – und dies muss der Vollständigkeit halber festgehalten werden – mittels der staatlichen technischen Möglichkeiten, die von Rebellen infiltriert wurden, verbreitet werden kann”) (33) does not entirely cover the point made in the *Exodus* trilogy, namely that digital media can constitute historical archives in their own right.

and boat refugees. In a strategy that can be considered as a form of citizen action he crashes the Noospace, which is so vital for the functioning of the sky cities around the world, by connecting the Weave to it and flooding<sup>14</sup> the Noospace with images from the Weave that have been filtered out of the Noospace and thus deleted from the official cultural canon or working memory (*Exodus* 286-300). Therefore, the embodied memories of the old Treenester woman Candleriggs can only serve towards revising the cultural canon by being combined with the disembodied, virtual ‘memories’ of the Weave as Fox aims at ““infecting the present with the past and – with luck – changing the future”” (*Exodus* 284). In this very visual representation of cultural knowledge passing from reference memory (the Weave) back into the sky city’s working memory (the Noos), the necessity to perform actions with such retrieved knowledge if it is to be useful for creating subversion and change is emphasised once more.

When Mara leaves the sky city to embark on the journey to Greenland, Fox is the character who stays behind and continues the subversion and revision of the sky city’s cultural (and political) canon. He consciously chooses citizenly abjection (cf. chapter 3.2) and re-situates himself within the liminal space of the netherworld. Together with Candleriggs, he retreats to the ruin of the old university library when the rising sea level threatens to swallow the Treenesters’ little island. Although “the library [has been] shunned [by the Treenesters] for being the ideological foundation of the new sky city” (Curry, “Navigating the Visual Ecology” 22), Mara has already managed to make use of what remains of the library’s contents to devise her strategy for taking herself and others in peril to Greenland, a point which illustrates Planka’s observation that books and the knowledge they contain are often represented in dystopian narratives as existentially important for the characters’ survival (cf. 26), thus exceeding the library’s function as a storage space of knowledge as it is also often linked to discovering secrets or solutions to problems (cf. Planka 27). Fox, now, establishes the old library as the base for his continued performance of retrieving and disseminating knowledge from the hidden historical archives of his society. While Curry argues that “[k]nowledge acquisition [via the represented knowledge institutions] is here construed as a tool for elitism rather than social equality or community cohesion” (“Navigating the Visual Ecology” 22), this study contends that by merging all the institutions of cultural knowledge and memory – the Treenesters’ oral tradition, the Weave, the Noos (both via the tools Fox

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<sup>14</sup> The “ghost virus” (*Exodus* 285) Fox creates from twentieth-century images is repeatedly described as a force of nature similar to the ocean surrounding the sky city: “the twentieth century wave” (*Exodus* 280), “the virus will hit like a tidal wave” (*Exodus* 286), a “[c]yberflood” (*Exodus* 287; also 300).

brings with him) and the analogue library – in one space, the old library becomes a proper place of resistance against the sky city’s cultural and political power. As Fox strengthens the link between the knowledge of the netherworld and archive of the Weave on the one and the hegemonic, canonical narrative disseminated via the Noospace on the other hand, he actively works against the cultural forgetting arranged by the sky city authorities.

In the *Longlight* trilogy, which like the *Exodus* trilogy has a strong focus on post-disaster genre traditions along those of the dystopian genre, it could be assumed that libraries, books and other institutions of knowledge and cultural memory have been destroyed due to the environmental catastrophe, called “the Abominations” in the narrative, which has brought about this changed world. However, as the implied reader learns at the outset of the narrative, books and spaces in which they have traditionally been stored have predominantly been decimated, once again, due to an active forgetting via destruction that has been mandated by the City authorities. As the chapter epigraph for chapter three in the trilogy’s first instalment informs the reader, “the city issued the edict. Bulldoze the schools, bomb the libraries, burn every book. Dissent will not be tolerated” (*Dirt Eaters* 28).<sup>15</sup> Consequently, keeping books, at least in the scattered Farland towns and villages, is “in flagrant disobedience of the law” (*Freewalker* 357), similar to Cassia’s forbidden poems in the *Matched* trilogy. While practical books “on medicine and the healing arts” are “sometimes permitted” by the City, again, “poetry, history [or] texts in long-dead languages” (*Freewalker* 357) are censored. The knowledge institutions of school, library and book are thus directly associated with the potential for an unwanted diversity and representations of differing opinions that has to be prevented by the authorities. The result of this enforced cultural forgetting, paired with the City’s propaganda, is that in Roan’s time most “people are suspicious of learning” (*Dirt Eaters* 14) and “blame the Abominations on books” (*Dirt Eaters* 15), as Saint, Roan’s mentor/antagonist in book one of the trilogy, informs him. Roan, who has been raised on the motto that “[r]eading is like breathing. Words are like air” (*Dirt Eaters* 15) finds this difficult to comprehend, and since he is the only focaliser in the first instalment of this trilogy, the implied reader is encouraged to share this view.

Due to the City’s cultural and political policy, any collection of books, however small it may be, has to be regarded as an instance of not only trying to maintain or at least safeguard

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<sup>15</sup> The typeface of these epigraphs is irregular as letters vary between small capitals, upper and lower case. For example, the letters ‘a’, ‘e’, ‘f’ ‘m’ and ‘t’ are set in lower case (even at the beginning of words), the letter ‘l’ appears in upper case and most of the rest are set in small capitals. For the sake of ease of both quotation and reading, chapter epigraphs will be quoted in regular typeface.

the society's culture and reference memory but also as an act of active resistance against oppression and/as forgetting. All libraries included in the narrative – and there is a surprising amount considering the authorities' policy –, whether they constitute smaller collections like that of Roan and Stowe's parents in Longlight village or the one that Saint builds up by scavenging through destroyed villages (like Longlight) or whether they are bigger libraries in the traditional sense, housed in places with telling names like Oasis or the Foresight Academy, match Planka's observations about the representation of analogue libraries in dystopian narratives mentioned above in that they are hidden and have survived in secrecy<sup>16</sup> as well as provide the protagonist with either necessary information to continue his quest or at least offer a space for recuperation (Oasis) or strategizing for battle (the Foresight Academy).

Another point that is emphasised especially with Saint's collection and the library at the Foresight Academy is the ambivalent character of these institutions as being linked to both canon and (historical) archive, but here the notion of a cultural canon is treated with a certain amount of irony.<sup>17</sup> Any hierarchy between supposedly 'high' and 'low' or popular culture is diminished as Saint declares the titles of "*Frankenstein*, *Hamlet*, a Volkswagen Beetle repair manual, *Crime and Punishment*, Plato's *Republic*, a biography of Michael Jackson, *The Biology of Orcas*, the *Kama Sutra*" and *Alice in Wonderland* as equally "[r]idiculous" and "[u]seless" (*Dirt Eaters* 40-41). Much more valuable to him are non-fiction books that have an immediate practical value to his lived experience, such as a title "on soil decontamination" (*Dirt Eaters* 41) or "*The History of the Qin Dynasty in China*" (*Dirt Eaters* 42), which includes notes on warfare. In either case, the selection process for his library is not based on cultural power and sanctification of certain works but, on the level of the narrative, is purely coincidental and dependent on which books Saint has been able to salvage from destroyed villages and towns.

Similarly, the Foresight Academy comprises titles such as "*Dante's Divine Comedy*" (*Keeper's Shadow* 98) or a "copy of *Gulliver's Travels*" (*Keeper's Shadow* 121) as well as "Chaucer" (*Keeper's Shadow* 121) and Oscar Wilde (*Keepers Shadow* 119). These references to canonical works and authors provide a link between the past and present of the

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<sup>16</sup> For example, the library at the Foresight Academy "was assumed lost and all records of its location were destroyed" (*Keeper's Shadow* 48).

<sup>17</sup> The ironic treatment of real-world canonical texts can be recognised, for example, when Roan and some of his friends enter Foresight Academy and see "[a] dried-up corpse hang[ing] from [the ceiling], snagged in a net. Clutched in its mummified hands is a huge gold-embossed book, *Dante's Divine Comedy*. He wouldn't be the first person in the world to die for a book, [...]" (*Keeper's Shadow* 98) or the rapturous exclamation "[h]ave I died and gone to heaven?" (*Keeper's Shadow* 122-123) by one of Roan's friends upon entering the library.

implied reader's world and the fictional future of the narrative, thus working across time as per Assmann's argument. Furthermore, the way in which Roan's friends the Storytellers and the Gunthers (a group of dissenters living under cover in the City) appreciate these works and authors, although often rendered in a humorous tone, underlines the crucial importance of stories – on a narrative as well as discursive level. In contrast to the *Matched* trilogy, however, it is significant to note that these 'real world' canonical texts in the *Longlight* trilogy do not really fulfil a function for the plot. Instead, this role is taken over by 'books' or 'works' that are particular to the in-text world of the trilogy, such as 'The Book of Longlight' or 'The Journal of Roan of the Parting'<sup>18</sup>, the protagonist's great-grandfather. Thus, whereas Cassia's journey in *Matched* is ultimately triggered by two forbidden poems that her world shares with that of the implied readers', Roan's (and also Stowe's) journey is highly influenced by these books that only exist within the narrative of the *Longlight* trilogy.

These texts that are part of the narrative world are predominantly referred to in epigraphs preceding every single chapter within the entire trilogy. Considering that the culture both in the Farlands and in the City is, at least overtly, not a book culture anymore due to the destructions and the consequent illiteracy of the major part of the population, this prominent position given to 'quotations' from these in-world 'sources', both written and, occasionally, oral, is striking. Since these 'sources' are largely inaccessible to most characters on the story level, probably apart from the potentially oral 'sources', the subversive 'Lore of the Storytellers' and the City propaganda of the 'Lithurgy of the Conurbation' and 'Proclamation of Master Querin', most of them can be assumed to have a more dominant function for the implied reader than for the protagonists<sup>19</sup>. In this way, other sources that have supposedly neutral titles like 'The War Chronicles' or 'Orin's History of the Friend' (i.e. the cult Saint has founded with his brotherhood) serve to either provide additional information on or context for the events narrated or to comment on the events and the fictional history they are based on. While the sources distributing the City authorities' propaganda can be regarded as an exemplification of cultural working memory in this narrative, 'sources' like the latter two mentioned can be considered as part of the cultural reference memory or archive, not least for

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<sup>18</sup> These fictitious sources that are unique to the world represented in the novels are considered as different from those books referred to that actually exist in the implied reader's world. To denote the difference between the fictional sources and those works actually existing in the real world, the titles are set not in italics but in inverted commas.

<sup>19</sup> The protagonists are most affected by the discourse of the prophecy, taken from 'The Book of Longlight' and 'The Journal of Roan of the Parting', as well as, in Stowe's case, the City propaganda around her persona, Our Stowe, as has been discussed in chapter 3.3.



the simple reason that they are inaccessible to most characters in the trilogy. In contrast to the other two trilogies discussed in this chapter, in the *Longlight* trilogy it is thus the implied readers rather than the protagonists who have to engage with this fictitious historical archive and compare it not only to the cultural canon or working memory but also to the events actually narrated.

The integration of these fictitious ‘sources’ represents a rather clever strategy to avoid re-affirming the real-world cultural canon or at least serves to demonstrate the artificiality of the canon’s selectiveness. When the fictitious ‘sources’ struggle over cultural dominance by the information – or mis-information – they disseminate via the chapter epigraphs, sometimes directly contesting each other or events narrated in the main text, or when they are put in relation with each other by ‘sources’ like the ‘Lore of the Storytellers’, the permeability between the cultural memory spaces of canon and archive is made visible, at least to readers who are willing to actively engage with the text. Instances like an epigraph from ‘Orin’s History of the Friend’ that tells of Saint’s death as “the Friend [having] commanded the Prophet [i.e. Saint] to leave the world and prepare a way for the one” (*Freewalker* 83) when in fact the reader knows that Saint has been killed in battle by a friend of Roan’s (*Dirt Eaters* 308) furthermore alert the reader to the unreliability of some of the ‘sources’, opening a space for questioning the reliability of all of these fictitious ‘sources’. This, in turn, creates a point of entry for increasing the implied readers’ competence in performing cultural citizenship by engaging not only with conflicting information and with negotiating between cultural working and reference memory but also by becoming increasingly aware that even the historical archive, as exemplified in a ‘source’ like ‘Orin’s History of the Friend’, contains gaps. From such insights about the manipulative strategies of these fictitious narratives, an understanding can grow for the mechanisms of cultural power in general, that is that it largely depends on the respective standpoint and the power of definition and representation, and thus on which ‘story’ is most widely accepted as the ‘truth’. The fact that there is no one story or truth to any situation despite the authorities claiming the opposite is mirrored in the increase and diversification of epigraph sources from one instalment of the trilogy to the next<sup>20</sup>, aptly reminding the implied readers of the same plurality in their own cultural environment.

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<sup>20</sup> While in the first volume, *The Dirt Eaters*, only four epigraph ‘sources’ are ‘quoted’, in the next instalment, *Freewalker*, the amount has more than doubled to nine fictitious ‘sources’. In the last volume, *The Keeper’s Shadow*, the fragmentation into more and more voices increases even further to twelve epigraph ‘sources’, some of them only ‘quoted’ once.

To summarise the discussion so far it can be stated that in terms of debating and negotiating cultural citizenship on an institutional level, the *Matched* and *Exodus* trilogy, each in their own way, pitch a closed canon – the respective society’s working memory – against a forcibly forgotten and censored cultural archive which at the same time provides a link to the implied readers’ present and past. The *Longlight* trilogy echoes this strategy by including a host of smaller or bigger private or hidden libraries in the narrative but in fact emphasises the struggles between and inherent issues of canon and archive via the fictitious in-text ‘sources’ ‘quoted’ in the chapter epigraphs. Thus, while all three trilogies discussed in this chapter engage in intertextuality via “genres which [...] are conventionalized in their contents, structures, characters and patterns of represented behaviour”, the *Matched* and *Exodus* trilogy additionally heavily rely on intertextual relationships through “specific earlier texts (or *pre-texts*) which are obviously alluded to by direct quotation or by allusion” and “other discourses, such as painting, popular song, film [and] television” (Stephens 84–85). In the *Matched* trilogy, such pre-texts are referenced in the quotation of and prominent narrative function given to poems by Dylan Thomas, Alfred Lord Tennyson and Emily Dickinson, whereas in the *Exodus* trilogy Fox’s collection of “[a] ghost parade” of “twentieth-century icons” (*Exodus* 280) from popular culture to politics includes Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley, Adolf Hitler and Martin Luther King, the Beatles, Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* and Harry Potter (the character, not the book series, hence no italicisation) (*Exodus* 281–284) and is used by him to crash the Noospace. Literary or generally (popular) cultural ‘salvage’ via intertextuality (cf. Hicks 3) thus emerges as a further cultural mnemonic practice that creates a liminal space between past, present and future, thereby poignantly underlining the deep connection between such mnemonic practices and envisioning and shaping the future by establishing enfranchised cultural citizenly subject positions.<sup>21</sup>

Accordingly, Planka’s claim that forbidden knowledge in general and the space of the library in particular are linked to resistance (cf. 31) and, similarly, McDuffie’s argument that, at least in the *Matched* trilogy, “print literacy, including canonical literature and writing, is a mechanism for knowledge and rebellion” (149), overtly seem to be validated. However, on the meta-narrative level, which these two authors do not seem to take into account in their analyses, this notion becomes much more ambivalent as the inclusion and prominent function given to these pre-texts emanates a considerable degree of nostalgia, which, as Baccolini

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<sup>21</sup> Also cf. the representation of the actual process of crashing the Noospace: As one of the virtual ‘ghosts’, Martin Luther King “*begins to tell the people of New Mungo the story of the old, drowned world [...] the truth*”, Fox “*feels the past link with the present and begin to knit the fabric of the future*” (*Exodus* 307).

explains, “has traditionally been viewed as a type of conservative or regressive memory” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 172). Thus, while the aim in all three trilogies discussed here may be the cultural citizenly enfranchisement of protagonists and implied readers alike, the references to real-world canonical texts or figures from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the *Matched* and *Exodus* trilogies, even if they represent the gaps in the cultural archive in the respective fictional future society, run the danger of re-validating the notion of a (literary, cultural) canon instead of criticising it. In contrast to the *Longlight* trilogy, which, as discussed above, overtly treats the real-world literary and cultural canon with humour and irony, the extension of the extremely limited cultural canon in the societies of the *Matched* and *Exodus* trilogies through the ‘rediscovery’ of these authors and figures from (popular or literary) culture and political history, on a meta-narrative level potentially affirms the notion of an unchangeable canon and its elitist connotations. Therefore, it is possible to speak of an “apparent disconnect between context and goal” (Day 89). As McCallum and Stephens have noted (and as has already been pointed out in the Introduction to this study), any form of transgression “must evoke the cultural dominant” (367) and thus, instead of representing a “process by which a culture [...] continually rewrites and retranscribes itself, constantly redefining itself through its signs” (Lachmann 301), intertextuality in these two trilogies risks re-inscribing and re-asserting the status-quo of the cultural dominant. With regards to the question of “which/whose memories will be made visible and in what ways” (Phillips and Reyes 14; also cf. Introduction to this study) the answer in the case of the *Matched* and *Exodus* trilogies has to be that that which is – still – emphasised is North Atlantic and white but also predominantly male cultural production and memoryscape.<sup>22</sup> The by-effect of evoking the cultural dominant in a rather nostalgic way that links back to a supposed “type of [...] golden age” (Geoghegan 17) may thus be a serious curtailment of the implied readers’ potential to actively question and challenge the cultural status quo they are raised with.

Nevertheless, Baccolini argues that nostalgia can still be made useful for a utopian striving for positive change because both nostalgia and utopia are linked by desire, for the past and the future respectively (cf. “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 159). Nostalgia as well as memory, she continues to explain, can still be “relevant for Utopia” if they succeed in making

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<sup>22</sup> Especially in the *Matched* trilogy, with the exception of Emily Dickinson, the emphasis is on dead white men. In addition to Dylan Thomas and Alfred Lord Tennyson, a painting by Thomas Moran is mentioned as part of the Hundred Paintings (*Matched* 118), and on trying to research the digital library for Thomas and Lord Tennyson, Cassia finds that “[t]here is a Thoreau”, too, and she “wonder[s] if he wrote anything else” (*Matched* 163). In the *Exodus* trilogy, those pre-texts that are explicitly mentioned and quoted include James MacFarlan’s *City Songs* (*Exodus* 156; 159ff.) and Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities* (*Exodus* 203).

people “feel[] uncomfortable” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 162) and thus dissatisfied in the present so that a desire for change is formed. As discussed above, a sense of discomfort with re-affirming a certain cultural canon in the *Longlight* trilogy is expressed via humour and irony as well as the creation of an in-world, fictitious body of ‘texts’. The *Matched* and *Exodus* trilogies, in contrast, seek to evade the notion of canon-affirmation and the consequent hampered cultural enfranchisement of the implied readers by representing real-world canonical texts and figures of the North-Atlantic cultural memoryscape not as ends in themselves but as points of departure for the protagonists, both figuratively and literally. Figuratively, the ‘rediscovered’ canonical texts and figures help especially the city-situated characters, Cassia and Fox, to develop awareness for the gaps in their societies’ working memory and thus offer a point of departure for their personal development. The nostalgic element of nineteenth and twentieth-century poetry, in Baccolini’s words, for them “triggers a journey of critical recognition” and thus “functions as something radical” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 177). Literally, both the insights gained from such reflections and the way in which these are made use of serve as points of an actual, spatial departure for the characters, triggering actual journeys, as Cassia in *Matched* leaves her home province and, in *Exodus*, Mara leaves for Greenland and Fox leaves the sky city to, henceforth, operate from the old university library in the netherworld.<sup>23</sup> Considering the fact that earlier Mara has critically observed that in “the vast halls of the university”, underneath the portraits of eminent cultural figureheads “not one of the golden names had belonged to a woman” (*Exodus* 169) although she “bet[s] there were loads” (*Exodus* 175), the fact that in Fox it is again a male character who establishes himself within the context of the library and not a female character like Mara may be read as an ironic indication that such spaces of potential canon-affirmation are indeed leaving-spaces for women. However, it also constitutes a rather telling continuation of the ongoing patriarchal connotation of such spaces of cultural knowledge and memory.

This notwithstanding, the emphasis in this image of a male character re-situating himself in a (former) patriarchal institution of cultural power is on a sense of nostalgic irony: the former university library is largely destroyed and Fox gains his knowledge for his resistance from other sources. Baccolini refers to Jameson when she summarises his argument that “nostalgia potentially offers a ‘revolutionary stimulus’ provided that it is a nostalgia

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<sup>23</sup> Mirroring the theme of (spaces of) canonical culture as points of departure, but in contrast to Fox, who re-situates himself in such a place, Roan in the *Longlight* trilogy constantly departs from places that hold (hidden) libraries: first, he is forcefully removed from destroyed Longlight village, then he leaves Saint’s camp and his library, the ‘proper’ library at Oasis and later also the library at Foresight Academy.

conscious of itself” (“Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 174; refers to Jameson, *Marxism and Form* 82)<sup>24</sup>. In the *Exodus* trilogy, such a self-conscious nostalgia can be recognised in the way in which the canonical figures Fox unearths from the Weave are referred to as ‘ghosts’, indicating that the narrative is conscious of its drawing on a North Atlantic and predominantly male cultural canon but at the same time acknowledging that this cultural hegemony is relegated to the side lines of a destroyed and/or censored past, having lost much of its former power. In a different way and yet similar in effect, the real-world canonical authors and poems in the *Matched* trilogy really ‘only’ provide a “stimulus for a desire for change” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 176) to Cassia and “open a space for the possible” (Baccolini, “Finding Utopia in Dystopia” 175) for her. The situations in which she has to destroy these poems or, later on, realises that further secret and forbidden papers have been stolen from her (*Reached* 229) on the one hand “signal destruction” or at least a loss of cultural products but on the other hand “also signal emancipation” (Manjikian 64) as she increasingly develops her own artistic cultural practice, a point that will be elaborated on in chapter 4.4. Thus, she ignores the head Archivist’s claim that anything Cassia thinks of as new cultural production ““has been done before, and better”” (*Reached* 197), which can also be read as a conscious departure from already sanctified hegemonic culture, both on the narrative and the meta-narrative level. Like post-/disaster fiction in general, the self-conscious nostalgia displayed in the *Exodus* and *Matched* trilogies thus on a cultural level negotiates the demise of a predominantly patriarchal, North-Atlantic cultural hegemony as both a loss and a possibility (cf. Manjikian 7-8) and requires of the implied adolescent (Western) readers to consciously, actively and critically engage with their (Western, North-Atlantic) cultural heritage, both that which is found in the space of the cultural canon and that which so far has been relegated to the cultural archive. The *Longlight* trilogy might more easily facilitate this process due to the fictitious ‘sources’ creating greater distance in a more straightforward way, but the *Exodus* and *Matched* trilogies certainly also imply the potential of fostering a critical cultural citizenly subject position vis-à-vis established structures and institutions if readers are allowed to approach the included pre-texts without bias and not as cultural edifices but as springboards into further critical enquiry.

While at the institutional level of cultural memory, whether relegated to the space of canon or archive, the development of a critical cultural citizenly subject position and thus of enfranchised agency is represented as difficult and hampered by cultural nostalgia, it is still,

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<sup>24</sup> The full reference is: Fredric Jameson. *Marxism and Form*. Princeton University Press, 1974.

crucially, possible. The situation is more complicated when the cultural sign or symbol to be buried or retrieved, to be forbidden or sanctified, to be read and interpreted is not a book, painting or other cultural product but the individual human body itself. Like (other) cultural products, the body is a crucial element of the cultural-political structure, and discourses around it are similarly concerned with questions of representation and the power of definition, i.e. with questions of cultural power. The way in which the body, like cultural institutions and production, becomes the site of struggle between working and reference memory, between hegemonic legitimisation and contestation, will be discussed in the following chapter.

### **4.3 The Corporeality of Citizenship: Biopower vs. (Appropriating) Representations and Manipulations of the Body in the *Hunger Games*, *Longlight*, *Matched* and *Uglies* Trilogies**

In the context of studying citizenship, beside the space of national territory the body can be regarded “as the site of power par excellence” as “[b]odily spaces are ‘inscribed’ by power” (Val xviii) in a similar way to geographic spaces. Hildebrandt and Peters, for example, argue that “historically and biographically, the right to control one’s own body is what initiates citizenship” (6) in the first place. In the same volume, Velsingers refers to the English Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 as the beginning of “bodily self-determination [...] [as] a key issue of citizen rights” (78) and adds that since then, “a cultural shift has taken place from passively owning a body to actively possessing it” (79). Chakrabarty adds a further aspect to the discussion of the body in the context of citizenship when he argues that a performative model of democracy highlights “the domain of the embodied and the sensual” (457). According to him, “the politics of experience orients us to the realm of the senses and the embodied” (459). Nevertheless, as for example Netz et al. have pointed out, bodies exist “in relation to certain norms and standards” and therefore are “historically and politically situated” (637) and thus are socially constructed as well as constituting material realities and experiences. Both the social construction of and embodied experiences via the body are contingent on the specific time-space(s) in which they occur.

The body can therefore be regarded as a cultural product, i.e. as a site “on which cultural meanings are inscribed” (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 12) and on which “social and cultural control has often been enacted” (Day 77). The passivity in the grammatical construction of these phrases highlights the fact that in such conceptualisations the body is

often considered “a passive medium” (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 12) or ‘docile body’ (cf. Foucault, *Discipline* 135), or at least it is treated as such by those who aim to exercise what Foucault terms ‘biopower’ on bodies of individuals as well as on populations at large. This term denotes the mechanisms by which those in power seek to “achiev[e] the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations” (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 140) in order to more easily manage and govern them. Byers and Stapleton explain that “contemporary areas of biopolitical concern are expansive, covering virtually the entirety of human existence” and include aspects ranging from “reproduction, sexuality, physical and mental health [to] food consumption, appearance, and day-to-day activities, among many other areas” (2). With a view to canonical dystopian texts such as *Brave New World, 1984* or *The Handmaid’s Tale*, to name only a few, it becomes obvious that the representation and negotiation of various forms and aspects of biopower is a key convention of the genre and many, if not all, of the aspects of authorities exercising biopower on individual bodies and (larger parts of) the general population listed by Byers and Stapleton can be found in the novels analysed in this study. Biopower is linked to normativity and hegemony as it “produces a field of hegemonic culturally intelligible bodies” as well as “bodies that fall outside of this field and hence cannot be ‘seen’” (Vint 18), that is they “can have no role in shaping the hegemonic ideology” (Vint 19), which, in the novels discussed here, is predominantly patriarchal and neoliberal. The docile or assimilated body can thus be compared to the (cultural) canon as on the microlevel of corporeality it represents that which has been codified as culturally acceptable. Citizens are thus those who possess ‘culturally intelligible bodies’<sup>25</sup> and who, “in order to become subjects at all”, must “willingly participate in [their] own subjugation” (Vint 18; her argument is based on Foucault’s work) by being “educated and trained throughout their lives to monitor and regulate their own behaviour and bodies” (Byers and Stapleton 4).

Such an imposition of cultural intelligibility by means of education as well as other cultural mechanisms can be understood as an attempt at ‘domesticating difference’<sup>26</sup> by those in power in order to make the as yet ‘other’ intelligible and at the same time limit their cultural power to represent themselves. Although, as noted above, the definition of what is

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<sup>25</sup> Cf. Figlerowicz’s summary of Agamben’s explanations of biopolitics: “Giorgio Agamben’s arguments emphasize that biopolitics is founded on a paradigm based on the distinction between a citizen and a human being. In consequence, human rights do not concern everyone in the same way. Contrary to what their name suggests, *human* rights are concerned with protecting *citizens*, [...]” (127).

<sup>26</sup> I borrow this term from postcolonial criticism and analysis of colonial discourses. See for example McLeod: “The colonised are considered the ‘other’ of the Westerner [...]. Yet on the other hand, the discourse of colonialism attempts to domesticate colonised subjects and abolish their radical ‘otherness’ [...]” (52).

‘other’ and thus unintelligible is contingent on specific contexts of space and time, in all cases the “right to be different [...] without compromising one’s right to belong” (Rosaldo 57) as a key issue of cultural citizenship is severely curtailed. Whether in past centuries it was “the mad [...] along with the poor, unemployed, and destitute” who were considered in need of “domestication” (Alberts 548) or whether, as in the novels analysed in this study, it is the adolescent body that needs to be managed and made intelligible, it can be seen that in a biopolitical context the body appears not only as acting *within* a normative social landscape but represents such a normative landscape in its own right in that it is highly regulated in terms of which kind of appearances, performances and practices are considered appropriate or ‘out of place’. Nevertheless, as power is an ambivalent force, Vint argues that “biopower is [not only] the site of ideology’s acting upon the body/subject [but also] a potential site for resistance. Bodies which resist disciplining themselves to cultural norms challenge the field of the culturally intelligible” (19) and that which has been culturally codified, thus insisting on their right to be different and to represent themselves as such. The body-mind-unit that challenges and resists biopower can thus be compared in function and effect to the role of the (historical) archive as potentially facilitating the delegitimisation of hegemonic power via physical experiences as well as (embodied) memories that oppose biopolitical control.

Approaches that envision bodies as having the ability to ‘resist disciplining themselves’ often highlight the fact that the body is not only a (discursive) product of culture and society, but also a (material) producer. As Velsingers explains, “the human body is a *producer* of society because our living together, our social organization, is essentially affected by the physicality of socially acting individuals” (81).<sup>27</sup> While Velsingers retains the image of the body as a medium, she describes it not as passive but as “our medium to perceive the world” and argues that since “this perception depends on actions we perform, then the body is a potential medium to actively create a world by applying or rejecting particular bodily actions and practices” (81). As an active agent, the body is thus perceived in a much more enfranchised position that includes the possibility for active choices and their bodily performance instead of a passive reception of cultural norms and hegemonies that are enacted upon it. This understanding of the body as agent is crucial for the “recognition of and

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<sup>27</sup> Also cf. Vint, who similarly supports a model of the body that “offers a way to conceive of the two aspects of the body (interiority and surface) as always interacting yet not reducible to the same thing, which allows analysis to address cultural inscription on both the body and the subject, yet also looks for ways that the subject can resist such cultural marking and offer alternative possibilities” (Vint 16–17).



resistance to biopolitical regulations [t]o be profoundly transformative, producing new discourses, ideas, and social norms about biopolitics and the body” (Byers and Stapleton 2).

The above explanations demonstrate that mechanisms of biopower and resistance against it do not only place bodies within a landscape of power but actually render them such a landscape of power, or more precisely, render them the suture both segregating and linking different areas within such landscapes. In the case of the body, these areas that the body is dividing and linking at the same time are that of the individual (owner of the body) and society. Several critics have pointed out the body’s “liminal position” as a “location between the social and the personal, the private and the public” (Figlerowicz 125) as well as between “self and not-self, between nature and culture, between the inner ‘authentic’ person and social persona” (Vint 16). Leaving aside the problematic notion of an ‘inner “authentic” self’ for now, the idea of the body “as a type of threshold” (Flanagan 42) highlights “the multiple ways in which bodies are brought into being in relation to classificatory practices on the one hand, and forms of claim-making on the other” (Netz et al. 641). In this context it is important to re-iterate that in the case of adolescents, it is not only their identities that represent a threshold between childhood and adulthood (cf. chapter 2.1), but on the level of a very material experience it is also their bodies that “transition from [what is perceived as adolescent] deviation to [adult] norm” (Hilton and Nikolajeva 13). As the adolescent body is often constructed as “undeveloped, unfinished” or even “as a deviation, a monster, a grotesque body” (Hilton and Nikolajeva 13), it is not only liminal but also, almost automatically, regarded as if not fully unintelligible then at least difficult to ‘read’ and therefore in need of ‘domestication’ via the authorities’ exercise of biopower over them.

The classificatory practices of biopower “that result in a conformity of not only action but experiences of embodiment more generally” (Day 77) can be countered, as Velsingers contends, by “consider[ing] the body a space for action that produces concrete realities” (86). She continues by positing that “every citizen can use his or her body to produce concrete bodily realities – realities that not only aim at enhancement and control, but are also open to include the foreign, the unknown, the scary, or the challenging to imagine” and may “lead to a subversive, or even utopian, potential” (86). “[U]sing one’s own body” in this way to produce such ‘concrete bodily realities’, as Figlerowicz furthermore argues, “may be important as a way of showing that political protest can start on the very core level of the most personal space, of the most intimate decisions and choices” (135). Thereby, such (cultural) practices and performances can be linked directly to notions of justice-oriented citizenship and “activist forms of claim-making [that] very often work via the body” (Netz et al. 642). Among the

examples given by Netz et al. are “squatters [who] claim the right to housing by putting their bodies into place, [...] [and] Femen activists [who] paint slogans on their naked bodies” (642). Such practices as well as “[t]he ways of exposing, hiding or transforming the body – the accepted and the subversive – are rooted in the socio-political context, which is why what is done *with* or *to* the body can be significant as a form of protest” (Figlerowicz 125). While these practices depend on individual bodies performing them it is important to emphasise that collectively, such acts of resistance “are not isolated but form part of a wider network of political practices” (Netz et al. 642), which can be considered as more open and accessible to those who are excluded from traditional forms of cultural and/as political participation, among them adolescents. Because adolescent bodies very squarely occupy a liminal position to an even more pronounced degree than bodies do in general, adolescent embodied citizenly subject positions may be regarded as particularly suitable for making claim to the ‘right to be different’ and to possess their own bodies via creating subversive bodily realities.

As the novels discussed in this chapter show, the negotiation of difference frequently revolves, on the one hand, around struggles over casting the adolescent body as a cultural product or symbol to make it culturally intelligible and, on the other hand, around domesticating the body as a container of or archive for both individual and cultural (reference) memory. While this is to a certain extent true for all adolescent bodies in these narratives, female or male, in many cases the female experience is mostly given predominance via the allocation of focalisation.<sup>28</sup> The female protagonist of the *Longlight* trilogy, Stowe, is variously cast between monstrosity (she is literally referred to as ‘monstrous’) and docile female stereotype (‘the daughter of the City’)<sup>29</sup>, while Katniss in the *Hunger Games* trilogy has to negotiate her corporeal subject positions between socio-political and regional ascriptions (‘the District 12 body’, ‘the tribute body’, ‘the mockingjay’) and

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<sup>28</sup> The male characters Peeta in the *Hunger Games* trilogy or Zane in the *Uglies* trilogy, who both suffer biomedical manipulation, Lumpy in the *Longlight* trilogy, who is marked by a leprosy-like illness and thus shunned by society, or Ky in the *Matched* trilogy, whose social classification as an Aberration (cf. chapter 3) has very corporeal consequences for him, also struggle with and have to negotiate the way in which their bodies are situated and perceived by others. While Peeta and Zane never become focalising characters, focalisation via Lumpy occurs very occasionally in the last instalment of the *Longlight* trilogy. In the case of Ky, the *Matched* trilogy branches out to include him as a focaliser from the second instalment onwards, alternating with Cassia in *Crossed*, and alternating with both Cassia and Xander in *Reached*. Nevertheless, the analysis in this chapter focuses only on Cassia also in the case of the *Matched* trilogy because, as the sole focaliser in the first novel of the trilogy and co-focaliser in the other two, she is clearly to be regarded as the protagonist.

<sup>29</sup> This is similar in the *Dustlands* trilogy, in which Saba is variously perceived as ‘the angel of death’ and then constructed as ‘the mother of New Eden’. As in the context of this chapter, however, Stowe in the *Longlight* trilogy is the more interesting character, the *Dustlands* trilogy will not be discussed here.

gendered impositions ('the girl in love', 'the girl on fire')<sup>30</sup>. Attempts by the authorities to 'domesticate' the body as an archive space of reference memory usually involve physical manipulations and/or mutilation by the authorities, who use bio-medical technology as biopolitical tools to manage and regulate both individuals and the population at large (a memory-erasing red tablet in the *Matched* trilogy, the mandatory operation already mentioned in the *Uglies* trilogy and drug-injection and torture in *Mockingjay*). Especially this latter theme does not only constitute an instance of genre memory of the dystopian tradition but also underlines that "[t]he material action of ideology on the body is not something that technology has erased; in fact, technology can be and has been used to enhance this action" (Vint 9). The following analysis will discuss in how far the protagonists manage to resist biopolitical micro-management and exert their own version of cultural citizenship via challenging, subverting or appropriating the authorities' methods on the level of their own corporeality and making claims to produce their own embodied self-representations.

In the *Hunger Games* trilogy, the nature of the annual Games, of course, highlights issues around the use and abuse of especially adolescent bodies from the start of the narrative. Enacting corporeal cultural citizenship via using one's own body to create a specific, material reality (cf. Velsing as well as Figlerowicz quoted above) is highly relevant here due to the non-existence of political rights and political participation. In Collins's Panem, biopower has permeated almost every aspect of people's lives, and the control of the state is as good as absolute. The way in which the protagonist Katniss, but also other subjects of Panem use their bodies underlines Figlerowicz's argument that "[t]he extent of control over the body within the socio-political is made apparent by the fact that even gestures that could seem trivial can question dominant discourses in a deep way" (125). She further contends "that the extent of the control and influence of dominant discourses and political power on the perception and functioning of the body is so great that *any* gestures that demonstrate taking possession of one's own body can constitute a significant subversion" (127; emphasis added). While Figlerowicz speaks about the way in which artists use their bodies in their work, the argument certainly has relevance for the representation of corporeal citizenship in the *Hunger Games* trilogy.

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<sup>30</sup> In the analysis this study consciously focuses on the first set of ascriptions (regional and socio-economic, which both become political) in the *Hunger Games* trilogy as research on the theme of gender within this trilogy already abounds even though, as far as could be ascertained for this study, the existing research on the *Hunger Games* and gender is not explicitly linked to questions of (cultural) citizenship.

There are several instances in the trilogy that emphasise the potency of seemingly trivial gestures within the context of Panem's oppressive society and which thus highlight Figlerowicz's claim (quoted above) that what is done both with and to the body can be used as a form of protest. Since the Capitol's power is so overwhelming and political means to address the ills of society do not exist, it is probably not surprising that resistance against its suffocating sense of superiority is expressed via bodily gestures and items or costumes worn on the body that underline and make use of local, regional and socio-economic markers, thus re-asserting a (cultural) identity that is independent of the authorities in the Capitol. Crucially, it is these local, regional and socio-economic markers enacted by and on Katniss's body that later turn into symbols of the rebellion against the Capitol, illustrating the point made earlier that while such practices depend on individual bodies performing them, they can be taken up and perpetuated or inspire more and more individuals and their bodies to act in their own ways and thus start to form a wider network of political practices (cf. Netz et al. quoted above).

The first such instance is represented in the very beginning of the narrative at the Reaping Ceremony that turns Katniss's adolescent body into a tribute body. When Effie Trinket, "District 12's escort" (*Hunger Games* 21), asks for applause after Katniss has voluntarily taken her sister's place as a tribute, instead, "not one person claps. [...] they take part in the boldest form of dissent they can manage. Silence. Which says we do not agree. We do not condone. All of this is wrong." Moreover, "almost every member of the crowd touches the three middle fingers of their left hand to their lips and holds it out to" Katniss, who explains that this "is an old and rarely used gesture of *our* district, occasionally seen at funerals. It means thanks, it means admiration, it means goodbye to someone you love" (*Hunger Games* 28-29; emphasis added). While Tan reads this silent "funerary gesture" as a sign that "the district recognizes Katniss's expulsion" ("Making of the Citizen" 86) and the silence of especially adults not only in this scene, but in the trilogy in general, as a sign that they are a "mute, impotent political community" ("Making of the Citizen" 87) "without voice, recognition, and through them, true identity" ("Burn" 58), this study suggests a contrary reading of this scene. By using their bodies in a specific way that is moreover connected to district identity, which means that the people in the Capitol and the other districts will not necessarily understand its original meaning, the people of district 12 link this gesture to their obvious open dissent expressed in their silence. In this moment, which follows Katniss's voluntary dispossession of her body by becoming a tribute to save her sister, this seemingly trivial gesture can be read as an instance of district 12's people taking possession of their

bodies and thereby creating a subversive potential (cf. Velsing quoted above). This potential is underlined when Katniss repeats it in the arena as she salutes the dead body of her ally and friend, Rue, after she has lovingly decorated her body in flowers (*Hunger Games* 286-287), which constitutes another physical, embodied challenge to the way in which the Capitol represents especially adolescent district citizens. Finally, this silent salute becomes so powerful that it is even taken out of its original context of regional district identity and is used by the people of district 11, Rue's home district, in acknowledgement of Katniss's support of her (*Catching Fire* 75). The fact that this scene culminates in public disobedience and security forces opening fire on those congregated shows that by this point in the narrative a supposedly harmless bodily gesture has become firmly political.

However, as powerful as such physically performed gestures might be, both for re-asserting district identity and for furthering the rebellion, this silent salute is actually the only one of the examples discussed in this chapter that also can be regarded as an expression of agency on Katniss's part. The other two examples to be mentioned, the symbol of the mockingjay and the image of 'the girl on fire', also link bodily, material performance and district identity before turning into signs of the resistance against the Capitol, but in contrast to the silent salute they also represent instances in which, increasingly, Katniss's body becomes a 'passive medium' that is used by others to express a certain message. The 'girl on fire' image represents a highly complex material expression with regards to "shape[ing], modif[ying] and narrat[ing]" (Netz et al.) Katniss's body. On the one hand, it is part of the procedure of making the district-tribute body "more palatable" (Mitchell 134) and also more intelligible for Capitol consumption by both domesticating it and simultaneously highlighting its (supposedly inferior) difference. Katniss's body is domesticated when the three Capitol citizens that make up her prep team "erase [her] face with a layer of pale make-up and draw [her] features back out" (*Hunger Games* 145) and, by "ridding [her] body of hair", make her feel "like a plucked bird, ready for roasting" (*Hunger Games* 75). As Mitchell accurately summarises it: Katniss is turned into a "superficially recognizable girl" (136).<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the authorities force the tributes to wear costumes that reflect their home district's industry and thus to conform to a stereotypical idea of a certain district identity (cf. Pulliam 176), thereby, however, also giving an implicitly dissenting stylist like Cinna the opportunity to add

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<sup>31</sup> Also cf. Montz, who argues that the stylist Cinna "'girlifies' Katniss so that she is a more successful rebel" ("Rebels in Dresses" 111). Similarly, Pulliam refers to the prep team's work as turning a tribute "into a one-dimensional character" (176). For a highly interesting discussion of the "sexism/speciesism nexus" interrogated in this the scenes of Katniss's 'make-over', see Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 52ff.

“the perfect touch of rebellion” (*Hunger Games* 96) to the costume, as Katniss’s mentor Haymitch remarks. In this image of ‘the girl on fire’, an “adolescent woman’s body [...] represents a [...] pairing of docility and danger” (Day 77), and in Katniss’s case, moreover, her ‘unfinished’ adolescent body is treated like a blank canvas on which meaning can be inscribed by the adults from Capitol and rebellion alike.

The trope of Katniss’s body being inscribed by others continues with the symbol of the mockingjay, which first appears in the form of a “circular gold pin” she receives from her friend Madge to wear in the arena as “a token from [her] district” and “to remind [her] of home” (*Hunger Games* 46). Later on, this pin is again connected to Katniss’s home district but also to the suffering of the districts in general when she learns that “its former owner was Madge’s aunt”, who was also “a tribute who was murdered in the arena” (*Catching Fire* 236-237). The further the mockingjay symbol is removed from its connection as a district token and the closer it is aligned with both the districts’ suffering and their rebellion against their oppressors, the more strongly Katniss finds herself forced into the role of actually embodying this symbol. As before with the ‘girl on fire’ image, which is (supposedly) linked to her home district’s industry of coal mining and thus does not only bear regional but also socio-economic connotations, Katniss is turned into the mockingjay by other people, first her stylist Cinna (*Catching Fire* 304) and then the leaders of the rebellion (e.g. *Mockingjay* 12, 37). While she values the ‘girl on fire’ image Cinna invents for and ascribes to her body as not only a more attractive symbolic representation of district 12’s industry than is usually the case in the Games (*Hunger Games* 80ff., 85; *Catching Fire* 248-255) but also as a chance to stand out and improve her chances of survival in the arena, the mockingjay persona is often almost forced upon her “without her consent, her approval, or even her desire” (Montz, “Costuming the Resistance” 144; also cf. *Catching Fire* 465). As Montz argues, Katniss thereby “shifts from ownership of the persona to a more passive recipient of the designation” (“Costuming the Resistance” 145).

Both the authorities and the rebels, not least due to the televised character of the Games as well as the rebellion, thus turn Katniss’s body into a cultural product to be consumed by the citizens of the Capitol and the districts alike. Both parties seek to make her body culturally intelligible, either as a tribute or as a (sign of) rebel(lion), and her gestures and/or costumes will be read differently depending on which side the person who ‘consumes’ her image stands.<sup>32</sup> As the tribute ‘girl on fire’ and ‘mockingjay’ alike, Katniss’s body is disciplined and

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Montz’s argument that “[a]s the residents of the Capitol – and beyond, the people of the districts – understand the language of dress and costume, using it to subtly manipulate the audience’s opinion of tributes

domesticated, but while she is very aware of this from the start with regards to her tribute-status, she only realises this after the second Hunger Games she has to take part in with regards to her status as mockingjay. In both instances, especially when she is turned into the mockingjay, Katniss's "body is something that is treated and thought about as something that can be designed" and "seems only acceptable if it is mastered and controlled" (Velsing 79). Katniss starts to internalise this narrative that seeks to control her body and increasingly loses her agency when the plan of the rebellion is revealed to her at the end of the second novel, as can be recognised in her repetition of "I am the mockingjay. [...] but I'm the mockingjay. I'm the mockingjay [...]" (*Catching Fire* 466-467). In a different way to Stowe's body in the *Longlight* trilogy, Katniss's body is thus also colonised. The result, however, is similar: after her sister Prim's death, which represents the final straw in what Katniss has been able to endure, she is rendered "unable to speak" and is declared by the doctor "a mental, rather than a physical, Avox"<sup>33</sup> (*Mockingjay* 410).

The extent of control that the Capitol authorities as well as the rebels exercise over Katniss's body does not only comprise that which is visible but also that which is, or rather has to be made, invisible. Both public personas that are laid over Katniss's body require her to fight violently, as a tribute in the arenas and as the personified mockingjay in the fight for defeating the Capitol, with the result that she sustains multiple injuries and her physical body is marked by scars, burns or even impairments such as loss of hearing in one ear. As such, her material body is a visible, lived expression of the "emotional trauma" (*Mockingjay* 410) she has endured. Interestingly, neither the Capitol authorities nor the rebels allow her body to represent the full extent of her embodied experience. Since even after the old rulers have been defeated Katniss is still treated as a cultural product, she has to appear flawless and unharmed, as a victor of the Games as much as a citizen of the new Panem. Figlerowicz argues that "a mutilated body tends to be seen as [...] counter-normative" and is linked to a transgressive "monstrosity" (133), which renders it unintelligible. Since Katniss's body as an adolescent body is already per se deviant and thus unintelligible, that which can be salvaged of the artificially created intelligibility of her body has to be maintained. Therefore, the Capitol seeks to "put the starving, wounded mess of a person back together again" (*Hunger Games* 425) after the end of the Games, transforming Katniss from a person whose body looks

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such as Peeta and Katniss becomes an integral part of establishing the rebellion and garnering support for it throughout Panem" ("Costuming the Resistance" 142).

<sup>33</sup> Avoxes are people whose tongue has been cut out as a punishment and who therefore cannot speak. Also cf. footnote 43 in chapter 3.

“[r]abid. Feral. Mad” (*Hunger Games* 422-423) into one whose body is “perfection, smooth and glowing” with even her pre-arena scars from hunting “vanished without a trace” (*Hunger Games* 426). Similarly, the rebels seek to “prep [her] for the cameras. Remake [her] to Beauty Base Zero” (*Mockingjay* 424) after Katniss has sustained substantial burns and, to herself, looks “like a bizarre patchwork quilt of skin” (*Mockingjay* 412). When the procedure is done, Katniss is astounded at “how *normal* they’ve made [her] look on the outside when inwardly [she is] such a wasteland” (*Mockingjay* 427; emphasis added). Instead of letting Katniss as the mockingjay, the personified symbol of the rebellion, bear the visible marks of this rebellion as a form of embodied memory, she has to appear ‘in mint condition’, ready for the public’s ‘consumption’ again. Like the Capitol authorities before them, the rebels ultimately seem to aim at erasing the bodily, embodied memory of injuries and scars which, as Assmann argues, is more reliable than mental memory (cf. *Erinnerungsräume* 246)<sup>34</sup>, in order to create another distorted image of political events. Katniss’s body is the normative landscape that is supposed to communicate ‘normalcy’ and normativity in actually extraordinary – and supposedly changed – circumstances. On a physical, corporeal level, such an erasure of her experiences, and by extensions those of other citizen-survivors of Panem, has to be regarded as a strategy analogous to that of censoring cultural memory on the level of society.

The only way out of this situation that Katniss can envision towards the end of the narrative is via self-destruction, i.e. to “die on [her] own terms [...] us[ing] [her] death[] as – symbolic as well as literal – weapon[]” (Fisher, “Precarious Dystopias” 30). Similarly to Figlerowicz’s argument about “artistic production”, also in the *Hunger Games* trilogy Katniss’s attempt at “[t]he destruction of [her] body [...] demonstrates how the body is considered social property – its mutilations are seen as an attack aimed at the social order and the productivity of society” (133). After she has assassinated the former rebel leader turned new president, Alma Coin, in order to re-claim possession of her body and her corporeal experience, Katniss “focus[es] now on the manner of [her] suicide [...] [her] own annihilation” (*Mockingjay* 428-429). As Figlerowicz argues that in artistic uses of the body it is “the decision to show one’s body, to expose it in the public space” that is necessary to achieve a disruption of “everyday perception and [...] its rules” (134), Katniss’s self-harm through attempted starvation can only be regarded as relevant in this way if it is assumed, as she does<sup>35</sup>, that the constant surveillance of her body continues as before even under the new

<sup>34</sup> Also cf. Chakrabarty: “The body also has experiences and remembers them.” (Chakrabarty 460-461)

<sup>35</sup> While awaiting her trial and/or execution, Katniss is “sure [she is] being watched round the clock. For all [she] know[s], [she is] on live television at this very moment” (*Mockingjay* 438).



rulers. In this way, it would mirror her public threat of her own and Peeta's suicide at the end of the first Hunger Games she has to take part in. However, her behaviour at the end of the narrative is not read as an act of resistance against the dispossession of her body and a reclamation of it but as the behaviour of "a hopeless, shell-shocked lunatic" (*Mockingjay* 441), discursively aligning her to sufferers of PTSD<sup>36</sup> but also to a supposedly gendered mental illness like hysteria. Again, this is a representation of her and her body by others and without her consent, but it serves to spare her from execution and has her be sent back to district 12. Thus, while the visible traces of what Katniss had to endure are erased, her body as a container of memories, if not material and embodied then at least mental, survives.

In the *Longlight* trilogy, the female protagonist, Stowe, like Katniss in the *Hunger Games*, has to both negotiate the desire of others to make her body more intelligible and has to fight for actual physical survival. Despite these structural similarities, her character is unusual to a certain extent in comparison to the other characters discussed in this chapter in several ways. Firstly, the reader only meets her as a focaliser from the second instalment of the trilogy (*Freewalker*) onwards while the protagonists of the other trilogies are introduced as focalisers or, in some cases, autodiegetic narrators from the beginning. Furthermore, and more crucial for the discussion in this chapter, Stowe is actually only ten years old at the onset of the action in *Freewalker* (*Freewalker* 8) and thus falls several years short of the age usually considered as adolescent.<sup>37</sup> In spite of her young age her body is frequently ascribed the monstrosity and grotesque-ness of an adolescent body as the consumption of a substance called Dirt, which makes it possible to enter a quasi-virtual space called the Dreamfield, a task given to Stowe by the City's masters, "has [...] forced her intellect to mature far beyond her years" (*Freewalker* 7) and has resulted in her "have[ing] lost [her] childhood and gained an unhealthy independence" (*Freewalker* 175), as her "guardian" (*Freewalker* 6) Willum observes.<sup>38</sup> As can be understood from these quotations, it is the very unintelligibility of her body – neither a child anymore due to her mental capacities, nor an adult yet due to her child-

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<sup>36</sup> Beal, too, observes that Katniss's "symptoms resemble nothing less than full-blown, untreated post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), complete with many episodes of fear and terror, nightmare and hallucination, over-reaction to cues and triggers, and a vicious startle reflex" (128).

<sup>37</sup> The protagonists of the other novels considered in this study range from fifteen (Mara in *Exodus*) to eighteen (Saba in *Blood Red Road*) at the onset of the respective narratives.

<sup>38</sup> Similarly, another Dirt Eater and associate of Stowe's brother, Roan, Alandra, emphasises that through the intake of Dirt Stowe has been "awakened [...] to her adult power" and that "[w]hen that's done to a child, a terrible negative force is unleashed" as "[t]he person becomes a distortion of who they are, of what they might have become" (*Dirt Eaters* 259-260). Roan himself wonders whether "the child he knew, the sister he loved, [is] still [...] present in the so-called monster of today" (*Freewalker* 240).

like physical appearance – and the impossibility to definitively place it that, in the eyes of those around her, render her monstrous. Thereby, Stowe is constructed as grotesque and unnatural, a point that is frequently highlighted by a strong emphasis on Stowe's unhealthy dependence on Dirt, which is represented as a drug addiction.<sup>39</sup>

The female child-body, in its various social personas as daughter (of the City in general and of Darius, the City's master in particular), younger sister (of Roan) or charge (Willum), is comprehensible and thus at the same time manageable and controllable, but also, in the case of Willum, protectable, and therefore represents the ideal case of Stowe's corporeality that is frequently invoked to different ends by different characters. Conversely, the slippery, liminal, 'other' and even unnatural body of the no-longer child, not-yet adult, is much more difficult to place and thus, in the eyes of Darius and the other city masters especially, needs to be domesticated. However, it is important to underline that it is not only the authorities who seek to domesticate the difference of Stowe's body (while at the same time exploiting it) but also her (male) relatives Roan and Willum, the latter of whom is not only her guardian in the city but is also later revealed to be Roan and Stowe's cousin. Both instances, no matter whether the intentions behind the attempted domestication are benevolent or not, "reveal a plethora of anxieties about the female body and its relationship to culture" (Flanagan 43)<sup>40</sup> and emphasise the subversive potential of, but also the general discomfort with especially female adolescent liminality.

Due to her considerable mental capacities Stowe is very aware that her body represents a landscape of power as she is aware of her position as "barely more than a child and a slave to the whims of the Masters" (*Freewalker* 101) at the same time that she seeks to appropriate and subvert this position. As the social persona of 'Our Stowe', she is made intelligible as a cultural product and quasi-religious symbol of adulation, which at least initially serves the biopolitical aim of the City masters to manage and control both the population and also herself as she is "seduced" (*Freewalker* 41) by the way in which "the City [...] adores her" (*Freewalker* 22). The persona of 'Our Stowe' renders her a cultural product for the

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<sup>39</sup> Stowe's need for a considerable dose of Dirt to enter the Dreamfield appears in stark contrast to other Dirt Eaters only requiring a pinch, or in contrast to her brother Roan, who is able to enter it without taking any substances at all. For example, Stowe is frequently represented as needing a larger amount of Dirt than others to enter the Dreamfield and she often asks for a second dose (*Freewalker* 59, 80, 101, 128). The "heaping spoonful" (*Freewalker* 80, 128) that she receives on these occasion she "gulps" down eagerly (*Freewalker* 80, 101).

<sup>40</sup> While Flanagan does not discuss the *Longlight* trilogy in her article, this argument is, of course, also valid in the context of this trilogy.

population's consumption, which on the one hand she experiences as physically confining<sup>41</sup> while on the other hand coming to realise and appreciate the power and the possibilities that come with such a role. However, the intake of Dirt and its 'negative force' have led Stowe to develop a certain cruelty, which serves to further emphasise the monstrosity and unnaturalness of her liminal corporeality. In this way, when she learns that simply by performing a long, piercing scream, she has "'left one man deaf, another comatose, another paralyzed on one side of his body'", she only "feels a quiver of excitement" at her power but no remorse (*Freewalker* 109). In order to increase her chances of one day defeating Darius and the other City masters, but also to develop a sense of self not dominated by those around her, Stowe nurtures this destructive power of hers, all the while seeking to conceal it and to not be found out. To safeguard the exact extent of her abilities and powers, she appropriates the role that all those around her are so keen for her to incorporate: that of a child. That this is a conscious performance is made explicit when "Stowe smiles. Her most childlike smile. At least *what she imagines* a child's smile to be" (*Freewalker* 192; emphasis added). She emulates the innocence, docility and submission expected of her, thus pretending that the City masters' exercise of biopower over her has indeed had the desired effect of making her both compliant and intelligible, while actually striving to resist and subvert this biopower and to gain agency over her bodily uses and abilities.

The liminality of Stowe's physical and mental existence and experiences as well as the (moral) ambiguity attached to both is further complicated by the fact that Stowe is able to 'inhabit' three different bodily versions of herself. Thus, she has to navigate not only her physical body but additionally also her Dreamfield body or avatar, which is also in a way material and may, for example, suffer pain, and her disembodied "ether body" (*Freewalker* 7), by which she refers to her ability to "escape her skin" (*Freewalker* 7) and let her mind travel, for example in order to witness conversations that she is otherwise excluded from. As her capacity to leave her physical body is unknown to those around her, this disembodied experience in her ether body is the only possibility for Stowe to elude the constant monitoring and policing she is otherwise subjected to. It allows her to enjoy more freedom than her Dreamfield avatar body does, which appears in the form of a clay being and is associated both with strength and with pain. Willum describes it as a "'temporary [...] interim body'" (*Freewalker* 78) which, like the physical 'unfinished' adolescent body, has to be adapted, even though "'[t]he process can be painful'" (*Freewalker* 79). This is emphasised repeatedly

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<sup>41</sup> She is, for example, obliged to keep certain appointments and, on these occasions, to wear dresses that "clench and cinch and are stifling and unbearable" (*Freewalker* 20).

as Stowe has to transform her Dreamfield clay body on several occasions (*Freewalker* 78-81, 102-103, 130) and is asked to “‘FORCE [THE PAIN] TO DRIVE THE CHANGE’”.<sup>42</sup> In contrast, her ether body does not cause her any physical pain, but neither is it without ambivalence. While it gives her the ability to “fly where she will” (*Freewalker* 7), on its own this immaterial body cannot give her full agency. The fact that “her hands are not flesh” means that “she can only hover impotently” (*Freewalker* 5) as an observer instead of being able to be an active producer of the reality around her. In combination, Stowe’s ether body and Dreamfield avatar body give a metaphorical description of the often emotionally difficult and painful experience of adolescence as a time of change and of feelings of self-alienation and impotence. Here, as in much adolescent fiction, it is especially “[f]emale characters, looking inward, [who] perceive the changes in their bodies with fear and anxiety” (Hilton and Nikolajeva 13), thus linking the physical transformation of the (female) adolescent body to emotional pain in addition to physical pain.<sup>43</sup>

If Stowe’s corporeal existence can thus already be regarded as a battlefield of different sets of ascriptions, i.e. monstrosity versus being stylised as a cultural product, and if she is already expected to handle excruciating pain so that she can do another one’s bidding in the Dreamfield, these issues are exacerbated when her Dreamfield avatar and by extension her actual physical body and mind are invaded and colonised by one of the ruler Darius’s opponents. When the Dirt Eater Ferrell engages her in combat in the Dreamfield, his lizard avatar “BURROW[S] DEEP” and “SPILL[S] [...] INTO HER CORE” (*Freewalker* 132-33), which enables him to make demands of and give commands to Stowe regarding her behaviour and actions he wants her to perform (e.g. *Freewalker* 204-205). Thus, for example, the consciousness of Ferrell causes “[h]er eyes” to move “without her consent” (*Freewalker* 180).<sup>44</sup> This physical and mental colonisation by an adult of a child and by a male of a female character – the description of the moment of physical colonisation bears, of course, overtly

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<sup>42</sup> The emphasis on the painfulness of this transformation is so pronounced in the novel that it is impossible to miss. Repeatedly, Stowe is shown to experience “TERRIBLE PAIN” (*Freewalker* 80), “AN EXPLOSION OF PAIN” or “AGONY” (*Freewalker* 81, 102), to “CR[Y] OUT IN PAIN” (*Freewalker* 102), “SWALLOW” (*Freewalker* 81, 103) or “EAT[] HER PAIN” (*Freewalker* 103), “USE IT AS FUEL” (*Freewalker* 81, 103) or as “EMBRACING THE PAIN” (*Freewalker* 130).

<sup>43</sup> It has to be noted, however, that the character of Stowe’s brother Roan also undergoes a number of physically and emotionally painful and scarring experiences inside and outside the Dreamfield. The discussion here focuses on Stowe because this study considers her embodied experience of liminality between child/adolescent and adolescent/adult as more interesting than Roan’s relatively unchallenged position as ‘traditional’ young adult hero, a role that is not contested in the narrative.

<sup>44</sup> Ferrell’s colonisation of her body is furthermore made explicit by him repeatedly calling her “‘my little house’” (*Freewalker* 329; *Keeper’s Shadow* 86, 87) or “‘my perfect little hostess’” (*Freewalker* 331).

sexual connotations and can be read as a form of rape – results in a loss of voice and loss of agency for Stowe as Ferrell not only commands her actions but his voice also starts “scraping its way into existence” through her body and Stowe hears her body speak with “[a] voice, not her own” (*Freewalker* 300), “smothering her, suffocating her” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 32). In contrast to Katniss in the *Hunger Games* trilogy, who has the visible markers of her experience erased from her skin and thus the outside of her body, Stowe is thus threatened with being erased from the inside.

Where before Stowe has been represented as crafty, powerful and able to appropriate various outside ascriptions to her own needs, she is now shown as dependent on others to have Ferrell’s consciousness exorcised from her body and thus to regain corporeal enfranchisement (*Keeper’s Shadow* 86ff.). In order to regain her corporeal agency and to heal, Stowe has to lose some of her liminality and become culturally more intelligible again. This involves her losing “her clay exterior” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 133) of her interim Dreamfield avatar, which is only possible in the presence of the souls of her dead parents within the Dreamfield. In this way, she returns once again, at least symbolically and discursively, into the position of a child.<sup>45</sup> Only by becoming a child again and shedding the ‘incompleteness’ of her avatar – and the monstrosity of her in-between-ness – is it possible for her to “look[] wondering at her own body”, which is now her completely and finally transformed Dreamfield body, and see that “nothing’s missing” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 133). As during her time of recuperation she is also weaned off the drug-like Dirt and loses some of her cruelty, the narrative seems to suggest that, due to the way in which she used and was made to use her own body-mind unit in all its different guises beforehand she still lacked “eligibility for citizenship” (Netz et al. 639). Now that she has become more experienced and is regarded as less monstrous by others full corporeal socio-cultural enfranchisement becomes possible although she has retained some of her previous ambivalence and thus has not been entirely domesticated into unambiguity as becomes apparent when Roan reflects that after the exorcism Stowe still is “such a little girl – no more than twelve, and yet the power she radiates seems ancient and dangerous” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 171).

In Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy, the representation of adolescent bodies as deviant and monstrous is even more pronounced than in the *Longlight* and *Hunger Games* trilogies. Whereas in these two trilogies, such perceived monstrosity or the potential thereof is linked either to individuals – Stowe as the premature, addicted and physically colonised no-longer-

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<sup>45</sup> This point is emphasised when, after waking up from the Dreamfield, Stowe is “curled into herself like an infant” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 168).

child body – or a limited group of people – the erasure of Katniss’s injuries is representative for the treatment of all victors of the Games – in *Uglies* it is in fact every person under the age of sixteen who is considered as ‘ugly’ and, hence, grotesque and unfinished. Biopower is here exerted both on the ‘outside space’ of the body via the already mentioned beauty operation and on the ‘inside space’ of the body via manipulating people’s minds and memories, thereby producing an easily manageable, docile population that is relatively homogeneous both in looks and in temperament. As Flanagan observes, “[d]ifferences between ‘my body and the rest of the world’ [...] are in effect eradicated in *Uglies*” (45), and the internalisation of continuously monitoring and regulating one’s own behaviour is not left to education alone in Tally’s world but is grafted into each individual’s brain in the form of a lesion mutilating their critical capacities.<sup>46</sup> Here, individual and thus also potentially dissenting memory is not only erased from the body’s surface to make it more consumable and re-establish normativity in appearances but the entire way in which the body-mind-unit operates is affected by this intervention.

Despite the fact that this operation is sold to the citizens as utterly desirable and most people undergo it willingly, the fact that it is also conducted against some people’s expressed wishes (e.g. Tally’s friend Shay) indicates that this constitutes another form of colonisation of the body-mind-space, this time however not of an individual (Stowe) or a social group (tributes, victors in Panem) but of an entire population. Nevertheless, in stark contrast to both Stowe and Katniss, who increasingly lose agency and control over how their bodies are used and represented, Tally in *Uglies* increasingly gains agency by repeatedly managing to re-activate her supposedly irrevocably altered memories and by appropriating her repeatedly artificially modified body. As Sawyer Fritz convincingly argues, although “Tally is placed under the knife by her government in an effort to control her behaviour and to exploit her as a resource [...] the real Tally, empowered, independent, and aware, lurks beneath the surface of each new façade and proves capable of rising up again despite the efforts of her government” (21).

The relevance of the body as a space or container of memories and the recovery of these is thus especially emphasised in the *Uglies* as well as in Condie’s *Matched* trilogy, where, as has already been briefly discussed in chapter 3.3, biopower via the manipulation of people’s memories is exercised by administering a red tablet to citizens whenever the authorities deem

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<sup>46</sup> Day similarly observes that “the pretty body not only conforms to social norms in its appearance but also, and more significantly, through the lesions that systematically shape behaviors” (Day 80).

this necessary. Two additional tablets, a green one and a blue one, also manipulate the body and mind in different ways. While the green tablet is supposed to calm a person down when overly agitated, the blue one is said to help people survive in desperate circumstances without food and water for a few days (*Matched* 51), when in effect it actually kills them (*Crossed* 180). Like Tally in the *Uglies* trilogy manages to “heal her brain after each surgery” (Moran 124), Cassia in the *Matched* trilogy manages to combat the effects of all three tablets despite not being immune to the red one like her friend Xander and her boyfriend Ky.

The importance given to these three differently coloured tablets in the Society is emphasised from the very beginning of the first novel. On her way to her Matching Ceremony, Cassia reflects on how for the occasion of this evening she has stored “the three emergency tablets that everyone carries” (*Matched* 5-6) in her “artifact”<sup>47</sup>, a “treasure[] from the past” of which each citizen is allowed only one (*Matched* 5). Cassia’s artefact, a compact mirror, is a family heirloom, given to her by her grandfather and engraved with the date “1940” (*Matched* 5), although Cassia is not sure what this number signifies. Thus, from the very beginning of this trilogy, the themes of the tablets (as a means of biopower manipulating the body) and cultural (the artefact) as well as personal (Cassia’s grandfather) memories are inseparably linked. In this way, it is her grandfather, who used to be one of the Society’s Officials and thus possesses more knowledge of its strategies than the average citizen does, who ingrains a deep suspicion of the tablets in Cassia from early on (*Matched* 118-19). Her grandfather’s words to her – “you are strong enough to go without it” (*Matched* 119) – enable Cassia to resist ever taking the green, calming tablet and defy the order to take the red tablet when Ky is taken away by the authorities at the end of the first novel (*Matched* 325).

As the red tablet is used to erase people’s memories of the last few hours prior to taking it, citizens usually do not remember even taking it so that its effect supposedly remains a mystery. However, there are those people among the population who have received inoculation, secretly organised by the rebels of the Rising, against the effects of the tablet as infants, such as Cassia’s friend Xander and her boyfriend Ky. Through this inoculation, the two young men are “immune to the red tablet, so the Society can’t take [their] memories” (*Reached* 12). Although in theory such inoculation is distributed randomly among the infants of the Society depending on whom the rebels can reach, in the character constellation of the narrative it is still indicative that it is the two male characters who are immune to the memory-

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<sup>47</sup> In the novel, American English spelling is used, therefore the spelling ‘artifact’ will be used in direct quotations as per the primary text. The British English spelling ‘artefact’ will be used in all other instances as per the chosen spelling for this study.

wiping red tablet, whereas the female protagonist, Cassia initially is not. In her discussion of three other trilogies, *Uglies* among them, Sarah Day refers to critic Susan Bordo's work *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (1993; 2003) in order to discuss gendered distribution of or protection from corporeal manipulation (cf. Day 78). Bordo's argument that "female bodies have historically been significantly more vulnerable than male bodies to extremes in [...] cultural manipulation of the body" (Bordo 143) is succinctly illustrated in the *Matched* trilogy by the fact that out of the trio of protagonists it is Cassia as the only female character who is not immune to the red tablet. Furthermore, it is another male character, her grandfather, who warns her of the tablets, which adds to the overall impression that the focus of manipulation is especially the female body.<sup>48</sup> Whereas Cassia thus has to struggle for autonomy over her body and the memories it contains, Ky's "body belongs to him more than most people's do" (*Reached* 274) even when he catches a mutated virus later on in the narrative to which no cure exists yet and to which, in this case, Cassia and Xander are immune.

Since Cassia has been able to resist taking the green tablet and, against all odds, has defeated the effects of the blue, death-bringing tablet by literally walking through its effects until she is "strong again, clearheaded" (*Crossed* 193; also 200), something that is said to be impossible, she initially hopes she is also immune to the red tablet. However, she has to realise that this is not the case when coming home one day from work she feels "confused", her "mind is foggy" (*Reached* 55) and she finds a slip of paper with the word 'remember' in her sleeve, a note she has written to herself to make herself aware whenever she has been made to take the red tablet.<sup>49</sup> When she realises that she is "not immune", "[s]ome part of [her], some hope and belief in what [she is], dissolves and disappears" (*Reached* 56). Instead of giving in to despair about this revelation, however, she practices further strategies of resilience and resistance by thinking of what she actually *can* remember (*Reached* 56). By refusing to let the manipulation of her body as a container of memories go unnoticed or crush her sense of self and her will to exercising her agency entirely and thus by appropriating her (adolescent) deviancy, she already at least in part escapes the homogenising control of the

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<sup>48</sup> However, it has to be highlighted that in the *Hunger Games* trilogy it is Peeta, Katniss's male counterpart, who suffers a biomedical manipulation of his memories as a form of torture and it is Katniss who helps him to regain a sense of what is real and what is not (cf. *Mockingjay*).

<sup>49</sup> The reader is prepared for this eventuality early on in the third novel of the trilogy when Cassia explains that she has included a small note in her tablet container that says 'remember' so that "[i]f the Society ever makes [her] take the red tablet, [she]'ll slip this up into [her] sleeve and then [she]'ll know that they've made [her] forget" (*Reached* 18).



authorities and insists on her right to be different – in this case, initially to be aware of the manipulation in the first place and then, slowly but surely, to overcome its effect by regaining previously erased memories.

In the *Uglies* trilogy, due to the pervasiveness of the homogenising effect of the operation and the consequent impossibility to appropriate and/or contest it as a not-operated-on ‘ugly’ from within the community, Tally decides to make the operation itself the ground within which to develop a physical and mental practice to challenge its effects. In order to do this, she gives herself up to Special Circumstances at the end of *Uglies* and receives the operation willingly. However, unbeknownst to the authorities, she has also agreed to serve as a test subject for a cure that has been developed by defected scientists in the Smoke. Day aptly summarises that Tally’s “decision, then, allows her to rebel and receive the pretty body she’s always wanted, though now this body paradoxically represents resistance rather than acceptance of social norms” (81). Thus, while to the outside world, her “prettiness locates her body as a space upon which social control has been mapped” (Day 80), it is actually Tally who, by giving her body up willingly, has created a concrete bodily reality which she and the rebels testing the cure intend to use for making claims to rights rather than to submit to society’s norms.

At the beginning of *Pretties*, this plan seems in danger as Tally struggles as much with her memory as every other ‘new pretty’. While the implied reader notices almost immediately that her memories have been distorted and that any notion of dissent or critical reflection is missing (cf. *Pretties* 13, 18), Tally herself notices the “bogus memories that [do not] fit together” (*Pretties* 19) only hazily. As the operation is geared towards docility and an easy management of the population, it produces a desire for mindless hedonism in ‘new pretties’. Any desire for individuality that might be left is channelled into the legitimate creation of costumes for the endless parties Tally and her friends are attending, as well as into additional ornamental body modifications (*Pretties* 8, 10ff.). Through this controlled and harmless exercise of being different (by wearing the most outrageous costume) that nevertheless is performed within the normative confines of New Pretty Town, any more substantial form of claim-making for a right to be different and self-represent that would include questioning and challenging the established structures and thus be geared towards justice-oriented citizenship is suppressed. Therefore, it is exactly the recovery of these critical capacities, including happy and unhappy memories, that is turned into a counter-hegemonic practice by Tally and some of her friends, and they use the medium of the body, as the operation does, too, to counter its very effects.

Summarising what has been said so far on the *Uglies* and *Matched* trilogies, it can be observed that both Tally and Cassia as representatives of their respective societies have been robbed of parts of their memory, which on the scale of the entire populations of their worlds also affects cultural and not only personal memory. Both seek to find a way to re-activate those parts of their personal reference memory that the authorities have sought to erase or at least alter via biopolitical means and re-integrate these into their working memory. In order to achieve this, both make use of their bodies to create concrete (bodily) realities through “sensory or emotional experiences” (Moran 132) perceived via the medium of the body, making use of the fact that “memory [...] can never be separated from the domain of the senses, for memory always has elements that are embodied” (Chakrabarty 460). In the *Uglies* trilogy, Tally and her friends develop strategies to stay “bubbly” (e.g. *Pretties* 11-12; the term is used repeatedly throughout the novel), that is clear-headed, to gain access to personal memories that have been cancelled out by the operation in the second volume of the trilogy and in the *Matched* trilogy, sensory, embodied experiences help Cassia to defeat the effects of the red pill despite not being immune to it.

As a ‘new pretty’ Tally at first seeks to “escape all the tangled memories” (*Pretties* 24) of the time before becoming ‘pretty’, but glimpsing a member of Special Circumstances at a party and the fear this causes in Tally have the effect of making “the world [...] strangely clear” to her for a moment and of “remov[ing] some barrier between her and the world” (*Pretties* 34). However, when the ‘pretty’, that is manipulated, state of mind takes over her consciousness again, she thinks of her moment of clarity as “brain-missing” (*Pretties* 38, 39). Nevertheless, the realisation that fear, but also physical pain as well as the uncomfortable feelings of self-alienation and insecurity induced by the haziness of their memories can induce clarity of mind and restore manipulated memories, Tally, Shay and Tally’s new boyfriend Zane devise strategies to intentionally produce and maintain such awareness. They perform specific acts with and on their bodies in order to actively resist the authorities’ homogenising and controlling aims, which range from performing daring tasks to less playful acts of self-harming, specifically cutting oneself and self-starving. On the one hand it can be argued that these practices tie in with Figlerowicz’s argument about the mutilated body constituting a form of counter-normativity and the self-destruction of the body representing a reclamation from the body’s perceived status of social property that have been outlined above in the context of the discussion of the *Hunger Games* trilogy, and it seems that Moran understands the practices in this way when she observes that “[t]he pain [via cutting] helps [Shay] [...] to move beyond the mental limitations imposed by the surgeries” and to try and “take back some

control over her body by turning to self-injury” (133). Zane’s practice of starving himself and subsisting only on coffee for days in a row which is soon adopted by Tally has the same effect on them that the cutting has on Shay. In a reverse strategy to that of the operation, which has erased any scars or other blemishes they might have had from their childhood and adolescence (similar to the victors ‘make-over’ in the *Hunger Games* trilogy), they try to re-activate their cognitive memory by voluntarily inflicting new scars or other forms of harm on their bodies in the hope of gaining access to more reliable visions of their past and present.

However, the way in which one form of disciplining the body (self-harm) is represented as a way to challenge and resist another form of disciplining the body (via biopolitics) and is thus at least potentially framed as a positive strategy seems cynical when considering that “[i]n contemporary culture and discourse, [the] discomfort [of young women with their bodies] is often aligned with eating disorders and self-harm” (Day 79). Interestingly, while Shay’s practice of cutting herself is frequently associated by Tally with madness and insanity (cf. *Pretties* 163, 166, 171, 179), no such attribute is given to her own and her boyfriend’s self-starving, even though the authorities in Tally’s world give the aim of eradicating mental illnesses with physical consequences such as cutting or bulimia/anorexia as one of the reasons for introducing the ‘pretty’ operation in the first place (*Uglies* 43, 190). Nevertheless, the narrative emphasises that neither strategy is ultimately successful: when one of her friends refuses to leave the city with her to stay permanently clear-headed, Tally realises that “[a] few tricks [are] not enough to make everyone bubbly” but that rather “you ha[ve] to *want* your mind to change” (*Pretties* 218). Furthermore, while Tally and Shay seem to succeed in their individual ways of harming their bodies for a certain period, this is only to the effect that they draw attention to themselves with their “methods of resistance” and are consequently co-opted and integrated “into the Specials and turn[ed] [...] into tools of repression” (Moran 133), losing their agency once more.

Tally discovers that less harmful corporeal (sensory and emotional) experiences that are triggered by simple acts such as seeing or smelling can have the same or even a stronger effect than the other methods she tries when she meets her ex-boyfriend David again on her second escape from the city. Seeing his un-operated (‘ugly’) face as well as smelling and feeling him causes “her long-suppressed memories [...] [to] finally flood[] back” “now that he [stands] next to her” as they have “survived the operation, hidden somewhere inside her brain” (*Pretties* 305, 306). Her mind and the memories it has ‘archived’, she realises, are more resilient than she has expected, and the gentler methods of recovering them are more effective as the change they produce is more profound. This is highlighted when, now turned into a

Special, it is not so much Tally's memories that have been distorted but her perception of the world, which has become much more acute and unforgiving. She realises that she does not "want to be this way" (*Specials* 85) and does not "want to *see* this way" (*Specials* 86) when her unforgiving gaze also perceives her boyfriend as now merely average, even "crippled" (*Specials* 77; also 76, 82, 178). Remembering what she used to love about Zane (*Specials* 84-85) combined with his insistence on her ability to change her self and her mind again (*Specials* 78, 82, 133, 134) finally enable Tally to "revert[] to her own nature" (*Specials* 152). Ultimately, Tally realises, it does not need harmful bodily practices to regain and maintain ownership of her body and mind, but instead more positive sensory and emotional experiences like "loving someone – or being in the wild, or maybe just a plunge into freezing water" (*Pretties* 326).

Like Tally, in the *Matched* trilogy Cassia ultimately regains a particular memory of a day with her grandfather and thus beats the memory-erasing effect of the red tablet by making use of sensory triggers, especially sight and touch, and emotional connections to the people closest to her. This memory is a key trigger for her because it is attached to her grandfather, who has always been the person in her life to challenge her, to encourage her to think for herself and to believe in her ability to master life without recourse to the green or blue tablets. On the day of his death (which is pre-determined by Society) he tells Cassia that his favourite memory of her is the one of the red garden day. The formulation in the singular intrigues her as to her knowledge she has spent a number of days with her grandfather that would match this designation. As she gradually comes to understand herself, her grandfather as well as the Society much better, she realises that her grandfather has indeed meant to refer to one particular day, the memory of which has been erased from Cassia's mind. In this way, it is the memory of her grandfather and what he has come to symbolise in her life that moves Cassia to seek a way to retrieve this particular memory. While Cassia does not resort to practices of self-harm like Tally in the *Uglies* trilogy does, she also realises that sensory and emotional triggers experienced via the medium of the body help her to re-gain access to this memory that has previously been lost to her. In this way, a first fragment of the memory, "flicker[ing] in and out" "[f]or a moment" (*Reached* 288), comes back to her when her boyfriend Ky falls ill and Cassia is both worried about him and tries to ease his pain by distracting him with a red flower bud. Strong emotions and the sense of sight thus enable her to get an initial access to this particular memory. A further fragment is restored to her when she spends time with her best friend and supposed Match Xander, ruminating about a day of planting flowers together, which makes Cassia's "heart ache[] for [them] both" (*Reached* 337ff.). Finally, she regains

the complete memory when she is caring for her mother after her father's death and is herself "desperate for something to hold on to" (*Reached* 459). Thus, slowly but surely, Cassia manages to "build the [memory] back like stepping-stones to take [her] to the other side of forgetfulness, to find the memory on the other bank" (*Reached* 469), understanding that her grandfather has left the clue so she "can get it all back" (*Reached* 468). Having achieved this once, Cassia knows she is able to regain other memories, such as the one that was taken from her when she realised she is not immune to the red tablet (*Reached* 470).

The similar way in which Tally in the *Uglies* and Cassia in the *Matched* trilogies fight the alteration and even loss of some of their memories due to biopolitical manipulation is mirrored in the fact that they both manage to struggle through the effects of their body-mind manipulations without having to take any remedies. In contrast to Stowe in the *Longlight* trilogy, who had to rely on others to have the autonomy over her body-mind restored to her, Tally and Cassia successfully "rewire" (e.g. *Specials* 321, 345) themselves and thus manage to re-access their personal reference memory which, in turn, is necessary for them to be able to act *as* citizens. Thereby, the *Uglies* and *Matched* trilogies highlight the capacity of the body-mind-unit to resist biopolitical domestication and subjugation and allow their female adolescent protagonists to reclaim their corporeal experience and/as personal reference memory in a more positive way than especially the *Hunger Games* trilogy does. Nevertheless, in the case of the *Uglies* trilogy, Tally's "taking ownership of [her] body" (Moran 137) is more ambivalent than it appears at first glance. In contrast to her friend Shay and the other Cutters, Tally decides to retain the "monstrous" body given to her through the operations, but instead of using its "morphological configuration" (*Specials* 237) as "a dangerous weapon" (*Specials* 236) as intended by Special Circumstances, she uses it to "kind of [...] save the world" (*Specials* 347) from renewed environmental destruction. While Moran argues that this can be regarded as an expression of her "hard-won autonomy" (137), the fact that "Cutters weren't *designed* to live indoors" (*Specials* 320; emphasis added) as well as the parting words of Tally's former antagonist, Dr. Cable, to "[l]eave, and for [Dr. Cable's] sake, keep [her]self special [as] [t]he world may need [her], one day" (*Specials* 335) call the autonomy of and agency behind the choice of how and where Tally situates her "still special" body (*Specials* 345) partially into question.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, while this study agrees with Moran that Tally situating herself as she does at the end of the narrative suggests her taking on "responsibilities we owe to each other" based on "an interconnected model of

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<sup>50</sup> This argument will be elaborated on in the discussion of ecological citizenship in chapter 5.

identity” (137), the fact remains that culturally just as much as spatially and politically, Tally is an outsider to her society. If the right to be different without losing one’s right to belong entails an element of cultural visibility, Tally situating herself in the wild shows that in the end, she does not fully resist the hegemonic definition of a culturally intelligible body after all as she still considers herself and is considered by others as ‘out of place’ even in her changing society. This notwithstanding, the fact that her friend/ex-boyfriend David is able to look beyond the alterations to her body and attests that she “‘just look[s] like Tally to [him]”” (*Specials* 345) implies at least the possibility that even extremely altered bodies like Tally’s will not remain ‘special’, that is unintelligible, forever.

Overall, the novels analysed in this chapter suggest that the experience of adolescent female corporeality is an embattled one and that the traumatised and fractured (adolescent) female body is the one that is culturally intelligible and therefore represents *the* culturally hegemonic female body. Of course, in narratives about (violent) oppression and (the no less violent) resistance to it, the female protagonists’ bodies are not the only ones that are embattled (Peeta in the *Hunger Games* trilogy, Roan in the *Longlight* Trilogy, Ky in the *Matched* trilogy and Zane in the *Uglies* trilogy have been mentioned only in passing or in footnotes in this chapter), so that the corporeal experience of pain, trauma, loss and not being ‘whole’ that is emphasised here could be read as a metaphoric representation of the quintessence of growing from childhood through adolescence to adulthood for all young people. However, the fact remains that in most cases the female point of view is given predominance via focalisation, which suggests that for young women the notion of corporeal citizenship as embodied resistance to biopolitical manipulation and oppression via a politics and culture of experience is even more difficult and strenuous to negotiate. The narratives both highlight this difficulty and at the same time reinforce it by frequently requiring the interlocution of a male character in order to make the female adolescent body as a product and producer of surrounding culture more intelligible even in its resistance to cultural hegemony, whether this is expressed via David’s view of Tally in the *Uglies* trilogy as outlined above, through Cassia’s memories of her grandfather as indispensable for defeating the effect of the red tablet in the *Matched* trilogy (cf. above) or through Katniss needing Peeta’s love and “the promise that life can go on” attached to it “to survive” (*Mockingjay* 453) and thus to reclaim her embodied existence. This notion is, of course, highly problematic as it reinforces male ascriptions to and viewpoints on the female body despite focalisation via female characters.

While in the case of the *Hunger Games* trilogy it can be argued that, at least on the story level, the fact that Katniss ultimately becomes a mother fifteen years on from the main events

represents an act of laying claim to the new peaceful and free society her previous bodily performances have helped to bring about, this is not entirely convincing in the light that it is “Peeta [who] wanted them [the children] so badly”, not Katniss, and that in fact it took her “fifteen years [...] to agree” (*Mockingjay* 454) at all. These formulations suggest that Katniss has not completely regained ownership of her own body and is still susceptible to being inscribed by (patriarchal) hegemonic cultural discourses but is only hazily aware that this might be an issue, noticeable in her expression of (initial) discomfort with ‘using her body’ in this way. On a meta-narrative level, by re-iterating a very conservative view of what the hegemonic culturally intelligible female body looks like and what it can do, the *Hunger Games* trilogy ultimately contributes to the biopolitical discourse of the value of the nuclear family which not only narratively absorbs and thus domesticates adolescent difference and unintelligibility by showing the female protagonist as an adult (cf. chapter 3) but also contributes to the continued training of implied (female adolescent) readers “to monitor and regulate their own behaviour and bodies” (Byers and Stapleton 4; cf. above).

In the *Longlight* trilogy, the soul of Stowe’s dead mother (and thus a female relative) comments that ““FEW OF US HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF LIVING WHOLE”” (*Keepers Shadow* 91) during Stowe’s exorcism experience, which initially seems to underline the representation of female embodied experience as one that is fraught and broken. This notwithstanding, it is also her mother who furthermore asserts that Stowe is ““TOO STRONG”” to be defeated by Darius, the City’s master (*Keeper’s Shadow* 134) despite the hole in her heart left by Ferrell’s invasion of her Dreamfield and actual physical body. Henceforth, the representation of Stowe does not endorse a reading of her corporeal experience as entirely domesticated. By the end of the narrative, Stowe’s still ‘monstrous’, that is premature pre-teen, body-mind is not so much defeated as re-made by her physically and emotionally challenging experiences. Whereas in the beginning the liminality of her physical existence has been condemned by most, her brother Roan, for example, increasingly begins to understand that the fault lies not with her but with him and his perception of her when he realises that “[h]e’d wanted Stowe to be his little sister again, but she’d become much more than that: wise enough not to ask the same of him” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 201). The more he understands that “maybe she doesn’t need his protection” the more he comes to admire “her resolve” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 172). While this situation to a certain extent echoes the problem of male characters explaining or facilitating the cultural intelligibility of female characters, the way in which the male character, Roan, uses these realisations serves more to reflect on and become conscious of his own thought patterns than to pass judgement on his sister. In the end, it is Stowe who, with several other

representatives of the Farland factions that “‘were estranged’” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 407), accepts the responsibility of becoming a member on the newly elected Council while her brother leaves. Using her body-mind in this way creates visibility not only for her corporeal (liminal) experience, but also for those of the other Council members, most of whom belong to formerly marginalised groups, and merges cultural with political citizenship. By placing not only Stowe’s body and identity but also those of others from marginalised communities at the centre of the new and reforming society, thus including the foreign, unknown or scary (cf. Velsingier qtd. above), the *Longlight* trilogy ends by making a strong argument for the right to be different without losing the right to belong. Thus, Stowe and other liminal, marginal bodies and identities still “figure in the tale” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 187) as its subversive or even utopian potential (cf. Velsingier qtd. above), a tale that Roan, the more traditional hero, is written out of at the end of the final novel (cf. chapter 3).

The other character who, apart from Stowe, most pronouncedly reclaims her cultural power, her right to be different and to self-represent via bodily practices is Cassia in the *Matched* trilogy. Whereas the liminality of Stowe’s body, as has been shown, is predominantly linked to her age vs. her mental capacities as well as to the different manifestations of her body-mind that exist, in the *Matched* trilogy, apart from the indispensability of sensory and emotional experiences to regain ownership of body and memory, the sense of the body as a threshold between inside (personal) and outside (social, cultural) space is emphasised via the notion of the body as a ‘container’ (of memories). This can be understood in two senses of the word ‘to contain’: firstly, as in the *Uglies* trilogy, as a storage space or vessel and secondly, in the sense of keeping something within certain limits and stopping it from spreading. On the one hand, memories that might lead to dissident opinions or critique of the system are erased by the red tablet people are required to take on demand and are thus stopped from spreading by the authorities. On the other hand, the citizens as well as non-citizens like Cassia’s boyfriend Ky, guard those of their memories with caution that might endanger them within the system they are living in and thus keep them within the contained space of their body and mind. As Cassia reflects, “[i]n the Society, we don’t call out beyond our own bodies, the walls of our rooms” (*Reached* 58), highlighting a strong sense of an embodied experience of control and containment that those living within the Society have internalised, thus contributing to their own ‘domestication’ and subjugation. In small and initially secret instances of using her body in specific ways that are not sanctioned by the Society, Cassia reclaims her cultural power by transgressing this physical and mental experience of containment. In embodied performances, she turns her body into a



(clandestine) canvas for dissent by wearing a red silk dress underneath the standard citizens' uniform and carrying pages of forbidden poetry underneath her clothes. In addition to wearing "silk and paper against [her] skin" (*Reached* 17), she also collects branches to turn them into writing material. When she reflects that "[t]hese branches will be my bones [...] and the paper will be my heart and skin, the places that feel everything", breaks "more branches into pieces: a shinbone, a thighbone, arm bones" (*Reached* 58) and uses one to write a letter into the snow, she allows her body to break out of the limitations imposed by the Society and appropriates it to create a new concrete reality (cf. Velsing qtd. above) that is at the same time linked to the aspects of making and connecting, which are also highly relevant for representations of cultural citizenship and will be discussed in the next sub-chapter.

Concluding, it is important to re-emphasise that while all protagonists discussed in this chapter use their body not only as a medium to experience but also to actively produce the world around them via the corporeal practices they apply or reject, as has been shown above, such practices do not automatically result in a reclamation of full cultural power and agency. Cultural citizenship on the micro-level of the corporeal is more often marked by ambivalence, as especially the examples of Tally in the *Uglies* and Stowe in the *Longlight* trilogies have shown, thus reflecting contemporary society's lingering unease with the 'monstrous' or 'special' bodies of female adolescents. The protagonist's chances for full cultural enfranchisement are represented as most promising in the case of the *Longlight* trilogy, where cultural and political citizenship are merged for Stowe, or in the *Matched* trilogy, in which the corporeal element of cultural citizenship is combined with other aspects such as making and connecting through artistic practice.

#### **4.4 Citizenship as 'Making and Connecting': Literacy and Creativity as Spaces of Enfranchisement in the *Carbon Diaries* Duology and the *Dustlands*, *Exodus*, *Hunger Games* and *Matched* Trilogies**

Creative expression and production to a certain extent is connected to both major aspects discussed in the two previous chapters. Firstly, the medium of the body is needed to facilitate the 'making' component of creativity, i.e. to manifest the creative product, be it a text, painting, story, song or other form of performance as illustrated in Cassia using her body to write a letter on the ground in *Reached*. Secondly, such creative practice often communicates with a given society's cultural institutions and political realities, criticising or extending the

cultural canon, resuscitating ‘forgotten’ histories from the historical archives for counter-hegemonic purposes, for which, as Assmann contends, it needs the artist (or scholar) instead of the archivist (cf. chapter 4.2), and challenging or subverting discourses dominating the contemporary political debate. The transgressive element of creative production – transgressing from the mind through the body to the outside world as well as transgressing that which is already part of the cultural memory and hegemonic discourse – makes it useful for highly engaged forms of (political) citizenship, such as citizen action/justice-oriented citizenship. Thus, creative making directly opposes the passive consumption of sanctified cultural products and hegemonic narratives that is expected of the population in many dystopian narratives.<sup>51</sup>

Similar to the ‘writing back’ paradigm in postcolonial studies, which describes a process in which those formerly rendered voiceless in colonised countries re-claimed a voice for themselves and created “new modes of representation” (McLeod 25), the creative making and expression of the protagonists in the novels discussed in this study as well as their practice of sharing such ‘products’ can be regarded as a strategy for telling their version of events, for speaking up against injustice and/or for achieving healing from traumatic experiences which facilitates the positive performance and acknowledgement of difference.<sup>52</sup> The close connection between cultural and political citizenship is once again made evident when considering the ways in which creative ‘making and connecting’ can upset hegemonic (national) narratives (as discussed in chapter 3.3) on a level that is both cultural and political at the same time. For adolescents, who on the formal political level are predominantly “‘ex-centric’” (Baccolini, “Gender and Genre” 18) or “de-citizenised” (Smith and Pangsapa 33) due to their age if nothing else, performing a citizenly subject position in the realm of cultural production is, as these novels argue, often more accessible and, at the same time, a prerequisite for growing political awareness and engagement.

The discussion of in how far creative making and connecting has the power to disrupt social, cultural and political norms and values and to challenge rules has a long tradition reaching back to antiquity. According to Torkelson, questions of cultural power are already

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<sup>51</sup> In this context, also cf. artist Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi’s idea of ‘radical sharing’, which according to her has the potential to challenge and renegotiate both hegemonic knowledge and sites of knowledge production (cf. 255 ff.). Furthermore, as her friend and colleague Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum explains in an interview between the two, while “‘sharing sometimes implies that something becomes less because you’ve divided it’”, “‘radical sharing means that the thing becomes more because you are equally nourished by it’” (Nkosi 262).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. chapter 3.3 for a discussion of the function of sharing personal memories to counter the (attempt to establish a) hegemonic national discourse in the respective fictional society on a more overtly political level.

debated in Plato's *Republic*, where it is argued that *mousikē*, i.e. "the entire realm of the Muses, which encompasses not only what we call music but also stories, drama, poetry, and even the visual arts, like painting and sculpture" (28), is able to produce negative effects for the ideal society if it is of the 'wrong' kind. In a (fictional) dystopian society that is nevertheless labelled as 'ideal' by the authorities<sup>53</sup>, what these authorities define as the 'wrong' kind of creative expression is usually the kind of expression that produces visibility for suppressed voices, viewpoints and experiences. Thus, as Baccolini argues, beside the factors of recovering history and collective memory, in dystopian narratives it is especially "literacy [...] [that] becomes an instrumental tool of resistance for their protagonists" ("The Persistence of Hope" 520–21). Furthermore she explains that, also since antiquity, "the link between memory, imagination, and identity" is a well-established one because "Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory, is [also] the mother of the muses and the patroness of intellectual and artistic efforts; and she grants the power to tell about the present, past, and future, so that memory becomes, in a sense, the source of creativity" ("Finding Utopia in Dystopia" 169).

As has been shown in the previous chapters, and according to the dystopian genre conventions, personal individuality as well as novelty in cultural production are strongly discouraged if not actively and violently prevented in the fictional societies presented in the novels, and a sustained success in resisting this is difficult to achieve. A major counter-strategy represented in the novels under discussion is that of making claims to cultural power and thereby also moving towards political enfranchisement by "sharing stories, inserting oneself into ongoing stories of activism and political action, and making a new story – a story of oneself and of one's role in relation to a larger collective" (Clark and Marchi 70), which can be regarded as a strategy similar to 'writing back' in that it is concerned with (re-)gaining one's voice and social visibility. While Clark and Marchi discuss specifically young people's behaviour on social media, the practice of storytelling is not limited to a certain technological context and can be performed in and via a range of media, as the analysis will show. Such a practice is always necessarily culturally situated, as Clark and Marchi further explain, "in that personal narrative both represents individual experience and is structured through the frameworks and symbolic materials of particular contexts" (70). In *Giving an Account of Oneself* (2005), Judith Butler argues similarly when she explains that "the 'I' seek[ing] to give an account of itself [...] will find that this self is already implicated in a social

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. Ni, who argues in the case of the *Matched* trilogy that it is "no wonder creative arts have become redundant. The canon has closed. No revelation is to come. [...] citizens [...] would not have anything to write about, because life is made to be felt as perfect" (169).

temporality” and that for this reason “the ‘I’ has no story of its own that is not also the story of a relation – or set of relations – to a set of norms” (*Giving an Account* 7-8). Inherent in this idea of telling or visualising one’s own story within a context of social relations is the position of an addressee, “real or imagined” (*Giving an Account* 36), whom the story or account is shared with. However, where Butler frames the situation of ‘giving an account’ as one of loss and “dispossession” because the ‘I’ is “compelled to give the account away [...], to be disposed of it” within “the structure of address” (*Giving an Account* 36-37), Couldry et al. contend that storytelling can be a way “to *recognise* people in new ways as active narrators of their individual lives and the issues they share with others” (615) and thus frame the ‘structure of address’ more positively as one of sharing and connecting with an addressee.<sup>54</sup> Although both perspectives are valid, the analysis will concentrate on the more positive connotations of sharing and connecting, of recognising and understanding each other and, by extension, of being and becoming visible and audible, which is a crucial aspect of self-representation and making claims to cultural power, because this is also where the novels place their emphasis.

Thus, Clark and Marchi propose “that in order for young people to come to see themselves as part of a collective in which they can bring about the changes they wish to see, they must participate in storytelling themselves *into* that collective, and into citizenship” (82). In so far as bringing about desired changes necessitates an active questioning and challenging of the status quo, storytelling as described here can be linked to justice-oriented citizenship. In order to gain enfranchisement and agency in a specific culturally situated ‘social temporality’, to use Butler’s phrasing again, young people must engage in creative practices of performing themselves and their claims to visibility and participation, practices that become public within a structure of address.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, as Haedicke argues, such practices of storytelling rely “on dissensual principles [...] that reconfigure the status quo by troubling a sense of commonality or consensus with alternate voices inventing new ways of seeing, hearing and thinking and that suggest inventive strategies to alter what can be said or done about those perceptions and experiences” (107)<sup>56</sup>. In the novels analysed in this study, such a ‘troubling of commonality or consensus’ through dissensual storytelling via a variety of creative expression

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<sup>54</sup> Couldry et al. study the use of digital media and digital infrastructure in a variety of contexts, but the principal functions of storytelling can be transferred from the digital to other (media) contexts.

<sup>55</sup> Also cf. Clark and Marchi, who specifically discuss online contexts: “As an individual performs the self online, then, what might have been considered a private act can be rendered public and ‘bears the potential of a political act,’ as Papacharissi has argued (2015, p. 111)” (Clark and Marchi 72).

<sup>56</sup> Again, this is reminiscent of Bhabha’s explanations of the performative element of national discourses.

can be found, for instance, in *Matched* when Ky shares his personal (hi)story with Cassia via small illustrations of scenes from his childhood, or in *Aurora*, the last instalment of the *Exodus* trilogy, when Fox captures the imagination of a global audience by becoming the ‘midnight storyteller’. In so far as adolescent voices in general, and those of the protagonists in the dystopian novels in particular, are voices that are often “silenced and marginalised”, Mignolo’s dictum of such voices needing to “bring[] themselves into the conversation” (736) via performative practices, which has been discussed in chapter 3.4, can be made useful in this slightly different context again. Bringing oneself into the conversation and inserting oneself into the story, when combined with a “revolutionary art practice” can result in a “practice of [...] imagining as a *politicized* summoning” of a – as yet – ““missing people”” (Sunstrum 144) and/or ‘missing’ individual citizenly subject position.<sup>57</sup> By performing a cultural citizenly subject position in this way, the protagonists ultimately successfully assert their agency and right to be different against the obstacles of technocracy, trauma and/or a sense of disempowerment and voicelessness caused by social and environmental injustice and governmental mismanagement.

Whereas these novels collectively do indeed cover ‘the entire realm of the Muses’ for the creative mediation of individual expression and marginalised, silenced experiences, a positive representation of the media technology dominating the lived experience of the implied readership – digital communication media – is largely, although not entirely, absent. Despite the fact that with the establishment of the internet since the turn of the millennium and the rise of social media from the early to mid-2000s onwards digital storytelling has become highly popular, most of the novels analysed in this chapter subscribe to the embedding of cultural creative practices of making and connecting in the context of older technologies – literacy, music, visual arts or analogue communication technology like the radio. As has been pointed out already in chapter 4.1, the argument between positions claiming that a new technology will further the democratisation of society and those demonising it for bringing negative changes is as long as the history of the development of media technology itself (cf. Schmidt, “Mediengeschichtsschreibung” 312).<sup>58</sup> Balbi explains

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<sup>57</sup> Haedecke argues similarly to Sunstrum when she claims that “[a] grammar of storytelling disrupts a complacent stability by affecting a shift in the understanding of social space by transforming it ‘into a space for the appearance of a subject: the people, the workers, the citizens’ (Rancière 2010: 37).” (Haedicke 107). Also cf. Kenyan director and writer Wanuri Kahiu’s statement on how she considers her creative work: “I write from me, with full knowledge that my existence is political and anything I subsequently create will be political too” (Kahiu 168).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Rowley for a comment of the promises and dangers in the context of digital media: “These major shifts in technology and the heralding of the digital era by Web 2.0 have transformed daily life, making content creation

that “[i]f the medium often meets with polarized opinions based on hopes and fears [...], then, with the appearance of a new medium, the old is often ‘glorified’. [...] Part of the impact of new media on old media is to rehabilitate them. In contact with the new, the old seems to be better” (241).<sup>59</sup> While Balbi refers to the debates that in the past have unfavourably compared theatre and cinema, cinema and TV as well as radio and TV, this description also matches the representation of the way in which media technology are used in the novels under discussion. Narratives like the *Exodus*, the *Hunger Games* or the *Matched* trilogies provide examples of how “repressive governments have been quick to adopt new technologies in order to clamp down on freedom of expression and launch indoctrinating campaigns” (Dumbrava 771), but at least the *Exodus* trilogy also provides a counter-image by showing that “[v]irtual spaces [can also] provide activists and citizens with alternative means of communication and engagement that escape traditional forms of censorship and control” (Dumbrava 771). As Dumbrava summarises her argumentation, “[t]hus the tensions between citizenship and technology are not inherent but rather derived from the circumstances in which technologies are adopted, the ways in which they are used, and the ongoing political struggles over citizenship” (783). The following analysis discusses in which ways the novels address this tension Dumbrava refers to and in which ways the protagonists make use of various ‘old’ and ‘new’ technologies “for ‘acts of citizenship’” (Dumbrava 783) via creative expressions and/as storytelling, which while rooted in the cultural realm frequently overlap with and cross over into the political.

The *Matched* trilogy makes a strong case for the deep connection between literacy, creative expression and cultural and political agency. This aspect can be regarded as a key instance of genre memory since, as do many narratives in the dystopian genre tradition – DuPlessis refers to *Brave New World*, 1984 and *The Handmaid’s Tale* – the *Matched* trilogy also highlights “the power of literacy to destabilize the social engineering” (105) the authorities within the narrative have established. Like in the “classic dystopian novels” referenced by DuPlessis, in the *Matched* trilogy, too, “literacy is presented on both a society level – restricted or forbidden, often as a potential agent of societal or political instability – and also for its function in the life of the individual” (108). In the first novel of the trilogy, *Matched*, it soon becomes clear that literacy in the Society has been reduced to reading and typing while writing by hand has been abolished (cf. *Matched* 81). Cassia bemoans this situation when she wishes that she and others “still knew how to write instead of just type

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and information sharing an interactive, participatory and constant experience. [...] But the rapidity and scope of these changes have also resulted in latent anxiety, anomie, and distrust” (165).

<sup>59</sup> Also cf. Rowley: “Revealing the latent harms of technology precipitates reorder and a reversion to former modes of communication” (173).

things into our scribes” (*Matched* 122). Such a form of “limited, utilitarian literacy” (DuPlessis 104) is directly linked to the protagonist Cassia’s inability to express herself in an original, individual way. When she composes a letter to her grandfather as a present for his death day (or Final Banquet, in Society terms), she does so by “cutting and pasting and copying sentiments on the letter-making program” (*Matched* 71) of the digital library. Initially proud of her composition, she is later ashamed that “[her] hands [...], like almost everyone else in our Society, cannot write [and] merely know how to use the words of others” when her grandfather recognises that ““none of these words are [her] own”” (*Matched* 81). It is also her grandfather who, as one of his final acts in life, reminds her that ““[she] ha[s] words of [her] own”” and encourages her ““to trust [her] own words”” (*Matched* 81).

Cassia begins to increase her literacy skills and to develop a more critical mind frame by learning to write by hand when she discovers during a hiking trip that her neighbour and soon-to-be love interest Ky makes “shapes and curves and lines in the grass that seem familiar” and realises that “[h]e is writing in an old-fashioned, curved kind of writing” (*Matched* 170). She is fascinated by his ability “to create” and that “[h]e can write words whenever he wants” (*Matched* 170; also cf. 177) without the authorities, who monitor all other writing technology in the form of electronic scribes or data ports, noticing what he is doing. It is for this reason that she persuades Ky to teach her to write by hand (cf. *Matched* 171, 173-174), which they practice by using sticks to write in the dirt (*Matched* 177). In this way, they are acting ‘out of place’ in a double sense, firstly because they write in an environment that is not traditionally associated with writing and secondly because they do not use the tools intended for this practice.<sup>60</sup> To Cassia, handwriting represents a new technology for self-expression, and moreover, one that is not monitored by the authorities. According to Schmidt, users have to become competent in using a specific new medium (or, in Cassia’s case, one that is new for them), which Schmidt describes as a form of disciplining the perception but which, however, does not necessarily restrict users but enables them to approach all media within a given society in a more critical and differentiated way and to become more creative (“Mediengeschichtsschreibung” 311). Similarly, McDonough and Wagner emphasise the intimate connection between literacy and media skills on the one and critical thinking on the other hand when they first consider “the act of learning to write and think” as part of the same process for Cassia and then use the same formulation to argue that

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<sup>60</sup> This aspect of ‘acting out of place’ and the refusal to stop creating when the intended, established tools are no longer available is also taken up again in *Crossed*, when Ky remembers how his mother used to paint images onto stone with water because proper paints were not available to her (*Crossed* 134).

despite all its rules and restrictions, “Society cannot take away her ability to write and think” (164).

In addition to handwriting, Ky also uses illustrations which he draws on old paper napkins and annotates with little comments to share snippets of his life story with Cassia (cf. *Matched* 176 ff.). His storytelling practice via a combination of drawings and written comments represents a dissensual creative practice by which he ‘brings himself into the conversation’ and inserts himself and his experience in the Outer Provinces into the overall story. When Cassia reads and subsequently destroys Ky’s napkin story to keep them both safe, both aspects of the ‘structure of address’ discussed above are recognisable: Ky’s giving an account of himself can be regarded as a disposal of it when Cassia burns the napkin, “wonder[ing] if [she] will ever have enough strength to hold onto something”, like “Ky’s story” (*Matched* 179); but the stronger emphasis is placed on recognising each other in new ways and as active narrators of an individual, non-normative story, as the budding romantic relationship between the two testifies, which of course is in itself a challenge of the authorities. Furthermore, the way in which Ky presents his story does not only subversively undermine the authorities’ attempt at controlling all communication technology, it also challenges Cassia to expand her ability for critical thinking even further. As she struggles to “classify” Ky’s creative production into one of the categories she knows – it is “[n]ot a picture, not a poem, not the lyrics to a song, although [her] sorting mind notices the pattern of all these things” (*Matched* 177) – it becomes evident that she does not only have to become familiar with and confident in using a for her new media technology (handwriting), she also has to negotiate a for her new (textual, artistic) genre (the combination of image and text).

Cassia indeed has to undergo a steep learning curve as, when she reads the first ‘instalment’ of Ky’s personal story, she concedes that she does not “even know what you would use to make marks like this” (*Matched* 177) since the ‘old’ tools for writing that the implied readers are familiar with have been banned. Thus, in addition to teaching her how to use a technology that is new for her and becoming familiar with new forms of creative expression, handwriting also requires her to develop the ingenuity to produce her own tools. While McDuffie is certainly not wrong to argue that “[h]andwriting [...] becomes a means for Cassia and Ky to rebel against the society [sic.]” (149), it is moreover the combination of the practice of handwriting and the follow-on effects and requirements this entails, such as getting access to a non-normative, non-controlled way of expressing oneself or having to think outside the box in order to procure tools, as well as the conscious act of connecting with another via sharing a skill and what is produced by employing it that provide the actual



potential of this performative practice to engender more agency for the characters and thus a more enfranchised (cultural) citizenly subject position. McDuffie addresses the link between creative making and enfranchisement more implicitly when she explains that “Cassia’s rebellion through consumption turns into production when she is exposed to handwriting. [...] an act that signifies considerable autonomy in a Society where conformity and submission are the norm” (148-149).

An interesting counter example to the way in which the potential of literacy is represented in the *Matched* trilogy can be found in the *Dustlands* trilogy. Of all the novels selected for analysis in this study, this is the only narrative that explicitly does *not* represent literacy as a requirement for overcoming an unjust tyrant and in Saba has a protagonist who is the only entirely illiterate heroine among the protagonists of the selected novels.<sup>61</sup> Thus, for Saba, literacy is not a necessary skill to discover DeMalo’s scam and develop a strategy for defeating him. Her inability to read and write transpires early on in the narrative when she and her younger sister meet an older couple in the desert on their way to Hopetown, the next bigger settlement. When the man, Mr Pinch, shows Saba “‘a book’”, “holds it like [...] the most precious thing in the world” and “gives [her] a look like [she] oughta be impressed”, Saba only thinks that “[i]t sure don’t look like much” with its pages “covered all over with black squiggle marks” (*Blood Red Road* 100). As Mr Pinch is shortly after revealed to be a slaver and a drug lord, his attempts to convince Saba that this “Wrecker tech” is “‘good [...]. Noble even!’” (*Blood Red Road* 101) ring very hollow indeed.

The other major character who is literate in this trilogy is DeMalo, who in the first novel is still in Pinch’s service but then installs himself as the tyrannical ruler after Pinch’s death. While in the *Matched* trilogy, as McDuffie correctly observes, handwriting and literacy are not only represented as subversive of an unjust system but are also “romanticized by the depiction of cursive as beautiful and by [their] role in furthering Cassia and Ky’s relationship ([*Matched*] 171)” (149), the seductiveness of (print) literacy is shown to be much more sinister in the *Dustlands* trilogy. In a scene that directly follows on from DeMalo showing Saba the ‘visions’ he receives from ‘Mother Earth’ (cf. chapter 3.3), he reads to her from one of the books he owns. The text he reads is the first stanza of Wordsworth’s poem 536. Ode,

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<sup>61</sup> Even the other trilogies with a post-disaster focus that represent books as an (almost) lost commodity and culturally significant treasure as well as literacy as a more and more uncommon and thus all the more valuable skill, the *Exodus* and *Longlight* trilogies, have protagonists (Mara and Fox in *Exodus*, Roan and Stowe in *Longlight*) who are literate.

“Intimations of Immortality”<sup>62</sup>, and when he finishes reading Saba is overwhelmed, telling him that he “‘spoke how [she] feel[s]’” (*Rebel Heart* 314). When she kisses him – although they are antagonists already at this point –, she kisses “[h]is lips, his mouth, *the words he spoke*” (*Rebel Heart* 314; emphasis added). In contrast to Ky in the *Matched* trilogy, DeMalo does not use his literacy to engage in a creative process of making and connecting by, for instance, showing Saba how to read as well. Neither is print literacy in this trilogy depicted as a media technology that has the potential to challenge and subvert unjust systems and further the democratisation process. Instead, DeMalo, and Mr Pinch before him, abuse print literacy as a tool to exercise power, similar to the way digital communication media are shown to be used by the authorities in the *Matched* trilogy. Whereas the romantic element of handwriting and literacy in the *Matched* trilogy, as shown above, is linked to agency and enfranchisement through its further connotations, in the *Dustlands* trilogy it is associated with an oppressive patriarchy as well as the imperialist endeavours of DeMalo’s expansion of New Eden, which ties in with this trilogy’s implicit criticism of settler colonial narratives (cf. chapter 3.4).

When Saba wakes up the next morning, she feels neither empowered nor recognised as a person with her own story to tell. Rather, she “cain’t [sic.] believe that was [her]” (*Rebel Heart* 315), “cain’t [sic.] breathe” and feels that “[t]his ain’t right, it’s ... all wrong.” (*Rebel Heart* 317). Thus, DeMalo’s use of literacy does not encourage others to actively engage in creative processes of resisting via making and connecting, too, but seeks to estrange them from themselves to gain power over them. Furthermore, in contrast to Cassia in the *Matched* trilogy, who also starts out by consuming other people’s words, DeMalo does not make the transition into starting a creative process of his own. It can be argued that one reason of why his ‘project’ of New Eden fails is his continued borrowing of words and ‘visions’ of others and his failure to share and connect via such a creative process for the sake of dividing and ruling over others instead. This brief comparison between the representation of literacy in the *Matched* and *Dustlands* trilogies illustrates Dumbrava’s argument quoted earlier that whether technologies are supportive or obstructive to citizenly enfranchisement is not inherent in the technology itself but in the way in which it is used.

The *Matched* trilogy furthermore aptly illustrates different stages of becoming socio-culturally enfranchised by performing oneself into visibility (cf. Clark and Marchi quoted

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<sup>62</sup> Once again, in Wordsworth, a dead, white and male canonical author is referenced – see the discussion in chapter 4.2. However, the fact that the person who quotes from this poem, DeMalo, is an oppressive tyrant, re-confirms the argument that (Western) canonical literature or cultural production in general is represented as a spring board and/or leaving place for the protagonists of the novels discussed.

above). While the first novel in the trilogy discusses the step from passive consumption to gaining the ability to actively produce, as shown above, the second novel, *Crossed*, represents the process of Cassia and some of her friends inserting themselves into the ongoing story of activism that is the Rising, which they join towards the end of the second novel. The last novel, *Reached*, finally is concerned with the way in which especially Cassia engages in making new stories and creating new outlets for these. The potential for connecting with others that lies in her own creation dawns on Cassia when she engages in a ‘structure of address’ by sharing a poem she writes spontaneously with a stranger in order to give the woman words to turn into a lullaby for her son. Her reflection about this exchange becomes, on a meta-narrative level, also an instance of textual self-reflexivity while highlighting the positive connotation of the ‘structure of address’: “This poem is between the two of us, but also for others. [...] And it strikes me that this is how writing anything is, really. A collaboration between you who give the words and they who take them and find meaning in them, or put music behind them, or turn them aside because they were not what was needed” (*Reached* 124). The aspect of sharing and connecting is emphasised even more strongly when, a few days after this incident, Cassia receives a small self-made sculpture of a bird in return (*Reached* 156), which leads her to the realisation that “[she is] not the only one creating” (*Reached* 157) and that “[she is] not alone” (*Reached* 174). She and the girl who has given her the bird sculpture subsequently resolve to initiate a space in which, unlike the Archivists, “[they] don’t need to *trade* [their] art – [they] could give, or share” (*Reached* 157)<sup>63</sup>, which they find in the dumping ground for “the white pieces of the [barricade] wall” (*Reached* 159) that used to surround quarantine spaces in the cities and that becomes known as “the Gallery” (*Reached* 174). In contrast to the realm of the Archivists, which is situated in vaults underground, “the Gallery [...] is alive and above ground” (*Reached* 197). As Ni argues, it constitutes a “new form of binding [people into a community]” and, as such, “a magnet that draws people toward it, a space of radical equality and true democracy” (174).

The democratic element of the Gallery space lies, of course, in the fact that everyone may contribute. Apart from Cassia’s poems and her teaching others to write, people bring pictures, wood printings, fashion designs and songs to this cultural space. It can be argued that due to its egalitarianism – even an Archivist makes a contribution, ““a story [he] wrote””, although he is “embarrassed” (*Reached* 177) – the Gallery has the opposite function to that of

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<sup>63</sup> The differentiation from the Archivists’ practice, discussed in chapter 4.2, is apparently so important that it is highlighted again later on: “[...] we are not competing with the Archivists for trades. This is a place for *sharing*.” (*Reached* 177; emphasis added).

museums as described in chapter 4.2, namely not to culturally sanctify certain cultural objects or products over others, but to give an equal space and equal value to all. Apart from the democratisation of cultural production, the very fact that “through the use of white walls”, “objects are placed within exhibition displays [and] are [thus] framed as aesthetic objects for demonstration, not function” (Farkhatdinov and Acord 499) has to be regarded as subversive in a society which hitherto has almost exclusively focused on utilitarian functionality. The objects, texts, songs and pictures on display have a value not because they support the rule of the authorities or the Archivists’ trade in commodities, but because people have originally created them and are not only willing but positively happy to share them with each other. While on the one hand, this conscious departure from the utilitarian dictum via public display and aesthetic valuation can be read as a romanticisation of spaces of (aesthetic) display, on the other hand it can be argued that this representation makes an argument similar to Dumbrava’s point on the use of media technology: whether a space of display like a museum or gallery is supportive or subversive of hegemonic definitions depends on the circumstances and the way in which it is used. The major difference in this case lies in how cultural practices and products are framed and who determines this framing, which links this discussion back to the question of cultural power.

Creating recognition and connection by performing (the memory of) formerly silenced experiences into visibility via cultural production and/as storytelling is represented in these novels not only as a cultural-politically subversive challenge to the status quo, but also as a way to address and, at best, heal the rifts within the respective societies and the traumatic experiences of individuals. Cultural production can thus serve to bring passive cultural reference memory back into a society’s working memory and contribute to heal the wounds caused by gaps in either. Where in the *Matched* trilogy, this function of artistic production is only mentioned briefly when Cassia reflects that “[she] think[s] [they] are also saving [them]selves here in the Gallery [because] [s]o many people have waited a long time to create, or had to hide what they’d done” (*Reached* 175), this aspect becomes a more dominant focus in the *Huger Games* trilogy (despite the fact that also here, the amount of pages given to the discussion of this point is relatively low). In this way, for instance, Peeta’s practice of painting memories of the first Games he and Katniss had to participate in (*Catching Fire* 65-66) as well as his decorating a friend’s wedding cake (*Mockingjay* 265-266) are unambiguously described as “‘a kind of therapy’” (*Mockingjay* 266). The case is similar with the songs Katniss sings at different points in the narrative. Singing the ‘Hanging Tree’ song for the propaganda film team (*Mockingjay* 143-148) does not only fulfil a propagandistic

function but first of all represents a form of dealing with trauma for Katniss as she sings “to stop those memories” of the Games that still haunt her (*Mockingjay* 144). Furthermore, singing “[a]ll the songs [her] father taught [her]” (*Mockingjay* 439) also helps her to stop wanting to kill herself.

Where singing and painting constitute individual practices of Katniss’s and Peeta’s respectively, even if they are shared with friends or a wider community, the two of them also engage in a shared project, the creation of a book, at two distinct stages in the narrative. In between the first and second Games Katniss and Peeta are forced to participate in, they start doing something “normal together” for “the first time”, as Peeta remarks (*Catching Fire* 195) when they start collaborating on recording healing and other useful plants in an old book owned by Katniss’s family. Peeta provides the illustrations of plants and Katniss the descriptive text, which, she reflects, “take[s] [her] mind off [her] troubles” (*Catching Fire* 194). DuPlessis also comments on this scene by stating that “writing, a contemplative activity, provides distraction from traumatic events” (122). While this is certainly the case, the position is taken here that already at this stage working collaboratively on a creative project does not only offer distraction but also provides a way of (re-)connecting with oneself and with others through the shared process of making, a prerequisite of taking an active, engaged position in society.

This book re-appears at the very end of the narrative with a changed focus and a thereby extended function. Instead of recording useful plants, Katniss, Peeta and later also Haymitch, their mentor, start recording the people they have lost in the Games and the struggle against oppression: “The page begins with the person’s picture. A photo if [they] can find it. If not, a sketch or painting by Peeta. Then, in [Katniss’s] most careful handwriting, come all the details it would be a crime to forget. [...] On and on. [They] seal the pages with salt water and promises to live well to make their deaths count” (*Mockingjay* 451-452). As Bickford and Sodaro explain, “naming each individual” is a “relatively new” aspect of memory culture and “marks a shift from remembering for the sake of the nation or the victors, to remembering for the sake of the victims” (73). In terms of culture as memory culture it thus constitutes the opposite of the ritual of the Games, which remembers the Capitol as victors. DuPlessis also emphasises that “[t]he book [...] is a memorial of individuals” but furthermore highlights its more complex functions of serving “to reveal the power of literacy – to preserve that which cannot be trusted to memory, to provide for future knowledge, and ultimately, to benefit those who create the book by offering catharsis” (124).

With the book's bridging of past and future by recording and thus keeping active those personal memories that on a cultural level could only too easily be relegated to reference memory status and its cathartic function that results from creatively and productively engaging with traumatic events, this book emphasises the connection between memory, creativity and identity highlighted by Baccolini (cf. above). Katniss is only able to reclaim her identity and to become an enfranchised citizen of her society when, as Henthorne contends, "she finds a way to narrate [her trauma]". He goes on to explain that "such storytelling" can be regarded as "a 'reconstitutive' act" (137) that enables Katniss (and Peeta, one might add) "to transition from a victim position to a survivor position" (131) by "transform[ing] their personal suffering into a validated recognized experience; [by] fight[ing] against the invisibility and silencing" (Orgad 142; qtd. in Henthorne 131)<sup>64</sup>. Whereas in the televised Games and the rebels' propaganda clips, Katniss repeatedly "is re-inserted into the medium", as Muller observes (56; note the passive construction), the book she and her friends work on, in contrast, can be regarded as a medium through which they actively re-insert themselves and their memories and experiences – via the people they have lost and memories attached to them – into the greater story. The act of storytelling and making thus provides them the cultural space to perform their experiences into visibility and have them recorded and recognised (cf. Couldry et al.) that was denied to them previously by the erasure of their experiences that have been 'written' onto their bodies (cf. chapter 4.3). In the sense that their storytelling as both a shared practice and a practice/product they can share with others in the present and future carries "a political and moral responsibility" (Orgad 154; qtd. in Henthorne 137) because it can serve not only to avoid similar atrocities being committed again but also to encourage further people to come forward with their own stories, producing the memory book can be read as a radical art practice in the sense of Sunstrum's argument as it politically summons a people through a cultural practice.

Where, in terms of media technology and how these are used, the *Hunger Games* trilogy pitches the use and effect of a single, handcrafted book against the elaborate machinery of (reality and/or propaganda) television and aspects of virtual reality, the *Exodus* trilogy is the only trilogy among the selected texts that places a strong focus on the uses and abuses of online spaces similar to and extrapolated from the online internet world the implied readers are familiar with. With its complete reliance on, even dependency of its Noospace, the sky empire in Bertagna's trilogy can be regarded as an 'eEmpire' as described by Raley in her

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<sup>64</sup> The full reference for Orgad's title is: Orgad, Shani. "The Survivor in Contemporary Culture and Public Discourse: A Genealogy." *The Communication Review*, vo. 12, no. 2, 2009, pp. 132-61.

article with the same title. Like such an ‘eEmpire’, the world’s sky cities, connected by the Noos, constitute a de-centralised network that “comprises communicative networks, electronic commerce, modes of production, and global finance markets” (Raley 231), the nodes or centres of which “often battle for control within the network” (Raley 236). By the time the events in the third novel of the trilogy, *Aurora*, take place, sixteen years on from the events narrated in *Exodus* and *Zenith*, New Mungo has lost much of its former power as “power in the empire has swung East and to the younger cities in the southern hemisphere” (*Aurora* 53-54). Nevertheless, the “connective tissues” of the Noos as a network “provide a *fantasy of community*, of sociality, of collectives, of utopias” (Raley 240; emphasis added) when in fact, as Curry has argued convincingly, it further encourages the dislocation of people from each other and from the outside world (cf. *Environmental Crisis* 36-40).

In spite of “the seductive beauty of the internal landscapes inspired by the Noos” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 38) that seeks to distract sky empire citizens from the injustices of their societies (cf. chapter 3), the Noos as a global virtual network space, like contemporary digital technologies, “in less democratic states [such as the sky empire], [...] can enable civic and political mobilization against political power” (Dumbrava 771). When at the end of *Exodus* Fox relocates to the netherworld and leaves the amnesiac society of New Mungo behind to find answers he seeks in those memories and knowledges excluded from New Mungo’s and the Noos’s working memory, he brings the city technology required to access the Noospace with him. Since “[t]he whole of the New World meets in the Noos every day – [he] can reach people there, plant seeds of dissent and gather support” (*Exodus* 277), thereby turning the virtual Noospace itself into a liminal space of resistance. As he starts to build a ‘counter’-network of “secret surgents” within the network who connect in “virtual gatherings” (*Aurora* 47), he fully exploits the Noospace’s ambivalence, which on the one hand induces a “global trance” (*Aurora* 85) but on the other also provides the vastness and chaos for “clandestine cyberclubs” (*Aurora* 86) to form and operate undetected in order to “set free [truths] in the cyber-universe” (*Aurora* 52) that the sky empire of the New World continues to suppress.

Among these ‘truths’ are those of “the crackling voices on the soundwaves: flood refugees telling desperate stories of their survival” (*Aurora* 11). Since the Noos is very much an elite media technology, only accessible to those who already hold citizenship status in the sky empire, those of as yet non-citizen or abject citizen status make use of a much older but also much more accessible media technology, which at the same time is also not policed by

the sky empire<sup>65</sup>: the radio. As a media technology that the sky empire has long discarded and relegated to the archival space of cultural reference memory, “[r]adio waves[,] [i]nvisible and forgotten” (*Aurora* 138), offer the possibility to those not included in the cultural working memory of the sky empire to give voice to and share their experiences and thus to bring themselves into the conversation: “The soundwaves cross gulfs of storm and silence to the survivors of the world’s floods, and buzz once again with the voices of the planet’s forgotten people. All of it unheard by the sky empire in its towers” (*Aurora* 138-139). In this way, this fictional resuscitation of radio and soundwave technology constitutes a nod towards the time when it was perceived “as having the ability to promote global peace and better understanding among mankind” (Ribeiro 213) – before it was then (ab)used in “the war of the airwaves” during WWII (Ribeiro 214) – as well as an example of the glorification of older media technology after the emergence of a new one (cf. Balbi quoted above).<sup>66</sup>

By way of contrast to the ‘fantasy of community’ that the sky empire creates with the Noos, Fox, the insurgents within the sky cities and Noos as well as the wider global population of boat refugees and other survivor communities such as the ‘gypsea pirates’ and Greenlanders do manage to create a cross-medial, global sense of collectivity and community by telling and listening to (each other’s) stories. The fact that stories are one of the few things that the Noos cannot offer is already highlighted in *Exodus*, when Mara tries to find comfort in a story during her stay in the sky city but, when requesting one from the Noos, has to realise that stories are something that has been “eliminate[ed] [...] from the New World hegemony” (Curry, “Navigating the Visual Ecology” 20).<sup>67</sup> The vacuum that has resulted from this dearth is filled by Fox in his persona of the Midnight Storyteller. Speaking to “millions [who] listen in each night” (*Aurora* 142) and broadcasting via both radio and Noos, the stories he tells are like “lifebelts in a storm” for the “listeners in the flooded world”, and provide an “anchor” or “exotic harbour” for “frenzied Noosworlders” (*Aurora* 143), thus echoing the perceived function of storytelling and/as creating as both connecting people and healing individuals and society alike that has already been addressed in the discussion of the

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<sup>65</sup> With regards to the Noos, while “police rooks” try to keep up with the formation of secret cyberclubs and “ban them if they find them [...] the Noos has grown so vast and complex it’s impossible to police it all” (*Aurora* 86).

<sup>66</sup> However, it has to be conceded that radio is not entirely romanticised in this narrative as difficulties with this technology are also highlighted, for instance when Pandora, Fox’s companion in the netherworld, reflects how “communication with the boat camps died in the mighty winter storms” and “[s]earching the hissing desolation of the soundwaves” (*Aurora* 11) is often unsuccessful.

<sup>67</sup> When the Noos cannot find the term ‘story’ “‘[a]s in once upon a time’”, it tellingly suggests the terms “[f]alsehood, lie” as alternatives and declares ‘books’ to be a “[d]efunct word” (*Exodus* 255).



*Matched* and *Hunger Games* trilogies. Furthermore, Fox seeks to “ignite [people’s] spirits and give them dreams to reach for” in order “to change their world” (*Aurora* 143).

While a number of critics have pointed out that this emphasis on the “significance of storytelling” (McCulloch, “A New Home” 78) “demonstrates the crucial role of cultural memory in the construction of counter-hegemonic positions” (Grzegorzczuk 82), a point that has hitherto not been paid attention to but is of essential relevance to the discussion of (cultural) citizenship is that of access. Fox is only able to become the Midnight Storyteller because he has access to the required media technology and is thus able to “exist in three dimensions at once: the netherworld, the Noos and the radio waves of the world” (*Aurora* 142). This becomes obvious when comparing the character of Fox to that of Gorbals, the Treenester poet, who is just as capable of spinning “a good, strong story to hold on to” (*Exodus* 130) as Fox is. Moreover, while “Fox tells the forgotten stories *that are preserved in the old books* of the netherworld” (*Aurora* 143; emphasis added), and thus not his own, Gorbals’s stories and poems, like Cassia’s in the *Matched* trilogy, are his own creations. By the time that Fox has become the Midnight Storyteller, Gorbals has become the “storymaster” of the Treenesters’ and Mara’s new settlement in Greenland (*Aurora* 34). Nevertheless, it is Fox who has a worldwide audience because he has access to and knows how to operate and manipulate the necessary technology, not because he is more creative or is a better storyteller. While Gorbals tells of the experiences of his community *for* his community, Fox tells his global audience of the history of humanity as preserved in the library of what used to be Glasgow university, thereby at least potentially re-entrenching the cultural divide between those voices and experiences heard, which at the same time are those stored in a (former) Western institution of knowledge, and those unheard, which are those of the socially and globally marginalised.

Furthermore, while in the beginning of the radio communications, the boat refugees have used the medium to tell their own stories (see above), it seems that when Fox establishes himself as the Midnight Storyteller, all attention is focused on him, directing attention away from other stories and experiences. This circumstance, as well as the formulations used to explain Fox’s motivation, which is “to rescue them [i.e. the boat refugees] from wretched existences” and “to win them new futures” (*Aurora* 139), highlight what Wolfram calls “The Problem with Solidarity” in the second chapter of his long essay *The Art of Speaking for Yourself* (2019). His argument here that “showing solidarity is also always accompanied by certain subtle notions of hierarchy” and therefore often represents a “‘top-down’ approach” (15) is clearly recognisable in Fox’s not really speaking *with* the boat refugees, but *to* them

and, in his making the decision about which stories “set alight their hopes and dreams” (*Aurora* 139), *for* them instead of, for instance, by means of his technology providing a platform for the boat refugees to give an account of themselves and find recognition through being listened to by a global audience. It is only when he decides to tell “Mara’s story” (*Aurora* 144) – and with it at least partly his own, too – that Fox shifts from ‘speaking to’ people to “encouraging the public to become storytellers, to become active participants in the *histoire* in actual public spaces” (Haedicke 107). The strategy of “suggest[ing] a stimulus by constructing the beginnings of story events, but [leaving] the resulting narratives, often contradictory or competing, [...] in the hands of the audience” that Haedicke assigns to “contemporary street artists” (107) is taken up by Fox when he plans to tell his listeners that this particular story “has no ending, not yet” and that they “are the storytellers now. [They] must decide [...]. How the story ends all depends on [them]” (*Aurora* 144). Like the spectators of the street artists in Haedicke’s argument, in this way, Fox’s audience “may achieve a sense of agency as they become active co-creators in the artistic process” (Haedicke 107) and thus also achieve a sense of cultural-political visibility and belonging.

In order to summarise the discussion so far, it can be stated that the four trilogies hitherto discussed in this chapter demonstrably take different sides in the way in which they represent literacy and creative production and how they are put to use. On the one hand, the *Exodus*, *Matched* and *Hunger Games* trilogies emphasise the potential of literacy and storytelling as creative making to foster agency and ultimately enfranchisement by providing the protagonists with strategies to narrate themselves, their experiences and those of others similarly marginalised into visibility. On the other hand, the *Dustlands* trilogy and also, according to DuPlessis, the *Hunger Games* trilogy, “emphasize[] that literacy is not, in fact, essential for political power” (115) or “to make a protagonist self-aware” (117). Whereas the *Dustlands* trilogy emphasises the way in which, if abused instead of being shared, a literacy of the few can become a tool for disenfranchising and oppressing the many, the *Hunger Games* trilogy, as DuPlessis argues, focuses on a representation of literacy that demonstrates “personal uses of books and writing rather than dramatiz[es] literacy’s social and political implications” (117). However, this study takes the position that although the uses of the book creation in this trilogy are predominantly personal, the fact that it is not only “an aid to personal” but also to “cultural memory” (DuPlessis 123) (as DuPlessis, rather self-contradictory, comments herself) signifies the potential for its (future) social and political use rather than only constituting “a part of [Katniss’s] therapy” as well as of her “surviving and continuing” (DuPlessis 122, 123).

Whether literacy and creativity are interpreted as tools for oppression or tools for enfranchisement in these novels, in either case the strong impact that such competences and practices can have in a larger socio-political context is hardly questioned, at least not overtly. Especially the *Hunger Games* trilogy seems to practically forego direct political participation at the end of the narrative (cf. chapter 3.2 and 3.3) in favour of a more culturally centred engagement, whereas in the *Exodus* and *Matched* trilogies, cultural practices and performances are a prerequisite for engaging more strongly in explicitly political struggles. Nevertheless, the *Matched* trilogy in particular expresses a lingering doubt about the efficacy of such strategies in a wider political landscape. It is striking that in a text that is so obviously concerned with the promotion of literacy and the pursuit of each person's creative expression as a form of citizenly participation, the protagonist, Cassia, at some point reflects on this very practice in ambiguous terms: "I could write stories; I could hide from the world and make my own instead of trying to change it or live in it; I could write paper people and I would love them too; I could make them almost real. In a story, you can turn to the front and begin again and everyone lives once more. That doesn't work in real life" (*Reached* 231). Fittingly, this reflection is followed by a scene in which the Gallery, this egalitarian creative space, is destroyed (*Reached* 233). Where Cassia as a character grapples with the methods by which she can best participate as an active citizen in her community and with finding a story and a way to share it that both fits her identity and circumvents and/or challenges society's restrictions, the *Matched* trilogy as a text seems to display a certain amount of self-consciousness and to grapple with the limitations of its own mediality. Ironically, while promoting the development of adolescents' cultural power via artistic creation, the trilogy ultimately seems to doubt its own cultural power and impact as a written text. In this way, it does not only "express considerable angst about the threat to literature itself" (Hicks 25), as some of the novels Hicks analyses in her study do according to her argument<sup>68</sup>, but also addresses the question that has been posed by critics of these novels in general already, which is whether individually and en masse as a genre, these texts have the capacity to rouse young people to action. It seems as if the *Matched* trilogy is saying that while writing and other cultural production can make a substantial contribution, it cannot stand on its own and has to be embedded in a wider context of more direct and overt political activism as otherwise the impetus for change and active participation remains contained in the medium.

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<sup>68</sup> Hicks lists Atwood's *Snowman* in *Oryx and Crake* as struggling with a dwindling vocabulary, diminishing literacy in Winterson's *The Stone Gods* or regression to oral traditions in Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas* as examples and argues that the authors she discusses "understand the novel as a powerful tool of literary self-preservation" (25).

If the *Matched* trilogy expresses concerns about the eligibility of cultural production as a form of citizenly participation in a political context only in passing and towards the very end of the narrative, by way of contrast, the two *Carbon Diaries* titles place this discussion centre-stage from the beginning of the narrative as one of the main conflicts between the protagonist, Laura, and some of her friends. While Laura and her friends Adisa, Claire and Stacey all play in a punk band together (the *dirty angels*, cf. chapter 3.4), Claire wants to steer the others “into the whole Straight X scene” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 42) and thus onto what she perceives as a more ““radical”” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 43) course from the beginning. Laura, conversely, questions why ““everything ha[s] to be political with”” her friend (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 44). At the same time, Claire, the singer and major songwriter, effectively silences Laura by both disregarding Laura’s wish to sing and by refusing to at least sing some of the lyrics Laura has written herself so that Claire’s “back pocket” becomes “a black hole for rhymes cos no line [Laura has] ever written comes out alive again” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 25; also 51). Thus, the performative competition between the friends is two-fold within the narrative: on the one hand, on a cultural-political level, there is competition over whose voice is quite literally heard in the band and thus also by others in a (potential) audience, and on the other hand, on a more activist political level, there is the competition about who is more radical and more engaged in challenging the system.

The question in which way a band may contribute to the cultural-political discourse of the day and, at best, even serve as a form of justice-oriented citizenship to question and challenge the system is posed early on by Laura herself when she reflects that after the introduction of carbon rationing in Britain, “a screaming, Straight X punk band isn’t anybody’s idea of important right now” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 25). A crucial factor that differentiates this narrative from the other four texts discussed so far in this chapter is that the system in which Laura and her friends live still provides the space for negotiating such questions. This is largely due to the *Carbon Diaries* novels being less squarely situated in the dystopian and/or post-disaster genre conventions than the other four texts, in which the dystopian society is firmly established (*Exodus*, *Hunger Games*, *Matched*) and/or the environmental disaster has already and irrevocably occurred (*Dustlands*, *Exodus*). Although Laura’s society can be regarded as being “on the brink” (*Exodus* i) with the environmental crisis becoming ever more pressing and the government’s measures to deal with it becoming ever more draconian, Laura and her friends still have options that are not available anymore in the established societies and/or worlds of the other protagonists. In view of this, it cannot be a coincidence that in the *Matched* trilogy, the question that in *The Carbon Diaries* characterises

a substantial part of Laura's character development, is posed by Cassia halfway through the final novel in the trilogy, when the dystopian rulers have already been unseated and the rebels of the Rising have taken over, allowing citizens more personal freedom than they have had before. It seems as if the eligibility of cultural production as a form of citizenly engagement is only questioned when more explicitly political engagement and enfranchisement become or still are possible.

Consequently, Laura and her friends oscillate between expressing that they are “‘giving a shit’”, in Adisa's words (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 157), both via their music and via direct political action. While youth culture, including the band the *dirty angels*, sometimes feels “‘pathetic and passive’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 205), Laura's friend Claire briefly attains “superstar” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 104) status at college for being arrested at a demonstration against flying at Heathrow airport, not for being the lead singer in a punk/hardcore band. Furthermore, as the climate crisis intensifies and a heat wave both on the continent and in Britain causes many deaths in the population, Laura is convinced that “‘the *angels* don't mean shit when people are dying’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 225). A counter-perspective is provided by the drummer of another band, Mia, who argues that even under these circumstances it is important to go on tour in order to show that they “‘care’” about what is happening and “‘to fight back’” against a system that has allowed the deterioration of the climate to happen in the first place (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 234). For Mia, the music she and her own band create is very much political in the sense that in this way she is able to express that “‘[she is] not happy like YOU think [she] should be, everything isn't OK, and [she is] gonna do something about [her] life’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 163), which explicitly links the creation and sharing of her music and its message to the exercise of cultural as well as political agency. This aspect is directly experienced by Laura when she plays on stage during a small tour in the south of England and feels as if “‘for one tiny moment [she is] doing something real’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 257).

Towards the end of the first book it seems as if the band is more settled in situating itself within the spectrum of both cultural and political activism as Adisa reflects that since due to the continuing climate crisis “‘[r]adical is becomin' mainstream’” and the *dirty angels* now have “‘a message that people actually wanna hear’” (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 268). However, after London has suffered a terrible surge flood that claims thousands of lives towards the end of the year recorded in Laura's 'diary', the band and its concerns feel “‘like another life’” to Laura and her friends (*Carbon Diaries* 2015 360), thus questioning the effect and even legitimacy of engaging in cultural production in times of crisis. The second novel

takes up this point again just over a year on from the first novel as the climate and ensuing political crises intensify, protests get more radical and the band members are torn between band practice and “picketing the campus” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 79). Laura, who feels she does not fit in with the community of society drop-outs and self-proclaimed radicals whom she shares a large squat with in formerly expensive housing in the now regularly flooding Docklands area, is convinced she can “find her own style” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 38) of resisting by “just [...] mak[ing] the *angels* work” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 39) and thereby by focusing on her music. This stance is contested by her former teacher and now fellow squatter Gwen Parry-Jones, who questions whether this is “enough” and wants Laura to do “more” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 49), such as helping out covering reports from protest marches. Laura’s boyfriend and fellow band member, Adisa, quickly becomes more radical than even their friend Claire has hitherto been and decides to leave the band<sup>69</sup> (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 117) because playing music seems pointless to him by now as he seeks engagement in a different way, first by helping people in refugee camps in Sudan (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 151), and later by joining a radical environmentalist group (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 327-330), the **2**<sup>70</sup>, who start to terrorise London by bombing the city towards the end of the novel.<sup>71</sup>

In the face of such doubts about the eligibility and suitability of citizenly engagement via (sub)cultural punk-musical performances, in a narrative move similar to that of having a member of a different punk band vindicate her way of performing her citizenship, the genre is endorsed by a (fictional) music critic in a gig review as “a musical style that draws influences from French surrealism and Marxist politics. [...] It is crisis music that knows who the enemy is” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 51). Laura’s friend and the *angels*’ drummer, Stacey, angrily and self-confidently claims this as the band’s guiding principle when challenged by a member of another band about the decision to forego a trial gig for the chance to accompany other bands on a European tour (cf. chapter 3.4) in favour of an anti-racist protest: the *dirty angels* “sing

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<sup>69</sup> The fact that Adisa is the one who leaves the band is ironic and represents one of the multiple ways in which the *Carbon Diaries* novels contradict their own intended messages. In both *Carbon Diaries* novels, Adisa, who is Nigerian-British, is questioned by other black characters why, in punk, he has chosen a supposedly white musical genre for expressing himself. Both fellow students Thanzila and his best friend Nathan challenge him, in very similar words, about engaging in “this kinda [...] white people’s shit” (Thanzila; *Carbon Diaries* 2015 157) or “this white kid punk shit” (Nathan; *Carbon Diaries* 2017 41), and each time Adisa refuses to be stereotyped, arguing that it is what the music expresses and the message it conveys that is important to him. Ultimately, however, it is the narrative itself that stereotypes him by writing him out of the band and replacing his role as guitarist there with a white character, Sam.

<sup>70</sup> This “global underground green army” derive their name from “the idea that if temperatures rise by 2 more degrees then we’ll all be at the tipping point” (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 71).

<sup>71</sup> Parallels to the IRA are drawn by Laura’s mother (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 351).

about revolution and [they] do revolution and [they] ain't just one of those wimpy shallow pissy fake punky piece of shit groups that look pretty and do jack shit'" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 119). Bringing themselves into the conversation and inserting themselves into the overall story through their music for them is inseparable from direct political action as they seek and express their growing agency and endorsement of justice-oriented citizenship via both means.

This assertion becomes even stronger after the band experience a traumatising summer in France and Italy during which they go from gigging in France to a rescue mission in Sicily (where Adisa is stranded with a severe bout of Malaria) to water protests that are brutally opposed by the authorities in northern Italy, where they are consequently held in a detention camp with other protestors as well as refugees and are finally deported back to Britain. After that, Claire and Laura feel that everything is pointless "'[c]ept the band'", which provides "'the only way [they] c'n make sense'" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 313) of their experiences. When they resolve "to get playing and make what happened over the summer count" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 315), their strategy is reminiscent of that at the end of *Mockingjay*: like the memory book Katniss and Peeta set to work on, their music for Laura and her friends offers both an opportunity for healing and a way to give an account of their experiences and share their story and political agenda with others, thus contributing to the potential for transformation of their society.

Having found 'her own style' (cf. above) gives Laura the confidence to acknowledge that there is more than one way to perform an active version of cultural-political citizenship and to assert her decision vis-à-vis her on-off boyfriend as "'not hiding. It's the opposite. It's living it for real. Doing it without guns and bombs'" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 397). As Laura comes to accept that Adisa has to "'go [his] own way'" but she has "'got to do the same too'", and that "'[t]he angels is gonna be [her] way'" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 397), and as the novel ends with an image of Laura "lying [...] on her bed, [her] bass next to [her]" (*Carbon Diaries* 2017 400) instead of her boyfriend, the narrative strongly nods towards the *Künstlerroman* in addition to the *Bildungsroman*, not only chronicling Laura's enfranchisement as a citizen, but also as an artist. It is due to this grafting together of two related yet slightly distinct generic traditions, as well as the use of punk music, i.e. 'crisis music', as the form of artistic expression, which ensures that as a protagonist, Laura's citizenly subject position is not subordinated to the reconciliatory tendency of the traditional *Bildungsroman* in the same way as many of the protagonists in the other novels analysed in these stories are (cf. chapter 3). A further reason is the fact that, in contrast to narratives such as the *Dustlands*, *Hunger Games* or *Matched* trilogies, the political circumstances in Laura's society become not less but more

dystopian the further the narrative progresses. While the other trilogies mentioned here end with the oppressive systems having been overcome and a less radical form of citizenship being necessary for building a new society, sometimes completely substituting direct political engagement with cultural engagement, in *The Carbon Diaries*, the struggle against preventing a totalitarian system from being formed has only just begun, and the characters of Laura and her friends can thus be seen as laying claim to a justice-oriented citizenly subject position that self-confidently situates itself squarely in both the cultural and the explicitly political realm.

In summary, so far it can be said that while all novels discussed in this chapter place an emphasis on cultural practices of creating and sharing as citizenly forms of ‘making and connecting’, the way in which this topic is approached varies considerably, not only covering multiple forms of creative (self-)expression but also differing views on and opinions about the use of literacy and cultural practices in general for the furtherance of citizenly enfranchisement as well as about the (ab)uses of various media technologies. To reiterate a point that has been emphasised earlier, most of the novels analysed here subscribe to a rather negative view on especially digital media, favouring more traditional (artistic) media technologies like literacy and handwriting, painting etc. In most cases – the *Exodus* trilogy and, to a far lesser extent, the *Carbon Diaries* novels being the only exceptions – those modes of representation that serve to subvert or openly challenge the conformity of the oppressive system are linked to ‘older’ media technologies as forms of expression, thus juxtaposing the protagonists’ experience of what are effective modes and technologies for achieving agency and enfranchisement via cultural production on the story level with the implied readers’ lived experience in an increasingly digital world on the meta-narrative level.

Of course, as texts that draw heavily on dystopian genre traditions, their representations consist in warnings rather than celebrations in no small part due to generic conventions, focusing on the ways in which digital media technology (film and online spaces as well as human-technology-interfaces, which are not discussed in this chapter) may be abused by oppressive authorities. Nevertheless, these novels cannot be considered as ‘digital dystopias’, a term that Rowley suggests in her article “Stranger than Fiction: Locating the Digital Dystopia in Contemporary Fiction” (2018). Among others, she analyses M.T. Anderson’s YA novel *Feed* (2002) and Alena Graedon’s novel *The Word Exchange* (2014) to examine the unease many novels represent about the growing reliance on digital media in contemporary society and culture. However, her argument predominantly focuses on issues and effects that are regarded as inherent to the technology, for example when she contends that “[t]he breakdown of communication technologies in digital dystopian novels represents a potential



danger in reliance on digital tools and devices which contributes to the feelings of chaos and disorder typical across the dystopian genre” (Rowley 170–171) or that “[t]he breakdown of communication technologies in digital dystopias leads characters to revert to analog methods of communication” (Rowley 170). While some of the aspects discussed in her argument are also reflected in (some) of the novels discussed in this study, for instance the reversion to older forms of communication, this, however, does not occur because of a breakdown of digital technologies but because these are so heavily policed by the authorities, which links back to Planka’s observation about digitally held knowledge usually being state-controlled in these novels. It is this aspect of policing rather than the technology itself that prevents it to be useful for cultural practices of citizenly making and connecting in many of these novels.

Nevertheless, the question remains whether an intended warning about the possible abuses of digital media technologies and platforms by different interest groups might not be more effectively transported to a contemporary implied readership in a more differentiated way rather than an outright dismissal of such technologies and platforms as spaces of manipulation and oppression. McDuffie therefore argues that “[p]roductive approaches to technology and literacy include both old and new literacies and respect young adults as valued citizens and agents of change capable of mastering a variety of forms of communication and technology” (155), an argument that this study fully endorses. When considering the novels analysed in this chapter, it is noticeable that, with the *Exodus* trilogy, it is the trilogy with the earliest publication date (the first novel was published in 2002) out of the selected texts that has to be regarded as the most progressive in this regard, even though it disregards a critical view on questions of access, as discussed above. In addition, *The Carbon Diaries 2017* also highlights the subversive potential of digital media technology at several points but then narratively prevents this discussion from becoming productive and offering a positive way of claiming agency and citizenly enfranchisement by rendering it exclusively via characters who Laura, the sole focaliser, either regards critically, like her former teacher Gwen Parry-Jones, or even intensely dislikes, like her room-mate Monica. Thus, when Monica, for instance, speaks of the “‘priority [...] to keep online’” (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 65) or the agility of a “‘smart mob’” at a protest march that will be much more difficult to handle due to it having “‘no leader, no centre. [...] Just a thousand fones [sic.], pushers, portals’” (*Carbon Diaries 2017* 84), the implied reader is presented with this potential of digital media technology through the point of view of Laura’s dislike of and biting sarcasm towards Monica and, by extension, her views. This not only prevents the engagement with such technologies from becoming a positive marker for citizenly performance but, furthermore, even situates people

who do insist on such an engagement as annoying and pretentious. Therefore, it is still the *Exodus* trilogy that, more than any of the other trilogies or novels, argues that “recent technology, much like traditional literacy tools, can also serve as a site of resistance and agency” (McDuffie 151; also cf. Dumbrava qtd. above), thus illustrating that a dismissive or even condemning stance towards newer media technology is not necessarily inherent to the dystopian genre.<sup>72</sup> Instead, the *Exodus* trilogy exemplifies that “[f]ocusing on the relationship between old and new media [...] means analyzing change and continuity together, instead of considering them as opposing and incompatible” (Balbi 244).

The fact that many of the novels discussed here do seem to consider different forms of literacy and technology as opposing and incompatible is especially ironic when taking into account the way in which this theme is related to the overarching theme of cultural working versus reference memory that is so central to the dystopian genre. While on many other levels these novels, as discussed in the previous chapters, argue for a strong interconnection of and exchange between cultural working and cultural reference memory so that the liminality that exists between these spaces anyway can be used consciously and productively, in the case of forms of cultural self-expression via specific technologies used for this purpose it seems as if the message in some of the narratives is to bring back more traditional and, in the world of the protagonists, formerly marginalised, forms from the ‘archive’ of cultural reference memory in order to replace rather than interact with newer forms of (digital) cultural production. It is this inconsistency in the argumentation of narratives such as the *Matched* or the *Hunger Games* trilogies that gives their endings a rather conservative aftertaste.

Examining the ways in which both older and newer forms of literacy and media technology influence and co-operate with each other furthermore would enable more productive discussions of questions around literacy in general, both as print and as digital literacy, for instance in terms of which competences are necessary to achieve more than a functional literacy in either and be able to achieve agency and citizenly enfranchisement by using them. As recent studies in the field of pedagogy suggest, the extent of young people’s digital literacy often is not as profound as the term ‘digital natives’ suggests (Schulmeister and Loviscach 2). It can be argued that the novels discussed in this chapter, by representing a (print) literacy level that is only functional and/or a digital environment that is controlling and

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<sup>72</sup> An even stronger case for this point is made by the novels by Cory Doctorow. Both McDuffie (151) and Ames (8) refer to his novel *Little Brother* (2008) in this context, but his novel *Pirate Cinema* (2012), for instance, also strongly emphasises the creative, connective and subversive possibilities of using digital media technology for counter-hegemonic storytelling by young people.

oppressive, have the potential to encourage their readers to reflect on only functional literacy and oppressive constraints in other media, too. However, as with the sometimes hidden discourses of a critical cosmopolitanism (cf. chapter 3.4), also these possible discourses of literacy as a general competence in a diverse range of media might need to be mediated for the implied readership as the overt criticism or even rejection of newer technologies seems to be emphasised.

For this reason, the fact that in most of the novels examined in this chapter digital technologies are either ruled out as providing new modes of representation or are hardly given significance by the protagonist beyond being used for getting news updates or co-ordinating meetings with friends (*Carbon Diaries*) suggests, on the discourse level, a tendency to ‘colonise young adults’ minds’ with regard to showing positive ways of how to insert oneself into the (national) story and making one’s voice heard by appearing almost prescriptive as to which forms of expressions are viable for the formation of a cultural citizenly subject position. At the same time that adolescents are encouraged to ‘insert themselves into the story’, due to the unequal power relationship between adult author and adolescent implied reader again they “lack sovereignty over the formation of their culture” (Bullen and Mallan, cf. chapter 1) and are to a certain extent ‘colonised’ (also cf. chapter 1) in that their giving an account of themselves, telling themselves into the story and thus participating in and performing themselves into a cultural citizenly subject position is framed within very specific, i.e. more traditional, media for expression and representation, and the choice for this representation has been made by someone in a position more socially powerful than theirs, i.e. the adult author.

Nevertheless, despite this aspect of ‘colonising’ the modes in which adolescents are encouraged to express themselves, viewed together as a group, the novels discussed in this chapter emphasise that storytelling as a form of representing experiences that have been marginalised or ‘forgotten’ in contemporary culture and cultural memory is an important practice for citizenly enfranchisement. They show that this is the case “whether in art or politics”, as storytelling or giving an account of oneself “transforms abstract ideas about freedom, equality and citizenship [...] into a frame in which the listener can link new perceptions and concepts to what is already known and understood” (Haedicke 107). In a contemporary context, acting as a citizen requires performances situated in both the culturally and the more overtly politically connoted spheres as both cultural and political spaces often tend to overlap. Where the dystopian genre tradition frequently pitches the individual against society and marginalises those who do not conform, the emphasis on making, sharing and, via

these practices, connecting underlines the point that “listening to each other’s stories with respect” is an important step to “sort out new solutions ... by reframing our diverse connections to the big story” (Lambert xx-xxi). It would only be desirable if adult authors more frequently ‘listened to’ and considered young people’s cultural citizenly subject positions in order to produce less prescriptive and more dialogic models for socialisation.

## 5. ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP AND SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL (IN-)JUSTICE BETWEEN ANTHROPOCENTRISM AND POSTHUMANISM

### 5.1 Introduction: Locating the Politics and Scope of Ecological Citizenship

The discussion in the previous chapter demonstrated that cultural citizenship at least in theory offers more options and opportunities for participation and enfranchisement to young adults than political citizenship does for the simple reason that it requires no minimum age. However, as the analysis revealed, the issue of participation and enfranchised agency is not solved in the novels' representation of cultural citizenship but is instead deferred to questions of access. Cultural power and/as the power of definition over who or what is culturally acceptable and legible often are as unequally distributed as political power and enfranchisement. The young adult protagonists, therefore, have to struggle for and over access to marginalised or intentionally 'forgotten' aspects of cultural memory, access to the means of creative production and distribution and access to self-determination over one's own body to a similar extent than they have to struggle for political inclusion. Whether they have or gain access to cultural power or not strongly influences and shapes their possibilities for and practices of cultural representation and exercising the right to be different without losing the right to belong. In this context, the analysis showed that it is especially adolescent female bodies that are conceptualised as particularly embattled and 'monstrous', be that via a physical 'colonisation' of their bodies or via the biopolitical demand to make their bodies more intelligible for cultural consumption. By strongly referencing dystopian genre conventions pertaining to mnemonic aspects such as cultural and/or personal memory, canonical and archival spaces or questions around (new and old) technologies and negotiating them within a spectrum between subversive memory use and critical as well as uncritical nostalgia, the novels not only bridge spatial and temporal aspects in the discussion but also problematise, in differing contexts, the potential gap between access (to knowledge, to technologies) and 'doing something' with these new-found opportunities, i.e. acting in a justice-oriented way. Overall, cultural citizenship as a citizenly subject position is presented in the novels discussed as not necessarily easier to achieve than political citizenship, but ultimately, once achieved, at least a little easier to maintain on a justice-oriented level than political citizenship.

Like cultural citizenship, ecological citizenship constitutes a more recent contribution to the general debate about citizenship and shares with it a strong focus on biopolitical themes,

questions of unequal (and negative) access – here in the form of differential and unequal exposure to ecoprecarity – and the fact that the concepts and sites for performing each form of citizenship are multitudinous. Where generically, cultural citizenship is discussed predominantly via dystopian conventions, the discussion of ecological citizenship draws heavily on post-/disaster generic traditions and often favours spatial aspects over mnemonic ones. Ecological citizenship is often regarded as “a response to the Anthropocene”<sup>1</sup> (Dedeoglu and Dedeoglu 2) and is, in comparison to political and cultural citizenship, conceptually much more unsettled or even embattled, indicated first and foremost by the longstanding and continuing scholarly debate about terminology. As Valencia Sáiz noted already in 2005, “[t]here is no unanimous consensus on the part of theorists of ecological citizenship, in part because of disputes over its relationship to formal definitions of citizenship” (14). Similarly, Dobson and Bell pointed out in 2006 that “[t]here is no determinate thing called ‘environmental citizenship’” (4). Across the vast amount of research literature on this topic, the terms most frequently in use are ‘environmental citizenship’, ‘ecological citizenship’ and ‘green citizenship’.<sup>2</sup> This study adheres to Dobson’s conceptualisation of ‘ecological citizenship’, which in his understanding contains greater transformative potential than the term ‘environmental citizenship’. He argues that “environmental citizenship [...] leaves citizenship unchanged, in that the environment-citizen encounter can be exhaustively captured and described by its liberal variant. Ecological citizenship, on the other hand, *obliges us to rethink the traditions of citizenship in ways that may, eventually, take us beyond those traditions*” (Dobson 90; emphasis added).<sup>3</sup> Since the analysis in this chapter plans to do exactly this, i.e. examine the ways in which ecological citizenly subject positions at least potentially move further and further away from traditional conceptions of citizenship, Dobson’s term is considered here to corresponds most closely to the general trajectory of this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> This study does not engage in depth with the concept of the Anthropocene because the focus of the analysis is on other categories and a critical debate on the term ‘Anthropocene’ would go beyond the scope of this study. The working understanding of this term for use in this study rests on the brief explanations by Mayer, who states that “toward the end of the eighteenth century, with the onset of industrialization and an ever increasing reliance on fossil fuels, humans became a geophysical force and ushered in a new geological age” (500), and on Whitehouse, who briefly summarises the age of the so-called Anthropocene as “the historical result of massive industrialisation and pollution; unprecedented human population growth [...]; continuing large-scale environmental devastation, and plummeting biodiversity” (18).

<sup>2</sup> One indication that the debate over what ecological citizenship is or can be and whether, in fact, it actually exists is far from over is the noticeable exclusion of the topic from the recently published and otherwise very extensive *Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*, which contains no chapter on the topic (Shachar et al. 2017).

<sup>3</sup> For a more extensive discussion of Dobson’s term cf. Adami 229ff.

A further difficulty in grappling with conceptualisations of ecological citizenship is the multitude of approaches to the topic from all sides of the political and related scholarly spectrum. Ryle, for example, points out the non-existence of a single green perspective when he highlights tensions between “deep green” and “anthropocentric” approaches as well as “red-green” and “neither left nor right” politics (11). All of the approaches Ryle notes intersect, in turn, with different feminisms (e.g. ecofeminism, socialist feminism) and orientations within ecocriticism (e.g. posthuman, new materialist). While the discussion about and negotiation of these often potentially opposing approaches to ecological citizenship has been on-going since the 1990s, the (academic) debate has been particularly animated in the first ten to fifteen years of the twenty-first century, the time in which the climate crisis came to be acknowledged and models for ecological citizenship thus became ever more relevant. The novels chosen for this study have all been published within this time frame and very noticeably reflect on, participate in and contribute to this debate by negotiating various sides of the conceptual divide.

As already indicated in the quote by Valencia Sáiz above, a major difference in the various conceptual approaches to ecological citizenship lies in the way in which they conceptualise citizenship as such and the repercussions this conceptualisation has on the understanding of related categories such as personhood, subjectivity and agency. Gabrielson and Parady distinguish between approaches that favour “traditional [Western, to a certain extent patriarchal] conceptions of autonomy and agency that view citizens (men) as discrete individuals capable of controlling or mastering the physical world through reflective action” (380) on the one hand and approaches that examine and reflect the “enormous potential” of “green citizenship [...] for eroding dualisms [...] and for generating new and productive ways to think about socioecological problems” (375) on the other hand.<sup>4</sup> While in all of these approaches, like in the case of cultural citizenship, the idea of personhood as tied to age restrictions is discarded, for instance ecofeminist approaches with posthuman and/or new materialist leanings go much further and challenge the idea of what it is to be human as such in that they examine, among other aspects, human beings’ positions in and interconnectedness and interaction with their respective environments.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Gabrielson and Parady term these differing approaches “epistemological” and “ontological” (375, 380). While a differentiation between various approaches and their conceptual leanings is useful, the terminology suggested by Gabrielson and Parady seems to create another dualism so that a practice that is criticised in traditional approaches towards citizenship is – unwittingly – perpetuated. I will keep these terms within direct quotations from Gabrielson and Parady but not make use of them otherwise.

<sup>5</sup> This point will be elaborated in detail in chapter 5.4.

Furthermore, both approaches more or less tentatively envision ecological citizenship as “challeng[ing] the traditional emphasis on the individual by locating citizens in a larger community” (MacGregor, “Citizenship” 5) that takes into consideration “categories such as non-human animals, forests, ecosystems or even the ‘biotic community’ (Leopold 1949) [...] as legitimate constituencies that require stakeholder status in decision-making processes” (Smith and Pangsapa 27). Thus, all approaches to ecological citizenship seek to establish “a deeper idea of a common moral community, [...] ‘the more-than-human’ community” (Curtin, “Ecological Citizenship” 296). However, the extent to which they define and attribute agency, autonomy and power to different ‘stakeholders’ in this larger community varies considerably, as the analysis conducted in the three following sub-chapters reveals.

Traditional approaches to ecological citizenship with their pronounced anthropocentric focus place a strong “emphasis [...] on [...] responsibilities” (Smith and Pangsapa 27; also 58; also cf. Dobson and Bell 22) and/as the “practice and affect surrounding the care for others” (Bartkienė et al. 134). In the major part of environmental political theory, responsibility is understood as consisting of “duties and obligations” (Smith and Pangsapa 27) as against the emphasis on rights and entitlements that dominates in understandings of political and cultural citizenship. Dobson and Bell contend that this emphasis within ecological citizenship revives more conservative, republican virtues of duty and sacrifice (cf. 6), while Valencia Sáiz argues for a more progressive reading.<sup>6</sup> Whether responsibility is framed as conservative or progressive, in so far as at least fictional representations of ecological citizenship are linked to a “poetics of *responsibility*” (Garrard 71), the focus, albeit not placed on “what we humans are, nor how we can ‘be’ better”, in these approaches mostly still centres on “what we *do*” (Garrard 72)<sup>7</sup> and not, for example, on what other elements in the more-than-human community do without a human contribution. Gabrielson and Parady therefore criticise that “rather than challenging the epistemological privilege that has long characterised Western understandings of citizenship, much work on green citizenship tends to

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. chapter 2 in Dobson’s *Citizenship and the Environment* (2003) for a detailed discussion of the historical framing of rights, duties and/or virtues. Valencia Sáiz argues for a more progressive reading by drawing on Delanty’s work, who claims that in conceptualisations of ecological citizenship “the idea of responsibility is being decoupled from the idea of duty”, “has been released from the conservative ideology and is being taken over by new social actors” (Delanty, 1997: 294-295)” (Valencia Sáiz 14). The original reference is: Delanty, G. “Models of Citizenship: Defining European Identity and Citizenship.” *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 1, 1997, pp. 285-303.

<sup>7</sup> Zadie Smith also emphasises the notion of human action when she ends her essay “Elegy for a Country’s Seasons” by highlighting the need to “begin[] to turn from the elegiac *what have we done* to the practical *what can we do?*” (Zadie Smith, n.p.).



reenact it” (375-76). Part of this re-enactment of existing structures and privileges in the understanding of (ecological) citizenship is what Lawrence Buell, among others<sup>8</sup>, considers the danger of falling into the “androcentric trap” (109) and keeping up long-standing gender-based binaries.

Conversely, approaches that are invested in challenging and eroding dualisms emphasise not so much, or not only, human responsibility and obligation but highlight human vulnerability and precarity as well as the porousness of the (material) human body and the way it interacts with other materials (organic and inorganic). It is especially these approaches that carry the potential to fulfil Dobson’s desideratum of taking ecological citizenship considerably beyond traditional conceptions of the meaning and scope of citizenship and citizenly subject positions. In the case of a term like ‘vulnerability’, this potential may not be immediately obvious. As Knight explains, the term ‘vulnerability’ “foregrounds the human experiences of fragility, exposure, threat, risk, and dependency (the word ‘vulnerability’ is derived from the Latin word *vulnus*—meaning ‘wound’)” (176) and is often regarded as the opposite to ‘autonomy’, which is, in turn, an integral part of conceptions of citizenship. In non-traditional, ecofeminist approaches, however, “autonomy is understood as inherently relational”, which makes “vulnerability to others [...] part and parcel of autonomous thought and action since we simply cannot unilaterally control the social infrastructure that makes forming and acting on decisions possible” (184). In a very concise and useful discussion of Judith Butler’s engagements with the notion of vulnerability across several of her works, Knight argues that in contrast to the idea of autonomy as relational, “the autonomous liberal individual [...] as a coherent, unified, sovereign subject [...] is a fiction. Autonomy does not and cannot occur by distancing or disentangling oneself from social influences” (183). Following on from this, Knight discusses Butler’s differentiation between ‘precariousness’ and ‘precarity’ as two distinct forms of vulnerability, with ‘precariousness’ denoting a “universal condition of vulnerability” (187) of all life and ‘precarity’ referring to “socially and politically induced forms of vulnerability” (177). She further explains Butler’s notion of precarity by emphasising that it describes the fact that the condition of universal vulnerability “is not distributed equally and is therefore experienced in particular ways based on one’s social positioning” (187), resulting in “particular experience[s]” (187) of vulnerability.

Whereas both Butler and, continuing from there, Knight refer especially to human beings, two concepts that either can be brought into conversation with or directly reference

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<sup>8</sup> For a more detailed debate of different positions within ecofeminist theory cf. MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth*.

Butler's understanding of precarity while also taking into consideration surrounding environments, ecosystems and thus the 'more-than-human' community are Nixon's notion of slow environmental violence and Nayar's concept of ecoprecarity. Nayar conceptualises 'ecoprecarity' as both a material state linked to vulnerability and an "intertwined set of discourses of fragility, vulnerability, power relations across species and imminent extinction" (6). His concept thus aims to capture the lived experience as well as representations of "precarious lives humans lead in the event of ecological disaster [...] and also [...] the environment itself which is rendered precarious due to human intervention in the Anthropocene" (7). Therefore, "ecoprecarity as a concept refuses the anthropocentrism" (14) of Butler's original term but, despite addressing aspects of biopolitics and biopower, in its desire to be more encompassing it loses the explicit focus on structural unevenness and differential exposure that mark Butler's idea of precarity.

In comparison, Nixon's understanding of 'slow environmental violence' highlights the differential experience of vulnerability as (eco)precarity. He defines "slow violence" as "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, an attritional violence that is typically not viewed as violence at all" (2). In this understanding, the (particular) experience of socially and politically induced vulnerability is extended to environments, landscapes, geographies and species inhabiting them, human or non-human, without losing the notion of structural unevenness and questions of socio-environmental (in)justice in this experience. This becomes evident, for instance, in his discussion of "vernacular landscape[s]" that represent not only the "affective, historically textured maps that communities have devised over generations" but also bear the long-term "ecological aftermath" (17) of destructive practices such as pollution and extraction on the one hand and "official landscape[s]" on the other hand, which Nixon describes as landscapes of "short-termers who arrive [...] to extract, despoil, and depart" (17), thus creating ecological landscapes of power and exposing spaces and their inhabitants to the effects of slow environmental violence. Therefore, Nixon's concepts can be applied more easily and readily to the analysis of ecological citizenly subject positions in a community that is, as MacGregor emphasises, "global, unequal and dependent on the natural world" ("Citizenship" 5). Nayar's concept will be used additionally to highlight specific aspects pertaining especially to the corporeality of ecological citizenship (cf. chapter 5.4).

As has already been hinted at above, ecological citizenship, like the other forms of citizenship discussed in this study, can be either affirming of or pose a challenge to existing structures. Gabrielson and Parady, for instance, emphasise that "in several leading accounts"

of ecological citizenship, the way in which responsibility, duty and obligation – and thus the capability of acting accordingly in an enfranchised manner – “is exclusionary, granting agency to some while excluding others from full citizenship” (376). The same exclusionary mechanism can occur in the reverse direction when some people (or species) are burdened with a disproportionate amount of caring for others. MacGregor argues that in order to harness the progressive potential within an ethic of care, the “language of care” needs to be brought into conversation with “the language of citizenship” (“From Care to Citizenship” 72) so as to achieve “a balance between an ethic of care and an ethic of justice” (“From Care to Citizenship” 64).<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, MacGregor warns that the (global) discourses on climate change and ecological citizenship are in danger of being turned into another grand narrative and thus a normative tool validating an official (spatial and temporal) narrative while at the same time marginalising “‘everyday life’ environmental justice goals” (“Only Resist” 624) of those who are either affected by slow violence or seek to prevent the exercise of slow violence in the first place.

Paying attention to the way in which ecological citizenship is practiced and performed and how such practices and performances are situated within a geographical, historical and socio-political context is, therefore, crucial. With regards to the novels discussed in this chapter, in contrast to Oziewicz’s criticism (or complaint) that “[i]n these [narrative] worlds the Trouble [sic.] is social, not environmental, injustice, and the focus is on social conflicts” (189), this study strongly endorses both a representation and an analysis thereof that considers the interconnection of “environmental-social crisis” (F. Buell 151). Frederik Buell points out that ecological crisis is deeply connected to “social, economic, cultural, and ideological structures that [people] inhabit (and that inhabit them)”, so that “[p]eople are not simply free to choose to stop affecting their environments as they do” but are, “[e]ven as they try to act, [...] shaped by a wide variety of [...] structures larger than themselves” (150). Since social and ecological crises each contribute to the exacerbation of the other, and since the experience of (eco)precarity “indicates oppressive and unjust constraints on one’s ability to exercise self-determination” (Knight 177), ecological crisis cannot, in fact, be thought without considering societal issues, too.<sup>10</sup> Inasmuch as the narratives analysed in this chapter foreground different experiences of “the slow violence of delayed effects” (Nixon 8) and ecoprecarity as well as

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<sup>9</sup> The concept of care will be discussed in more detail and applied to the analysis in chapter 5.3.

<sup>10</sup> Also cf. Curry: “With an ecological stimulus as trigger for social upheaval, the disasters [in the novels she analyses] around which societies rally are both environmentally and culturally imbricated” (*Environmental Crisis* 22).

different social and political developments causing and resulting from these, they offer a possibility to critically engage with the “historical forces, hierarchical power relations, and value systems that have caused, and are standing in the way of addressing” socio-ecological crisis (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 627).

While the dystopian and *Bildungsroman* genres highlight socio-political struggle, often between state and individual, the post-/disaster genre, which provides the underlying dominant framework for the discussion of ecological citizenship, is especially useful for representing the ‘delayed effects’ of slow violence and socio-economic crisis. Not only does this genre engage with the (threat of an) erasure of (social, political, ecological, anthropocentric) structures and systems, but, at the same time, as Stephens highlights, such fiction “evokes a deep past which usually approximates to the reader’s present, and hence its moral and political lessons are cast back to the moment at which the text is being *read* [...] [B]ecause the message of such a book applies at the moment of reading, then the possibility of a new beginning is also displaced into the moment of reading” (“Post-Disaster Fiction” 126). Post-/disaster fiction is thus uniquely equipped to represent how (eco-)“precarity emerges over time [...] as the consequence of processes and practices” (Nayar 9) that lead to “displacements – temporal, geographical, rhetorical” caused by “[a]ttitudinal catastrophes that overspill clear boundaries in time and space” (Nixon 7). This genre can thus contribute to countering the all-too-usual process of “both the causes and the memory of catastrophe readily fad[ing] from view as the casualties incurred typically pass untallied and unremembered” (Nixon 8-9), “smooth[ing] the way for amnesia” (Nixon 7). With the demand that, therefore, “environmental violence[...] needs to be seen [...] as a contest not only over space, or bodies, or labor, or resources, but also over time” (Nixon 8), Nixon transfers the socio-cultural and often politically induced process of ‘remembering/forgetting’ and thus the often politically motivated selection of what is included in the canon (as active memory) and what is deposited in the archive or, worse, entirely forgotten, from a cultural to an ecological context. By developing images of possible future outcomes of socio-ecological slow violence perpetrated in the implied readers’ present, these narratives can be argued to contribute to helping readers to “apprehend threats imaginatively that remain imperceptible to the senses, either because they are geographically remote, [...] or are played out across a time span that exceeds the instance of observation or even the physiological life of the human observer” (Nixon 15).

The fact that post-/disaster narratives remind their implied readers of “so many of our most consequential forgettings” (Nixon 8) is regarded critically by some scholars. Oziewicz,

for instance, bemoans that since such narratives “are set in worlds where environmental derailing has already occurred”, they “offer very little hope for any environmental healing” (189), which would be in tune with the “dark, eco-dystopian” images that Ross has called “the official ‘look’ of the future in popular culture” since the 1970ies (144). With his argument that this constitutes a “quiet resignation about the Earth’s doomed fate” (Oziewicz 189) Oziewicz echoes earlier critics who have argued that such narratives often express fatalism and resignation (cf. Kerridge 87) and thus have a tendency “to invalidate hope for any solutions” (F. Buell 256) instead of articulating creative responses. In this way, MacGregor contends that such speculative genre conventions support an erosion of political engagement by the public. She claims that “[d]ystopian and apocalyptic narratives of natural disasters, chronic resource shortages, global pandemics and perpetual war [...] help to create acceptance of the need for extreme measures and radical policies” as they “create a sense of emergency” and “cast the human-nature relationship as one of antagonism and conflict” (“Only Resist” 621).<sup>11</sup> Such an effect of post-/disaster and dystopian narratives may occur when its overt or covert mnemonic strategy leans towards an uncritical nostalgia for that which has been or is in the process of being lost, which in the context of ecological citizenship is often connected to images of supposedly unspoilt wilderness or the representation of characters’ experience of loss, without converting this loss into transformative action. On a meta-narrative level of genre conventions, nostalgia can also be expressed in an uncritical application of wilderness tropes or pastoral images, as will be discussed in chapter 5.3.

In contrast to the positions held by Oziewicz and others, Huffman argues that “ecologically-minded texts, especially those written in the science fiction genre, are explicitly activist in their orientation and intent, and are thus pedagogic warnings about the coming realities of the planet’s ecological demise and ways in which humans will have to deal with it” (65). Rorty, speaking about speculative literature especially for an adolescent readership, even posits that it is difficult to “overestimate the importance of such stories for the human future. Only if lots of young people in every country are gripped by such stories, and thereby

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<sup>11</sup> It is rather unhelpful that MacGregor does not distinguish more clearly what the term ‘narrative’ means in the context of her discussion. The examples she gives are predominantly located in the realm of politics and policies, but she also draws on filmic representations, both documentary and fictional, and emphasises that “[t]hese narratives are not merely the stuff of science fiction: further examples can be found in the communications of UN conferences and grassroots organizations” (“Only Resist” 621). With regards to the novels analysed in this chapter, it has to be said that they decidedly do not fit in this exclusively negatively constructed category. While many of the novels might create a ‘sense of emergency’ (especially the British-authored narratives, the *Exodus* trilogy and the *Carbon Diaries* novels), they all emphasise the responsibility humans carry for the state of the biospheric situation. The challenging situation has been created for humans by other humans, not because the environment or ‘nature’ is cast as an antagonist to withstand.

come to dream some of the same dreams” change can be achieved (237). Bringing about change in terms of practices and performances of ecological citizenship can be engendered through narratives with a strong combination of post-/disaster and dystopian genre traditions by, as Nixon points out, “offer[ing] us a different kind of witnessing of sights unseen” (15). In doing so, they contribute to working against the danger of a collective forgetting of delayed effects of slow violence and conditions of ecoprecarity because these effects exist in the present of the fictional world while, on the other hand, the implied readers’ present has been forgotten or is remembered in distorted ways. While the dystopian genre conventions employed in the novels analysed in this study predominantly focus on strategies of remembering and forgetting as embattled issues on the story level, the post-/disaster aspect of witnessing sights otherwise unseen also plays a significant role on the meta-narrative level by calling into memory sights of delayed destruction from ‘elsewhere’ and situating them within the geographic context of the implied readers, i.e. within wealthy industrialised countries across the North Atlantic. This meta-narrative mnemonic strategy requests adolescent readers to critically examine their current (possibly privileged) ecological situatedness, the responsibility they hold as well as the possibility that the relative safety they know may not exist interminably, thus engendering a destabilisation of the hierarchy of what is remembered and what is forgotten. As Manjikian has argued predominantly for a political context (cf. chapter 2 of this study), also in an ecological context such fictions can denote a rising awareness in hitherto unaffected locales that their privileged position might be in decline while at the same time addressing the need to focus on inequalities and social injustices around notions of ecological citizenship.

In addition to destabilising the notion of *what* is witnessed and therefore remembered of both the present and delayed future socio-ecological derailments, these novels, by emphasising a young adult perspective, also contribute to the debate on “*who* bears the social authority of witness” (Nixon 16; emphasis added). The fact that the novels analysed in this study all have young adult protagonists as focalisers and thus as witnesses as per Nixon’s understanding underlines the relevance of this perspective for questions of socio-ecological justice and ecological citizenship. The representation of ecological citizenly subject positions that emphasize the important contribution the adolescent protagonists, and by extension the implied adolescent readers, can make in order to challenge political failure and alleviate social injustice causing and caused by (ecological) slow violence directly challenges Oziewicz’s criticism that (adolescent) “postapocalyptic dystopias” (189) privilege “the human” and, more specifically, “in fact, an adolescent perspective” (185), which he fears “may not be adequate

to grasp the complexity of the environmental challenge or may likewise look for simplistic solutions” (185).

Apart from the fact that this is strikingly patronising, Oziwicz seems to disregard the factor of genre in this criticism. As he analyses narratives that draw heavily on conventions of the *Bildungsroman* and are directed towards an adolescent readership, the focus is *necessarily* on a both anthropocentric and adolescent/young adult perspective. Moreover, since the *Bildungsroman* is traditionally invested in discursively constructing human, anthropocentric citizenship, these novels, again necessarily, favour questions of human development (which can be ecologically situated or not) over questions of environmental justice as outlined by Oziwicz. How some of the novels at least attempt to break open the anthropocentric confines of the *Bildungsroman* genre will be discussed in chapter 5.4. As for the young adult perspective, it can be argued that the liminal position that adolescents occupy within discourses on citizenship in general renders their point of view useful as an example for a marginalised perspective that, “[b]y laying claim to the mobile rhetoric of environmental justice, [...] may enhance their prospect of becoming visible, audible agents of globalization from below” (Nixon 37). The inclusion of young adult protagonists as witnesses thus at least offers the potential to trigger agency as responsibility and to help implied readers recognise how human beings, other species and even inanimate objects are interconnected and constantly interacting, thus raising an awareness for multifaceted-ness of ecological citizenship by showing how the adolescent protagonists have to perform and practice it not only towards their contemporaries within the narrative but also towards “future generations” and “the support systems that make human life possible” (Smith and Pangsapa 27). In how far the novels discussed in this chapter fulfil the potential for representations of performing ecological citizenship as a responsible practice of negotiation, resistance and remedial care or are – usually unwittingly – working against such a potential is discussed in the following sub-chapters.

The first section, chapter 5.2, examines the representation of the post-/disaster genre convention of the (threat of an) erasure of socio-environmental structures as a risk scenario, by which the novels engage in what Andersen terms “the imagination form of ‘The Social Collapse’” (11). In this scenario, the collapse of ecosystems offers not only the backdrop to events unfolding in the narrative but is, moreover, the driving force behind governmental and citizenly measures and counter-measures to confront a range of resulting risks, a number of which steer the represented societies into thoroughly dystopian terrain. The understanding of ecological citizenship in this scenario, in which “crisis no longer lies somewhere down the

road but is already very much in progress at the present” (F. Buell 151), strongly leans towards traditional (anthropocentric) understandings of citizenship with an ecologically-oriented framing. In this context, the protagonists experience and perform responsibility as a negotiation of “risk, rights, and duties” (John Urry 312) and are challenged to counter (governmental) approaches to ecological citizenship in which responsibility is both depoliticised and individualised. Whether they face overly universalising discourses of “eco-cosmopolitanism” (Heise, *Sense of Place* 10) or are urged to regard their ecological citizenly subject position as “synonymous with the ‘sustainable consumer’” (MacGregor, “Citizenship” 6), they need to find ways to avoid both resignation and an erosion of engagement lest ecological citizenship become another hegemonic discourse that “will leave the asymmetries untouched” (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 628).

Following on from this, the analysis in chapter 5.3 focuses on specific models of ecological citizenly practice, stewardship and care ethics, which are both supposed to fulfil preventive functions in the best case, i.e. where this is still possible, or redemptive functions in the case that socio-ecological structures and system have already been destroyed or even erased. Coming from different conceptual and ideological angles, both approaches compete in the conception and representation of care-based interpretations of ecological citizenship. The novels selected for analysis in this chapter thus mirror the scholarly debate in that they create a tension between two approaches that emphasise responsibility as care-based but understand ‘care’ in significantly different ways. By paying close attention to the tension between these two models of ecological citizenly practice as well as tensions within conceptualisations of stewardship and ecofeminist care ethics, the analysis demonstrates that on an overt story level the narratives examined in this chapter share a similar criticism of various approaches to stewardship but that they differ considerably on a meta-narrative level in the ways in which ecological citizenly subject positions are, become and remain available for the respective protagonists. Furthermore, this chapter argues that with regard to genre, the way in which the novels reference pastoral or wilderness tropes as part of the post-/disaster genre tradition helps to determine where power is (perceived as) allocated in the respective narratives and whether or not this allocation is regarded critically.

Lastly, chapter 5.4 discusses the post-/disaster convention of an erasure of structures and boundaries represented as a corporeal reality and/or posthuman possibility for characters in the selected narratives. The emphasis in this examination of corporeal citizenship in an ecological context is on approaches to citizenship which highlight the relationality and interdependence between humans (as embodied) and ‘other’ (non-human) matter. In order to



illustrate such aspects, the narratives discussed in this chapter draw on images of feral children or other groups read as feral or monstrous, on the image of cyborg or on the image of a virus ‘invasion’ so that it emerges that the spatial boundaries and normative structures that are negotiated, transgressed and potentially transcended are those of the human species itself. Of specific importance in this context is the way in which personhood as a prerequisite to citizenship and agency as a capability deriving from it are represented and/or reconceptualised in liberal humanist terms or as posthuman in these narratives. The potential of ecological citizenship to “take us beyond th[e] traditions” (Dobson 90; cf. above) of liberal understandings of citizenship usually comes from those corporeal experiences marked by an uneven exposure to various forms of ecoprecarity and social precarity, an experience that the respective protagonists are confronted and challenged with. Depending on the protagonists’ perspective on maintaining or transcending traditional conceptions of personhood and citizenship and on (potential non-anthropocentric) species transgression as threat or as opportunity, different subject positions and socio-ecological models of society become possible (or not) within the narratives and, by extension, can be imagined by the implied readership.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The *Hunger Games* trilogy is the only one among the narratives selected for analysis in this study overall that will not be discussed in this chapter. The reason lies in the trilogy’s very strong emphasis on aspects of political and cultural citizenship and much lesser focus on ecologically connoted issues. While Panem as a state emerged from a former United States geographically diminished by ecological disasters, the narrative does not present a direct, causal connection between these events and the socio-political injustice and increased risks in Katniss’ present. Furthermore, while some elements in the trilogy can be – and have been – examined from a (ecofeminist) care ethics perspective (cf. Curry, *Environmental Crisis* chapter 3; also Averill), the trilogy does not discuss the tension between this concept/approach and that of stewardship, as other trilogies do (and as is discussed in this chapter). Finally, while the trilogy does represent technological or other intentional alterations of the body, this occurs *not* as a reaction to ecological disaster and ecoprecarity but as either a demonstration of biopolitical power (e.g. the so-called ‘mutts’ in the first arena, engineered animals that have the eyes of the already dead tributes; *Hunger Games* 405) or a demonstration of City-superiority and thus a corporeal expression of the political centre-periphery-dichotomy (e.g. *Hunger Games* 74-77), which has already been examined in detail in chapter 3 of this study. The *Hunger Games* trilogy therefore does not fit neatly within any of the intended examinations in the following sub-chapters, which in turn provides the opportunity to ‘decentre’ this widely discussed trilogy and give more discussion space within this study to hitherto less frequently academically discussed narratives.

## 5.2 Ecological Citizenship ‘on the brink’ and beyond: Post-/disaster Socio-Ecological Crisis, Risk Management and/or Dwelling Actively in Crisis in the *Carbon Diaries* Duology and the *Dustlands* and *Uglies* Trilogies

Ecological citizenship as tied to varying degrees of socio-ecological responsibility is discursively situated across the full range of political citizenly subject positions discussed in chapter 3, from personally responsible to participatory to justice-oriented citizenship. The negotiation with the respective society’s authorities and state institutions, which centred on challenging political oppression and national rituals in the context of political citizenship (chapter 3) and on cultural power and representation in the context of cultural citizenship (chapter 4), in the context of ecological citizenship focuses on countering ‘grand’ hegemonic narratives and strategies for handling socio-ecological risks and an often concomitant unequal distribution of responsibility. Such grand ecological citizenly strategies, as Barry notes, “can be easily usurped and co-opted by organizations and institutions [and governments] in a manner that hollows out [ecological citizenship’s] transformative, oppositional, and radical [...] dimensions” (24), allowing them to simply engage in a superficial “climate change bandwagoning” (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 623). Therefore, while the characters in the novels have to come to terms with the fact that they are “dwelling not in a movement toward environmental crisis, but firmly within that crisis” (F. Buell 152), they also have to pay attention that their practices not fall into the trap of ‘merely’ representing lifestyle changes and ultimately “*stay out of politics*” (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 618). A purely lifestyle-oriented approach diminishes the “potential for citizenship to be a positive force in counter-hegemonic green politics” (MacGregor, “Citizenship” 7) because such a practice leads to an ecologically oriented form of personally responsible citizenship and thus a form of citizenship that does not get involved in systemic challenges and changes. As the novels examined in this chapter demonstrate, the availability of diverging ecological-political citizenly subject positions is predominantly dependent on a set of interlinked factors that comprises the respective authority’s approach to handling the socio-ecological crisis at hand, especially as a practice of managing risks, the (un)just distribution of (ecological) responsibility among individuals and corporations and, lastly, influenced by and influencing both previous aspects, the respective societies’ approach to consumerism, both on a collective and on an individual level.

Thus, the young adult protagonists have to navigate shifting ecological citizenly subject positions that are sanctioned or even mandated by the existing political institutions and

usually find expression in personally responsible (citizenly) ways of consumption on the one hand, while on the other hand, as with all previously discussed forms of enfranchisement, they have to determine and assert the positions and ways in which they situate themselves by performing ecological citizenship in different and potentially subversive ways. In this way, for instance, the *Dustlands* and *Uglies* trilogies or the *Carbon Diaries* novels highlight the possible negative effects if radical policies remain unchecked (*Dustlands*, *Uglies*) or how certain measures regulating consumption, e.g. carbon rationing, are (more or less) accepted while other, harsher measures that are furthermore unequally distributed, like water shortages, can be and are effectively resisted by the public (*Carbon Diaries*). Both on the level of the narrative and on the meta-narrative level, the adolescent protagonists and the implied adolescent readership alike are asked to take “responsibility both for [their] causal role in environmental injustice and for ensuring a more just distribution of ecological space” (MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth* 93). The implied readership in particular thus find themselves in an in-between position of complicity in causing the situation in the respective novels, being required to take responsibility for remedial action in their present in real life and simultaneously constituting a part of the ‘future generations’ for whose benefit remedial action is to be taken. As the protagonists demonstrate on the story level of the narratives, such a form of ecological citizenly ethical and temporal liminality can be challenging but also performatively productive.

The three narratives analysed in this chapter start from very different vantage points in regard to the extent of the socio-ecological crisis and in the way in which the narratives position themselves and their characters towards the related but slightly different notions of ‘risk’ and ‘slow environmental violence’.<sup>13</sup> Frederick Buell explains Ulrich Beck’s conceptualisation of ‘risk’ by positing that “[t]he term ‘risk’ [at the time that Beck theorised it] had the great virtue of encompassing much of the heterogeneity of environmental problems” that had occupied people from the 1960s onwards. “It incorporated the effects of actual deterioration [by which he means, I assume, already ongoing and visible effects], invisible and still virtual deterioration, long-term consequences from present exposure, and probabilistic disasters” (F. Buell 192). The references to as yet invisible and long-term effects align this conceptualisation closely to the temporal emphasis in Nixon’s concept of ‘slow

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<sup>13</sup> The research literature on the theory of risk and related notions such as ‘risk perception’ or ‘risk society’ is far too extensive to be covered in depth within this study. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, Frederick Buell in *From Apocalypse to a Way of Life* (2004) and Ursula Heise in *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet* (2008) offer detailed overviews in this regard. A more recent engagement with ‘risk criticism’ is offered by Molly Wallace in *Risk Criticism: Precautionary Reading in an Age of Environmental Uncertainty* (2016).

environmental violence'. Despite the fact that Nixon's term had not been developed yet at the time of F. Buell's writing, F. Buell already begins to establish a relationship between the two terms when he contends that "[r]isk and uncertainty quickly became the premier feature of life in slow environmental crisis and deterioration" (192). While 'risk' is thus understood as a feature of a situation or a result of a process, the terms 'slow crisis' or 'slow violence' describe the very processes that lead to such situations and results.

Nevertheless, in contrast to terms such as 'risk' and 'crisis', which have a more neutral ring to them in terms of how they are caused since they can also be created by chaos and catastrophe outside of humanity's reach of influence, the term 'slow violence' has unmistakably ethical connotations as it implies a perpetrator: 'violence' is usually committed *by someone* (an individual, group, institution or corporation). Even though theories of risk and the 'risk society' acknowledge the fact that, for one, an "inequitable distribution of environmental bads" exists, which leads to "tension and conflicts" in addition to those "resulting from the unequal distribution of goods" (F. Buell 193), and, moreover, that globally there is an unevenness between those who produce risks and profit from them and those who suffer the consequences (cf. Heise, *Sense of Place* 155), the emphasis is often placed on 'risk-sharing' and its potential to help form new communities (cf. Heise, *Sense of Place* 155-56).<sup>14</sup> Heise succinctly summarises Beck's approach to risk when she contends that "Beck is less interested in the idea of already existing communities and their confrontation with risk than in the possibility of emergent communities and political agents that he envisions as explicitly transnational" (*Sense of Place* 156). Both the discourse on risk and the discourse on climate change, which MacGregor criticises, are thus in danger of uncritically constructing a 'global we' (cf. MacGregor, "Only Resist" 627).<sup>15</sup> While the fact that environmental problems and anthropogenic climate change "are global, and hence [require] transnational solutions" (Valencia Sáiz 7) is unquestioned and the awareness of the scale of such problems may lead

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<sup>14</sup> Also cf. Wallace: "And though he [Beck] does acknowledge the unevenness of global risk distribution – with some benefiting from others' losses; some able to shield themselves from hazard, environmental or otherwise – he perhaps optimistically anticipates that risk society will also be characterized by a kind of cosmopolitan spirit of shared hazard, as a common risk makes for a common bond." (12)

<sup>15</sup> An example of the pitfalls of a homogenised 'global we' is Whitehouse's off-hand remark that "[t]he Anthropocene throws up many different challenges for all of us, but it's not the apocalypse" (Whitehouse 23), which, with her speaking from Australia in 2015, so before the devastating fires of 2019/2020 and the floodings of 2022, sounds almost cynical considering that in other places around the world habitats are being destroyed through coastal erosion, illegal deforestation, wildfires etc. Whether or not 'the apocalypse' is happening thus very much depends on geographic and socio-economic situatedness. Amitav Ghosh, for instance, in *The Great Derangement* (2016) argues that most climate victims, especially due to rising sea-levels, live in South Asia (87-88).

to “the appearance of a cosmopolitan consciousness” (Valencia Sáiz 9), as with more cultural-political understandings of cosmopolitan citizenship, also within the context of ecological citizenship, this notion is not unproblematic and can easily be turned into a form of cosmopolitanism from above (cf. chapter 3.4). This issue is highlighted by MacGregor when she argues that the dominating public discourse on climate change tends to universalise people’s experiences of climate change on a global level and homogenizes humanity to the extent that power asymmetries are glossed over, which results in gender-blindness and the marginalisation of less powerful, non-elite voices, those who are most vulnerable in ‘global society’ and most affected by and at the same time least responsible for climate change and its effects (cf. “Only Resist” 623, 627). In the same way, she further criticises, the discourse on ecological citizenship, centred in the global North, is “largely blind to political struggles and emerging forms of citizenship elsewhere in the world” (“Citizenship” 6).

Where a risk theory approach thus seems to be predominantly oriented towards the (hopeful, utopian) future building of new, eco-cosmopolitan communities (cf. Heise, *Sense of Place*) but is in danger of subsuming heterogeneous experiences, Nixon’s approach is invested in the present coping and resistance strategies of communities living in landscapes rendered vernacular by processes of slow environmental violence. In order to further compare these two approaches of risk theory and the concept of slow violence with regards to aspects of (ecological) citizenship and responsibility as a major feature of ecological citizenly subject positions, a brief look back to the discussion on cosmopolitan citizenship (cf. chapter 3.4) might be helpful. In an ecological and environmentalist context, the concept of ‘slow violence’ offers what Mignolo has termed ‘border thinking’ by allowing for marginalised people(s) to bring themselves into the conversation (cf. 736). By placing the focus on examining experiences and practices situated in vernacular landscapes, the concept of slow violence thus foregrounds ecological citizenly subject positions that, if considered on a global scale, share aspects with Bhabha’s understanding of “vernacular cosmopolitanism” (xvi) or Mignolo’s alternative term of “critical cosmopolitanism” (723). Risk theory, on the other hand, by focusing on risk as either community-endangering or, alternatively, community-building based on a shared (feeling of) responsibility is reminiscent of a ‘simple’, reformatory and reconciliatory inclusion of ““those to be included”” (Mignolo 724, 736) and thus eludes a thorough engagement with (global) structural unevenness of ecological risk distribution. A discourse of ‘risk’ in this form can more easily be turned into a hegemonic (Western, North Atlantic) perspective on ‘dwelling in crisis’ that does not fully take into account a “perspective of coloniality” (Mignolo 723).

The position that discourses of ‘risk’ often constitute discourses ‘from above’ (similar to a cosmopolitanism ‘from above’) is supported by such discourses often framing risks and the resulting risk society predominantly as a result of a managerial break-down, i.e. when authorities and their institutions are unable to effectively cope with increasing and increasingly diverse levels of risk. As F. Buell explains, “[r]isk society [...] emerges when modernity, for a host of reasons, proves structurally unable to contain the hazards it produces” and any “attempt” to “contain and manage ‘risks’ [...] has broken down” (193). In spite of such a managerial approach to addressing risks, as F. Buell contends, “[a]ccountability [...] is increasingly difficult to assign according to the rules of causality, blame and, liability” due to the extended time span between “the creation of hazards and the manifestation of their effects” (193). Accountability for actions, policies, etc., in any context of injustice and thus also with regards to ecological destruction, can be considered as a form of responsibility that stretches into the past and ‘remembers’ the underlying issues of power imbalances and structural unevenness that the predominantly future-oriented framing of responsibility in risk theory at least potentially glosses over, which would “leave the asymmetries untouched” (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 628; cf. above). Thus, in a risk theory framing, ‘responsibility’ may turn into another practice of ‘remembering/forgetting’ as previously discussed in different contexts in chapters 3 and 4 (cf. Anderson 201) by leaving open the very ambiguous potential for a form of environmental or ecological forgetting. Against such a practice of accidental or wilful ‘remembering/forgetting’ of the (global) power hierarchies and hegemonic value systems “that have caused, and are standing in the way of addressing” socio-environmental crisis (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 627; cf. above), the concept of slow violence as well as literary representations of possible effects of such violence evoke (global) memory-scapes that highlight the experiences of those on the receiving end of “the socially privileged attempt[ing] to export such side effects to the less empowered” (Heise, *Sense of Place* 147) and disenfranchised in the present. Since the effects of ecological slow violence ultimately are a global problem and produce uncertainty in diverse geographic locations, remembering with a view to challenge and change those structures that have caused ecological uncertainty and derailment is an obligation, or responsibility, in the present (cf. D. Levy 27). Addressing ‘slow environmental violence’, with its focus on an ethical dimension, not only engenders a revisionist remembering but also demands the active taking and performing of responsibility via citizenly practices.

On an overt meta-narrative level, in the *Dustlands* and *Uglies* trilogies, responsibility and accountability for the ecological effects of slow violence that has occurred in the

narratives' deep past (cf. Stephenson qtd. above), i.e. the implied readers' present, is very clearly assigned<sup>16</sup>: the characters in the *Dustlands* trilogy refer to the societies of the implied readers as 'Wreckers', while in the *Uglies* trilogy they are known as 'Rusties'. Both terms suggest much about the state of the biosphere in either narrative. In the *Dustlands* trilogy, the entire ecosystem is indeed 'wrecked', i.e. collapsed and seemingly unsalvageable as the unsustainable way of life of the Wreckers has resulted in "desertification, drought and water shortage, [...] and the collapse of [...] society [...] into lawlessness and armed conflict" (Goodbody and Johns-Putra 5). This already becomes apparent in the first two paragraphs of the narrative when the protagonist, Saba, describes her home, Silverlake, as drying out since they "ain't had a drop of rain fer [sic.] near six months now" (*Blood Red Road* 6). While it is never disclosed whether the ecological derailment has occurred as a slow process or a sudden event, as in traditional apocalyptic narratives, it is clear that the effects are still ongoing in the development of Silverlake from a sanctuary Saba's parents once sought out to the dried-up place it has become at the start of the narrative. In the *Uglies* trilogy, in comparison, the Rusties' reliance on metal and fuel – and their exploitation of the resources necessary to gain both – has led to the demise of their way of life but it has destroyed neither 'nature' nor 'civilization' completely. With regards to the latter point, the narrative initially suggests the objection 'on the contrary' as the downfall of the Rusties' way of life has resulted in making technology more efficient so that it needs not rely on fossil fuels and other finite resources any longer. The "Rusty Ruins [...] [,] the remains of an old city" (*Uglies* 47) have been left standing as a museum-like reminder of the time "back when [...] everyone was incredibly stupid" (*Uglies* 47) and now serve as a destination for school trips for educational purposes, while new and more energy-efficient cities have been built for the population.

In Saba's world neither the ecological nor the social crisis can be ignored or even forgotten. A strong link between the state of the biosphere and individual and social well-being is established early on in the narrative when the protagonist reflects that she and her family "bin watchin [both sic.] the land die, bit by bit. An [sic.] it's the same with [her] Pa" (*Blood Red Road* 7). The derailment of individual lives and the consequent loss of a cohesive social order from the family unit to society at large are thus framed as consequences of

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<sup>16</sup> This is also the case in other trilogies examined in this study but not in this chapter, especially the *Exodus* and the *Longlight* trilogies. A notable exception to this representation for human responsibility of ecological breakdown can be found in Susan Beth Pfeffer's *Last Survivors* trilogy (not considered in this study), in which ecological derailment occurs not because of human-induced slow environmental violence but as the consequence of a meteor having hit the moon and derailed it to the extent that it is now blocking the sun. Responsibility is here not practiced towards the non-human other but towards one's individual survival as well as that of the immediate family.

ecological collapse and thus represent an example of how “global warming exposes and intensifies interhuman division” (Andersen 23). In the *Uglies* trilogy, the situation is, at least initially, rather different. While in the *Dustlands* trilogy it is obvious that neither those risks that have produced delayed socio-ecological crisis nor those that are a result of this crisis can be effectively managed, and the majority of the narrative is concerned with negotiating in which way ecological justice might be achieved without losing sight of social justice by re-establishing a social structure that is sustainable in both ways, Tally’s society in the *Uglies* trilogy prides itself in having overcome such obstacles. Where in the *Dustlands* trilogy initially no form of government exists, the *Uglies* trilogy and also the *Carbon Diaries* novels represent societies in which ecological responsibility as taking action against human-made ecological destruction is based on government decisions and policies.

These policies, although arguably well-intended, produce at least as many new risks and issues as they attempt to solve, a circumstance that strongly underlines the intersection of ecological and social crisis. To begin with the *Uglies* trilogy as a very different example of a society ‘beyond the brink’ than represented in the *Dustlands* novels, initially a society is presented that manages to live without exploiting and destroying the environment and has thus risen above the ecological challenges facing the characters in the other two narratives discussed in this chapter. A major difference is that no slow or fast ecological derailment seems to preoccupy Tally and the society she lives in. This partly idyllic and partly triumphant vision, however, is deconstructed soon enough as it emerges ever more obviously that socio-ecological crisis has not been averted or solved but merely domesticated. A first indication of this fact is given on Tally’s trip to the Smoke, during which she encounters a group of “rangers” who battle a formerly rare orchid that, through genetic engineering, has “‘turned into the ultimate weed’” (*Uglies* 172-173) and learns that they and others before them have done this for “[a]lmost three hundred years” (*Uglies* 174). Ecological concerns thus represent one reason why the authorities in Tally’s world have declared any space outside the city as “[o]ff limits” (*Uglies* 46) for law-abiding citizens (cf. chapter 3.2). Consequently, citizens are contained within the cities and respect ‘nature’ by largely avoiding it.

However, the attempt to re-establish a healthy biosphere in the case of the *Uglies* trilogy comes at the cost of social justice. In a process that F. Buell terms “accommodationism”, “society [...] burrows deeper into environmental and social crisis by following messy intervention with even messier remedial adaptation” (162), and while the ecological crisis might not increase due to the ‘messy intervention’ by the authorities in Tally’s society, the



social crisis certainly does. The form of accommodationist risk management that the Specials, led by Dr. Cable, resort to is a seeming failsafe against people's tendency to subjugate and exploit that which humans consider as resources in an ecosystem. Not trusting their citizens to develop acceptance of ecological citizenship as an active and voluntary practice of responsibility towards the ecosystems that surround them and therefore not relying on their compliance with an openly communicated and transparent remedial policy, they eliminate a potential risk factor – much of human curiosity and desire to explore – by surgically removing it during the mandatory operation of citizens aged sixteen. The *Uglies* trilogy thus presents a triple-fold accommodationist risk management strategy for the domestication of the environmental crisis, and for “domesticat[ing] [the citizens] within crisis” (F. Buell 205). Firstly, citizens are forbidden from interacting with the non-urban areas surrounding the city apart from the Rusty Ruins, whose museum-like status helps shaping the narrative that all accountability for ecological derailment rests with the Rusties. Thereby, accountability and the necessity for a practice of responsibility are relegated predominantly to the past. Secondly, the operation ensures that citizens have no curiosity or critical capacity to doubt this narrative, and thirdly, production and recycling technology has been upgraded to facilitate an endless cycle of reusability of materials, so that the operated-on citizens are kept busy with engaging in forms of consumerism that are ecologically harmless.

The “[n]ew technologies [that] are summoned up to remedy the problems created by old ones” (F. Buell 162) in the form of medical procedures and technologies are thus employed for an accommodationist risk management from above that might prevent ecological crisis from spinning out of control but at the same time significantly curtails individual or community agency. Furthermore, ecological responsibility in the *Uglies* trilogy emerges as part of the hegemonic discourse since it is linked to the community-defining hegemonic ritual of the operation (cf. chapter 3.3). As with political citizenship, also ecological citizenship is not even available as a conscious subject position at the level of personal responsibility here since all responsibility has been taken on by the authorities. As a consequence of the Specials' approach to risk management a continuing process of remembering/forgetting this very crisis is ongoing: while the citizens are constantly reminded that there once was a crisis due to the Rusties' behaviour, they are also made to ‘forget’ that responsibility rests with their contemporary society in equal measure and must be practiced in the present, too. This, in turn, has the effect that the root problems of ecological crisis are not addressed sufficiently – or not at all – in Tally's society.

One of these root causes, and thus one of the greatest risks to be managed, is consumerism, and both the *Uglies* and the *Carbon Diaries* narratives address the “anxiety [...] [of] unsustainable levels of consumption” (Goodbody and Johns-Putra 5), albeit in different ways. In the *Carbon Diaries* novels, the issue is approached through the lens of cutting carbon consumption through carbon rationing. This risk management policy is introduced by the government in Laura’s Britain because due to the (fictitious) Great Storm that has hit Britain and the rest of Europe a few years previous to the events narrated in the novel and has killed many thousands society has to come to terms with the fact that “even slow crisis might not stay slow” (F. Buell 192). Being set in the future closest to the present of the implied readership (at the time of publication in 2008), the *Carbon Diaries* novels render not only the effects of slow environmental violence graspable but also aptly illustrate the growing awareness of the hitherto privileged European, especially British, citizens of what it means to be ‘dwelling in crisis’ and hovering on the potential tipping point from ‘slow crisis’ to full-on disaster.<sup>17</sup> At the beginning of *Carbon Diaries 2015*, the UK is the first country in the world to introduce the policy of carbon rationing in order to reduce carbon emissions by 60% (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 4). As people have to navigate the new rules of carbon rationing society struggles massively with the change from a life of abundance before the onset of rationing to a life of fewer choices and more (consumer) restrictions the policy has brought about. Only one month after the introduction of carbon rationing, the unstable character of existing social (and economic) networks is laid bare when Laura and her friend Adisa get caught on the underground during a power blackout, which causes panic among the commuters on the trains and mayhem at street level. There, Laura and her friend run into “a massive standoff” (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 38) between looters and rioters on the one and the police on the other hand. Laura later summarises the severe effects of the only two-hour blackout as follows:

30,000 passengers [on the underground] trapped till midnight, 8 million euros’ worth of damage in the City, 2 buildings burnt down, 4 separate riots, looters fired on with gas and water cannons, 6 people dead, 260 injured, 800 arrests. (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 39)

Although the introduction of carbon rationing as a form of risk management can be read as a fictional counter-example to complacent politics and a general “absence of political will”

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<sup>17</sup> In Mayer’s terminology, Lloyd’s novels represent risk narratives of anticipation, which present “a fictional world that is marked by the cultural moment of uncertainty in a late twentieth/early twenty-first century present, when awareness of the risk figures prominently in a society, when the first symptoms of climate change in deterritorialized local places can be detected, but have not yet led to full-scale, global climate catastrophe” (505).

(Valencia Saíz 10) to engage in environmental justice and foster ecological citizenship, the *Carbon Diaries* novels thus at the same time problematize the procedure of a government-mandated privatisation of responsibility and the negative effects this has on social cohesion. Like the authorities in Tally's world in the *Uglies* trilogy, the government in Laura's Britain engages in a form of risk management from above that is accommodationist as it exacerbates the social crisis, even as it seeks to counter the ecological one.

Carbon rationing as accommodationist risk management demands compliance as a form of personally responsible citizenship from each individual without giving especially younger citizens the possibility to 'bring themselves into the conversation'. When Laura's school's headmaster tells the students that "[their] generation would be thanked by all those to come [as] it was [they] who finally made the choice to change [their] lives and save the planet", Laura wryly comments "what choice? I ain't old enough to vote" (*Carbon Diaries* 2015, 269). Laura is here shown as very conscious of having to comply without having had the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process, thus providing a mirror for the implied readers as to their own liminal position eco-politically as well as regarding the expectation that they must take remedial action for the ecological 'misdeeds' of their forbears. With the introduction of a "compulsory carbon card for all citizens" (*Carbon Diaries* 2015, i), which includes citizens under age and thus not eligible to vote, as well as the installation of a smart meter in every home that connects to the national carbon grid and can "'take[] over and manage[] [people's] energy use'" to the point of "'shuttin' things off in the 'ouse if [they're] really bad'" (*Carbon Diaries* 2015, 57), ecological responsibility via carbon rationing becomes a hegemonic discourse in the *Carbon Diaries* novels and individual carbon saving is established as a normative duty instead of a citizenly practice and subject position that people choose actively and voluntarily. Nevertheless, while the citizenry might have little choice in the implementation of the actual policy, in contrast to the citizens in Tally's society in the *Uglies* trilogy, who are completely disenfranchised by the operation, they do have a choice in how they react and adapt to it.

Waiting or hoping for citizens to adapt to a new policy is circumvented by the operation in the *Uglies* trilogy. While people are prevented from 'consuming nature', i.e. destroying and/or exploiting it by being prevented to interact with it at all, consumerism is alive and well in New Pretty Town, where new items appear out of a "hole in the wall" (*Pretties* 10) by simply pressing a button and can be disposed of a moment later in the same way without this

having any negative ecological consequences.<sup>18</sup> The aspect of a strict non-interaction with the environment is underlined by the inability of the production and recycling technology to process non-artificial materials. A woollen sweater that Tally was given on her journey away from the city cannot be recycled as “the hole can’t use it” (*Pretties* 14). The potentially endless cycle of production, consumption and recycling is therefore not critically reflected in Tally’s society but, on the contrary, exacerbated to serve as a distraction for the population from both the social crisis and the not-to-be-transgressed-into wilderness.

The issue in terms of citizens’ adaptation to new policies or critical reflection of the status quo in both the *Carbon Diaries* novels and the *Uglies* trilogy lies in the apparent circumstance that consumerism “seamlessly occupies the horizons of the thinkable” (Fisher, “It’s Easier to Imagine the End of the World” 311). While Fisher’s argument concentrates on capitalism in general, it is especially consumerism that in both the *Carbon Diaries* novels and the *Uglies* trilogy, and thus both in a society temporally close to that of the implied readership as well as in one that is set three hundred years in the future, “has colonized the dreaming life of the population” (Fisher, “It’s Easier to Imagine the End of the World” 311) and continues to do so. As a force that occupies the ‘dreaming life’ of citizens, consumerism constitutes a significant part of the ‘social (and ecological) dreaming’ that characterises utopia as well as, in the case of the novels analysed here, dystopia (cf. Baccolini and Moylan 5; also chapter 2 of this study). It is thus highlighted in both narratives as being part of the socio-ecological crisis, a further risk that needs to be managed, so that risk management to a large extent focuses on consumption management. As a consequence, any form of ecological citizenship linked to versions of consumerism is in danger to be reduced to a citizenly subject position that is both depoliticised and co-opted by the authorities (cf. MacGregor qtd. above; also Barry).<sup>19</sup>

The long-standing socio-economic ideology of consumerism thus severely infringes on the citizens’ possibilities to perform an enfranchised form of ecological citizenship. Instead, in both Lloyd’s *Carbon Diaries* duology and Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy, whether consciously or unconsciously, they resort to a subject position that Fisher terms “the consumer-spectator”. It is described as a disengaged and detached subject position that has replaced active

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<sup>18</sup> The imagined technology for producing and recycling inanimate items is not uncommon in speculative fiction. A prominent example in science fiction is the so-called replicator technology in *Star Trek*. At this point it is interesting to observe that while the authorities in Tally’s society seem to be able to make surgical alterations to people’s curiosity and critical capacities, they are not able – or are not willing – to apply the same medical procedure to those areas in the human brain that regulate the predisposition to consume.

<sup>19</sup> F. Buell even uses the term “eco-authoritarianism” (202) to describe the approach of some governments.

engagement and involvement with passive cynicism (Fisher, “It’s Easier to Imagine the End of the World” 309–310). In the *Carbon Diaries* duology, this subject position is adopted by many characters in the form of individual strategies of evasion. Especially the first instalment, *The Carbon Diaries 2015*, illustrates how, when ecological responsibility and citizenship become hegemonic, normative discourses imposed by the authorities, the subject position of consumer-spectator may suddenly appear to become a vehicle for exercising choice and agency. While the practice by some characters of exceeding their carbon limit is usually framed as a (emotional) difficulty with adapting to the new rules of carbon rationing, when the Smart Meter appears “like a military dictator” (*Carbon Diaries 2015* 71) acting against its rationale can seem like resistance to “the system tak[ing] over” (*Carbon Diaries 2015* 65), as Laura’s mother comments. Furthermore, difficulty or even reluctance to adapt is not a generational issue, as Farzin claims when she assigns such “quirky adolescent behaviour” especially to Laura’s parents when “one would expect [this] from their teenage daughters” (190). In fact, Laura’s sister Kim is even more reluctant to adapt than her parents, overspending her carbon limit to the extent that the entire family has to undergo a “*Carbon Offenders Recovery Programme*” and Kim has to attend the “*Carbon Offenders Rehabilitation Outreach Centre*” (*Carbon Diaries 2015* 68, 70), a point that Braithwaite also highlights when she argues that Kim “is presented in opposition to the behaviour the text advocates” (“The Hope – the One Hope” 7). Even Laura at some point concedes that “[e]verything [she] like[s] burns so much carbon” (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 215), and she frequently displays the passive cynicism of the consumer-spectator towards those who are vocal and unabashed about trying to establish alternative forms of community and responsibility. Her elderly neighbour, Arthur, succinctly comments on the situation that “[i]n some ways [the war] was easier – we had a clear enemy – but this time it’s almost like we’re fighting ourselves” (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 150).

Roughly three hundred years on, in the *Uglies* trilogy the situation has not changed much, although a certain cynicism has to be attested to the authorities and the Specials instead of to the major part of the population, which remains predominantly mindless, or ‘pretty-minded’, about their consumerist behaviour. Consumerism here is predominantly associated with the mindlessness of the new pretties, i.e. with those young adults who have recently undergone the mandatory operation, as it is their ‘horizon of the thinkable’ that is first and foremost preoccupied with the next party to go to and producing the perfect costume to

match.<sup>20</sup> At first glance it thus appears that the narrative criticises young adults, including the implied readership, for only engaging in thoughtless consumerism, which seems to reflect Oziewicz's criticism of the adolescent perspective as inadequate in terms of recognising and productively engaging with ecological challenges (184-85; cf. above). However, in contrast to such a position, the trilogy highlights that, through the ritual of the operation, at least initially the (citizenly) subject position of the 'consumer-spectator' is imposed on the adolescent characters from above by the authorities and is thus, moreover, the only subject position available to them. It is therefore not necessarily the adolescent characters who actively choose to be socio-ecologically disengaged and potentially irresponsible; rather, they are kept in a position in which they, too, like other 'risks', remain manageable. That they pose a certain ecological risk becomes apparent when Tally and her friends in their post-operation state try to break through the numbness of 'pretty-mindedness' in order to feel more awake and 'bubbly' (cf. chapter 4.3). It is noticeably when "at their bubbliest" (*Pretties* 131) that Tally's friends engage in environmentally unfriendly and potentially harmful practices like gathering wood from trees and burning it. Tally's performance of politically and culturally justice-oriented citizenship via countering the effects of the operation thus emerges as a threat to a fragile socio-ecological equilibrium based on the docile compliance of the citizens with performing a disenfranchised version of ecological citizenship. Since they never receive the possibility to actively understand, accept and voluntarily perform such a responsibility for themselves, when exercising a higher degree of agency the citizens in the *Uglies* trilogy immediately fall back into unsustainable behaviour once they succeed in undermining the effects of the operation.

Therefore, neither in the *Uglies* trilogy nor in the *Carbon Diaries* duology does the subject position of consumer-spectator, whether cynical or mindless, constitute an actual counter-hegemonic strategy. Acting from this subject position does not constitute an act of speaking from a position of coloniality because the characters in both narratives are not aware of the colonisation of their minds by consumer-capitalism. This subject position, therefore, may represent an alternative to a passive adherence to the rules of risk management as personally responsible ecological citizenship imposed by the authorities and thus may appear as a way out of being domesticated within crisis. However, this unaware, non-responsible, selfish form of 'resistance' is no more enfranchising within the situation of socio-ecological

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<sup>20</sup> Middle pretties, i.e. adults who take up a profession and/or start a family, may be operated on again to be able to fulfil certain functions in the community that require responsibility, such as police people or teachers, although the text does not reveal whether and how this impacts on their behaviour as consumers.

crisis than the imposed rules are. Individuals and communities have to find more responsible and critically agential ways to bring themselves into the conversation via “*dwelling actively within* rather than *accommodating oneself to* environmental crisis” (F. Buell 206; emphasis added), which Buell understands as an “awareness of ‘embodiment’ and ‘embeddedness’ in ecosystems” as “key to a [...] politicizing of environmental crisis” (206). In all three narratives discussed in this chapter, actively living in a socio-ecological crisis situation implies both a realisation and acceptance of responsibility and accountability and an active engagement with and, if necessary, corrective resistance to the measures introduced and maintained by the respective authorities.

In the *Carbon Diaries* duology, practicing an active, engaged and conscious socio-ecological responsibility is frequently linked to “being a productive part of a group” (Braithwaite, “‘The Hope - the One Hope’” 8), which helps to counter the beginning of a social meltdown as described above. Such a community-based performance of socio-ecological responsibility moves from the more engaged citizenly subject position of participative ecological citizenship on to justice-oriented ecological citizenship when it is used to openly question the equity of the distribution of ecological responsibility. Both instalments of the narrative offer a number of examples of responsible and productive community action that either substitutes failed or missing action by the authorities or is in open opposition to imposed and unequally distributed risk management. In relation to both, Laura frequently oscillates uneasily between different citizenly subject positions: especially with regards to alternative community cooperatives, such as the group Women Moving Forward, which her mother joins in *The Carbon Diaries 2015*, or the semi-flooded Docklands squats community Laura herself joins out of financial necessity in *The Carbon Diaries 2017*, she frequently takes on the position of a passive and cynical spectator instead of becoming actively engaged herself (e.g. *Carbon Diaries 2015*, 278f.; *Carbon Diaries 2017*, 36) while at the same time relying on their help when in need. While she thus at least partly ridicules what she perceives as an overzealousness in those who engage in a socio-ecologically grounded form of participative citizenship – many of whom are female in these groups –, she valorises the strategy of her elderly (and male) neighbour Arthur, who keeps himself mostly to himself, apart from occasional meetings with Laura as well as her father, and practices a rigorous form of energy saving (cf. *Carbon Diaries 2015*, 221). Arthur’s strategy is informed by his previous experience of rationing during World War II, when the population also had to handle a severe infringement on their “habitual lifestyle” (Weik Von Mossner, “Hope in Dark Times” 70). This parallel in government-mandated rationing and people’s adaptation to it

leads Farzin to the conclusion that “by drawing on historical experience, [Arthur] also provides the grain of utopian hope typical of young adult dystopias. In his memory, rationing functioned also as a social leveller and sparked people’s ability to form new collectives out of solidarity when faced with a common challenge” (191). However, the representation of this spirit as a response to ecologically-based challenges in Lloyd’s novel is far less romanticised than in Farzin’s argument. It is Arthur himself who tells Laura to not “‘believe all that Government whitewash “Spirit of the Blitz” stuff”” and who corrects her illusion that then “‘at least everyone worked together”” (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 150) by telling her of lootings which involved cutting fingers from dead bodies to steal their jewellery (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 151).

Laura’s level of (non-)engagement with and criticism of these community projects based on solidarity reflects the novels’ attempt to offer a more conflicted and careful view of such a privatisation of ecological responsibility and to not invite too strong a nostalgic or romanticised view of measures like (carbon) rationing without at the same time negating the necessity of such measures. Ecological citizenship and the ways in which it can and/or must be performed thus emerges, whether planned or not, as the most successfully ambivalent citizenly subject position in the *Carbon Diaries* novels. Less conflicted than forms of ecologically participative citizenship is the novels’ stance on ecologically justice-oriented citizenship, which is especially directed against the unequal distribution of the ‘burden’ of responsibility and the aim to highlight and uphold accountability of those institutions and corporations who seek to avoid it.<sup>21</sup> In the first instalment, the *Carbon Diaries 2015*, this issue is taken up when Laura watches a protest against the Mayor of London’s approval of a “2<sup>nd</sup> drought order” (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 179) on TV, which rules in favour of Thames Water, a by then privatised and internationally owned company (cf. *Carbon Diaries 2015*, 187) and against the citizens of London despite the company having “lost 50bn litres of water in London thru [sic.] leaky pipes” (*Carbon Diaries 2015*, 175). Thus, while the citizens have to ration their water consumption even more severely, the international corporation responsible for large-scale water waste remains unchallenged at first. The issues of ‘water-wars’ and “confrontations between [...] typically unequal forces” (Nixon 41) is taken up repeatedly

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<sup>21</sup> This issue is also underlined by Nixon when he argues “that although advocating personal environmental responsibility is essential”, in view of the planetary scale of the problem, this cannot be the only solution; conversely, “[i]nstitutional actions (and institutionalized inaction)” and their “profound impact on environmental outcomes” (39) have to be taken into consideration for an equitable distribution of responsibility.



again in the second instalment, *The Carbon Diaries 2017*, and it is in this context that Laura starts to overcome her cynic and often passive position of (consumer-) spectator.

During Laura and her band's failed tour through Europe, they learn that "there's water battles going on everywhere" from all over southern Europe to Israel and Palestine as well as other places in the world (*Carbon Diaries 2017*, 263-64). Some, like Laura's former teacher Gwen Perry-Jones and, later, her on-off boyfriend Adisa, react to the situation by radicalising themselves to the extent of joining an environmental terrorist group, the 2 (cf. *Carbon Diaries 2017*, 268). In a less violent and more productively justice-oriented way, Laura and her friends engage in a protest in a rural village in Italy against water theft by the authorities, an "extractive theft" (Nixon 42) that constitutes a further accommodationist practice that requires the citizens to bear the brunt of the crisis spinning out of control. As they encounter the situation of the theft unexpectedly, witnessing "a tanker, with a giant hose attached, sucking up water from a shattered well – and guarding it, a row of armoured troops" (*Carbon Diaries 2017*, 279) while the villagers stand by impotently is all the more shocking to the group. In spite of at first not having been noticed by soldiers or villagers, the group decides not to "sneak away" but instead to "walk[] forward and [fall] in line with the people [as] [t]here just wasn't anything else to do" (*Carbon Diaries 2017*, 280). Faced abruptly with an instance of socio-ecological injustice and the blatant disparity in distributing the effects of slow ecological violence, the group and especially Laura herself progress from a practice of witnessing the ecological and social effects of this socio-ecological violence to a more active and more direct engagement. Holding the perpetrators, in this case Italian authorities, accountable via direct citizen action is framed as an inevitability in the face of obvious inequality, and in the aftermath of this experience Laura has to consider and negotiate her own strategy and performance of socio-ecological responsibility. While she does not shrink away from engaging in further direct protests (cf. *Carbon Diaries 2017*, 376ff.), her practice centres on forms of witnessing, e.g. via the music of her band (cf. chapter 4.4), as a way to hold accountable those who continue to commit acts of slow violence and/or engage in accommodationist risk management. In this way, she and her friends continue to remember and to practice their own responsibility in working towards socio-ecological justice and at the same time refuse to forget that responsibility and accountability rest not only with individual citizens but, and to a significant extent, with the authorities as well as big corporations.

Where Laura often ridicules the alternative, counter-hegemonic communities that form in her neighbourhood and in London in general, such communities are represented more positively in the *Uglies* and the *Dustlands* trilogies and in further trilogies discussed in

previous chapters (notably the *Exodus* and the *Longlight* trilogies) where they are associated with the peripheral side of the centre-periphery-dichotomy discussed in chapter 3. Neither the Smokies in the *Uglies* trilogy nor the communities in the other trilogies that represent different approaches to social organisation and interaction with ‘nature’ are “primarily indigenous peoples nor are they unequivocal models of optimum human-earth interrelations, [but] they are invested in the knowledge structures of oppressed rural peoples [...] and thus can be read as the victims of environmental imperialism” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 109). However, in a move similar to that outlined in chapter 4.2 where it was argued that in terms of collective memory the counter-hegemonic (hi)story of past events on its own is not able to bring about desired change, also in terms of ecological citizenship these alternative, marginalised communities in themselves do not offer a solution to the socio-ecological crisis at hand, as evidenced in the fact that none of these communities remains unaltered until the end of the respective narrative. In the case of the Smokies in the *Uglies* trilogy, the fact that their community cannot offer entirely sustainable solutions for society on a large scale becomes apparent soon after Tally’s arrival there. While the Smokies have a more immediate, unmediated relationship with ‘nature’, their settlement in the woods is made from “trees [that] had been taken alive” (*Uglies* 194), a point that horrifies Tally. Furthermore, they burn wood, which gives the Smoke its name (*Uglies* 186), and hunt animals for subsistence, all of which is initially shocking for Tally. Even though they are careful not to take more than they need, the idea of “cutting down *trees* here” is represented as a grave issue when Tally reflects that this had also been a part of Rusty culture and “the Rusties had been insane, almost destroying the world in a million different ways” (*Uglies* 191). Tally’s initial discomfort with consuming meat and using ‘alive’ wood thus highlights the fact that even consuming ‘nature’ for subsistence may be ecologically problematic if applied to a much larger community, like a city, a nation or even a global community.

This concern resurfaces at the very end of the *Uglies* trilogy, when, after the defeat of Dr. Cable and the curing of the mind- and body-altering operation(s) she had devised, the ensuing increased communication and exchange between individual cities includes “talk [...] even of expansion into the wild” (*Specials* 323). As already evidenced by Tally’s friends when they were trying to combat the effects of the operation, it becomes even more obvious now that without the possibility to negotiate and train ecological citizenship as taking responsibility for the surrounding ecosystem and accountability for practices that may or may not be sufficiently sustainable, the citizens are in danger of “going to start acting like Rusties now” so that Tally worries they will be “[s]preading across the wild, overpopulating the earth,

levelling everything in their path” (*Specials* 323) as those in the implied readers’ present are accused of doing. For once, she and her former nemesis, Dr. Cable, agree since Dr. Cable, too, is worried that after having been administered the cure to the effects of the operation, people will “start chewing up the wild” (*Specials* 334). When Dr. Cable saves Tally from being “despecialized” again, this is therefore not out of kindness but because Tally is “[t]he last of [her] Specials designed to live in the wild, to exist outside the cities” (*Specials* 335). As this quotation highlights, Dr. Cable’s plea – or request – that Tally should leave is motivated in equal measure by vanity (the survival of ‘her’ Specials) and by concern about a renewed uptake of slow environmental violence.

Tally’s dispatch into the ‘wild’ with the words “[t]he world may need you, one day” (*Specials* 335) can be read as an ultimate act of accommodationist risk management from above. Even though Tally is free to make her own decisions now, her resolve to retreat into the wilderness to a certain extent constitutes another assignment for a technologically enhanced individual whose purpose now is to prevent the falling back of society into ecologically harmful practices and thus to be a safeguard against renewed ecological crisis – a safeguard that was before ensured via the operation. The solution the trilogy offers to prevent history from repeating itself thus in a way remains true to the represented society’s credo of not trusting their citizens and therefore not ‘bothering’ to engage in a discursive and performative *communal* process to educate them about ecological responsibility as a citizenly subject position. In retreating from society into the woods, Tally, and through her focalised perspective the entire narrative, consciously rejects another solution represented by her friends, who start “teaching [dispersed villagers] about technology [...] and how *not* to start forest fires. [...] In return, [her friends] were learning everything about the wild, how [...] to live off the land, gathering the knowledge of the pre-Rusties before it was lost again” (*Specials* 340). Such a strategy of engagement that combines the knowledges and experiences of both the former ecologically colonised and the former ecological colonisers for the development of ecological citizenly subject positions instead of drawing back completely into isolation seems more practical and potentially offers a way forward out of ecological and social crisis. The text thus uneasily suggests that a full reconciliation between humans and their non-human environment as well as a way of living together as a ‘more than human community’ remains difficult at best, and that, as in Tally’s case, there remains a choice to be

made in favour of living in society *or* in favour of performing ecologically justice-oriented citizenship.<sup>22</sup>

Where in the *Uglies* trilogy ecological citizenship as a responsibility and accountability towards the biosphere ultimately remains (predominantly) an outsider position, the *Dustlands* trilogy represents a reverse trajectory while still pitching two different forms of ecological citizenship against each other. Due to the design of DeMalo's strategy for gaining hegemonic power – unifying New Eden and/by making the land arable again – ecological and political citizenship and citizenly subject positions have a considerable overlap in this trilogy. In this chapter, the analysis focuses on Saba's citizenly practices to achieve socio-ecological justice and subsequently, the following chapter will engage with DeMalo's particular interpretation of stewardship as an ecological citizenly subject position. Although, in contrast to the protagonists of the *Uglies* and *Carbon Diaries* novels, the subject position of consumer-spectator as an 'alternative' is not available to Saba, her citizenly subject position and her performance of citizenly practices are not ecologically oriented before she is introduced to DeMalo's 'vision', i.e. the filmic representation of Earth before the effects of slow environmental violence led to full ecological destruction. While she feels responsible for many things (e.g. her siblings, the death of friends, stopping DeMalo's cruel politics etc.), the regeneration of the ecosystems surrounding her is not one of them. Predominantly, this is due to her having no knowledge of both the possibility that this might be feasible and the way how to bring it about. In her understanding and experience, the destroyed landscapes she knows and traverses as well as the social crisis playing out within them are near-irreversible facts of life. She knows there are places like Crosscreek or Darktrees that are still wooded and have access to a steady supply of clean water, but there are also shifting landscapes and beasts called "hellwurms", creatures that live underneath a dried-out lake and developed when "back in Wrecker times, they put some kinda poison into the lake [...] [which] killed off everythin [sic.]. Essept the wurms [sic.]. They grew'" (*Blood Red Road* 307). Faced with these realities, instead of moving from a passive adherence to the rules of accommodationist risk management via non-responsible form(s) of 'resistance' to responsible and active practices of engagement like Laura and Tally do, Saba's development of ecological citizenship begins with a moment of ecological 'awakening', followed by an experience of mourning, pessimism and dislocation to gaining access to the means for a solution, which in turn motivates her active and responsible engagement.

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<sup>22</sup> The way in which Tally's ecological citizenly subject position can be aligned with the concept of stewardship and the role the concept of wilderness plays in this context will be discussed in the following chapter (5.3).

Her perspective begins to change when DeMalo invites her into the Wrecker bunker, the place he uses to initiate new Stewards into his ‘grand narrative’ (cf. chapter 3). Here, a film recording made in pre-destruction times – during the implied readers’ present – is triggered to play every day by the light of the rising sun, a technology unknown to most in Saba’s world and therefore easy for DeMalo to usurp. The extent of the impact this film has on Saba is underlined by the space that is given to representing her experience: over three pages, Saba as autodiegetic focaliser recounts what she sees, from “a bird’s eye view of grasslands an blue sky an [both instances sic.] clouds” to “animals [she] ain’t never seen before” to the ocean and life “unner [sic.] the water” (*Rebel Heart* 306) to “[t]he lost cities of the ancient world” and, finally, “a little blue ball float[ing] in a [sic.] ocean of stars” (*Rebel Heart* 307), a representation that Curry terms “the whole earth image” (*Environmental Crisis* 27)<sup>23</sup>. Her ecological awakening is a very emotional experience that causes her alternately to “[c]ry out at one wondrous sight after another” (*Rebel Heart* 307) and to not being able “to stop the tears” (*Rebel Heart* 308). Saba’s immediate reaction of joy, enthusiasm and curiosity (cf. *Rebel Heart* 307) while watching the film is turned into “a solid, heavy ache inside of [her]” (*Rebel Heart* 308) as she mourns that which has been destroyed by the effects of slow environmental violence.

Thus, the film magnifies Saba’s understanding of the loss that has occurred to the extent that she “wish[es] [she] didn’t know that’s the way it used to be” (*Rebel Heart* 311), but instead of furthering her responsible engagement, these disembodied images of past life on the planet “shatter[] [Saba’s] heart” (*Raging Star* 139) and “engender[] nostalgia for a lost sense of earthly belonging in counterpoint to the detachment and dislocation” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 27) of life in the derailed landscapes left behind by ecological destruction. The fact that, as Curry argues, this view “engenders a sense of alienation by denying humanity’s phenomenal interaction with the earth” (*Environmental Crisis* 28) is highlighted when Saba tries to touch the animals she sees but “[her] hands go right through to the cold wall” (*Rebel Heart* 306). This moment is echoed in the last instalment of the trilogy when she returns to the bunker to discover DeMalo’s secret and “touch[es] the walls where [she] seen eagles fly. [...] But [she] [doesn’t] feel a thing. It’s cold an it’s dark an [both instances sic.] that’s all” (*Raging Star* 139). In this way, the whole earth image “delimits

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<sup>23</sup> While Curry develops her argument about the whole earth image in the context of examining Bertagna’s *Exodus* trilogy, the major points apply to the representation of pre-destruction Earth in the *Dustlands* trilogy as well.

human belonging by inscribing the earth as an anti-sensory space of failed and ineffectual human relationships” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 31).

In foregrounding Saba’s sense of loss and the potential of an alienation from her present due to an uncritical nostalgia for an irrecoverable past, the narrative consciously refers to the criticism that post-/disaster representations and discourses may engender a quiet resignation in the face of seemingly insurmountable problems and, thereby, an erosion of citizens’ eco-political engagement. Nevertheless, even though the sense of passive nostalgia provoked by the whole earth image is initially not conducive to Saba’s development of ecological citizenship as actively practiced responsibility, the film crucially provides a new perspective and new knowledge via the Wreckers’ recorded memories of earth as it used to be. By going through a period of what F. Buell, with reference to Phyllis Windle and Joanna Macy, calls “environmental mourning” (206), Saba finds a “means of both absorbing, internalizing, emotionally surviving, and remembering the species, landscapes, and other environmental goods that have been irrevocably lost and of continuing on to love and be engaged with what remains” (206).

A way forward for Saba in the development of a practice of dwelling actively rather than passively not only in social but also in ecological crisis involves a more active engagement with these recorded memories, the possibility for which arises when she and her love-interest Jack discover additional information and knowledge left behind by the Wreckers. During their search of the bunker for clues to defeat DeMalo, they discover a “Wrecker seedstore”, holding seeds for “[f]lowers. Vegetables. Fruits, trees, grasses” (*Raging Star* 143), as well as DeMalo’s “plan [...] [t]o plant” and “reseed the earth” (*Raging Star* 145). DeMalo’s plan to build “[a] green paradise of slave labour, all controlled by him” (*Raging Star* 146) exacerbates the social crisis while aiming at alleviating the ecological one in a way similar to the strategies employed by the authorities in the other novels examined in this chapter. When Saba and Jack additionally discover that DeMalo’s ‘visions’ are actually a film that is played every day at dawn, Saba understands that “[t]he seedstore an [sic.] this room with these visions” “go together” as “a gift to the future [...] meant fer [sic.] all of us” (*Raging Star* 151; emphasis added) instead of for a tyrant like DeMalo and his few ‘chosen ones’. Convinced that the Wreckers “meant fer [sic.] it to be used rightly an [sic.] justly” (*Raging Star* 151), Saba begins to integrate her politically justice-oriented citizenly practices with ecologically justice-oriented ones in order to ascertain equal access to the seed store for everyone. For her, even more than for Laura and her friends in the *Carbon Diaries* novels, ecologically justice-oriented citizenship as an active practice of

responsibility that is unequivocally community-based includes both non-human and human society. Performing an enfranchised form of ecological citizenship, as against the disenfranchised form practiced by DeMalo's Stewards and centred on a disembodied image of 'Mother Earth', focuses on engendering an embodied and embedded interaction between humans and the ecosystems they live in so that all citizens of New Eden "'can heal the earth, work the land, raise [their] children, an [sic.] not at the point of a gun'" (*Raging Star* 195). In this way, Saba and her friends transform themselves from victims "stranded in a place stripped of the very characteristics that made it inhabitable" (Nixon 19) into "resource rebels" who "mobilize[] [...] against memory loss, refusing to see their long-term livelihoods abstracted into oblivion" (Nixon 41) by DeMalo's ambitions.

As the analysis in this chapter has shown so far, the novels discussed here correlate post-/disaster fiction's reproduction of what Manjikian terms "the characteristics of the failed state – including mounting demographic pressures; the movement of refugees; [...] uneven economic development [...] and a widespread violation of human rights" (52; cf. chapter 1 of this study) with images of ecoprecarity as the result of slow environmental violence as well as the attempt to manage the risks that result from the effects of such violence. While some narratives, such as the *Carbon Diaries* duology and the *Dustlands* trilogy, advocate an equal distribution of responsibility between all members of society as the most effective response to the resulting socio-ecological crisis, the *Uglies* trilogy remains ambivalent as to how to best perform such responsibility and who is best suited to do so. The narratives thus differ in their conclusion as to who practices ecological citizenship and from which socio-political position, i.e. from 'above' or from 'below, and who or what is the major beneficiary of a performance of responsibility that is geared towards justice and equity. This is due, on the one hand, to the novels' differing interpretations of what exactly is comprised by the notion of ecological citizenship and how closely they tie it to the other forms of citizenship already discussed in this study, and on the other hand it reflects the genre traditions that are especially referenced in the respective narratives as well as frictions between opposing tendencies within the differing generic conventions.

In the *Carbon Diaries* duology and the *Dustlands* trilogy, Laura's and Saba's ecological citizenship arguably develops as a citizenly subject position that is almost supplementary to other, more strongly focused citizenly subject positions. Where in the *Carbon Diaries*, developing her approach to ecological citizenship and her practice of witnessing ultimately enables Laura to become a more confident and actively engaged artist and thus enhances her performance of cultural citizenship, for Saba in the *Dustlands* trilogy working towards socio-

ecological justice bolsters her already strongly developed politically justice-oriented citizenship. Furthermore, both narratives place a strong emphasis on a combination of individual and community action to achieve a practice and performance of ecological citizenship that is both individually and communally responsible, equitable and justice-oriented. Thereby, both narratives foreground a form of ecological citizenship that can be compared to political border-thinking as it is directed against a socially unjust distribution of the burden of responsibility and gives those who are rendered politically voiceless, for example teenagers or neighbourhood communities in the *Carbon Diaries* duology and displaced and/or oppressed people in the *Dustlands* trilogy, a possibility to bring themselves into the conversation and challenge accommodationist risk management strategies from above.

Ultimately, however, both narratives are invested in a conception of ecological citizenship that is strongly based on traditional understandings of anthropocentric citizenship in general, which is, of course, reflected in the conventions of the traditional *Bildungsroman* and its tendency to seek reconciliation rather than continuous struggle and revisionism. This is visible first and foremost in the *Carbon Diaries* novels, which in terms of ecological citizenly practices reflect on how people can and should adapt in order to ascertain both their own and therefore, necessarily, the survival of the biosphere but explicitly place the focus on inter-human instead of additionally on human-non-human relationships. Weik von Mossner's conclusion that Lloyd's novels suggest that "[l]osing our habitual lifestyle may be painful [...] but it may also lead to new solidarities, new value systems, and new modes of agency, all propelled by the hope that a different and in some regards ecotopian society will be possible" ("Hope in Dark Times" 70) may sound overly optimistic, but it ultimately also indicates the degree to which the non-human environment plays a role in these novels: as the backdrop for the protagonist's citizenly enfranchisement. It is Laura's cultural citizenship that is, ultimately, most explicitly validated. In this way, the narrative's rather strict adherence to *Bildungsroman* (and *Künstlerroman*) generic traditions with little to no interrogation of its more problematic aspects prevents a more ecocentric understanding of ecological citizenship despite the novels' continued emphasis on the causal relationship between ecological and social crisis.

The *Dustlands* trilogy, in comparison, seeks to represent a more balanced understanding of ecological citizenship based on the conviction that human-led ecological recovery and restoration has to be embedded in socially just practices. The reconciliation that takes place at the end of the narrative thus is not only a reconciliation of society with itself, one that Saba



excludes herself from (cf. chapter 3.2), but also a reconciliation of sorts between human and the more-than-human community in so far as the people of New Eden take collective responsibility for restoring the ecosystem. Nevertheless, the community Saba leaves behind at the end of the narrative, while keenly aware of their embeddedness in an ecosystem and their embodied relationship to it, is still in charge of engendering ecological resuscitation. Therefore, there still remains a dichotomous imbalance between humans and the non-human environment in terms of who is allocated agential capacities so that the potential to rethink traditional understandings of citizenship leading to their eventual transgression (cf. Dobson 90, qtd. above) is not fully utilised. This is mirrored in a shift in the generic emphasis within the trilogy from predominantly post-disaster with a nod to dystopian conventions in *Blood Red Road* to predominantly dystopian on the backdrop of post-disaster ones in *Rebel Heart* and *Raging Star*, with the effect that the social conflict, even though grafted onto an ecological conflict and crisis, takes precedence. By their emphasis on specific generic conventions, both the *Dustlands* trilogy and the *Carbon Diaries* novels thus emphasise that the performance of ecological citizenship as responsibility that is geared towards justice and equity is aimed first and foremost at people and society at large in that both narratives highlight the themes of distributing responsibility equally between individuals and corporations or governing bodies and of everyone having equal access to the means to be able to dwell actively in crisis.

The *Uglies* trilogy, finally, presents a generic tension between the social reconciliation of the traditional *Bildungsroman*, post-disaster ecotopian or redemptive sentiments and the dystopian theme of remembering versus forgetting. In a reading that foregrounds the ecotopian and redemptive aspects of some post-disaster narratives, Tally's decision to separate from human society, integrate in and protect the 'wilderness' from a perpetuation of human-induced attritional destruction can be interpreted as a refusal to be subsumed under a reconciliatory and predominantly anthropocentric understanding of society and citizenship as she chooses, actively or passively, the more-than-human community for herself. Curry regards Tally's action "as the adoption of an overtly traitorous subject position" because thereby she "'betray[s]' her own kind and become[s] a traitor to 'the narrative of the human' that desires anthropocentric expansion and exploitation in a progress-led trajectory that has engendered environmental crisis (Mallory 2009: 9)" (*Environmental Crisis* 190–91)<sup>24</sup>. As Curry further contends, Tally's "[s]tanding in humanity's way is here the equivalent to

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<sup>24</sup> The full reference for Mallory is: Mallory, Chaone. "Val Plumwood and Ecofeminist Political Solidarity: Standing with the Natural Other. *Ethics and the Environment*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2009, pp. 3-21.

standing *with* the ecological other in an extension of solidarity” (*Environmental Crisis* 191). Ultimately, this reading suggests, becoming a ‘traitor’ to human society may be necessary in order to manage the risk of continued or renewed slow environmental violence and “*remind [people] of the price the Rusties paid for going too far*” (*Specials* 350), as Tally writes in her ‘Manifesto’. Against the conventions of the traditional *Bildungsroman*, in this interpretation Tally’s ecological citizenly subject position becomes ecocentrically revisionist and confrontational rather than anthropocentrically reconciliatory.

While such a reading may suggest that Tally, at the end of the narrative, through her situating herself with the ‘ecological other’, adopts a perspective of coloniality, this study argues that, even though such a representation might be the narrative’s intention, this is not the case. Her being situated by Dr. Cable/situating herself in the ‘wilderness’ obviously does not represent an easy socio-ecological integration or reconciliation, but it also crucially does not represent a form of ecological border thinking that brings the more-than-human community into the conversation for the simple reason that Tally does not take part in any conversation. Tally and also David’s performance of responsibility in the way they do is required in the first place because again, as with the operation before, citizens are not sufficiently engaged in a collaborative process of understanding and practicing responsibility. Tally and David do not foster such an engagement or actively debate with the cities directly in order to challenge and change the renewed tendency to commit ecological violence and injustice, but instead they critique from afar and with condescending overtones when Tally writes: “*You see, freedom has a way of destroying things*” (*Specials* 350). While on the individual level, for Tally and David their residence in the ‘wilderness’ may represent “an attempt to obtain a new human and a new social identity in relation to nature which challenges [the] dominant instrumental conception, and its associated social relations” (Plumwood, *Feminism* 186), overall, society does not effectively receive the opportunity for the same development so that, thereby, Tally and David rather re-entrench the nature-culture binary and the narrative of the human as being focused on anthropocentric consumerism for all but themselves instead of actually dismantling it. This strategy runs the risk of becoming another catalyst for ‘remembering/forgetting’ as it may encourage the citizens in the cities, who remain disproportionally less ecologically enfranchised (and talked down to once again), to ‘forget’ their every-day responsibility because they ‘remember’ that somewhere ‘out there’ someone will “*stand in [their] way*” and “*push back*” if necessary (*Specials* 350). After all, “[j]ust as citizenship can be learned and therefore needs to be taught or encouraged, it can also be forgotten” (Barry 27). In terms of the majority’s ecological citizenly subject position and

the addressing and alleviation of socio-ecological crisis it therefore has to be noted that despite the fall of Dr. Cable and her regime of the operation, major asymmetries especially on the inter-human (social), but also on the human-non-human level, “remain untouched” (MacGregor, “Only Resist” 628), although the shift in focus from a clearly anthropocentric political to a seemingly more ecocentric ecological citizenship initially suggests the opposite.

In conclusion, it can be said that all but the *Dustlands* trilogy fall short of representing “the end of the other” (Weik Von Mossner, “Hope in Dark Times” 70) because, in contrast to Weik von Mossner’s argument, the “distance between those who are victims and those who are privileged and safe” in a global geographic context is not entirely collapsed (“Hope in Dark Times” 70), even though the narratives analysed in this chapter work towards it by representing, via their post-/disaster generic strategies, ecological citizenship as transgressive. However, while the spatial transgressions examined in previous chapters, between a centre and periphery within a landscape of power (chapter 3) or between the cultural spaces of canon and archive (chapter 4) and their temporal dimension via intersections with issues around remembering and mnemonic practices work on both the story and the meta-narrative level, the representation of ecological citizenship in these novels is spatio-temporally transgressive predominantly on the meta-narrative level. As indicated earlier in this chapter, the ‘casualties’ of ecological derailment and the landscapes they navigate are displaced by these narratives into imagined future North Atlantic regions, thereby re-situating images of “environmental destruction” that the industrialised nations usually “export[]” (F. Buell 169) to the places of production and extraction in less wealthy regions of the world into these – still, at the time of publication – environmentally relatively secure geographies. Through the spatio-temporal displacement of such landscapes and experiences within them, the implied readership’s geographic context in the affluent North Atlantic regions as well as the ecosystems their experience is embedded in are turned into liminal spaces between the ‘now’ of the early twenty-first century and versions of possible futures of delayed destruction due to attritional ecological violence. Spatial dichotomies along the lines of ‘the West and the rest’ are thus at least conceptually blurred through the narrative contestation of the usual out-of-sight-ness of ecoprecarity as images of the effects of slow environmental violence are brought into the working memory of hitherto less affected geographies and their inhabitants.

Nevertheless, it remains questionable in how far this blurring of spatio-temporal experiences, even if it may engender “the knowledge and anticipation of [...] repercussions and their potentially catastrophic effects” (Weik Von Mossner, “Hope in Dark Times” 70), can truly result in ‘the end of the other’. As has been discussed above, in the *Uglies* trilogy

dichotomies are re-entrenched rather than dissolved. In the *Carbon Diaries* novels, the ‘other’ as in people from outside Europe, remains a footnote or, at best, serves to enhance the protagonist’s development of understanding and responsibility (cf. the discussion in chapter 3.4). Out of these three novels, the *Dustlands* trilogy most successfully bridges the spatio-temporal gap also on the story level when it ends by showing a community that comprises former socio-ecological outcasts, fighters as well as members of the Stewards of the Earth. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether the ‘end of the other’ in this case is even necessary or desirable. As has been demonstrated at numerous points throughout this study, the category of ‘other’ is used frequently in the novels analysed here in the very figures of the young adult protagonists, and as with political and cultural citizenship, also with ecological citizenship it is often those characters who are ‘other’ to the dominating adult and institutional narratives and openly contest them who also take the strongest stance for implementing subject positions that enable an enfranchised, agential performance of responsibility and accountability and thus an active dwelling in socio-ecological crisis.

For the implied (North Atlantic) adolescent readership it can be productive to explore the ambiguity of their own liminal positions in the context of ecological citizenship. On the one hand, like the protagonists in the novels, they experience themselves as other to hegemonic (adult) society, on the other hand, on a wider geographical scale, their privilege – not least the privilege of having the leisure to read such narratives – is not effectively disrupted. And yet, the liminal potential of the spatio-temporal displacement that these novels engender might affect the implied readers’ knowledge about contemporary and future ecological destruction not only in the places they know but also in places farther away. Such a “secondhand nonexperience” (Heise, *Sense of Place* 151; she refers to Beck, *Risikogesellschaft* 96), i.e. a knowledge about experiences that are not one’s own, has the potential of making the difference between disabling the readership via a passive nostalgia for what humanity stands to lose, both in terms of lifestyle (as represented in the *Carbon Diaries* novels) and in terms of survival in a functioning biosphere “[w]hen the air was sweet and the earth was good” (*Blood Red Road* 349), and an enabling acknowledgement of experiences that may as yet be ‘other’ but may not interminably remain so. A conscious witnessing of such ‘other’ experiences and an understanding of how the effects of slow environmental violence are unequally distributed globally may enable adolescent readers to actively and productively “reconfigure their practices [...] in relation to these larger sociospatial scales” (Heise, *Sense of Place* 152) and thus begin to take responsibility for socio-environmental justice.

However, it becomes clear that where the narratives focus on a risk and risk management perspective that predominantly emphasises individual and community culpability and thus responsibility, post-/disaster genre conventions may represent a number of erasures – from individual safety to social cohesion to the functioning of ecosystems – but the traditional conceptualisation of citizenship and the continued need/wish for human(ist) social structures – including their potential local and global asymmetries – are not part of these erasures. Even the *Dustlands* trilogy, which underlines most strongly an approach that combines ecologically and justice-oriented community action with paying attention to the community's embeddedness in its environments, ultimately does not move beyond the question of how 'we' as humans can adapt to the crisis we live in and possibly redeem ourselves in the process as well as how we can integrate those to be integrated in a conciliatory way. The *Carbon Diaries* novels and the *Uglies* trilogy have an even narrower scope because neither narrative succeeds to imagine an actual alternative to consumerism. As the two narratives progress, only the way this consumption is practiced and monitored as well as the way in which ecoprecarity due to previous generations' consumption is witnessed and evaluated changes while anthropocentric consumption and the average citizen as consumer remain unsolved risks to socio-ecological justice and equity. Furthermore, the continued persistence of consumerism as a memoryscape that covers the horizon of the thinkable and the at least partly framing of changing consumption patterns as a loss to be looked upon with nostalgia threatens to thwart the representation of ways in which people can "actively and positively [...] dwell in their senses and within crisis" (F. Buell 206). Instead, the narratives are in danger of showing the practice of ecological citizenship as crisis having been "domesticated into daily life" (F. Buell 202) and citizens and (government) institutions thus accommodating themselves to crisis. As becomes clear, none of this is conducive to re-imagining new and transforming traditional understandings and conceptualisations of citizenship via ecological citizenship so that the novels in this respect fall short of the potential of ecological citizenship as highlighted by Dobson (cf. Dobson 90 and chapter 5.1). The result is that these narratives themselves become liminal locales as they hover uncomfortably between being no more than "a convenient diversion" via "futurist [...] catastrophism" (F. Buell 158) and encouraging a 'carnavalesque' dissent (cf. Fuggle) that can, after all, become an agent of socio-ecological border thinking.

### 5.3 Negotiating and Performing Ecological Citizenship between Stewardship and (Ecofeminist) Care Ethics in the *Dustlands*, *Longlight* and *Uglies* Trilogies

After the previous chapter has discussed the relationship between the socio-ecological effects of slow environmental violence, including governmental risk management, and the distribution and acceptance or refusal of individual and/or community responsibility as reactions to the (threat of an) erasure of given social, political and ecological structures, the analysis in this chapter will build on these findings and examine the negotiation between two specific approaches to spatial practice within the debate on ecological citizenship and citizenly subject positions. The models or concepts of practice that are frequently referenced in the novels analysed in this study, whether overtly or covertly, are those of stewardship on the one and care ethics on the other hand. Both approaches have the potential to function as strategies for what F. Buell considers as ‘dwelling actively’ in crisis instead of accommodating oneself passively in the crisis situation but both concepts also show inherent tensions that may work against such a potential. Since neither concept requires personhood in the legal sense of being of age in order to be performed and practiced, both stewardship and care ethics are theoretically accessible for adolescents and other ‘ex-centric’ subjectivities (cf. Baccolini and previous chapters). However, tensions arise in this context for example due to historical gender-biases within conceptualisations of either approach, which can imply rather different emphases in regard to citizenship. Furthermore, different approaches to the way in which the categories of memory and/or nostalgia are made use of can be discerned depending on the prevalent understanding of ‘care’ as well as depending on which generic (and modal) conventions a practice of care is related with within the narratives. As this chapter will show, the ideological perspectives underpinning these two different conceptual approaches and whether the narratives engage with the covert assumptions implied in these ideological perspectives critically or not impacts the protagonists’ capability for expressing and performing agential and enfranchised ecological citizenly subject positions. In the following, important aspects of the two conceptual approaches to performing ecological citizenship will be briefly discussed before analysing their representation and application in the novels selected for examination in this chapter.

There are numerous approaches to the concept of stewardship, which depend, for example, on the context of “different subject matters, [academic] discipline and areas of legal scholarship” (Barritt 1). The minimal consensus definition of ‘stewardship’ that Barritt suggests describes a relational situation in which when “people (either as individuals, a group

or the state) are in a position of *control* over a *valuable* or *scarce resource* they have a *duty* to treat those resources with a certain *degree of care* or in line with certain *values*” (3). According to Barritt, within the various discourses on stewardship four major distinct types can be identified which describe differing relationships between the actor(s) who exercise(s) the duty (e.g. individuals [in general or specifically as landowners], corporations, the state), the beneficiary of the duty (current generations, future generations, non-human community), the object of the duty (e.g. ‘the land’, environment, ecosystem etc.) and the nature of the duty (custodial, managerial, proprietorial or ethical/spiritual) (4ff.). Custodial, managerial, proprietorial or ethical/spiritual stewardship are understood by Barritt as a “spectrum of relationships [that] represents a progression in the strength of the obligations placed on the steward” (14), with custodial stewardship representing the “minimum content” of the stewards’ duty or responsibility (15) and ethical and spiritual stewardship “mark[ing] the culmination of the spectrum” (20). Stewardship as a form of guardianship (15; Smith and Pangsapa 54) implies a range of duties of care (Barritt 15; also cf. Bartkienė et al. 130ff.) on the part of the steward(s). Such duties of care include “protect[ing] natural resources and [...] us[ing] them in a sustainable, wise and responsible manner” (Barritt 15) as well as averting “significant harm” from the non-human community via the “presence of articulate defenders, stewards or guardians” (Smith and Pangsapa 55). Since in this understanding the emphasis is placed on human duty (of care) and obligation, stewardship emerges as “historically an anthropocentric concept”, and consequently “[t]he main beneficiary of good environmental stewardship is humanity, whether as part of the current human community or a future community” (Barritt 8).

Tracing the conceptualisation of stewardship from its roots in “Judeo-Christian tradition” (Bauckham 40; also Barritt 22; L. Buell 108), Bauckham argues that the anthropocentricity inherent in the concept today stems from a process of “dediviniz[ing] nature” (40) that started during the Renaissance as the basis for “the modern project of aggressive domination of nature” (33). He further contends that “[t]he secularization of the project of domination” has not only led to a sidestepping of “the issue of ethical obligation to nature” but also has left the concept and practice of stewardship as well as nature “exposed to commercialization and consumerization” (42), which runs counter to Morgan’s explanation of a Christian-spiritual form of stewardship as representing a “celebration, preservation and restoration of Creation” that is “based on thoroughly Christian values of love, humility, pity, compassion and service to others” (Morgan 157). While Morgan furthermore links stewardship especially to the “‘right’ management of the biophysical and social realms”

(157), thus underlining both the ecological and the social dimension of stewardship and framing it – uncritically – as managerial, Baukham highlights the very relevant issue of “the implication that nature is always better off when managed by us” (45). Palmer, too, draws attention to this highly contentious aspect of stewardship when she criticises the human assumption “that nature is dependent on humanity for its management” (70). Both Baukham and Palmer also consider the fact that the concept of stewardship creates “an image that depicts the human relationship to the rest of creation in an entirely vertical way” (Baukham 45; cf. Palmer 70<sup>25</sup>) as highly problematic. Through the notion of management or managerial responsibility for place, the concept of stewardship and its understanding of ‘care’ link with forms of risk management as discussed in the previous chapter, while the emphasis on a vertical, hierarchical relationship between human and non-human community, almost ironically, places stewardship as a practice in danger of engendering or, at worst, promoting behaviour that results in slow environmental violence. As Barritt highlights, in the history of the concept “stewardship has been used both to condone *and* to justify the unadulterated use of natural resources” (2).

Approaches to stewardship as a concept and practice that “emphasise the importance of considering the needs of the ecological, or non-human, community” (Barritt 8) often correlate, as Barritt claims, with those approaches emphasising the “relationship between stewardship and environmental or ecological citizenship literature” (10). However, as Curtin argues, the fact that custodial or managerial forms of stewardship are closely linked with conceptualising modern citizenship in the eighteenth century complicates this relationship (“Ecological Citizenship” 294ff.). He contends that stewardship as a “(resource) model of responsibility for place” was “an idea common enough in Enlightenment ideas of citizenship” (“Ecological Citizenship” 296) and is furthermore, especially in a North American context, linked to “westward expansion into the ‘wilderness’” and to “breaking traditional [i.e. nomadic] relationships to place by becoming a citizen farmer” (“Ecological Citizenship” 294). Citizenship was thus linked to ownership of place (cf. proprietorial stewardship), with communal ‘ownership’ of land being framed as backward (“Ecological Citizenship” 296). Conversely to the ideals and aims of ecological citizenship, the concept of stewardship has thus been employed to contribute to the destruction of vernacular landscapes as “alive to

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<sup>25</sup> “The idea of stewardship originates in a society which is based on slavery or serfdom, and represents a despotic and autocratic form of government, a fact which is particularly clear considering it in the feudal context” (Palmer 70). Additionally, according to her, the concept thus implies “a strong sense of humanity’s separation from the rest of the natural world” (70).



significant ecological and surface geological features” (Nixon 17) and has instead been implicit in the creation of official landscapes. Like the concept of citizenship itself (cf. Slaughter, “Enabling Fictions” 55), stewardship as both a concept and a practice that is linked to citizenship is thus intertwined with patriarchal and liberal values and contains the history and memory of colonial expansion and oppression. For these reasons, Palmer considers “the term [as] unsuitable for use in modern society” (70). Due to the connection between stewardship and a pronouncedly patriarchal and anthropocentric tradition, stewardship implies at least the memory of a power-relationship which, in turn contains a gender bias as it traditionally promotes male guardianship and custodial care of the environment. If not appropriated critically, conceptualising ecological citizenship as stewardship may thus to a certain extent contribute to the continued gendering of spaces and places, where ‘man’ (instead of humanity) cares for an often feminised ‘nature’. Nevertheless, Barritt maintains that approaches which situate stewardship within the context of ecological citizenship go beyond considering only duties “from individuals as landowners” and contends that “stewardship for individual citizens requires a particular ‘ethics of use’” (10) that considers both fellow humans (present and future) and the non-human community.

A rather different, almost contrasting approach which conceptualises ecological citizenly practices as part of a horizontal instead of vertical relationship between human and more-than-human community can be found in (ecofeminist<sup>26</sup>) ethics of care. In contrast to stewardship with its emphasis on a vertical relationship and framing of ‘care’ as managerial duty and obligation, an ecofeminist care ethic seeks to “re-envision environmental thinking [...] by establishing conceptual frameworks that are non-oppressive and non-subordinating and effectively freed from oppositional thinking” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 74). A care ethics approach thus explicitly opposes patriarchal, binary conceptualisations of ‘nature’ and human beings’ relationship to it and, as Curry contends, seeks to make use of “the underlying association between women and the natural world” for inspiration and resistance instead of, as from a patriarchal perspective, for subjugation and exploitation (*Environmental Crisis* 2).

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<sup>26</sup> The concept of ethics of care is not exclusive to ecofeminist theory. It was initially developed within psychological and ethical theory and has been adopted by both environmentalists and feminists since the 1980s (cf. Sander-Staudt). The confines of this study do not allow for more than a very brief glimpse into the field of ecofeminist theory. Curry gives a very concise definition of the wide theoretical field of ecofeminism when she states that “[e]cofeminist discourses draw from feminism and critical ecology to identify comparable mechanisms of exploitation that affect women and the environment and to challenge both the theoretical underpinnings and actual manifestations of these mechanisms” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 1). For a more detailed overview over ecofeminist approaches cf. MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth*. For the application of ecofeminist approaches to the study of young adult literature cf. Curry, *Environmental Crisis*.

According to her, a specifically ecofeminist care ethic approach aims “to revalue, rather than deny, the woman-nature connection as a caring and transformative response to environmental crisis” (*Environmental Crisis* 2). Furthermore, in contrast to a rights approach that is based on oppositional thinking, regards the self as autonomous and personhood as individualistic, a care ethics approach regards both self and personhood as contextual (Curtin, *Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 138) and interdependent (cf. Tronto 162f.). Care in this context is conceptualised as “a set of relational practices” (Gordon et al. xiii) which constitute a “species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our ‘world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible” (Tronto 103). Such a practice is explicitly “not restricted to human interaction with [human] others” but includes “our environment” (Tronto 103).<sup>27</sup>

In order to be able to better describe distinct nuances within a given spectrum of care practices, a further differentiation that can frequently be found in the critical literature on the subject is that between notions of caring as either ‘caring for’ or ‘caring about’. Although many critics refer to this distinction, consensus as to what the different notions imply is not a given. While ‘caring for’ is often associated with the emotional, affective domain (cf. Bartkienė et al. 136; also MacGregor, “From Care to Citizenship” 58) and a direct contact with the person or object cared for, as for example in parenting, the definition of ‘caring about’ is more difficult. Bartkienė et al. argue it is linked to justice-oriented subject positions (cf. 136) while MacGregor criticises that, as ‘caring about’ has often been ascribed to men as a more affectively distanced and less involved form of caring, implying that men are either incapable or unwilling to perform care as ‘caring for’, this differentiation reinforces gender binaries (cf. “From Care to Citizenship” 58-59). Curtin’s approach may be regarded as mediating between these positions as it is non-gendered and does not rest on a person’s moral attitude or affective attachment/detachment, but on a relatedness that is more dependent on (spatial) distance and scale:

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<sup>27</sup> The term ‘relational’ and the concept of relationality is used widely in ecofeminist theories. In this study, however, terms and concepts such as ‘contextual’, ‘interdependent’, ‘permeable’ or ‘vulnerable’ as discussed by Judith Butler in “Interdependence” (esp. 208-210) are considered as more useful because the term ‘relational’ can be misleading. For instance, also ‘stewardship’ as a vertically oriented practice can be said to describe a *relationship* between humans and non-human others and thus can be considered ‘relational’ (in a certain sense), only that the way this relationship is understood and performed is different than what ecofeminist theory considers as ‘relational practice’. Furthermore, although ‘relationality’ as a concept supposedly seeks to dismantle oppositional, binary thinking and practice, its frequent discursive ascription especially to women and Indigenous peoples reproduces the binaries and essentialisms it seeks to disrupt.

Caring about is a generalized form of care that may have specifiable recipients, but it occurs in a context where direct relatedness to specific others is missing. [...] As an element in a feminist political agenda, such caring about may lead to the kinds of actions that bring one into the sort of deep relatedness that can be described as caring for: caring for particular persons in the context of their histories. [...] caring for is marked by an understanding of and appreciation for a particular context in which one participates. (*Chinnagounder's Challenge* 144)

This more useful approach can be related to Tronto's different terminology for what she identifies as four phases of caring, which are 'caring about', 'taking care of', 'care-giving' and, finally, 'care-receiving' (cf. 106-08). In Tronto's model, "[c]aring about involves the [basic] recognition in the first place that care is necessary" (106). For this study, the more interesting notions in this conceptualisation are those of 'taking care of' and 'care-giving'. While 'care-giving' "involves the direct meeting of needs for care [...] and almost always requires that care-givers come in contact with the objects of care" (107) and thus can be considered as corresponding to the more frequently used term 'caring for', 'taking care of' "involves assuming some responsibility for the identified need and determining how to respond to it. [...] taking care of involves the recognition that one can act to address these unmet needs" (106). 'Taking care of' thus has a clear focus on "notions of agency and responsibility in the caring process" (106) and therefore implies the potential for enfranchisement and justice-orientation. In this way, it corresponds to Bartkienė et al.'s understanding of 'caring about' without the disadvantage of being mixed up with other scholars' framing of the latter. Furthermore, with its emphasis on agency, it can be said to represent the notion of care that is most overtly useful for and applicable in discussions about citizenship.

Like stewardship, the concept of care in itself as well as its application to discourses on (ecological) citizenship is not unproblematic. At the most fundamental level, it is the very grounding of ecofeminist care ethics in the emphasis on "the woman-nature connection" (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 2) that renders many critics suspicious as to its usefulness for gaining (political) agency. This is especially the case if care is defined as a predominantly or even exclusively female practice and if "women's ethico-political life [is reduced] to care" (MacGregor, "From Care to Citizenship" 57) and thereby privatised instead of politicised (cf. Curtin, *Chinnagounder's Challenge* 142). MacGregor, for instance, cautions that "an uncritical emphasis on women's care-related morality can also affirm harmful assumptions about gender and reify exclusionary notions about the nature of care" ("From Care to Citizenship" 61; also cf. Curtin, *Chinnagounder's Challenge* 141), resulting in an entrenching instead of a challenging of "patriarchal dualisms" ("From Care to Citizenship" 58) so that an

ethic of care would emerge as another ideology to maintain hegemonic power imbalances instead of subverting them.<sup>28</sup> Likewise, Curry underlines that an ethic of care bears the risk of “naturalising the processes of subordination and dependency that are still clearly located within discourses of femininity and associated with women’s capacity to care” (*Environmental Crisis* 75). Tronto, too, warns of such processes when she highlights both paternalism and maternalism as dangers to the political potential of care because they can engender the “development of relationships of profound inequality” (170).

In order to acknowledge these problems inherent to discourses on and practices of what is generally understood as care without losing care as a potentially transformative political approach, Curtin argues that “caring is not really caring in a specific context if it is not possible to care without being damaged, or subsumed by another’s moral agency” (*Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 145). The difficulty with this argument, of course, lies with how to define and ascertain when someone is damaged or subsumed by a certain practice.<sup>29</sup> “True caring”, according to Curtin, must be “understood as human power to effect change and construct bonds of community” but, crucially, “can only function in combination with other powers” (*Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 141). In order to be useful to “resist ‘development’ and build local communities” (*Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 141), care as a concept, discourse and practice needs to be connected to the “language of citizenship” (MacGregor, “From Care to Citizenship” 72; also qtd. in 5.1).

Comparing how these two approaches conceptualise citizenship in general and favour certain literary genres for their representation, it can be observed that stewardship as a concept and practice moves on a spectrum between benign guardianship on the one and supporting colonial expansion and economic ‘development’ on the other hand. Furthermore, it is linked to a traditional – Western, liberal – understanding of citizenship as conciliatory with a focus on personal responsibility, which is a feature stewardship as a concept shares with the genre of the traditional *Bildungsroman*. Both can function to “discipline people into being good citizens” (MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth* 13), i.e. in the case of stewardship being ecologically dutiful, and thus have a normative power. MacGregor therefore regards stewardship as a form of “masculinist green conceptions of citizenship” (“From Care to

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<sup>28</sup> For a detailed discussion and extensive criticism of ecofeminist positions that endorse a care ethic that, in her opinion, is uncritical, see MacGregor’s article “From Care to Citizenship” (2004).

<sup>29</sup> For instance, one of many question in this context is whether relatively low wages and strenuous working conditions would already be considered as damaging or subsuming, and whether this would be determined on an individual or a collective basis.

Citizenship” 77) which follows “a desire to instill in individual citizens a sense of moral responsibility for environmental sustainability” (*Beyond Mothering Earth* 91). Conversely, MacGregor describes what she terms “feminist ecological citizenship”, which is based on ecofeminist care ethics, as a “courageous and continuous critique of power – a constant questioning stance” (“Only Resist” 630) that focuses on the performance of revisionist and justice-oriented aspects of citizenship. Tronto especially highlights the focus of care ethics on interdependency as an aspect of the practice of care that fosters “the qualities necessary for democratic citizens to live together well in a pluralistic society, and that only in a just, pluralistic society can care flourish” (161-62). Moreover, such a care-based practice has the potential to challenge and transcend traditional conceptions of citizenship grounded in liberal philosophy since favouring interdependence as part of “[c]are as a political concept” (Tronto 69) runs counter to linking personhood as the prerequisite for citizenship to independence and autonomy so that those who “become too dependent [...] cannot participate as citizens” (Tronto 163).<sup>30</sup> In terms of genre affiliations, (ecofeminist) care ethic thus does not only interlink with adaptations of the *Bildungsroman* such as the feminist *Bildungsroman* but moreover, in that it holds the potential to redefine and/or transcend the very category of citizenship itself, it also aligns with the post-/disaster generic potential of breaking up supposedly clear boundaries and erasing old structures.

Situating care as both concept and practice in the context of ecological citizenship and the performance of citizenly subject positions, and situating it specifically on a spectrum ranging from (patriarchal) stewardship to (ecofeminist) care ethic, “requires that we recognize how care – especially the question, who cares for whom? – marks relations of power in our society and marks the intersection of gender, race, and class with care-giving” (Tronto 168-69).<sup>31</sup> Moreover, in the context of ecological citizenship, MacGregor demands “that care is not only [viewed as] an ethic that can inform citizenship but as a set of time-consuming practices that make citizenship possible” (“From Care to Citizenship” 78)<sup>32</sup>, regardless of the

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<sup>30</sup> The aspect of potentially redefining the category of citizenship by redefining the related concepts of personhood and agency will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5.4.

<sup>31</sup> For a slightly different view, see Curtin: “The caring-for model does not require that those recipients of our care must be ‘equal’ to us. It does also not assume they are unequal. It is built on the capacity to care, not the criterion of equality” (*Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 145). This study follows Tronto’s understanding.

<sup>32</sup> Insofar as MacGregor aims at re-contextualising care within the discourse of citizenship and citizenly practices, the criticism that she “equates the ethical content of care with maternalism” brought against her by Bartkienė et al. (132) is hardly tenable. In the same vein, their argument that “although MacGregor (2006) has taken political aspects of care into account, she has not explored the performative and practice dimensions of

way in which care is interpreted on the spectrum between stewardship and care ethic. It follows that an examination of the fictional representation of care practices as ways in which to perform ecological or socio-ecological citizenship must pay attention to whether such performances are shown as hierarchical or interdependent and how these differing approaches and their interlinks with generic affiliation impact possibilities for access and participation (and by whom or what) on the one or the threat of marginalisation and privatisation on the other hand. The narratives discussed in this chapter set off positions, often but not always located in the (aspiring) centres, that use stewardship as a tool – and excuse – for their centralising ambitions of hegemonic rule over groups and positions against which the rulers/authorities attempt to “administer[] invisibility” and “spatial amnesia” (Nixon 151), thus linking the conflict over the best way to respond to (socio-)ecological needs by performing care in various ways to the centre-periphery-faultline discussed in chapter 3 of this study.

While in the post-disaster setting of the *Dustlands* trilogy DeMalo argues that people “‘can’t go on as we are’” (*Rebel Heart* 312) because “‘[r]esources are precious, [...] rare’” (*Rebel Heart* 311), Dr. Cable in the *Uglies* trilogy praises her city as “‘exist[ing] in equilibrium with our environment’” by employing practices like “‘purifying the water that we put back in the river, recycling the biomass, and using only power drawn from our own solar footprint’” (*Uglies* 103). Both leaders thus regard themselves as protectors and defenders of the non-human environment. However, as Tronto explains, protection is not necessarily the same as care because while “[c]aring seems to involve taking the concerns and needs of the other as the basis for action[,] [p]rotection presumes the bad intentions and harm that the other is likely to bring to bear against the self or group, and to require a response to that potential harm” (104-105). The assumptions that “‘[t]here isn’t enough clean water or good land to go around’” (*Rebel Heart* 311) or that “‘[w]ithout the operation, human beings always become Rusties’” (*Pretties* 128) and Special Circumstances represent “‘the cure’” to humanity as “‘a cancer on the body of the world’” (*Pretties* 128) reflect the expectation that ecological harm will be done to human and/or more-than-human community automatically by human agents. Especially in the *Uglies* trilogy it becomes evident that Dr. Cable is convinced of the (unconscious) bad intentions of all of humankind, which can be regarded as one of the reasons for her strategy of “splitting human beings from nature in order to defend nature”, a strategy

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caring in depth” (Bartkieniè et al. 133) rings hollow in the face of their much shorter and in no way more in-depth exploration into the topic.

which Curtin links to the thinking of first generation environmental philosophers (*Chinnagounder's Challenge* 31).

Both narratives make explicit that “how the care-givers choose to meet the need can cause new problems” (Tronto 108), especially when the wish to meet a perceived care need is intricately intertwined with a stewardly top-down approach and the desire to rule. The pretty operation in the *Uglies* trilogy does not only create a dumbed-down and disenfranchised citizenry in New Pretty Town but the dumbing-down aspect is, from an ecological point of view, also entirely unnecessary. When on her way to the Smoke Tally encounters a group of rangers from another city, she notices that although they are predominantly “new prett[ies]” (*Uglies* 170) they are not pretty-minded. Conversely, they are “so determined [and] so focused on their task” “[t]o save the world” from “the ultimate weed” (*Uglies* 172-73). The existence of these rangers highlights that other versions of ecological care than Dr. Cable’s radical form of stewardship are possible. Her remark that she considers not only “those few people who live outside the cities” in places like the Smoke but also, and to a greater extent, “[o]ther cities” as potential threats (*Uglies* 104), unintentionally reveals that the measures she enforces serve not only to meet an ecological need but also to at least the same degree to maintain her hold on the city she governs. Therefore, she cannot be regarded as “the most radical eco-warrior, willing to do whatever it takes to preserve the wild” (Arigo 124) but has to be considered as a ruler unwilling to lose her dominion.<sup>33</sup>

DeMalo, who in the *Dustlands* trilogy is still in the process of establishing his dominion, uses his ecological concern and the excuse that he is responding to a socio-ecological need to expand his territory by claiming “[a]ny earth good enough to work, any clean water” and then “mov[ing] [his] own people in to work it” (*Rebel Heart* 103), thus simultaneously displacing those he considers as ‘surplus people’ (Nixon 151)<sup>34</sup>. His use of the spatial practice of mapping, one of the “three institutions”<sup>35</sup> of “the colonial state [to]

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<sup>33</sup> If Dr. Cable’s intentions were indeed purely directed towards ‘preserving the wild’, as Arigo argues, a more effective way to do so than by manipulating people via an operation would be to get rid of them altogether, a ‘solution’ that is suggested in Richard Powers’ novel *The Overstory* when an environmentalist biologist suggests that the most effective way to help the environment would be by committing suicide (*Overstory* 455-56, 466). Such an interpretation of a character’s suicide as “an act of love” “from a ecocentric perspective” is also suggested by Andersen (Andersen 88). That Dr. Cable does not go to this end shows that neither is she willing to do ‘whatever it takes’ nor is she willing to give up the opportunity to govern over the society she lives in.

<sup>34</sup> As Nixon explains, this term was created by the apartheid regime in South Africa to refer to people who “were deemed superfluous to the labor market and to the idea of national development and were forcibly removed or barred from cities” (151).

<sup>35</sup> The other two institutions Anderson names are the census and the museum (163). For a discussion of the latter cf. chapter 4.2 of this study.

imagine[] its dominion” (Anderson 163-64) by domesticating the space of a certain territory, furthermore “produce[s] a systematic account of spaces ripe for colonization” (Bradford and Baccolini 45). DeMalo’s division of New Eden “into sectors” (*Raging Star* 144) on “[n]umbered maps” which Saba and Jack find in the secret bunker matches “[n]umbered papers. [...] A number on every cupboard” of the seed store, exposing the bureaucratic and totalising approach DeMalo has devised for his “plan [...] to plant” (*Raging Star* 145). The fact that the numbers are “everywhere” on the maps, even on uninhabited parts of larger areas such as “[t]he Waste [...] the Raze an [sic.] south of the Black Mountains” (*Raging Star* 145) plainly indicates that DeMalo understands ecological stewardship as a means to achieve hegemonic power. Together, these maps and papers as well as the combination of “this seedstore an his books of knowledge an fear an [sic. in all instances] guns” thus build an “arsenal” (*Raging Star* 146), as Jack observes, that results in the creation of an “official landscape[]” which “writes the land in a bureaucratic, externalizing, and extraction-driven manner that is often pitilessly instrumental” (Nixon 17). Thereby, DeMalo creates the new problem of “development-inflicted destitution” (Nixon 152) for those who, through the development of New Eden, are evicted and displaced to a refugee camp situated in the Waste, an area that is “bare of tree. White of rock” and offers “[n]o shade. No shelter” (*Rebel Heart* 79). Being forced into barren regions in which ecosystems have long collapsed, these “developmental refugees” (Nixon 152) are unable to establish a lasting new community since people are arriving and leaving continuously in this inhospitable terrain. Therefore, the developmental refugees that arrive at the shaman Auriel’s camp can be said to have been forced on a socio-ecological citizenly inside-out trajectory by the ‘development’ of New Eden and thus into socio-ecological abject citizenship. DeMalo’s interpretation and performance of stewardship thus functions in a clearly normative and disenfranchising way as only the able-bodied and young are allowed to stay and ‘care for’ the land by becoming Stewards of the Earth and thus citizens of New Eden.

Representations of the practice of ‘ghosting communities’ (cf. Nixon) that DeMalo is thus involved in can be observed in all three trilogies examined in this chapter. The starkest example at the earliest point in the narrative is offered by the *Longlight* trilogy in what the Brothers, a cult-worshipping group of male warriors, call the Visitations. Although the Brothers claim that they “fight evil and nurture life” (*Dirt Eaters* 13) by helping villages to “reclaim[] acres of farmland” (*Dirt Eaters* 82), their ultimate goal is to “unify all the lands and take the City” eventually (*Dirt Eaters* 115). Their leader, Saint, seeks to justify these Visitations as a “way of achieving a perfect balance” when in fact they constitute the



annihilation of entire communities. Roan calls out this power-seeking practice, at least to the implied reader, when he remembers his father's remark that "[d]uring the Madness, they called genocide holy, a cleansing" (*Dirt Eaters* 115). Through this spatial annihilation, "[t]he village they called Longlight is silent" (*Dirt Eaters* 2; emphasis added) and has been relegated to the past already on page two of the entire trilogy. Before the wilful destruction of the community and the murder of its people, the inhabitants of Longlight "had planted gardens to heal the earth, nurtured and loved one another, shared all that they had" (*Dirt Eaters* 6) and had thus practiced a non-oppressive and non-hierarchical form of caring. Moreover, they "[stood] for Remembering" the ecological atrocities, the so-called "*Abominations inflicted on [the Earth's] surface*" (*Dirt Eaters* 4), thereby incorporating mnemonic practices into the way they performed their caring for the more-than-human community.

Similarly, the Smoke in the *Uglies* trilogy "wasn't just a hideout for assorted runaways [...]. It was a real town, a city in its own right" (*Uglies* 209) in which "[h]undreds of people had made a life" (*Uglies* 215) and found a home (cf. *Uglies* 185). For Tally, the Smoke becomes a place of immersion in and caring for the 'wilderness' by taking only what the community needs and, for example, "'planting more [trees] on the other side of the mountain, pushing into the [weed] orchids'" (*Uglies* 187), as her friend Shay explains. Both the Smoke and Longlight village thus represent a space with a notable "affective, historical[]" texture (Nixon 17) and thus an antithesis to the city rulers' strict separation from 'nature' and the containment of its citizens in urban spaces in both trilogies. Therefore, like Longlight village, the Smoke is subsequently destroyed in an "[i]nvasion" (*Uglies* 273) by Special Circumstances, who burn down the buildings and, similar to the practices of DeMalo's Tonton in the *Dustlands* trilogy, evict the community and capture many of its inhabitants in order to forcibly turn them into dumbed-down pretties living in the city. The forced operation in this instance serves as a mechanism to achieve both spatial and imaginative amnesia of the Smoke under the pretence of protecting the wilderness from those who have made a home there.

Thus, whether stewardship is used for (colonial) spatial expansion as in the *Dustlands* and *Longlight* trilogies or, contrastingly, for the spatial containment of citizens as in the *Uglies* trilogy, in all cases the narratives highlight its normative aspect and unmask and interrogate the ways in which stewardship as a concept and practice can be used to disenfranchise human and more-than-human community alike. Most obviously, the very fact that, in the *Dustlands* trilogy, it is those who are associated with the tyrannical ruler who are called stewards, i.e. DeMalo's Stewards of the Earth, indicates the issues and problems

inherent to this concept. The tyrant DeMalo, the leader of the Brothers, Saint, in the *Longlight* trilogy and the head of Special Circumstances, Dr. Cable, in the *Uglies* trilogy, all fail to resist “the seduction of power” and to take “affirmative action to overcome injustice”, practices Morgan designates to stewardship (157), and instead entangle themselves in what Gifford, in the context of British rule over its colonies, terms “the recurring tension of dominion and what might be called ‘pastoral responsibility’ or stewardship” (23). One example of establishing normative rule via a hierarchical practice of stewardship is the attempt to “administer[] invisibility” and “spatial amnesia” (Nixon 151) on communities such as the Smoke or Longlight village. With this strategy, the authorities within the narratives seek to impose a spatial and mnemonic absence on them “through a war against [their] presence, as inhabitants drop off official maps and plummet into zones of invisibility” (Nixon 153) or are, indeed, murdered. This ecological spatio-mnemonic practice can therefore be regarded as similar to the practice of intentional and administered cultural ‘forgetting’ of artworks, cultural spaces and people discussed in chapter 4 of this study, i.e. as an attempt at an erasure “from public awareness” (Nixon 153). With a nod to Anderson, Nixon speaks of “unimagined communities” that are not only physically but also imaginatively displaced (150) for hegemonic purposes of expansion and capitalist development. When framed and performed in this way, stewardship becomes inextricably intertwined with the (creation of) national or community-defining narratives discussed in chapter 3.

However, as the narratives reveal, while it might be difficult to resist the brute force of spatial and ecological dispossession, this does not automatically result in the unimagining of interdependent human and more-than-human communities. In the *Uglies* trilogy, for instance, a fireworks display intended to distract Special Circumstances so that Tally and David can break into their headquarters at the same time represents a moment of hope for those who have escaped capture when the Smoke was destroyed and those who seek to escape the city alike. As the fireworks form the proclamation “THE SMOKE LIVES”, Tally “wonder[s] if the words [are] really true” (*Uglies* 352), while David expresses his hope that “‘maybe it will [exist] again’” (*Uglies* 351). More than a mere distraction, this proclamation is an assertion against the authorities’ planned erasure through amnesia and invisibility as it is “visible to anyone staring longingly out their window” (*Uglies* 352). As an instance of socio-ecological citizen action, this ultimately also leads to a reclamation of spatial presence as the ‘New Smoke’ settles in the Rusty Ruins outside New Pretty Town and grows in “influence” and numbers due to “nightly pilgrimages out to the ruins” (*Uglies* 387-88). Alternatively, in the *Longlight* trilogy the prophecy that is connected both to the destroyed Longlight village and

the fictional ‘Book of Longlight’, which is frequently referred to in the chapter epigraphs, is omnipresent, and with it the memory of both the village and its community linger. Those whose practice of socio-ecological care used to include memory-keeping of ecological disaster and destruction are now in turn remembered, which prevents the community and what they (used to) stand for from being unimagined.<sup>36</sup>

Remembering the people, places and ecosystems that were destroyed becomes a new care need that survivors like Tally and her friend David in the *Uglies* trilogy, the members of Roan’s alliance in the *Longlight* trilogy and also Saba and her friends in the *Dustlands* trilogy can take care of. Since ‘taking care of’ implies “notions of agency” and “involves the recognition that one can act to address these unmet needs” (Tronto 106; cf. above), it becomes a tool to achieve enfranchisement even if the “communities [...] have become ecologically unmoored” (Nixon 152). The authorities’ attempt to impose spatial amnesia is thus subverted by the protagonists’ and their allies’ taking care of and upholding the memory of what has been destroyed. Remembering as a socio-ecological care practice thus serves to “include those outside the already established circle of caring for” (Curtin, *Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 143) established by the authorities, which includes people who have been rendered citizenly abject as well as landscapes and ecosystems that have been destroyed for development or containment. The respective authorities’ attempt at inflicting spatial and imaginative amnesia on those places and spaces that represent the possibility of different approaches to interact with human and more-than-human community has thus, conversely, resulted in the creation and enhancement of memory-scapes of care as socio-ecologically interdependent and non-oppressive that are too persistent to be erased.

On the story level there is thus an overt similarity between these three narratives in terms of how stewardship is framed and how aspects of an ethics of care can be applied to function as a corrective to a form of stewardship that focuses predominantly on patriarchal hierarchies and hegemonic rule. At a closer look, however, the underlying discourses differ noticeably. While the negotiation of stewardship as a concept and citizenly practice is one of the dominating themes both in the *Uglies* and in the *Dustlands* trilogies, this focus, at least in the narrow understanding in which it is discussed in these two narratives, is quickly dropped in the *Longlight* trilogy, in which approaches leaning towards ethics of care or posthuman points of view soon gain dominance. Furthermore, the representation and evaluation of

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<sup>36</sup> Since mnemonic practices in the *Dustlands* trilogy have been discussed in detail in chapter 3 of this study, this will not be repeated here. Nevertheless, they can still be read in a context of care as a citizenly and socio-ecological practice.

stewardship is overtly very different in the *Uglies* and *Dustlands* trilogy, a point that becomes apparent when closely examining the ways in which these two narratives make use of the tropes of wilderness and pastoral respectively by intertwining them with the inventory of post-/disaster generic conventions. In the following, firstly the effects of a critical or uncritical engagement with wilderness and pastoral tropes in the context of ecological citizenship as stewardship and/or care and the resulting subject position available to the protagonists as socio-ecological (caring) citizens in these two trilogies will be discussed before examining the *Longlight* trilogy as a contrasting example.

References to the North American wilderness narrative are unmistakeable in the *Uglies* trilogy. Although the trilogy aims at achieving a positive representation not only of the ‘wilderness’ and those who live there and practice a supposedly non-hegemonic form of stewardly care, this aim is thwarted by this representation at the same time constituting a glorification and romanticisation of the space of ‘wilderness’ as a concept, which rather uncritically connects to the memory-scape of settler-nation myth-making. As Curry observes, Tally, the young adult protagonist and only focaliser, is represented as a wilderness heroine and “as the prototypical frontier American” (*Environmental Crisis* 109). As much as the community she seeks out in the Smoke represents a community that is destroyed for socio-ecological hegemonic purposes, it also has to be regarded as an idealised, escapist, romanticised version of stewardship<sup>37</sup>. The Smoke and Tally’s journey towards it through (presumably) uninhabited landscapes reflect the American tradition in which ‘wilderness’ has been regarded as the “ultimate landscape of authenticity” in which people can “recover [their] true selves” (Garrard 70).

Crucially, neither the narrative itself nor some of the scholarly work that engages with it engage critically with the way in which genre or modal memory is applied in this trilogy. McDonough and Wagner, for instance, refer to this conceptualisation of wilderness by positing that the *Uglies* trilogy, among other novels<sup>38</sup>, “suggest[s] that a female protagonist’s awakening is catalyzed by her experiences within nature and that these experiences shape

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<sup>37</sup> The nostalgic character of the Smoke becomes even more evident when considering its covert reference to Thoreau’s *Walden* (1854), which “engaged with the possibility of a backwood, pioneering, idealistic, retreat, while accepting the presence of the railway at the far end of Walden Pond that made retreat possible” (Gifford 24). In the same way, Tally and other escapees from New Pretty Town need the “track with metal rails and wooden crossbars” (*Uglies* 141), – disused railway tracks – “stretched across the entire continent” (*Uglies* 198) to fly their magnetised hoverboards to the Smoke. As Tally comments, “unlike most ruins, the railroads were actually useful” (*Uglies* 198).

<sup>38</sup> The authors also refer to *Matched* and Lauren Oliver’s *Delirium*.

nature into a place ideal for claiming her agency” (McDonough and Wagner 157).<sup>39</sup> They go on to argue that “[t]he belief in nature as refuge, as a safe and peaceful place is a common thread throughout” (158) but fail to examine the way in which through such a representation the *Uglies* trilogy uncritically perpetuates the generic convention of “the frontier novel as heroically individualized pioneer romance” (Nixon 92) that potentially excludes other(ed) experiences, including that of the more-than-human community.

In spite of the Smoke and its inhabitants being constructed as ‘other’, as outsiders and abject citizens in a political sense by Dr. Cable and Special Circumstances, their practice of living in the ‘wild’ and their subsistence culture, which includes practices that are ecologically questionable, such as killing animals and cutting down life trees (*Uglies* 187-194, 203), do not necessarily represent a ‘non-hierarchical’ form of caring. As Curry argues, from the perspective of caring for the more-than-human community, such a representation continues to “problematically equate[] ecological care with ecological comfort under the implicit premise that bioregional relationships are predicated on mutual compromise rather than respect” (*Environmental Criticism* 141). Such a perspective furthermore condones “anti-urban sentiment and romanticization of rural life” (MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth* 98). It thus mirrors an over-emphasis of communalism in ecological discourses which MacGregor criticises “for taking a rosy view of rural life when they hold up the stewardship practices of the family farm as a model of sustainable living” (*Beyond Mothering Earth* 98). Tally embodies this view when, after her first observation is that the “Smoke really [is] smoky” (*Uglies* 186), she soon starts to appreciate the “physical beauty of the Smoke” (*Uglies* 219). With its rather nostalgic representation of the Smoke, aided by Tally’s quick adaptation to practices that are initially abhorrent to her (*Uglies* 219-20), the *Uglies* trilogy in this instance fails to imagine an actual ecological alternative to Dr. Cable’s managerial approach by neglecting “to re-envision the economic structures and anthropocentric value systems of pre-apocalypse socio-political processes” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 142). Instead, the trilogy supports “[t]he assumption that the remote non-human world constitutes a ground from which saving Earth (i.e. a transition to sustainability) can be instigated” without showing awareness for this assumption constituting “a nostalgic longing for a world that in the Anthropocene no longer exists” (Andersen 101).

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<sup>39</sup> Ostry argues similarly when she contends that “life in nature has taught [Tally] to take risks, make decisions, and resist being controlled. Tally learns that she is part of nature” and at the end of the trilogy, “makes herself the guardian of nature” (“On the Brink” 104).

In the *Dustlands* trilogy it is the pastoral that is referred to as part of the post-disaster framing on the one and as part of the performance of DeMalo's understanding of stewardship on the other hand. In contrast to the *Uglies* trilogy, the *Dustlands* trilogy consistently and overtly problematizes pastoral references by linking them to DeMalo's hegemonic aspirations and thus resembles what Gifford terms "post-pastoral literature" in that it "is itself aware of the dangers of idealized escapism while seeking some form of accommodation between humans and nature" (Gifford 26). While DeMalo's re-seeding plans may be ecologically future-oriented, personally and socially he simultaneously seeks to create an illusion of 'idealised escape' (cf. Gifford 26 qtd. in 5.1) that conceptually links to the pastoral trope's "backward-looking tendency" (Gifford 21). Thus, Saba observes that on the one hand DeMalo claims to focus on the well-being of the planet and future generations but on the other hand he creates "places outta [sic.] time. Where real life stops" for himself (*Rebel Heart* 366). These places, his room in the Tonton headquarters or his tent, furnished with items that have become a rare luxury in Saba's world<sup>40</sup>, represent a "nostalgic 'requiem'" (Gifford 21) for a "vanished past" supposed to criticise a "'fallen'" present (Garrard 37) by which DeMalo not only seeks to impress but also to ratify the "oppressive social order" he is building by means of "masculine colonial aggression" (Garrard 49). In addition to this, DeMalo employs extensive religious imagery to underline his claim to patriarchal dominion, such as stylising himself as a prophet and quasi-messiah, 'the Pathfinder', or naming the territory he seeks to conquer and establish 'New Eden' and Tonton headquarters 'Resurrection' (*Rebel Heart* 327). Resurrection's spatial situatedness of being housed in an old dam structure from 'Wrecker' times (cf. *Rebel Heart* 327) is especially telling as Nixon discusses the structure of the "megadam" as an "icon of national ascent" (152) – which matches DeMalos political aspirations as discussed in chapter 3 of this study – and at the same time "becomes coupled to the descending prospects of communities that have become ecologically unmoored" (152).<sup>41</sup>

The way in which the wilderness and pastoral tropes are employed in these narratives within the post-disaster and dystopian framework and in the context of the discourse of ecological citizenship as stewardship or (ecofeminist) care determines the agential and citizenly subject position assigned to the protagonists – by themselves, other characters and,

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<sup>40</sup> Among these items are, for instance, "'[w]ine [...]. Very old [...] very rare'" (*Rebel Heart* 299) as well as "[r]ugs on the floor. A large table off to the left, covered with a cloth. One end of it set fer [sic.] a meal with a chair, plate, cup, an [sic.] lit candles. The crackle of a fire. A solid, dark wood, carved settle chair, [...] a book in his hand" (*Rebel Heart* 358-359).

<sup>41</sup> Also cf. for Curtin, who highlights that in the "context of developmentalism [...] there is a systemic bias toward large dams that centralize water collection and political power" (*Chinnagounder's Challenge* 143).

ultimately, by the narrative. In the *Dustlands* trilogy, references to the pastoral serve to continuously unmask DeMalo's attempts to strengthen and legitimise his claim to hegemonic power. For him, pressing Saba into a certain role and a specific way of caring is part of this process. Although he initially comes to know her as a fighter in Hopetown in the first instalment of the trilogy (cf. *Blood Red Road* 124, 135, 165), he subsequently tries to persuade her into the role of the woman *by his side* – crucially *not* in her own right. In his vision, she is to take on the role of motherly carer for their family and the community of the Stewards of the Earth while he and the Tonton 'take care of' re-seeding the land, rendering 'Mother Earth' "a feminine platform for [predominantly] male relationships" (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 26).<sup>42</sup> Saba, like the human and more-than-human community, is to be domesticated as a woman and carer, or womanly carer, visually expressed in DeMalo repeatedly asking her to wear "a [...] dress" when Saba has "never wor[n] a dress in [her] life" (*Rebel Heart* 301; also cf. 361) and only takes it "with reluctant hands" (*Rebel Heart* 361). Dressed up to "look womanly", Saba "hardly recognize[s] [her]self" (*Rebel Heart* 361) anymore, an observation which can be conferred from her appearance to her character and personality, too. While DeMalo seeks to impose the same hierarchical, patriarchal structure on Saba as on his interaction with the Stewards and the land alike, the narrative works against him and constructs Saba's subject position in ways that indicate her 'failure' to live up to the expectations of both a binary-entrenching care ethics and a patriarchal form of stewardship. In contrast to DeMalo's ambition to press her into a socio-ecological subject position that is reduced to that of wife and mother and thus constitutes the attempt at privatising her care practices, she is shown by the narrative as neither traditionally feminine nor motherly, as can be seen in her fraught relationship to her much younger sister and in the fact that she miscarries her and (presumably) DeMalo's baby (*Raging Star* 311). Furthermore, her commitment to the land is questioned when Auriel comments that while Saba's brother "longs to plant hisself [sic.] in one place, plant the land around him", this decidedly "'ain't [her] [as] [Saba] cain't be tied'" (*Rebel Heart* 106).

The threat of increasing self-alienation due to the ascribed identity DeMalo attempts to enforce on her can be considered a threat of "being damaged, or subsumed by another's moral agency", a circumstance that according to Curtin makes caring in an interdependent sense impossible (*Chinnagounder's Challenge* 145; cf. above). DeMalo's strategy can therefore be regarded as an example for a policy that "result[s] in an intensified burden of caring

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<sup>42</sup> The act of re-seeding or sowing of seeds implies, of course, also a gendered and sexualised metaphor.

responsibilities [for some] while making it more difficult for citizens to find time for civic engagement” (MacGregor, *Beyond Mothering Earth* 14) due to being pressed into the role of performing a privatised form of care, e.g. ‘caring for’ a partner and children. The narrative thus explicitly problematizes not only the concept and performance of patriarchal stewardship but also the idea within ecofeminist care ethics that women’s strength and political role lies in (affectively) ‘caring for’ the human and more-than-human community in a privatised way while men perform their ‘caring about’ via more detached – and public – practices. For Saba, the way to socio-ecological enfranchisement lies in bringing together the affective domain and the language and practice of a socio-ecological citizenship by ‘taking care of’, i.e. addressing and acting on the needs of those people disenfranchised by DeMalo (cf. the discussions in chapter 3 and 5.2).

Whereas the *Dustlands* trilogy explicitly exposes DeMalo’s display of a pastoral nostalgia as part of his interpretation of stewardship as a (patriarchal) claim to power, thereby critically challenging both concepts in the context of ecological citizenship, the *Uglies* trilogy’s adherence to and uncritical use of what Andersen terms “the imagination form ‘The Loss of Wilderness’” (Andersen 12) has to be regarded as affirmative of nostalgic, romanticised notions of ‘the wild’ as well as of stewardly subject positions guarding this space. Thereby, the stewardship model that is overtly criticised on the one hand through the representation of Dr. Cable is covertly reinstated again on the other hand by the narrative’s uncritical and romanticised approach to the wilderness trope. The trilogy clearly seeks to represent and preserve an image of wilderness and thus of ‘nature’ as undomesticated, uncontained and “as the place where the sensitive human being can become acquainted with the true condition of the world” (Andersen 101). This is made clear by Tally’s sentiments towards ‘nature’ hardly changing over the course of the narrative. From the time she lives in the Smoke, when she considers “the mountain, the sky, and the surrounding valleys” as “spectacular” (*Uglies* 219), to the very end of the trilogy, when, now a special, she longs to “be[] out under the open sky again”, the thought of which “sen[ds] a painful ping of hope through her” (*Specials* 335), the representation of Tally as the protagonist and only focaliser remains within the convention of wilderness heroine, which renders it highly problematic in the context of care and/as citizenship. In contrast to Curry, who reads Tally’s final decision to remain in the wild together with her friend David as an instance of “[e]coconsciousness [which] entails a ‘traitorousness’ to the metanarrative of ecological otherness that has engendered a definition of human identity divorced from its ecological context”



(*Environmental Crisis* 190)<sup>43</sup>, this study argues that the representation of the way in which Tally performs care remains in the realm of nostalgic conservatism because it is decoupled from the language of citizenship.

Introducing Plumwood's use of the terms 'traitor' and 'traitorous', which in this context signify "a revised conception of the self and its relation to the non-human other" (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 189; Plumwood, "Deep Ecology" 69) together with a practice that is oppositional to injustice and oppression and relinquishes the notion of human dominance, Curry reads "Tally's decision to remain in the wild with David after the cities' guardians have been overthrown [...] as the adoption of an overtly traitorous subject position" (*Environmental Crisis* 190). She goes on to argue that

[their] message, left to the remaining city dwellers and, by implication, to the novel's readers, sees Tally 'betray' her own kind and become a traitor to 'the narrative of the human' that desires anthropocentric expansion and exploitation in a progress-led trajectory that has engendered environmental crisis (Mallory 2009: 9). Standing in humanity's way is here the equivalent to standing *with* the ecological other in an extension of solidarity. (*Environmental Crisis* 190–91)

Despite the evident critique of anthropocentric *Bildungsroman* conventions of integrating the human subject with the rest of human society that Curry's reading implies, this study considers the notion of 'traitorousness' as neither very useful nor productive in the context of representing ways in which to perform ecological citizenship. Firstly, human behaviour and performativity are still at the centre of this extended conception of ecological care. After all, Tally and David's presence in the 'wilderness' is still regarded as necessary, thus the 'wilderness' is not regarded "as human beings' conversation partner" (F. Buell 206) but still viewed as an entity in need of human (or post-human special) protection, which, as has been argued above, is not the same as care (cf. Tronto 104–105). Moreover, the notion of protection implies "the strengthening of paternalistic forms of power at the expense of collective forms of resistance and social transformation" (Butler et al. 1). Tally and David's solidarity of standing with the non-human other, to use Curry's words, like the solidarity that, on the level of cultural citizenship, Fox extends to the boat refugees in *Aurora* (cf. chapter 4.4), still implies a hierarchy and thus a "'top-down' approach" (Wolfram 15), a point that Curry does not consider and that reinforces instead of challenges the notion that 'nature' is better off

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<sup>43</sup> For her argument, Curry draws on the work of Plumwood and Mallory when she contends that "[a]n ecoconscious conceptualisation of human identity that recognises the self as a product of the ecological whole [...] offers an alternative to the individual of western humanism" and that hybridity offers "a representation of the multiplicity necessary for the expanded parameters of ecological selfhood" (*Environmental Crisis* 189).

when protected (i.e. managed) by people.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, what Curry considers a representation of ecoconsciousness and ecological selfhood and thus, quoting Plumwood ““an attempt to obtain a new human and a new social identity in relation to nature which challenges [the] dominant instrumental conception, and its associated social relations”” (Plumwood, *Feminism* 186; qtd. in Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 181), this study considers as a reinforcement of the concept of custodial stewardship at the same time that it represents a re-privatisation of care.

This becomes evident when considering Tally’s position at the end of the narrative in the context of the aspects of (spatial) transgression and access that are, of course, key to citizenship. As a ‘traitor’ who is not part of human community any more, Tally’s ‘social relations’ except for that with David and the more-than-human-community are all but severed. By having Tally issue a warning (or threat) for people to not step out of line and refuse to engage discursively with human society, Tally and thus the narrative re-introduce the policy of spatial containment that has been employed by the city authorities and that she as a character and the narrative as a whole have spent three instalments to deconstruct. Instead of fostering a hybrid position that bridges the gap between nature-culture, which is a cause for the perpetration of slow environmental violence in the first place, the care or guardianship she performs remains oppositional instead of becoming interdependent in non-hierarchical ways. Tally thus maintains and entrenches the nature-culture binary and thereby reproduces ““the problem with the cities”” in which ““[e]veryone’s a kid, pampered and dependent”” (*Uglies* 216) by contributing to keeping city-citizens in the status of ecological citizenly disenfranchisement.

The reason for this effect is the narrative’s uncritical adherence to the wilderness trope and its tendency to “evacuat[e] cultural history from the concept and experience of wilderness” (Nixon 90). Thus, where spatial transgression as a way to claim rights and perform citizenship is positively connoted in the context of political citizenship (cf. chapter 3), the narrative now presents it as undesirable in the context of ecological citizenship. In doing so, the narrative endorses a view very close to the Romanticist sentiments “that a capacity to love and learn from nature is a special rather than a general disposition” (Ryle 14), a point that is suggested, as Ryle argues, for example by Wordsworth’s work. As Ryle rightly

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<sup>44</sup> This is especially ironic in the light of the *Uglies* trilogy’s simultaneous investment in emphasising the resilience of non-human life, for instance when David explains to the new Smokies that ““[t]his old-growth forest stops them [the weed orchids]. It’s been around for centuries, probably even before the Rusties”” (*Uglies* 183) or when Tally feels “puny against the strength of the wild” (*Uglies* 200).

observes this implies “an exclusionary aspect” (15) because “the idea that the human who truly attunes her sensibility to the non-human world participates in saving it” (Andersen 101) in this view is reserved only for the ‘chosen few’ (i.e. the ‘traitors’ in Plumwood’s terms). While Tally is narratively allowed to spatially transgress into the ‘wilderness’ and thereby “empowered [...] to understand or imagine, and potentially engage in, a very particular green ‘good life’” (Gabrielson and Parady 377), others do not have the same opportunity as she effectively does not allow them to ‘side with nature’ (cf. Curry qtd. above). Tally’s form of stewardship for the wild therefore has clear elitist overtones as it “draws heavily on Western conceptions of the nonhuman natural world and humans’ appropriate relation to it” (Gabrielson and Parady 377). In this conception, the rest of society in Tally’s world is barred from accessing the experience of attuning themselves to ‘nature’ and thus developing their sense of socio-ecological agency and citizenly enfranchisement.

At the same time that Tally becomes a custodial steward, the spatial containment she imposes on both herself and the human society she has separated herself from and the fact that she alone – together with a sidekick – is responsible for caring for the more-than-human community suggest that the narrative (re-)introduces a conceptualisation of care as a privatised ecological practice instead of a practice that can “effect change and construct bonds of community” (Curtin, *Chinnagounder’s Challenge* 141). As Tally re-asserts the necessity of “human evictions and erasures” (Nixon 90) from the ‘wild’ and thus entirely decouples it – and herself – from interaction with human society, the ‘wilderness’ turns into her and David’s ‘private space’ in which Tally can be argued to be domesticated if ‘saving nature’ is her own private responsibility. Considering the way in which Tally’s ecological citizenly care practice is thus entirely privatised and separated from wider negotiations of and discourses about citizenship, it can be argued that even the justice-orientation she maintains in a political way by refusing to integrate into society (cf. chapter 3) is undermined. Her ecological citizenly subject position therefore has to be regarded as an example of “promoting private (unpaid, feminized) pro-environmental behaviors as acts of citizenship” when, in fact, “green citizenship should be seen as a position from which to [...] challenge [...] the relationship between green citizens and the state” (MacGregor, “Citizenship” 10). By romantically glorifying “a wilderness” that may “actually already [be] inhabited” (Gifford 24) and thereby creating a doubly problematic subject position for the protagonist as elitist steward and privatised carer in the end, the narrative almost seems to sabotage its own presumed intent of representing ecological citizenly enfranchisement, as this remains questionable both for wider society and for Tally herself.

A very different position is represented in the *Longlight* trilogy by the Wazya, one of many communities living in the Farlands, and especially the character Mabatan, who becomes one of Roan's friends and allies in the fight against the City. As the readers learn from one of the chapter epigraphs, the Wazya represent an at least partly nomadic culture that is hidden from the hegemonic aspirations of both the City masters and the Brothers because "those who wander are thought to be lost in the Devastation" and the authorities and chroniclers "have no knowledge of their origins, beliefs, or numbers" (*Freewalker* 113). They "mostly travel alone, are well hidden and are believed to be mythical" (*Keeper's Shadow* vii). Consequently, no one can physically displace them for the simple reason that their existence is uncertain and their location(s) is/are unknown. The spatial indeterminableness due to their quasi-mythical status is increased by an ambivalence in appearance that transcends supposedly clear categories. When Roan first encounters Mabatan, his assumptions about both her age and her gender are proven wrong (*Freewalker* 83-86, 231)<sup>45</sup>, suggesting an identity and a subject position that is fluid and potentially subversive in its ambivalence. However, the fact that the Wazya keep to themselves and have little to no contact with others separates them from negotiations about citizenly subject position and therefore at least potentially limits the underlying subversiveness of their existence.

Although the Wazya are described as "keepers of [both] the earth and the Dreamfield" (*Keeper's Shadow* vii), Mabatan asserts the earth is not in need of human protection since it "has millions of summers still before it." By adding that "it will shrug us off her shoulders and we will be returned to dust" (*Freewalker* 117) her character explicitly challenges the idea that the earth depends on human interference to be managed as implied in the concept of stewardship. Rather, the Wazya consider themselves part of a larger, more-than-human community, as is evidenced by Mabatan's assertion that she is never "on [her] own" because "[w]hat [she] touch[es], what [she] smell[s], what [she] see[s], what [she] taste[s], what [she] hear[s], all of that is with [her]" (*Freewalker* 116-17). This connectedness becomes evident already in her introduction into the narrative when she saves Roan and his closest friend from being killed by carnivorous plants (*Freewalker* 74). She explains that, actually, these "are not plants. They are Skree.' [...] 'Sentient beings'" whose respect Roan has won (*Freewalker* 84-85). Therefore, while Tally in the *Uglies* trilogy is represented as a top-down guardian and privatised carer of the 'wilderness' around her, Mabatan and the Wazya are shown to have a non-oppressive, non-hierarchical and interdependent relationship to the more-than-human

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<sup>45</sup> Roan assumes that Mabatan is a boy of "[n]o more than elven or twelve years old" (*Freewalker* 84), whereas she asserts she is "a girl" (*Freewalker* 86) aged eighteen (*Freewalker* 231).

community of which they are a part like everything else. Nevertheless, Mabatan's practices of following the song of the earth to access the Dreamfield (cf. *Freewalker* 88-89) or her ability to listen to what certain animals tell her (cf. *Freewalker* 115) is not represented in a romanticised way as the 'wilderness experience' is in the *Uglies* trilogy but is shown simply as one of many ways of being in and interacting with the world around us. With her ability to commune with the earth, some animals as well as the Hhroxhi, a community of abjected people living under ground and speaking their own language (cf. *Freewalker* 157 ff.), and the ambivalence of her appearance, Mabatan rather than Tally (as Curry argues) represents a subject position that can be regarded as "[e]cological hybrid[]" in that it represents the "embodiment[] of multiplicity" and "manifest[s] dual or plural subject positions, identities and perspectives" (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 181).

Conversely to Tally's double separation from the rest of human society, Mabatan is shown to be keenly aware that her practice of taking care of the human and more-than-human community, if it seeks to "effect change and construct bonds of community" for all involved, "can only function in combination with other powers" (Curtin, *Chinnagounder's Challenge* 141; qtd. above). As she informs her companions, in order to save both earth and Dreamfield as socio-ecological spaces "'the struggle [they] face'" is to "'end the conflict'" (*Freewalker* 93-94) between the City Masters and those Farlanders who travel the Dreamfield by eating Dirt (cf. chapter 4.3). For her, this means leaving the hidden life of the Wazya behind and transgressing into a space in which the care need she has identified can be connected to the "language of citizenship" (MacGregor, "From Care to Citizenship" 72; qtd. above) through accepting an active part in the alliance against the City. The increasing involvement of not only Mabatan but the Wazya as a community in a struggle that is socio-ecological as well as political is reflected in one of the chapter epigraphs which is ascribed to the fictional record "The Way of the Wazya". Here, the way from passive resistance to open engagement with the Dirt Eaters, who are complicit in the destruction of the Dreamfield, is expressed, moving from "with[holding] [their] knowledge" to "openly condemn[ing]" the Dirt Eaters and finally becoming "their enemy" (*Keeper's Shadow* 11). While this focus on social struggle might be regarded as proof for Oziewicz's criticism that in many young adult narratives "the Trouble [sic.] is social, not environmental, injustice" (189; cf. chapter 5.1), in Mabatan's case her choice to deliberately engage in a struggle that is also social and political is an expression and a performance of the multiplicity of her socio-ecological identity and the plural perspectives she embodies. To engage at the intersection of ecological and social care and the negotiation of citizenly subject positions thus results in an outside-in trajectory for Mabatan, a position

from which the gap between nature-culture as well as the gap between Roan and different communities in the Farlands and agents in the Dreamfield can be much more effectively addressed – and bridged – than by Tally’s rigorous enforcement of this gap in the *Uglies* trilogy. Thus, while Tally is narratively contained in the ‘wild’ at the end of the narrative, Mabatan’s transgression from ecological immersion to socio-ecological justice-oriented citizenly engagement is a sign of her strong sense of agency and enfranchisement. The fact that her practice of care is connected to practices of citizenship is re-confirmed by the narrative when she becomes a member of the new council at the end of the *Longlight* trilogy (*Keeper’s Shadow* 408).

In conclusion it can be said that the representation of stewardship as a concept and practice is relatively consistent across the three trilogies analysed in this chapter. All three narratives, in varying degrees, reference a number of ideological memory-scapes inherent in the concept of stewardship, specifically those of Western, patriarchal liberalism, colonial expansion and, as two sides of the same coin, the commodification of spaces as resources on the one and the romanticisation of other spaces on the other hand. By emphasising these conceptual and practical issues of stewardship as a citizenly subject position, the narratives reflect – overtly or covertly – MacGregor’s criticism of “current green political (or ecopolitical) thought” as “a field that is at once exciting and unimaginatively patriarchal in its visions” (*Beyond Mothering Earth* 9). Stewardship, therefore, is presented as a force and practice of control which interprets ‘care’ as ‘protection’ and often takes the form of ‘protecting’ power interests rather than people and ecosystems. Even where the protection is directed towards the non-human ecosystems, as in the *Uglies* trilogy, the fact that it is rather protection than care that Tally practices leads to the maintenance of vertical hierarchies and oppositional thinking, which are supposed to be transgressed by an ecofeminist care ethic. While at a cursory glance the narrative seems to merge her ecological citizenship as stewardship with agency and enfranchisement for herself as the protagonist, it covertly reinforces socio-ecological divisions, power imbalances and a lack of access and participation for the general citizenry. Thereby, in the *Uglies* trilogy “humanity’s separation from the rest of the world” (Palmer 70; cf. above) is enforced rather than transcended. Tally’s ‘caring’ as separated from discourses of citizenship and relegated to a ‘privatised’ space thus has to be regarded as a logical result of the narrative’s adherence to an ecological citizenly subject position that remains within a patriarchal (Western, liberal) framing of stewardship. A stark contrast to Tally, as argued above, can be found in Mabatan and, by extension, the Wazya people in general in the *Longlight* trilogy, whose practice of combining an embodied

multiplicity with socio-ecological and political involvement can be regarded as interdependent and non-oppressive in an ecofeminist sense.

While the *Uglies* and *Longlight* trilogies thus arguably ‘take sides’ in the ideological struggle between these two conceptions of ecological citizenship, the position of the *Dustlands* trilogy is more complicated and therefore, perhaps, more interesting. Like the *Longlight* trilogy, it also explicitly challenges the assumptions of stewardship as a benign, managerial guardianship. Thus, when DeMalo’s tyranny is ended and the struggle over land and power is over, one form of oppositional thinking inherent to the concept of stewardship is overcome. The community that takes over the seed store and the process of reseeded the land is shown to change their practice from a justice-oriented – and thus at least potentially oppositional – ‘taking care of’ to ‘caring for’ the land and each other, by which the narrative highlights the interdependent aspect of caring, whether this is directed towards people or the ‘more-than-human’ community. However, a vertical, hierarchical relationship is not entirely overcome since the assumption that ‘the land’ is better off when humans care for and look after it is still visible in the *Dustlands* trilogy, too. While anthropocentrism thus emerges as an underlying and apparently inescapable memory-scape in both the *Dustlands* and the *Uglies* trilogies, the ending of the *Dustlands* trilogy shows that it “is important [...] that they [ecological citizens] are acting collectively and publicly to bring about changes to existing power structures” (MacGregor, “Citizenship” 11) and socio-ecological justice. In contrast to the *Uglies* trilogy, here, care is firmly brought into conversation with questions of agency and enfranchisement and thus citizenship.

Nevertheless, a further opposition that the *Dustlands* trilogy does not resolve is that between Saba and the rest of the community, which poses a significant contrast to Mabatan’s position as a member of the new council at the end of the *Longlight* trilogy. The fact that Saba as the protagonist and major focaliser leaves the community to embark on a new journey together with her love-interest Jack may invite several interpretations (also cf. chapter 3 of this study). In the context of ecological citizenly practices and subject positions, Saba’s leaving the community behind after DeMalo is defeated suggests a certain unease or discomfort on the part of the narrative with both stewardship and care ethics as possible options for expressing and performing agency. While patriarchal stewardship is very overtly rejected by the narrative, the critique of care practices, especially idealised or feminised notions of it, is less obvious yet noticeable. In the same way that Saba refuses to be bullied into a feminised role of ‘carer’ (i.e. ‘mother’) to the Stewards of the Earth by DeMalo, at the end of the narrative she refuses further involvement in the social, political and ecological care

needs of both the community and the land. On the one hand, Saba's departure can be interpreted as a performance of 'self-care' after having facilitated socio-ecological enfranchisement for others. While this may be an understandable move by the protagonist on the story level, on a meta-narrative level Saba's apparent rejection of "care as 'integral to being and subjectivity' since interdependency is a precondition of human existence (DeFalco 2011: 239)" (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 75) is in danger of re-endorsing "the autonomous sovereign subject of neoliberal discourse" (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 75), which the narrative at least to a certain extent has previously dismantled, and of thereby ultimately negating the critical and transformative political potential of interdependent socio-ecological care practice.

On the other hand, however, this ending might be read more ambivalently as a critical stance against "theories of green citizenship that privilege particular conceptions of the natural world, or some human interaction with it over others" and that thus "are inherently exclusive" (Gabrielson and Parady 381). Such a more open reading recognises the tensions inherent to both concepts of human interaction with the natural world discussed in this chapter and acknowledges the possibility that the narrative, represented via its protagonist, favours neither. More specifically, the *Dustlands* trilogy rejects an understanding of ecological citizenship that is intertwined exclusively with 'the land'. When Saba arrives at the sea coast, marvels at the smell and taste of the air, "fresh and alive" (*Raging Star* 340), and finally transgresses from land to the "place" of "the sea" (*Raging Star* 343) on a boat with Jack, both the assumption implied in the concept of stewardship that citizenship especially in a North American context is tied to land ownership, whether owned by individuals or as commons, and an interpretation of care ethics that focuses on interdependency in a land-based context are challenged. The spatial transgression from land to sea as a place which, at least within the confines of this narrative, has no borders and has not been politically struggled over, signifies a turn away from land-based and anthropocentric human socio-ecological and political structures, opening Saba's ecological as well as political citizenly subject position to develop beyond the traditional conceptions of citizenship. Such an interpretation of the *Dustlands* trilogy's ending is congruent with the narrative's interrogation of the *Bildungsroman* normative generic convention of reconciliation via a resolution of all political, social and/or ecological conflicts and frictions and the individual finding his/her 'place' in society in the end as discussed in chapter 3 of this study. With the prospect of extending the place and general scope of citizenship, ecological and, by implication, otherwise, beyond specific and privileged forms of inter-human and human-non-human interaction, the *Dustlands* trilogy



makes productive use of the post-/disaster generic potential of destabilising given (anthropocentric) structures, a potential that, in the context of three other trilogies, will be further examined in the final chapter of this study.

#### 5.4 The (Posthuman) Corporeality of Ecological Citizenship: Transgressing the Space of Species in the *Exodus*, *Longlight* and *Matched* Trilogies<sup>46</sup>

While the previous chapter has focused on ecological citizenly subject positions based on “notions of green ecologies, such as cooperative, congenial coexistence” (Oppermann 286), the final chapter of this study examines the ways in which the novels chosen for the analysis acknowledge that “dwelling in crisis means facing the fact that one dwells in a body and in ecosystems, both of which are already subject to considerable degradation, modification, and pressure” (F. Buell 202-203). Buell’s observation only hints at a point which is central to the discussion of ecological citizenship as corporeal and embodied and which is made explicit in Gabrielson and Parady’s emphasis on “humans’ *inescapable* embeddedness in differing social and natural (discursive and material) contexts” (376). Judith Butler clarifies this aspect further by positing that “the body is less an entity than a relation, and it cannot be fully dissociated from the infrastructural and environmental conditions of its living” (“Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance” 19). Therefore, she argues, it is necessary to regard “the human body as a certain kind of *dependency* on infrastructure, understood complexly as environment, social relations, and networks of support and sustenance by which the human itself proves not to be divided from the animal or from the technical world” (“Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance” 21). While in the context of cultural citizenship, the focus on the characters’ corporeal experiences highlights the ways in which individual (adolescent) bodies are cast as a cultural product or symbol to make them culturally intelligible or are domesticated as a container of hegemonic cultural memory, in the context of ecological citizenship the focus on corporeal, material experiences serves different functions.

Overwhelmingly, the novels engage with the conceptualisation of bodies as “porous but resistant, plural and connected” (Gabrielson and Parady 376) instead of individually

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<sup>46</sup> With its focus on technologically changed human bodies, including the brain, Westerfeld’s *Uglies* trilogy has already been frequently discussed as representing and negotiating questions of posthumanism (cf. e.g. Curry, *Environmental Crisis*, Flanagan, “Girl Parts” or Moran, “The Three Faces of Tally Youngblood”). For this reason as well as in order to give preference to the examination of novels that have hitherto not been discussed in this context, the *Uglies* trilogy will not be considered in this sub-chapter despite its suitability for the topic.

contained, thereby displaying an awareness of the human body being “[s]ituated between the cultural and material and participating fully in both” (Gabrielson and Parady 380; also cf. Gabrielson 7). Conceptually and, possibly, ideologically, the focus in the negotiation of ecological citizenship thereby at least potentially moves away from “the traditional conceptions of autonomy and agency that view citizens (men) as discrete individuals capable of controlling or mastering the physical world through reflective action” (Gabrielson and Parady 380) and towards a differing approach that accounts for the interconnections as well as blurring and overlapping boundaries between human bodies and their material and discursive contexts, an understanding that is related to the focus on interdependency in care ethics as discussed in the previous chapter. One function of focusing on ecological citizenship as corporeal and embedded is to highlight individual characters’ or character group’s differential and uneven exposure to dangerous and toxic environments, be they urban work places or destroyed landscapes, as well as, on the other hand, to techno-scientific experimentation or other intentional or unintentional alterations of the body as reactions to ecological disaster. A key notion in this line of examination is that of “vulnerability [as central] to the human experience” (Gabrielson and Parady 380).

In the context of debates about citizenship, vulnerability traditionally has been a difficult aspect. As Sabsay underlines, “[a]ccording to Oxford Dictionaries, to be vulnerable is to be ‘exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally; [or] (of a person) in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect’” (285). To be vulnerable may thus threaten or, indeed, revoke, the right to personhood as traditionally constructed, which in turn has long been conceptualised as the prerequisite for obtaining fully enfranchised citizenship status. However, by not only emphasising “human ability” (Gabrielson 7) as well as responsibility and accountability, as in other conceptualisations of ecological citizenship, but also highlighting “human vulnerability, dependency, and precarity” (Gabrielson 7), expressed via characters’ differential experience of disease or immunity, of abjection and/or being rendered ‘other’ through techno-scientific engineering, the novels analysed in this chapter seek to draw attention to the “systematic differences in how particular bodies ‘fit’ with their environment” (Gabrielson 7) as a result of differential and uneven exposure to various ecological degradations and biopolitical pressures.<sup>47</sup> While Gabrielson and Parady refer especially to the vulnerability of the human

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<sup>47</sup> Harrison, too, points out that “[h]uman beings in these narratives return to a state of vulnerability, at the mercy of sickness, the climate, predators, and inter-human exploitation and violence” (3). The relationship between the terms ‘vulnerability’ and ‘precarity’ in Butler’s theory becomes evident in her statement that “as much as

body, Nayar's understanding of ecoprecarity comprises "the vulnerability of all lifeforms, their attendant ecosystems and relations between and across lifeforms/species" (14), which may even lead to "the erosion of species boundaries and new forms of species alignment" (11). In this way, by framing vulnerability as and through the porousness, permeability and interdependence of the human body and other materials, the novels discussed here have at least the potential to challenge "the category of 'human'" (Harrison 6) as it is traditionally understood by opening up the discursive frameworks and the characters' material bodies to posthuman experiences. McCulloch, too, emphasises the potential of such narratives to "reconfigur[e] childhood [and adolescent] identity beyond the liberal humanist paradigm in ways that interrogate its hegemonic systems, thereby enriching and liberating rather than threatening our understanding of humanity" ("No Longer Human" 75). Thus, as MacGregor argues, "inserting a sense of corporeality into green citizenship enables it better to become a position from which to resist constructions of the neo-liberal, self-reliant subject" ("Citizenship" 8).

As can be seen from this brief initial contextualisation, through the focus on not only discursive but also, and especially, physical, bodily and thus material porousness and connectedness as well as vulnerability and precarity, such an approach to corporeal ecological citizenship intersects with posthuman ecocriticism and posthuman theory in general. In a nutshell, Oppermann describes posthumanism as "a perturbed middle space where many crisscrossing discourses mingle to consolidate a non-anthropocentric humanism" (274) which "dispenses with the species barriers", abandons anthropocentric dualisms and "blurs the boundaries between humans and machines" (276-77). More strongly than in conceptualisations of corporeal citizenship as interdependent, posthumanist theory thus emphasises that "the other-than-human" that the human body is connected to and interlinked with "is not a biological category only" (Oppermann 277). As with approaches to corporeal citizenship emphasising interdependency, such a posthuman view necessitates "rethinking the conceptual frameworks within which we have defined human subjectivity, agency, identity and self, acknowledging the permeable boundaries of species [...], and recognizing the profound interconnections between different forms of life in the composite world where previously we had seen separations" (Oppermann 275). Therefore, the addition of a posthumanist lens to the examination of ecological citizenship offers the possibility to rethink

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'vulnerability' can be affirmed as an existential condition, [...], it is also a socially induced condition, which accounts for the disproportionate exposure to suffering" (Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance" 25). The latter aspect of 'socially induced condition' she also employs to define the term 'precarity' (cf. Butler, *Frames of War* 25).

and transform traditional conceptions of citizenship by regarding not only the individual human body but, moreover, the human species and species in general as a space that is both delimited and liminal, permeable and can thus be transgressed into and out of.

Whereas the conceptual lenses through which ecological citizenship has been analysed in the previous chapters, i.e. risk theory, social justice and equity in the distribution of duties and responsibility, stewardship and care ethics, have been rather ‘unproblematic’ in terms of their employment within the generic frameworks the novels are situated in, there is a clear friction between an interdependent corporeal and posthumanist lens and at least some of the genre traditions the novels draw on. The novels discussed in this chapter and this study overall are thus challenged with negotiating between “a post-human sensibility” (Nayar 22) – and thus a non-anthropocentric sensibility – that most of them display on the one hand and, on the other hand, genre conventions that are, at least in the case of the *Bildungsroman*, adolescent literature and dystopia, whether critical or not, overtly anthropocentric. While this study predominantly concurs with Harrison’s claim that “YA dystopia, because it takes for granted the unstable bodies of its adolescent protagonists [...], offers unique potential to challenge the humanist assumptions that underlie traditional dystopia” (9), at least for the novels discussed in this chapter it is doubtful whether the same potential can indeed be attested to “the bildungsroman [sic. no italics] insistence on personal and social change” (9). Whether humanist and/or anthropocentric or posthumanist and/or non-anthropocentric positions are favoured becomes evident not least in the way in which agency and personhood are understood in the different narratives and the way they make use of their generic contexts, which in turn has clear repercussions as to how citizenship itself, as strongly based on agency and personhood, is conceptualised.

Since the Enlightenment, Attala and Steel state, “agency has overwhelmingly been viewed as the preserve of rational thinking humans. This is underpinned by the assumption that agency – the ability to effect change – is somehow synonymous with intentionality” (3). As a literary genre that has emerged during the Enlightenment period in order to narrate specific experiences of subjectivity and new subject positions, the traditional *Bildungsroman* thus endorses the “Western ideal citizen as reasoning, independent, autonomous agent” and “[a]cting with intention, or by choice” (Gabrielson 2), thereby perpetuating the view that (human) individuals are reliant on their “reasoning ability to express [their] subjectivity”, which at the same time results in the possibility that individuals can “be held responsible for [their] actions” (Gabrielson 2). While later adaptations of the *Bildungsroman* as well as much of the dystopian genre highlight that agency and the performance of it are considerably

influenced and shaped by social contexts which may in turn enable or constrain its very expression (cf. Gabrielson 4), young adult literature, however, is overall particularly invested in representing adolescent agency and/as intentional choice and responsibility. It is through the hybridisation of these overtly anthropocentric genres with the many guises in which post-/disaster narratives may appear that the focus shifts from only highlighting “humans’ dependencies [...] on one another” to also including “humans’ dependencies [...] on [...] the natural world” (Gabrielson 5) and “humans dwelling in daunting material networks” (Opperman 285).

With its emphasis on the destruction and erasure of (anthropocentric) structures, value systems, relationships and normativities (cf. the discussion of the genre in chapter 2), the post-/disaster genre much more than the other genres framing the novels discussed in this study is able to represent an “ontological reorientation” of agency, which “conceives of agency”, as Gabrielson discusses, “as collectively produced by a variety of participants, including non-human animals, plants, and things” (7) and is regarded “as a collective, embodied, distributed, and emergent capacity of the world in which we all participate, differently” (11). When agency is viewed “not as an attribute of the subject, but as *widely distributed, temporally emergent, and collectively expressed*” (Gabrielson 8), those subject positions in the discourse on citizenship that have traditionally been marginalized because they “were thought to participate in the inhuman” or “either do not seek to or cannot achieve this [the liberal Western] aspirational conception of personhood” and are therefore constructed as “nonagents” (Gabrielson 2-3) are brought into the conversation. Thereby, the notion of personhood as constituted by traditional, liberal conceptions of agency and as a prerequisite to citizenship is questioned and challenged (cf. Attala and Steel 8). In this way, also inanimate objects such as stones, even though they “may not be metabolically active”, may be regarded as “possess[ing] creative agency, and represent[ing] different episodes of life’s alterity” (Oppermann 288). Thus, decoupled from rationality, intentionality or purpose and regarded “as the outcome of relationships” (Attala and Steel 14) instead of as innate to certain (human) bodies, it becomes possible to conceive of agency (and personhood) not in the singular, as something certain agents have, but as a plurality of specific expressions of various forms of agencies (cf. Oppermann 288).

Representing the corporeality of ecological citizenship for the novels discussed in this chapter (and the overall study) thus means having to grapple with the tensions created by different forms of agency endorsed – or made possible – by different generic conventions and the repercussions these tensions have on how personhood and citizenship are conceived.

While Nayar posits that a (post-disaster) erosion of boundaries due to ecoprecarity includes the disruption and erosion of “the ideas of a coherent, autonomous human” (22), Harrison recognises a similar pattern in dystopias, which often “depict[] either societies or bodies that have been breached from the outside”, thereby negotiating how “the category of ‘human’ is challenged by intrusion” (6). Such a breach and embedded challenge can be posed by any of “the intricacies of environmental anomalies caused by climate change”, such as “ozone-fleeing ultraviolet radiation, anaerobic environments, pesticides, invasive species, toxic bodies, hybrid natures, intelligent machines, and a motley of other strange agencies” (Oppermann 286). While in the context of the post-/disaster genre in general Manjikian convincingly argues that, in political terms, the genre’s representation of destructions and erasures of the systems of predominantly industrialised nations often mirrors (Western) fears of a loss of hegemonic power in the world (cf. chapter 2), in the context of ecoprecarity and ecological corporeal citizenship the feared loss of power concerns not necessarily a single nation or specific geographic and economic context but the entire human species as ‘losing their power’ and supposedly dominating position over other, non-human species. The struggle over the space of species and its (supposed) boundaries according to Nayar is frequently represented in two specific ways in narratives featuring themes of ecoprecarity. On the one hand, Nayar explains, the outbreak narrative refers to the ‘invasion’ of hostile life forms, be they a virus or an alien species, and on the other hand the discourse of ‘going feral’ and ‘feral children’, sometimes interlinked with Haraway’s conception of the cyborg<sup>48</sup>, is a further way to discuss alleged breaches of species boundaries (cf. Nayar 18, 109-10).

Both Bertagna’s *Exodus* and Foon’s *Longlight* trilogies, in diverging ways, reference the discourse of ‘going feral’ and ‘feral children’ in their discussion of ecoprecarity and ecological citizenship and, in the case of the *Exodus* trilogy, interlink it with Haraway’s concept of the cyborg in order to debate corporeal porousness and connectedness. Thereby, these narratives represent not only the (human) body but the species in general as space that can be and is permeable and transgressed, with repercussions on how ‘feral’ or ‘cyborg’ bodies are perceived with regards to personhood and citizenship. Nayar describes the feral child as “one who has lived a precarious life by exiting, voluntarily or involuntarily, the human ecosystem” (118). This is true for both the group of sea urchins, as Mara calls them, in the *Exodus* trilogy and for the Hhroxhi, one of the factions populating the Farlands outside the dominating City, in the *Longlight* trilogy. When at the beginning of the *Exodus* trilogy Mara

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<sup>48</sup> On the impact Haraway’s conceptualisation of the cyborg had on scholarly and cultural debates on feminism and biopolitics see e.g. Sandilands (2017).

encounters the sea urchins for the first time, they have just saved her life from drowning during her attempt to leave the boat camp and enter the netherworld underneath the sky city (cf. *Exodus* 91). The young boy who has pulled her onto his makeshift raft is described as “baby-faced, with dangerous eyes”; “his unclothed body is sleek with mud and sea slime” (*Exodus* 92), and a short while later Mara realises that “his skin is tough” and “his whole body [is] covered with sleek hair – thick, seaworthy skin like a water rat or a seal” (*Exodus* 100). He communicates not in language but in “wail[s]”, “yelp[s]”, “squeals” and “grunts” (*Exodus* 92). Reluctant to think of the children as ““dangerous little animals”” (*Exodus* 121) or ““not human like us”” (*Exodus* 127), as the Treenesters do, Mara is soon shocked and disgusted by their “barbarity” and “savagery” (*Exodus* 124) when she sees the boy eating a raw pigeon. The boy is thus introduced as the stereotypical feral child, whose “ferocity and inarticulateness are clearly products of [...] an environment where the struggle for scarce resources has reduced all manifestations of humanizing culture to a minimum and is threatening to cast *homo sapiens* back into a state of sheer animality” (Glitz 42).

Historically, the concept of the ‘feral child’ represented a transgressive, monstrous divergence from enlightened civilization. Thus, Nayar explains, “[t]he feral child reverses the traditional model of development and modernity: they [sic.] move from culture to Nature” (119) and thus represent the “threat of dehumanization” (Glitz 42). The feral, Nayar further argues, thus “gestures at the borders between Nature and culture, between human and non-human/animal” and “suggests that the borders may be blurred, and identities are precarious, for one may easily slip into the other” (108), a condition that the Treenesters perceive as dangerous and therefore rigorously ‘defend’ their species border by radically excluding the children from their community lest they be subsumed by the feral themselves. A different strategy of handling the species border that is transgressed by the feral children is attempted by Mara. Like Crusoe with Friday, she decides to ““give [the boy who saved her] a name””, which she announces to be ““Wing [...]. That’s what I’ll call you”” (*Exodus* 100). Instead of relegating him to the category ‘wild’ she thus aims at placing him in the category of ‘domesticated’, thereby using the permeability of the species border in order to narrow the gap, so to speak, between what she perceives as the boy’s humanity and animality. The very fact of an implicit categorisation taking place according to Nayar signals a way for those humans who find themselves situated in some form of wilderness context, like Crusoe on the island or Mara in the netherworld, and are thus threatened by the prospect of becoming ‘feral’ themselves, to establish and re-assert their own humanity (cf. 109). Mara’s desire to reverse or at least attenuate the feral existence of “[h]er own urchin” (*Exodus* 100; also 315) thus at the

same time has to be regarded as an implicit re-entrenching of the nature/culture, human/non-human binary, including the unequal power-relationship inscribed in it. Her assumption that she is doing the boy a favour by naming him and that, moreover, she is in a position to do so, thus entirely ignoring the fact that he is already part of a community of “[a] cathedral full of sea urchins” (*Exodus* 100) who not only manage to communicate very well amongst each other but have also succeeded in surviving on their own, shows her belief in the supremacy of ‘civilized’ humanity, i.e. of human life that does not challenge the nature/culture binary, over corporeal, embodied experiences that do blur and transgress such normative boundaries.<sup>49</sup>

The *Longlight* trilogy also references the trope of the feral but challenges the assumption that it “marks the retreat from the social order” (Nayar 110) per se or, in fact, that it represents the wild at all. In their introduction to the narrative, the Hhroxhi, also known as Blood Drinkers, are introduced from Roan’s point of view as “ghoulish” and “a vision of horror” with pink eyes, waxen skin and “sharp fangs” (*Dirt Eaters* 131). The similarity to vampire figures in gothic and horror narratives is obvious and intentional, as is stated overtly later on when Roan refers to this group as “these vampires” (*Freewalker* 163). The implied readers receive the added information in the chapter epigraph that the practice of filing their teeth and cutting off their ears as well as their being “sustained by blood” (*Dirt Eaters* 126) is conducted by all Hhroxhi. A further chapter epigraph in the trilogy’s second instalment, *Freewalker*, summarises the general public opinion about the Hhroxhi on the story level: “They sleep in the earth like the walking dead, their language clicks like the insects that share their beds. Give them no quarter for they are not human” (*Freewalker* 156). With their unusual appearance and their practices of living underground and consuming blood, the Hhroxhi thus trigger similar fears as the image of the ‘feral child’ does. Here, too, the protagonist Roan, indoctrinated by public views on the Hhroxhi, fears a monstrous deviation from what he perceives as human and, consequently, the blurring of the species border between human and non-human/animal. Within the narrative, Roan’s point of view thus represents the liberal, enlightened and traditionally humanist point of view that is unsettled by images of the feral and/as posthuman.

This point of view is challenged by Roan’s friend Mabatan, who demands that he “keep in mind that nearly all that is told of these people is false” (*Freewalker* 166), thereby

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<sup>49</sup> The act of naming is subsequently repeated by Mara for all the children who live in the abandoned cathedral in the netherworld. This time she does ask them if they “[w]ould [...] like names”, thinking “it seems only right to ask” even if they cannot understand her (*Exodus* 138). Then she carries on regardless, “dishing out names at random” (*Exodus* 139) and thus demonstrates the fact that this act is, ultimately, not for the benefit of these children but her own.



also reminding the implied readers that the dominant point of view or discourse does not necessarily have a claim to truth simply by virtue of being dominant. When Roan witnesses the telling and performance of the Hhroxi's origin tale it emerges that their choices – of living underground, of changing their appearance and of consuming blood – have only partly been their own and are partly due to consequences relating to nuclear warfare and their subsequent increased level of vulnerability and ecoprecarity. Roan learns that their retreat to a life underground was necessitated after their refusal to fight in the many wars and the effects of “the explosion and [...] the Brightness” (*Freewalker* 161), which caused their hair to fall out, their skin to turn white and people to turn blind, had rendered them increasingly vulnerable to both sunlight and hostile groups. In contrast to the human community “[t]he earth welcomed them” and “sheltered them” (*Freewalker* 161). Therefore, the Hhroxhi “rejected the world of men”, “removed themselves” and “transformed themselves. They shed their ‘humanity’” (*Freewalker* 161-62). In Roan's view, the Hhroxhi transform “their children from members of the human race into something foreign and terrifying” (*Freewalker* 163) when they cut off their ears and file their teeth, but in the Hhroxhi's own view, through this practice and what it represents, “[t]hey bec[o]me something better” (*Freewalker* 162).

Like the children in the *Exodus* trilogy, the Hhroxhi in the *Longlight* trilogy thus illustrate Nayar's claim that the feral results “from human practices of exclusion and inclusion” (Nayar 117). However, in contrast to the children in *Exodus*, who are excluded from any other human community and make do with the circumstances they find themselves in, the Hhroxhi intentionally keep separate from (other) human communities and render themselves more ‘feral’ by altering their physical appearance and engaging in practices that they know will be regarded as ‘wild’, ‘feral’, dangerous and abhorrent by others. Their intentional use of this mechanism of exiting the ‘human ecosystem’ (cf. Nayar above) to express their agency and a different socio-ecological subject position to those especially in the City also distinguishes them from the ‘unimagined’ or ‘ghosted’ communities (cf. Nixon) discussed in the previous chapter since the Hhroxhi do not only regard themselves as differentially exposed victims of ecoprecarious conditions but embrace their vulnerability and corporeal permeability as agents for transformation. The Hhroxhi therefore do not represent a retreat from social order per se but the establishing of a different social order that rejects the many violent destructions and resulting ecoprecarity that are caused by and in the name of ‘humanity’. Thus, the narrative from the beginning casts doubt on Roan's perception that the Hhroxhi's conduct constitutes a “testament to hatred, a cry against humanity” (*Freewalker* 162) and instead questions whether it is not the self-rendered posthumans who express more

‘humanity’ (in the sense of compassion, kindness and peacefulness but also reflective rationality) than many of those humans in power in the Farland communities. By extension, this representation and line of questioning invites the implied readers to consider what it is that defines humanity as a species and which aspects are in fact considered as a transgression of the species boundary.<sup>50</sup>

Conversely, in the *Exodus* trilogy the emphasis is decidedly not placed on recognising the community of children as an alternative social order but, instead, on the “reintegration [of the feral children] into civilized society” (Glitz 43). This remains Mara’s aim despite her early realisation that “she can’t tame [the boy] into a replacement little brother. [...] No matter how tender she tries to be or how hard she tries to teach him words and language, he makes it clear he’s having none of it” (*Exodus* 147). Nevertheless, he and the other children join Mara and the Treenesters on their flight from the netherworld and journey north to Greenland (cf. *Exodus* 324ff.). By the beginning of the trilogy’s third instalment, *Aurora*, it transpires that Mara’s project of re-civilizing the feral children has only partly been successful. Since one of their numbers, a girl named Scarwell by Mara, “was thrown out of” Mara’s new community because she “was more trouble than all of them put together” (*Aurora* 24), the rest of the children followed her, causing many to perish. The survivors “were brought back to live in the safety” of the community (*Aurora* 24) only when the community suffered from a guilty conscience, but Scarwell and “Wing wouldn’t come” (*Aurora* 24). While Scarwell “was never seen again” (*Aurora* 24) and has joined a pack of wolves to live among them, Wing, “[w]olfman or human fish” (*Aurora* 19), has started to move between wolf pack and human community according to the shifting seasons (*Aurora* 24). Scarwell thus represents the ultimate feral outcast, the permeability of her corporeal, embodied existence too obvious in a way that is interpreted by Mara and her friends as inappropriate, out of place and threatening because it transgresses that which they perceive as the species boundary between human and non-human animal. Wing, on the other hand, represents the redeemable feral child, hybrid, liminal, half re-civilized but still “stumble[ing] with human words” while “[f]luent in the language of the wild” (*Aurora* 19).

Apart from these two positions there is a third one, which is that of Pandora, a young woman who as a child did not manage to flee the netherworld together with the others (cf.

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<sup>50</sup> This point is further underlined when Roan learns that what he presumed to have been a violent and unfounded attack by the Hhroxhi on one of the Farland communities was, in fact, a desperate reaction to an atrocious attack of the community’s governor on a Hhroxhi community, killing many. To help fight the presumed attack, Roan has killed a number of Hhroxhi himself, which subsequently places him in the position of belligerent, terrifying and blood-thirsty ‘other’ (cf. *Freewalker* 171-72).

*Aurora* 13). Having been raised by Fox and the oldest Treenester woman, who have also stayed behind in the netherworld, Pandora is completely assimilated to that which the narrative very conventionally holds up as human civilization: language, (romantic) feeling and technology. Out of the three prominent ‘feral child/young adult’ characters in the trilogy’s final instalment, it is, tellingly, Pandora who is constructed as one of the narrative’s focalisers besides Mara, Mara’s teenage daughter Lily, Fox and others. The novel even starts from her perspective, and when she reflects that “[t]here [is] no other human presence [...] in all the netherworld” (*Aurora* 7) apart from Fox and herself, it is obvious that on what might be termed a species spectrum she unequivocally self-identifies as human. Despite her “webbed hands and feet and the soft gills on her neck” (*Aurora* 9), features she shares with Wing and Scarwell, her position is at least initially confirmed through her cooperation with Fox in his struggle against the sky city authorities; her performance of a justice-oriented form of citizenship and her self-perception of her corporeal status as human mutually determine each other.

This self-perception is threatened when Fox finds out and reveals to her that her physical appearance is not due to a process of evolutionary adaptation but that instead “[t]he sky people made [her]” (*Aurora* 49) as part of their “‘Amphibian Experiment’”, in which they sought to create “[a] new kind of human made to survive in a flooded world” (*Aurora* 50). In one brief conversation between the characters, Pandora’s corporeal subject position thus changes from re-civilized feral child to cyborg, a “creature[] simultaneously animal and machine” (Haraway 149) that represents “transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities” (Haraway 154). Transgression and danger are ascribed notions that the image of the cyborg shares with that of the feral child. A notable difference between these two tropes of transgressing the space of the human species is “the paradoxical nature of cyborg as an enhancer as well as a mutilator” (Lai 387), as Lai highlights. She argues that “[a]s cyborgs are potentially ‘better than human’, it holds [sic.] great promises in enhancing our lives (life-saving) while at the same time harbouring destructive potential that threatens ‘the loss of our identity’” (387).

Such a loss of identity paired with self-alienation is experienced by Pandora predominantly out of the fear of being judged by Fox, not only a ‘pure’ human but, moreover, a male and white one, as “alien creature” and “freakish mistake” (*Aurora* 53), “more Amphibian than human” (*Aurora* 54). Where before she has experienced pride in her physical capabilities and thought of herself as “beautiful” and “warrior queen of the netherworld” (*Aurora* 10), the fact that she has been genetically engineered by other humans makes her feel

considerably less human – and thus less beautiful and confident. In contrast to the Hhroxi in the *Longlight* trilogy, whose ‘breach’ of the species boundary is a deliberate performance of agency and an expression of their alliance with each other and the environments they live in, Pandora experiences the revelation about her status as ‘not-quite-human’ or ‘more-than-human’ cyborg as isolating, shameful and disenfranchising. This fictional depiction mirrors at least part of the public perception around the time of publication in 2011, as becomes evident when comparing Pandora’s development to interviews Lai has conducted with young adults in 2012 as to their perception of the effects of ‘cyborg’ technology. Lai explains that those interviewed “are perturbed by the hybridity of the human/machine/animal coupling, fearing that such union may *eradicate their personhood* and compromise their sense of humanity [...]. For example, the cyborg is described as ‘not a real person’, ‘less human’ and ‘degraded’” (388-389; emphasis added). An imagined cyborg identity evokes a feeling of shame and rejection by society (389). In the case of Pandora, despite the fact that her corporeal fusions and the blurring of a porous species border that occurs with it render her much better suited for life on a drowned planet, the knowledge of her cyborg genealogy, instead of further empowering her, causes her to experience herself as the ‘other’ in an unequal binary differentiation.

The emphasis, both in the interviews conducted by Lai and in the representation of Pandora in the novel, is thus clearly placed on the cyborg as mutilator instead of on the cyborg as enhancer, with direct repercussions for the representation of possible socio-ecological citizenly participation or even full inclusion in the novel. The sole focus on the cyborg as mutilator cuts short the “needed political work” (Haraway 154) of negotiating and extending both the space and spectrum of species, especially *homo sapiens*, and with it the category of personhood that is so crucial for constructions of citizenly subject positions. Thus, the *Exodus* trilogy misses the opportunity to positively represent how “we can learn from our fusions with animals and machines how *not* to be Man, the embodiment of Western logos” (Haraway 173; emphasis added), embodied in the narrative especially via Fox and also, perhaps ironically, even more so by Mara.

Despite the fact that it was she who brought the feral children along to Greenland, of the major characters it is Mara who, in the third instalment of the trilogy, is most invested in excluding those who are unwilling to entirely assimilate to the “civilizational achievements and legacy” of “the species *homo sapiens*” (Glitz 43), i.e. Scarwell and Wing, from her *homo sapiens* community. The first, overt reason for this exclusion, explicitly stated early in the narrative, is the feral children’s unruliness and tendency to create trouble (cf. *Aurora* 24). A

second reason initially emerges covertly and becomes more and more evident during the course of the narrative: Mara, and by extension her human community, fear a ‘dilution’ of their species boundaries that might occur via a pairing of Wing and Mara’s daughter, Lily, even though none of them is aware of the fact that both Wing and Scarwell, in addition to representing the ‘feral’, also can be considered cyborgs. While Pandora regards herself with shame and self-rejection, the narrative underlines the attraction Wing holds for Lily (cf. e.g. *Aurora* 18-19, 25), marked not least by her “jealousy” of Scarwell because Lily “feels excluded from all that they [Wing and Scarwell] share” (*Aurora* 29) in terms of their corporeal difference from other people and their very different life in a community of wolves. Additionally, Scarwell emanates a “wolfish sensuality” (*Aurora* 28) that Lily feels she is no match for. Wing is thus cast as the ‘exotic’ love interest, Scarwell as the feral femme fatale and Pandora as the tragic self-alienated and, ultimately self-destructing doubly colonised individual (as an ‘other’ and a woman). It therefore emerges that the narrative employs stereotypical ascriptions of subject (or object) positions that are familiar from Orientalist and colonial discourses in general and transplants these onto the representation of posthuman, corporeally porous and permeable subjectivities. Consequently, instead of enabling the implied readers to start learning “how not to be Man, the embodiment of Western logos” (Haraway 173; also qtd. above), the *Exodus* trilogy firmly re-asserts Western dualistic narratives. The *Exodus* trilogy thus has to be regarded as an example of those narratives that “explore alternatives to this [humanist] model while still remaining invested in humanist ideologies such as individualism, rationalism, and progress” (Harrison 10-11) and, one might add, speciesism.

An alternative approach is offered in the representation of the Hhroxhi in Foon’s *Longlight* trilogy. Despite none of the Hhroxhi characters ever functioning as a focaliser, their role as posthuman agents is envisioned much more positively in this narrative than that of the ‘urchins’ in the *Exodus* trilogy. In contrast to the *Exodus* trilogy, the *Longlight* trilogy does neither ignore nor nostalgically romanticise the exclusionary tendencies of liberal humanism, as has been indicated above. Instead, whereas the representation of harmful assumptions and exclusionary viewpoints about those characters who seem other-than-human here, like in the *Exodus* trilogy with Mara, is also allocated to the protagonist and major focaliser, Roan, the *Longlight* trilogy does not allow Roan’s conservative humanist position to continue unchecked and unaltered. Unlike Mara, who until the end maintains her rather narrow definition of who has personhood based on corporeal embodied existence and therefore may be part of her community, Roan is confronted with his misconceptions about the Hhroxhi,

forced to very critically reflect on his prejudices as well as his own misdeeds and, finally to revise his point of view. The first indication for his point of view being marked by prejudice is his realisation, upon being invited by the Hhroxhi “to explore their domain” (*Freewalker* 166), that they are a community like any he has known (cf. *Freewalker* 168-69) with many professional workers, families, schools and other markers of ‘civilization’ in place. The confirmation that the Hhroxhi are not the cruel, violent and blood-thirsty monsters they are depicted as in dominating representations but are predominantly peaceful, fighting only in defence when necessary, comes with the simultaneous realisation that he himself, who was raised on the (humanist) values of peacefulness and non-violence, has “fought and killed them without a second thought” before (*Freewalker* 181). One of those he killed was the father of a young Hhroxhi woman who is friends with his own friend, Mabatan. In a ritual of repentance and prospective reconciliation, Roan is physically marked by several Hhroxhi cutting across his chest to form a “bloody star” (*Freewalker* 184). This mark, the Hhroxhi inform him later, now “set[s] [him] apart from humankind” (*Freewalker* 188) in a similar way that they themselves are set apart. Roan as a protagonist and focaliser now (is made to) experience(s) corporeal connectedness, permeability and plurality and, to a certain extent, transgresses the space of species by becoming other-than-(only)-human.

In contrast to these two narratives, Condie’s *Matched* trilogy does not focus on the feral or cyborg imagery but employs the generic strategy of the invasion narrative. As Nayar argues, the ‘invasion’ of the corporeal space of the human body/species often results in “[t]he borders of bodies, homes, nations and the race itself [being] broken open” (18), threatening to lead to the “loss of ontological and visceral-corporeal sovereignty, identity and integrity” (18). This threat can “often result[] in extreme measures being taken to re-establish control over and clarity of [corporeal] boundaries” (Harrison 6) as can be seen in the final instalment of the *Matched* trilogy, *Reached*, when the Society is faced with the outbreak of a virus that is, ironically, of its own making and was released to poison rivers in enemy territories to eliminate resistance there (cf. *Reached* 69, 72, 93). Initially designed to kill enemy bodies outside the borders of the Society, the virus indeed permeates borders and ‘invades’ the nation of the Society and all of its inhabitants, irrespective of citizen classification status (‘normal’, Aberration, Anomaly). Thereby, “the thus-far inviolate and sovereign human is transformed into a host for the Other (alien, monster, pathogen)” (Nayar 18). As the systems and procedures the Society is built upon start to collapse at increasing speed because more and more people are affected by the so-called Plague and go “into an almost comatose state” (*Reached* 15), the Society becomes unable to contain and hide the fact of the virus any longer

(cf. *Reached* 74-75). Due to the permeability and vulnerability of individual, corporeal bodies, and their ‘connection to’, i.e. infection by, the virus, both the infected human bodies and the national body have been placed in an in-between state, as becomes evident in Cassia’s observation that those who have gone still “are here and not here. With us and gone. Close enough to see and out of reach” (*Reached* 91). Conceptually, at least, the virus thus creates a liminal space between autonomous human subjectivity and the dawning understanding that other entities in life possess agencies of their own and that human bodies are interconnected with these entities surrounding them.

While the Society is breaking down, the rebels of the Rising seize the opportunity to take over control by proclaiming that “[t]he Society is sick [...] and we have the cure” (*Reached* 92). It transpires that Society scientists who have defected to the Rising have been working on a cure for years but so far never had sufficient resources to provide immunisation for everyone (cf. *Reached* 72-73, 95). Some people within the Society were lucky enough to receive immunisation as infants through a secret swap of one of the tablets provided by Society. As Xander, Cassia’s close childhood friend, explains, “the Rising’s tablets [...] [n]ot only [...] make you immune to the red tablets [cf. chapter 4.3], they also make you immune to the Plague” (*Reached* 44). Now that the Society has fallen, the Rising essentially takes over its biopolitical role of regulating people’s corporeal lives, from announcing that their rebellion is of a different kind because “[i]t will begin and end with saving your blood, not spilling it” (*Reached* 95) to, by styling themselves as saviours bringing the cure, essentially promising the restoration of both bodily and national ‘borders’ against the porousness and vulnerability laid bare by the virus’s ‘invasion’. With their supposed counter-narrative of rebellion, cure and abandoning of many of the Society’s defining rituals, which is nevertheless based on the same biopolitical and anthropocentric principles the Society has established, the Rising emerges as “‘Society, with a different name’” (*Reached* 317), seeking to control human corporeal experiences and claiming the human subject’s independence and separateness from non-human entities.<sup>51</sup>

“However,” as Ni wryly comments on the developments in the novel, “vitality mocks human calculation. The virus mutates, the plague runs amok, people begin to die” (172). The mutated virus now “gain[s] a life of its own” (176) and thus can be read as an example of “matter and substance in all its varied states of being impact[ing] upon and influenc[ing] other

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<sup>51</sup> It indeed transpires later on in the narrative that Society and Rising “‘have infiltrated each other so thoroughly’” over the years that by the time the Rising ‘takes over’, they are basically inseparable from each other (*Reached* 341).

matter, including humanity” (Attala and Steel 3). In fact, as Attala and Steel contend, “viral epidemics” are one of the “influential shapers of people’s worlds” (2), and accordingly various characters in Condie’s trilogy recognise and acknowledge the virus as an element that actively shapes itself and its surroundings and thus possesses, despite not being sentient, let alone rational or purposeful, a certain creative agency. Both a virologist Xander works with within the Society as well as an old scientist named Oker whom Xander and Cassia meet in a village in the Society’s Borderlands, emphasise respectively that ““viruses change all the time”” (*Reached* 165) and that this ““virus mutated on its own, as viruses have done for years”” (*Reached* 320). When Ky falls ill and a friend of Ky and Cassia’s dies, Xander himself, too, reflects on how “a virus doesn’t think or feel” but how it appears to him that the mutation he and the others have been dealing with “likes to take down those who were the most alive” (*Reached* 432). In this way, the virus is described as exhibiting a form of behaviour and is thereby assigned “a place in the hierarchy of agents” (Attala and Steel 3). For this reason, the mutated virus in the *Matched* trilogy can clearly be identified as an example of what Oppermann summarises as “lively organisms, inorganic matter, and Titanic forces [that] blend and clash to expose human frailties, arrogance, and negative capabilities” (Oppermann 279). It is with an increasing understanding of the virus’ agential behaviour that Xander, dejected, realises that no-one will ever be ““really safe”” (*Reached* 320) in spite of both Society and Rising proclaiming the opposite as the virus may simply continue to mutate. The bodies of both citizenry and nation will always remain vulnerable and permeable.

In the search for a possible cure for the mutation, two very different instances of uneven and differential exposure to “diverse and varied material engagements” (Attala and Steel 2) between human bodies and non-human materials are negotiated in the novel, one explicitly and one rather implicitly. The explicit representation centres on the village community in the Borderlands, whose inhabitants – all of Anomaly status – are discovered to be immune even to the mutation despite never having been previously inoculated at all (cf. *Reached* 274). Since they and their forebears have been classified as Anomalies by the Society and thus have been regarded as ““not good enough to live among [other people]”” (*Reached* 300), they have always lived outside the Society and its biopolitical control. The term and citizenly classification of Anomaly, signifying an ‘other’ that is too different to be allowed to belong in the Society, thus now gains a new meaning: in contrast to ‘normal’ citizens and those of Aberration status who, like Ky, have lived within the Society’s reach, the bodies of those in the Borderlands act anomalous in that they do not fall ill with the mutation. These bodies are thus acting ‘out of place’ in Society terms, but their very out-of-place-ness ultimately serves



as a lifeline for the Society/Rising as a whole. In an ironic twist, now everyone “need[s] [them] to save [them]” (*Reached* 300-01) in order to restore bodily integrity to the majority population.

In a combined effort to find a cure for the mutated virus, the so-called Anomalies are “pooling [their] resources to try to turn [their] immunity into [the general population’s] cure” (*Reached* 285). While Xander initially fears that the reason for the Anomalies’ immunity might “be a matter of genetics” (*Reached* 301) and would consequently not serve to derive an immunisation for other people from, the villagers themselves are convinced that the reason for their immunity “must be environmental” (*Reached* 301; also 317) as the data they have gathered “indicates an environmental or dietary exposure” (*Reached* 306). After extensive research and some trial and error the combined forces of the villagers, including their scientist Oker, as well as Xander, Cassia, a coincidental contribution by Cassia’s (absent and sick) mother and Ky as trial subject, discover that the villagers’ immunity stems from the consumption of a plant the growing of which the Society had previously banned. A crop discovered by Cassia’s mother the year before had been destroyed by the Society as “rogue” (cf. *Reached* 121) and unsanctioned. Outside the reach of the Society in the Borderlands, however, this plant, a flower, grows freely and has for years, possibly generations, interacted with the so-called Anomalies in representing a food supply. The villagers on the one hand and the plant on the other hand consequently embody different participants in “an agentic realm” (Oppermann 279) in which the villagers’ (uneven) exposure to and corporeal interaction with their material surroundings through their food consumption can consequently be regarded as a positive representation of “the co-generative relationships between people and the material world” (Attala and Steel 2) and the benefits such an interaction can yield. This practice of a form of corporeal ecological citizenship via food consumption may occur unconsciously and out of the sheer necessity to make use of whichever crops grow in their vicinity, but it nevertheless opens a position of power to the villagers to reverse the injustice of having been “denied [...] access to any of [the Society’s] medications for years” due to their ‘othered’ status (*Reached* 415) and enables them to trade with the Society/Rising to their advantage. The collectively produced posthuman agency thus gives them an advantage that others, like Ky, lack.

The character of Ky represents in often implicit ways a form of human-non-human interconnectedness that articulates not the benefits of a plural embeddedness within people’s material surroundings but the vulnerability that can result from such a bodily, material porousness, too, if the other agential elements are not beneficial to human life. Whereas the

so-called Anomalies in the remote villages, despite their status of social outcasts and politically abject citizens, as well as Cassia and Xander in suburbia within the Society at least initially and in different ways ‘fit’ with their respective environments, as a citizen of Aberration status (the middle classification) living within Society Ky has always been metaphorically and corporeally ‘out of place’. Cassia voices this circumstance in her perception of him as “changeable and difficult to put into one finite set, one clear description” (*Reached* 325), once more highlighting Ky’s liminal position in the trilogy. In sharp contrast to Xander, who repeatedly acknowledges that he as well as his family have always “been lucky” (*Reached* 52, 238, 481)<sup>52</sup>, Ky, due to this status, has “never been lucky” (*Reached* 260). One consequence of this ‘bad luck’ has been his assignment to a workplace that is literally toxic as, while still living within the Society, he had to work as a “[m]enial labourer[]” in “nutrition disposal”, which is described by one Official as “particularly dangerous” and leading to people dying prematurely (*Matched* 287). Cassia then works out that this is due to the Society “poison[ing] the food for the elderly” (*Matched* 287) to ensure they die on their eightieth birthday. When he is sent to the Outer Provinces as cannon fodder in a proxy war (cf. *Crossed* 18) Ky is exposed to toxins again in “poisoned rivers” (*Crossed* 3) and suffers from malnourishment and water withdrawal (cf. *Crossed* 4, 19). The case of Ky thus demonstrates how “[l]ayering the social and natural contexts in which humans are embedded reveals the uneven and unequal exposure of human bodies to toxics, pathogens, natural disasters, and climactic and other environmental stressors” (Gabrielson and Parady 384). His socio-politically citizenly declassified, abjected status impacts the corporeality of his ecological citizenship, too.

In view of this history of uneven and disadvantageous exposure, when the mutated virus takes hold in the Society, Ky does not even “expect to be immune” (*Reached* 260) and Xander observes that “[o]nce again Ky is going to lose and it’s not fair” (*Reached* 281). While the narrative as a whole draws no explicit connection between Ky’s differential exposure and being at a higher risk to catching the mutated virus – after all, both Cassia’s (privileged, ‘normal’) parents fall ill, too – it cannot be ignored that out of the three focalising characters in this final volume – Cassia, Ky and Xander – Ky is the one who is ‘chosen’ by the author to embody the point of view of the sick and invaded body. Thus, in a very covert way, the *Matched* trilogy draws attention to the fact that “chemical residues” may “turn into foreign

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<sup>52</sup> Xander further explicates this privilege towards the end of the narrative when he reflects that while his family have “seen terrible things happen and it’s torn them up” at the same time “that’s as close as they’ve been to real suffering” (*Reached* 482).

insurgents” and death, too (Nixon 201) as Ky’s body has previously been shown to “merge[], commingle[] and interact[] with other matter” (Attala and Steel 10) that is hostile to human life or has been prevented to interact with such matter that would have been beneficial, factors that considerably increase his vulnerability. Cassia and Xander’s perceived ‘good luck’ in being immune to the virus mutation may thus at least in part be a result of a very privileged upbringing which may have led to a greater bodily resilience.

After he has fallen ill and before he goes comatose, Ky resignedly acknowledges what his role will be in the search for the cure when he announces that “[he]’ll be a body [...]. Just like in the Outer Provinces” (*Reached* 274; also 282). Shortly after, he ‘goes still’, a state in which he initially retains sensory experiences (cf. *Reached* 310) and his reasoning capacity and thus a sense of autonomy and traditional agency but is nevertheless locked in his unmoveable body, control over which is taken over more and more by the virus mutation. In contrast to the characters discussed in chapter 4.3 and their corporeal strategies as a means of cultural resistance, in this case it is not Ky but the virus which does something to and with his body by merging with it. As time passes, his consciousness is increasingly overridden by the virus, and with his consciousness his sense of subjectivity and autonomous agency wanes. As he tries to resist the virus’s force, his internal monologue changes from “I need to remember to breathe” to “I need to remember”, without a sense of what it is he needs to remember, to a simple and singular “I” (*Reached* 338) as his last attempt to assert himself as an autonomous subject and individual that is separate from other agential materials. The virus inhabiting the space of Ky’s body and creating an altered reality in this way is thus framed as the loss of a “coherent, autonomous” (Nayar 22; cf. above) human individual rather than as a new entity “collectively produced by a variety of participants” (Gabrielson 7; cf. above). Consequently, the next chapter that is assigned to Ky’s focalisation through a chapter heading with his name is, apart from this heading, a blank page, indicating that the ‘post-human sensibility’ (cf. Nayar qtd. above) evident in a plurality of agencies inhabiting his body at this point cannot – or will not – be narrated.<sup>53</sup>

Accordingly, Ky’s recovery is as much concerned with his regaining consciousness as it is with his regaining control over his body so that, ultimately, an autonomous, agentic human individual is reconstituted and can thus reclaim full personhood – at least this is the

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<sup>53</sup> It is furthermore noticeable that while the narrative function of Ky falling ill clearly lies in providing a representation of a first-person perspective on the species boundary transgression of human body and the mutated virus interacting (*Reached* 290-92, 310-11), it is nevertheless this potentially posthuman perspective that receives less narrative space with fewer chapters focalised via Ky than via Xander and Cassia even before his becoming sick. Thereby, even in terms of narrative structure Ky and his experience are given uneven exposure.

superficial image that is transported on an overt level of the narrative. At a closer look, it becomes evident that neither is autonomous personhood an unshakeable state that can be taken for granted nor is autonomy and the sense of personhood that derives from it in opposition to forms of vulnerability, porosity or connectedness. Ky and others who recover remember and report that, when they were sick, the virus seemed to have connected “various living organisms”, especially human consciousnesses “across time and space” (Ni 177). In this way, some of the infected, such as Ky or Cassia’s mother, experience a connection to other infected people they are emotionally close to, in Ky’s case another rebel friend and in Cassia’s mother’s case her husband, briefly before these people die (cf. *Reached* 375-75, 458). Others, like Xander’s colleague Lei, experience themselves as another being, so that Lei “‘had a different body’” and felt like a fish while infected with the virus (*Reached* 485). This interconnectedness with other people and life forms stops once those infected are cured but it leaves behind a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of all of life’s elements. Moreover, as the narrative questions “the boundaries and *dividuality* of the human body” (Attala and Steel 9-10), it also begins to reconceptualise the traditional understanding of autonomy and agency and thus to break open the long-standing construction of personhood as a prerequisite to enfranchised citizenship. Instead of insisting on a sense of autonomy that “oppose[s] vulnerability in the name of agency, [...] [and] impl[ies] that we prefer to see ourselves as those who are only acting, but not acted on” (Butler, “Rethinking Vulnerability” 23), the final instalment of Condie’s trilogy reframes “autonomy [as] more of a social practice than an inherent individual attribute” (Knight 186) and thus dismantles the perceived dichotomy between vulnerability and/as precarity on the one and autonomous and agentic personhood on the other hand. The subjectivities that emerge from the experience of the epidemic illustrate Butler’s understanding (as Knight summarizes it) that “the self [...] is simultaneously precarious *and* autonomous, both constituted and susceptible to forces beyond one’s control *and* capable of making and executing choices” (Knight 186).

In the *Longlight* trilogy, an emphasis on personhood as social practice and agency as collectively produced by both human and non-human agents and agential materials is even more strongly pronounced. It has already been argued in this chapter that, in addition to the Hhroxhi, Roan as a protagonist also embodies a “post-human sensibility” (Nayar 22), which is further underlined by the inextricable connection between his path through the narrative and a small insect that accompanies him from the first to the last sentences of the entire trilogy (cf. *Dirt Eaters* 1, *Keeper’s Shadow* 410). The fact that “[h]e carries the white cricket” (*Dirt Eaters* 166) marks him out from other people because “[s]now crickets don’t take to people

easily, but once they adopt you, it is said they never leave” (*Dirt Eaters* 141). The phrasing clearly suggests that it is the cricket who has chosen to stay with Roan instead of Roan having decided to keep the cricket, thus recognising the cricket’s agential capacity. Superficially, the white cricket which has adopted Roan as well as others of its kind may appear as a leitmotif, emerging from the depths of Roan’s clothes or from whichever surroundings the protagonist and his friends find themselves in at irregular intervals in the story. However, a closer examination of the narrative reveals that much of Roan’s unfolding story during the course of the trilogy is the result of a collective agency practiced by him and the white cricket(s) together.<sup>54</sup>

This collective agency manifests in different ways throughout the entire trilogy. For instance, these white crickets are able to bestow calmness in troubled times, to sing people to sleep when rest is needed or keep them awake when unconsciousness would be life-threatening (cf. e.g. *Dirt Eaters* 166, 220-21) as well as to save lives, e.g. that of Roan’s friend Lumpy (cf. *Dirt Eaters* 172). Moreover, and highly crucial for the course of the narrative, they help to forge alliances between different people and factions in the Farlands against the City masters. Roan gains his first true ally and friend, Lumpy, because the latter sees “the snow cricket perched on [Roan’s] top button” (*Dirt Eaters* 141), and when the cricket leaves Roan’s body for the first time since ‘adopting’ him in order to comfort Lumpy, Roan understands that he is supposed to trust his new companion (*Dirt Eaters* 148-49). This event is mirrored when the two friends meet Mabatan of the Wazya (cf. chapter 5.3) and “both of their crickets” – for Lumpy has been adopted by a cricket in the meantime, too (cf. *Freewalker* 17) – are “perched contentedly on Mabatan’s shoulders” (*Freewalker* 87). Since “[t]he crickets wouldn’t go near her if she couldn’t be trusted” (*Freewalker* 87), Roan and Lumpy understand they have found an additional ally. The Hhroxhi, who “revere the white cricket” (*Keeper’s Shadow* ix), are ultimately persuaded to join the (other) humans in their fight against the City masters when the severest critic of such an alliance, after an attempt on Roan’s life, is reduced to ashes by the combined force of Roan’s sister, Stowe, and a number of white crickets (cf. *Keeper’s Shadow* 194-95). The other Hhroxhi conclude that “the crickets’ message is clear” and will now “stand with [Roan and his allies] in [their] struggle” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 195). One of the final fighting scenes underlines that the crickets themselves are very much part of the alliance against the City when, as Stowe and the City

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<sup>54</sup> A similar representation of collective agency can be found in the *Dustlands* trilogy in the interconnection between the protagonist, Saba, and her friend, the crow Nero. Similar to Roan’s being accompanied by the white cricket, Nero travels and ‘works with’ Saba from the first to the last chapter of the trilogy.

master and major antagonist Darius are engaged in combat, “[a] white cloud passes over the hole that was the sun, moving straight toward them. Her brother. With [artificial] wings. Wings and a cloud of millions of white crickets around him” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 397).

Consequently, the white crickets have to be regarded as non-human agents that connect communities and people who are supposed to trust each other and cooperate and, moreover, that constitute active participants in the struggle to achieve socio-ecological justice. Altogether, the narrative highlights that the final alliance against the City is the result of an acknowledged and embodied porousness, interconnection and interdependence between a vast number of human and non-human agents, who together consciously practice and perform agency as embodied and collective. In this way, the *Longlight* trilogy to an even stronger or perhaps more explicit extent than the *Matched* trilogy highlights “the co-generative, influential and relational biosocial aspects of being” (Attala and Steel 8). Autonomy, and with it personhood and thus the opportunity to perform citizenly subject positions, is here both decoupled from the human species per se and shown to constitute “more of a social practice than an inherent individual attribute” (Knight 186; also qtd. above). Furthermore, since the white crickets were “brought forth” by “the parched earth” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 193) and “the earth [speaks] to them, and through them” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 80), they represent conduits for the ecological and ecoprecarious spaces that have created them and a medium through which these spaces, too, participate in the exercise of collective agency. Reaching a full understanding between all existing agential materials, be they human and non-human bodies or part of those materials that surround them, is clearly a desideratum the *Longlight* trilogy endorses. However, when the narrative closes with the words “[s]urrounded by a chorus of white crickets, he listens intently to their song. A song that [...] Roan of Longlight hopes one day to understand” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 410) the narrative concedes that such an understanding that transgresses species and other material boundaries and makes possible the socio-ecological citizenly participation of all agential materials is still in the realm of (eutopian) hope rather than immediately reachable.<sup>55</sup>

As the analysis of these narratives has hitherto demonstrated, Vint’s observation that in some “models of posthumanism” in fictional representations, implicit “models of subjectivity and society [...] are still informed by the assumptions of liberal humanism, particularly the unacknowledged ways in which it has excluded certain subjects from its definitions of the

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<sup>55</sup> It is notable that in the *Exodus* trilogy, those “[f]luent in the language of the wild” (*Aurora* 19), such as Wing, are ultimately excluded from the community and, by extension, citizenship, whereas in the *Longlight* trilogy, Roan actively hopes to understand this language one day, symbolised in the song of the crickets.

human” (11), applies to the novels discussed in this chapter in varying degrees. While all the novels analysed here display an awareness for the themes, tropes and discursive contexts that address and negotiate questions of both human(ist) and posthuman agency and personhood in the context of ecological citizenship, the available subject positions they create for their characters and the way these are represented differs significantly across all three trilogies. All three narratives make use of post-disaster narrative tropes and conventions in order to, at least initially, frame corporeal porousness, vulnerability, connectedness and interdependence as monstrous. Unlike the monstrosity that is ascribed to bodies and embodied experiences in the context of cultural citizenship, with regards to ecological citizenship the concern is not about the cultural intelligibility of certain bodies but directed towards the maintenance or transgression of species boundaries. Those who are considered ‘out of place’ in terms of species boundaries or in other ways practice and perform corporeal porousness and interdependence positively and actively are, not surprisingly, frequently to be found in “ghosted communities” (Nixon 151) like that of the Hhroxhi in the *Longlight* trilogy or the village of the ‘Anomalies’ in the *Matched* trilogy (even though both communities have to a certain extent ‘ghosted’ themselves from the rest of their respective societies), or can be considered as “ghosted casualties” (Nixon 153), like the sea urchins/cyborgs in the *Exodus* trilogy. Despite these similar starting points, the narratives make very different use of the potential to create “position[s] from which to resist constructions of the neo-liberal, self-reliant subject” (MacGregor, “Citizenship” 8-9) and acknowledge – or not – previous exclusions from definitions of (human) personhood and, hence, citizenship.

In the *Exodus* trilogy, liberal humanist ideals are continuously perpetuated, resulting in an overall representation of posthuman corporeality that hovers uneasily between constituting an (attempted) assertion of hegemonic human power over those who are perceived as non-agents – non-human agents as well as human-animal or human-machine hybrids – on the one hand and an uncritical nostalgia for a time in which the species boundaries were (thought to be) more clearly defined and less easily breached on the other. Posthuman corporeality and embodied experience in this trilogy is predominantly regarded as a danger, threat or as shameful and is, ultimately, irredeemable. Such a stance obviously has repercussions for the representation of corporeal socio-ecological citizenly subject positions available to those characters who, until the end of the narrative, remain ‘monstrous’ outsiders and are denied the recognition of personhood. Those characters who have emerged from the sky city’s ‘Amphibian Experiment’, i.e. Wing, Scarwell and Pandora, are deemed as ‘unnatural’ and ‘out of place’ in terms of species-belonging and therefore unsuitable to live an enfranchised

life inside either of the communities they were originally a part of. This exclusion is expressed both on the story level itself in Scarwell's early banishment and Wing's later decision to cease living between worlds and join Scarwell and the wolf pack for good (*Aurora* 283) and on the meta-narrative level in Pandora's self-sacrificial death to save Fox, which, although she has been a focaliser before, is not even narrated from her own point of view but from Fox's (cf. *Aurora* 286). Thus, all the cyborg/feral 'urchin' characters once again exit "the human ecosystem" (Nayar 118; also qtd. above). Whereas as children their abandonment from the community of the sky city and in Greenland was involuntary, as (young) adults they all make an active choice, at least on the story-level, even if one of these choices is self-destructive. Wing goes furthest in exerting a sense of traditional, individual agency on the story level by renaming himself to Wolfscar (*Aurora* 282), but nevertheless his permanent self-exclusion from Mara's community of supposedly 'pure' human beings has a similar meta-narrative effect as Pandora's self-sacrifice. In both cases, the result is a representation of citizenship that remains exclusive for those whose bodies are regarded as (more) separate from 'nature' or human-machine experiments and thus more 'contained' within species boundaries. The agency they perform thus is not translated into full personhood and they are still cast as 'non-agents' (Gabrielson 3) especially by Mara because the unsettling of liberal humanist binaries through the porousness, permeability and human-animal-machine connectedness of their corporeal existence seems to be considered much too unsettling for being allowed equal rights.

The *Matched* and *Longlight* trilogies take different, almost opposing stances to the *Exodus* trilogy by "rethinking the human as a site of interdependency" (Butler and Taylor 210) and agency and personhood as social and collective practice. In the *Matched* trilogy, the interaction between the human self and the virus, either by infection or by caring for those who were infected, emerges as part of "a shimmering web of interconnected beings and becomings", a web that, in Condie's narrative consists of "the community of illegal plants, forbidden poems, and human rebels" (Ni 175-76). Consequently, it is the characters' awareness that the citizens and the leaders of the Society are not only actors but also acted on by contexts and materials both of their own making, such as the original virus, and outside of their control, such as the mutation as well as the nourishing plants, which leads to a rethinking of the entire political system. Ni in this context rightly observes that the virus mutation, by "gain[ing] a life of its own, wreak[s] havoc as well as facilitate[s] political transformation" (176). As Cassia's reflection that "[w]hatever happens next, we managed to find a cure and begin a vote" (*Reached* 512) suggests, these two processes are inextricably interrelated. It can thus be argued that arriving at this point has been the result of the performance of a collective



agency in which humans in various capacities, a virus mutation and plants have all participated in various roles and with different functions to bring about socio-ecological and political justice in a way that is similar to how, in the *Longlight* trilogy, the fall of oppressive City rule and the implementation of a new council have been brought about by the collective agency of humans, humans-turned-Hhroxhi and the white crickets. Both trilogies thereby draw attention to “the permeable character of embodied political subjectivities” (Sabsay 279).

The ending of the *Matched* trilogy sees Ky, Cassia and Cassia’s remaining family having cast their votes in the first democratic election for generations, while in the *Longlight* trilogy, the new council begins work on “mend[ing] City and Farlands alike” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 408). Corporeal porousness, connectedness, interdependence and “vulnerability – a sense of precarious, corporeal openness to the material world”, as Alaimo proposes, thus “can foster an environmental ethics” (23) and furthermore, it is important to add, it can engender socio-environmental and political change based on such ethics. This becomes especially visible in the candidates who run for office in either trilogy. In the *Matched* trilogy, apart from other candidates who represent the Society and the Rising respectively, Anna, the leader of the group of so-called Anomalies who have participated in finding the cure to the mutation, runs for office as leader of the Society, and, in Cassia’s view, “represents everyone else” (*Reached* 506). The trilogy ends with a chapter focalised through Cassia, thus giving her thoughts and opinions an added weight. Her comment about Anna and her belief that “[i]t’s time for the Anomalies and Aberrations to have their turn” (*Reached* 508) suggest that the majority of the population is ready to embrace a new form of leadership and the transformation of citizenship this would entail. In the *Longlight* trilogy, the new council unites representatives of the old city council, the Brothers and the storytellers as well as Mabatan, a member of the Hhroxhi and others who esteem the white crickets and their contribution to socio-ecological change. Showing Lumpy, Roan’s friend who has also been adopted by a white cricket, as the new head of the council (cf. *Keeper’s Shadow* 407) underlines the shift that has taken place from seeking individual control over humans and other-than-human environment alike to the acknowledgement and practice of socio-ecological citizenship via collective expressions of agency. The new council is plural and connected, both to a wide range of human communities and to posthuman agencies.

Nonetheless, the representation of a democratic election in the *Matched* trilogy and the convening of a new, varied council in the *Longlight* trilogy might be read as a narrative constraint imposed by the *Bildungsroman* and dystopian genre memories of the (ideology of the) anthropocentric struggle of the human being to achieve citizenly enfranchisement through

the performance of autonomous agency based on rational thinking, and thus a capitulation of the narrative before limiting (Western liberal) generic conventions. The inclusion of the plurality of figures in the *Longlight* trilogy and of Anna as a candidate running for office in the *Matched* trilogy, however, encourages an alternative and more nuanced reading. Anna as well as others of Anomaly and Aberration status, like Ky, represent a very different approach to citizenship and personhood (as citizenship's prerequisite) than the Society has previously propagated or that the *Bildungsroman* and dystopian genres advance since they represent the corporeal, embodied memories of their various unequal exposures to ecoprecarity as well as both a consequent greater awareness of their vulnerability and a conscious making use of corporeal permeability and interconnection with other materials. Mabatan, Lumpy and the Hhroxhi councillor, all linked by their connectedness to the white crickets, fulfil a similar function in the *Longlight* trilogy. If those who represent a form of personhood that is not based on independent subjectivity and a liberal understanding of autonomy but on a subjectivity formed by interdependency, corporeal, material porousness and collective, cooperative agency are not only included in the citizen body but can, moreover, run for office, this narrative move implies that while enfranchised citizenship is still valued as important, it is in the process of being reconceptualised.

The election in which a character like Anna runs for office thus merges both aspects with a view, the ending of the *Matched* trilogy indicates, of transcending them and creating something new, while, as the *Longlight* trilogy suggests, for humans like Roan there is still much to learn and understand if this new, revised form of citizenship as a corporeal ecological citizenship is to be successful. Whereas the *Exodus* trilogy upholds and reinforces the idea of the Western, liberal, autonomous individual as citizen as an anthropocentric ideological memoryscape, the *Longlight* and *Matched* trilogies belong to those young adult narratives to which Harrison attests a critical stance towards humanist ideologies and which thus encourage adolescent readers to negotiate a multitude of "social issues [...] th[r]ough the development of an enlarged and entangled subjectivity" (10). Corporeality, in this understanding, is seen "not as a ground of static substance but as a place of possible connections, interconnections, and ethical becomings" (Alaimo 23) in which the binary opposition between autonomy, agency, personhood and resistance on the one hand and vulnerability, connectedness, interdependence and plurality on the other hand "can become undone" by "vulnerability enter[ing] into agency" (Butler, "Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance" 25) in ways that can be "insurgent" (Alaimo 26) and part of socio-ecological and political action. In conclusion, the breakdown and erasure of stable species boundaries as part of post-disaster generic influences

in this way contributes to, if not entirely reconciling differing approaches to ecological citizenship as well as citizenship in general, then at least to bringing them into conversation with one another. The ultimate boundary breakdown, the *Longlight* and *Matched* trilogies indicate, thus occurs within the liberal humanist memoryscape of citizenship itself – political, cultural, socio-ecological – which, together with the dominating genres that traditionally negotiate citizenship, the *Bildungsroman* and the dystopia, is transcended beyond its traditions (cf. Dobson 90) and opened up for a much broader and inclusive reconceptualization of both personhood and, with it, citizenship.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In the years since the publication of the narratives analysed in this study, citizenship has remained a concept, subject position and practice that continues to be negotiated, struggled over or even embattled on many different levels, in many places around the globe and around a variety of forms of citizenship and their interconnections. As Evans and Banerjee note in their “Introduction” to their very recent edited volume *Cultures of Citizenship in the Twenty-First Century: Literary and Cultural Perspectives on a Legal Concept* (2024), “[a]s we move through the second decade of the twenty-first century [...] the concept of the citizen is far from obsolete” (16). Citizenship as a topic is everywhere, and it is especially justice-oriented citizenship practices across all three (and more) forms of citizenship considered in this study that have garnered global media attention. From performances of ecological citizenship by groups such as Fridays for Future, Extinction Rebellion or the Letzte Generation, to performances of cultural-political citizenship in the Black Lives Matter (USA and many other Western countries) or Woman, Life, Freedom (Iran) protests, it is especially citizen action as public protest that has been and continues to be both highly visible in public spaces, from streets and city squares to social media, and disruptive in the challenge it poses to perceived normative and hegemonic notions of citizenship in different global locales. Like the protagonists in the novels, people act ‘out of place’ in order to make visible experiences that are often marginalised and relegated to the cultural archive instead of the public cultural, active memory. To ‘bring themselves into the conversation’ (cf. Mignolo) for many of these citizen-activists means using and risking their physical bodies to lay claim to the right to be different without losing the right to belong.

At the same time, many political, socio-cultural and ecological events have occurred that could be labelled as dystopian or disastrous. The assault on the US Capitol by right-wing protestors on January 6, 2021 or the re-taking of power by the Taliban in Afghanistan, also in 2021, were (and continue to be) political events that for many represent oppressive politics in a dystopian sense with very narrow and highly normative definitions about who should have access to personhood and citizenship status. While the severe flooding in many areas that had before not regularly faced such events (the flooding of the Ahrtal in Germany in summer 2021 is only one example) gravely demonstrated to many the disastrous effects slow environmental violence can have, the global spread of non-human agents in the form of the many variants of the COVID-19-virus during the pandemic and consequent phases of lockdown and other strict measures especially in 2020 and 2021 have not only highlighted human vulnerability but also,

crucially, many issues related to questions of access along socio-economical and geographic faultlines. Such issues ranged from globally unequal access to newly developed vaccines and thus differential exposure to the virus to unequal access to digital technologies, which during the phases of lockdown determined who would or would not be able to effectively continue to participate in social, cultural, educational, political and further contexts. Predating all of these events – including the recent movements for socio-political, socio-cultural and/or ecological justice – by a time span ranging from at least six to almost twenty years and thus extrapolating from the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century, these young adult speculative novels pre-shadow or even anticipate many of the challenging events that have occurred in the past ten years. The novels' main contribution lies not so much in the fact that they do so – this is, after all, one of the main functions of both the dystopian and the post-/disaster genre tradition – but in the fact that they engage with and reflect on the ways in which such or similar events affect the performance of and struggle over young adult citizenly subject positions and citizenship practice from multiple perspectives.

In 2020, during the first world-wide lock-downs to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus, a meme circulated on social media depicting the photo of a bookshop window with a note ironically informing customers that “the post-apocalyptic fiction section has been moved to Current Affairs” (Pens and Words, 2020), aptly capturing the way in which literary genres are made use of as shared frameworks of reference for making sense of events that are experienced as difficult or even devastating by many. Taking not only genre's function of providing a shared frame of reference but also genre's discursivity as being shaped by and in turn shaping larger socio-cultural contexts as a starting point, this study's aim was to provide one possible answer (of many) to the question “what we gain by taking the combination and mixture of the conventions of different genres in textual analysis and interpretation into account” and to narrow the research gap of “little sustained effort ha[ving] been made to discuss the impact of generic cross-references” (Nünning and Schwanecke 121) with regards to the young adult speculative novels chosen for examination. In discussing the selected novels via a framework combining a genre-theoretical lens supported by relevant concepts from postcolonial and feminist theories on the one hand and perspectives emphasising a culture of memory on the other, this study sought to provide a structured approach to address and examine the discursive functions of the genres employed in the novels by centring on questions of citizenship and enfranchisement. While previous studies of the novels analysed here predominantly focus on the examination of themes and their representation at the story level and often use generic ascriptions more in a descriptive way and less as a tool to analyse

and interpret tensions within and between prevalent discourses, this study has adopted the position that “[t]he more often generic borders are crossed and the less secure habitual categories stand, the more important it becomes to identify the genre conventions that a given work or new generic hybrid adapts, transforms, and subverts” (Nünning and Schwanecke 121) – and in which ways and to which effects. Since the generic boundaries that have been blurred and transgressed, that of *Bildungsroman*, dystopian and post-/disaster narratives, all represent different perspectives on, possibilities for and impacts on processes of citizen-isation, it has been the aim of this study to critically dissect the possibilities for young adult citizenly enfranchisement these narratives envision both in terms of (spatial and mnemonic) strategies and practices and in terms of which (ideological, normative) stance(s) different narratives ultimately take towards a variety of young adult citizenly subject positions on the meta-narrative level. The conceptual framework established has proven a fruitful combination in this case since all of the employed critical lenses are concerned with uncovering (hidden) power dynamics and displaying and challenging hegemonic structures.

While, as discussed in chapter 3, political citizenship can be difficult to attain for young adults due to the fact that in terms of rights, a minimum age requirement is usually linked to personhood status, the novels analysed all emphasise the important contribution young people can make to political processes, also and especially those adolescents who are multiply marginalised in their societies beyond the general marginalisation due to age. Furthermore, the novels highlight possibilities for young people to take an agential political position despite (age) restrictions and threats by oppressive authorities. Thus, to a certain extent, the novels mirror, discuss and analyse the political tools available to all, citizens and non- or not-yet-citizens alike, to dismantle such oppression. In doing so, it is a further strength of these novels that they represent conflicted and contradictory subject positions within the political citizenly spectrum, depending on spatial situatedness of ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ (which usually changes during the course of the narrative) and perspective and/or relation to other groups (e.g. Mara in *Exodus*, who starts her journey as a refugee, then becomes the leader of an ‘exodus’ and, in this context, also the destroyer of the gypsea pirate community, briefly experiences the positions of a slave and ultimately becomes the co-founder of a new community). The inclusion of different cosmopolitan subject positions becomes possible in (some) novels with a strong focus on post-/disaster genre traditions, i.e. the *Carbon Diaries* duology and the *Exodus* and *Dustlands* trilogies. In opposition to what genre theory often claims as a firm generic convention of post-/disaster literature, in these young adult speculative novels the narrative focus is not necessarily limited to the microcosm of a single community with a very

narrow spatial focus, as observed previously in chapter 2. The cosmopolitan subject positions represented range from global cosmopolitanism, especially in the *Carbon Diaries* duology, to vernacular cosmopolitanism, especially in the *Dustlands* trilogy, with the *Exodus* trilogy representing differing positions within this spectrum.

Despite this breadth in political citizenly subject positions represented, the analysis in chapter 3 has shown that across the novels selected for this study, it is especially the female young adult protagonists who carry most of the burden when it comes to challenging and transgressing spatial dichotomies or recognising and productively employing the potential of liminal (physical and intangible) spaces, e.g. national rituals, while the male young adult characters more often than not take supporting positions. Furthermore, there is mostly little creative imagination when it comes to envisioning enabling, constructive and safe socio-political systems that differ from or go beyond the current status quo of (Western) liberal democracies. As, in traditional *Bildungsroman* fashion, revolution leads to reconciliation and the protagonists', especially the female protagonists', political citizenly subject positions either become more 'mainstream' and domesticated, i.e. more conciliatory towards normative integration, or are written out of the narrative, the subversive potential and productive dissent of the previously liminal (female) young adult subject positions are often sacrificed. When the novels portray freedom from oppression and the possession of rights as leading to a more passive belonging instead of the previous much stronger active engagement, they both conform to a traditional *Bildungsroman* trajectory and offer the implied readership "a safe space to wrestle with, and perhaps displace, the fears they [the novels] play upon – fears that are set and, not unimportantly, *resolved* amidst the comfortable narrative threads of young adult narratives" (Ames 7). While the desire for ultimate conflict resolution is understandable, the taming down and mainstreaming of those young adult political citizenly subject positions previously represented as subversive nevertheless leaves the impression of a thought experiment revoked because it is regarded as too politically transgressive after all.

Cultural citizenship, as discussed in chapter 4, is no less contested than and is often closely intertwined with political citizenship on the novels' story level but overall represented as less problematic in terms of a continued justice-orientation of cultural citizenly practices on a meta-narrative level. Through its obvious link to cultural memory, cultural citizenship bridges spatial and temporal aspects on the one hand and always also contains a political dimension on the other, a connection so well-established that it belongs to the repertoire of dystopian genre conventions. By presenting an examination of cultural citizenly subject positions with regard to a considerable diversity of spaces as well as practices and

performances enacted on or in these spaces, the selected novels demonstrate an awareness for the many dimensions that are shaped by and in turn shape cultural citizenship. Furthermore, the novels problematize the supposed lower threshold to cultural citizenship in contrast to political citizenship which the lack of an age restriction suggests by, for example, highlighting biopolitical issues (not only but also) in connection with both age and gender or by negotiating questions of access to (the tools of) representation and creative expression. Whereas biopolitical manipulation and policing, where this is a theme in the selected novels, usually affects both female and male (adolescent) characters, it is especially female adolescence that is on the one hand frequently represented as physically and mentally painful, even traumatic, while on the other hand, especially female adolescent resilience and ingenuity is often highlighted, both not least due to the emphasis on focalisation via female characters. In spite of this, the interlocution of male characters is often narratively deemed necessary in order to explain female adolescent bodies and/or identities and render them intelligible, a mechanism by which many of the texts – and their adult authors – reveal a continued (socio-cultural) unease with the liminal female adolescent body as ‘monstrous’, an apprehension that mirrors Harris’s observation that in the early twenty-first century “we are interested in applauding but also scrutinizing [the] lives” of young women (1).

A certain degree of unease or uncertainty can also be discerned in the novels’ debate of more clearly culturally-connoted spaces such as the cultural canon and archive as well as the different spaces opened up (or closed down) by a variety of media technologies. Here, it can be observed, as argued in this study, that while all narratives make a strong case for the relevance of knowledge and understanding about and positioning ourselves towards the past, be it individual (physical and/or mental) or socio-cultural-political in the form of cultural products and practices that are canonised or relegated to archival spaces, the way in which the novels represent such a negotiation often risks re-inscribing the normative, canonical status quo. This is especially visible in the novels’ predominantly highly sceptical perceptions of the use(s) of media technology with a tendency to romanticise print literacy while digital and online media spaces are, with the notable exception of the *Exodus* trilogy, often rather demonised and their possible uses for transgressive cultural production is (largely) disregarded. Such a negative view on more recently developed media technologies is, often covertly, linked to questions of access, a theme that some novels do and others do not address plainly and clearly but that can be discerned as resonating at least implicitly at the fringes of the discussion. Again, as with representations of cosmopolitan citizenship, it is some of those novels with a marked focus on post-/disaster generic conventions and themes which present a



more positive and constructive view on digital media (the *Exodus* trilogy), a less romantic and more critical view on print media and literacy as well as the relevance of access to it (the *Dustlands* trilogy) or a more ironic and less reverent view on the cultural canon (the *Longlight* trilogy) than those novels with a predominant emphasis on dystopian and *Bildungsroman* conventions do. Despite these apprehensions that are more dominating in some novels than in others, collectively, the selected narratives emphasise the importance of utilising gained knowledges for positive collective change and understanding contested spaces as diverse as the cultural canon, media technologies or even one's own body as the foundations from which to develop one's own agential subject position and create one's own contributions. Thereby, collectively, these narratives overwhelmingly argue for the importance of every single contribution, voice or even gesture (cf. the *Hunger Games* trilogy) in working towards transgressing oppression and engendering change for the better.

The discussion in chapter 5, finally, demonstrates that the complexity and disunity of the theoretical debate on ecological citizenship is mirrored in the variety of approaches to this form of citizenship the novels offer as well as in their standpoints towards these respective approaches. Notwithstanding the greater challenge this complexity poses for the conceptualisation of ecological citizenship, and regardless of how multifaceted and contested ecological citizenship emerges to be, consensus prevails among the selected novels that there exists a causal link between slow environmental violence and socio-political-cultural collapse. In spite of and because of societal collapse, ecological citizenly subject positions are often represented, similar to cultural citizenship, as both more readily available to a younger age group than political citizenly subject position, not least because it is the form of citizenship that – potentially – most radically problematises and reconceptualises the idea of personhood, and as imposed upon young people at the same time. The *Carbon Diaries* duology, for instance, represents ecological citizenship as the gateway citizenly subject position that serves as a point of entry into the protagonists' more widely oriented political and/or cultural engagement at the same time that it negotiates the protagonist's development from the position of consumer-spectator to a position from which she can dwell in crisis more actively. Here as well as in other narratives analysed in this study, the transgression from a passively assigned (citizenly) position that serves accommodationist risk management practices to a critical and engaged ecological citizenly subject position is predominantly narrated from a female adolescent point of view, suggesting that here as much as in other expressions of citizenship, there is both a desire and a demand that young women increasingly make themselves be seen and be heard (cf. Harris 125).

In an ecological citizenly context, this in part proves difficult because a patriarchal, hegemonic model of stewardship is often superimposed on ecological citizenly practices in the represented societies. The novels express consensus that within this context, stewardship has to be regarded as a problematic concept that is susceptible to be abused for greenwashing, the maintenance of structural unevenness and differential exposure to ecoprecarity and other attempts to mask power imbalances. While the task to oppose such unjust ecological practices by linking a language and practice of care with a language and practice of socio-ecologically justice-oriented citizenship is most frequently relegated to the female characters, the character of Roan in the *Longlight* trilogy is a notable exception. Nevertheless, as my reading of the ending of the *Uglies* trilogy demonstrates, the fact that some of the novels struggle to envision ecological citizenly subject positions truly alternative to stewardship despite their critical stance towards this concept indicates the ongoing difficulty to imagine ecological citizenship beyond anthropocentric positions. The space of species is, consequently, one of the most controversially debated spaces across the selected narratives, which offer a wide range of positions towards posthuman(ist) ideas. Whereas the productive agential interaction between humans and other living organisms and materials is viewed from perspectives ranging from ambivalence (the interaction between humans, virus-mutations and plants in the *Matched* trilogy) to celebration (the interdependence and connectivity between some humans and a certain species of crickets in the *Longlight* trilogy), especially cyborgianism, when it is the result of bioengineering, is more often regarded with suspicion and apprehension, as the representation of the urchins, especially the female urchins Scarwell and Pandora, in the *Exodus* trilogy shows<sup>1</sup>. Although, as is usually the case in post-/disaster narratives, many structures and boundaries are erased in the novels discussed, even the *Uglies* trilogy, which in the physically ever changing character of Tally represents the most positive image of a cyborg figure, ultimately re-instantiates a stewardship model. Therefore, some binary oppositions such as the nature-culture or the human-non-human binaries, are re-affirmed or at least narratively muted rather than transgressed, as the example of Ky's experience of shared agency with the virus in the *Matched* trilogy, represented by a blank page, demonstrated. Such a discursive development can be attributed to the influence of the *Bildungsroman* genre's investment in constructing human, anthropocentric citizenship. The analysis showed that

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<sup>1</sup> A further example for this kind of cyborgianism which has not been discussed in the analysis chapters can be found in the character of Darius in the *Longlight* trilogy, who continuously extends his life-span by stealing organs from children and using them to substitute failing organs in his own ageing body.

despite these confines many of the narratives at least attempt to challenge these generic, anthropocentric confines.

In sum, this study sought to facilitate a comprehensive and, importantly, comparative examination of the ways in which a selection of at the time (mostly) widely distributed and received young adult speculative narratives from the North Atlantic region represent different forms of citizenship and the narrative and ideological mechanisms they draw on to accomplish this. In doing so, this study reveals that both the respective novels' situatedness within the hybridised generic spectrum and the way in which they make use of generic conventions have strong implications for the way in which adolescents, and especially female adolescents, come to understand the possibilities – or conditions – for enfranchisement towards political, cultural and ecological citizenship, as well as the possible rewards or costs such an enfranchisement may imply. In order to gain an even wider “intercultural and transcultural” perspective on these “genres and generic systems” (Nünning and Schwanecke 140) and how they represent youth citizenship, further research needs to be conducted to examine the representations of forms of citizenship and citizenly subject positions and mechanisms of representation offered by young adult speculative narratives stemming from a wider geographic context or by young adult narratives drawing on different popular genres, for instance detective stories or mysteries. In the meantime, the initial assumption of this study that in this particular body of works from the North Atlantic region, citizenship positions are interrogated and challenged but also reaffirmed to the extent that the endorsement of one form of citizenship may (covertly or even overtly) curtail enfranchisement in another form of citizenship, and that this occurs through the challenging of or compliance with genre conventions relating to aspects of space and memory, is shown to be valid. Citizenship as a (normative) concept and a subject position is neither monolithic nor stable, and neither is the representation of citizenly subject positions in the focused novels.

As the analysis conducted in the previous chapters aptly shows, this becomes evident first and foremost via the figure of the female young adult protagonist, which on the one hand points towards a productive liminality and ambivalence of young female citizenly subject positions that ‘act out of place’ and transgress “controlling ideologies of asymmetric socio-political systems” (Curry, *Environmental Crisis* 193) at least on the narratives’ story level, and on the other hand displays the narratives’ diverse or even antagonistic positions towards young adult, and specifically female young adult enfranchisement. My reading of the way in which the novels employ, appropriate and/or subvert generic conventions suggests that the hybridisation of different generic traditions within the novels highlights the tensions within often

still ongoing debates about citizenly subject positions and citizenship in general at the same time that it, mostly unwittingly, also draws attention to the difficulty of thinking beyond long-standing ideological positions such as patriarchal, anthropocentric, Western liberalism. Thus, this study demonstrates, despite successfully blurring and transgressing genre boundaries and hierarchies, these novels are sometimes caught in an ambivalent, liminal space between subverting dominating public discourses by providing alternative – imagined future (female) young adult – perspectives while at the same time often affirming assumptions about, for example, the scope of possibilities for political change, the personal cost of active engagement or conservative prejudices against specific media technologies.

While the novels analysed in this study thus mirror, participate in and reflect on struggles over and challenges to young adult enfranchisement and are, whether successfully or not, invested in destabilising or even transgressing boundaries not only of genre but also of long perceived notions of citizenship, ‘border thinking’ as “the recognition and transformation of the hegemonic imaginary from the perspectives of people in subaltern positions” (Mignolo 736-737) remains incomplete. In addition to the reasons discussed above, a further major reason is the fact that the unequal power relationship between adult authors and young adult implied readership remains unchanged (and unchallenged), so that ‘border thinking’ as a “transformative project” (736) remains contained on the story level of these narratives. Beyond the novels’ story level the fact remains that adult authors devise fictional young adult protagonists and (the development of) their citizenly subject positions *for* a young adult readership – and not *with* them. In a similar way that the protagonists or other characters in the novels do not have easy or equal access to the tools of cultural production on the narratives’ story level, the implied young adult readership faces the same difficulty of access in real life, where the publishing industry develops and markets products *for* young people but not necessarily *by* them, at least at the time when these novels were published. In this industry and in the novels it produces and markets, young people *are (passively) brought into* the conversation as fictional characters in adult-authored narratives, but crucially have little to no possibility to do so themselves. In this context, the romanticisation of print literacy and the demonisation of digital media technology that many of the novels analysed in this study subscribe to can be read as an unconscious attempt of those holding more powerful positions in this industry to promote self-expression and citizenly participation via forms of media that they hold control over, i.e. printed novels, instead of much more unregulated online platforms and social media. Further research in this area may be interested in examining how young adults envision their own citizenship positions based on the texts (in the widest sense) they

produce in the (media) spaces they have access to as well as the ways in which the possibilities for youth access to more traditional ways of publication may have changed since the novels analysed in this study have been published.

Considering these more problematic aspects both with regard to the novels' at least partly contradictory messaging regarding young adult enfranchisement and with regard to the unresolved issue of unequal power relationships that mark these and other young adult novels' production, these novels' trajectory cannot be regarded as representing a broad "almost overt call to action" (Ames 7), as Ames rightly points out. Instead, viewed together, the novels present a conflicted discussion of youth citizenship at a time of "struggle for the survival and hegemony of the North Atlantic" (Mignolo 740) during the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century. Both such a conflicted discussion and, as per Nünning and Schwanecke's argument, also the generically highly hybridised nature of the novels, can be read as "manifestations of a sense of crisis" (Nünning and Schwanecke 138). As this study highlights, the novels examined participate in the negotiation of how to react to or 'dwell in crisis' (cf. F. Buell) and are, therefore, much more differentiated in how they present and offer models for citizenly subject positions to the implied readership than many critics and also scholars have purported so far in that they remain conflicted about various aspects of young adult citizenship while at the same time ambitious to promote young adult citizenly enfranchisement. Further research might examine whether these findings can be applied to young adult (genre) fiction (from the North Atlantic region and beyond) in general or whether what might be termed the ideological liminality of the novels with regards to citizenship positions is particular to the genre of young adult speculative literature from a specific temporal and geographic context.

In view of this ideological liminality, a concern voiced by several critics, as already briefly discussed in the introduction to this study, needs to be addressed more extensively, which is the concern that these novels may "contain[] rather than propagate[]" dissent (cf. Fuggle 33), leave adolescent readers "with less of a desire for political action" (Morton and Lounsbury 65) than before reading and, therefore imply "a danger that the texts become what they condemn, a simulacrum that eventually fails to move beyond its own terms of reference" (Muller 62). For a concluding reflection on this point of discussion, I once again turn to the genres focused in this study, especially the *Bildungsroman* generic tradition, in order to reframe these concerns via a central inquiry of this long-standing, changing and adapting genre, that is the question of who or what 'emerges' in Bakhtin's understanding of this term. Whether the young adult speculative novels discussed in this study are regarded collectively as

fostering “[i]nclusion [as] [...] a reformatory project” and thus reconciliation between the subversive individual and larger society as per the traditional *Bildungsroman*, or whether they are regarded as representing previously “silenced and marginalized voices” “bringing themselves into the conversation” (Mignolo 736), leading to the revision of normative and oppressive structures and the transformative of society, largely hinges on the perspective individual readers choose to focus on or emphasise. As the analysis demonstrated, when focusing solely on the narratives’ story level it is relatively easy to foreground the aspects of challenge, subversion, struggle against oppressive norms and, ultimately, transformation. When taking into account the meta-narrative level, as the analysis in this study did, it becomes apparent that through a combination of generic restrictions, (seeming) authorial unease about young female subject positions, the difficulty to think beyond (the limitations of) long-established concepts such as, among others, Western liberalism, capitalism and personhood and the conditions of young adult literature’s production and publication, the more conservative aspects of the novels which may threaten to turn them into the simulacra mentioned by Muller become evident.

The tension between story level and meta-narrative level thus brings the novels’ ideological liminality to the surface, a liminality that holds both potential and threat with regards to fostering young adult, and especially female young adult citizenly enfranchisement. However, even if these novels, collectively, cannot be regarded as issuing a direct call for action, they importantly show that action is both necessary and possible if any change towards more equity, justice and enfranchisement is to be achieved, as imperfect as such solutions may remain. Such action does not always have to lead to complete revolution via dramatic and violent self-sacrifices, as the novels’ story-lines would often have it. Butler helpfully reminds us that not all established norms encroach on our sense of agency, but that there are useful norms, too, that “constitute the intersubjective and infrastructural conditions of a livable life” and therefore, ideally are supportive rather than detrimental to an individual’s sense of agency. She continues to argue that people would “hardly seek to overcome those social and material conditions of our lives, but we do seek to make them more just, more equal, and more enabling” (“Vulnerability in Resistance” 19). In this sense, the novels analysed in this study can be regarded as neither calling their readers to revolution nor as advocating solely for a conservative notion of integration and reconciliation (and thus rather containing dissent) but as taking a liminal position in between. This liminal position is shaped both by the assumption that “persons of that age are especially suitable for such escapades, as the young are idealistic, have an underdeveloped sense of their own mortality, and are afflicted with an exaggerated

thirst for justice” (Atwood, *The Testaments* 411)<sup>2</sup> and by the perspective of the adult authors, which may idealise youth’s idealism but also represents more lived experience. From this liminality a body of literature emerges that can serve as a point of departure for the implied readership – much as the canonical texts and artworks referred to in the novels serve as points of departure on the story level of the narratives – by providing a possibility for implied readers to think further and reflect more deeply on which aspects from the novels can provide inspiration to them, which strategies or perspectives they would like to adopt and build on and which aspects they choose to disregard.

Ultimately, the novels cannot relieve their readers of the responsibility to make their own choices and their own decisions, both in regard to whether they interpret the novels as simulacra or not and in regard to how to translate their choices and values into active citizenly practice and performance of their claim to citizenly rights. What may emerge through the stories these novels tell and the implied readers’ active engagement with these stories are, thus, tentative routes for young adults towards shaping their own citizenly subject position by discovering their responsibilities and choosing their area(s) of engagement and modes of practice. As the novels suggest, such a process may take the form of initially witnessing, recognising and/or remembering power asymmetries as political, cultural or ecological privilege or disenfranchisement and then making active choices of how to respond to and act on these insights. Fiction can thus highlight dangers as well as possibilities and alternatives but it cannot act on our behalf. It lies within the responsibility of the implied readers to decide whether they choose to utilise their own, potentially liminal position or whether they choose to remain ‘manageable risks’ within hegemonic power structures.

While there is the threat to understand such a responsibility in the sense of personally responsible or participatory citizenship, which focus on individuals’ conforming socio-political behaviour and (partly) on the notion of individuals or groups compensating for lacking social and political policies respectively, alternative, more positive readings are also possible. When interpreted as *response-ability* (hyphenated on purpose), i.e. the power to act, the focus shifts

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<sup>2</sup> The quotation is taken from the ‘keynote speech’ of a fictional historian at the fictional Thirteenth Symposium on Gileadean Studies, with which Atwood’s novel *The Testaments* (2019) concludes. It can be read as a half-ironic, half-acknowledging comment on many of the young adult speculative fiction that preceded *The Testament*’s publication in the first fifteen years of the twenty-first century. The relevant passage in full reads: ““Nicole” might seem too young, in years but also in experience, to have been assigned to the hazardous mission the two of them appear to have carried out so successfully, but she was no younger than many involved in resistance operations and spywork over the course of the centuries. Some historians have even argued that persons of that age are especially suitable for such escapades, as the young are idealistic, have an underdeveloped sense of their own mortality, and are afflicted with an exaggerated thirst for justice” (Atwood, *The Testaments* 411).

towards a notion of responsibility that is empowering and enables agency. In showing that something can be done, always, even in the most adverse circumstances and even if it is only a (seemingly) small gesture (cf. the salute in the *Hunger Games* trilogy), and in linking individual action towards socio-political justice and claim to rights to the possibility of transforming an entire community, the novels, despite the traditional *Bildungsroman*'s narrative trajectory of a tendentiously conservative reconciliation and inclusion, at least have the potential to invite and encourage the implied readership to engage in revisionist thinking and practice that can still be justice-oriented without being destructive. The novels do not negate that choosing the power to act can be difficult and challenging for the individual or group who make(s) that choice. Neither do they negate that citizenship as a concept, an identity and a practice is complex and complicated and that its different forms and layers are not always easily reconcilable or even accessible and understandable.

Finally, the concern that the novels discussed in this study and related novels in the young adult speculative continuum may constitute simulacra failing to move beyond their own terms of reference can be argued to predominantly pose an actual concern or problem if we seek to pigeonhole both young adult and genre literature as *necessarily* – and therefore usually *easily* – didactic. The novels discussed in this study emphatically show that both young adult and genre literature cannot be reduced to easily didactic functions but instead open up considerable possibilities for complexity. What emerges, incidentally and besides other aspects, is a body of literature that, more confidently and successfully in some aspects than in others, lays claim to playing an important part in the continuous discussion of the presence and absence of citizenly rights and privileges in a variety of contexts and from a considerable range of different perspectives.

Ten to fifteen years on from the time of publication of the novels discussed in this study, those forms of citizenship examined here are not only still highly relevant but rather, it seems, their negotiation, often as violent struggle, has only become more pressing and more contested. Current global socio-political, cultural and ecological developments, from the rise of the political right in many Western countries to the arrival of widespread access to powerful AI tools to the increasingly confrontational debate whether ecological activists are, in fact, activists or terrorists, promise the continued relevance of the concepts of the citizen and citizenship as well as the continued contention as to what these concepts signify and who they include or exclude. While many of these issues (e.g. artificial intelligence) are not new – neither in real life nor as a topic in speculative fiction – their more recent incarnations will undoubtedly inspire new discourses on possibilities for enfranchisement of various heterogeneous groups or about



different ways to perform citizenly subject positions as well as new fictional stories that narrate shifting, changing, adapting and entirely new forms of citizenship into being, much like the *Bildungsroman* genre has done for several centuries now. Whether the many current fault lines of negotiation and struggle will resolve in reconciliation or lead to revision or even revolution remains to be seen. In order to navigate the complexities of citizenship and gain and/or maintain enfranchisement, young people (or everyone, really) need to continue “to pursue the opportunities laid out before [them]. If [they] do, [they] can gain the power to reinvent not only [themselves] but the world” (*Keeper’s Shadow* 71) and “[c]reate the future as [they] go” (*Dirt Eaters* 195).

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