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Indigenous Knowledge for Resistance, Love, and Land: Lecciones for our Children, for our Future”

Selected Proceedings of the 2019 Meeting of the National Association for Chicana
and Chicano Studies

Edited by L. Heidenreich, María González, Francisco Villegas,
and Samantha Manz

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“Indigenous Knowledge for Resistance”: Lecciones from Our Past

L. Heidenreich

Washington State University sits on the lands of the Nimiipuu and Palus peoples – land only recently taken from these first nations. With the first treaty, negotiated at Walla Walla, just miles from where I sit and edit our proceedings, tribal leaders were able to retain approximately 7.5 million acres of their original lands. Yet, as in so many other histories of first nations, once Euro-American settlers found gold they encroached on reservation lands; the response of the U.S. government was to negate the treaty it had made with the Nimiipuu and Palus and insist on taking yet more land. The Treaty of 1863 reduced tribal lands to approximately 750,000 acres.¹ Also known as the *Theft Treaty*, the 1863 “treaty” was rejected by many people, including Husishusis Kate, a spiritual leader of the Palus. Years of battles and U.S. genocidal practices followed. As a result, Washington State University sits on the lands of the Nimiipuu and Palus peoples.²

I recount this brief history here because it calls to mind some of the critical contradictions within which many of us work: committed to decolonial pedagogies, we often labor in spaces created through violent colonial projects. Within this context how do we create, fuel, sustain and insist on pedagogies that are, in fact, decolonial and life-giving – that challenge the very state that our institutions were built to sustain and the systems that those institutions are built to reproduce? As Chicax scholars, how do we build relationships with the first nations of the land where we work, especially if we are not of those nations? These are not new questions, but questions that our communities, including Chicax academics and activists, have been asking for generations. In 2019, at our national conference, our chair-elect brought us back to reflect on these critical issues once again.

Dr. Karleen Pendleton Jiménez’ welcome letter called us to dialogue and to question our work, activism, scholarship, and relationships. Holding a

conference themed “Indigenous Knowledge for Resistance, Love, and Land,” she reminded us, was/is a bold call to accountability. Thus she opened her letter with questions directed to all of us who engage in scholarship and activism with, from, through and/or in Chicana/x Studies:

What is your relationship to Indigeneity? Where and how have you learned? How has Chicana/o/x Studies excluded or encouraged this learning? How do you honour Indigenous knowledge in yourself, your classrooms of university students, with K-12 children and youth, and with community learners and activists?

Such questions have deep roots in our field and our communities because of our complex histories as mestiza/o and Indigenous scholars working in coalition with First Nation communities, at times as members of those same communities, at times not. They also have deep roots the critical work of coalition that made the work that we do in our home institutions possible.

On many of our campuses it was working in coalition with activists from Black, Indigenous, and Asian communities that the generation of the liberation movements insisted on a new curriculum of, by and for our communities.³ In 1969 Ethnic Studies programs were founded at San Francisco State University and at the University of California, Berkeley though the activism and coalitions of students, staff and faculty committed to diverse liberation movements.⁴ At my alma mater, San Francisco State University, the program came at a high price; faculty were fired for participating in the strike, not all were rehired. Chicano studies was the result of Chicano scholars and activists coming together in spaces such as University of California, and Washington State University, and it was the result of the coalitions fighting for resources on our campuses.⁵ Similar coalitions among Chicana women and other women of color feminists would give rise to the founding of Kitchen Table Press and the foundational *This Bridge Called My Back*.

The National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies was founded in this context, first as the National Caucus of Chicano Social Scientists (1973) but by 1976 the National Association for Chicano Studies.⁶ From its inception the founders insisted our scholarship be relevant and accountable to our communities.⁷ Three decades later scholar activists including Steve Casanova, Patrisia Gonzales, and Roberto Rodríguez founded the Indigenous caucus of NACCS.⁸

The caucus continues to strive to:

Endorse the development of critical, creative, ethical, and intuitive thinking, skills, and actions; Promote and protect Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty, languages, lands, cultures, resources, sexualities, and rights; Work towards the creation of an effective and pro-Indigenous United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Provide support, resources, and advocacy for Indigenous scholars working within the university; Advance liberatory teaching, research, service, and relations; and Disseminate statements and positions on local, national, and global events that affect Indigenous Peoples.⁹

In the twenty-first century, as across Turtle Island and beyond, First Nations continue to rebuild amid a socio-political context of national backlash, the efforts of the caucus remain critical to the well-being of NACCS and our larger world communities.

Today, even as we struggle within a world of backlash—where white nationalism is on the rise not only in U.S. but in Russia, Germany, and England it is more critical than ever that we remember the lessons of the liberation movements.¹⁰ Our survival and flourishing requires that we move forward with pride in our home communities, as in coalition with other communities and nations committed to decolonial activism and liberated futures, we engage “Indigenous Knowledge for Resistance, Love, and Land.”

During the liberation movements of the 1960s-70s Indigenous, African American, Asian and Chicanx peoples, often working in coalition, insisted on dialogues to address similar challenges to the ones which we face today. In addressing those challenges our communities took note of and, at times articulated some of the complex relationships and ways in which our communities at times overlap, and weave together, especially Chicanx and Indigenous communities. Here the life of raulsalinas comes to mind, an activist whose legacy was the focus of Louis Mendoza’s “Memoir of Un Ser Humano,” published in last year’s proceedings, but also the work of Santiago Vidales, featured in part two of this volume.¹¹ Salinas’s commitment to Pinto justice, including freeing political prisoners Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu Jamal, and his activism within the American Indian Movement highlighted the manner in which so many of our communities are connected.¹²

This weaving, as well as the questions of Dr. Pendleton Jiménez also call to mind the work of strong Indigenous women in NACCS, women such as Dr. Inés M. Talamantez, Mescalero Apache, who, in her scholarship and in our meetings, consistently called on all of us to reject colonial and patriarchal mind-sets and institutions.¹³ It was Dr. Talamantez, who, when Dr. Margo Tamez, Lipan Apache, received the Antonia I. Castañeda Award, made sure we honored protocol. In this her year of passing as we honor her memory, we also remember her role in building the field of Native American religious studies, her fierce scholar-activism, engagement with the Indigenous caucus, and commitment to calling us all to activism, accountability, and life.

Many NACCS members will remember the powerful work Dr. Talamantez contributed to *Fleshing the Spirit*—a volume critical to scholars of religion and spirituality, and to anyone committed to wholeness. Through their ongoing conversations with other mujeres about Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous spirituality Elisa Facio and Irené Lara conceived of and developed this first anthology of Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous women’s spiritualities. Its opening pages Dr. Talmantez reminded us:

The ancestors knew we were coming
 They left work for us
 Now we carry their wisdom forward.
 Know who you are, *sabe quien eres*
 Know your land, *conoce tu tierra*
 Learn you language, *aprende tu idioma*¹⁴

The work presented at NACCS XLVI was beautifully intersectional in its response to Dr. Pendleton Jiménez’ call, a call that reminded and reminds us to *Know who we are, Know our land, Learn our language*. In this volume we have a sampling of that work, divided into three sections: Flourishing of the Nations, Community Building/Community Coalition, and Sitio y Lengua. The papers approach the conference theme from different angles whether focusing on the power of community education, strategies for rebuilding nations that continue to confront settler colonial violence, or using our words and stories to strengthen our communities through the deployment of culture. Thus, this year, as in years past, our scholarship, as required by our field, remains rooted in the goal of liberation, grounded in the work of scholar activists who came before us.

Part one: Flourishing of the Nations, opens with the welcome address of our then, Chair-elect (now Chairs) referenced in this Introduction. It is followed by the powerful work of Marisol Archuleta of the Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP), reminding us that in New Mexico, her homeland, “Colonization has never truly won ... though we are familiar with the taste.” With her strong voice she notes:

Through resistance and resilience, we’ve saved the seeds of our sacred culture, the seeds of our languages, and the seeds of our foods. I seek out the seeds of my history to plant in the hearts of my daughters, through reclaiming the words, recipes and traditions our colonizers were never able to erase.

She reminds us of the work of SWOP as it plants seeds and nurtures seeds and fights for justice. Similarly, Adrian Chavana writes of community action and struggle. Chavana’s focus is nation rebuilding –noting the false narrative of extinction, created by the nation state, that erased the continuing history of Coahuiltecan Mission Indians, the state recognition of the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation, and the role of peyote in the nation’s continued resurgence.

Part Two, Community Building/Community Coalition holds examples of the multiple and varied ways that we continue to work for the empowerment of our multiple communities. Yesenia Olmos, in “A Practicing Doula Testimonio,” writes of her journey becoming a doula, of mentorship, heritage and a commitment to healthy birthing and “respect for all.” Rooted in the rich tradition of testimonio, her paper connects past to present and holds justice at its core. Similarly, Alexandra Arraiz Matute and Nira Elgueta, in “Cuentos del Sur,” tell of their work with immigrant women in Canada and their efforts to build immigrant and Indigenous solidarity on Turtle Island. They note the contradictions in Canada's Reconciliation Commission, and its 94 Calls to Action which public institutions oftentimes fail to meet. Their cuento maps the difficult yet critical work of *concientización* and the coalitional work that made/makes their work possible. It calls to mind the work of Gloria E. Anzaldúa who reminded us that we are *nos/otras*, bridged people, working in alliance. Elisa Facio, in one of her last published works too built on this concept reminding us:

Nostotras, the Spanish word for the feminine us, indicates a collectivity, a type of group identity of consciousness. Joining together *nos* and *otras* holds the promise of healing; we contain

others, others contain us. However, *nos/otras* does not represent sameness, as the differences among us still exist. These two concepts function dialogically, generating previously unrecognized commonalities and connections.¹⁵

Finally, Francisco Villegas and E. Munoz, a team of scholars from Kalamazoo College in Michigan analyze the discourses surrounding the fight for county IDs in Kalamazoo. Like Dr. Pendleton Jiménez, they map and trouble language that creates us/them binaries and discourses of deservingness, even on the part of allies. The goal, then, was/is to have both language and physical forms of identification marking “all people as members of the same community.”

Part three is titled *sitio y lengua*, in honor of the call of Emma Pérez, now three decades old, to claim space and language and to acknowledge the manner in which language theft robs us of our histories. This section is comprised of four critical essays, each using language to claim, reclaim and create spaces of *concientización*, power, and action.¹⁶ Ismael Mondragón, in “The Devil at the Gay Bar,” revisits the New Mexico tradition of *cuentos*. How do we keep this critical tradition alive and vibrant today? Answering his own question he revisits the *cuento* of “Devil at the Dance Hall” this time with a queer lens. His story, rich in tradition and imagery, holds the power to pull us in and teach us lessons of honesty and integrity. C. “Martin” Vélez Salas in “Reflexiones nepantleras profesionales,” engages the Anzaldúan tool of *autohistoria* to argue for the power of language in relation to community, the nation-state, and the possibility of coalition. Applying the critical lessons he learned growing up in Peru, with multiple dialects of Spanish (and English and Quechua) he argues that language departments and the university in general must learn to build on the language skills of Chicanx and Latinx students from throughout the Americas if we are to succeed in creating alliances among ourselves and between ourselves and larger justice projects. Equally important, if we want to remain relevant as places of learning to the new generations of students who now fill our classrooms, we must expand our lexicon and our pedagogy. In relation Santiago Vidales’ “Hemispheric Poetics” reminds us of the relevance of two critical writers to today’s students. Through a close reading of the work of Raúl Salinas and César Vallejo he is able to demonstrate the convergence of liberatory politics in the work of Salinas, a Chicanx poet, and Vallejo, the Peruvian writer. Vidales’ work, like so much foundational work in Chicanx studies, takes a hemispheric approach to our histories and political struggles. Vidales argues that

Cultures are always already informing one another. It is thus the critic's responsibility to create scholarly approaches that can account for the multiplicity of ways that the people in our hemisphere have produced politically conscious art grounded in their lived experiences.

Finally, Magaly Odoñez, in "Relationships with Cannabis," engages a "Chicana and Indigenous feminist theory to imagine a decolonial politics as it concerns cannabis potentiality for tribal sovereignty." Vélez Salas, Vidales and Ordoñez call us, through the power of language and coalition, to connection and thus bring us full circle. Like Marisol Archuleta of the Southwest Organizing Project, they remind us of the importance of knowing our roots and building from those roots to action; they remind us *conoce quien eres* and they remind us *conoce tu tierra*. They remind us to plant new seeds for the generations to come. The papers presented at NACCS 2019 inspired me to be a better scholar, a relevant scholar, a scholar-activist committed to continuing the work of the generations who came before me. It is my hope that they will also inspire you.

The years ahead of us, as our multiple and diverse communities and nations build and challenge colonial legacies, will bring challenges which we will be able to meet if we continue to do the difficult work of coalition, listening, and learning. Thus I close these introductory notes with words, once again from Karleen Pendleton Jiménez:

How do we know when our work involves deep and respectful teaching and learning? How can we build and maintain good relations between Chicana/o/x and Indigenous communities? How can we avoid the traps of cultural appropriation? How do we incorporate Indigenous knowledge into our conceptions of ethical research? How might Chicanas/os/xs acknowledged Indigenous land claims, when our own relationships with land have been fraught or severed for generations?

Solidariamente,
Linda Heidenreich, Washington State University
February 2020

Notes:

¹ Nez Perce Tribe, History. <https://www.nezperce.org/about/history/>. Accessed January 21, 2020; James Darcy, "The Continuing Impact of Manifest Destiny in a Small Town," *Wicazo Sa Review* 14 no. 1 (1999): 148-50.

² Clifford E. Trafzer, "The Palous in Eekish Pah," *American Indian Quarterly* 9 no. 2 (Spring 1985): 169-82.

³ Catherine S. Ramírez, "Learning and Unlearning from Ethnic Studies," *American Quarterly* 66 no. 4 (December 2014): 1059; Dennis Lopez, "Cultivating Aztlán: Chicano (Counter)Cultural Politics and the Postwar American University," *American Studies* 58 no. 1 (2019): 74, 87-88. Lopez notes that with the rise of reactionary politics in the early twenty-first century, Chicano studies must be impactful beyond the university, challenging the structural inequities confronted decades ago at its founding.

⁴ Ramírez notes that the call for such an education can be found as early as 1903 in the work of W.E.B. Du Boise, as well as that of Carter G. Woodson (1933). Ramírez builds directly on Christine E. Sleeter, *The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A research Review* (Washington, DC: National Education Association, 2011).

⁵ Carlos Muñoz, *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (London: Verso, 1989), 191-196; De Vere Edwin Pentony, Robert Smith, and Richard Axen, *Unfinished Rebellions* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971).

⁶ "History of NACCS," National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies. <https://www.nacccs.org/nacccs/History.asp>. Accessed February 11, 2020; Zaragoza Vargas, "Fifteenth Annual National Association of Chicano Studies Conference," *International Labor and Working-Class History* no. 33 (1988): 102-05. Accessed February 12, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/27671747.

⁷ Irene Blea, *Researching Chicano Communities: Socio-Historical, Physical, Psychological, and Spiritual Space* (New York: Praeger, 1995), 26-55; Richard A. García, "The Origins of Chicano Cultural Thought: Visions and Paradigms: Romano's Culturalism, Alurista's Aesthetics, and Acuña's Communalism," *California History* 74 no. 3 (Fall 1995): 290-305; Michael Soldatenko, *Chicano*

Studies: The Genesis of a Discipline (Tucson: University of Arizona, 2009), 59-60.

⁸ “Business Meeting Minutes,” *Noticias de NACCS*,” 38 no.2 (May 2009), 8; Miner, Dylan A.T., *Creating Aztlán: Chicano Art, Indigenous Sovereignty, and Lowriding Across Turtle Island* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014), 45-48.

⁹ “Indigenous Peoples/Indigenous Knoweldges Caucus,” National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies. https://www.naccs.org/naccs/What_is_a_Caucus1.asp.February_15, 2020. See website for full statement.

¹⁰ Southern Poverty Law Center, *Combating Nativism: Protecting the Rights of Immigrants*, Montgomery: Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019; Eva Namusoke, “A Divided Family: Race, the Commonwealth and Brexit,” *Round Table* 105 no.5 (2016): 463-476; Yardena Schwartz, “Springtime for Petry,” *Newsweek Global*, March, 17, 2017, 38-43; Alan Feuer and Andrew Higgins, “Extremists Turn to a Leader to Protect Western Values: Vladimir Putin,” *New York Times*, December 3, 2016. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/03/world/americas/alt-right-vladimir-putin.html>; Owen Matthews, “Putin to Russia: We Will Bury Ourselves,” *Newsweek Global*, July 20, 2014. <https://www.newsweek.com/2014/06/20/putins-paranoia-card-254513.html>.

¹¹ Louis G. Menoza, “Memoir of un Ser Humano: The Life and Times of raulsalinas,” *NACCS Annual Conference Proceedings* (2018): 31-41. <https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/naccs/2018/Proceedings/7>. See also Mendoza, “The Re-Education of a Xicanindio: Raúl Salinas and the Poetics of Pinto Transformation,” *MELUS* 28 no.1 (Spring 2003): 39-60.

¹² Olguín, B.V., “Tattoos, Abjection, and the Political Unconscious: Toward a Semiotics of the Pinto Visual Vernacular,” *Cultural Critique* 37 (Autumn, 1997): 194-195.

¹³ See her interview with Natalie Avalos in the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (2016) for a discussion of her education, research, and commitment to Indigenous knowledge and power.

¹⁴ Inés Talamantez, “A Mindful Invitation: Una invitación,” in *Fleshing the Spirit: Spirituality and Activism in Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous Women’s Lives* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014), xi.

¹⁵ Elisa Linda Facio, "Writing in the Borderlands: The Implications of Anzaldúan Thought for Chicana Feminist Sociology," *Chicana/Latina Studies* 10 no. 1 (Fall 2010): 77.

¹⁶ Emma Pérez, "Sexuality and Discourse: Notes from a Chicana Survivor," in *Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About*, edited by Carla Trujillo (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1991), 174-179.

PART ONE: FLOURISHING OF THE NATIONS

Native leaders and their communities discovered a political economy of their own making that dawned a new day of tribal sovereignty. Not new nations, but rebuilt ones, have begun to appear across the horizon of Indian Country... to believe and weave a dream of the old and new—the tenacity of the Indigenous spirit. To all Indians, *it does matter*. The rest of society should look toward Indian Country and acknowledge the resilience of Native people and the rebuilding of their nations.

Donald L. Fixico, *Indian Resilience and Rebuilding: Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West*

Chair-Elect Welcome Letter
Welcome to NCCS XLVI, Albuquerque, NM

Karleen Pendleton Jiménez

I would like to acknowledge the original peoples of this land. The Sandia Pueblo (other pueblo communities) and the Navajo Nation have ties and stories on this land and within the broader community that are connected within New Mexico. I am grateful to be able to work here in relationship and strengthen community on this territory.

*-Suggested University of New Mexico Indigenous Peoples
Land and Territory Acknowledgment*

Dear Colegas,

Welcome to this beautiful land of mesas, mountains, rivers, and deserts. Nuevo Mexico is also home to the highest proportion of Hispanas/os/xs, Latinas/os/xs and Chicanas/os/xs in the U.S., and the second highest state percentage of Native Americans. Indigenous peoples have lived here for at least 13,000 years and at present there are 23 federally recognized tribes in New Mexico, including 19 Pueblos, 3 Apache Tribes, and the Navajo Nation. I can't think of a better place to bring together conversations about Indigenous knowledge and Chicana/o/x Studies.

In Toronto, where I live, Potawatomi-Lenapé scholar/educator Susan Dion asks her students (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to document their autobiographies of knowledge of Indigenous peoples. The responses are family stories, secrets, stereotypes, pride, colonial lies, resistance, shame, violence, community, love, educational institutions, myths, names, dreams, and land. They are an accounting of the formation of knowledge. They express ongoing relationships. A process of learning and unlearning.

My Indigenous knowledge was embodied by my grandmother who identified as European one day, Indigenous the next, but mostly Mexican. My learning took place in California public schools where fourth graders built

celebrated Missions out of sugar cubes. My consciousness arose in Chicana/o/x Studies classrooms where I learned about the genocidal violence of those missions. My Chicana queer identity formed through Anzaludúa's *borderlands* and Moraga's *war years*, women as committed to loving women as they have been to loving the Indigenous parts of themselves and those around them. I was taught in Chicana/o/x Paradigms class that Chicana/o/x theory could cross borders, and since coming to live and teach on Anishinaabe territory on the upper edges of Turtle Island, I have contemplated my responsibility as a Chicana scholar/educator on northern Indigenous land.

What is your relationship to Indigeneity? Where and how have you learned? How has Chicana/o/x Studies excluded or encouraged this learning? How do you honour Indigenous knowledge in yourself, in your classrooms of university students, with K-12 children and youth, and with community learners and activists?

I hope NACCS XLVI is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on relationships with our own Indigeneity, with Indigenous peoples, knowledge, and land. With this year's guiding theme, NACCS takes time and space to interrogate the relationship between our collective/individual autobiographies and knowledge of Indigenous peoples.

Corky Gonzalez's "I am Joaquin" is emblematic of early Indigenous threads and reclamations in the field of Chicana/o/x Studies. Since then, our gatherings are punctuated with *Danza*, our politics are in solidarity with Indigenous water activists, and our teachings informed by Indigenous talking circles and story-telling. Yet, questions of mutuality, reciprocity, artificial boundaries, and quality of engagement with Indigenous communities remain.

How do we know when our work involves deep and respectful teaching and learning? How can we build and maintain good relations between Chicana/o/x and Indigenous communities? How can we avoid the traps of cultural appropriation? How do we incorporate Indigenous knowledge into our conceptions of ethical research? How might Chicanas/os/xs acknowledge Indigenous land claims, when our own relationships with land have been fraught or severed for generations?

I am delighted by the number and quality of papers, panels, workshops, roundtables, and posters tied to the conference theme, covering such topics as Native rights, Working with Indigenous children, Indigenous cultural landscapes, The uprooting of Indigenous/Latinx communities, Latina and Indigenous women

professors, Ambivalent Indigeneity, Teaching Chicanx/Latinx literature, Two-Spirit spiritual communities, Storytelling and resistance, Mexican Indigenous migrants, Hiking the sacred Navajo mountains, Feeding the next seven generations, Indigenous Chican@x in European New World Print Culture, Queering Northern New Mexican Folktales, and Indigenous Knowledge as implemented throughout the Cycles of Life, to name a few. There are opportunities every day, during every time slot, to engage in conversations about the role of Indigenous knowledge in our lives and learning, and for the world we are offering our children and youth.

I thank you for entrusting me with the position of Chair Elect, and the honor of dreaming and planning this year's conference. I thank Professor Irene Vazquez of the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at UNM for helping me design the opening plenary, Professor Tiffany Lee of the Department of Native Studies at UNM for providing the land acknowledgement, the NACCS board (Aureliano Maria De Soto, Linda Heidenreich, María Gonzalez, Francisco Villegas, Chalane Lechuga, Ernesto Colín, and Lilia Soto) for support and feedback as I worked through many layers of program planning, Julia Curry Rodríguez and Kathy Blackmer Reyes for the thousands of hours spent organizing this conference and assisting me with nuts and bolts and nuance as we work together on a welcoming and successful event.

I invite you to enjoy these early days of April in New Mexico. I hope they will be meaningful, energizing, challenging, and affirming.

Karleen Pendleton Jiménez
Chair-Elect, NACCS
2018-2019

Plenary Address: Cultivating Resistance through Food, Language and History:
A New Mexico Love Story

Marisol Archuleta,
SouthWest Organizing Project (SWOP), Albuquerque, NM

I am surrounded by seed savers. The people I work with, my chosen family, we save harvested seeds, but we also save the varied seeds of our many languages and the seeds of wisdom our elders softly and often silently pass on to us. For me, I think these seeds manifest themselves through my intense emotions and a deep, unrelenting drive to root myself in this land and in the messy, complicated history of my family. New Mexico, this place I'm from, is so very special. Colonization has never truly won here, though we are familiar with the taste. Through resistance and resilience, we've saved the seeds of our sacred culture, the seeds of our languages, and the seeds of our foods. I seek out the seeds of my history to plant in the hearts of my daughters, through reclaiming the words, recipes and traditions our colonizers were never able to erase.

I'll be the first to admit I have identity problems. I identify first and foremost as a Chicana New Mexican, but with a white dad, and with my light hair and blue eyes, I fight internally with intense feelings that my literal genetic makeup embodies the ripple effects of the attempted colonization of New Mexico. Growing up in Albuquerque, while all my cousins grew up in Santa Fe, my focus and most anticipated moments were family holidays where I got to be with my cousins and we got to run around free in the milpa behind the house my grandpa built on the land of my grandma's family.

Where I work at the Southwest Organizing Project, or SWOP, it's important to talk about where we come from. It's how we connect with people and begin building with them. So, for me, my mom's side of the family is from Santa Fe and Madrid, New Mexico. My Grandpa Antonio came from a family of miners and my Grandma Antonia's family worked the land in Santa Fe until my Grandma broke tradition to become the first female vice president of a bank in New Mexico. My great grandma Rivera was a curandera with one eye, who, until recently, I only knew as the oldest person alive. It was decades after she died that my Auntie Carmen told me stories of her sewing wounds and preparing medicina from her garden.

My cousin Bianca wrote about the women in our family in a poem she calls Los Sucros. She says in part:

We always develop wrinkles in our foreheads first
from furrowing our brows.

We feel
proud of this
ever deepening crease because it is
a mark
of our lineage. We who think so
hard and
worry so much it has left a
permanent mark between
our eyes. To furrow is to dig a long
narrow trench
in the ground especially for
planting seeds and
for irrigation like the acequias in the
field
behind our grandmother's house.

So in my family, I take great pride in the line of resilient women I come from. Tiny women, first out of bed and last to fall asleep, who make feasts out of scraps; who are driven, hardhearted and intense. The women in my family are resilient as a result of our history, a history that demanded of my grandmas, skills to endure

hardship and abuse while simultaneously nurturing, growing and healing our families through the food they made, the plantas they grew, and the stories they passed down to us. As a mama, I find myself desperately collecting little seeds of resilience rooted in my matriarchal history to save for my daughters Adelita and Rosie, to plant these stories for them in this fertile land we are rooted in, to teach them to cultivate our feminine resistance with pride.

Of all my grandparents, I was closest with my grandpa. My grandpa was the one who taught me how to make tortillas. The thing was, he taught me only once how to do it the long way using manteca. The rest of the times, he told me he just wanted to use Harina Preparada, “porque es mas facil,” and so that’s how I learned, by buying the bag of flour sold by the white Quaker man. This is another representation of my struggle to hold faithful to my roots but also to reclaim them. When I take my daughters to the store, I tell them when we buy this corporate bag of flour that even though it is not connected to the land, it IS connected to my grandpa, to the way he hummed and the way he taught me to make little bolitos, not too big, with just a pinch. But as I teach my daughters how my grandpa taught me, using the same wooden bolillos and the golden plastic Tupperware bowl, I will tell them that we need learn more about the tortillas of our ancestors because they didn’t come from the Quaker bag. I will tell Adelita and Rosie about how making these tortillas connects them to my grandpa whom they didn’t know, and how it connects me to my great grandma, whom I barely knew, and how our hybrid tortillas will serve as the masa that will connect these past generations of my family to our future babies.

So that is a little about my blood family. Now I would like to tell you some stories about my chosen family. I am so very thankful to work for SWOP, which was founded by young activists of color in 1980. These young activists worked out of the Chicano Communications Center here in Albuquerque at what is now known as the Harwood Art Center. The father of our current Executive Director was one of those young Chicano activists. His name is Joaquín Luján. And he is one of my most cherished mentors. To me, he embodies the great pride we at SWOP take in our history of resistance and resilience.

Our book, *500 Years of Chicano History in Pictures*, was first published by the Chicano Communications Center in 1976 as *450 Years of Chicano History*. This

book was carried out on the shoulders of fierce Chicanas, with compañeros like Joaquin taking their place in supporting these chingonas with a vision. I've been told the making of this book was dramatic. And I believe it without a doubt, because we at SWOP are passionate people. We have been taught storytelling as a way to communicate and organize. My predecessors made sure that this book of our history was told in pictures, in English and in Spanish, because they understood the complicated history of the colonizers trying to rob us of our languages. Our book is popular with our incarcerated brothers and sisters and that is a point of pride for us at SWOP. We have worked to make our history accessible because we believe the people most affected should have the loudest voice at the table of solutions. The beautiful thing about it is that these SWOPistas who came before me carved out a space to tell their stories on their terms, and now thanks to them, here I am, with a space all my own to share my own story with you all.

In 2010, our book was banned in Arizona as an attempt to silence our stories. We reacted by sending thousands of free copies of *500 Years* to Arizona students who wrote to us about why learning their history is important to them. It was clear that the students who wrote to us inherently understood resistance. They flooded us with their desires to access their history through the language of the photos of those who came before them in this struggle.

At SWOP, we also cultivate our culture through food. We grow food as an organizing tool, stacking our compost enchilada style as my compadre Travis would say. Our food justice program is called Project Feed the Hood. It's intergenerational, based in traditional New Mexican agricultural practices, informed by the wisdom of our elders, and fueled by the energy and dreams of our young people. Joaquin has worked arm in arm with Lorenzo Candelaria, Rodrigo Rodriguez, Travis McKenzie and Stefany Olivas over the past decade to build Project Feed the Hood. They've grown it from one community garden to 10 school programs, a paid summer internship, and a transformative justice program model that uplifts the healing power of putting your hands in la tierra.

Through this work of my heart, I have learned from my elders, peers and young people so many lessons in resilience. Lorenzo likes to remind me: "We plant many plants, Marisol, but we harvest consciousness—the ability to understand our

connection to mother earth.” Stefany has taught me to use the term Food Apartheid and to resist the term food desert because we live in a beautiful, thriving ecosystem called a desert here in New Mexico. Travis embodies resilience, digging literal and metaphorical trenches to grow and inspire hundreds of young leaders in our community. Rodrigo has shown me the transformative power of men mentoring young men with palas as organizing tools. And every season, I have watched young SWOPistas grow fruitful like our plants.

The garden is also a space for healing, which my comadre Beva has taught me so much about. To me, Beva’s embraces communicate novels. She has taught me that we belong to nature and our roots are the stories and experiences of our ancestors. When we grow medicine in our gardens, we heal our hearts as we dig and weed and nurture. She taught me that Patriarchy, Colonialism and Capitalism are the root causes of the destruction of our Mother Earth and of violence and poverty in our community. Beva has reminded me of the indigenous teachings of our sisters in community—that the blood that runs through our veins is like the water that runs through our acequias. Beva credits Esteban Arellano when she teaches me how we heal through resistance, we keep planting, we roll with the hail storms, we keep growing and coming back to plant more of the seeds we saved for the next season.

I come from a long line of women who dig acequias in the land and in our brows; women whose unpaid labor has sustained our communities for centuries. And I work with people who link arms with each other to dig trenches, save seeds, plant consciousness, and fight fiercely to make space at the table for the voice of our communities. Resilience has been part of my culture forever. I could have been born anywhere else in this world, but I was born here, in this incredible, sacred land. My love for New Mexico overpowers me. And every day I get to work on saving the seeds of resilience in my family’s history and of our Chicano History, and planting these seeds with my peers so we can grow them with our elders and with our children. And we will be unafraid for the storms that are sure to come because they will bring us water y agua es vida.

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Reclaiming Tribal Identity in the Land of the Spirit Waters: The Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation

Adrian Chavana

The San Antonio River, originally called *Yanaguana*, by the Indigenous Payaya people who were sustained by it for nearly 11,000 years, was also the lifeblood that sustained five Spanish colonial-era Catholic missions founded along its banks in the early 1700s.¹ Today, the modern-day descendants of the eighteenth-century San Antonio Mission Indians who built, lived in, were baptized, married, and ultimately buried (and reburied) in the five missions along the San Antonio River banks are actively reclaiming their Indigenous identity, carving out space for the voices of the Indigenous people of the region.² The ceremonial use of peyote by modern-day descendants of San Antonio's eighteenth-century Mission Indians points to evidence of Coahuiltecan cultural survival across time, and, has very real implications for the tribe, particularly with respect to issues of recognition. This paper, through a case study of the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation in San Antonio, Texas, will interrogate issues of tribal resurgence, *mestizaje*, and the politics of recognition—both state and federal recognition of a Native tribe, and the politics of recognition across Indian Country at-large. Contrary to dominant narratives in the academic literature and popular literature, the Indigenous people of South Texas not only never went extinct, but, are both actively reclaiming their indigenous identity, and, pushing back against narratives of Coahuiltecan extinction.³

The Struggle for Ancestral Remains: Repatriations and Reburials

On November 26, 1999, two tipis were erected on the grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano in the South Side of San Antonio, Texas. That evening, members of the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation conducted an all-night Native American Church prayer service in one tipi, while the skeletal remains of approximately 150 of their relatives sat unaccompanied in the other tipi, waiting for a proper reburial in the morning.⁴ The remains, mostly eighteenth-century

Coahuiltecan neophytes, were excavated in the late 1960's and early 1970's by archeologists during renovations of Mission San Juan Capistrano, but for over thirty years, were not returned to those who could, because of the Native American Graves Protection and Reparation Act (NAGPRA), be considered next of kin through cultural affiliation ties.⁵ Instead, some were put on display as public artifacts in museums and universities across Texas; some were stored in boxes on the shelves of these institutions, with ultimately very little research conducted on any of the excavated remains.⁶

In 1994, approximately twenty five years after the Coahuiltecan remains were excavated from Mission San Juan Capistrano, five families of eighteenth-century San Antonio Mission Indian descendants united out of political necessity; The Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation, and its non-profit agency, American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions (AIT) were born.⁷ The Nation would serve as a unified voice in the struggle for the repatriation of the human remains, and AIT would begin to provide various services to San Antonio residents at large. According to personal correspondence from Archbishop of San Antonio Patrick Flores to Tāp Pīlam member Raymond Hernández, Flores was more willing to work with a large group, than individuals, who were interested in conducting genealogical research through the Spanish colonial-era mission records (including birth, baptismal, marriage, and death records) held by the Archdiocese in San Antonio.⁸

Creating the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation in 1994, then, was a strategic political decision undertaken by five families of San Antonio Mission Indian descendants.⁹ Raymond Hernández would become one of the most outspoken advocates of the tribe's genealogical research endeavors and repatriation struggle. In a letter dated May 10, 1995 from Archbishop Flores to Hernández, Flores wrote:

Although the process to identify his identity may seem burdensome to one who believes himself to be a descendant of the Mission Indians, it is essentially the same process that a Native American must undertake to qualify as a member of one of the tribes recognized by the federal government. The certification that may be provided by the Archdiocese should be valuable for an individual, or group of individuals, who seek further recognition. As I mentioned, the Archdiocese will be glad to

work with the individuals who are interested in verifying their ancestry and establishing themselves as descendants of the Mission Indians. Should a sizeable group be certified it would perhaps be expedient for them to put forth a representative to act on their behalf with the Archdiocese. In the meantime, the Archdiocese will deal with them on an individual basis.¹⁰

Ultimately, the San Antonio Archdiocese would also work with the Tāp Pīlam in the repatriation and reburial of the human remains, helping the tribe to broker an agreement with University of Texas San Antonio Center for Archeological Research, the Texas Historical Commission, and the National Park Service for the return and reburial of approximately 150 Coahuiltecan neophytes.¹¹ On November 27, 1999 the Nation conducted its first major reburial ceremony on the grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano—the very grounds of the Spanish colonial-era mission their eighteenth-century Coahuiltecan ancestors built, lived in, were baptized, married, and buried in, and on that November morning, were ultimately reburied in. This reburial ceremony served as a very visual representation of what Texas A & M archeologist Alston Thoms has labeled a Coahuiltecan resurgence.

Alongside the on-going repatriation and reburial efforts (there have been two repatriations and reburials since the major 1999 reburial), the tribe's non-profit agency American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions (AIT), began offering services to the San Antonio community at large in 1994. A co-founder of the National Urban Indian Coalition, AIT now offers programs including Healing the Wounded Spirit (Indigenous-based counseling services), fatherhood education and programming as a member of The National Compadres Network, powwows, and cultural arts workshops such as beading classes. Their Four Seasons Indian Market, held quarterly on the grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano, provides a space for Native artists from around the San Antonio area to sell their work, while guided tours of the San Antonio Spanish colonial-era missions educate the public on Coahuiltecan contributions to the missions, to San Antonio, Texas, and the United States.¹²

A Brief Coahuiltecan History, Missionization, and Resurgence

Although the term Coahuiltecan implies a unified, homogenous group of people, there were more than sixty nomadic bands of Coahuiltecan people who lived without a central polity in what is now South Texas prior to the arrival of the Spanish. Living a nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle of seasonal migrations, plant staples of the Coahuiltecan people included mesquite flour, pecan, agave, yucca, and prickly pear cactus, and meat sources included bison, deer, turkey.¹³ Seven distinct languages were spoken—Cotoname, Comecrduo, Solano, Aranama, Mamulique, Garza, and Coahuilteco (Pakawa/Tejano).¹⁴ These seven, largely mutually unintelligible languages, are considered by linguists to be language isolates. That is, none of the languages are related to any of the fifty-eight major American Indian language families, a consequence of the uninterrupted occupation of the region for 11,000 years.¹⁵ Despite political and social differences, the various Coahuiltecan bands did have one thing in common—the *mitote* ceremony. An all-night ceremony of singing, drumming, dancing, and the ceremonial consumption of the peyote cactus, this ancient religious ceremony is well documented by Spanish missionaries. Unlike in central Mexico, however, where peyote use by Indigenous peoples was heavily prosecuted by courts of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, the peyote ceremony in South Texas was kept alive, and even spread to other Indigenous people, through strategic Coahuiltecan negotiation of the Spanish missions in South Texas.¹⁶

In 1718, the first of five Spanish Catholic missions along the banks of the San Antonio River, Mission San Antonio de Valero (more commonly known as the Alamo), was established.¹⁷ By 1731, four more missions would be established along the banks of the San Antonio River, all within a few miles apart of each other—Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña, San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, San Juan Capistrano, and San Francisco de la Espada. With their populations already decimated by Spanish diseases, and facing continued Apache and Comanche raids from the north, as well as Spanish settler encroachments from the south, the various bands of Coahuiltecan Indians around the San Antonio area strategically took up seasonal residence at the missions to ensure their own survival. Band names recorded in Spanish colonial-era records of the San Antonio missions include Payaya, Pajalat, Xarame, Orejonos, Borrados, and Manos de Perro, to name just a few.¹⁸

Until quite recently, the historiography of the Coahuiltecan Mission Indians of San Antonio has pointed either to their complete extinction, as

understood in the traditional sense of the word extinction, or to their absorption into the rapidly growing, mostly mestizo, ethnic Mexican/Tejano population of the late Spanish colonial/early Mexican Republic eras, particularly through intermarriage.¹⁹ Most of the academic literature concludes that by the mid-1800s, the San Antonio Mission Indians were so unrecognizable as a distinct indigenous ethnic group that *de facto* extinction through Hispanicization was the only plausible explanation of what happened to the Indigenous people of South Texas. Historian Raul Ramos explains that “secularization of the missions in 1823 started the process of Indian ‘disappearance’ in Bexár (San Antonio)... many became Tejano, intermarrying with Mexicans and becoming ethnic Mexicans outright.”²⁰ Nonetheless, scholars like historian Raul Ramos and archeologist Alston Thoms have left room for more nuanced approaches to understand what happened to the Mission Indians of San Antonio, explaining that “the historical construction of Mexican ethnicity along the lines of Indian identity meant this would be a complicated incorporation at best...the levels of identity themselves are blurred and overlap at the edges.”²¹ The negotiation of multiple, overlapping identities, then, is crucial to understanding the ways in which descendants of San Antonio’s Mission Indians have wrestled with questions of *mestizaje* in the U.S./Mexico borderlands. The Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation, through its activism, reclaiming of language, ceremonial practices, and services offered to the San Antonio community at-large actively pushes back against ideas of Coahuiltecan extinction that have dominated both the scholarship, and the popular settler imagination in Texas, for the past three hundred years.

The Politics of Recognition, Peyote, and NAGPRA

There are three federally recognized tribes in Texas- The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, and Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. Following the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the Ysleta del Sur (so called so as to be distinguished from the Isleta who remained and/or returned to the pueblo in New Mexico after the revolt), fled with the ousted Spanish and settled in present day El Paso in 1682.²² A recent exercise in sovereignty, Project Tiwahu: Redefining Tigua Citizenship, undertaken by the Ystela del Sur resulted in the tribe changing its enrollment criteria (previously set by the federal government in the mid-1980’s during restoration of a government-to-government relationship) to reflect the wishes of its citizenship. After close engagement with its citizens through direct outreach and surveys, the tribe won its exercise in self-

determination, successfully changing its tribal enrollment criteria to include a less restrictive blood quantum, and, a larger consideration of lineal and lateral descent, doubling the size of its citizenship.²³

The Alabama and Coushatta tribes, two distinct but culturally related tribes, were part of the larger Creek Confederacy. Entering Spanish-controlled Texas in the 1780s, the two tribes would eventually merge into one nation when the State of Texas created a reservation in 1854 for the Alabama; the Coushatta would join them there.²⁴ Currently the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas is engaged in litigation with the State of Texas regarding its casino on its reservation. The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas is the only tribe allowed by the State of Texas to have gaming, a consequence of the different ways in which government-to-government relationships were restored between the tribes, the federal government, and the state after termination.

The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas is one of three federally recognized Kickapoo nations in the United States, and the most southerly of the Kickapoo diaspora. Fleeing Anglo settler encroachments on their traditional homeland between Lake Michigan and Lake Erie, the nation now known as The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas accepted the invitation of the Spanish colonial government to settle in Texas.²⁵ It was the hope of the Spanish to use the Kickapoo as a strategic buffer against Anglo incursions. The Mexican War for Independence and the Texas War for Independence led to an increase in the Anglo settler population and Kickapoos, by this time straddling both sides of the Rio Grande, led raiding parties against the Anglo with their Cherokee, Delaware, Caddo, and Seminole allies. As a reward for their service the Mexican government awarded them land in Texas, which they would later trade for land in Múzquiz, Coahuila.²⁶

Between the mid-1950s and late 1960s, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and the Alabama-Coushatta saw their government-to-government relationship with the U.S. government terminated by the U.S. Congress, reflecting the larger termination policy that affected more than one hundred Indian tribes between the mid-1940s and mid-1960s.²⁷ In 1965, The Texas Indian Commission was established and would engage in government-to-government relationships with the three tribes until restoration (or in the case of the Kickapoo, initial recognition) of their status of sovereign nations by the U.S. government in the

mid-1980s.²⁸ The Texas Indian Commission disbanded in 1989, as government-to-government relationships between the tribes and the federal government resumed. Although the disbanding of the Texas Indian Commission left no mechanism for official state recognition of Indian tribes, resolutions passed in 2001 in both the Texas House and Texas Senate recognize the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation for the historic and contemporary contributions of Coahuiltecan people to the State of Texas, and to the nation.²⁹ The Texas Senate version reads, in part:

WHEREAS, During the early 1700s, a number of Native American groups were converted to Christianity, and members of the Coahuiltecan tribe and other groups performed important duties at the missions, such as constructing dams and irrigation canals, working in the fields and as cowboys, and helping to build communities; and

WHEREAS, Unlike the traditions of many Native American tribes, the proud rituals and traditions of the Coahuiltecan have endured, and many aspects of the tribe's early life remain the same today; time-honored occasions, such as Indian Decoration Day, are still celebrated, and ceremonial music and dress are still in use; and

WHEREAS, The Coahuiltecan have played an important role in Texas history, and they have enriched our culture by preserving and sharing their heritage and customs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 77th Legislature, hereby commend the Tāp Pīlam -Coahuiltecan for their exemplary preservation of their heritage and their many contributions to the culture of our state and nation.

As a non-federally recognized tribe, the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation's membership in the Native American Church of North America sheds new light on the politics of recognition in Indian Country, as membership has traditionally been limited to federally recognized tribes. As Indigenous Peoples of the U.S./Mexico borderlands, Tāp Pīlam members embrace multiple, overlapping identities including Coahuilteco/a, Tejano/a, Chicano/a, and Mexicano/o.³⁰ For members of the Tāp Pīlam, the use of peyote is a birthright that predates any of

the European colonial projects on the continent, with the earliest evidence of Coahuiltecan ceremonial peyote use carbon dated to approximately 8,000 years ago.³¹ Archival sources, combined with oral histories conducted with tribal members between 2017 and 2019, point to a long history of personal relationships between non-federally recognized indigenous people of South Texas, and members of federally recognized tribes across Indian country. An article in the January 12th, 1926 edition of the *San Antonio Express News* details early twentieth century pilgrimages by the Comanche from Lawton, Oklahoma to a private ranch in South Texas to harvest peyote.³² A reference to a guide from “the Indian colony in San Antonio” sheds light on the role of the Indigenous people of South Texas in the making of the modern Native American Church. Tribal elder Ramon Vásquez also spoke of a letter he held in his collection from a tribe in Oklahoma acknowledging the guidance of Coahuiltecan families from San Antonio in the peyote tradition.³³ Taken together, this evidence indicates that Indigenous people of South Texas (both likely Coahuiltecan and Lipan Apache people) have served as teachers and mentors of the peyote ceremony to members of federally recognized tribes since at least the early 1900’s.

The first chapter of the Native American Church was incorporated in 1918 and would rapidly spread across Indian Country, providing an inter-tribal space for prayer and healing at a particularly bleak time for Native Americans. Harassment and imprisonment of Native American Church members led to Indian political activism, resulting first in the 1978 American Indian Religious Freedom Act, and subsequently, the 1994 amendments to that act explicitly protecting ceremonial use of peyote by members of federally recognized tribes.³⁴

Left in a legal grey area with respect to federal protection as a member of a non-federally recognized tribe, Isaac Cárdenas, Tāp Pīlam tribal elder has nonetheless served as Texas delegate-at-large to the Native American Church of North America between 2007 and the present writing (2019). Cárdenas explained in his 2017 interview at the American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions office in San Antonio:

Our history with the medicine (peyote) goes back to even those mescal beans that you're wearing. We have a lineal history. Our lineage helps us know our identity; it shows us our identity. We've always had the medicine. It grows in our backyard. We would use it for our *mitotes*, we use it for our bear dance, we use it for our healings. We use it as a healing

herb that we use for cuts. We use it for all different types of medicinal purposes. I think it's what keeps me going.³⁵

Cárdenas also explained that his introduction to the medicine was through his grandfather who took him to ceremonies in the peyote gardens of South Texas, the home of Amada Cárdenas, affectionately called Grandma Cárdenas by members of the Native American Church, and, the first federally licensed peyote dealer.³⁶ Her private ranch in South Texas became a pilgrimage site to members of the Native American Church who journeyed from throughout the United States to conduct all night prayer services, and return home with a supply of their sacrament. It was at this pilgrimage site that Cárdenas learned the intricacies of the Native American Church prayer service and began to build relationships with Church members across Indian Country, eventually becoming the Texas delegate-at-large to the Native American Church. He recalls of a Native American Church business meeting in Austin, Texas:

They expressed who they were, and we got information for the next convention that was going to happen in Mayetta, Kansas with the Pottawatomí—Prairie People. So, we had to get our by-laws together, we had to create our charter, our 250 dollars to join. The state recognizes us, whatever that means. We have a letter from the federal government that recognizes who we are, but we're not officially federally recognized. So, with those documents we were admitted.³⁷

Other members of the Tāp Pīlam have also formed relationships with well-known and well respected members of the Native American Church over the years, further cementing the bond with, and inherent recognition by, federally recognized tribes as indigenous people of South Texas. Raymond Hernández traces his Coahuiltecan ancestry through both his grandfather's stories and the Spanish colonial-era records of Mission San Antonio de Valero, more commonly known as The Alamo. Popular narratives have rendered the Alamo, which was used as makeshift military fort by Anglos during the Texas War for Independence from Mexico, a bastion of White progress and American exceptionalism. For Coahuiltecan people, it holds a very different meaning. Hernández recalls of walks with his grandfather in downtown San Antonio:

He'd take me to the Alamo. He would tell me about certain family members that were there. One of the first ones that he could recall

from that line of family, my maternal, was a lady named Josefa whose parents were from the Papanac people, and Seneca—that's the way it's spelled. Now whether it's the Seneca of the Seneca Nation from New York, I have no idea. I just know how it's recorded in the archives. And we documented it, and had the (San Antonio) Archdiocese validate that it was authentic, from the actual book of the *nacimientos y bautismos* (births and baptisms). We were not allowed to go inside the Alamo, because of that era (Jim Crow South). And he would pray outside, across the street from the Alamo and we'd have our little sandwiches, and he'd leave the little offerings, you know, humble things.³⁸

In his interview at the AIT office, Hernández spoke of the personal relationships he built over the years with people including William Tall Bull, Floyd Youngman, and Anthony Davis, roadmen (spiritual leaders) of the Native American Church who embraced him as an Indigenous person of South Texas, and, who understood his ancestral links to the peyote medicine.³⁹ That members of the Tāp Pīlam fundamentally mark their Coahuiltecan identity through the ceremonial use of peyote points to evidence of Coahuiltecan cultural survival across time, and could have very real implications in NAGPRA related claims in the future, serving as evidence of a cultural affiliation link to the various Coahuiltecan bands who have occupied the San Antonio area for millennia.

At least two NAGPRA compliance reports commissioned by the federal government regarding human remains protocols recommend the Tāp Pīlam be consulted should any Native American remains be found in and around San Antonio on federal property at any time in the future.⁴⁰ Letters from the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, and the National Park Service invite the Tāp Pīlam to be a part of NAGPRA human remains and funerary objects protocol discussions with them.⁴¹ These recommendations are unique, in that they go beyond the consultations required of the federal government by the letter of NAGRPR law, as the Tāp Pīlam is not a federally-recognized tribe. In May of 2000, The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, a federally recognized tribe located in Oklahoma, passed a tribal council resolution in support of:

our traditional tribal neighbors, the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation of San Antonio, Texas in their efforts and activities to protect and preserve their sacred sites, burial grounds, and artifacts, and hereby sponsor participation of the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation in all

official and appropriate matters involving their traditional homeland to include properties owned and controlled by the U.S. government.⁴²

In effect, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes declared themselves a sponsor of the Tāp Pīlam in NAGPRA related issues through this tribal council resolution. Although NAGPRA laws only apply to federally recognized tribes, this paper trail of *de facto* recognition by at least one federally recognized tribe could have very real implications for the Tāp Pīlam in future NAGPRA claims if the tribe ever receives federal recognition.

To be sure, there has been pushback against the Tāp Pīlam from groups and individuals who also claim San Antonio Mission Indian descent. These groups and individuals argue that the Tāp Pīlam should not be the only group consulted, at the exclusion of other Mission Indian descendants, in issues related to the repatriation and reburial of human remains. Nonetheless, the Tāp Pīlam continues with its activism regarding human remains and funerary objects. The front page story on the September 11, 2019 edition of *San Antonio Express News*, “Group Files Suit Over Alamo Changes: Native American Descendants Want Say Over Remains,” speaks to the tribe’s view of the San Antonio missions as their ancestors’ final resting place.⁴³ Major renovation plans at the Alamo (Mission San Antonio de Valero) have excluded the Tāp Pīlam from the human remains protocol, prompting the tribe to file a federal lawsuit to “protect the rights of the lineal descendants to participate in determining what happens to any of the human remains that will be discovered.”

Conclusion

The Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation is in the midst of a tribal and cultural resurgence. At the heart of the resurgence, in part, is ceremonial use of peyote—evidence of Coahuiltecan survival across time—a cultural affiliation link to the various early bands of Coahuiltecan that inhabited what is now South Texas. This cultural affiliation link could serve as a foundation for future NAGPRA cultural affiliation human remains and funerary objects claims should the tribe ever receive federal recognition. Tribal members are actively reclaiming their indigenous identity, and simultaneously, pushing back against narratives of Coahuiltecan extinction. The Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation’s non-profit agency, American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions, provides

Indigenous-based services to San Antonio residents at-large, carving out a space in an urban area whose romanticization of its Spanish/Mexican and Anglo heritage has often silenced the legacy and voices of both historic and contemporary Coahuiltecan people. Coahuiltecan language classes, Coahuiltecan-led tours of the San Antonio Missions, pow-wows, and Indian markets are all readily visible signs of tribal resurgence.

As I move my dissertation research and writing process forward, using Indigenous research methodologies in both archival research and the oral histories, I hope that my work will shed light on the continuity of the peyote ceremony amongst Coahuiltecan people, revealing multiple links, and possibly strengthening future NAGPRA cultural affiliation claims for the tribe.

NOTES

¹ Cárdenas, Isaac (Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation tribal elder, Texas delegate at-large to the Native American Church), interviewed by Adrian Chavana at the American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions office (digital audio recording), June 14, 2017; Vásquez, Ramón (Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation tribal elder, American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions Executive Director), interviewed by Adrian Chavana at the American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions office (digital audio recording), June 14, 2017; Thomas N. Campbell, Handbook of Texas Online, “Payaya Indians,” <http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/bmp53>. The Payaya are one band of Coahuiltecan people in the larger, problematic, Coahuiltecan cultural umbrella. One reason Coahuiltecan as an umbrella term is problematic is because the approximately sixty bands of Coahuiltecan Indians in what is now South Texas often had little in common, both socially and politically. Seven distinct languages were spoken, and it was only through the colonial Spanish mission system that a

Coahuiltecan *lingua franca* emerged. *Yanaguana* means Spirit Waters in Coahuilteco according to Isaac Cárdenas; According to Vásquez, Tāp Pīlam means People of the Earth in Coahuilteco.

² Claims by tribal members to be direct lineal descendants of eighteenth-century San Antonio Mission Indians have been contentious. Based on my research thus far, it seems that some tribal members may have no direct lineal descent from San Antonio Mission Indians, instead tracing their Mission Indian descent from Coahuiltecan Indians who resided in the Catholic missions in what is now the Mexican state of Coahuila. Nonetheless, as a tribal nation asserting its sovereignty, enrollment criteria is set by the tribe. Following the recommendations for further research by Texas A & M archeologist Alston Thoms, I have begun the process of working with tribal members to build on and expand the family genealogies tracing Mission Indian descent, some of which have already been completed by tribal elder Ramón Vásquez.

³ Alston V. Thoms et al., *Reassessing Cultural Extinction: Change and Survival at Mission San Juan Capistrano, Texas* (College Station: Texas A & M University, Center for Ecological Archeology and San Antonio Missions National Historical Parks, National Park Service joint publication, 2001). In this NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) compliance report, Thoms conducts a literature review of both the academic and popular literature, assessing the ways in which narratives of Coahuiltecan extinction have played out since the Spanish colonial era. Thoms ultimately concludes that Coahuiltecan people are not extinct, and that Mission Indian descendants in San Antonio are both culturally affiliated to and likely direct lineal descendants of Coahuiltecan neophytes buried in all five San Antonio Spanish colonial-era missions. My dissertation builds on his recommendations for further research.

⁴ Cárdenas (Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation tribal elder, Texas delegate at-large to the Native American Church), 2017; Barrios, Joseph. “Indian Remains Reburial Today.” *San Antonio Express News*, November 27, 1999.

⁵ Mardith Schuetz, “The Indians of the San Antonio Missions, 1718-1821” PhD diss., (University of Texas at Austin, 1980), Box 1, American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions private archive, San Antonio, Texas. Burying neophytes at the mission they resided in was customary. Schuetz concludes that none of the Coahuiltecan remains (so-identified through bone structure) could be traced to a specific person listed in the mission records, rendering the remains unidentifiable. Although the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation was not created until 1994, individuals of Mission Indian descent had begun independently working on

the repatriation of remains by the early 1980's. EN: Passed in 1990, the Native American Graves Protection and Reparation Act requires institutions receiving federal funding to inventory all Indigenous collections, consult with federally recognized tribes, and repatriate human remains as well as many cultural items.

⁶ Alston Thoms et al., "Reassessing Cultural Extinction: Change and Survival at Mission San Juan Capistrano, Texas," *Reports of Investigations No. 4* Center for Ecological Archaeology Texas A&M University and San Antonio Missions National Historical Parks, Texas National Park Service, 2001.

⁷ Vásquez (Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation tribal elder, American Indians in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions Executive Director), 2017. The five founding families of the Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation and the band each represents is as follows: Raymond Hernández (Pa-na-ma Payaya), Mickey Killian (Pampopa), Teodoso Herrera (Venado), Ramón Vásquez y Sánchez (Auteca Paguame), and Casanova (Pampopa).

⁸ Thoms. Oral histories kept alive in these Mission Indian descendant communities, passed down from generation to generation, were often the only way to know which mission one's ancestor resided at prior to a concerted effort by Mission Indian descendants and cooperation from the Archdiocese. The Tāp Pīlam's archival work tracing Mission Indian descent began in earnest in the early 1990s and continues today.

⁹ There is room for debate here whether this is a Coahuiltecan resurgence or ethnogenesis, as there was never a singular Coahuiltecan tribe, and the Tāp Pīlam is comprised of descendants from different Coahuiltecan bands.

¹⁰ Thoms.

¹¹ *Ibid.* Although the National Park Service did not have jurisdiction over Mission San Juan Capistrano when the remains were unearthed, it assumed a co-management role with the San Antonio Archdiocese when it became a part of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park in 1983, along with three other missions along the banks of the San Antonio River. These four missions—Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña, San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, San Juan Capistrano, and San Francisco de la Espada, along with San Antonio de Valero (The Alamo) also became a UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Site (one of only ten such sites in the United States) in 2015, largely because of Tāp Pīlam activism. Catholic mass services are still held at all the

missions except Valero, with each congregation still largely comprised of Mission Indian descendants.

¹² AIT brochure. *Keeping the Culture Alive*. San Antonio, AIT, 2017.

¹³ Thomas Hester, *Digging Into South Texas Prehistory* (San Antonio: Corona Publishing Company, 1980); Bobbie L. Lovett et al., *Native American Peoples of South Texas* (Edinburg: University of Texas Pan American University, 2014).

¹⁴ Ives Goddard, “The Languages of South Texas and the Lower Rio Grande Valley”, in *The Languages of Native America*, eds. L. Campbell and M. Mithun (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), p. 355-389.

¹⁵ Rudolph C. Troike, “Sketch of Coahuilteco, a Language Isolate of Texas,” in *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. 17: *Languages*, ed. Ives Goddard (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1996), p. 644-665.

¹⁶ Omer Stewart, *Peyote Religion: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987). Archeologists radio-carbon date the earliest ceremonial peyote use to approximately 8,000 years ago.

¹⁷ Mission San Antonio de Valero is more commonly known as the Alamo. Its role in the Texas War for Independence often overshadows its Spanish colonial-era establishment as a Franciscan mission, where mostly Coahuiltecan Indians lived.

¹⁸ T.N. Campbell and T.J. Campbell, *Indian Groups Associated with Spanish Missions of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park*. (San Antonio: Center for Archeological Research, The University of Texas San Antonio Special Report No. 16, 1985). As was common throughout the Spanish empire in the Americas, Spaniards grafted names onto people based on what they perceived to be their physical appearance and/or the geography of the region, hence we see names like Orejones (Big Ears) and Borrados (Painted Ones). Other names like Xarame and Pajalat are probably Spanish approximations of what these indigenous people called themselves. Although a small number of people from other nations (including the Lipan Apache) resided at the missions, Coahuiltecan bands represented the majority of the Indian converts at the missions.

¹⁹ Campbell, T. N. *The Payaya Indians of Southern Texas* (San Antonio: Southern Texas Archaeological Association, 1975); Campbell, T. N. *Ethnic Identities of Extinct Coahuiltecan Populations: Case of the Juanca Indians* (Austin: Texas

Memorial Museum, 1977); W.W. Newcomb, *The Indians of Texas, from Prehistoric to Modern Times* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961); Thoms.

²⁰ Raul Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo: Forging Mexican Ethnicity in San Antonio, 1821-1861*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), p. 78. Secularization refers to changing the status from a mission to a local parish. When the San Antonio missions were secularized in the late Spanish/early Mexican period, Mission Indians received plots of land adjacent to the missions, and thus today, Mission Indian identity remains strongest in the neighborhoods immediately surrounding the missions.

²¹ Ramos, *Beyond the Alamo* p. 58.

²² Ysleta del Sur Pueblo official website, <https://www.ysletadelsurpueblo.org/>; Bill Wright, Handbook of Texas Online, “Tigua Indians,” <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/bmt45>.

²³ Project Tiwahu: Redefining Tigua Citizenship, https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/CAJSCwwIT83_LA.

²⁴ Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas official website, <http://www.alabama-coushatta.com/>; Howard N. Martin, Handbook of Texas Online “Alabama-Coushatta Indians”, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/bma19>.

²⁵ The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas official website, <https://kickapootexas.org/>; M. Christopher Nunley, Handbook of Texas Online, “Kickapoo Indians”, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/bmk09>.

²⁶ M. Christopher Nunley, “Kickapoo Indians”.

²⁷ “Indian Termination Policy”, *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_termination_policy; Nunley. The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas did not receive federal recognition until 1983. Before that, their migratory nature between the United States and Mexico resulted in an unclear citizenship status.

²⁸ John R. Wunder, “Texas Indian Commission”, Handbook of Texas Online, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mdt38>.

²⁹ Texas Legislature Online, 77(R) HR 787; 77(R) SR 1038. <https://capitol.texas.gov/>

³⁰ Cárdenas, Hernández, and Vásquez (tribal elders). The Native American Church is an inter-tribal religion that uses peyote as a sacrament. It is the largest modern-day Native American religion after Christianity.

³¹ Stewart, *Peyote Religion*, 1987.

³² “Indians Establish Camp in Kenney Co Where Religious Rite Weed, Under US Ban, Found,” *San Antonio Express News*, January 12, 1926, Peyote folder, Texas State Library and Archives, Austin, Texas.

³³ Although I was given unprecedented and almost unlimited access to the Tāp Pīlam private archive, the one box I was asked to not look in was labeled NACNA (Native American Church of North America), likely due to sensitive legal and political issues. I suspect this letter to be in this box. Moving forward with my dissertation, I must consider how to move forward with this sensitive subject, and even perhaps, ultimately deciding to not write about it, employing what Audra Simpson calls “ethnographic refusal.”

³⁴ Peyote is classified as a Schedule I controlled substance by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. Legal exemptions exist for members of federally recognized tribes who are members of the Native American Church. Tāp Pīlam membership in the Native American Church, then, can be seen as *de facto* recognition across Indian Country as indigenous people of South Texas with historical ties to peyote, although that too has been contentious within the NAC.

³⁵ Cárdenas.

³⁶ Stacey B. Schaefer, *Amada’s Blessings from the Peyote Gardens of South Texas* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2015).

³⁷ Here, Cárdenas is referring to the Texas House and Senate resolutions, as well as to one of several letters from the U.S. Army, the National Park Service, or the U.S. Airforce recognizing the Tāp Pīlam as Indigenous people of South Texas. Although the Tāp Pīlam is not federally recognized, many of these letters speak to issues of human and funerary remains, going beyond the consultations required by the letter of NAGRPR law.

³⁸ Hernández, Raymond (Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation tribal elder, tribal Cultural Preservationist), interviewed by Adrian Chavana at the American Indians

in Texas at the Spanish Colonial Missions offices (digital audio recording), June 16, 2017.

³⁹ Peter J. Powell, *Sweet Medicine: The Continuing Role of the Sacred Arrows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969). William Tall Bull is the paternal great-grandson of the noted Cheyenne Dog Soldier chief who was killed at Summit Springs, an Indian retaliation in the wake of the Sand Creek Massacre carried out by the U.S. Army, and part of the larger so-called Indian Wars. Anthony Davis, Pawnee, was a former president of the Native American Church and a well-known roadman in Texas and Oklahoma.

⁴⁰ Fields, Ross and Gardner, Karen. *Cultural Affiliation Overview for Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis Training Site, Bexar and Comal Counties, Texas*. Prewitt and Associates, Inc., January 2000, Box 10 (archeological reports), AIT private archive; Thoms.

⁴¹ AIT Private archive (personal correspondence); Thoms. The National Park Service assumed a co-management position with the Arch Diocese of San Antonio of four of the five missions in San Antonio (all except San Antonio del Valero) when The San Antonio Missions National Historical Park was established in 1983. San Antonio de Valero was under the care and jurisdiction of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (a non-profit organization) until the Texas General Land Office assumed control in 2015.

⁴² Thoms.

⁴³ Huddleston, Scott. “Group Files Suit Over Alamo Changes: Native American Descendants Want Say Over Remains,” *San Antonio Express News*, September 11, 2019.

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PART TWO: COMMUNITY BUILDING/COMMUNITY COALITION

The ancestors knew we were coming
They left work for us
Now we carry their wisdom forward.
Know who you are, sabe quién eres
Know your land, conoce tú tierra
Learn your language, aprende tú idioma

Inés Talamantez, *Una invitación consiente*

A Practicing Doula Testimonio: Creating Space for Indigenous Reproductive Justice

Yesenia Olmos

As I sit down to type, there are babies being born around the world. However, more than half will receive inadequate, and for some, inhumane treatment. This was the case for me when I was born nineteen years ago on November 18, 1999. My mother underwent two traumatic surgeries that left her sterilized for the rest of her life. But why did a woman like my mother have to undergo two consecutive surgeries? It is because a licensed doctor “accidentally” left a sterile needle inside her womb after performing a cesarean delivery. Accidents do happen in operating rooms, but today, as throughout the twentieth-century, they are happening consecutively, especially to women of color. It is important to recognize that women giving birth in hospitals is a 20th century concept. Before the existence of hospitals, women gave birth in their homes with midwives, and Indigenous peoples delivered their babies in sweat lodges where only women were allowed to enter. Birth was perceived as a sacred ritual that embraced the beauty of life and the strength of women; what happened to these practices?

In this paper, I discuss how my experience as an undergraduate at California State University, Channel Islands (CSUCI) influenced my research of natural birthing practices and reproductive justice as a global right. Specifically, I address my experiences as a practicing doula and birth worker alongside my first teacher, Tema Mercado. Lastly, I discuss a birth working class I will be taking in October of 2019 while on a one-year study abroad program in Santiago, Chile. The class will be taught by the Puerto Rican veteran doula and teacher, Rita Aparicio.

As human beings we have the fundamental rights to be born, to live, and to die because it is the natural way of life. Between all this we must realize that things do go wrong, this is part of our humanity. However, we must aptly observe

the ripple effects that have caused the human rights of so many people to be tarnished. We first must educate each other about building a healthy relationship with our sexuality and sensuality so that institutionalized laws—such as the one that affected my mother—do not continue. During the 20th century multiple laws were passed regarding population control. One of the earliest laws was “Law 116,” passed in 1937 which institutionalized a population control program.¹ The law legalized sterilization without consent, and would be used to target Latina, African American, and Native American women. Funding and resources for sterilizations targeted states such as Puerto Rico, New York, California, Alabama, and North Carolina, where there were significant populations of minority women.²

My fundamental goal in researching women’s reproductive health and birthing options came from my mothers’ traumatic experience in the hospital. Today what I am asking of our institutionalized spaces is collaboration, so that traditional as well as institutionalized western medicine can learn to cohabit so that we can learn from one another. Thus I do not reject procedures such as cesareans, which have saved the lives of countless women, yet we must critique the fact that seventy percent of caesarean births are done without medical reasoning.³

If doulas as well as midwives (*parteras*) were institutionalized women would be more aware of their options. This would also create a more humanizing birthing practice. Mothers could make informed decisions regarding whether vaginal birth or cesarean birth were best for themselves and their babies; they could also make very basic decisions such as their preferred physical positioning when giving birth. Unlike midwives who deliver babies, doulas are the woman’s companion throughout her stages of pregnancy. This reciprocity is called “women

¹ Kathryn Kruse, “History of Forced Sterilization and current U.S. Abuses”, in *Our Bodies Ourselves*, edited by the Boston Women’s Health Books Collective (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014).

² Suzanne Tessler, “Compulsory Sterilization Practices,” *Frontiers* 1 no. 2 (Spring 1976): 52-66; Elena R. Gutiérrez, *Fertile Matters: The Politics of Mexican-Origin Women’s Reproduction* (Austin: University of Texas, 2008).

³ Centro Cristal Luz, “Entrevista a Rita Aparicio,” November 25, 2015, YouTube video, 00:54. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zISHnUBW0oU>.

helping women.”⁴ Doulas as well as midwives work with mothers no matter the income. There is a misconception that only women of a higher economic class can afford doulas—and this is a misconception as I will address below.

As an incoming freshman during the fall 2018 semester, I had the opportunity to apply to attend a three-day workshop on “doula training” titled “Birthing Sin Frontera: Midwifery and Reproductive Justice On The Border.”⁵ Intrigued, I submitted my application where I had to answer the following question: “Tell us why you want to be a doula.” In an effort to answer this question I researched the roots of the tradition and discovered that in Greek “doula” meant “to serve.” In ancient times this role was given to respected female slaves who helped in the household. I was still unsure about what a modern doula was, so I consulted with my mother. She verified with me that the term in Spanish meant *asistente partera*.⁶

As discussed above, I was motivated to learn more about reproductive justice because of my mother’s traumatic experience, but what I learned from my sister further fueled my desire to learn more. Through her research into our family history, I learned that both of my grandmothers were skilled in herbal medicine and natural birthing. On the Mexican side of my family, my paternal great grandma was a *curandera*, and from my Salvadorian family my maternal grandma was both a *partera* and *curandera*. Coming from a lineage such as this, I felt called to this practice.

I completed my application, was accepted to the program on full scholarship, and soon found myself immersed in a program that addressed many of the questions I brought with me. At our first session, I met licensed Midwife, Tema Mercado, a renowned birth worker who works on the borders of Mexico, in the state of Baja California and in the city of San Diego to provide women with self-empowered births. Specifically, Tema works on the border to allow Mexican women to have humanized births, addressing a crisis situation where Mexico

⁴ Jan S. Mallack, “Why be a Postpartum Doula?,” *International Journal of Childbirth Education* 20 no. 1 (2005):31.

⁵ Jennie Luna & Tema Mercado, “Birthing sin fronteras: Midwifery and Reproductive Justice On The Border,” workshop at Cal State Channel Islands, Camarillo, CA. March 17, 2019.

⁶ Adela Olmos-Salazar, interview by author, April 15, 2019.

places fourth as a country of obstetrical violence.⁷ During this three day training, we discussed and learned about the art of doulaism, social constructs of birthing, postpartum care, anatomy and physiology of birth, the placenta, breathing techniques, and the magic of the *rebozo*. The training was only open to twenty applicants and extended invitations were sent out to the community members of Oxnard, Ventura and Santa Barbara. The training began March 15^h and concluded on March 17th of 2018.

The workshop was possible, and tuition-free, because , Dr. Jennie Meztli Luna, with Vanessa Terán, program manager for the Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project (MICOP), applied for and won a competitive three-year grant from the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement (NCSCE).⁸ This provided \$2,500 for the program that year and would continue for the following two years. CSUCI was also one of only four institutions in the nation to receive the prestigious award.⁹ Dr. Luna and MICOP used the grant to organize a “culturally responsive doula training program designed for Mixteco and other Indigenous expectant mothers giving birth in local hospitals.”¹⁰ Among the participants was, Vanessa Terán whom I interviewed to get her perspective regarding her reasons for applying to the program and assisting.¹¹

Testimonio:

As a testimonio, I also asked Vanessa her thoughts during the training and her overall view. She began with, “we all learn differently”—this was in reference to the first session. Tema had been talking about the different fetal positions of the baby throughout the stages of pregnancy, something Vanessa had found hard to comprehend. She said, “I was confused, but then she got the 3D baby model and showed the movements visually, and I understood.”¹² Vanessa said she felt

⁷ Tema Mercado. “La Matriz Birth”, 2017, <http://www.lamatrizbirth.com/>.

⁸ “CSUCI Professor and Mixteco Representative Receive Grant to Establish Culturally Sensitive Doula Program,” News Releases *CSU Channel Islands*, March 2, 2019, <https://www.csuci.edu/news/releases/2018-national-science-grant-doula-programs.htm>.

⁹ “CSUCI Professor and Mixteco Representative Receive Grant.”

¹⁰ “CSUCI Professor and Mixteco Representative Receive Grant.”

¹¹ Vanessa Terán. “Interview,” April 12, 2019.

¹² Terán.

exposed at first by being put in a room with women she had never met, but towards the end of the training, she felt “comfortable and at peace”—this was in reference to the third session. The third session was geared towards the full spectrum doula work, in which we were asked to pick a partner and comfort them without touch and only with sound, while the other partner was holding ice in their hand. In this exercise, I was partnered with Vanessa, and from my experience, I can say it was difficult to comfort someone without touching them. Tema required us to work for ten minutes and then said, “Okay, this time we are going to be turning down the lights and you will be using touch, sound and essential oils to comfort one another.” Vanessa, once again was laying on the floor with the cold ice clenched in her fist. She looked tense when Tema allowed us to begin. I remember using the lavender oil and putting it on my wrist and allowing her to smell the essential oil, then, with her permission, I applied the oil to her pressure points. I placed her head onto my lap and began to talk to her with a soothing voice, also known as the doula voice. Unlike the first time, she completely forgot about the cold ice in her hand. This exercise showed us the power of touch. Vanessa expressed that this experiment involved “bonding and trust,” which allowed her to reflect. This was something she enjoyed about the exercise. She referred to it as “equal opportunity,” meaning, there is reciprocity in this type of work because you learn from one another.

Vanessa applied to the program “to support Indigenous communities [because] Oxnard for example was sending complaints to MICOP regarding hospital mistreatment and the language barrier between some women and their doctors.”¹³ MICOP felt there needed to be a support system for the women. Yet Vanessa also noted that providing such wisdom to the community may come with repercussions for the community, such as the “lack of insurance,” and “representation.” She continued by saying, “with work such as this, I believe the challenge is ‘validating’ one’s work to the state.” Vanessa shared that she would like to serve her community from home “without a bureaucratic system bordering her.”¹⁴

The Workshop:

¹³ Terán.

¹⁴ Terán.

The first day of the training, March 15th of 2018, we went over the history of birthing, birthing statistics, anatomy and physiology of birth, dismantling trauma, and the shame of sexuality. On this day, I learned about the power that is taken from women, especially minority women when they are giving birth in hospitals. Among the women present, many mentioned that their mothers too had been closed with gauze, needles, or towels still inside them. This was not a coincidence because birthing is a business for hospitals. Everything from unneeded cesareans to pressured epidurals unnaturally speed up the birth process. The process of giving birth can be over in minutes or last days, this all depends on the women; however, today it is dependent on the doctors' and the hospital's schedule.

The second session involved educating participant about legal issues, for example, dealing with traumatic births and providing advocacy in hospital settings. We also discussed “optimal fetal positioning” and how that can be accomplished by using a *rebozo*. The *rebozo*, is a multifaceted shawl. In Latin America, South America and Mexico, it was used by Indigenous women to hold their infant babies, and as a *faja* during postpartum pregnancies. We learned that the *rebozo* could help get the baby to position correctly with a technique called *sifting*. The idea is to come behind the mother and place the *rebozo* underneath her hips and begin to sift, first to the left and then to the right. We practiced doing this with a partner. Ultimately, the optimal fetal position is head-down, however we must also realize that some women have a differently shaped pelvis and this may result in not being able to give birth vaginally. For this reason, we must always take into account the differences that we all hold. In a case such as this one, a cesarean birth would both save the mother and baby, resulting in a humanized birth.

On the third day, we did full spectrum doula work. It was primarily geared towards postpartum care, which involved baths, placenta medicine, belly binding, breast-feeding, and massaging techniques. My favorite part during this session was when I learned about the placenta, commonly known by birth workers as “the tree of life.” It is called this because of the veins and umbilical cord attached that help form a tree. The placenta is delivered directly after the baby is born; this magical organ that develops during those nine months to feed the baby can once again be used to provide back nutrients to the mother. The placenta is packed with nutrients such as protein and potassium. Consuming the placenta can increase breast milk production, boost energy, regulate hormones and most importantly

help with postpartum depression (PPD).¹⁵ While many opt out of this practice, the placenta derives from nutrients that helped the baby grow healthy and strong throughout a woman's pregnancy. That is why it is important to teach her how to consume the medicine she has produced. The placenta can also be encapsulated and be taken as a daily supplement, an option offered by one of our Xicana doulas, Jaymee Payan. The placenta is steamed, dehydrated, grounded, and placed into pills. This is a process that I have been witness to. Of course, this is only an option, and some may benefit from it, while others may not because all of our bodies react differently.

At the end of our training, we all received a Certificate of Completion. Tema made us realize, however, that a certificate is not something to show off, it is something that needs to be practiced through action. Our ancestors did this work because they were wise enough to know there was a method to birthing, a process, a ritual. Oral Tradition is sacred, and it can only live on if we have those who are willing to continue the teachings. For that reason, I thank Tema for her dedication and transparency in helping women feel empowered and beautiful. With this training, I knew I wanted to be a doula.

Beyond the Workshop:

During winter of 2018, I was offered a paid position to be a student research assistant for Dr. Luna. This opportunity was funded by the Office of Research Scholarship and Creative Activities (RSCA). The funding covered my student research salary, travel, supplies, and other necessities. Thus I began my research on "Reproductive Rights and Health Access for Women," during the spring of 2019.

My first task was to communicate once again with the birth workers that had attended the three-day training the previous year. In 2019, I was able to contact all the twenty doulas and in March 17, 2019 we had our first meeting; this was exactly one year after our initial training. In the meeting, we reconnected with one another and discussed our commitment to the work, future ideas, doula bag essentials, liability issues, and new training sessions. We, of course, came across some difficult issues, the most important one being liability and insurance fees.

¹⁵ American Pregnancy Association, "Placenta Encapsulation," <https://americanpregnancy.org/first-year-of-life/placental-encapsulation/>, accessed April 2019.

Dr. Luna introduced the idea of creating an “Independent Doula Network” that would be independent from the Nursing Program at CSUCI. We will still be affiliated with the university but work more strongly within the community and MICOP. One of our current doulas, Candice Somay Perez, who that year was able to assist in a thirty-hour birth, shared her experience with us noting “it requires a lot of stamina.”¹⁶ Most importantly from this meeting, we discussed our future long-term goals. We decided we would like to open a Reproductive Justice Center. We would offer on call doulas, pamphlets, herbal medicines, trauma prevention seminars, vaginal steamings, and of course, bilingual speakers. We have yet to work out the details, but currently, Dr. Luna’s capstone class is acquiring statistical information via surveys on the women’s birthing experiences in Ventura County.

Currently in Ventura County, we only have two Xicana doulas: one of the doulas is Jaymee Payan, who is skilled in placenta encapsulation and, at the time of this paper was written, had helped deliver 20 babies. I was able to meet with Jaymee to discuss various topics relating to her work. In her own words, she became a doula because, “I felt drawn to it, having a non-medicated birth myself, I felt called to help other women.” She notes, “doula work is demanding” however, “in the end it is always worth it.”¹⁷ Curious to know more about the placenta option, I asked Jaymee how she began this work, how many placentas she had encapsulated and her service fees. I learned that Jaymee was self-taught and began to encapsulate by researching on her own, and she believes in sharing this knowledge with others. She also teaches other aspiring doulas the encapsulation process. In total, Jaymee has encapsulated seventy placentas. I closed my interview with Jaymee by asking her to define the word doula; she responded that being a doula is being a “physical, emotional, educational and sometimes spiritual support for laboring peoples.” She concluded with, “never assume,” this was in regards to how one addresses their clients. Instead of using the word mother, woman, or partner, Jaymee tries to be inclusive and address her clients as people.

Dr. Luna is the second Xicana doula in Ventura County; she has helped deliver over thirty babies. With such a small number of bilingual doulas of color, there is a reason MICOP, along with Dr. Luna are striving to keep this work alive. I am grateful to be a part of a movement that works toward natural birthing rights.

¹⁶ Candice Perez, “Doula Meeting”, March 17, 2019

¹⁷ Jaymee Payan, interview by author, April 27, 2019

I also realize that institutionalized spaces are a worldwide phenomena that are not always harmful, but can be confusing and unsafe if you do not know your rights.

In April of 2019 Bryce and Udobang published an exposé about the death of Nigerian Fashion Designer Folake Oduyoye.¹⁸ Oduyoye, died in custody three years ago after her hospital refused to discharge her because she had not paid an outstanding balance. This global phenomenon is known as hospital detention. I was able to communicate via Instagram with one of the authors, Udobang, to ask her “How can I help?” she replied with, “... I do not know particularly how you can be of help directly, but I think [that] awareness is an important step.”¹⁹ Udobang is correct. We spend far too much time wishing we could help without realizing that awareness is also helpful. Awareness allows you to question and questioning allows one to shift the paradigm.

As we move forward with our current doulas and doula practices, it is our priority to work within our community in Ventura County because the work of doulas does not end once the baby is born. Their work continues with placenta encapsulation, limpias, belly binding, and massaging techniques. For those reasons, the doulas mentioned in this paper are keeping their costs low to make such practices accessible to all women. People in general deserve healthy, humane treatment, and that is what the Reproductive Justice Center will offer.

My training does not end here, while on my study abroad year long program in Santiago, Chile, I will be attending a birthing class taught by Rita Aparicio, founder of ‘Doula Caribe’.²⁰ Aparicio is a midwife from Puerto Rico who has dedicated the last seventeen years of her life to training and educating families all over the world. She is also a professor at the renowned Birthingway College of Midwifery in Portland, Oregon. The course that will be offered is titled “Rita Aparicio in Chile: Certification de Doula,” and it is a forty-hour training. This course is based on more than 25 years of studies that recognize the presence of the doula in the maternity cycle. I will be specifically learning about the work

¹⁸ Emma Bryce and Wana Oduyoye, "Nigerian Hospitals Are Locking Up Women Unable to Pay Their Childbirth Bills," *Vice News*, April 1, 2019, https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/59xxkd/nigeria-hospital-detention-folake-oduyoye.

¹⁹ Wana Udobang, correspondence with author, *Instagram*.

²⁰ Doula Caribe Internacional, “Quienes Somos,” <https://doulacaribe.com/quienes-somos/>. Accessed April 2019.

of doulas in different cultures and how this has contributed to the enrichment of this vocation.

How we are brought into this world affects how we strive and develop on mother earth. For this reason alone, humanized births are critical so that humanity can have a chance at living the cycles of life as naturally as possible. The way we are born has an impact not only on oneself, but also the society in which we live in. Universal rights must be demanded for all, not only humans, but also nature. We live with obstacles such as anxiety, depression, suicide, disease, homophobia and so much more. Life and death however, are natural processes, yet if we allow both to be obstacles, we may never understand the true meaning of what it means to be alive. Respect for all must be our fundamental virtue if we want to advance as a species.

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Cuentos del Sur: Building Relationships of Solidarity with Indigenous Women on Turtle Island

Alexandra Arraiz Matute and Nira Elgueta

In this paper, we describe a community arts program whose goal was to open up spaces for conversations within the Latinx community in Toronto regarding identity, Indigeneity and migration. We also explore how the program began building relationships of solidarity with Indigenous women in Canada, and the complicated relationship between immigration and settlement in the settler-colonial state. In particular, the program sought to begin a conversation around our roles as immigrants on indigenous land, and how our own migration stories and ties to Indigeneity figured in those roles.

In order to better contextualize our work, we begin with a description of the Latinx community with which we work in Toronto. As community workers, this program was guided by the needs that participants expressed and our partnership with grassroots activist organizations within the community. While the program began as a response to inquiries from participant community members to learn a deep and useful history of Canada, the 10-week long program was also successful in ways we did not anticipate. Thus, here we begin by contextualizing our work within the landscape of Toronto and Canada, then provide a description of the program and the topics that were covered. We use some of the participants' words to reflect on the intersections between immigrant and Indigenous solidarity on Turtle Island, ending with some of the outcomes and implications for continuing to expand these conversations within the Latinx community in Canada.

Context:

This research took place in Toronto, Canada, on the traditional land and territory of the Anishinaabe Michisaagig (Mississaugas). As visitors on this land, we wanted to explore how our own legacies of colonialism and displacement

shaped our understandings of indigeneity and how to be better allies to Indigenous women on this land. The Latinx community in Toronto differs from the US community in several important ways. These differences impact not only the makeup of the community itself but also the services and programs that it needs. The Latinx population in Toronto is the largest one in Canada, with over 113,000 people (StatsCan, 2017). It is also one of the most rapidly growing populations and represents over 20 countries from Mexico, Central and South America.

Immigration and America to Canada has been traditionally categorized in 5 waves. Mata (1988) arranges the pattern of Latinx immigration to Canada into four different waves according to circumstances that produce migration; the Lead wave (1950-1970), the Andean wave (1971-1975), the Coup wave (1973-1979) and the Central American wave (since 1981 to present). Veronis (2006) adds to this model a fifth wave of “professional immigrants,” situating their arrival from the 1990’s to the present. While the description of the waves is useful for summarizing demographic data, it is important to note that this information was drawn from available statistics, which obscures the picture of all immigrants coming into Canada. In particular, it excludes those who did not migrate through the traditional immigration system and those with precarious status. Goldring & Landolt (2013) note the challenges in accounting for migrants with precarious status, even using community organization data. They also note that with the proliferation and increase in temporary status programs, there has been an increase in individuals with precarious status, authorized and unauthorized (Goldring & Landolt, 2013). The reliance on traditional demographics data, therefore, homogenizes “waves” of immigration from Latin America, despite the considerable differences in the circumstances that bring people to Canada—circumstances that are shaped by people’s social and economic locations.

While imperfect, the organization of the five waves is helpful in laying out the history of immigration from Latin American countries to Canada, particularly in understanding trends that shape migration patterns between the sites. These waves were shaped by both the socio-political events taking place in Latin America and the shifts in Canadian immigration policy during the last sixty-four years. It is important to note the context that shaped these waves in order to understand part of the heterogeneity in the Latinx community. For example, the first wave is traditionally thought of consisting of a large number of highly politicized individuals, mainly Chilean political refugees. While the second and fifth waves

are thought of as mainly the result of economic and labour opportunities and the third and fourth waves as consisting primarily of socio-political refugees. Of course, within these waves, there is heterogeneity as migration is not accessible to everyone equally, and costly and lengthy immigration processes make traditional immigration inaccessible for more vulnerable populations. In addition, the homogenization that occurs when utilizing the above model often erases Indigenous peoples within migration waves. Nonetheless, this conceptualization is helpful in demonstrating the large variability and heterogeneity of the Latinx community in Canada, and how its diversity is shaped by global circumstances in addition to national immigration policy.

While Latinx immigration to Canada during the 1950s and '60s was not particularly voluminous, it coincided with Ontario's industrial expansion and increased need for labour, which attracted immigrants from Latin America (Mata, 1988). The need for skilled employees brought white-collar workers from some of the more developed economies at the time, most from the south cone, including Argentina and Uruguay (Mata, 1988). Canada's immigration policy at the time, which was focused on "traditional" immigrants of European origin, may have advantaged some Latinxs of European descent (Veronis, 2006). Similarly as Valiani (2013) argues, this policy resulted in more temporary workers arriving to Canada than permanent residents, again obscuring the precarious status of some immigrants who arrived dependent on employers.

This geographic pattern of migration was challenged with the Andean wave, aptly named to reflect the high proportion of Ecuadorians, Peruvians and Colombians who immigrated during the 1970s. Because of a special amnesty program, there was an unprecedented flow of 50,000 immigrants in a period of two years. While all Latinx immigrants benefited from this legislation, Ecuadorians and Colombians made up 30% of the Latinx immigrants during that time (Mata, 1988). During the 1970s, Chileans, Argentines and Uruguayans rose in numbers, many fleeing the oppressive dictatorships in power at the time.

After 1983, Salvadorians totaled almost half (42.5%) of the yearly Latinx immigration to Canada; thus the term Central American wave. This wave was a product of a series of social and political events that created unrest in Central America. While most of these political refugees were urban poor or rural middle class, and therefore arrived with lower levels of education and skills, they possessed

a high degree of political awareness, organizational capabilities, and social cohesion (perhaps due to their displacement and politically unstable countries), all of which aided them in building community and establishing relationships once in Canada (Mata, 1988).

The refugee programs that the Canadian Immigration Ministry put in place in the 1970s and 1980s benefitted those refugee immigrants that met the requirements for “conventional refugees” by allowing them a quick path to residency and eventual citizenship (Hispanic Development Council, 2003). This provided immigrants with a feeling of security in their new country, as with these programs, their legal status was less precarious. Al-Ali, Black, and Koser (2001) argue that migrants’ status within a host society largely impacts their transnational practices, or, how willing they are to continue engaging with the world “back home” if they feel secure in their host society. Veronis (2006) posits that partly due to the security afforded by the refugee amnesty programs, Latinx immigrants during the 1970s and early 1980s engaged in transforming their host society as well. During this time, influential Latinx institutions and groups such as the Centre for Spanish Speaking People and the Hispanic Development Council were established. These groups continue to work today to serve the Spanish speaking community in Toronto.

During the early 1990s immigration policy shifted to focus on “skilled” immigrants. The point system that was introduced in the 1960s was modified to place a larger emphasis on levels of education, occupation, experience, and knowledge of Canada’s official languages. The programs put in place for refugee immigrants also ended, and immigrants with specific professional training and skills were given priority for residency. This gave rise to the fifth wave of Latinx professionals (Veronis, 2006). This wave is so named as most of the immigrants are professionals with high levels of education and some familiarity with one of Canada’s official languages. Veronis argues that while many were forced to migrate due to the socioeconomic situations in their home countries, these immigrants could be considered ‘voluntary’ immigrants as they apply and undergo the traditional immigration process (as opposed to refugees who are sponsored by the Canadian government). However, this description fails to capture the heterogeneity of many of the migrants who continue to come to Canada, in particular, migrants who continue to be undocumented and face particular challenges when accessing services. Many of these immigrants, regardless of their background and even if they

have been able to apply through traditional immigration processes, have still been forced into manual and unskilled labour due to the non-recognition of their professional accreditations (Houle & Yssaad, 2010; Mata, 1999).

Clearly this is not a homogenous immigrant community. What we have in a city like Toronto, which receives a high percentage of the immigrant influx to Canada every year, are multiple communities with different ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, political and religious backgrounds. Veronis (2006) notes that this has resulted in a micro representation of the larger Latin American context, including the reproduction of divisions along class, racial and ethnic lines, and unequal relations of power. They differ in demography and history, face different issues in schools, and should, therefore, be understood as such (Suarez Orozco, 1987).

Why this project?

The genesis of this project came about through synergies of previous work by both authors. Alexandra's previous work with the Latinx community had revealed a silence around race and Indigeneity that was hard to ignore (Arraiz Matute, 2018). Participants often avoided talking about race or tended to defer to ethnic categories (Latina/o/x, Hispanic, Spanish), or national ones (Salvadorian) instead of racial ones. In addition, the focus of their narratives was often on their family's experiences of migration, or discrimination by the Canadian Anglo-white mainstream; but there was no mention of Indigenous lands or Indigeneity in their stories. These silences provoked Alexandra's interest in questions of identity and Indigeneity among settlers of colour in Canada.

In part, the absence of race and Indigeneity from discussion of immigrant identity is due to the public discourse about the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Around the time of Alexandra's research, in 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report. The Commission was founded in 2008 to investigate the reports of rampant sexual, psychological and physical abuse that took place in Residential Schools (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, n.d.). The commission travelled throughout Canada collecting the truths of survivors. In 2015 after 7 years of listening, they released their report. This report detailed the truth about the physical, cultural and spiritual genocide that occurred in the residential schools (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). It also contained 94 Calls to Action; these calls to action gave the government, but

also everyday Canadians, concrete actions that they could take to begin the long road to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Two of these calls to action, number 62 and 63, addressed education:

We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to:

- Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.
- Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.
- Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.
- Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

- Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.
- Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.
- Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
- Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

(Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015)

Yet in an academic support program with which Alexandra worked, where tutor mentors were training to be teachers, the subject was never raised. While the results of the study were covered widely in the news, it did not seem to connect with how immigrant communities were thinking of themselves. And Canadian teachers, most of whom are non-Indigenous, still felt uncomfortable breaching the

subject. As a result, they seldom used the resources available to them or felt comfortable bringing Indigenous perspectives and histories into their classrooms (Milne, 2017). Thus, we were interested in how the silences Alexandra had heard in her participant's narratives belied a disconnect between themselves and Indigenous communities and issues in Canada.

Community Arts Programs:

After Alexandra's research had concluded, she continued to work with the Working Women Community Centre (WWCC) in a new project focusing on parent training and advocacy work. During this time, she also worked closely with their Community Outreach Work, and Nira, who, for several years, had been building a thriving community arts program. Through her work, Nira had begun to have conversations around the arts table on issues of migration, settlement and identity. As the Latina Feminist Group tells us in their 2001 collection, this kind of work is facilitated by the intimate relationships and conversations that those relationships enable. So it was with the arts table. Participants felt comfortable sharing their "*papelitos guardados*" (Latina Feminist Group, 2001) with each other.

At community members' behest, we both facilitated an evening workshop in which we covered some of the history of Canada and the treatment of Indigenous peoples by the Canadian state. Much of the information was new to participants, and they were especially surprised given the discourse of Canada as a benign, tolerant nation that they had heard before immigrating (Bannerji, 2000). At the end of the workshop, all the participants asked whether we could develop a program that investigated this with more detail and expressed interest in participating in a workshop where we could have more conversations and learn from each other.

For us, as community workers and educators, this kind of program was critical for several reasons. Firstly, it responded directly to the TRC Calls for Action, including numbers 93 and 94 which refer to newcomer education. Secondly, it responded to a need that we saw and heard from the community; it was a community-based education initiative rooted in the needs and wants of our community members. Thirdly, it connected with many of the conversations Nira had begun with participants and was looking to further develop. In particular, she noted that she saw potential in her community arts programs to speak about immigrant's migration and settlement trajectories. She had observed how the various programs she ran had created a community, a sisterhood of women, who

were all newcomers or immigrants. This sisterhood broke the barriers among participants encouraging dialogue among women of varied social and economic locations based on their country of origin and migration status. Through their participation in the program, Nira had seen many of the women find confidence in their new home and confidence and training to become facilitators of art workshops in other centres. In many of our conversations, this had become an important focus for Nira's work and she was interested in seeing how this connected with the roles we have as "immigrant" guests on this land and our relationships with its original peoples.

We successfully applied for a grant from the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and Refugees in order to develop and implement a short 10-week program that would allow us to explore these issues together. In this paper, we present part of the project and the outcomes we observed. Having mapped the context, we will now describe the program in detail, including its facilitators and participants, and topics we covered over our 10 weeks together. We will then discuss the outcomes of the program, both intended and unintended; and end with implications for future work.

Cuentos del Sur Project:

When we first started writing the grant, we approached PODER (formerly MUJER) "a grassroots organization that aims to create decolonial, anti-oppressive, and community building spaces that explicitly prioritize Afrodescendiente, Indígena, LGBTTIQQ2SA+, Non-Binary, Gender Non-Conforming, Agender, Mad, Crip, and Sick and Disabled voices for people with roots to the Latin American and Caribbean / Abya Yala / Anáhuac / Tawantinsuyo diaspora" (PODER, nd). Due to their mission of creating "a cultural shift in critical awareness towards decolonization and liberation in solidarity with Black and Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island", they were a perfect partner for this project.

The project ran through the summer of 2018, beginning on Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21st. We decided to dedicate 6 weeks to topics of Indigeneity, identity and reclaiming knowledges, and 2 weeks to creative art-making that would enable the group to use art to express our learnings from the past 6 weeks. We looked to our community to find facilitators that could help us bring this vision to life and develop the program.

Our facilitators for the project were Maria Montejo, (Deer clan) who is a member of the Jakalteco/Popti (Mayan) community of Indigenous people who reside in the Xajla territory of Guatemala. In addition to her formal schooling, Maria was mentored from a young age by various Elders, Medicine people and Traditional Teachers on Turtle Island, from Central and South America. Our second facilitator was Janet Romero-Leiva, a queer feminist latinx visual artist and writer whose work explores immigrant displacement, denied aboriginality, and the experience of living between the south and the north, between Spanish and English, between memory and truth.

Through PODER's social media channels we put out a call for participants to our community arts groups but also to the community at large. In the end, a group of 15 self-identified Latinx women came together to collectively explore identity and belonging within the multicultural context of Canada. The project allowed participants to engage in weekly learning sessions, create community and reclaim pre-colonial knowledges lost through the ongoing process of colonialism. The participant group reflected the heterogeneous community in Canada (as described above). We had participants from Mexico, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Canada, Costa Rica, Argentina, Peru, and Guatemala.

The group was heterogeneous in many ways. There was a combination of newcomer and migrant experiences; we had participants who had been in Canada for less than a year, and one who was born in Canada to immigrant parents, as well as those who had been in Canada for a range of years. Many of the participants did not have other family in Canada. There was a range of formal education levels, from secondary to university, all in different countries; there was also social, class and economic diversity among participants. Lastly, the group was intergenerational, with participants ranging from 18 to 80 years of age. However, as we described above, many of the women had previously established relationships with each other through their participation in the Community Arts Program ran by WWCC. Therefore there was a level of trust within the group that facilitated many of the deep conversations that were held throughout our 10 weeks together.

Structure of the Program:

In the section that follows, we describe briefly the topics that were covered each week and use comments made by the participants about their experiences in

the program to guide our reflection of the work that the sessions accomplished. In order to ensure privacy, the names of the participants have been changed.

Week 1- We Bring Our Minds Together as One” // “Unimos Nuestras Mentes Como Una”

During this initial meeting, we came together using a talking circle, an Indigenous methodology, to share what brought us to the program and what we hoped to learn together. This session was meant to “connect us to creation, the land base and to each other in order to co-create the energy of the group and set forth the intention and design of the program and its future sessions” (Facilitator notes). Maria Montejo explained every step of the process to ensure that we could all engage meaningfully with the process of a talking circle.

One of the participants, Luisa, later reflected,

Las facilitadoras me parecieron muy asertivas y conocedoras de su tema y fueron de gran inspiración no solo para seguir investigando y aprendiendo por nuestra cuenta, sino también en el proceso de expresión personal [...] me pareció muy terapéutico, relajante y sobre todo una gran oportunidad para conectar con las compañeras participantes desde el corazón.

Luisa’s reflection, in particular, shows the way in which Maria was able to establish trust, respect and inspiration from the beginning of the program. The group began with open hearts to delve into the difficult knowledges and reflections that would come. Investing in building relationships between participants was/is critical in furthering this work and in engaging in authentic solidarity-building practices within and between communities. Such relationships must exist in order to engage in the kind of vulnerability that comes with talking about our histories and identities.

Week 2- “Nation to Nation Agreements: Reflecting on Our Worldview”

During this week, we reflected on how worldviews shape our beliefs, attitudes and actions, as well as how they reflect our social systems. With Maria’s guidance, we learned about indigenous creation stories in what is known as North America, and the connection to the name Turtle Island.

Through an activity where we drew portraits of each other as group, we explored how our beliefs also shape our reality. We made connections to the way

that history and other subjects are taught in schools, and whose voices are typically left out. We shared our own schooling experiences from different countries and regions of Latin America, finding commonalities in the colonization and subjugation of Indigenous knowledges throughout the continent.

Another one of the participants shared on this session the following reflection:

Considero que este tipo de programas son muy necesarios y relevantes puesto que el conocer más, el aprender y entender sobre las diferentes culturas originarias no solo nos permite fortalecer nuestro personal sentido de pertenencia a un determinado grupo étnico, sino que también nos motiva a crear puentes colectivos entre una cultura y otra, a encontrar cada vez más puntos de coincidencia y colaboración (Carolina).

In her reflection, we begin to see the first connections to building bridges of solidarity with indigenous peoples in Canada. These connections were what we hoped to nurture through the program.

Week 3- Indigenous is a State of Being - Connection: Colonization is a process of Separation - Disconnect”

The third session was focused on learning about the history of Canada and colonial relations. This was in direct response to the TRC Call to Action #93: Update education for newcomers to reflect the true history of Canada. We reviewed historical documents that demonstrated the normalization of “colonization/conquest” - as a natural process. We reflected on the impact of historical relationships on our current perception of self and Indigenous Nations. We explored questions such as: Who was here before us? Whose land are we on? How are we implicated in the ongoing displacement of Indigenous people, even through our own displacement? Even though many of us in the group had felt “othered” from White Canadian society by virtue of our “immigrantness,” learning and understanding the ways in which we were also implicated in the workings of the Canadian settler nation-state was an important process. In this, Dei’s differentiation between being complicit and being implicated in settler colonialism as racialized bodies was useful in allowing us to consider the many ways that all of us arrived to this land, the many histories that brought/bring us here and that connect us to other lands (Dei, 2017).

While we began to have this conversation during the third session, this was an ongoing conversation that continued to come up throughout the program. Given participants' social locations, their identification as "other" from the Anglo, white, Canadian norm; there was a tension with thinking of themselves as implicated in the oppression of others. Through the remaining weeks we had conversations of how our migration paths and our connections to Indigenous communities in other lands came into tension with the Canadian state- such as in the process of seeking documentation to remain in Canada, applying for permanent residency or even citizenship. We did not aim to resolve the tensions and contradictions within one workshop, but in opening up the conversation, we tried to make the implicit more visible within the group.

Week 4- "Ak' ank' ulal: Internal Peace: A Mayan Multi-Dimensional Approach to Transformation"

This session was rooted within a Mayan Worldview and the sacred calendars. Maria introduced the group to various types of energy-based relationships and built awareness on how an individual can work with the four elements of fire, air, water and earth to transform life experiences into wisdom and sustain a state of connection/wellness for the benefit of their communities. As a group we reflected on how the present moment is the most significant in transforming the past and creating the future. We therefore tried to locate the conversation of our current circumstances in Canada, and how we could use those to build relationships of solidarity with other communities such as the indigenous community in Toronto.

Week 5-Ak' ank' ulal: Internal Peace: A Mayan Multi-Dimensional Approach to Transformation"

Arts- tradition of healing and oral storytelling.

In this session the group was introduced to the term "Ethnostress" and its profound impact on individuals and their behavior toward self and others. Maria facilitated a session rooted in the Indigenous Mayan/Popti concept of zero and the collapse

of time as the essential state of being for wellness. She explained how the accumulation of time is seen as the shadowing of our perception and the creation of separateness; and therefore, the alignment to zero point (the union of the heart of sky and heart of earth in each individual) is the emergence of authentic identity – a transformative practice.

The group also explored how traditions, rooted in cultural expression like dance and visual arts, can be used for healing. This was particularly important for participants who felt that they had “lost touch” with traditions after long periods of migration and displacement. As a group we talked about and shared family traditions and the ways in which they provide an opportunity for healing through time and geographical distances.

Week 6- “Water and Pipe Ceremony – Eagle and Condor Prophecy – Thriving Together”

This session was led by a local Grandmother/Kokum Alita Sauve. Kokum Alita has worked in the Toronto community for over 30+ years supporting the healing journey of Indigenous peoples from many nations. She is a recognized and respected keeper of the knowledge. The group offered tobacco with the intention of bringing forward a message from the people and land of the Eagle to the participants who represent the people and land of the Condor. We gathered in ceremony to receive messages of guidance as we began to move forward in our visions for a healthy and sustainable world for all. This session was highly emotional, and many participants expressed how powerful they felt the gathering and ceremony was. One of the participants wrote,

I felt a profound privilege to be able to learn from Alita and Maria Montejo; to feel a sense of unity and to see the need for more spaces like this; and lastly, to experience this with my children and witness them absorb the knowledge and love shared within the circle. This was an amazing way to reclaim and empower our indigeneity, and i am very grateful for this opportunity. The emotions I feel when my children now ask about and engage in small smudging ceremonies at home, simply warms my heart. I would like to end with the exact words my son right after the ceremony: “the limit your eyes see is not the limit you can walk Paco Sanchez.

Week 7-10 Art workshops

We had planned two writing workshops centered around memories and the feelings these evoked, to be facilitated by Janet Romero-Leiva. Many of the prompts addressed memories, and these led to often long and sentimental stories in which the women shared parts of their personal journey with each other. These sessions and the conversations they evoked connected to the session on cultural expression as healing.

At the end of the two writing workshops, we had a surprising development. Three of the participants, who themselves identify as Mexican Indigenous women, took it upon themselves to research, organize and facilitate an additional art workshop based on two Huichol techniques; bead work and the Ojo de Dios. Huichol art was selected as it is traditionally used as ofrendas and gifts in exchange for the knowledge given by the gods. This was an ofrenda and gift from the women to celebrate the teaching they received during the community arts-based program. The participants created a PowerPoint presentation in both Spanish and English; and took upon themselves to learn traditions and the craft to share the knowledge with the group as a cultural exchange. For 4 sessions they took over the organizing of the sessions including all the necessary materials/resources.

These last sessions lead us into addressing outcomes and implications, and how we envision this work moving forward based on the learnings from this first implementation.

Outcomes/Discussion:

In this section, we discuss the outcomes of the program's first implementation. These outcomes are based on our conversations with participants and observations as participants in the group ourselves. Because of the nature of the centre where we held this first program, our focus has a non-profit approach to thinking about program development, and the immigration and settlement sector. We hope to continue developing the program and using these reflections and community feedback to guide that growth.

As discussed in the last section, one of the surprising developments we had was that three of the participants took the lead in planning and running a workshop in traditional Huichol art for the program. Additionally, and as a result of the project, Trent University and their teaching program invited the women to offer two

sessions on traditional Huichol art to 1st and 2nd-year students; the workshop received great feedback and the group has been invited again for the winter semester. As facilitators, for us this demonstrated an increased confidence on the part of the participants, who felt empowered to research more about the Indigenous art of their country and learn traditional techniques. In addition, this also signaled an interest in researching and connecting to Indigenous peoples and traditions from their home communities, which was an important first step in dispelling colonial narratives of Indigenous peoples as savages, less civilized, less intelligent, etc, which permeate colonial societies today.

The project attracted the attention of a diverse group of women whose commonality was their self-identity as of Latin American descent. The heterogeneity of the participants gave rise to rich conversations and the building of a strong bond among women who otherwise would not have had the experience of meeting and getting to know each other. We also contend that this diverse demographic speaks to the thirst in the community for such spaces and conversations. All of this demonstrates the need to continue building on this work and to open up similar spaces.

In addition, school age children became unexpected participants in the project. Since the program ran during the summer months and some participants struggled to find summer programs for their children, we had to accommodate and integrate children in most of the sessions. The fear of children disturbing or getting bored by the sessions faded quickly away as they grew curious and engaged as sessions unfolded; by the end of the program they were active listeners and active participants of the more hands-on and public parts of the project. All project participants were impressed by the children's genuine curiosity in learning about identity, tradition and their natural respect for Indigenous culture. We therefore see in this outcome an opportunity to consciously grow this aspect of the program and more intentionally incorporate the children into the program's next iteration.

Another way in which we, as organizers, were interested in the outcomes of the program, was in how the conversations and lessons influenced the immigration and settlement experiences of participants, and the role that community arts programs can play in this process. From the reflections that were shared with us, we saw that participants reconnected with ancestral traditions, and they communicated how important it is to pass those traditions to the new generation.

This reflection, which was connected to the participation of the children in the program, points to the importance of more intentionally involving children in these spaces and including them in these conversations. Additionally, participants built empathy and solidarity with marginalized communities based on the exploration of their own identity. The diversity of experiences of participants promoted the empowerment and social integration of all participants; older participants felt valued and respected as they shared their identities, oral histories and wisdom with younger participants.

Overall, we observed that the stress of a suppressed ethnic identity was lifted for the first time for many of the participants, setting up the building blocks of engagement for participants in areas that were previously unexplored; these blocks included participating in cultural communities activities and increasing involvement in organizations lead by indigenous people. This has enormous implications for civic engagement and participation of immigrant communities. We now turn to those implications.

Implications/Conclusion:

We found three effective tools for community building and transformation in this study: the use of art/cultural expression as a way to engage community members in difficult conversations; building awareness of true history, empathy and solidarity with Indigenous peoples; and exploring our roles and responsibilities as settlers of colour. Firstly, we saw that the use of creative writing was an effective way to engage the group in difficult conversations around identity, memory, and place. The workshops facilitated by local artist Janet Romero-Leiva led participants to talk about difficult childhood memories involving race and discrimination as well as happy memories related to family and place. It would have been much harder to try and elicit these kinds of sharing by verbal means alone. We suspect it was also beneficial to have these activities at the end of the program, after we had spent significant time building relationships of trust and vulnerability with each other.

The lead that the three participants took in researching and presenting on traditional huichol art demonstrates to us the capacity that the arts have to foster engagement and critical conversations. Through their research and then their facilitation of art workshops, the group was able to make connections to their own heritage, complicate notions of *latinidad* and *mestizaje* and have hard

conversations about why many of us felt disconnected from Indigenous knowledges and cultures in our home lands. As immigrant women, this was the first time many of the participants had questioned their own upbringing and the ways in which discrimination and colonial narratives are normalized through education and socialization. While it is possible to have these conversations without the use of art, we believe that working on beading and threading created an intimate atmosphere in which people felt comfortable sharing their truths. In addition, the use of visual art expression enabled them to demonstrate their reflections without necessarily verbalizing them to the group.

In addition, our intent was to respond to the TRC call to action #93, which refers to newcomer education. While not everyone in the group was a newcomer, everyone agreed they did not feel like they knew much about Canadian history and in particular the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Therefore, the program took care to build awareness of the true history of Canada, centering the genocide and forced movement of Indigenous peoples from their home. Through this, we hoped to better position the group to enter into relationships of solidarity with Indigenous peoples –relationships that come from a place of empathy and compassion, not from a place of judgment and misinformation. We therefore took care to talk about things we heard in the media, stereotypes and misinformation that often circulate through social media. As descendants of colonized places ourselves, we were able to draw parallels to our own experiences in Latin America, from media misrepresentation to normalized discourses that discriminate against Indigenous peoples. This approach focused on finding our similarities and using those to build bridges between communities.

Lastly, a big part of this initiative centered on the question of our roles and responsibilities as settlers of colour. It is often easy to see ourselves as victims who, due to our race, language, accent, etc., are othered within the cultural narrative of Canada. In these times of polarized debate, many of us feel unsafe as immigrants of colour in North America where xenophobic discourses are becoming more and more normalized. It can become easy to turn a blind eye to the ways in which we are complicit in the oppression of others, because we ourselves do not feel privileged. It is this feeling that the system exploits to distract us from organizing and uniting efforts. We hope to interrogate how as others within the multicultural mosaic, we still enable the continued oppression and occupation of indigenous peoples and their lands. This is difficult work, in

part because it is hard to reconcile the work of fighting for legitimacy from the state in the form of a permanent resident card while recognizing the state as illegitimate. What we hoped to spark with this program was the beginning of multiple difficult conversations within our immigrant communities of colour. What are our roles and responsibilities, as settlers, to this land and its original peoples? How do we pay respect to those responsibilities? How can we enter into respectful relationships of solidarity with Indigenous peoples here on this land? How do our own stories and legacies of colonization, trauma and displacement figure into how we enter into these relationships? These are all questions that need to continue to be asked and that the community has shown it is eager to explore together.

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Allied Arguments or Subtle Exclusion?: Illegalizing Frames in Arguments Supporting a County ID

Francisco Villegas and E. Munoz

While undocumented migrants lack formal citizenship, they have navigated and mobilized lower levels of U.S. government to develop spaces of belonging and relative safety. Examples include, sanctuary policies, local governments banning cooperation between their police forces and immigration enforcement, and the availability of municipal or county-issued ID cards. These programs, while not fully addressing the deportability and illegalization undocumented migrants experience, can serve as a loose patchwork of policies that address legal exclusions presented by state and federal legislation.

Demands for ID are a salient feature of today's society, given the prominence of security discourses, specifically in relation to the movement of people across borders. Furthermore, while narratives normalizing the need for ID often operate at broader levels of society, they seep into localized spaces (Ono, 2012). That is, despite there being no legal statute requiring individuals to carry state-issued identification, it is a necessity of everyday life and often required to pick up children from school, cash checks or open banks accounts, turn on utilities, pick up medication, and show when coming in contact with law enforcement. As a result, many individuals and institutions take for granted the ability for people to identify themselves¹.

Normalized demands for ID intersect with the fact that post-9/11 policies severely curtailed the availability of state-issued identification for undocumented migrants. Ranging from the outright banning of undocumented migrants from eligibility for licenses and ID cards in various states to the development of the REAL ID Act, the ability to receive state-issued identification shifted into the realm of securitization rhetoric (Bloemraad and De Graauw, 2013; Valdez, 2016) and resulted in increased insecurities for

¹ One timely example is the initial demand for ID cards to receive water during the ongoing Flint water crisis (LeBron et al, 2017).

undocumented migrants. Specifically, the inability to receive a state-issued identification card illegalizes migrants not just by marking them outside the eligibility criteria but also through the denial of goods and services that demand ID. In this way, IDs reinforce internal borders that place the undocumented population outside the parameters of belonging.

There have been many attempts to promote the availability of an ID for undocumented populations (Wilson, 2009; Lagunes, Levin, and Diltman, 2012; De Graauw, 2014; Manuel and Garcia, 2014). These efforts, including demands toward driving privileges, have met considerable resistance particularly from individuals who proclaim an ID is a feature of formal citizenship. As such, exclusion and reduced availability to common goods and services, operate alongside demands to create inhospitable environments² and increase punitive measures against undocumented migrants as a method of removing said communities.

This paper examines the initiative to develop a county ID in Kalamazoo County, Michigan. The proposal culminated with a launch in April 2018 after a year of organizing and maneuvering local government bureaucracies.³ The process to pass the policy consisted of community deputations across multiple County Commission meetings, the development of a task force and a report describing the barriers experienced by people without government-issued IDs, and organizing residents and local politicians to support the motion. During Commission meetings, a debate ensued between opponents to the proposal who mobilized xenophobic arguments and proponents who described the ID as a method of fostering community. While this debate was expected, many of the arguments in favor of the County ID also deployed illegalizing logic. We examine this process, focusing on illegalizing discourses that arose in an attempt to counter nativist arguments: defining the limits of community between “us and them” and deservingness ideals aimed to “save” the undocumented or reduce them to an economic benefit provided to the nation and county. We argue that the ideological boundaries of belonging were shaped through speech-acts, particularly as some proponents for the ID re/formed separation between undocumented migrants into Manichean binaries: good/bad and, or deserving/undeserving migrants (Anderson, 2013; Chauvin and Garcés-Mascreñas, 2014). In short, we propose that these arguments depicted the undocumented Kalamazoo

² Including attempts to create spaces that lead to “self-deportation”

³ April 2018 was the date of a soft launch with an official launch in May 2018.

population in reductive ways, as either “good” potential members of society or as abject others.

Literature Review and Discursive Framework:

Much of the research examining the depiction of migrants in media has been divided across “positive” and “negative” frames (Estrada, Ebert, and Lore, 2016). However, less focus has been placed on the ways “positive” frames may reconstitute the very thing they aim to disrupt.⁴ Specifically, “positive” frames can define and reinscribe the parameters of belonging and the resultant exclusion of undocumented migrants. Furthermore, “positive” frames do not necessarily centre the undocumented population and may instead focus on the “nonimmigrant community, including U.S. born individuals, the business community, and government institutions” (Estrada, Ebert, and Lore, 2016, 564).

To examine this, we employ a discursive framework that brings together theorizations of migrant “illegality,” deservingness, and value. Rather than describing a simple binary of good and bad migrants, the framework facilitates a critical analysis of arguments delineating “good migrants.” It also provides an entry point to understand the ways national ideals are mobilized to restrict the inclusion of the undocumented.

The social production of illegality is manifested at discursive and material levels; it defines the boundaries of membership and generates apparatuses that execute multiple forms of exclusion. The social production of illegality is a way of continuing to concretize and strengthen the borders that exist throughout the community of value to exclude “outsiders” (De Genova, 2005; Calavita, 2005; Anderson, 2013). In this way, the divide between the “good citizen” and the “non-citizen” can be bridged by the non-citizen with the potential of becoming a good citizen (Anderson, 2013). However, potentiality is contextual and precarious as it must maintain a script of deservingness constantly re/defined by demands to prove humanitarian worth or economic profitability.

There are many consequences of being illegalized. Historically, they have included race-based exclusions and quotas (Ngai, 2005) as well as the

⁴ Take for instance the arguments in favor of Dreamers and the Dacamented that argue children must not be punished for the sins of their parents. Such arguments, while appearing in favor of these youth, hinge on the illegalization of parents and vilification of undocumented migration (defining it as sin).

development of a deportation complex (Ngai, 2005). Contemporarily, they involve large raids in racialized communities (Golash-Boza and Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2013; Golash-Boza, 2015; Crowder and Elmer, 2018), the building of structures hindering the movement of people or redirecting them towards dangerous environments (Nevins, 2001), and the lack of access to social goods (Menjívar and Kil, 2002; Carney, 2015). These processes are racialized, particularly as the label of undocumented serves as proxy primarily to Latinx bodies in the U.S. (Chavez, 2008). In this way, the definition of the citizen and non-citizen is subject to illegalizing and racializing discourses that determine the parameters of belonging and deservingness to the nation.

The study of deservingness encompasses the ways migrants define their presence in the nation, the depiction of migration in media, the broad discourse utilized by politicians and citizens to re/define the boundaries of belonging, and the discretion within law enforcement to determine targets for detention and deportation proceedings. According to Villegas and Blower, (2019) examining deservingness is useful to analyse “the ways different actors evaluate ‘worth’ and mobilize strategies to support their position...examining deservingness frames furthers understandings of how social exclusion operates in relation to different categories of non-citizens.” To Bridget Anderson (2013), the modern-state’s “community of value” is a place that has a collection of shared values, made up of “good citizens”; it needs protection, specifically from members outside the community who allegedly do not share the same values (Anderson, 2013, 3).

Deservingness frames facilitate the analysis of potentiality to become the “good citizen.” Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas (2014, 426) describe frames that range from demands of deservingness based on vulnerability or civic performance, economic or academic performance, cultural integration, and fulfilling a particular “niche” such as “being a student, a worker, or a parent.” These frames, while aligned with national ideals of productivity and morality are themselves fluid but provide a useful mechanism to understand the social production of value in a community. One aspect of disingenuous “positive” discourse regarding migrants is benevolent rhetoric. To Menjívar and Kil (2002, 160), this consists of sympathetic discourse by public officials that “can mask divisive tactics that effectively deny immigrants vital resources.” Benevolent rhetoric thus can have material consequences as it criminalizes practices developed as a result of limited access to social goods (housing and health). Thus, politicians can appear to mobilize humanitarian concern while simultaneously illegalizing survival practices.

Positive representations may also come with caveats that distinguish between “good” and “bad” migrants. This is fairly common in the current rhetoric about the deservingness of migrants to formal citizenship. Claims to desirability are often deployed when politicians and community members portray some undocumented migrants as exceptional due to their upholding of national ideals such as enrolment in higher education, having a history of paying taxes, and maintaining a clean police record. However, as Dingeman-Cerda, Munoz Burciaga, and Martinez (2015, 62), remind us, “the construction of any ‘desirable’ category rests upon the production and demonization of undesirable ‘others.’” The presence of the latter constructs a false dichotomy that illegalizes individuals who are not perceived as satisfying the grounds necessary to be considered a “desirable” or “good” migrant.

In addition to media and politicians, community members also have an impact in the deployment and maintenance of illegalizing discourse. These frames come to the fore when such individuals speak at community gatherings, political meetings, and in everyday engagement since the everyday citizen is also now involved in the processes of immigration enforcement (Aberman, 2018). Aberman, drawing on Orr, theorizes these actors as “civilian soldiers” (Orr 2004; Aberman 2018). The citizen, as Walsh (2014) stipulates, has become both deputized and given the responsibility of engaging in immigration control. This includes the use of tip lines to call immigration enforcement, being required by law to curtail access to local institutions, and encouragement to develop vigilante groups. While this is a useful typology of creating the “watchful citizen,” we must also consider the use of citizens’ voices in shaping local policy that defines the parameters of belonging. Thus, while not necessarily tasked outright by the state to protect the nation from the undocumented, the citizen, based on ideas of American identity, fairness of law, deservingness, and relative value frame the contours of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991).

Contextualizing the Kalamazoo County ID:

While ID cards issued by county and municipal governments are primarily imagined as a tool to limit the exclusion of undocumented migrants from local spaces, they are valuable to many other communities that experience barriers accessing a state ID including the elderly, the homeless, transgender individuals, and the formerly incarcerated (Wilson, 2009). These cards, often designed with criteria for broader eligibility and accessibility, define residence in the local space as the primary factor determining membership. At the same

time, while municipal and county IDs facilitate the ability for individuals to utilize some local goods and services, they do not provide access to goods or services to which an individual was not already legally entitled (de Grauw, 2014). However, the provision of these cards remains a hot button issue with both opponents and proponents often utilizing illegalizing discourse to argue their position.

In Michigan, Public Act 31 of 2008 institutionalized the illegalization of undocumented migrants by making them ineligible to receive a driver's license or identification card. It stipulates:

If the applicant is not a citizen of the United States, the applicant shall provide documents demonstrating his or her legal presence in the United States. A person legally present in the United States includes, but is not limited to, a person authorized by the United States government for employment in the United States, a person with nonimmigrant status authorized under federal law, and a person who is the beneficiary of an approved immigrant visa petition or an approved labor certification (Michigan P.A. 31, 2008).

Since its passage, undocumented communities residing within Michigan have been unable to receive state issued identification. And, while various levels of governments and service organizations have worked to address this challenge, the result has been a loose patchwork of documents that can vary greatly in their degree of acceptance⁵.

As a result of the federal government's inability to come to a consensus regarding immigration policy, and of states, like Michigan, reducing the possibilities of undocumented migrants having access to drivers' licenses and identification cards, municipalities have taken stronger stances on how they conceptualize residents within their localities, particularly the parameters of belonging vis-à-vis immigration status. Cities like Hazelton, Pennsylvania passed resolutions making it illegal to rent to undocumented migrants, though such resolutions were later found unconstitutional (Longazel, 2016). On the other hand, in 2007, New Haven, Connecticut was the first locality to offer a municipal identification card with the goal of developing a more welcoming environment to all residents regardless of status (Lagunes, Levin, and Dittmann, 2012).

⁵ This can include municipal and county IDs as well as consular IDs issued by foreign government consulates and cards developed by social service agencies such as homeless shelters or food banks.

While cities and counties do not have the power to confer driving privileges, they can legally produce government issued identification cards that can be recognized by municipally funded entities and local organizations and businesses. Since the enactment of New Haven's ID card, 17 other municipal or county governments have adopted similar policies. Washtenaw County became the first location in Michigan to begin issuing their own County IDs in June of 2015. A year later, in December 2016, Detroit followed suit. In May 2018, Kalamazoo County became the third locality in the state and 18th in the country to provide local-government-issued identification cards. However, the process to bring this to fruition demanded a carefully curated taskforce made up of key public figures, a clear discourse about its availability to communities lacking identification, beyond the undocumented population, and strong displays of support from the community. After significant community pressure, the County Commission voted 10-1 in favour of creating a task force, which would be led by two "rookie" commissioners and immediately-placed the ID initiative as a low priority item. The task force split into five subcommittees, which collectively developed an argument recognizing the need for the ID and its value for residents. However, regardless of the depth of research and information from community members needing an ID, commissioners voted along party lines with the final vote at 6-5 (Democrats-Republicans) in favour of the ID (Barrett, 2018). The program took almost eight months to get through the local government.

While the populations imagined to benefit most from this ID expand beyond the undocumented, they became a population highlighted by Republican Commissioners as the primary sticking point in passing the policy. For this reason, the following subsections focus exclusively on the ways they were described by different stakeholders to re/formulate the boundaries of belonging.

Methods:

The primary goal of this project was to understand the discursive boundaries of belonging employed by individuals who positioned themselves as allies during Kalamazoo's County Commission meetings. Discourse is important to an understanding of power relations; it consists of more than speech-acts, also informing action, including policy (Ahmed, 2006). To this end, we utilize Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse the "written and spoken texts to reveal discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias and how these sources are initiated, maintained reproduced, and transformed within

specific socioeconomic, political, and historical contexts” (Pimentel and Velazquez, 2009, 8). Specifically, this method of data analysis centres the ways power is asserted as a means of contesting it (Pimentel and Velazquez, 2008). Thus, this paper follows the challenge set forth by Wodak (2008, 55, emphasis in original), who states that “we need to approach the processes of ‘inclusion/exclusion’ by carefully considering issues of power, in defining access *to* discourses and power *in* discourses.”

Data for this paper comes from public video records of nine Kalamazoo County Commission meetings, as well as one Kalamazoo City Council, one Portage City Council, and one Kalamazoo Township Council meetings held between December 2016-July 2017. Meetings aired live on a local public-access TV channel and were stored on that station’s online database. At all but one of these meetings, commissioners followed a pre-set agenda that included a slot for citizens’ comments⁶. Community members showed their support or argued against the County ID during “citizens’ time” to urge their Commissioners to vote according with their respective standpoints on the proposal. Using video capturing software, we recorded each meeting where the County ID Program was mentioned and then transcribed the recordings. Upon completion of transcriptions, we coded for discourse regarding membership and undocumented migrants using Atlas T.I. First, we collected all instances where individuals discussed the ID, and then developed a codebook to categorize such speech acts into discrete discursive strategies.

Table 1 Meetings Coded and number of speakers during Citizen’s time⁷

Meeting	Community Speakers in Favor	Community Speakers Against	Total Number of Speakers
12-6-16 Kalamazoo County	17	0	17
12-20-16 Kalamazoo County	20	1	21

⁶ This is a broad label signifying residents of the area rather than a reflection of speakers’ immigration status. Status was not provided or questioned at any point. The only meeting that did not include citizens’ time was a Kalamazoo County “Committee of the Whole” meeting that takes place prior to a County Commission meeting and does not make space available for citizen input.

⁷ This table does not include the number of instances Commissioners spoke about the ID as their time is less structured than citizens who are given one opportunity to speak and a four-minute time limit.

1-3-17 Kalamazoo County	0	0	0
1-7-17 Kalamazoo County	0	0	0
2-20-17 Kalamazoo City Council	5	0	5
2-28-17 Portage City Council	8	0	8
3-7-17 Kalamazoo County	0	1	1
3-13-17 Kalamazoo Township Board	6	0	6
3-21-17 Kalamazoo County	26	1	27
6-20-17 Kalamazoo Committee of Whole	0	0	0
6-20-17 Kalamazoo County	15	1	16
7-5-17 Kalamazoo County	34	2	36
TOTAL	131	6	137

While the statements are public record, all individuals quoted in this paper appear under a pseudonym. We understand this is a limited protection but recognize the value of a layer of confidentiality. Prior to speaking, all community speakers provided their full name and local address to identify themselves as residents of the county. No other identifying information was requested to contextualize their comments, though some described their stake in the proposal while speaking, often describing the length of time spent living in Kalamazoo County or their family’s migratory trajectory.

Discussion:

A total of eight County Commission meetings open to the public included the County ID in their agenda. Community members were very invested in this agenda item and the meeting space was filled to capacity with individuals overflowing outside the doors, a rare occurrence for this branch of government. Deputants mobilized frames to identify un/deservingness and by extension “good” citizens, residents and migrants. Such frames sometimes

promoted nativist arguments, which found all undocumented as undeserving of membership, reserved the boundaries of belonging to those able to produce permanent residence documents, and identified undocumented presence as a danger to the nation. While in the context of the Kalamazoo County ID this was a numerical minority, it resonates with what Kevin Johnson (1996) argues is the modern appeal to nativism and more stringent borders: that it provides a scapegoat for societal frustrations and a solution to the fear of the “other” (see also Chavez, 2008). However, illegalizing tropes were not reserved to opponents of the ID.

Individuals in support of the County ID were far more numerous at government meetings; however, in their attempts to serve as “allies”, many drew boundaries based on immigration status. In this way, the border⁸ was reintroduced while arguing for a project aiming to erode such boundaries. These bordering discourses constructed undocumented migrants as 1) outside the boundaries of membership (us and them arguments), 2) in need of protection, or solely as economic units. While these categories encapsulate understandings of exceptionality and value, there are clear differences in how value is construed in each classification. Furthermore, a third dynamic was also present where some undocumented migrants deployed deservingness frames as a method of referring to themselves as potential “good citizens” while reifying categories of the “bad migrant.”

While these classifications are not meant to serve as discrete categories, they can serve as analytical tools to discuss and interpret the ways discourse aiming to support undocumented migrants can, through the deployment of national ideals, further illegalization. As such, there can be overlap or the utilization of various frames simultaneously. In this way, we can think of deservingness frames as encompassing more than a single discursive pattern and instead stemming from a multitude of illegalizing rhetoric.

Us and Them Arguments:

The majority of community members speaking at County Commission meetings were in favour of the ID. However, many deputants distinguished undocumented migrants (them) from citizens (us). Irene Bloemraad et al

⁸ Kalamazoo is significantly closer to the Canadian border (~140 miles) than the Mexico border (~1,400 miles), but mirroring dominant discourse, the latter was the only referenced as a danger.

(2008, 156) explain that “some must fall outside the community in order for a ‘we’ to exist” that is, in order to secure an understanding of an imagined community (Anderson, 1991), there must be a distinction about what binds members and separates them from non-members. In the context of County ID meetings, the defining category was immigration status. While the use of this tool was previously discussed in relation to opponents of the ID, “allies” also utilized it in the ways they described or justified a discursive divide.

The division between the undocumented and the rest of society is a fallacy, particularly the idea that communities do not come in contact with the “other.” This strategy betrays the ways communities, workplaces, and public spaces are composed of individuals with varying immigration statuses. For example, Margaret, a legal aid worker in regular contact with undocumented migrants, while arguing in favour of the ID stated, “this will benefit the community while also benefitting undocumented immigrants at the same time.” In this instance, the speaker removed undocumented migrants from “the community,” creating a clear distinction between the two. For Margaret, “the community” referred to individuals who are not undocumented. Thus, the undocumented were positioned as peripheral individuals within the city. Comments such as this reimpose borders in a project aimed to erode them by demarcating the undocumented as existing outside the parameters of community.

There were also more subtle comments within “ally” arguments in favour of the ID. Jim, a white community member at a County Commission meeting mentioned, “I just want to express my support for the county ID program because I think it’s one way we can ensure everyone has, even the most needy, have more access to Kalamazoo’s resources.” One of the problems throughout many statements was the consistent clarification of community members’ meanings of “everyone.” Many speakers clarified and adjusted their own meanings; that is, rather than saying *everyone* should have access, the statement “*everyone, even the most needy,*” should have access, thereby implying that “the most needy” were not automatically included in this speaker’s initial conception of “everyone.” In this way, there is a distinction made between “everyone” as citizens and the “most needy” as those with precarious belonging.

Finally, discourses of “us” and “them” also included racialization, particularly an association between being Mexican or Latinx and undocumented. Theresa, a local social worker, when speaking about who could potentially benefit from the ID, explained the project was useful,

Not only for Latinos who do not have it, but for people who have mental illness, sometimes they do not have IDs, people who are homeless and have substance abuse issues, maybe they lose their IDs, people who are, they are the persons who are coming out of prison, have difficulty finding IDs.

In this quote, Theresa not only utilizes “Latinos” as proxy for the undocumented, she also delineates the various communities differentiated from the “us,” a category only encompassing those able to secure a Michigan ID. Alberta, a college student who self-described as Mexican, also linked race to undocumented status. She stated,

They want to do good, be part of the community and I don't want things to go bad for them for us because after all I am one of them even though I'm a US citizen. And I do want to thank a lot of you guys that came out here because I know a lot of you guys are not probably Mexicans or anything like that and it's nice to see support from other people too.

While Alberta described herself as connected to the community affected, she reinforces the idea that all undocumented migrants are Mexican. However, she is also clear in distinguishing herself from the undocumented community, as she is a member of the nation, a “U.S. citizen.” The continuous categorizations of “us” and “them” in statements at the meetings display a limit of the “ally” framework, particularly when they enhance differentiation rather than a breakdown of the social structures that facilitate their employment.

Deservingness Arguments across Humanitarianism and Capitalism

Deservingness was often defined in two distinct ways. First, in relation to a moral imperative that demands inclusion as a means of saving individuals imagined as lacking agency (Willen, 2012; 2015; Villegas and Blower, 2019). Unlike distinctions of membership based on immigration such as the “us and them” discourse, the humanitarian argument determines that the ‘non-citizen’ needs to be looked after by the ‘good citizen,’ since the latter is defined as law abiding, honourable, and a contributing member of the community. Anderson (2013, 3) classifies ‘the good citizen,’ as someone who has a “moral compass that enables him to consider the interests of others...firmly anchored in liberal ideals about the individual, autonomy, freedom, belonging, and property.” Second, the capitalist or economic benefit frame reduced undocumented migrants to financial contributions to the local community or the larger society

via taxes. Speaking of migrants as benefitting ‘our’ economy means “‘our’ economy is treated as if it belongs to all of ‘us’ equally, and, although migrants make a contribution by working and living in this same economy, it is not ‘their’ economy” (Thobani, 2000, 38). In this way, the economic deservingness frame not only objectifies undocumented migrants solely as financial units providing rewards to the nation, it also removes recognition of the oppressive and exploitation present in the labour markets available.

The liberal humanitarian discourse was used prominently. Sarah, a community member at a Portage City Council meeting stated,

there’s a whole host of things that we take for granted that they can’t do and their children shouldn’t be, at least in my humble opinion, be stigmatized for that, and I also think as a compassionate, caring community, don’t we want to look after everybody as fellow human beings?

While we do not mean to say that compassion is problematic, Sarah’s statement fits very neatly within liberal discourse arguing for the innocence of children and the need to provide them with protection. It also provides speakers like Sarah the ability to portray themselves as “good citizens” who can recognize the humanity in the undocumented child, while other “citizens” cannot.

Keith, a white middle-aged local County Commissioner utilized a similar humanitarian argument to Sarah’s. He said, “the opportunity to help human beings in our community get identification so they can establish their identity for any good number of reasons I think that’s an honour and a privilege for us to be able to offer that opportunity.” While like Sarah’s deputation, at face value Keith’s statement displays an important and perhaps commendable stance, we must also consider the limits of the action being redefined as an “honour and privilege.” Taking credit for the inclusion of others through this initiative removes responsibility from the exclusion that has been taking place. That is, it demands a temporal adjustment that prohibits the recognition of borders built across time and instead shifts the focus to what is being done now. Specifically, rather than addressing the inequities built into the processes of illegalization, it simply places liberals on a pedestal of “good people” who are willing to “share” some degree of power to others via the availability of the ID. Furthermore, humanitarian discourses remove agency from marginalized populations, assuming that these actions are solely based on goodwill rather than political pressure and activism. Both Sarah’s and Keith’s statements showcase the utilization of the humanitarian moral

argument as the reason for inclusion while simultaneously eliding the history of exclusion and the political capital utilized by community members to demand the passing of the ID policy.

The humanitarian deservingness frame was not limited to the ideal of the “good citizen”; it also include the utilization of the ideal of the “good Christian.” Some community members in attendance at commission meetings reiterated their Christian values as reasons for “helping” others. Joshua, a member of the clergy stated at a County Commission meeting,

I really didn't want to come here tonight. I wanted to stay home and bake Christmas cookies and I'm tired and I'm old and I'm tired of arguing about these things and then I realized last night that I needed to be here just because it is the Christian's Christmas season and Jesus always always always stood at the side of those who were weary, those who were ill, those who were marginalized.

While noting that they did not have to be present at the meeting, but took time out of their day, such citizens again perpetuate a boundary between people who need the ID and people who are present as an act of kindness. Similar to those who utilized the “good citizen” ideal, Joshua described a desire to stand “at the side” of the marginalized given his relative power. Villegas and Blower (2019), in their discussion of the Canadian deservingness frame stipulate that for it “to be effective, it needed to be applied onto ‘deserving’ subjects: those identified as having a ‘legitimate’ need for protection.” In this sense, deservingness for Joshua was based on his understanding of weariness, illness, and marginalization. Thus, migrants become deserving as long as they uphold an abject and helpless position.

As stated above, deservingness frames also utilized financial arguments, particularly the fiscal reward the community receives from their waged labour and spending practices. Robert, a Kalamazoo County resident who described difficulty in accessing an ID as a child of adoption, also argued, “as far as employment goes, I think we are all well aware countywide that there are undocumented citizens working very dutifully for us countywide.” Similarly, Fred, at a different County Commission meeting explained that the presence of undocumented migrants equals the availability of fruits and vegetables. Both individuals speak to the presence of undocumented workers supporting the agricultural industry present in the area, particularly given the rural/urban divide in Kalamazoo County. In both instances, the deployment of fiscal logic served to imagine the undocumented migrant solely as an economic unit whose primary value is benefiting the local economy. This

presents a number of problems as it places all undocumented migrants in a homogenized category, excludes other types of work, and dehumanizes undocumented migrants by placing them as only important to the community so long as they serve economic purposes. Furthermore, these arguments limit the recognition that the economy does not benefit everyone equally, and many of the gains described are the result of the ways illegalization facilitates exploitation.

While not explicitly an economic argument, some deputants also formulated deservingness based on a transactional process. Tina, a self-identified person of colour, further described this when stating, “we want to make it easier for them, to get housing and to make it easier for them, you know... those who are giving and valuable in our community.” This statement not only separates outsiders from the “we,” it further clarifies that “we” only want to make daily services easier for certain people “who are giving and valuable,” again creating standards of eligibility to belong in the community. The politics of being valued in this instance relates to aspects read as beneficial to citizens.

Conclusion:

The social production of illegality demands that institutions and individuals partake in defining the parameters of belonging and non-belonging. This process is multifaceted and can encompass various degrees of adoption, from nativist ideas of actively removing the undocumented to “liberal” ideas of benevolence in accordance to deservingness. In this paper, we examined strategies formed to counter xenophobia that instead maintained boundaries and barriers to belonging. The deployment of humanitarian, religious, and economic bases for deservingness further concretizes illegalization and fails to highlight or address multiple exclusions.

The arguments we present in this paper highlight how illegalization of undocumented migrants is hegemonic as state actors as well as community members take for granted immigration status as an organization feature of society. That is, state discourse can permeate understandings of belonging and membership to an imagined community. Furthermore, such discourse, as deployed by state actors as well as the populace has material repercussions. As Anderson, Sharma, and Wright (2009, 8) tell us “*the state* is deeply implicated in constructing vulnerability through immigration controls and practices.” Therefore, they say, “social justice movements must not only ‘confront’ the question of the border, they must *reject* borders” (11). The boundaries of

belonging to the community of value are perpetuated by the discourses discussed in this paper. One important point to consider is our inability to classify to what degree these statements served to gain support from the Commissioners who ultimately voted in favour of the proposal.

Recognition of membership in a community can serve an important role in creating spaces of relative safety while endeavouring to reach a comprehensive and equitable solution. Not all community members perpetuated the theme of exclusion and border creation. One speaker expressed that as a community, “we believe that all people thrive when conditions are created in a community where barriers that limit potential are removed.” The Kalamazoo County ID was described by a different community member as “an emblem of membership in a community.” Having a form of identification which identifies all people as members of the same community was considered a way of transgressing some boundaries.

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PART THREE: *SITIO Y LENGUA*

I wish to point out that our works emerge from *un sitio y una lengua* (a space and language) that rejects colonial ideology and the by-products of colonialism and capitalist patriarchy—sexism, racism, homophobia, etc. The space and language is rooted in both the words and silence of Third-World-Identified-Third-World-Women who create a place apart from white men and women and from men of color, if only for a weekend now and then.

Emma Pérez, “Sexuality and Discourse: Notes from a Chicana Survivor”

The Devil at the Gay Bar: Revitalizing and Queering Northern New Mexican Folktales

Ishmael Mondragón

In northern New Mexico, the youth of the past partook in the sharing of *cuentos*, oral narratives told by elders of the community to preserve certain beliefs and traditions special to Chicana/o/xs. However, with WWII and the spread of American culture, these folktales began to lose their value with the rise of technological advances. In the 21st century, distractions in the form of portable technology slowly individualized members of the community and replaced the voice of the *abuelos* with Apple and Android. Despite this, one character has helped *cuentos* survive, La Llorona, especially with Warner Bros. Pictures and New Line Cinema modernizing her tale in *The Curse of La Llorona* (2019). Even though the weeping woman takes center stage, my work shifts the spotlight from this infamous icon as a means of bringing to the forefront another legendary character of cultural significance, the Devil. While the tale of La Llorona represents the *mestizaje* of Chicana/o/xs, the Devil signifies the beliefs marked by the Spanish conquest that still survive with Catholicism. As a folklorist and creative writer, my work (re)introduces an adult audience to the *cuento* of "Devil at the Dance Hall" as a way of revitalizing this form of storytelling by removing the vague warning of this tale as an example of how to convey a moralistic message in the present day. My short story, "Good Friday," utilizes the Devil as a character who continues to enforce the codes of morality within a culture to understand what has survived and changed by transforming the voice of the elders into a modern queer narrator. Although *cuentos* are used to educate younger generations, I target adult readers, within and beyond the academic community, to illustrate how to communicate relevant beliefs in modern times to ultimately retell these stories in contemporary contexts while illustrating a facet of Nuevomexicana/o/x culture.

As a writer, I transform oral narratives into contemporary adult short stories to continue the transmission of Northern New Mexico folktales to give voice to a Chicana/o/x subculture found thriving in the American Southwest. The reason my writings focus on (re)educating adults on this form of storytelling is because the modern-day Nuevomexicana/o/x, Chicana/o/x, and everyday reader no longer have the time to come together to listen to *cuentos*. In 1998, it was found that “the younger generations, beginning to be influenced by modern ideas and notions, no longer seemed to be interested in this particular heritage... [which] has become increasingly evident since the great changes that have come about throughout the United States since World War II” (Espinosa and Hayes ix). Although some traditions are fading into the static of the digital era, folktales can be modernized to catch a glimpse of what that culture was like during a particular moment in time. According to Aurelio Espinoza, “the folktale... [is] a traditional, popular narrative that deals with human beings – ordinary human beings – but in which the heroes and heroines often receive supernatural help in order to realize the ideals of justice of the common people” (174). I utilize the *cuento* as a foundation for storytelling because it is the words and beliefs of *los viejos de antes*. Brunvand states, “folklore represents what people preserve in their culture through the generations by custom and word of mouth when few other means exist to preserve it” (23). Lucky for this generation, digitization has presented itself to modern readers to help create a digital imprint of what it means to be Nuevomexicana/o/x at the turn of the century. My work is designed for adults to show how a folktale can be modernized for a contemporary understanding of values associated with traditions and beliefs still practiced to this day.

Although I transform the voice of *los viejos de antes*, I create a contemporary adult Nuevomexican@ narrator who continues to serve the purpose of the use of folktales as an elder who “bear(s) principal responsibility for ensuring the vitality of... culture and the survival of its bearers” (Briggs 59). Since the adults of today will be the *viejitos de mañana*, I use folktales as the skeletal structure for my writings to capture the voice of the elders in the new age to show how to retell these stories to the future while continuing to warn people of what could happen when there is no balance between one world and the other. Sometimes people resist traditions because they no longer understand why they do things, but “even as tradition gestures to the past, it also carries us forward to our communal future” (Blank and Howard 18). My revitalized folktales show how the warnings of the past can be transformed into modern understandings for

an adult audience. According to Dundes, “Folklore provides socially sanctioned forms of behavior in which a person may do what can’t be done in ‘real life’” (59). Since folktales create this storyworld, my work uses this idea of folklore to create the duality found in a world where a person has to navigate through several spaces to exist. However, instead of keeping the vagueness of the outcomes of certain communal violations, my short stories provide a graphic adult interpretation which depicts the results of engaging with the taboo. While preserving the voice and warnings of *los viejos de antes*, I construct a storyworld that shows the presence of the Nuevomexicana/o/x in the twenty-first century, and I give voice to the queer Nuevomexicana/o/x to show their presence within a community.

To be a Nuevomexicana/o/x in the twenty-first century means that mestiza consciousness is utilized to navigate through the dominant space. The people of this region have changed because our people have dwelled in an area long before the Mayflower wrecked into Plymouth Rock. They created a culture in a place where the border fluctuated around them until the United States drew lines in 1912. The folklore from northern New Mexico reflects this multifaceted identity and my work shows how these people are *mestiza*, “a product of transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one group to another” (Anzaldúa 100). In the twenty-first century, being Nuevomexicana/o/x reflects mestiza consciousness as Spanish, Mexican, Native American, and American identity converge to identity the culture of these people. Their history shows the awareness these people have of their multiple layers of identity because “Nuevomexicanos [possess] a readily understood racial identity, a documented historical lineage, and a claim to the land that dated to the very ‘conquest’ of New Mexico” (Nieto-Phillips 81). Although the origins of some of these people arose from the Republic of Mexico, the citizens of the region identified with Spain. Geography isolated the culture which helped increase the population and “interestingly enough, northern New Mexico, where Spanish settlers and Pueblo Indians had their earliest and most enduring contacts has maintained what might most accurately be called Spanish-American culture, rather than Mexican-American” (West 28). However, to survive these constant changes, the Nuevomexicana/o/x realized, “It is not enough to stand on the opposite bank, shouting questions, challenging patriarchal, white conventions... [O]n our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank... so that we are on both shores at once... (Anzaldúa 100 – 101). In order to survive an ever-changing cultural world, Nuevomexicana/o/x embrace

their *mestiza consciousness* as a means of maneuvering through the world by maintaining an attachment to their community while blending with the dominant culture for future preservation. As *mestizas*, “we are chameleons. As we move from one world to the other we exchange colors, ideas, symbols and words in order to fit, to relate and to survive” (Burciaga 101). Instead of assimilating to an unattainable standard created in the image of the Anglo heterosexual-male, a cultural group survives by understanding who and what makes people different rather than what sets them apart. My work shows how the Nuevomexicana/o/x uses *mestiza consciousness* to see the world with communal eyes within a globalizing world for survival. We live in a time where voices are trying to be silenced, but my work gives voice to the Nuevomexicana/o/x in 2019 to show their presence and future transformations.

Besides emphasizing on transforming folktales into short stories for preservation and to portray the contemporary Nuevomexicana/o/x, my work brings the legendary characters of the ghost, *bruja*, and Doña Sebastiana to the forefront. However, since Lent is still practiced in Chicana/o/x communities, I introduce this audience to “Good Friday,” a revitalized version of “Devil at the Dance Hall” from *Hispanic Legends of New Mexico* (1980) of the R.D. Jameson Collection edited by Stanley Robe. Legends are types of *cuentos* which come from the mixture of the various cultures that make up a cultures identity. According to Herrera-Sobek, “Legends are defined as folk narratives whose actions take place in a historical time in a specific space on earth and with protagonists that may be human or supernatural” (28-29). The most infamous supernatural legend whose cries overshadow other legendary characters in Chican@ culture is *La Llorona*. This classic *cuento* has been told time and time again, with the most recent addition to the Nuevomexicana/o/x literary canon, *Bruja: The Legend of La Llorona* (2011) by Lucinda Ciddio Leyba and now for a general audience, *The Curse of La Llorona* (2019), a film adaptation by Warner Bros. Pictures and New Line Cinema. The tale tells the story of a young woman who is abandoned by the man she loves and left alone to raise their children. Either grief or revenge takes over the woman which leads her to drown her children in a body of water. In her afterlife, she is bound to roam the shores searching for her children. The tale itself is used to warn unruly children to obey their parents and stay away from forceful bodies of water. Besides the main storyline of the *cuento*, this legend embodies the meeting of the Old and New World, she represents the *mestizaje* of a people. According to Pérez:

The legend of La Llorona is as old as is it dynamic. From a pre-conquest portent, which consisted of a woman howling in the night month before Cortés' arrival, to the Houston mother from Mexico accused of murdering her children, who stated in an interview, 'Yo soy La Llorona,' the Weeping Woman has permeated the consciousness of her folk community. To those who participate in the transmission of the lore, either through storytelling or as interlocutors, La Llorona is alternately, and sometimes simultaneously, a person, legend, ghost, goddess, metaphor, story, and/or symbol. (2)

The *cuento* of La Llorona provides the inspiration for the revitalization of other classical supernatural legends by creating characters who embody the supernatural. The purpose of portraying these characters in modern times is to demonstrate what has transcended time in a changing nation-space. Since Lent is still celebrated, I construct the storyworld of what happens when a member violates a communal practice during this religious festival, even in a technological age.

In northern New Mexican culture, the Devil is a character that symbolizes something more than the concept of evil. In Catholic ideals, the Devil is Satan, however, the character of the Devil found in Nuevomexican@ culture is not Satan but rather a figure that embodies Spanish-American religious ideals. When he appears in northern New Mexican text, The Devil represents the survival of the Catholic faith, a mark of the Spanish conquest in modern times. His presence "enforces the codes of morality as it has long existed in northern New Mexico. He is not entirely evil and is to be feared mainly by violators of religious and moral taboos" (Robe 145). When he appears in the folktale, he is a depiction of "[a] moralistic attitude toward dancing, especially public ballroom dancing, is more prevalent in Spain and Spanish America than realized by North Americans who think all Puritans come from New England" (Paredes 201). For this northern New Mexican folktale, the Devil is associated with the night life and only appears when a character violates a norm of the community. Robe states:

He appears in a clear pattern which supports the regional system of traditional values, by insisting on the observance of religious feast days, by pressing the fulfillment of religious obligations, and

enforcing respect for one's parents. These values are characteristics of Hispanic Catholicism in New Mexico, a survival of the militant faith of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The devil is a personification of evil, yet he supports this religious and moral system. (145)

In all variations of this tale, the Devil is the result of the violation of religious practices. Using this supernatural character to instill fear in the younger generation of the community continues to show the persistence of Hispanic Catholic beliefs within the community.

For the short story "Good Friday," I took the basic plot elements of "Devil at the Dance Hall" and twisted the tale for an adaptation geared toward a broad adult audience. The original story starts with "a disobedient girl [who] goes to the dance without her parents' permission . . . while at the dance a handsome beautifully dressed man asks her to dance. They dance all night, until she suddenly notices with a shock that he isn't wearing shoes, and in fact doesn't even have feet" (Castro 17). It is at this point "some physical feature betrays him to those who are present, a long tail, feet like those of a chicken, or horns protruding from his forehead. Once his presence is known, he vanishes amid a cloud of sulphurous smoke" (Robe 145). Depending on the motive of the tale, the young girl often disappears with the handsome stranger or she is able to ward him off by making the sign of the cross. Originally, this tale was geared toward a female audience "to instill fear in young women . . . not [to] disregard parental authority. In some variants a young girl specifically transgresses religious beliefs by insisting on going to a dance on Good Friday. . . The appearance of the devil on this day is an especially ominous sign" (Castro 18). The reason this tale is revitalized is because the majority of modern-day Nuevomexicana/o/x are catholic and still practice Lent. Since this religious festival is celebrated, the warnings of the Devil should be clear during that time, but how does one meet this character in the new millennia? What does it mean to meet the Devil at the dance? What does it mean to disappear with the Devil? [See the excerpt from the short story, "Good Friday," at the end of the essay.]

For my version of this tale, I removed the vague outcome by switching the gender of the main character to create a new variation of this legend, creating a vivid answer to what happens when you meet the Devil at the dance. My short story has a closeted homosexual male as the lead role for this tale to show how a

Nuevomexicana/o/x can embrace *mestiza consciousness* to survive in modern day America and within their own community. As a *mestiza*, a gay male character, such as Alex, is able to replace the prototypical role designed for a young female because he learns to shift his sexual identity for personal gain and satisfaction. Anzaldúa states, “Men, even more than women, are fettered to gender roles . . . Only gay men have had the courage to expose themselves to the woman inside them and to challenge the current masculinity” (106). In Chican@ communities, men are associated with the image of the “macho,” a meaning which is the result of Anglo hierarchical male dominance, in concept and invention, that insinuates oppression, poverty, and low self-esteem (105). The short story of “Good Friday” illustrates the current struggle with the northern New Mexican male in an American nation-space. Alex lies to his mother and girlfriend to partake of carnal needs despite knowing his cultures beliefs in religious practices during Lent and feelings towards sexuality. His actions represent the violation that occurs so that the Devil manifests. When he appears, “[The Devil] is clearly portrayed and identified in those legends where he plays a major role that is repeated in a number of texts without significant variations” (Robe 146-147). The character of Luciano remains true to what his purpose is as the devil, but in the short story the supernatural element is absent. Instead, Luciano represent the Devil in the flesh as a way of teaching a moral or issuing a warning of communal violation whether the protagonist believes in the traditions or not. Alex meets the Devil in the flesh not based on his sexuality but on the fact he was not true to himself. He consciously decided to manipulate his family and girlfriend to go out to a gay bar on Good Friday. In the end, despite Alex not believing in the Devil, the character manifests himself to the protagonist to continue the translation of what it means to meet the “Devil at the Dance Hall.”

Overall, what I hope my work does for adult readers is reconnect them to their own folklore to eventually retell their own stories to their youth. Sometimes, I wonder if what I am doing is enough for the continued transmission of northern New Mexican folklore, but all I can do is rely on transformation and adaptation as ways to ensure these folktales survive for future generations. Although there are still a number of people who prefer reading over any other form of media, we are headed into a future where taking time to read a book, even on Kindle, is becoming obsolete. The idea of folklore is to preserve a culture with modern technical means available. Since my work has moved the oral narrative to digital print, this may lead to other forms of medium, perhaps audiobooks or even film as

a means of not only preserving and changing northern New Mexican folklore but also showing how the Nuevomexicana/o/x maneuvers through the new millennia and beyond.

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THE VIOLATION

Excerpt from "Good Friday"

Condensation gathered on the mirror above the black granite counter top while the chrome swan-neck faucet glistened in bathroom lighting. Alex wiped the mirror dry with a white wash cloth. He smiled at his reflection and winked as he adjusted the Bluetooth in his ear. Alex fingered it in until it felt snug. As he leaned toward the mirror, he tilted his head to check for stray nose hairs. A lone straggler waved at Alex as he exhaled. He pinched the end of the hair between his index finger and thumbnail. Alex tugged. It curled and retracted. He leaned in closer to the mirror to stare up his nostril. He found the end of the curly Q, slowly he extended it, and yanked. His eyes watered as he sneezed.

"*Salud, hijo,*" his mother said on the other end of the line.

Alex buttoned the last two buttons of his lavender dress shirt.

"*Ya te vas acostar?*" asked his mom.

“I’m already in PJs, ma,” He unbuttoned the sleek charcoal dress pants which hung loosely on his firm legs. Adjusting his bulge in baby blue bikini briefs, he tucked in his shirt, and buttoned up.

“It’s past my bedtime.”

“That’s good, *mijo*. Once I hear KRQE at 10, I’m ready for Mark Ronchetti to come out. *No se, hijo*. Your dad has no idea how those rosy cheeks of that weather boy help me put him to sleep. Once the news and your father are done, its time for a few levels of *Candy Crush y despues trampo oreja*.”

“Whoa. Mom, please. I’m trying to go to bed. Last thing I need is. . . visuals.”

“It’s natural, *Alexis*. I could see if it was Diane Anderson *calentandome*. Then there’d be a problem. Not for your father, but for my soul. Anyways, it’s good you are staying in. It’s Good Friday. You don’t want to meet up with. . .”

“*Aye mamita*, the devil is not loose on Good Friday. That stuff only happened in the old days.”

Alex tilted his head back and laughed.

“*No ries*,” his mom said. “You know he’s real. Because of movies nowadays, *y esos estupid*’ video games, *tú y tu* generation thinks everything is fake. You know your Tia Mona felt his presence once when she was young.”

“Oh, God. Not this again,” Alex said shaking his head.

“*Hijo*, don’t take the Lord’s name in vain . . . and listen to me, okay? So she snuck out of the house to a dance at the Civic Center or Night Owl, or whatever they call that bar *en Las Vegas* nowadays, *pero ese cerca de Harris Pond*. You know the one *que tiene los jotos de dueños*.”

“Mom . . .”

“Anyways, that Good Friday, she sneaks out and goes to the dance and at midnight two pigs with beady red eyes entered the dance hall and started dancing the Macarena.”

“Mom listen to yourself. Pigs? Really? Did she mean cops?”

“No. Listen. Pigs are symbols of filth and Jesus put demons in pigs because they are dirty. You remember *con ese . . . como se llamaba? Lee . . .? Leon?*”

“Legion?”

“*Si! El!* Anyways, the pigs started dancing and your *tia* freaked out. She’s all ‘Ahhhh!’ and made the sign of the cross and prayed to *Jesús, María y José*. *Izque* the pigs disappeared in a puff of smoke.”

“I don’t even know what to say.” Alex laughed. He smiled at his reflection and winked as if it could acknowledge him.

“*Piensalo, hijo*. Why do you think she doesn’t go out anymore? She doesn’t even use Listerine during lent because of how much alcohol is in it.”

Alex slipped the end of his belt into the first belt loop. He fed the leather strap through each loop until he reached the front.

“Pigs at a dance? You should have told me the other one. I like the one about the girl who meets the handsome stranger and disappears.”

“*Ya, ya, ya* . . . enough Devil talk. It’s like calling him out to play. And I don’t even wanna play jacks with him.”

“Jacks?”

“Jacks. Nintendo. Pinochle. *Lo que sea!* Let’s talk Jesus. What time will you be here Sunday?”

“Early Sunday morning. . . the latest nine. I have a lot of homework to do tomorrow, so I want to take care of that, so my focus will be on your *torta de huevo* and salmon patties.”

He scrunched up his face in disgust as he said the words “salmon patties.”

Alex tightened his belt. He smiled at his reflection.

“Have you talked to Gloriana?”

“Not since earlier. I haven’t been able to get a hold of her. I hate texting her. I’d rather hear her voice,” Alex replied. He reached for his black iPhone and pushed the home button. Two unread text messages from Gloriana.

“*Bueno, hijo*. I know you’ve had a long week and you’re already in bed, so call me when you can tomorrow. Mark Ronchetti is about to come out. Good night.”

His mom hung up.

Alex laughed as he pushed the end-button several times to make sure the call was over. He placed his earpiece on the counter just as the Pandora app popped up connecting to the Wi-Fi. When he placed the iPhone on the Bose sounddock, Today’s Dance Hits came on. Electronic beats bumped and filled the bathroom. Alex swayed his hips to the song. The golden cross necklace, which hung around his neck, glinted in the florescent bathroom light as Alex danced. He unclasped the chain and tossed it to the corner of the bathroom counter where bottles of body scrub, skin moisturizer, and hair product were neatly lined up. The chain wrapped around a grey bottle of Clinique skin moisturizer for men, knocking

the container on its side. Thick white liquid splattered across the black countertop. Alex grabbed the white wash cloth and dabbed the mess.

THE MEETING

“Howl ‘cuz it’s midnight.”

The crowd howled.

“I just wanna thank all you heathens for being an awesome crowd tonight,” DJ Beezle continued. “Hope you’re enjoying your Easter weekend. On this Good Friday don’t forget to try our drink specials: The Bleeding Jesus for \$7 and Holy Hail Mary shots for three bucks.”

Alex wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand.

“I need another drink,” Alex said as he walked away.

“Wait,” Sammy said as he tugged on Alex’s arm. “He’s here.”

The lights flashed off. Sirens blared as red lights flickered. Thick fog filled the dance floor. The dubstep thumping of “Must Be the Feeling” by Nero pulsed from speaker boxes. The crowd howled.

“Sammy?”

Alex reached forward trying to find the purple-haired boy.

The lights flashed back on. Sammy vanished but, in his place, stood a tall olive-skinned broad-shouldered man with his arms crossed, stroking his nicely trimmed chin strap with one hand. His jade eyes glinted in the flashing lights. He uncrossed arms as he ran a hand through onyx hair. A tight scarlet western shirt with black trim embroidery outlined the man’s defined torso. The stranger gripped the silver bull skull bolo and adjusted it, bringing it closer to his thick muscular neck. Tight black jeans gripped his thick muscular legs and tight ass. He ran his hand down his shirt and stopped at his belt buckle, a golden eagle with silver-tipped wings perched above his packed crotch. On his feet, black pointy vaquero boots with the points trimmed in silver. Sammy stepped out from behind the handsome stranger, handing him two bottles of Dos Equis. The man offered one to Alex.

“I hear you’re thirsty,” said the man. His voice was deep and low. He smiled. His left canine, trimmed in gold, glinted in the strobe lights.

Alex took the beer from the man who firmly held on to it. His eyes locked on to the green eyes of the handsome stranger. The stranger took his bottle from

Sammy as smoke engulfed the dance floor. The purple-haired boy faded into the mist. Keeping his eyes on Alex, the man let go of the beer and smirked. Alex took a sip of his beer. The handsome man placed the tip of the beer bottle up against his bottom lip, tilted his head back, and in three chugs he swallowed his drink. Alex grinned and mimicked the stranger's action. His attempt was unsuccessful as he spit up a little after the third chug. Beer ran down the corner of his mouth. The handsome stranger leaned into Alex as he withdrew a black handkerchief from his back-left pocket. He wiped the corner of Alex's mouth and grinned.

"I'm Luciano," he said. His voice carried over the bass.

"I'm Al..."

"I know who you are," Luciano interrupted. His breathe smelled of Wrigley's Big Red and beer. "I've had my eye on you."

Sammy appeared out of the smoke and took the empty beer bottles. The handsome man patted the purple-haired boy on the butt before he vanished into the dancing crowd. The stranger tucked the hanky back into his butt pocket as he slipped his index finger through the belt of Alex's pants. As he pulled him close, he gyrated his pelvis into Alex.

"Dance with me?" Luciano asked but it sounded like a command.

Alex followed Luciano's hips. When the beat began to speed up, the handsome devil separated from Alex and danced on his own. He stomped his silver lined boots on the dance floor like horse hooves. Alex smiled. His eyes glistening in the manipulated light. Step by step, Alex followed the man's dance moves.

THE (DIS)APPEARING

Alex took the drink.

"Run along and get the car ready. We're gonna finish dancing," Luciano said. He tugged at the O-ring around the boy's neck.

Sammy nodded and walked away.

Alex took a sip, "Damn, this is good. What is it?"

"Adios Motherfucker," Luciano said.

"What?" Alex asked as he stopped drinking his blue concoction.

"That's the name of your drink," Luciano said. "Drink up. One last dance is needed before we leave."

Alex removed the thin black straw and tossed it to the floor. He downed his drink. The mixture of tequila, gin and vodka overpowered the subtle citric flavor. Chills crawled throughout his body. He wrapped his arm around Luciano's thick bulging bicep. Alex staggered behind Luciano who walked through a door other than the one they exited from. As they crossed the threshold, Alex's hand stamp illuminated and itched. Alex scratched the stamp as he stumbled toward the center of the dance floor. Strobe lights flashed. The fog machine hissed as smoke billowed across the crowd. Luciano continued pushing through the crowd until he found an open spot to dance with Alex. The music thundered and the room started to spin for Alex. He shook his head trying to shake the feeling but the room spun faster. He clung to Luciano as the lights flashed and swirled around. Luciano's deep laughter drummed through Alex. He tried to catch his breath but the smoke gagged him. His body went limp. As he fell, the lights blurred and swirled. Luciano's handsome face distorted and then nothing.

The last thing Alex heard was, "I got you."

Darkness.

Alex moaned. He opened his eyes to find his face covered by a burlap sack. A dull orange glow seeped through the tiny holes of the fabric. Alex tried moving his body but his arms and legs were restrained, spread apart like those of DaVinci's *Vitruvian Man*. He moaned again unable to tell whether he was lying down or upright. A cool breeze flushed over his naked body. His flesh stung.

"He's awake."

Alex recognized the purple-haired boy's voice. He tried to say "Sammy" but a ball gag muffled his cries. Alex coughed and groaned as he tried to move an arm. Nothing. He tried his other arm. Still nothing. He pushed himself up. Not a budge.

"There, there. Just relax, master isn't done with you," Sammy said. He pulled the burlap sack from Alex's head. Upon black and white checkerboard tile, in the center of a dark red room, trimmed with black paint, Alex lay on his back across a leather mat which covered an old round gray dried up oak table. Black fabric covered the windows. Two white candles burned on holders placed on the walls, separated by a bleached goat skull, while a mass of black, red, and white candles burned brightly on an altar beneath.

Alex struggled.

"Save your strength. You've been a good boy."

Sammy caressed the red welts puffed across Alex's torso. Alex twitched as the fingertips grazed his sore flesh. Above them, four chains hung from the beams on the ceiling. Sammy reached for a chain and linked it to an opening on the corner of the leather mat beneath Alex. He freed one of Alex's hands and secured it to the leather cuff attached to the chain. He did this to the other hand and both legs. Sammy walked to the corner of the room. He gripped the handle on a circular wrought iron wheel and cranked. The table beneath Alex squeaked as it lowered away from his body. As it retracted into the floor, the tabletop became a platform. Alex gripped the chains with both hands, trying to resist the force of gravity, but his body went limp. The chains jangled. Suspended in air, Alex thrashed about, attempting to break free. He released the chains and groaned. Alex moaned a rubber-ball muffled "help" as he dangled in the air.

"How do you like being the prey?" Sammy asked.

He walked over to Alex's dangling body. With one hand, Sammy wrapped his fingers around Alex's neck and clenched. He tightened his grip. Alex's face turned red.

"That is enough, Sammy."

Sammy released Alex and stepped back.

Luciano appeared at the doorway as he puffed up his smooth bare chest. He pulled a red and black lucha libre mask over his head. Black plastic horns protruded from the forehead. Luciano rubbed his hands down his chest to his abdomen and stopped above his well-groomed pubic hair. He spit in one hand and then rubbed himself.

"You may leave us. I will call you when I am done with him."

Reflexiones Nepantleras Profesionales: Una Autohistoria Como Profesor de Español en Los Estados Unidos

C. “Martin” Vélez Salas

Enmarcado en reflexiones nepantleras entre el español y el inglés en mi propia ‘autoetnografía’ o desde el concepto de ‘autohistoria’ de Gloria Anzaldúa, en este ensayo propongo los siguientes objetivos: (a) enmarcar mi experiencia personal de aprendizaje de lenguas dirigido por mi madre; (b) conectar este legado familiar con mi trayectoria profesional transnacional y migrante peruano-estadounidense como profesor de español a nivel universitario en Kentucky y Texas, (c) mostrar dos modelos de intersección recientes entre los estudios Chicanos/as, Latinos/as, el Español y la Educación Bilingüe en Texas y Colorado, (d) proponer direcciones para crear puentes y alianzas interdisciplinarias del estudio nepantlero translingual del español en San Antonio, Texas.

Al revisar nuevamente los conceptos de “borderlands” y de “nepantla” en la reciente traducción de *Borderlands / La Frontera: la nueva mestiza* de Norma E. Cantú (Anzaldúa, 2015b), hago eco del uso de la intersección de estos dos términos, citando a Cantú: “*Borderlands*, viene a ser para Anzaldúa, un espacio liminal y psicológico que ella denomina “nepantla” o “espacio de en medio” (p. 55). Es esta intersección que elaboro mis reflexiones nepantleras dentro de mi autohistoria profesional como profesor de español a nivel de pre-grado en los estados de Kentucky y Texas. Asimismo, utilizo el término autohistoria que Anzaldúa define de la manera siguiente: “This form (‘autohistoria’) goes beyond the traditional self-portrait or autobiography; in telling the writer/artist’s personal story, it also includes the artist’s cultural history— indeed, it’s a kind of making history from our experience and perspective through our art rather than accepting our history by the dominant culture” (Anzaldúa, 2015b). Es desde este espacio fronterizo psicológico de entre mis mundos culturales peruanos y estadounidenses (Kentucky y Texas) en mi labor como profesor de español (así como de inglés y estudios bilingües/bilculturales) que escribo esta breve historia personal para crear la posibilidad de establecer puentes y alianzas interdisciplinarias translinguales

del español en Estados Unidos—con especial énfasis en San Antonio, Texas—considerando una revisión panorámica de estudios correspondientes y de dos modelos de alianzas interdisciplinarias recientes en Colorado y Texas. Al final de este ensayo, volviendo a una síntesis de ideas que extienden mis reflexiones Anzaldúanas, combino las posturas teóricas de acción local indígenas y afroperuanas de Silvia Rivera y Victoria Santa Cruz, dos pensadoras sudamericanas, así como una reorientación con mi legado cultural y lingüístico migratorio de mi madre, residente en la ciudad de Lima.

“Uyaricuy ñañito: Aprende estas palabras para comunicarnos”: Mi madre como eje fundamental del aprendizaje inicial del quechua, el castellano y el inglés:

Mi madre Verónica, quien migró de la selva peruana a Lima en su adolescencia, trajo consigo su variedad del castellano que fue discriminada (y lo sigue siendo) por los hablantes del castellano estándar de la ciudad capital. También, hablaba algunas palabras de origen quechua que ella había aprendido de sus padres, en especial de su abuela Ernestina quien era hablante monolingüe de esta lengua. Ella nos enseñó a mis hermanas y a mí ciertas palabras y frases que advertían o aconsejaban comportamientos¹ así como me incentivó a que estudiara inglés, natación, mecánica, cocinar y tocar guitarra. También visitaba constantemente a mis profesores de primaria y secundaria para asegurarse que estudiaba bien mis cursos y respetara a mis mayores. Recuerdo cuando mis familiares que nos visitaban hablaban con nosotros de una manera distinta, y cómo los vecinos se burlaban de la manera cantada y el uso de ciertas palabras que los hablantes ‘no muy educados’ de la selva (de la región peruana) usaban. Mi mamá y mis tíos adoptarían la variedad sociolingüística limeña pero nosotros disfrutábamos y aprenderíamos ciertos comportamientos lingüísticos ante la visita de familiares o conocidos que migraban de la selva a Lima. Menciono estas circunstancias puesto que estos conocimientos de carácter sociocultural y lingüísticos aprendidos con mi madre, mis hermanas y mis tíos en esos años de socialización se han convertido en ejes fundamentales para re-escribir mi autohistoria al regresar a esos años fundamentales de mi primera socialización con el castellano, el quechua y el inglés. En los últimos diez años, he visitado a mi

¹ Por ejemplo estas órdenes incluían: upapay (cállate), mikuy (come), apamuy (agarra), uyaricuy (escucha).

madre dos veces al año. Hemos tenido el gozo de que nos haya compartido sus recuerdos más profundos: canciones en español como “Cielito lindo”, una canción en japonés, un poema en inglés, poemas en español y una canción en quechua dedicada al niño Dios. Enmarcar esos conocimientos en mi labor profesional, ahora que mi mamá dejó de platicar verbalmente con nosotros así como ayudarla a comunicarse con nosotros en su lenguaje se ha convertido ahora en un reto dentro de mi autohistoria personal con ella.

‘El lenguaje de la frontera’ y el ‘Habla del Pueblo’: Una urgente necesidad de retomar las lenguas y los lenguajes secretos entre el español y el inglés:

Desde mis años como estudiante de Educación en la Universidad San Marcos de Lima, y de ser profesor de inglés en colegios estatales antes de migrar con esfuerzo a Estados Unidos y luego como estudiante graduado y ahora profesor en Programas de Español y Estudios Bilingües y Biculturales, observo la importancia de retomar las lenguas habladas por las comunidades bilingües/biculturales chicanas y que pueden también ser lenguajes secretos (Anzaldúa, 2015b) como el que aprendí con mi mamá en Lima, así como retomar con las formas locales del ‘Habla del Pueblo’ que son generalmente asociadas al Spanglish o a la variedad que tiene las dos lenguas (Zentella, 2016). En mi trayectoria profesional, me preparo para resaltar la importancia de establecer puentes y proyectos interdisciplinarios desde la universidad hacia la comunidad y viceversa y de todos aquellos involucrados en proyectos educativos de justicia social y económica. Esta importancia radica no solo en un proyecto crítico en lingüística aplicada con justicia social sino también en las interacciones que se están dando en espacios de interacción de hablantes bilingües del español y del inglés en los Estados Unidos tanto en ambientes de ayuda migratoria como en situaciones legales y de salud, por ejemplo. Sin embargo, la mayoría de los departamentos de español han desestimado la investigación sobre el español en Estados Unidos y han optado por una variedad extranjera a la que es prevalente en Estados Unidos (Valdes et al, 2003). Overall, my pedagogical experience in teaching Spanish in higher education in the US echoes the research findings that indicate that most Spanish programs do not consider the US Spanish variety (Tex-Mex, Nuyoricán, Spanglish) as worth of study; students need to acquire proficiency of standard academic forms of Spanish-speaking countries, especially Castilian Spanish (Valdes et al, 2003). Yet as we move into the twenty-first century, most programs will need to reconsider such standards not only for their

vitality as programs but also for the respect of the field, the communities that speak these languages and the critical role that they all play in constructing each other. Los estudios recientes no solo de contacto de variedades del español en la ciudad de Nueva York, Los Angeles, Houston y San Antonio señalan que hay luz en el camino y una revaloración de las distintas variedades del español y de su contacto con el inglés en Estados Unidos. Gloria Anzaldúa (2015b) expresa que su lengua no tendrá validez hasta que no tenga la libertad de manera bilingüe y “cambiar de códigos sin necesidad de siempre traducir, mientras todavía tenga que hablar inglés o español cuando preferiría hablar espanglish...” (p. 119).

Las autohistorias e investigaciones antropológicas de libertad lingüística de Anzaldúa (2012) y Zentella (1997), han tenido efecto en la comunidad activista en esta década. . En los últimos años, académicos activistas han publicado sobre la reconfiguración de los programas bilingües y el español académico en EEUU (Guerrero et al, 2017), la importancia del desarrollo del Español como Lengua de Herencia (Potowski, 2018), y de estudios sobre la decolonización de la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras (Macedo, 2018). Estos esfuerzos nos ofrecen orientaciones pedagógicas translingüales (García, 2018) de desarrollo de proyectos con orientaciones curriculares partiendo de lo local (Tochon, 2014). Enseguida paso a citar dos ejemplos de innovaciones curriculares en la intersección de estudios chicanos, del español y de la la educación bilingüe en Colorado y Texas. .

Alianzas interdisciplinarias en Educación Bilingüe con estudios Mexicano-Americanos en Texas y con el Español y Estudios Fronterizos en Colorado

In “Social Studies through Authentic and Relevant Curriculum”
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Professors Joy Esquierdo and Stephanie Alvarez, create and promote the creation of curriculum rooted in Mexican American culture and history in both English and Spanish. Their work is collaborative and developed with the help of elementary school teachers. Esquierdo hopes the curriculum in both languages can alleviate the limited resources in social studies in Spanish. Alvarez believes that being exposed to Mexican-American content can have a significant impact in students’ understanding of their history (Castillo, 2019). In a more sociological and critical approach to the study of Spanish in the US, the new major called Borders & Languages, housed in the Sociology & Human Services Program at Fort Lewis College in Colorado, will start its new journey in the Fall 2019 (Johnson, 2019). The program introduces—as soon as first year courses— critical analysis of the cultural context where Spanish or Spanglish is used. Students can reflect about

horror movies, punk and norteño music, and features of narco culture within the help of Anzaldúa and Foucault's texts in English. This change equals bilingual instruction from the very basic courses. Professors Carolina Alonso and David Vásquez-Hurtado are teaching basic pronunciation, the history of the US-Mexico border, as well as the life of Anzaldúa and norteño music in both basic and intermediate courses which will be part of the new major. The program also includes Spanish for the professions and conversational and survival Spanish courses. The new program gives importance to "cultural context," a critical component for initial language acquisition. Both Alonso and Vasquez-Hurtado hope that the program will become its own department and be catalyst for curricular innovations in borders and languages (Johnson, 2019). These two recent academic interdisciplinary research and new programs do provide concrete modelos that do consider the importance of sociolinguistic varieties of the Chicanos/as/Latino/as, Latinx²/speakers in the US Southwest.

¿Qué hacer para posibles alianzas? Preguntas institucionales e intervenciones desde mi autohistoria

As activist academics in critical language studies in Spanish and English studies at the undergraduate level in the US, we may eventually ask these questions: How do we embark on more alliances among departments, tenured and non-tenured professors, administrators, provosts, and community activists, parents, pro-immigrant and social justice organizations to respect and continue the local empowerment of bilingual/bi-literate identities among Chicanos/as, Latinos/as, Latinx? How do we embark upon community-based research projects that incorporate these students' life experiences and consider different variables such as socio-economic class, gender, sexual orientation, ableness, and legal status in the development of academic identities in these students? Taking these variables into consideration, how do we conceive and develop new directions in our curriculum? Las teorizaciones desde la lengua y cultura de Anzaldúa así como las investigaciones antropológicas de Zentella sobre el español en EEUU son esenciales para la creación de proyectos que se unan a otros estudios decoloniales desde la universidad (Grosfoguel et al., 2016) para revalorar "El Habla del pueblo" (Zentella, 2016). A esta re-valoración se pueden agregar estudios sobre

² Taking a cursory review of leading academic Chicano/Chicana and Latino Studies programs and organizations, I use the term Chicano/a for people of Mexican origin in the US, Latino/a for other Spanish-speaking countries in the Americas living in the US, and Latinx, as a new academic terms that includes Latino/a and gender fluidity in the US.

epistemologías del saber relacionadas a otros modelos de convivencia (Rivera, Boaventura de Santos) así como estudios relacionados a la revitalización de lenguas indígenas en las Américas y de educación intercultural bilingüe en México, Perú, Guatemala y Bolivia publicadas en inglés y español (Coronel-Molina & McCarthy, 2016, Bertely et al, 2018). Las perspectivas con una orientación hacia los saberes indígenas desde las lenguas y culturas indígenas y aún vitales después de la colonización de las Américas se convierten en ejes fundamentales para crear mundos nepantleros/zurdos/otros donde no solo nuestra herencia indígena tenga su propia revaloración, sino también nuestra herencia africana y corporal (Santa Cruz, 2010) enmarcados en proyectos bilingües/multilingües, biculturales/multiculturales y de doble y múltiple alfabetización (Coronel-Molina, S.M & McCarthy, T, 2016).

Las preguntas institucionales tan complejas mencionadas solo pueden ser respondidas en conjunto y con un esfuerzo mancomunado. En comunicaciones breves con los colegas activistas de los dos programas interdisciplinarios en Colorado y en Texas, ellos mencionan los diálogos con autoridades académicas fundamentados en pedagogías bilingües críticas (Colorado) y proyectos pilotos de colaboraciones para sustentar proyectos necesarios en la comunidad local (Texas). Personalmente, los profesores académicos críticos debemos de considerar alianzas dentro de sus programas fundamentados en ejes anzalduanos y zentellistas y de colaboraciones interdisciplinarias del español con otras disciplinas en el sudoeste de los Estados Unidos.

Anzaldúa plantea que una autohistoria es crear historia como parte de nuestras experiencias y perspectivas. Mi autohistoria está muy relacionada a las experiencias de vida de mi madre Verónica Salas y mis hermanas Nora y Lilian así como las perspectivas y relecturas de las teorizaciones y experiencias de Gloria Anzaldúa, Ana Celia Zentella, Victoria Santa Cruz y Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui. Mi historia como educador migrante bilingüe, en el presente luego de once años de obtener mi doctorado in Culture, Literacy, and Language en UT San Antonio, se ha enriquecido con experiencias tanto en Texas como en Kentucky, Lima y la Ciudad de México.

Mi hogar (**tierra**) ahora está asociado a dos lugares donde encuentro **amor**: el convivir con mi madre, en particular ahora con su demencia en estado avanzado, y mis familiares en Lima y amigos en San Antonio así como el interactuar y ayudar en el aprendizaje del español a mis alumnos en San Antonio. La continuación de esta, mi autohistoria, como mencioné al principio, estará

íntimamente ligada a la revaloración del legado que mi mamá Verónica ha dejado en mi primera socialización socio/cultural y lingüística del español, quechua e inglés en el Perú y en mi niñez y juventud y ahora en mis viajes para cuidar de ella. Asimismo, dentro de mi autohistoria como profesor de español, seguiré trabajando con mis colegas activistas bilingües en valorar nuestras historias desde nuestros hogares y nuestras madres que nos enseñaron a combinar varios códigos y variedades sociolingüísticas para ser libres dentro de los parámetros sociales de la homogeneidad nacional, sociocultural, racial/étnico y lingüístico de la nación. Las autohistorias/autoetnografías para conocernos y liberarnos continuarán para ser parte de proyectos de alianzas transdisciplinarias de amor y resistencia y mundos otros en el aprendizaje y el uso crítico del español, inglés y de la valoración/aprendizaje de otras lenguas indígenas en Estados Unidos y el mundo hispano.

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Hemispheric Poetics: raúlsalinas, César Vallejo, and the Convergence of Xicanx and Vanguardia Poetry

Santiago Vidales

This essay places two important poets of the Americas in conversation. I argue that the poetry of raúlsalinas and César Vallejo presents an array of poetic convergences that can be studied and critiqued to contribute to an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to hemispheric studies. Salinas, a Xicanx poet, and Vallejo, a Peruvian writer, share deep artistic, political, and ideological sensibilities. In studying their poetry from a critical convergence approach we may interpret their works in ways that open up their oft hermetic language to reveal the deeper political contestations and autobiographical accounts that are contained in their verses.

Salinas' carceral poetry has been studied under the framework of Xicanx Pinto culture. Pintos are Xicanx people who are or have been incarcerated. This interpretative approach is key in understanding the specific codes that Pintos use and how this discourse is woven into Salinas' poetry. The concept of *concientización*, political awakening, is a key feature that emerges from the scholarship on Pinto poetry. In turn, the concept of *concientización* arises from a carceral (re)education that will be a useful resource in studying Vallejo who, while incarcerated, wrote and radically rewrote his poetic masterwork, *Trilce*.

Vallejo is considered one of the most important and influential poets of the Spanish language. His poetry is exemplary of la vanguardia poética, an artistic movement that seeks to reinvent language to express the homegrown sensibilities and ideologies of the poet's cultural and political context. La vanguardia's

political commitment and lyrical originality resonate deeply with Salinas' work and open up a new and informative way of reading his work. A hemispheric convergence approach to reading these poets contributes to a mutual interdisciplinary understanding. My aim is not to argue for the primacy of one poetic tradition over the other, instead it is to present how independently developed poetic voices share similar characteristics that speak to their shared political orientations and how these orientations present themselves through poetry.

Xicanx poetry and raúlsalinas: appreciation and incomprehensibility

My entry point into Xicanx poetry occurred a few years back when my advisor, Luis Marentes, emailed me a video of a poetry reading by raúlsalinas¹ at the 1973 Festival Flor y Canto in Southern California. The first poem that Salinas performs "Homenaje al Pachuco: Mirrored Reflections," has mesmerized me to this day. I studied Latin American and Golden Age poetry for several years, and yet, I had never felt such strong appreciation and incomprehensibility by a work of art. This poem, specifically, and much of his poetry is multilingual, sonically expressive, lyrically inventive and hermetic in ways that make the comprehension and interpretation of his poetry a challenge for those of us who do not have fluency in Xicanx discourse (both literary and linguistic). But the power of Salinas' voice and his ability to channel history and myth captured my attention and amazement beyond my inability to access the text.

Salinas was born in San Antonio in 1934. He grew up in the Black and Xicanx working class neighborhoods of Austin before leaving for Northern California to work in the fields. As many young people of color in this country, his contact with the criminal justice system would have long lasting and painful implications. From 1957 until his final release in 1972, Salinas served time mostly

¹ Salinas went by many names. His nicknames Roy and Tapón are from his youth. He chose the pen name raúlsalinas, inspired by ee cummings when he started publishing his work. He also went by Autumn Sun, his Indigenous name. In the poem 'On Being/Becoming' he writes, "Naming ceremonies/Autumn Sun/Speak to many nations/ for red Nations"(Salinas *Indio Trails* 5). In his role as 'ambassador' for Indigenous struggles in North America, Salinas traveled the world bringing awareness to Indigenous resistances, advocating for political prisoners, and creating networks of support. His poetry maps his travels from his years of incarceration to his trips to Cuba, Nicaragua, and Mexico.

for drug offenses in four penitentiaries: Soledad, Huntsville, Leavenworth, and Marion.

These long years of incarceration were deeply scarring but also presented themselves as an opportunity for intellectual, political and artistic growth. The years spent incarcerated offered Salinas a radical education informed by the people he met and the relationships he fostered. It is in this context that his *concientización*, or political awakening, takes root. In prison he met Puerto Rican Nationalists such as Rafael Cancel Miranda and Óscar Collazo. These contacts gave Salinas the tools to construct his political consciousness. As he writes: “I was never to be the same after meeting these potentially focused men committed to liberation and justice” (Salinas *Memoir* 66). Similarly, he met other political prisoners such as Black Panthers and members of the American Indian Movement. These relationships informed his views on revolutionary politics and anti-colonial struggles. His prison experiences and his radical education became the groundwork for his most celebrated poetry book: *Un Trip Through the Mind Jail y Otras Excursions* (Editorial Pocho-Che: 1980; Arte Público Press: 1999).

In “Homenaje al Pachuco,” these biographical experiences are translated into a complex and nuanced layering of lyricism. Salinas’ poetry masterfully navigates the clarity needed to make a radical political contestation and the hermetic nature of a culturally specific art form. An example of this nuanced and layered poetics can be read and heard in the concluding verses to “Homenaje al Pachuco” (Salinas *Un Trip* 104):

Y le peleamos la causa al gringo
that we are Not ahistorical.
Yet no mention
que por esta pinche vida vas
SUFRIENDO
Dibujos-TONANTZÍN Y HUITZILOPOCHTLI-grabados
tatuados en tu piel bronceada
con las
Ardientes Agujas
de esta gacha sociedad;
que no sabe llorar
por niños hambrientos o migrantes sin trabajo.
Much less give a damn, a good god-damn

about
street corner born,
forlorn fugitives
of the total jail
Hail Pachuco!

The first challenge that this poem offers is unpacking the multiple layers of language that are expressed in its verses. As Gloria Anzaldúa explains:

Chicano Spanish sprang out of the Chicanos' need to identify ourselves as a distinct people. We needed a language with which we could communicate with ourselves, a secret language. For some of us, language is a homeland closer than the Southwest...and because we are a complex, heterogeneous people, we speak many languages. Some of the languages we speak:

- Standard English
- Working class and slang English
- Standard Spanish
- Standard Mexican Spanish
- North Mexican Spanish dialect
- Chicano Spanish (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California have regional variations)
- Tex-Mex
- *Pachuco* (called *caló*) (77).

The multiplicity and complexity of Xicanx discourse is evident in the verses written by Salinas. However, given that this poem was written to be performed, it is important to watch his performance and appreciate Salinas' specific accent, intonation, and cadence². Through an overview of his written and spoken poetry, it is possible to read and hear the multiple languages that Anzaldúa references even though the work of art may remain shrouded to linguistic and literary outsiders. Furthermore, the poetry of Salinas also expands the catalog of

² USC Digital Library, 'Raúl R. Salinas reads from his work, 1973':
<http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15799coll79/id/189/rec/6>

languages that Anzaldúa describes; we would be well served by adding African American Vernacular English to the list as well as Pinto discourse. Pintos being Xicanx people who are or have been incarcerated. Salinas identified as and referenced Pinto culture in his prison writings³. Knowing the range of languages that are present in Salinas' poetry is important because it provides the reader with a necessary context to interpret the text. However, if the reader does not know at least some of the languages in Anzaldúa's catalog, Salinas' verses will remain shrouded in their culturally specific lyricism.

"Homenaje al Pachuco" is exemplary of Salinas poetics. In the first two verses that are cited above (Y le peleamos la causa al gringo/that we are Not ahistorical) we see the poet's engagement with history and his commitment to confronting white supremacist⁴ erasure of Xicanx history. His reference to the "gringo" can be understood as his poetic avatar for white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism. As Salinas' biography makes clear, the poet understood how school segregation and lack of access enforced the myths and stereotypes perpetuated by white supremacist ideologies that frame Black people, Indigenous people, and Xicanx people as lacking history, culture, and civilization.

This poem responds to these ideologies of erasure and marginalization by reframing Xicanx history and tracing its roots to Tonantzín (an Aztec Mother Goddess) and Huitzilopochtli (an Aztec deity of war). Earlier in the poem, Salinas references the foundational myth of the Movimiento Chicano, Aztlán. The poet laments how many of his fellow *carnales*, *pachucos*, and *vatos locos* remain incarcerated "en las cárceles de Aztlán". The explicit mention of Aztlán and of the two Aztec deities signals the poet's commitment to combating stereotypes about

³ Within Xicanx colloquialisms Pintos and Pintas are a bilingual play on the Spanish word *penitencia* (penitence). Pintos and Pintas are thus people who have spent time locked up in penitentiaries. The second play on words traces the word Pinto and Pinta to the Spanish word *Pintao* (*Estar pintado*--to be painted, in this case tattooed). Pinto and Pinta subculture comes out of the lived experiences of incarcerated Xicanx people. For a more complex treatment of Pinto culture see: "Tattoos, Abjection, and the Political Unconscious: Toward a Semiotics of the Pinto Visual Vernacular" (Olguin, 166).

⁴ "Throughout American history, the subordination of Blacks [and therefore all other racialized people] was rationalized by a series of stereotypes and beliefs that made their condition logical and natural. Historically, white supremacy has been premised upon various political, scientific, and religious theories, each of which relies on racial characterizations and stereotypes about Blacks that have coalesced into an extensive legitimating ideology" (Crenshaw 1370-71).

Xicanx lack of history by affirming a glorious and powerful indigenous lineage that can be traced through the Aztec empire to the earliest inhabitants of Aztlán⁵ (i.e. the American Southwest).

The political and poetic contestation “we are Not ahistorical” is buttressed by the way the poem links Xicanx history to the ancestral pantheon of the Aztecs. However, the way political contestation, affirmation of history, and connection to an ancestral past is presented is quintessential Salinas. The poem states that the two Aztec deities are tattooed on brown skin; the poet thus expands the textual terrain of the poem and incorporates the complexities of Xicanx Pinto tattoo culture within his poetics. In other poems, Salinas includes his own tattoos in his poetry thus expanding his poetry over multiple bodies. Unfortunately, this essay’s brevity does not allow for a full treatment of such a complex and transgressive artistic intervention.

As a contestation of white supremacist ideologies Salinas deploys the multiplicity and complexity of Xicanx languages that Anzaldúa catalogs. Furthermore, within Anzaldúa’s discursive matrix we can see that the “secret language” of Xicanx people is expressed in the hermetic Pinto context from which Salinas’ early work emanates. Pérez-Torres speaks to the hermetic nature of Xicanx poetics when he states:

literary texts reconstruct a voice, portray a community, enact a union between linguistically apt readers. This does not mean that any reader proficient in Spanish immediately gains access to interlingual texts. The use of *caló*, the re-creation of regional dialects, the specificity of speech-acts that occur within the borderlands of Chicano social networks all are

⁵ “Within a Chicana/o context, Aztlán as the mythic Aztec homeland has served as a metaphor for connection and unity. During the nearly thirty years of its modern incarnation, Aztlán has come to represent a nationalist homeland, the name and place that will at some future point be the national home of a Chicano people reclaiming their territorial rights” (Pérez-Torres ‘Refiguring Aztlán’ 171). After 30 years of Aztlán as a metaphor it has also come under criticism for erasing the territory, the lives, and histories of Indigenous communities living in the Southwest. However, Aztlán as a metaphor has the potential for regeneration and redemption: as a metaphor it can honor the historic and political importance of Aztlán within the Movimiento and acknowledge the struggles of current Indigenous people that live in the Southwest. For a more complex treatment of the current debates surrounding Aztlán and Xicanx indigeneity see: [‘Beyond Aztlán: Reflections on the Chicano Student Movement’](#).

the matrices that form the hermeneutic grids of a text, which inflect the range of Chicano poetic expression. Familiarity with and recognition of speech patterns forms one of the draws and requirements of comprehension within Chicano poetic discourse (Pérez-Torres 215).

It has taken me years of reading Xicanx poetry, studying Salinas' work, and learning about Xicanx history to fully grasp the complexities and nuances that are expressed in poems like "Homenaje al Pachuco". As my understanding of Xicanx language expands and I have a better grasp of the poetic and political contexts that Salinas navigates, my appreciation for his work only grew even though the hermetic nature of his Pinto discourse remains inaccessible in many ways. However, the incomprehensibility and inaccessibility of his hermetic nature also reminded me of the Latin American poetic traditions that I had studied previously.

Salinas and la vanguardia: independent developments, shared characteristics:

The strongest and clearest connection I can make between Salinas and the Latin American poetic tradition is with César Vallejo. Vallejo (Peru, 1892-France, 1938) is widely considered one of the most important and influential avant-garde poets of the twentieth century. As Efrain Kristal states, "Vallejo's poetry stretched the Spanish language beyond grammar and lexicon into compelling dissonances and asymmetries, unprecedented and unsurpassed in the history of Hispanic poetry" (Kristal "Introduction" 1). Before placing Vallejo and Salinas in conversation with the aim of framing such a comparative criticism within a hemispheric vanguardia, it will be useful to define avant-garde poetry as seen in the Latin American context.

For such a definition, I turn to Raúl Bueno and his article, "Apuntes sobre el lenguaje de la vanguardia poética hispanoamericana." La vanguardia is traditionally understood as a response to the Latin American modernismo of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the avantgarde aesthetics coming out of Europe in the early twentieth century. Bueno argues that in its poetic manifestation, la vanguardia poética is more than the addition of neologism and new metaphors. What makes la vanguardia distinct from modernismo, its predecessor, and the European avant-garde is its new and homegrown sensibility. Similarly, the innovation of la vanguardia goes beyond original forms of

expression. What is truly at stake is the creation of a new poetic language that is committed to the development of an ideological project. La vanguardia poética thus corresponds to a new ideology. The poetic language that the vanguardia creates is anchored in an ideology that breaks with our colonial past and seeks to create a poetic language that expresses the revolutionary spirit of a new generation of artists, thinkers, and intellectuals. La poesía de vanguardia is seen as a tool to understand ourselves and our own realities and not merely to replicate poetic models coming from abroad (Bueno 35-7). To underline the homegrown sensibility and revolutionary commitment of la vanguardia poética, Efrain Kristal defines Vallejo's poetry as densely hermetic because he sought to challenge the "logos of Western culture" by creating a "window into the indigenous soul of the Andean peoples" (Kristal "Introduction" 1).

By the very heterogeneous nature of la vanguardia, it is not easy (or useful) to find a sole definition for such a wide ranging ideological and poetic project. As a historical process, la vanguardia responds to modernismo and to avantgarde movements in Europe. As an aesthetic manifestation of revolutionary politics, it is committed to a decolonial framework that centers marginalized populations. As already mentioned, Vallejo is a poeta vanguardista for his transgressive use of language as well as his inclusion of indigenous vocabulary and epistemologies. La vanguardia has feminist⁶ openings that can be seen in the works of Magda Portal (Peruvian 1900-1989) and to a lesser degree in Gabriela Mistral (Chilean 1889-1957). In its Caribbean iteration, la vanguardia's clearest representative is Nicolás Guillén (Cuban 1902-1989) who infused Spanish poetry with the lyricism of the African Diaspora⁷. La vanguardia's lasting impact and reach can also be seen in contemporary urban Mapuche poetry such as the work

⁶ For a more nuanced study of feminism and la vanguardia see Mihai Grünfeld's 'Voces femeninas de la vanguardia: El compromiso de Magda Porta' and Karen Peña's 'Hecate's Delightful Revenge or Gabriela Mistral's "Sonetos-lésbicos:" Refashioning Amorous Discourse in Los sonetos de la muerte (1914).

⁷ For a more nuanced study of negritude within the vanguardia see Arturo Pérez Pisonero's "Nicolás Guillén y la intrahistoria cubana."

by David Aníñir who blends Spanish, Mapudungun and English in his contemporary Chilean indigenous poetry⁸.

As a flexible definition we can thus state that the poetry of the vanguardia presents a hemispheric aesthetics of rupture and contradiction. It seeks to create a poetic language that can express the debates and the crises that poets see in their cultural and political contexts. The great contribution of la vanguardia poética is its ability to communicate through various ways that which seems incommunicable (Pérez 22). This is achieved by the poet's negotiation and navigation of multiple languages, the creation of neologisms, the playful capitalization of words and letters, the creative use of pictographs, the inclusion of rhyme and free verse, the explicit and implicit political contestations, and the always already commitment to a homegrown sensibility and a revolutionary spirit.

Equipped with a more robust understanding of the Latin American vanguardia tradition, let's revisit Salinas. We can identify the aesthetic, poetic, and political elements of la vanguardia in Salinas' work. We have already seen the multiplicity of languages in Salinas' poetic discourse, but for an even more complex layering of Pinto discourse, African American Vernacular English, and a culturally specific language meant for a very particular audience I would highlight the opening stanzas of "Homenaje al Pachuco":

¡Ese loco...
 cúrate!
Dig on what/
 on what them dudes are saying,
 VATO.
That you are (¡ja-ja, que lucas!)
 a non-goal oriented
 alienated being,
 sufriendo un "identity-crisis",
rejecting conventional modes & mores.
 ¡Me la Rayo!

⁸ For a more nuanced study of Aníñir and Mapuche poetry in Chile see Juan Guillermo Sanchez's "Encuentros en la encrucijada Mapurbe: David Aníñir y la poesía indígena contemporánea."

Y wacha,
 dizque you sprang from EL CHUCO,
 Boogie'd into LOS
 & found
 the battleground
 for US Naval wars;
 y es acá.
 Órale, simón que sí.

Again, the multiple voices that Salinas negotiates in these stanzas is impressive and only rendered more expressive and beautiful when we hear his performance. In reading the poem and experiencing the performance we can point out the multiplicity of personas that Salinas engages. Given that this poem is, and much of Salinas' poetry is autobiographical, each of these stanzas encapsulates a different moment of Salinas' life and personality.

The borderland discourse, the "secret language" that Anzaldúa references, is made explicit in verses such as "Ese loco.../curate" and "Órale, simón que sí." These verses are spoken in Spanish but come out of the hybrid, multilingual cultural context of his Xicanx youth in Texas and California. The verses "Dig on what/on what them dudes are saying" is a clear echo of African American Vernacular English; a language that Salinas' would have heard and spoken in his Austin barrios. We again see the presentation of racist tropes that frame Xicanx people as "non-goal oriented/ alienated being/ sufriendo una 'identity crisis,'" which are rendered vacuous by the poet's sense of humor: "¡Ja-ja, que lucas!".

Even though these verses seem at first glance mostly a rehearsal of the poet's range of personas, sonic expressivity, and ridiculing of stereotypes; the poem also hides a historical account. When we "translate" "Y wacha,/ dizque you sprang from EL CHUCO,/ Boogie'd into LOS/ & found/ the battleground/ for US Naval wars;" I interpret these verses as an account of the so-called Zoot Suit riots in Los Angeles ("Boogie'd into LOS", LOS being a colloquialism for Los Angeles) of June 1943 in which white civilians and U.S. military personnel attacked young pachucos ("the battle ground/ for US Naval wars" refers to the violence perpetuated by U.S. servicemembers) in a deliberate weeklong racist and anti-Mexican reign of violence (Grisworld del Castillo 367-8). As the reader of Xicanx poetry develops their understanding of Xicanx language and history, these kinds of political contestations and historical accounts come to light where we

previously may have only appreciated the polyphonic expressivity of Salinas' lyricism.

Vallejo as a Pinto: Xicanx approaches to vanguardia poems:

In a similar way, Vallejo's vanguardista poems also hide historical accounts in poems that at first glance appear to be almost unintelligible. *Trilce*, published in 1922, was Vallejo's second book of poems and was received by critics with few accolades. Efrain Kristal explains that the leading critics of his day panned *Trilce* as "incomprehensible and outlandish" (Kristal, "Introduction" 12). Vallejo's style broke with tradition, ignored all conventions, and challenged the very fabric of language. His work was considered "an affront to good taste" (12). In the opening verses of "Trilce I", we can immediately notice the complexity of Vallejo's poetics and understand the confusion of the critics⁹:

Quién hace tanta bulla y ni deja
Testar las islas que van quedando.

Un poco más de consideración
en cuanto será tarde, temprano,
y se aquilatará mejor
el guano, la simple calabrina tesórea
que brinda sin querer,
en el insular corazón,
salobre alcatraz, a cada hialóidea
grupada.

Who's making all that racket, and not even letting
the islands that linger make a will.

A little more consideration
As it will be late, early,
And easier to assay

⁹ I use Clayton Eshelman's bilingual edition of his *The Complete Poetry César Vallejo*. This book is an incredible resource that brings together all of Vallejo's published poetry and translates them into English with great accuracy.

The guano, the simple fecapital ponk
A brackish gannet
Toasts unintentionally,
In the peninsular heart, to each hyaloid
Squall.

In this excerpt of “Trilce I,” we can read and hear the complexities of Vallejo’s *poesía de vanguardia* that hides a “deep structure” under an “opaque surface” (Eshelman, “A Translational Understanding of Trilce #I” 157). The opacity of such works can be seen in Vallejo’s obscure expression, “la simple calabrina tesórea” which Eshelman translates as “the simple fecapital ponk”. Eshelman explains that *calabrina* is a Spanish archaism for stench, which thus necessitates the English archaism *ponk*. *Tesórea* is an example of Vallejo’s many subtle neologisms in which the word *tesoro* (treasure) borrows its new suffix from *estercórea*, meaning excrement. Like in Salinas’ poetry, we have to navigate through the layers of language, in this case neologisms and archaic terms, to find the deeper meaning of Vallejo’s verses.

“Trilce I” seems to be at first glance a commentary on excrement. But equipped with a better understanding of Vallejo’s biography and his political engagement, the poem reveals itself to be a contestation of how prisoners are treated by their guards. Vallejo was imprisoned from November 1920 to February 1921 for having been involved in the social unrest and protests that had taken place earlier that year in Trujillo. The guards of the prison would take the inmates out to the latrines four times a day and instead of respecting their privacy, they would mock them, shout at them, and demand that they hurry up (Eshelman, “A Translational Understanding of Trilce #I” 154). In a similar way as Salinas and other Pintos, the time behind bars granted Vallejo the opportunity to reflect on life and his place in society. While in prison, he wrote and radically rewrote a significant part of the poems that would become *Trilce* (154). With an understanding of Vallejo’s complex language and his biography, we can see that beyond the opaque surface of his poetics, the deep structure of his verses contain a transgressive centering of prisoners, some of the most marginalized people in any society.

We can thus “translate” the opening verses of “Trilce I” “Quién hace tanta bulla y ni deja/ Testar las islas que van quedando” (Who’s making all that racket, and not even letting/ the islands that linger make a will) as a rhetorical question

contesting the guards' disrespect towards the inmates in not allowing them the dignity of privacy while going to the bathroom. Neither the inmates nor their turds ("the islands that linger") are allowed to speak their truths ("make a will"), thus rendering the inmates objects of the guards' disrespect. This poem hides within it an autobiographical account in which the humiliation of Vallejo the inmate becomes the inspiration for his radical reimagining of the Spanish poetic language. His brilliance as a poet is not simply his transgressive use of language but the way in which he hides his political contestation of the treatment of inmates within his carceral verses. This interpretation would only have been possible by bringing Salinas' Pinto *concientización* into this new Latin American context. Furthermore, in "Trilce L," Vallejo once again writes of his carceral experience:

El cancerbero cuatro veces
al día maneja su candado, abriéndonos
cerrándonos los esternones, en guiños
que entendemos perfectamente.

Cerberus four times
a day wields his padlock, opening
closing our breastbones, with winks
we understand perfectly.

The four times the guard¹⁰ opens the doors for the inmates underscores the biographical information Eshelman notes in his reading of "Trilce I". From a Xicanx perspective, Vallejo's prison poems express a Pinto sensibility. This Pinto sensibility is present in the political awakening, or *concientización*, that inmates undergo in prison. This *concientización*, which was so powerful in Salinas' prison years, makes the inmate aware of their own carceral marginalization and the wider interlocking systems of oppression that sent them to prison in the first place (Olguín 167). The process of *concientización* creates bonds of solidarity and forms networks of radical (re)education. In the cases of Salinas and Vallejo the process of *concientización* also inspired them to write a poetry that is deeply committed to social justice but expresses its political message in the register of

¹⁰ Cerberus being the three-headed dog that guards against any soul escaping from the Greek Underworld.

the vanguardia poética which may hide a powerful ideological and autobiographical message underneath the hermetic nature of their layered and nuanced poetic discourse.

Hemispheric poetic convergences: diverse struggles, mutual desires:

When placed in conversation, Salinas and Vallejo present us with the opportunity to observe the cultural and literary convergences that scholars working within Hemispheric studies write about. The aim of a hemispheric approach to Xicanx and Latin American poetry is to “construct intellectual and linguistic bridges between American studies and Latin American studies”(Luis-Brown 61). David Luis-Brown emphasizes the possibility of creating a “robust hemispheric studies field” that may change institutions of higher learning by focusing them on a more holistic approach in which multilingual pedagogies and vibrant cultural exchanges are centered and amplified. My research has this end in sight, to create a space of poetic convergence where the artistic sensibility and political ideology of Xicanx poetry and la poesía de vanguardia may be placed in conversation with the aim of understanding how our hemispheric political consciousness creates a new poetic language that expresses our diverse struggles and our mutual desire for justice and liberation.

My use of the term convergence is intentional for I do not seek to argue for the inclusion of Salinas within the canon of la vanguardia. I also do not aim to argue that Xicanx literature is merely an extension of Latin American literature. I do not argue for the primacy of one over the other; I am also not looking for a cause and effect. The term convergence operates by observing the way independently developed poetics share similar characteristics that speak to the sensibility, ideology, and solidarity of poets like Salinas and Vallejo. In studying the convergences that are created by placing such poets in conversation, we can build the fields of study where multilingualism and cultural exchanges are the norm. Languages are always already in constant evolution. Cultures are always already informing one another. It is thus the critic’s responsibility to create scholarly approaches that can account for the multiplicity of ways that the people in our hemisphere have produced politically conscious art grounded in their lived experiences.

With this use of a convergence approach to hemispheric poetics, we can read and interpret Salinas’ Xicanx poetry with the terminology of la vanguardia. The opaque and hermetic nature of his discourse thus opens itself up to a clearer

understanding of the deep structures that speaks to his political contestations and autobiographic accounts. A new approach to his work grants us a new understanding of it and hopefully a wider audience that will appreciate the power and beauty of his lyricism. In turn, a convergence approach also equips us to read Vallejo with the vocabulary of the Xicanx Pinto experience. His time in prison clearly had an impact in his work. Eshelman states that *Trilce* was radically reconceived while in jail. The concientización of Vallejo is evident in his carceral poems. This creates an opening to reevaluate his literary work grounded in a critique that centers his carceral influences and his political radicalization. These kinds of research questions and future lines of study are only now being explored because our disciplines are opening themselves to these critical approaches.

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Relationships with Cannabis: Chicanx and Indigenous Feminisms Disrupting Settler Colonial Politics

Magaly Ordoñez

This project departs from a queer Chicana's relationships to the land. Chicana and Indigenous onto-epistemological and pedagogical practices inform this project's broader discourse on cannabis (in its many complexities) to recognize relationships to land as politically invaluable. Current national, and oftentimes state, cannabis legislation continues to perpetuate state violence against Indigenous, Chicanx/Latinx, and Black communities, while allowing white cisgender men and corporations to profit through enforcement, or at times, lack of enforcement, of this same legislation. Through a careful analysis situated at the intersections of race, class, gender, and indigeneity, I explore how cannabis functions as a tool of sociocultural and political structures of oppression against Chicanx, Latinx, and Indigenous communities. More specifically, I put into conversation Chicana and Indigenous feminisms with the current state of affairs against cannabis in the U.S. and tribal sovereignty. While some legal scholars advocate for "intergovernmental agreements" that "allow" for tribal cannabis policies on reservations (Ramirez, 2018), such as those established in the states of Washington and Nevada, this project contests such settler colonial politics, and instead moves toward anti-colonial and decolonial methodologies (Calderon et al. 2012; Arvin, M., Tuck, E., Morrill, A., 2013). Although tribal nations have autonomy and jurisdiction on tribal lands, the federal government continues to coercively intrude on legislative measures enacted by Tribal councils that attempt to legalize hemp (non-psychoactive cannabis). Through an analysis of recent news articles highlighting the altercations between tribal nations and U.S. federal agents, I intend to provoke critical discourse regarding cannabis politics within this particular nation-state but also well beyond its borders.

The qualitative theoretical framework guiding this project builds from Chicana and Indigenous feminist theory to imagine a decolonial politics as it concerns cannabis potentiality for tribal sovereignty. I broadly outline settler colonial cannabis politics to contextualize the continuous systemic oppression on

tribal lands followed by an exploration of cannabis geographies and sovereignty. I conclude by proposing anti-colonial and decolonial cannabis politics building from Indigenous and Chicana feminist scholars.

ONTO-EPISTEMOLOGICAL POSITIONALITY

It is important to bring Chicana and Indigenous feminisms into conversation as they both challenge Eurocentric knowledges and ways of understanding gender, spiritually, relations and kinship violently institutionalized through a logics of settler colonialism.¹ While these feminisms attempt to deconstruct hierarchical colonial ideologies of marginalized communities, Indigenous feminisms augment a critical place-based approach to Chicana feminisms. *Y al revés*, a Chicana feminist perspective allows and attempts to situate this project as a reciprocal relationship between cannabis users and academic research. Through a place-based critical feminist lens, I intend to highlight the precarity of cannabis geopolitics across the U.S. by which capitalist settler logics manipulate the plants' cultivation on tribal lands in particular. I engage with feminist models in general, to address politics of cannabis in order to challenge common capitalist romanticism of the growing industry, and expose embedded structures of oppressions through an intersectional lens. Although useful, previous research in sociology, agriculture, history, political science, and white gender and sexuality studies have embarked on categorical cannabis research that superficially situates one aspect of tyranny over another. Additionally, throughout this paper I challenge colonial logics of Indigenous people's eventual assimilation (Duarte & Lewis, 2015, p. 685) into a white cannabis industry.

Chicana and Indigenous feminist epistemologies disrupt western colonial politics that institutionally contain knowledge production in academia, and by which the production of this very project exceeds the boundaries of academic validity given the "precarious" or "risky" topic of cannabis research, specifically in the Midwest. Here I want to echo political geographers Lindsay Naylor, Michelle Daigle, Sofia Zaragocin, Margaret Marietta Ramírez, and Mary Gilmartin (2018), who offer alternative body-land based epistemologies,

¹ Throughout this paper I use *Chicana* and *Chicana* interchangeably, the first to keep the author's original use and the latter to intervene in and to disrupt embedded binary language and ideologies.

ontologies and geopolitics as a collaborative intervention that speaks to their commitment to a decolonial praxis/project beyond theoretical confines in academia and embodies,

[a] radical and transformative politics that actively ruptures the colonial political geographies that shape our everyday lives within and beyond the confines of the academy... only then [can] the decolonial be constructively and radically taken up (p.201).

Naylor et al., (2018) provide insights to this cannabis project given the academic precarity with hierarchical knowledge productions, even within disciplines claiming to be “progressive” and “flexible.” My own body-land based onto-epistemology as a Chicana scholar from California engaging with research on cannabis in the Midwest simultaneously disrupts the colonial politics of academia. To center my experiences as a queer, working-class, first generation brown individual prioritizing cannabis as a field of study challenges the erasure, and further marginalization, of communities of color who continuously maintain relationships with cannabis. Narratives of profit and so-called opportunities in the cannabis industry perpetuate racist, sexist, classist, and nationalist understandings institutionally reproduced within academe. My positionality as a graduate student at an R1 public institution places a responsibility of funneling resources and tools hoarded by academia towards communities of color continuing to be systemically persecuted for having a history with cannabis, while heterosexual white men and corporations continue to reap profits.²

In an attempt to disrupt stereotypical assumptions of Chicana and Indigenous relationships with cannabis, I ground my own experiences with family, friends, colleagues, and non-human relations, both cannabis users and non-users alike, that motivate and shape my ideological theorizations of cannabis. My intention is to unpack the ways in which communities of color are persecuted for having relationships with cannabis. I ground part of this project from my own lived experiences with cannabis as a queer Chicana. So, I build upon Chicana feminists such as Calderón, D., Delgado Bernal, D., Pérez Huber, L., Malagón,

² In January of 2018, for example, *USA Today* reported that John Lord, CEO of LivWell Enlightened Health, was able to donate nearly \$23,000 to federal lawmakers in an attempt to influence federal policy.

M. C., Vélez, V. N. (2012) whose Chicana feminist epistemologies (CFE) center lived experiences of Chicanas. CFE is grounded in Anzaldúan and third world feminisms as a means to resist epistemological racism by foregrounding the life experiences and knowledge of Chicanas embodying “a sense of political urgency to engage in a decolonizing process ...and this decolonizing work is never separate from spiritual activism” (Calderon et al., 2012, p. 516). Critical to the decolonization process in Indigenous feminisms is the demand of tribal land stolen by the settler state. I recognize the overlaps and differences in genealogies of “decolonization” among Chicana and Indigenous feminisms, however my intentions are to foster a dialogical relationship that cultivates a decolonial cannabis potentiality.

At the intersection of Indigenous and Chicana feminist onto-epistemologies, pedagogical models demand that issues of patriarchy, sexuality, race, class, indigeneity and colonial notions of nationality be acknowledged, specifically in a cannabis industry shaped by settler colonial capitalist logics. I embrace critical feminist frameworks to critique heteronormative hegemonic settler narratives molding the development of a growing “legal” cannabis production. By embracing Indigenous and Chicana feminist decolonial onto-epistemologies to begin sketching how settler colonial logics shape relationships with cannabis, I contribute a queer “radical decolonizing and tolerance for ambiguity—of how body and place can be rearticulated to expose mechanisms of oppression, such as homophobia, and offer liberatory alternatives,” (Calderon et al., 2012, p. 520-521) within a growing white heteronormative dominant cannabis industry.

SETTLER COLONIAL LOGICS: CANNABIS POLITICS

Audra Simpson has demonstrated how settler colonialism, as a governance project and as an ideological and material structure of dispossession foregrounds heteropatriarchal whiteness as the norm. Here I note that this same governance project manipulates, exploits, and appropriates cannabis knowledges with capitalist logics. With this in mind I ask: how have settler colonial logics usurped cannabis politics? how have Chicana and indigenous communities been affected by such politics and in turn, how are they disrupting and/or resisting imposed cannabis politics? I contribute to the limited scholarship addressing institutional oppression and persecution of tribal lands attempting to cultivate cannabis and

hemp. Canada and United States are settler nation-states that are accountable for violence leveled against tribal nations; both nation-states continue to perpetuate violence toward the people and the land. Canada's federal 'Indian' policies were directed towards "assimilation and eradication of Indian culture and thus get rid of the "Indian problem" (Cote, 2001, p.17). In the U.S. however, because of tribe's "dependent" status, "they cannot exercise powers that belong to or conflict with those of the dominant sovereign... the U.S. government" (Cote, 2001, p. 21). I bring these two colonial powers into conversation given their pretentious cannabis politics and their settler colonial histories – geographically many native nations straddle the border.

Within this context of colonial violence recent attempts at cannabis legalization become problematic. This includes Canada's most recent legislation to federally re-schedule cannabis allowing for its recreational use, and U.S.'s December 2018 removal of cultivation of industrial hemp from the Schedule 1 controlled substances list, which was lobbied for by conservative farmers. Canada and the U.S. built their cannabis legislation on the mass incarceration of Indigenous, African American, and Latinx people, for the same plant they are now trying to legalize. The criminalization of cannabis illustrates the logics of the prison industrial complex that supports white supremacy and the white settler project. We see how the imposition of criminality works to invalidate indigenous claims to land and sovereignty as well as the ways that our communities are funneled to a punishment complex that feeds the capitalist system. The same capitalist system now intends decriminalize marijuana and redirect profits towards whites, elites, and settlers.

Here I build upon Audra Simpson's (2016) scholarship outlining settler colonial techniques of elimination and violence by Canadian government on Indigenous communities by which the dispossession of land functioned against through the Indian Act of 1876.³ In the U.S. similar dispossession took place through treaties, including theft-treaties and through the Allotment Act of 1887 (Greenwald, 2002). Indigenous dispossession as a technique of elimination is generative for contextualizing broader settler colonial techniques on cannabis

³ The Indian Act, enacted in 1876 and since been amended, allows the government to control most aspects of aboriginal life: Indian status, land, resources, wills, education, band administration and more.
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/background-the-indian-act-1.1056988>

legislation, specifically on tribal lands in the U.S. whose hemp plots have been burned down. This is a clear representation of colonial logics controlling who cannot partake in a cannabis economy and also that tribal land is disposable within U.S. colonial projects of dispossession. Additionally, instances of sexual violence and rape, a fundamental violence of settler coloniality, against women in trimming jobs in cannabis fields are also obscured within discourse in cannabis legislation. Such instances, I instigate, are considered “obstacles” and “scandals” to white capitalist sponsoring legislation and shaping the growing face of the cannabis industry. The logics behind obscuring the violence producing cannabis as a commodity

within settler colonialism, is [the] exploitation of land that yields supreme value. In order for settlers to usurp the land and extract its value, Indigenous peoples [and women in particular] must be destroyed, removed, and made into ghosts. Extracting value from the land also often requires systems of slavery and other forms of labor exploitation. (Arvin, M. et al., 2013, pp.12).

Thus, when women in Northern California working as trimmers across cannabis fields go to local authorities to report cases of rape, assault, and trafficking, they are dismissed and blamed for the violence because they chose to work in an “illegal” business. The coloniality of cannabis politics are strategically embedded to benefit the state as is vivid in the violence’s against women of color and migrant communities working in the state of California, notoriously known for growing most and top strains of cannabis across the nation.

Settler colonial politics shape the relationships Indigenous and communities of color continue to have with cannabis given the persecution and consequences strictly imposed on the marginalized communities. Ramirez (2018), a legal scholar from New Mexico conducted a systemic review of law and policy surrounding cannabis cultivation, possession, and use in Indian country. He maps the federal raids in California, Wisconsin, and South Dakota where authorities justified their actions claiming that tribes did not obtain “permission” from the federal government to cultivate, possess, and use cannabis on tribal lands. Native tribes stand in the maze of cannabis business, law, and policy. Thus Ramirez advocates for intergovernmental agreements that “allow” for tribal cannabis policies within a state-tribal cannabis relations framework. Some tribal leaders are seeking a legal approach that, as Collene Keane writes for the *Navajo Times*

(2015), initiates involvement in the medical cannabis business. For instance, tribal leaders hosted presentations at the 2015 National Cannabis Summit in Denver, Colorado to talk and educate one another about business opportunities for Native nations.

I have briefly outlined above ways in which settler colonial politics shape current affairs with cannabis. I depart with a critique of the colonial power/knowledge dynamics embedded in Ramirez’ scholarly work to challenge the very settler colonial logics of cannabis policies it advocates for tribal nations. I instead seek to propose “an encounter and dialogue which reconfigures knowledge production,” (Naylor et al., 2018, p.199) and a decolonial politics for a transformation of the cannabis industry.

CANNABIS GEOGRAPHIES, TEMPORALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

The racist heteropatriarchal settler colonial state enables violence against indigenous communities, women of color, queers, and others who contest institutional land exploitation. The solution, then, lies in prioritizing Chicax, Latinx, Black and Indigenous people’s attempts to reclaim and participate in cannabis productions. Indigenous scholar Mishuana Goeman (2017), in her article “Ongoing storms and struggles: Gendered violence and resource exploitation” sketches spatial injustices and situates Native feminist practices to unpack how gendered and sexualized violence spread on vertical and horizontal scales that enable colonial control of space. Similarly, on the topic of political spatiality, Mary Pat Brady (2002) in *Extinct Lands, Temporal Geographies* explores spatial temporalities in the manipulation of space within the context of Chicana subjectivities by which, she argues, power is accrued by those who exercise control over the environment. Both Goeman’s (2017) and Pat Brady’s temporal gestures of space point to the current political perpetuation of marginality for Indigenous and Chicax communities confined to geopolitical borders to yet another ostracized relationship: our relationships with cannabis.

An embodiment of Indigenous feminist praxis that connects humans, nonhumans, and land in symbolic relationships is helpful for understanding Indigenous dispossession and spatial injustices committed on tribal nations whose hemp (non-psychoactive cannabis) crops have been destroyed by federal agents to ultimately signify state power in the growing cannabis business. Cannabis cultivation, possession, and use on tribal lands represents an embodiment of sovereignty and an act of resistance to U.S. federal jurisdiction over tribal law, by

which the authority of U.S. government is contested (Smith, 2018). Spatial temporalities of cannabis at the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality in Chicana and Latina identities remind us of a stigmatized relationship to cannabis relegated to “narcos” and “cholos.” This “narcotics” discourse still prevails in the ways in which we formulate language around, for example, absolving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated Black, Brown, and Indigenous people.

In December of 2018 congress approved an amended “Farm Bill” legalizing hemp cultivation at the federal level; this, while tribal nations attempting to grow their own hemp were persecuted by federal agents. Steve Smith (2008) contextualizes Cannabis and/or hemp agriculture on tribal lands as an embodiment of sovereignty, currently being denied by the U.S. Although Smith is neither Chicano or Indigenous, he contextualizes the action of planting and growing hemp on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota as an act of protest against U.S. federal jurisdiction. The authority of the U.S. government is contested. The Oglala Lakota Nation strategically “illegally” planted hemp seeds by which they call into question the sovereignty of the U.S. government along with its institutions and territory. The U.S. filed an injunction on the tribes and destroyed hemp plots on the reservation, not once, or twice, but three times: in 2000, 2001, and 2002.

A second example the relationship between settler-colonial violence and land sovereignty is the federal raid on Menominee tribal lands in eastern Wisconsin that destroyed hemp plots, even though the Tribal nation had themselves legalized the growing of industrial hemp with low THC non-psychoactive and notified the United States Attorney Office for the Eastern District of Wisconsin of the licensees. Chairman Besaw stated his discontent with the administration’s actions to raid their communities for growing industrial hemp with research purposes while permitting recreational marijuana in states like Colorado, and not allowing the Tribe to take differences to court. The Menominee Nation was following regulations under the Farm Bill of 2014 that allows the growth of industrial hemp.

In contrast, *Indian Country* (2015) reports the first recreational pot dispensary with a drive-thru is open by the Paiute Tribe in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Tribe Chairman Benny Tso notes that the drive-thru is designed for elderly and disabled people for whom it is difficult to leave their vehicles to make a purchase. Not only is this the only dispensary to have a recreational drive-thru, it is also the largest in the nation.

ANTI-COLONIAL AND DECOLONIAL CANNABIS POLITICS

Throughout this paper I engaged with Indigenous and Chicax feminist onto-epistemologies to unpack settler colonial politics shaping a cannabis ‘industry’ that is being built on the backs of Native, African American, and Latinx people’s incarceration. The relationships being cultivated with the cannabis industry are premised on historical and contemporary forms of state violence traced to the exploitation of the land and Indigenous people. Cannabis in its many complexities entered mainstream legislative initiatives as a commodity ready to be exploited and profited from without regard for its healing characteristics. I build upon Chicax and Indigenous feminisms to expose legacies and contemporary manifestations of coloniality shaping how we understand our relationships to other human and non-human beings within the context of cannabis. I want to close with possibilities for further research.

I am excited to look at eco-eroticism for a potentiality of cannabis ideological, social, and political understandings embodying a sense of utopian futurity and disturbing heteronormative western temporalities and relationalities. Here I invoke Melissa Nelson’s (2017) generative approach to by which she builds from both ecology and Indigenous queer theory to propose a “greening” of Indigenous queer theory. I take this in its literal and epistemological sense to be useful in thinking about the superficial and intimate relationships fostered with cannabis beyond its known affects to get people “high.” Cannabis is green. Contextualizing the relationships between human and not-humans allows our selves to feel and experience desire and prompts me to ask: how can “greening” Chicax queer theory be helpful for understanding or beginning to decolonize cannabis? Duarte and Belarde-Lewis (2015) offer us the act of imagining as a decolonial methodology to rethink the systemic colonial marginalization in the cataloging of Indigenous sacred knowledges and materiality; here, I seek to refuse the colonial logics of cataloguing cannabis as just another ‘recreational drug.’

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Contributors:

Marisol Archuleta was born in Albuquerque and has a deep love for New Mexico. Marisol joined the SouthWest Organizing Project in 2008 as the Development Coordinator where she built SWOP's grassroots fundraising program. Marisol has BAs from University of New Mexico in Latin American Studies and Political Science and a Master's degree in Special Education from New Mexico Highlands University. Marisol also proudly serves on the Advisory Board of the Three Sisters Kitchen. Along with her husband Mark, Marisol has two daughters, Adelita who is 7 and Rosie who is 5. Her family is Marisol's foundation and her daughters keep her motivated and inspired to make her community better. Marisol is proud to follow in a long line of powerful women in her family, as her grandma, Antonia Padilla, was the first ever female Vice-President of a bank in New Mexico.

Alexandra Arraiz Matute is an Assistant Professor in the Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies at Carleton University. She completed her doctorate in Curriculum Studies & Teacher Development at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE) in the University of Toronto. She has an MA in Curriculum Studies from the same institution and a BSc in Psychology. She is a passionate community educator and organizer. Her research and pedagogical interests lie at the intersections of identity, culture, race, and migration. Past research focused on the importance of relationships in teaching and learning as a site of healing and resistance for marginalized communities in the mainstream education system. Informed by this work and her own background as mestiza, her current work focuses on indigenous-settler relationships; particularly our roles and responsibilities as settlers of colour on the northern part of Turtle Island.

Adrian Chavana, a native of Houston, Texas is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, specializing in American Indian and Chicana/o history. His work on tribal resurgence in Texas, puts American Indian history and Chicana/o history, two fields seldom in conversation with each other, into a direct dialogue. Adrian's dissertation- "Reclaiming Tribal Identity in the Land of the Spirit Waters: The Tāp Pīlam Coahuiltecan Nation," is a case study of the modern-day descendants of the 18th century Mission Indians of San Antonio who are in the midst of a tribal resurgence, and actively pushing back against narratives of Coahuiltecan extinction. Adrian employs the indigenous research methodologies he was trained in, including centering indigenous ways of knowing and being, and being of service to the indigenous communities that inform his work.

Nira Elgueta is the Project Coordinator for Gender Based Violence Building Leadership Capacity Project at the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). She is passionate about inclusiveness and accessibility for newcomers, such as safety and inclusion of women fleeing gender-based violence, and the effective eradication of isolation, poverty and exclusion. In the past she created accessible spaces to facilitate community engagement for newcomer women at the Working Women Community Centre and took care of governance, leadership and board-related matters for The Redwood Shelter. She is a past participant of Building Blocks in the Latin American Community, and has also co-organized mayoral debates with agencies serving immigrants.

L. Heidenreich grew up in a mixed Euro-Latinx family down-valley in Napa, California, earning their AA from Napa College, BA from San Francisco State University, and PhD from the University of California, San Diego. Today an Associate Professor with the Department of History at Washington State University, they are also author of *“This Land Was Mexican Once”: Histories of Resistance from Northern California*, and lead editor of *Three Decades of Engendering History Selected Works of Antonia Castañeda*. Dr. Heidenreich’s articles have appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Chicana/Latina Studies*, *Aztlán*, the *Journal of Latinos in Education* and the *Journal of American Ethnic History*, while their poetry, sometimes under the name of onegangrygirlfag has been published in *Lean Seed*, *Sanctified*, and *Sinister Wisdom*. They chair the national Antonia I. Castañeda Award Committee, and served on the Board of the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies spring 2017-2019. Their second monograph *Nepantla²: Excavating Transgender Mestiz@ Histories in Times of Global Shift*, is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska Press in fall of 2020.

María C. González is Associate Professor of English at the University of Houston and an authority on American literature, Mexican-American novelists, Chicanx writers, and Feminist and Queer Theory. González is the author of *Contemporary Mexican American Women Novelists: Toward a Feminist Identity*. Currently completing a book on the influence of Chicana lesbian writers and queer theory in Chicanx literary studies, she is the co-editor of Voices Breaking Boundaries’ three volume collection of transnational art and essays, *Borderlines*. Past president of the National Women's Studies Association and a board member of the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies, she has served on the editorial boards of the *NWSA Journal*, *The Journal of Lesbian Studies*, and the *Chicana/Latina Studies Journal*. One of the founders of the GLBT Studies Minor and the LGBT Resource Center at the University of Houston, she served for many years on the UH Faculty Senate.

Samantha Manz is a graduate student in the department of history at Washington State University. Sam is an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation and originally from Lubbock, Texas. She received her BA in English and History from Macalester College in

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Ishmael Mondragón is a northern New Mexican creative writer who revitalizes *cuentos* found in his region as a means of (re)introducing an adult audience to these stories by retelling contemporary adaptations for future transmission. He earned his B.A. in English – Creative Writing with a Minor in Media Arts from the University of New Mexico and a M.A. in English – Creative Writing from New Mexico Highlands University. As a professional educator, he has been teaching Language Arts and English Composition in higher education for almost a decade. During this time, he found an attachment to instructing in Adult Education. Currently, he is the Curriculum & Instructional Specialist for Cannabis NM Staffing, a company dedicated to breaking the stigma of cannabis through education. On his free time, he continues working on an unpublished manuscript tentatively titled *Cuentos para Grandes: Revitalized Folktales about Dancing with a Ghost, the Devil, and Brujas – for Adults*.

Elizabeth Munoz is an undergraduate student at Kalamazoo College majoring in Anthropology and Sociology. She was involved in the research and implementation of the Kalamazoo County ID Program. Her senior thesis focuses on the politics of deportability and the way undocumented immigration is understood in northern Michigan, a state fully encompassed by Border Patrol's 100-mile border zone. She will graduate in 2020 and plans to attend law school post-graduation.

Yesenia Olmos is an undergraduate at Cal State Channel Islands, majoring in History and minoring in Chicana Studies. She is interested in the power of history – of knowing the past while also understanding the present. In relation, Chicana Studies allows her to get in touch with her indigenous roots, something that led her to want to become a doula her first year of college. During Yesenia's sophomore year she became a paid student research assistant for Dr. Jennie Luna researching "Reproductive Rights and Health Access for Women." Currently in her third-year at Cal State, she is studying abroad at la Universidad Católica de Chile (International Law and History). In the future Yesenia hopes to pursue a law degree and become an international lawyer in either Washington D.C, New York or California. Outside of academe she enjoys traveling and shooting pictures with her Minolta 7000.

Magaly Ordoñez is a second-year Feminist Studies PhD student at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. They are a first generation non-binary Chicanx scholar from Los Angeles, California striving to rupture racist heteronormative structures of oppression and bring to the forefront the experiences of queer, trans, working-class people of color, and overall historically marginalized communities. Magaly's scholarly interests lay at the intersection of Chicanx and Women of Color feminisms, critical ethnic studies, cannabis culture, and gender and sexuality studies. Part of their research interrogates ways in which the cannabis industry perpetuates sexist, classist, racist, and homophobic modes of oppression while simultaneously embodying means of resistance to sociopolitical persecution. As a critical cannabis studies scholar, Magaly intends to manifest seeds of liberation for those who have been caged and dehumanized in name of racist capitalist cannabis legislation, and move toward building equitable societies. Beyond the boundaries of academic institutions, Magaly enjoys cooking food that heals the soul, camping, long hikes, and watching Colombian *novelas*.

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Carlos Martín Vélez Salas, a native from Peru, received his Bachelor's in Spanish and English Education from the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos of Lima, his M.A. in Spanish from Michigan State University, and his Ph.D. in Culture, Literacy and Language from the University of Texas at San Antonio. He currently teaches Spanish at the undergraduate level at the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures at Trinity University in San Antonio. Before joining Trinity University, he held academic positions teaching undergraduate/graduate level courses in English as a Second Language, Bilingual Education, and Spanish in Kentucky and Texas. Intersecting theory and practice from critical applied linguistics, performance and theater studies, Chicano/a, Latino/a studies as well as epistemologies of the south frameworks, he continues to carve out collaborative transformative spaces for the teaching and learning of Spanishes at the undergraduate/graduate level in US academic institutions.

Santiago Vidales was born in Bogotá, Colombia. He holds a B.A. in philosophy and an M.A. in Latin American Literary and Cultural Studies. His M.A. thesis focused on Latin American (re)interpretations of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and how these processes are anchored in revolutionary politics. Since 2014 Santi has been working towards his Ph.D. in Latin American and Latinx Literary and Cultural Studies with an emphasis in Xicanx and Vanguard poetry from the twentieth century at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. His dissertation on Xicanx poet and activist Raúl Salinas aims to place Xicanx poetry in conversation with the literary traditions of Latin America. By placing these traditions in conversation, the project also aims to rethink how bilingual poetry challenges and reinvigorates the Spanish poetic tradition going back to sixteenth-century Spain. Other intellectual passions of his include Colombian historical novels, novels about dictatorships in the Americas, and Caribbean short stories.

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