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Publication Date

2015

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Chicana/o Indigenous Affirmation as Transformational Consciousness:

Indigeneity and Transnational Human Rights Advocacy since

the Chicana/o Movement

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

José Luis Serrano Nájera

2015

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2015

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Chicana/o Indigenous Affirmation as Transformational Consciousness:

Indigeneity and Transnational Human Rights Advocacy since
the Chicana/o Movement

by

José Luis Serrano Nájera

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Juan Gómez-Quiñones, Chair

Indigenous social movements in the Americas have multiple sources, but in regards to Mexican Americans, my focus considers Chicana/o Indigeneity of particular importance to decolonization efforts because of its density, scope, and breadth, as well as spatial location. My dissertation answers the following question: how are Chicana/o assertions of cultural Indigeneity, intrinsically parallel and related to Chicana/o participation in Indigenous transnational struggles? The underlying premises for my investigation of Chicana/o Indigeneity are the following subquestions: how do transnational these efforts enrich our understanding of the respect of human rights, and what are the bases of Chicana/o Indigeneity? I explicate how Chicana/o historic consciousness is influenced by the complex transnational activism with Indigenous Peoples to decolonize the Americas and contend that Chicana/o Indigenist activists, informed by trans-border interactions, cultural practices, and long oral traditions challenged hegemonic constraints of Indigeneity constructed by Mexican and U.S. pro-western domination premised

assimilationist projects. These challenges have resulted in Chicana/o participation in broader challenges to the prominence of western cultural hegemony in the nation-states of the Americas.

I depict groups and organizations comprising a specific activism that challenge assimilation and contribute to the prominence of contemporary *Indigenismo* or Indigenism as a cultural and political ideology. This activism, which seeds and stimulates Indigenism, instills calls for cultural assertion within international human rights advocacy. I focus on Chicana/o activists, activist organizations, and cultural groups that demanded the right to revive their Indigenous culture, and in doing so, aligned their cultural revival with the right to cultural survival that is integral to the demands of Indigenous Peoples. Since the late 1960s, the objective of Chicana/o statements on Indigeneity have provided the forum for a discussion regarding a culturally autonomous trajectory for Chicanas and Chicanos free of colonial logics, hegemonic cultures, and oppression. By no means has this road been straight forward and without equivocations. Nevertheless, by the 1980s and well into the twenty-first century, most Chicana/o and Indigenous activists stood generally unified by certain precepts and agreements despite national borders in their efforts to redress the violation of human rights in the Americas.

This dissertation of José Luis Serrano Nájera is approved.

David Delgado Shorter

Kevin Terraciano

Juan Gómez-Quñones, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

DEDICATION

Para mis ancestros, abuelos, tíos, tías y
mi papá que han cruzado al otro lado

Para mi mamá, Gloria,

Finalmente, para Liz

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although I did not know it at the time, this dissertation began in 2004 when I traveled to Morelos, México for a weeklong course in Nahuatl philosophy with *temachtiani* Martha Ramírez-Oropeza at Nahuatl University in Ocotepéc. That trip awoke in me a desire to understand Mexican Indigeneity and put together fragmented memories of my own cultural history back together. After returning from this trip, my interest in Indigeneity coalesced with my desire to teach history while working with high-school youth as part of MEChA de UCLA's Xinachtli outreach program. These early years were the foundation of my trajectory as an educator and historian.

I first began asking questions about Indigeneity and Chicana/o social movements in my undergraduate seminar on the History of the Chicana/o Movement led by Professor Juan Gómez-Quiñones. He has helped guide my research since then, and along with Professor Irene Vásquez, helped realize the first stage of this project, which eventually became my master's thesis while a student at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). I thank both professors Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez for their mentorship that continues today. Along with Professor Munashe Furusa, professors Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez helped me begin to elaborate my arguments about Indigeneity during the Chicana/o Movement.

The research for expanding my focus of Chicana/o Indigeneity in the context of transnational Indigenous Peoples movements would not have been possible without the financial support of the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center and the UCLA American Indian Studies Center. Through grants from the UCLA Institute of American Cultures, these centers helped make possible my travel to archive repositories across the Southwestern U.S. and Mexico City and for me to interview prominent activists involved in these movements. I want to thank Armando Rendón, David Luján, Alurista, Ernesto Vigil, and José Flores for taking the time to

conducting an interview with me and sharing your insights, analysis, and reflections of Indigenous Chicana/o activism. Although conducting an interview during research for this project was not possible, I would also like to thank Tupac Enrique Acosta for pointing me in the direction of recorded interviews available online. I also want to acknowledge Raul Salinas, Gustavo Gutiérrez, and Cecilio-García Camarillo. Although this research began after their deaths, it would have been impossible without their record keeping and gracious donations to archive repositories.

An earlier version of “CHAPTER 5: Pedagogical Legacies: Indigenous Consciousness, Critical Pedagogy and Steps to Ensuring Paths to Decolonization” appeared in volume one, no. 1 of *Regeneración Tlacuilolli: UCLA Raza Studies Journal*. I want to acknowledge the reviewers of my essay for providing me with critical feedback. As a co-editor-in-chief of this journal, I want to acknowledge Elizabeth González Cárdenas and Moises Santos for helping me get this journal started. I also want to thank Juan Pablo Mercado, Alfredo Huante, and Araceli Centanino for taking on the task of continuing this publication. Taking valuable time away from your own work, working with frugal budgets, and antiquated software is no easy task. I thank you for working through the difficulties and believing in the mission of the journal.

I humbly want to thank the hundreds of Chicana/o and Indigenous activists of Turtle Island and Abya Yala that are the focus of this study. Your daily work for more than five decades has pushed this world towards a better trajectory. You have continued a resilient resistance that began in 1492 and I hope my writings inspire more to join this struggle for generations to come. Your courage inspires me to struggle for the rights of human beings and the earth. Of course, any mistakes in my depiction of your struggle are my own.

A special thanks goes to my advisor, Juan Gómez-Quiñones. His mentorship, advice, encouragement, and friendship over the last decade have made it possible for me to realize my

potential as writer and *maestro*. He supported my endeavor into such a profound research topic and provided me with invaluable advice and direction. I am very fortunate to have a mentor that tirelessly took the time to comment on drafts of papers, articles, this dissertation, ask me the tough questions, and help define my Chicana/o History scholarship. ¡Muchisimas gracias, profé!
¡Siempre seguiré adelante!

I would like to thank David Delgado Shorter for critical exchanges about Indigeneity that will continue to keep me thinking, and in general, for always helping me better articulate my arguments and supporting my scholarship on Indigeneity. I would like to also thank Kevin Terraciano for helping me understand the breadth of the long *duree* of Indigenous Peoples history in México and for his continued support in highlighting the importance of my project.

Additionally, I would like to thank my colleagues and friends that supported my educational aspirations. I want to thank Eboni Shaw, Hadley Porter, and all the other staff at the UCLA History Department for your patience and support. I would also like to thank my dear friend Carlos Hernández for your friendship, critical conversations, your commentary on Chapter “CHAPTER 2: “Pensamiento Serpentino:” Chicana/o Movement *Teatro* Cultural Empowerment Strategies, 1970-1978,” and of course for the rides to South Central on several occasions. I am also grateful to my cohort in the U.S. field, the Latin Americanists that engaged in cross-field discussions with me, and all others I could not mention here.

I would also like to acknowledge my former students. I had the privilege to teach the History 96W course at UCLA, and I would like to acknowledge the inspiration my students gave me in also taking an interest in cultural revitalization in the context of social movements. I hope they continue to ask critical questions about history and culture. I also want to acknowledge my students from San Fernando High School who took my Chicana/o Studies course as part of the Project Grad LA program. Their enthusiasm for Chicana/o Studies continues to influence my

desire to teach Chicana/o History. I finally would like to thank my former students at UCLA, CSUDH, Venice High, and Cabrillo High that helped turn an introverted thinker into a committed teaching professional with a social justice ethos.

Le quiero dar gracias a mi mamá, Gloria, y papá, Luis, por cruzar al otro lado para salir adelante. Como los millones de migrantes que han venido al norte, ustedes han hecho la historia de nuestras comunidades. Le quiero dar gracias a mi abuelita María, mis tias Margarita, Francisca y mi tío Elfego por enseñarme lo importante que ha sido trabajar la tierra para nuestros ancestros y ha mi tío Amador por inspirarme ha ser maestro. También quiero darles muchismas gracias a mis primas Eli y Mari por darme un lugar para vivir durante mi mes de estudios en el Distrito Federal. I also want to thank my sisters María, Mabel, Gissel, and Johanna for always having your little brother's back. I am especially thankful to Gissel for feeding my cats when I was on research and conference trips and to Johanna for getting me ready for those job interviews. As for my nieces and nephew Arianna, Alyssia, Isaac, Samantha, and Naima, thank you for your love and I hope I inspire you to pursue your passions.

Finally, I would not have completed my PhD. without the support of my partner in life, Elizabeth González Cárdenas. Her love and support has made writing this dissertation possible and our mutual passion for Chicana/o Studies and education make our journeys as writers, journal editors, and teachers a labor of love. When we first met in 2005, she immediately lent her support of my studies by lending me her "office." Ten years later, I am very lucky to have walked this journey with you, and look forward to many more years and journeys to come.

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*So how are we going to address colonization?
There's only one [way], its [to] decolonize.¹*

INTRODUCTION

Twentieth and early twenty-first century Indigenous Peoples' social movements that have demanded recognition of cultural and political rights have special resonance in the United States and México.² These North American countries have large populations of Indigenous peoples and people of Indigenous descent that have impacted the histories of these national societies. Moreover, Indigenous Peoples' cultural vitalities are a significant part of contemporary North American social relations. The U.S. and México also have a history where Indigenous Peoples have suffered discrimination and violation of their civil and human rights, while paradoxically Indigenous cultural symbolisms are mythologized.³ The context for this paradox has its origins in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as colonial officials celebrated the grandiose accomplishments of pre-columbian civilizations in patronizing tones, while at the same time validating conquest and colonization of the Americas.⁴ The consequence of this line of thought

¹ Tupac Enrique on "Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win: TONATIERRA and The Catalyst Project," *Podomatic*, accessed February 15, 2013, http://ushrnetwork.podomatic.com/entry/2012-02-15T11_29_02-08_00.

² In 2007, the UN general assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP), which is the most extensive international recognition of the inherent relationship between Indigenous cultural rights and human rights. Although the legal implications of the DRIP are still unclear, the adoption of the DRIP is a product of decades of Indigenous People's struggles to protect their cultural rights and demand they be respected as inherent human rights. For a depiction of these struggles, refer to Gaspar Rivera-Salgado, "Equal in Dignity and Rights: The Struggle of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas in the Age of Migration" (Presentation for the Prince Claus Chair in Development and Equity, Utrecht University, Netherlands, April 2005).

³ For Latin American *Indigenismo* mythology, refer to Rebecca Earle, *The Return of the Native: Indians and Myth-Making in Spanish America, 1810-1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). For the mythologizing of American Indians in the U.S., refer to Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1997). For the metaphysical problems of writing American Indian and White history, refer to Calvin Martin, ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of History* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1987).

⁴ For mid and late colonial era historiography, refer to Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001). For the political uses of this historiography by ruling elite, refer to D. A. Brading, *First America: Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State, 1492-1866* (Cambridge University Press, 1993); D. A. Brading, *The Origins of Mexican Nationalism*, Cambridge Latin American Miniatures 4 (Cambridge, England: University of Cambridge, Centre of Latin American Studies, 1985).

in the Americas had disastrous effects to the political, social, and economic survival of Indigenous Peoples in what would become México and the United States.⁵

Although decrees of kings, queens, popes and viceroys have long since faded in the Americas, the consequences of colonization continue to suppress the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples. The founding of nation-states and notions of freedom influenced by liberalism and republicanism have further entrenched the supposed notions regarding the superiority of Western civilization. Furthermore, racist policy hostile to the cultural traditions of Indigenous Peoples has been instituted in efforts to force assimilation as a means to promote and further modernity, as well as create a laboring class. In this long historic context, twenty-first century Indigenous Peoples' social movements address the right to autonomously define Indigenous cultural trajectory and in sum demand respect for Indigenous human rights in ways which synthesize the historical and modern in unique expressions.⁶ These movements bring to bear the consequences of five centuries of unjust western political, social, and economic rule over Indigenous Peoples in the Americas. These social movements address the need to challenge the dominance of western thought in the governing policies of the Americas and point us towards a future where historic injustices are rectified and notions of superiority are abolished. Indigenous Peoples' social movements seek the decolonization of the Americas both in the policies of nation-states and the hearts and minds of all their citizens.

⁵ For Spanish colonization in the U.S. southwest that inhibited Indigenous Peoples' self-determination, refer to Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940*, 1st ed (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994).; and Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans*, 1st ed, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001). For the global implications of colonialism, and efforts to decolonize, refer to Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed (London: Zed Books, 2012).

⁶ Although my focus is on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Indigenous Peoples' efforts to challenge colonial power date back to the late fifteenth-century and Columbus' voyages. Refer to Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014).

Indigenous social movements in the Americas have multiple sources, but in regards to Mexican Americans, my focus considers Chicana/o Indigeneity of particular importance to decolonization efforts because of its density, scope, and breadth, as well as spatial location. Thus, my dissertation answers the following question: how are Chicana/o assertions of cultural Indigeneity, intrinsically parallel and related to Chicana/o participation in Indigenous transnational struggles? The underlying premises for my investigation of Chicana/o Indigeneity are the following subquestions: how do transnational these efforts enrich our understanding of the respect of human rights, and what are the bases of Chicana/o Indigeneity? I contend that Indigenous Chicana/o activists, informed by trans-border interactions, cultural practices, and long oral traditions challenged hegemonic constraints of Indigeneity constructed by Mexican and U.S. assimilationist projects. In challenging assimilation, Indigenous Chicana/o activists demonstrate varying types of Indigeneity that propounds Chicana/o self-determined Indigenous identity to a broader transnational Pan-Indigenous community. In return, many Indigenous communities recognize Chicana/o Pan-Indigenous community membership as a result of Chicana/o participation in broader Indigenous Peoples movements in the Americas that uphold Indigenous communities' right to self-determination.

Late twentieth-century Indigenous Chicana/o activism has supported Indigenous Peoples self-determination as a way to rectify the injustice in the Americas since the onset of colonialism. In this dissertation, I explicate how Chicana/o historic consciousness is influenced by the complex transnational activism with Indigenous Peoples to decolonize the Americas. Indigenous Chicana/o groups challenge assimilation and contribute to the prominence of contemporary *Indigenismo* or Indigenism as a cultural and political ideology that instill calls for cultural survival and assertion within international human rights advocacy. In my dissertation I focus on Chicana/o activists, activist organizations, and cultural groups that demanded the right to revive

their Indigenous culture. In doing so, these Chicana/o groups aligned their cultural revival with the right to cultural survival integral to the demands of Indigenous Peoples. Since the late 1960s, the objective of Chicana/o statements on Indigeneity have provided the forum for a discussion regarding a culturally autonomous trajectory for Chicanas and Chicanos free of colonial logics, hegemonic cultures, and oppression. Moreover, Chicana/o activists have problematized definitions of Indigeneity based on blood quantum and the ability to speak an Indigenous language as an extension of colonialism. By no means has this road been straight forward and without mistakes. Nevertheless, by the 1980s, most Chicana/o and Indigenous activists stood generally unified by certain precepts and agreements despite imposed national borders in their efforts to redress the human rights violations of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas.

To be sure, Indigenous premised assertions have challenged violations of human rights across the globe for centuries. Upon examination, late twentieth-century mobilized assertions of this principle may provide understandings of the importance of cultural rights as inherent human rights globally. As a result, my study enlightens late twentieth and early twenty-first century social changes impacting human rights that are indicative of this late modern era. In this era, the respect for operative cultural heritages, such as Chicana/o Indigenous heritage, have become integral to challenges to the dominance of western cultural hegemony. These challenges were accelerated by the global context of anti-colonial movements beginning after World War II. Anti-colonial movements across the globe sought liberation from the exploitative social relations established by modernization and global economies. Ultimately, my study is an examination of how cultural consciousness, and its decolonial applications, are employed by the oppressed for social and cultural survival in a complex late modern era world.

A Movement in Progress: Contribution of the Study

Although some scholars have noted Indigenist themes, references, and practices among Mexican Americans,⁷ none have thoroughly analyzed how philosophical understandings of Indigenous heritage have influenced cultural and political ideological trends among Chicanas and Chicanos during the twentieth-century. Furthermore, scholars have not framed Chicana/o Indigenism in the context of twentieth-century western hemispheric Indigenous cultural movements that have influenced resurgent struggles for human rights in the United States, México, and the Americas.⁸ Thus, my dissertation provides a study of Chicana/o participation with and in Indigenous Peoples' social movements. I analyze the development of cultural ideology, critical historical consciousness, and human rights advocacy beyond the parameters of a focus on United States civil rights struggles as represented by the prospects of the Chicana/o Movement and consequent public advocacies. For this dissertation, I study history, question documentary materials and data, and pay careful attention to the creators of my subject.

Methodology

I combine an oral historical method with archival research in my dissertation. I interviewed members of Chicana/o *Teatro* troupes, *Danza Azteca* collectives, and activist organizations.⁹ I

⁷ Jorge A Huerta, *Chicano Theater: Themes and Forms*, Studies in the Language and Literature of United States Hispanos (Ypsilanti, Mich: Bilingual Press, 1982).

⁸ For a nationally focused study on Chicana/o Indigenism, refer to Sheila Marie Contreras, *Blood Lines: Myth, Indigenism, and Chicana/O Literature*, 1st ed, Chicana Matters Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008). For a Latin American example of Indigenous cultural ideology, refer to Natividad Gutiérrez, *Nationalist Myths and Ethnic Identities Indigenous Intellectuals and the Mexican State* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

⁹ *Teatro* is the Spanish word for theater, but also connotes a theatrical method that emphasizes political messages over theatric aesthetics. For an examination of Chicana/o *Teatro*, refer to Yolanda Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994). For struggles to depict Chicana subjectivity in *Teatro*, refer *Teatro Chicana: a Collective Memoir and Selected Plays*, 1st ed, Chicana Matters Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008). *Danza Azteca* is a ritual dance that promotes the integration of Aztec spiritualism as part of Chicana/o identity and spiritual understanding. For an examination of *Danza Azteca* in México, refer to the seminal work Martha Stone, *At the Sign of Midnight: The Concheros Dance Cult of Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975); and Susanna Rostas, *Carrying the*

consulted activist organizations' archived collections across the Southwestern U.S. and Mexico City.¹⁰ I have developed oral history questionnaires that are based in long established oral history methods and that are sensitive of topics like culture, political ideology, and violations of human rights.¹¹ I asked my interviewees during recorded conversations questions regarding their childhood, participation in Indigenist activities, political activism, and stances on the significance of the relationship between cultural identity and political activism. I combine my interviewees' statements with documented evidence in archived collections of activist organization records. The twentieth and twenty-first century organizations I focus on have left fair amounts of records in ethnic studies libraries, special collections, and institutional records across the Southwestern U.S. that document their public activism and advocacy for human and civil rights.

Although I wish this debate would be put to rest, many scholars in the discipline of History still assert that the document in the archive is a better source than the oral history. Upon reflection, this seems a superficial contention to me in relation to my subject. Obviously both are human pronouncements and archival sources themselves are records often initially stated orally. In conjunction with the validity of oral and archival sources, prioritizing the archival over the oral is detrimental to writing the history of peoples with oral traditions. The ability to archive materials is linked to economic and social privileges Indigenous Peoples, along with other racialized populations, do not possess due to the legacy of colonialism. Indigenous Peoples' perspectives are not documented in the archives because they lacked the power of representing

Word: The Concheros Dance in Mexico City, Mesoamerican Worlds (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2009). For an interview with a pivotal figure in Chicana/o *danza*, refer to P. Poveda, "Danza De Concheros En Austin, Texas: Entrevista Con Andrés Segura Granados," *Latin American Music Review/Revista De Música Latinoamericana* 2, no. 2 (1981): 280–299.

¹⁰ Please refer to the bibliography for specific archives.

¹¹ For long established oral history methods, refer to Donald A Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). For sensitivity to Indigenous Peoples' concerns during oral history interviews, refer to William Schneider, --so *They Understand: Cultural Issues in Oral History* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2002). For oral history methods with People of Color in the United States, refer to Teresa Barnett and Chon A Noriega, *Oral history and communities of color* (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Press, 2013).

themselves in governing institutions or previous scholarship. In his theoretical interlude, David Delgado Shorter explains that the value of written documentation over oral tradition in historical scholarship is tied to centuries of racist beliefs that equated written documents to civilization and oral traditions to savages. In challenging this tradition of racism amongst historians, Shorter contends that Indigenous Peoples, in this case Yoeme Deer Dancers, establish their historicity in ritual performance and oral tradition.¹² In many ways, my dissertation also relies on oral history so that I can utilize oral tradition as a valuable source for my historical narrative. Although I focus on activist organizations that have archived records, the value of the oral histories and traditions is integral to the interpretative framework of my dissertation. Oral tradition has remained the integral way most Chicanas and Chicanos have constructed, maintained, and transmitted understandings of historicity, culture, and identity.¹³ Oral tradition provides history with localized epistemology that demonstrates the way people have constructed their historicity over time.¹⁴ In this manner, I utilize interviews to demonstrate how Chicanas and Chicanos have utilized cultural premises regarding claims to Indigeneity as a means of understanding and partaking in human and civil rights advocacy.

Utilizing both written and oral history sources, my historical narrative emphasizes Chicana/o participation in Indigenous social movements that stress the importance of cultural identity as part and parcel of fundamental human rights. In this research, I have found that Chicana/o activists advocated a commitment to Indigenous cultural pride that helped instill among them and others an ethos of equality, justice, and respect. This ethos is related with the necessity to understand the integral role that Indigeneity has played in Chicana/o participation in

¹² David Delgado Shorter, *We Will Dance Our Truth: Yaqui History in Yoeme Performances* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) 197-209.

¹³ For a foundational study on Mexican American oral tradition in music, refer to Americo Paredes, *With a Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and its Hero*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958).

¹⁴ For more on the localized contexts of knowledge production, refer to David Turnbull, "On with the Motley: Contingent Assemblage of Knowledge Spaces," in *Masons, Tricksters and Cartographers: Comparative Studies in the Sociology of Scientific and Indigenous Knowledge* (Harwood Academic Publishers, 1999), 19-52..

Indigenous social movements, which stress the importance of culture as a fundamental human right.

On Periodization(s): Dialectical and Intersecting Contexts

My examination of Indigeneity demonstrates, from yet another perspective, the impossibility of constructing a linear and progressive historical narrative beyond the level of chronology. Long ago, historians began to call into question the tropes of modern progress in Western society.¹⁵

This is especially true when examining Indigenous historical perspectives inclusive of a consciousness of past injustice resulting from conquest, genocide, and colonialism.

Consequently, as a historian, I try to analyze historical trends that are multifaceted, occur in cohort with other trends, and intersect in dialectical interactions that lead to synthesized outcomes. For social movement actors, these trends inform their interpretation of the past, as reflected in their historic consciousness, and influence their demands for the future. For many Chicana/o activists, historic trends of political and economic *power*, as well as *resistance* to this power, inform their *historical consciousness* of their Indigeneity, and their demands for *cultural autonomy* and *more democratic and egalitarian* societies.

The ebb and flow of political and economic *power* inflicted by western societies to other parts of the world stems from the onset of colonialism in the late fifteenth-century and continued for the following centuries. For Chicanas, Chicanos, and Indigenous Peoples of the now U.S. Southwest, the vestiges of Spanish colonialism coalesced and were superseded by U.S. Empire building and settler-colonialism in the mid-nineteenth century with the 1846 U.S.-México war

¹⁵ For foundational critiques of progressive history, refer to Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 1st ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968). For critiques of tropes in historical writing, refer to Hayden V. White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). For an overall survey of the changing perspectives on narrative in the discipline of History, refer to Georg G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (Middletown, Con: Wesleyan University Press, 2005).

and the military genocide of Indigenous Peoples in the nineteenth-century. These expansionist wars, extended to Latin America and the Pacific in the early twentieth-century, placed the U.S. in prime location to overtake England as a global empire after WWII. Since then, the U.S. has maintained its global hegemony through increasingly neoliberal economic policies and enhanced militarism, facilitated by world scope financial institutions. These foreign policies have facilitated the development of globalized capitalism in the late twentieth-century, and have polarized the domestic labor market in the U.S. between fewer and fewer middle-class information management jobs and a service sector working class. The elite, on the other hand, form part of a transnational financier network, in many ways resembling the companies that funded the initial colonizing voyages to the Americas in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In this colonial, modern, post-modern globalized context of *power*, Chicana/o activists inspired by critical interpretations of their Indigeneity, contest the expansion of global capitalism and its threats to land, resources, and human autonomy necessary for cultural survival. Thus, conditions of these periods both influence *resistance* and inspire alternative *historical consciousness*.

The almost two centuries of modernized global capitalism has not remained unchallenged by human advocacies across the world that have and continue to *resist* this global domination. In the modern context, the left, manifested in Marxism and socialism, has remained a prominent force for critique of capitalism, even if its implementation in socialist governments has been spotty and coerced to fail. Resistance inspired by Marxist analysis has been characterized by labor organizing and electoral politics in economic centers of the world, and by nationalist overthrow of colonial powers in the peripheral zones. In his periodization of historic resistance of the left, Immanuel Wallerstein centers the transition of old left to new left in the 1950s and 1960s. Prior to the 1950s, both nationalist and socialist resistance to global powers oriented

toward modernist avenues of political power. Modernist political power is defined by either the creation of nation-states modeled after the centers of power, or the access to power through the institutional apparatus that maintained capitalist in power in the global economic centers. These modes of gaining political power won out control of left oriented organizations and peripheral states.¹⁶

The discontent with these outcomes ushered in the U.S. what is known as the new left, which Wallerstein expands into the twenty-first century and terms “antisystemic movements.”¹⁷ The civil rights era, the shift to human rights advocacy in the 1980s, and finally anti-capitalist globalization movements of the 1990s and 2000s characterize the change and continuity of these movements. In these periods of resistance, Chicana/o Indigenous inspired activism is a transition out of the civil rights based activism of the Chicana/o Movement into the human rights advocacy and anti-capitalist globalization.¹⁸ Historic emphasis on transition, however, demonstrates that post-1960s movements continued to build on the old and incorporate new. This is no different for Chicana/o activists that continue to demand redress for historic injustice dating back to the fifteenth-century. At the same time, Chicana/o activists push for more egalitarian and democratic societies, especially in the arena of gender equality and female political leadership.¹⁹

¹⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, “New Revolts Against the System,” in Tom Mertes et al., *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?*, First Edition edition (New York: Verso, 2004) 263.

¹⁷ Ibid, 267.

¹⁸ For perspectives on transitions of Chicana/o Movement activism to post-civil rights era activism in the arenas of education, voting rights, and labor, refer to Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez, *Making Aztlán: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* (UNM Press, 2014). For the shift in social movements from old to new, refer to the New Social Movement theories presented in Marcy Darnovsky and Barbara Leslie Epstein, *Cultural Politics and Social Movements*, ed. Richard Flacks (Philadelphia: Temple Univ Pr, 1995).

¹⁹ For examples of Chicana/o Movement era feminism, refer to *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings* (New York: Routledge, 1997); and Enriqueta Vasquez and John Nichols, *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement: Writings from El Grito Del Norte*, ed. Lorena Oropeza and Dionne Espinoza (Arte Público Press, 2006). For interpretation of the significance of Chicana/o Movement era Feminism, refer to Maylei Blackwell, *¡Chicana Power!: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*, Chicana Matters ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011). For Chicana Indigenous Feminisms, refer to Elisa Facio and Irene Lara, eds., *Fleshing the Spirit: Spirituality and Activism in Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous Women’s Lives*, 2 edition (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014); and Cherríe L. Moraga, *A Xicana Codex of Changing Consciousness: Writings, 2000–2010* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2011). For theses on social movement challenges to long political and economic cycles, refer to Andre Gunder and Frank Marta Fuentes, “Ten Theses on

The complex matrices of *power* and *resistance* reveal the deep implications of Chicana/o *historical consciousness* of Indigenous heritage. Consciousness of colonial injustice problematizes the History of the United States, where historians ignore the colonial basis for U.S. power, and the settler-colonial drive for land possession that built this country on top of Indigenous genocide.²⁰ Moreover, Chicana/o historic consciousness of millennia of human migrations in the western hemisphere, the interconnections of Indigenous civilization before and after colonization, and the inherent human right of cultural survival in response to assimilatory nationalist projects in the U.S. and México, point towards decolonized alternatives.²¹ Consciousness of a time before nationalized/colonized definitions of identity and community membership help Chicanas, Chicanos, and Indigenous Peoples envision pathways to post-national and post-colonial alternatives to current globalized domination of capitalism. Indigenous Chicana/o activists thus provide analyses of present-day oppression as part of trends that link the modern with the colonial in the building of U.S. empire.²²

The complex matrices of *power* and *resistance* that influence *historical consciousness*, also influence Indigenous Chicana/o activists to call for *cultural autonomy* based in community membership. This emphasizes a cultural hybridity based in human agency and interactions instead of cultural and racial attributes. In particular, Chicana/o activists challenge blood quantum and language requirements that define Indigeneity in the United States and México

Social Movements,” *World Development* 17, no. 2 (1989): 179–191. Here, the authors contend, “The ‘new’ social movements are not new, even if they have some new features; and the ‘classical’ ones are relatively new and perhaps temporary.”

²⁰ For an Indigenous perspective on US history, refer to Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*.

²¹ For more on the millennia of context of Indigeneity and migrations in the Americas, refer to Roberto Cintli Rodríguez, *Our Sacred Maíz Is Our Mother: Indigeneity and Belonging in the Americas*, 4th ed. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014). For foundational text on the idea of the profound context of Mexican Indigeneity, refer to Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *Mexico Profundo: Reclaiming a Civilization*, trans. Philip A. Dennis (University of Texas Press, 1996).

²² For an analysis of coloniality and modernity as two sides of the same coin, refer to Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, edited by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (New York: Routledge, 2010).

respectively. The emphasis on agency tied to community membership demonstrates the way in which Indigenous Chicana/o activists tie together historical contexts of power into broader historic analyses of colonialism in the Americas. In this way, Chicana/o Indigeneity is consciousness of millennia of cultural development in the Americas and critiques of transnational abuses of political and economic power that have inflicted violent impediment to this cultural development for five centuries. This consciousness, in turn, motivates Indigenous activism that aspire to create more *democratic and egalitarian* alternatives to global capitalism in the present and future. In the following parts of this dissertation, I will outline how these contexts and historical consciousnesses inspire Chicana/o transnational activism that calls for the critical dismantling of global capitalism as necessary to ensure the cultural survival of Indigenous Peoples.

Summary of Chapters

My dissertation consists of six chapters that examine the antecedents, cultural significance, and political implications of late twentieth-century Chicana/o Indigeneity. In the first chapter I demonstrate the decoloniality of Chicana/o efforts to detach from epistemic hegemony of western civilization. Through a theoretical discussion of agency in the context of power over time, I illustrate that Chicana/o revival of a counter-hegemonic Indigenous awareness is a practice of decolonization. In this chapter, I place the trajectory of Chicana/o Indigeneity into the broader contexts of social movements and trends of local human struggles to have agency over how to advance Chicana/o communities. I contend that Indigenous Chicana/o activist contributions to anti-colonial and decolonial movements demonstrated implications of historic Indigeneity. Chicana/o Indigeneity subverts the logics of systemic dominations comprised of an elaborate colonialism continued by modern global capitalism. In subverting

colonial domination, Chicana/o Indigenous activists demonstrate a pluriversal alternative as a trajectory for a more just future.

The second and third chapters of my dissertation examine the antecedents to Indigenous Chicana/o activism of the 1980s and 1990s during the Chicana/o Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Chicana/o Movement era activism, influenced by a coalescence of civil rights advocacy and anti-colonial ideology, demonstrated unique demands for the respect of human and civil rights based in stances on self-determination. Chicana/o activism during the *movimiento* also inserted into civil rights the demand for the respect of cultural autonomy, which for Chicanas and Chicanos was the respect for their Indigenous Heritage. For Chicana/o activists during the Chicana/o Movement, collaboration with other ethnic groups in efforts to establish racial, social, and economic equality in the United States went hand in hand with the respect of local community autonomy and revival of Indigenous heritage.²³

The second chapter of my dissertation focuses on Chicana/o Movement era Chicana/o and American Indian collaboration in civil rights activism in the United States. I depict efforts made by Chicana/o activist organizations The Crusade for Justice and La Alianza Federal de Mercedes that collaborated with American Indian Movement organizations to challenge U.S. racial injustice beginning in the early 1960s.²⁴ Although Chicana/o activists in these organizations did not explicitly propound an Indigenous Chicana/o cultural identity, Chicana/o and American Indian collaborative activism aligned Chicana/o political goals of civil rights with American Indian demands for sovereignty. The intersection of these two goals lay in the demand

²³ For Chicana/o participation in multiethnic coalitions, refer to George Mariscal, *Brown-eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

²⁴ For a focused examination of The Crusade For Justice, refer to Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999). For example of their leadership's stances, refer to Rodolpho Gonzales, *Message to Aztlán: Selected Writings of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales*, Hispanic Civil Rights Series (Houston, Tex: Arte Público Press, 2001). For an examination of *La Alianza* refer to Reies Tijerina, *They Called Me "King Tiger": My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights* (Houston, Tex: Arte Público Press, 2000); and George Mariscal, *Brown-eyed Children of the Sun*.

for cultural survival and redress of treaty violations. For many Chicanas and Chicanos, especially from New Mexico, the core concern was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the citizen and land ownership rights supposedly guaranteed therein.

The third chapter of my dissertation examines the affect Chicana/o Indigenous ideas and ideology had on Chicana/o efforts to self-empower communities utilizing education. An alternative school movement that stems from Chicana/o Movement efforts to provide proper education for Chicana/o children and young adults many times began utilizing Indigeneity as a foundation for students to learn and strive for social justice. Educators growing incorporation of Indigeneity into curriculum and teaching methods enriched their knowledge and that of students. Chicana/o youth knowledgably discussed the implications of Chicana/o Indigeneity contributed to the development of Indigenous Chicana/o transnational activism beginning in the 1980s. In this chapter, I contend that the educational legacies of a five-decade alternative school movement demonstrate the value and potential of Chicana/o Indigeneity. These teachers' and activists' pedagogical efforts, at various Chicana/o and American Indian schools, helped foster young peoples' critical consciousness and self-esteem. As a result, new generations of activists, community leaders, and/or self-determined adults contributed further to the self-determination of Chicana/o communities. The commitment to the future of Chicana/o communities vis-à-vis the education of young people demonstrates Indigenous Chicana/o activists' commitment to building a decolonized future. In sum, this chapter portrays a five-decade history of Chicana/o desires for a decolonial future through an investment in a critical education for future generations of Chicanas and Chicanos.

Chapters four and five of this dissertation depict Chicana/o proclamations of Indigenous identity and their ideological significance in relation to self-determined Chicana/o Indigenous cultural identities. Since the 1950s, global anti-colonial movements have challenged the validity

of Western cultural hegemony that is backed by political and economic dominance. In the United States, these sentiments manifested themselves in the Civil Rights era, and for Mexican Americans specifically in the Chicana/o Movement. The Chicana/o Movement thus is significant in its unification of promoting autonomous cultural trajectory and cultural pride, with civil rights activism.²⁵ Since the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o activists' demands for the right to self-determine cultural identity and trajectory has led many Chicanas and Chicanos to embrace their Indigenous heritage, investigate the historical implications of Indigenous cultural continuity in Mexican and Chicana/o communities, and learn to become members of a transnational Pan-Indigenous community in the Americas through cultural ceremony.

The fourth chapter of my dissertation focuses on Indigenous cultural recognition and revival by Chicanas and Chicanos during the Chicana/o Movement from 1971 to 1977. I examine *El Teatro Campesino* (ETC) directed by Luis Valdez and the *teatro* troupe coalition *Teatro Nacional de Aztlan* (TENAZ). I focus on ideas of Chicana/o Indigeneity promoted in theatrical performances and publications during the Chicana/o Movement rather than theatrical aesthetics as a means to analyze the significance theatric performance of Indigeneity on Chicana/o Movement ideology. Although these *teatros* some times overly simplified complex colonial history, the strategies employed by *teatros* for cultural empowerment based in Chicana/o Indigeneity demonstrate a significant shift towards decolonial cultural elaborations during the Chicana/o Movement.

The fifth chapter of my dissertation continues the analysis of Chicana/o performance of Indigeneity after the Chicana/o Movement with a focus on Chicana/o *Danza Azteca* and the Peace and Dignity Journeys. Beginning in 1970, Mexican *concheros* began to make connections

²⁵For elaborate discussions on the significance of the relation between Chicana/o cultural ideology and civil rights advocacy, refer to Mario Barrera, *Beyond Aztlan: Ethnic Autonomy in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Praeger, 1988); and Ignacio M García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).

with Chicanas and Chicanos interested in partaking in a revival of Indigenous cultural elements.²⁶ In this chapter, I depict the trans-border ritual practice of *Danza Azteca* and the Peace and Dignity Journeys as a means of unifying Mexicans, Chicanas, Chicanos, and Indigenous Peoples in ritual performance. These ritual performances propounded Indigeneity as a method of decolonization in the U.S. by promoting cultural practices that have persisted among regular people despite the forces of colonial domination. Through these rituals, Chicanas and Chicanos embraced knowledge of Indigenous cultural agency and adaptation of western culture on Indigenous terms. I focus on the different *conchero* and *mexica* branches of *danza* and contend both demonstrate the complex decolonial task of taking inventory of historical consciousness and circumstances. In this chapter, I also focus on the Peace and Dignity Journeys as the outward extension of Chicana/o consciousness of Indigeneity in ways that helped Chicanas and Chicanos build relations with each other and gain membership in a broad hemispheric Indigenous community. In sum, this chapter depicts the ways these rituals demonstrate Chicana/o consciousness of Indigeneity as a means of constructing pathways to decolonization.

Chicana/o proclamations of Indigeneity have led to Chicana/o political struggles for civil and human rights. These took the form of participation in transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements in the Americas (among many interethnic coalition political activisms), as well as community activism that sought the self-determination of Chicana/o communities. The final chapter of my dissertation thus focuses on Chicana/o activists that participated in Indigenous Peoples' transnational struggles in the Americas to protect human rights. I analyze how Indigenous Chicana/o activists contributed to transnational Indigenous peoples advocacy for human rights at the United Nations (UN). Beginning in the 1980s, Chicanas and Chicanos

²⁶ Pablo Poveda, "Danza De Concheros En Austin, Texas." 282. For an examination of late twentieth-century *Danza* in Mexico, refer to Martha Stone, *At the Sign of Midnight*; and Susanna Rostas, *Carrying the Word*.

collaborated with other Indigenous Peoples of the United States to resolve human rights abuses committed by the U.S. government to Native Americans, Chicanas, and Chicanos in violation of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The main grievances regarded the negation of citizenship rights and land rights outlined in the Treaty. These efforts contributed to broader Indigenous Peoples advocacy at the UN for rights of Indigenous people to not suffer from discrimination and marginalization, maintain their cultural identity, and determine for themselves the social and political trajectory of their communities. This activism reflects history of Chicana/o political activism related to Indigenism and Indigeneity that came to fruition in the late twentieth-century. Indigenous Chicana/o activists, building on Chicana/o Movement era anti-colonial efforts to establish self-determination, put forth a decolonial alternative to western hegemony. Indigenous Chicana/o activism brought together a critical understanding of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage, desires to self-determine cultural, social, political, and economic trajectories for Chicana/o communities, and the support for the sovereignty of all Indigenous Peoples in the Western Hemisphere.

CHAPTER 1

Chicana/o Indigeneity as a Process Of Decolonization

*Y, por lo mismo, en todas partes hay más compañeros y compañeras que están aprendiendo a relacionarse con las personas de otras partes de México y del mundo, están aprendiendo a respetar y a exigir respeto, están aprendiendo que hay muchos mundos y que todos tienen su lugar, su tiempo y su modo, y así hay que respetarse mutuamente entre todos.*¹

Introduction

Sensitive to historical legacies since its origins in the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o Indigeneity reflected a growing Chicana/o historic consciousness of Indigeneity. Cultural and civic Indigenous consciousness, in return has been stamped by critiques of ongoing legacies of colonialism, simply as an integral part of living life as Indigenous People generation to generation. These coeval developments in cultural identification and political critique demonstrate one of a few Chicana/o efforts to “delink” from the epistemic hegemony of western civilization through a revival of a counter-hegemonic Indigenous awareness.² Chicanas and Chicanos of the late twentieth-century have thus partaken in a global trend of anti-colonial movements and decolonial demands that have eroded the universalism of western presumptions, and subsequently the rationale of western political hegemony.

In their participation, Indigenous Chicana/o activists contribute to anti-colonial and decolonial movements a demonstrated need to examine the implications of historic Indigeneity. Through their examinations, Chicana/o activists subvert the logics of a systemic domination premised on an elaborate colonialism that has mainly consisted of capitalist exploitation of land

¹ Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, “Sexta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona,” 2005.

² Here I refer to the concept of “delinking” described in Walter D. Mignolo, “Delinking: The Rhetoric of Modernity, The Logic of Coloniality, and the Grammar of De-Coloniality,” in Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, Reprint edition (Routledge, 2013) 303-354. However, the analysis of living and evolving as a counter assault culturally, educational, and civically to challenge colonialism and neocolonialism has not been done extensively beyond what activists generate about their doings. This is not to say that theoretical musings on colonialism and its consequences are not useful in academic conceptual frameworks and elaborations.

and labor. This exploitation entails force and denigration that has amounted to a cultural and social assault of Indigenous Peoples. When Indigenous Chicana/o activists emerged from within a civil rights movement with clear cultural manifestations, the complex legacies of colonialism impelled the need for pluriversal solutions that take into account regional differences in Indigenous heritage, varying trajectories of Indigenous communities, and the effort to balance global connections with community autonomy. The Chicana/o Movement carved space for Indigenous based activism to robustly emerge in Chicana/o communities and college campuses.

The purpose of this chapter is to place the trajectory of Chicana/o Indigeneity into the broader contexts of social movements and global trends of local human struggles to have agency over how to both politically advance their communities and the conceptual aspects of community autonomy. I demonstrate how Chicana/o Indigeneity has contributed to Indigenous Peoples' attempts to abolish colonial emplacements and logics to move towards more pluriversal ways of acting and thinking. In doing so, I bridge the theoretical discussions presented by academics with the advocacy efforts of activists and educators as a means to better evaluate the libratory potential of action and thought related to Chicana/o Indigeneity. Ultimately, I contribute to larger dialogues on the utility of decolonial projects that subvert the hegemony of western thought in political discourse.

Moreover, in this chapter, I aim to contribute to discussions that are generally based in the questions that led me to a research agenda in social movements and ethnic revitalization: 1) What is Indigenous and who gets to define it?; 2) How have colonial force and logics inhibited Indigenous Peoples?; 3) How have Indigenous Peoples made efforts to uphold their self-determination?; 4) What contributions does Chicana/o Indigeneity make to decolonization?; and 5) How has Chicana/o Indigeneity materialized in the context of civil and human rights movements of the late twentieth-century? Ultimately, my discussion contributes to larger

dialogues on the utility of decolonial projects that liberate “the wretched of the earth” to help us build *un mundo donde quepan muchos mundos* [a world where many worlds can fit], which the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) has demanded during the last twenty-years.³

Definitions

Definitions of peoples and their thoughts about themselves are always complex. Definitions of “Indigenous,” “Indigeneity,” and “Indigenism” are polemic. Discussing them is no easy task due to selective exclusion, implicit denigration, and more ambiguity reflective of colonial imposition debasing the humanity of Indigenous Peoples common to academia. Moreover, the problematic universality of definitions obscures the complexity, diversity, and historical contexts of Indigenous history, also denied in academia. Thus, I borrow from Juan Gómez-Quiñones, who hypothesizes as a mode of beginning to theorize the Indigenous, when he states:

Being Indigenous is the conscious experience of Native descent and lived culture historically situated in the Americas; of a historical memory related to awareness of a Native group membership; and of an ethos that recognizes exploitation and discrimination, past, present and future.⁴

Gómez-Quiñones’ demonstrates the necessary continual revision of theorizing when he describes how Indigenous identity informs the purpose of Indigenism: “Indigenism involves the understanding and convergence of history and the present and gaining from this understanding and motivation to change the present.”⁵ Here, Gómez-Quiñones notes historic consciousness of Indigeneity that forms part of an ethos that moves people towards decolonial intentions. In this way, Chicana/o Indigeneity is reconstitution of identity by Chicanas and Chicanos towards reversing the effects of colonialism on their communities, rationales, and philosophical

³ Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, “Cuarta Declaración de la Selva Lacandona,” 1996.

⁴ Juan Gomez-Quinones, *Indigenous Quotient/Stalking Words: American Indian Heritage as Future* (San Antonio, Tex: Aztlan Libre Press, 2011) 68-69.

⁵ Ibid, 69.

perspectives, as well as standing in solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas in an ethics of decolonization.

Along with decolonial ethics, there is another element to Indigeneity, which along with individuals claiming Native decent, includes Indigenous communities claiming individuals. Ideally, Indigenous Peoples should have the agency to determine group membership, however given the legacy of colonialism, the standards of membership in Indigenous are tricky to say the least.⁶ As Indigenous Studies scholar Audra Simpson states, “If you require more explanation, or cannot explain yourself, or be explained (or claimed) by others, then there is a problem.”⁷ She continues outlining the how colonialism affects agency to define membership in the present as follows:

“Membership talk” conditions such people as problems—unknowable, illegitimate—and also determines the conditions of belonging, the legitimacy of legal personhood outside of official or state law. Here the axis is in memory, in conversation, in sociality; by talking to other people you understand who someone is, how she is connected, and thus she is socially and affectively legitimized with or without official recognition. This knowledge archive, however, is structured through prior languages and experiences of exclusion and inclusion that are tethered, sometimes with venom, to historical processes: from the movement of Mohawk people in the seventeenth century from what is now New York State into their northern hunting territory, what is now southwestern Quebec (Canada).⁸

Here, Simpson demonstrates the complexity of defining an Indigenous identity in the context of colonialism, in this case the Mohawk removal from New York State. Indigenous Peoples have had to balance the agency to determine who is a member of Indigenous communities while at the same time battling appropriation tactics used by settler colonists seeking ownership of Indigenous Peoples’ land. Given this complex colonial context, Chicana/o activists reconstituted

⁶ For the examples of the gendered and ethnic power dynamics in cultural identification and agency within the context of colonialism, refer to the legacy of the 1704 captivity of Eunice Williams in Audra Simpson, “Captivating Eunice: Membership, Colonialism, and Gendered Citizenships of Grief,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 105–129.

⁷ Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2014) 9.

⁸ Ibid.

Chicana/o identity towards the Indigenous in conversation with Indigenous activists in transnational social movements. As the rest of this dissertation describes in more detail, many Chicana/o activists established recognition of Chicana/o identity as Indigenous in dialogue with Indigenous Peoples through out the Americas, rather than appropriating other identities. Indigenous Chicana/o activists established nuanced definitions of Indigeneity unique to Chicanas and Chicanos, while taking into account diverse historic circumstances of colonialism that define hemispheric Indigeneity in the Americas. In this broader community, Chicanas and Chicanos have both defined themselves as Indigenous, as well as been claimed by other Indigenous groups as Indigenous to the Americas.

The construction of decolonial Indigeneity, that is both a self-determined act and within the collective dialogue of Indigenous Peoples, stems from historic geopolitical struggles between former colonies and colonizers since the emergence of the Western nation-state in the late eighteenth-century.⁹ During the twentieth-century, Chicana/o activists utilized cultural ideologies to strengthen understanding and political advocacy of human and civil rights in the U.S.¹⁰ As a result, Chicana/o activists partook in post-colonial global challenges to historic socioeconomic inequalities in a modern era that was still defined by Western political dominance

⁹ For modern Latin American power dynamics molded by the historic context of colonialism, refer to Batalla, *Mexico Profundo*. For the discussion on the “coloniality of power,” refer to Mignolo, *Local Histories/global Designs*. For what some western academics consider foundational work on nationalist identity construction along western lines, refer to Benedict R. O’G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). For critiques of Eurocentric questions regarding nationalism’s emancipatory twentieth-century uses among peoples of the “third world,” refer to Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). For Pan-African “imagined communities” among African Americans excluded from “first world” nationalist identities, refer to Sidney J. Lemelle and Robin D.G. Kelley, *Imagining Home: Class, Culture, and Nationalism in the African Diaspora* (Verso, 1994).

¹⁰ For twentieth-century Chicana/o ideological and activist challenges to U.S. hegemony, refer Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990); Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez, *Making Aztlán: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* (UNM Press, 2014); Ignacio M. García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997); Armando Navarro, *Mexican American Youth Organization: avant-garde of the Chicano Movement in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995).

as a reformulation of colonialism.¹¹ Chicana/o construction of identity and culture relates to the hegemony of national politics and identity in the United States and México in ways that are never simplistic, even if at times romantically optimistic. They many times highlight the complexities of decolonial endeavors caught in a cycle of hegemony and counter-hegemony that are bound in western modes of political purpose both self serving and philosophical.

The hegemonic and counter hegemonic contexts of Chicana/o historical experiences have been the subjects of various historiographies. The most revealing are those that question the grounding of the historiography itself in colonial modes. As Chicana Studies scholar Emma Pérez establishes in her critical interpretation of Chicana/o historiography, “Chicana/o historiography has been circumscribed by the traditional imagination. This means that even the most radical Chicana/o historiographies are influenced by the very colonial imaginary against which they rebel.”¹² Pérez goes on to criticize what she calls the four tropes of Chicana/o history that portray Chicanos as intellectual heroes, exploited/colonized workers, as social beings, and the fourth trope of Chicana history relegated Chicanas into one or more of the previous tropes. The tropes, according to Pérez, center on four periods: the Spanish Conquest; the US-Mexico War; the Mexican Revolution; and the Chicana/o Movement.¹³ Pérez’s critiques, however, do not lay in contradicting these modes of historical interpretation, but instead are focused on the intellectual parameters of colonial discourse that bind pro and con argumentation.

In the back and forth of pro and con argumentation, Pérez reveals potential for excavating a history in the intersections of colonial and anti-colonial discourses of appropriation, with

¹¹ For historicity, culture, and political perspective, refer to Arif Dirlik, “The Past as Legacy and Project: Postcolonial Criticism in the Perspective of Indigenous Historicism,” *Contemporary Native American Political Issues* (London: Altamira Press, 1999). For Chicana/o theoretical responses to Western dominance, refer to the feminist definition of differential consciousness provided by Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

¹² Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1999) 5.

¹³ *Ibid*, 8.

contentions in discourse on heteronormativity and queerness.¹⁴ Here, Pérez juxtaposes the works of Rodolfo Acuña, where he utilizes a counter nationalism to U.S. nationalism and Gloria Anzaldúa, who counters the nationalism in Acuña's early work by introducing a more inclusive and transborder approach. According to Pérez, Anzaldúa's Borderlands concept is, "...the interstices where the decolonial imaginary glides to introduce the possibility of a postcolonial, postnational consciousness."¹⁵ In retrospect today there are more influences on Indigenous Chicana/o activists' historical consciousness than Chicana/o historians could identify at an earlier time. Nevertheless, Pérez's analysis of the coloniality draws the parameters around arenas of contention and reveals the complex matrices of influence on Chicana/o Indigeneity rooted in centuries of colonialism.

In challenging the colonialism of western societies, several anti-hegemonic writers challenge the complex interconnected web of material colonial power, and its subjective rationales imposed and self-imposed. This self-assigned task requires critical self-reflections of positionality in the colonial web. Sometimes these thinkers are more successful with their argumentations, other times they are less successful. Nevertheless, I clearly see the rising potential for "post-colonial" consciousnesses in the historical proclamations of Chicana/o Indigeneity. Within this trend of thought, there is a reflective commitment to challenging the imposed and self-imposed power of hegemony in ways that illuminate possibilities for upholding self-determined historical assessments of community. In this way, Indigenous Chicana/o activists, in time, uphold the inherent right of cultural survival and creation without oppressive distinctions. My focus on Chicana/o Indigeneity thus unavoidably provides a unique theoretical perspective on challenges to hegemony by examining Chicana/o historic and cultural

¹⁴ Ibid, 25-26. Pérez draws her analogy of excavation from the postmodern perspectives of the eminent western philosopher of recent times Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Vintage, 1982).

¹⁵ Ibid, 26.

consciousness in relation to Chicana/o attempts to establish Chicana/o historicity. Ultimately, the efforts of Chicana/o activists to assert the rights of Chicanas and Chicanos to claim Indigeneity are tied to diverse localized Indigeneity claims in globalized contexts, with different influences and contexts that have the same goal of decolonization. Chicana/o activists' challenges to colonialism were historically rooted and based in historic Indigenous peoples resistance.

Revealing The Colonial Logic of Power

The decolonial potential of Chicana/o Indigeneity is related to earlier currents and expressions of both counter hegemony and hegemony within the anti-colonial context of the twentieth-century. Beginning with the end of World War II and the accelerated demise of British and French colonial order in Africa and Asia, global political and economic relations among nations-states began to realign to the power and influence of the United States and its Cold War competition with the U.S.S.R. The origins of post-colonial hegemony are rooted within the U.S.'s international hegemony, whose early manifestation was the Monroe Doctrine of the nineteenth-century. As Frantz Fanon elaborated in 1958, the false truths of colonial power far out lasted the formal political relationships of colonialism. The end of colonialism did not stop the capitalist desire for resources and labor. In fact, as Fanon describes, British, French, and U.S. capitalist competition for resources maintained private property rights for former colonizing occupants, which increased the ferocity of conflict of resources, especially in areas of the oil rich Middle East and resource rich Africa. Further more, former colonies, now semi-nation-states, in Latin America, Africa, and Asia were viewed as the stereotypically homogenized "third-world" in which the battle over control and exploitation of these regions' resources and labor played out during the Cold War vis-à-vis proxy war. Finally, to continue to entrench the hegemony of the

west, the superiority of modernity defined by western civilization was emulated, many times by force, by governments of formerly colonized nation-states as the required model for economic national development. All in all, Fanon explicitly revealed to us in the early years of anti-colonial struggles that Eurocentric colonial logics continued to rationalize the exploitative relationships between the west and the former colonies after the end of political colonialism. As such, the dehumanization of Indigenous Peoples and the mining of resources for economic development of western interests continued its five-century course in the Americas. Under the guise of expanding modernity, colonial rationales justifying the exploitation of colonized peoples permeate the logic of twentieth-century global capitalism.¹⁶ The revelation of a colonial logic in the power of global capitalism is a central concern in present-day decolonial endeavors, including those of Indigenous Chicana/o activists.

Latin American theorists have been most apt critics of the consequences of colonialism and sincere aspirants for counter hegemonic redemption.¹⁷ Colonial logics of power that permeate rationales for economic domination and development in the modern capitalist age are rooted in political rule of the Americas since the pillaging and decimation of Indigenous societies during the colonial era. This logic stems from fifteenth and sixteenth century invented myths of Americas by Europeans that portrayed Native Americans as inferior, whether as savages or as children, centered Europe and Europeans in a narrative of global history, and rationalized the violent domination of Indigenous Peoples.¹⁸ The modern danger of colonial logic is that not only

¹⁶ Frantz Fanon, "First Truths on the Colonial Problem," in *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* (New York: Grove Press, 1964). Originally published in *El Moudjahid*, No. 27, July 22, 1958.

¹⁷ For consequences of colonialism on modernity in the Americas, refer to the decades of Anibal Quijano's work in: Anibal Quijano, *Imperialismo y "marginalidad" en América Latina* (Mosca Azul Editores, 1977); "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad," in *Perú indígena*, 13, no. 29 (1992); and "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," in *Nepantla: Views from the South* 1, no. 3 (2000): 533-580. For an early influential critic of colonialism in Latin America, refer to José Carlos Mariátegui, *Siete Ensayos De Interpretación De La Realidad Peruana* (Lima: Biblioteca "Amauta," 1928).

¹⁸ For more on the invention of the Americas as a European colonial logic, refer to Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum Intl Pub Group, 1995).

has it remained a part of the modern world, but it also has proven to be the guiding light of political power for modern nation-states. As Aníbal Quijano explains, colonialism and modernity are two sides of the same coin. His examination of the “coloniality of power” reveals a colonial logic within the policy decisions of global institutions of power. This logic guides elites’ perceptions of “non-westerners” or Indigenous Peoples as not possessing the ability or knowledge to know what is best for local resources, labor organization, and many other forms of real or potential Indigenous social organization. Quijano goes on to contend that even though modes of exploitation and domination have changed and developed depending on local and historic contexts, colonialism remains the general framework for modern domination among the world’s super powers in the present day.¹⁹ What Quijano implies here is an ominous irony because coloniality is more dangerous now, since it is engrained in a global order of capitalism, because it can have more far reaching consequences in the present day than those of the early colonial period.

The powerful consequences of colonial logics have been amplified in the modern and post-modern eras by a continuously changing global capitalism. The mining of mineral resources and exploitation of African and Indigenous labor that began in the sixteenth-century has expanded over the centuries to include a plethora of natural resources, exploitation of various migrant labor forces, and more recently the extraction and commodification of Indigenous knowledge. In his argument for the persistence of colonial logics that support empire in the post-colonial world, philosopher Santiago Castro-Gómez reveals how changing definitions of capital are intensifying the effects of colonial logics, not erasing them.²⁰ As Castro-Gómez states:

¹⁹ Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, edited by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (New York: Routledge, 2010): 24.

²⁰ Sergio Castro-Gómez, “The Missing Chapter of Empire: Postmodern reorganization of coloniality and post-Fordist capitalism,” in Mignolo and Escobar, *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, 291. This article is written as a rebuttal of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s book *Empire*, where these authors argue that modern/colonial hierarchies have disappeared. Castro-Gómez refutes this by contending that the West’s episteme of

...capital is undergoing a significant change in its form and is gradually acquiring a postmodern face...This means that economic development is no longer measured by the *material* levels of industrialization, but in terms of capacity of a society to generate *human capital*...sustainable development places the generation of ‘human capital’ at the center of its concerns, that is to say the promotion of knowledge, aptitudes and experiences that convert a social actor into an economically productive subject. In this way, *the possibility of converting human knowledge into a productive force*, replacing physical work and machines, becomes the key ingredient of sustainable development.²¹

Although Castro-Gómez may be underestimating the continued value of material resources, he does reveal a frightening new type of mining, where the resource is human knowledge. At the very least, Castro-Gómez should problematizes information and knowledge willingly given away by individuals through social media for others to make it a commodity. But these first-world concerns may pale in comparison to, as Castro-Gómez demonstrates, the mining of knowledge and cognitive resources by multinational corporations of formerly “third-world” countries. With the gained importance of knowledge and information in the global economy, Castro-Gómez reveals how the bio-diversity of the South is becoming a commodity of the North. Agricultural and pharmaceutical researchers are using “mined knowledge” through research in both the social and physical sciences to alter genetic resources, and patent Indigenous Knowledges that helped them understand local environments.²² Researchers should be especially concerned with the ethical implications of utilizing social science methods to gather knowledge from Indigenous Peoples that is later commodified as intellectual property. This process is supported by international bodies like the United Nations’ World Intellectual Property Organization that in 2001 lumped “traditional knowledge and folklore” with intellectual property and genetic resources.²³ All in all, what Castro-Gómez reveals is that Western epistemes still rule the rationality of powerful people in charge of the world’s politics and economy. Indigenous

“scientific rationality” remains the only valid system of knowledge in circles of powerful people, and it is the organization of the capitalist economy is what has changed instead, in large part due to the commodification of human knowledge in an information age.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid, 292-294.

²³ Ibid, 294.

epistemes are only valued as objects of study, within a scientific method, as a means to diversify capitalism and uphold the hegemony of western domination.

The contribution of decolonial critiques has been the revelation that power in modern societies is derived from colonial logics held by the west, and the westernized, that define former colonies as places to mine for capital. The persistence of these logics is due to the continued evolution of what can be deemed capital, which has allowed for mining and (re)mining of the former colonies over the last five centuries. Capital has held many different meanings over different historical contexts over these centuries, thus capitalism and colonial logics have ascribed meaning and value to geo-political location and the human body. Chicana/o Indigeneity is a project that centralizes the goal of cultural autonomy defined by place, which is defined by historical context and historic consciousness. Thus, Chicana/o Indigeneity seeks to challenge colonial logics that define the values of geo-political locations and ascribe meaning to human bodies, Instead, Indigenous Chicana/o activists seek to validate human consciousness, experience, and knowledge as a source for define place as a source for community use rather than capital extraction.

If Chicana/o Indigeneity is a project that seeks the abolishment of colonial logics in political rule, then it is important to outline how those logics have had detrimental effects on the politics of place and body that govern the political and social history of Chicanas and Chicanos in the Southwest. As Walter Mignolo outlines, along with the globalization of the economy, rooted in colonialism, came the imposition of “...the coloniality of knowledge controlled and managed by the theo-, ego and organo-logical principles of knowledge and its consequences.”²⁴ The imposition of the coloniality of knowledge thus connects Chicana/o social struggles for localized social and cultural autonomy to the decolonial goal of de-universalizing the West’s

²⁴ Walter D. Mignolo, “Delinking: The rhetoric of modernity, the logic of coloniality and the grammar of de-coloniality,” in Mignolo and Escobar, *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, 317.

colonial logics. Mignolo goes on to contend that a challenge to these colonial logical principles requires an analysis of the geo- and body politics of knowledge that provides the foundation for the revelation of totalitarian inclinations of colonial logics.²⁵ In regards to geo-political space, the politics of location have long governed the socioeconomic policy of the Americas. From the onset of colonization and the European mythology about the Americas, assumptions about the inferiority of Indigenous Peoples have influenced colonial rationales to impose western ownership of the Americas. The Papal Bulls of the fifteenth highlight the link between the rationales of the superiority of western civilization and the justifications for the expansion of western rule in Africa and the Americas, and the enslavement of non-western peoples in those locales.²⁶ Together, these Papal Bulls are known as the Doctrine of Discovery, which justified the usurpation of land, resources, and labor in the Americas and Africa through the colonial era.²⁷

In the nineteenth-century, independent American nations continued to uphold their right to land based on this Doctrine of Discovery. Nowhere is this more evident than in the United States, which is demonstrated by the precedent established by the Supreme Court's decision on *Johnson v. M'Intosh*, March 10, 1823. This case regarded a land ownership dispute between Johnson, who had purchased Illinois land from Piankeshaw Indians, and M'Intosh who had acquired the land via U.S. grant. The court ruled in favor of M'Intosh, noting that:

...[there is] a uniform understanding and practice of European nations, and the settled law, as laid down by the tribunals of civilized states, denied the right of the Indians to be considered as independent communities, having a permanent property in the soil, capable of alienation to private individuals. They remain in a state of nature, and have never been

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Please refer to the papal bulls Pope Nicholas V, *Dum Diversas*, June 18, 1452; Pope Nicholas V, *Romanus Pontifex*, January 5, 1455; and Pope Alexander VI, *Inter Caetera*, 1493.

²⁷ For a comparison of British, Spanish, and Portuguese colonial applications of the Doctrine of Discovery in the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand, refer to Robert J. Miller, "The International Law of Colonialism: A Comparative Analysis," Symposium: The Future of International Law in Indigenous Affairs: *The Doctrine of Discovery, the United Nations, and the Organization of American States*. *Lewis & Clark Law Review* 15, no. 4 (2011): 847-922.

admitted into the general society of nations...All the treaties and negotiations between civilized powers of Europe and of this continent...have uniformly disregarded their supposed right to the territory included within the jurisdictional limits of those powers...Not only has the practice of all civilized nations been in conformity with this doctrine, but the whole theory of their titles to lands in America, rests upon the hypothesis, that the Indians had no right of soil as sovereign, independent states. Discovery is the foundation of title, in European nations, and this overlooks the proprietary rights in the natives.²⁸

The court went on to affirm that, “The title of the crown (as representing the nation) passed to the colonists by charters, which were absolute grants of soil; and it was a first principle in colonial law, that all titles must be derived from the crown.”²⁹ This case demonstrates continued colonial rationales of Indigenous inferiority, within legal precedent, that justified the denial of Indigenous populations’ right to land ownership and sovereignty. Also significant is the matter of fact tone taken by the Supreme Court and Chief Justice John Marshall that buried these rationales under implicit understandings of legal precedent inherited from colonial law. The precedent established by this decision implicitly inclined the Supreme Court to favor the legal rights of colonial heirs over Indigenous Populations, which as late as 2005, continued to deny native population’s land rights.³⁰

Nineteenth and twentieth-century modernization of the U.S. economy went hand in hand with U.S. foreign policy that rationalized the control of the Americas as part of its sovereign right. These neo-colonial intentions are established by the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, expanded by the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904, and reinterpreted to fit Cold War rhetoric by the Truman doctrine of 1948. In the modern and post-modern eras, world economic and political leaders ironically continue to employ colonial logics to, in their eyes, remedy the legacy of colonial economics. Even with the end of colonial rule in the Americas, implicit understandings of

²⁸ United States Supreme Court, “Johnson and Graham’s Lessee v. William M’Intosh, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 543 (1823).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Refer to *City of Sherill v. Oneida Indian Nation of New York*, 544 U.S. 197 (2005) where the Supreme Court referenced the Doctrine of Discovery to rule that the Oneida Nation did not possess sovereignty over land it repurchased from the City of Sherill, and thus owed the city property taxes.

colonial logics regarding land ownership and rule demonstrated by the Supreme Court with *Johnson v. M'Intosh* also extended to U.S. foreign policy. The implicit understanding that the U.S. has inherited the colonial right of control over the Americas, and more recently the world, under reinterpreted guises to fit the context of different historical times demonstrates a continued logic that denies the self-determination of formerly colonized areas and peoples.

To reveal the colonial logic of space in the current era of globalization, here I seek to make explicit what is implicit at what at times are contradictions or corollary propositions of U.S. policy makers and United Nations declarations of good intentions: former colonies possess misused or untapped resources and labor; plus they have underdeveloped economies because of their colonial history; which equals the rationale for imposing political and economic policy to bind these countries economic future with those of the west. This is most evident in the attempt to establish a New International Economic Order headed by the United States, which was first announced by President Ronald Reagan at the Summit Meeting on International Cooperation and Development in 1981.³¹ A major fruition of this policy was the integration of North American economies with the adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 by the U.S., Canada, and México. With NAFTA, the Clinton Administration announced the goal to “channel a changing international economy to *our* benefit.”³² The Clinton Administration continued to contend that NAFTA primarily affected México by forcing this nation to eliminate it's, according to the Clinton Administration, antiquated trade tariffs, integrate its economy (even further) with the United States, which would lead to a market for U.S. produced goods.³³

Underlying these contentions is the implied logic that the Clinton Administration knew what was

³¹ For more on the significance of Reagan's announcement, refer to Greg Grandin, *Empire Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 185-190.

³² United States. and Bill Clinton, *The NAFTA: Expanding U.S. Exports, Jobs, and Growth: Clinton Administration Statement on the North American Free Trade Agreement*. (Washington, DC: President of the U.S.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., 1993), 3, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002708875>.

³³ *Ibid*, 3-5.

best for the continental economy and that the Mexican government had to modify its economic policy to fulfill these goals of globalized capitalism. Much like the colonial officials of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the Clinton Administration dictated the reorganization of the Mexican economy, based on a perception that its policies were inferior, (i.e. Mexican nationalism was retrograde and U.S. supramacism was avant garde). Complete with the help of its accommodating *caciques*, in this case President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and the authoritarian ruling *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, the Clinton Administration continued the colonial legacy of denying the Mexican population self-determination of their economic resources under the newer goals of upholding globalized capitalism.

The colonial logics implicit in the politics of location also govern the politics that ascribe values, both social and economic, to genders, race, and sexual orientation. Although it may be argued that these politics exist in all civilizations, the current geopolitical order operates under the rules of western domination, informed by Judeo-Christian beliefs that date back to the Roman Empire, which were exported to the world through early forms of colonialism. Judeo-Christian color-coded postulates of black and white informed the colonial hierarchical organization of racism where whiteness was supreme, and all others were inferior.³⁴ The normalization of heterosexual relationships based on paternalism was also a central institution of the colonial order. In this way, restricting sexuality based on desire and pleasure and homosexual relationships became a means of establishing hegemonic hierarchies originating in Europe and exported to the rest of the world through colonialism.³⁵ Finally, gender norms,

³⁴ For more on racism and Christianity in the early colonial era, refer to Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Va., by the University of North Carolina Press, 1968).

³⁵ For the hegemony implicit in European social norms on sexuality, refer to Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (Allen Lane, 1979).

although not exclusive to western society, have been instituted in the laws and policy of western nations to uphold patriarchy.³⁶

Here, I again make explicit the implied values beyond material aspects that contribute to continued colonial logics of the body: Those that look like the formerly colonized because of race, or those that deviate from social norms on sexuality because of homosexual orientation, or those that are defined by social norms based on gender; plus the perceived deficiencies of these identifiers; equals the rationale for denying these populations self-determination that amounts to blaming inequalities on the victims of racism, anti-homosexual prejudice, and sexism instead of taking into account the hierarchical power structures created by colonial histories. Revealing ascription of values based on race, gender, and sexual orientation in the Americas as a whole, and in the U.S. Southwest in particular, provides a means of abolishing injustice and taking steps toward decolonization. Making these ascriptions explicit highlights the ways in which the bodies of those who deviate from the norm are classified in Western society for proletarianization, elimination through genocide, or deemed second-class citizens vis-à-vis gender and racial binaries.

Together, the colonial logics about land and people open up the concurrent processes of land dispossession and exploitation of peoples across the globe that defines the expansion of global capitalism. In his essay, Glen Coulthard revises Karl Marx's arguments about the primitive accumulation of capital to emphasize the dispossession of Indigenous People's land that went hand in hand with the proletarianization of European workforces. He contends that since Indigenous Peoples experience with capitalism occurred through violent colonial land dispossession, their anti-capitalist stances are primarily exhibit challenges to land dispossession

³⁶ For the relationships between constructed gender norms and hegemonic power, as well as for an argument for the relevance of gender analysis in all History, refer to Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (Columbia University Press, 1999).

more so than they are in the unification of a working class because land is the basis of their economic survival.³⁷ Coulthard therefore reveals, through case studies of the Denendeh in Northwestern Canada, the concurrent processes of proletarianization and dispossession that fuel the expansion of capitalism across the globe whose origins stem from colonial dispossession.

Further aspects of contesting colonial legacies appear in the form of anti-racism exhibited in many civil rights claims in the United States. However, as Robert Nichols and Andrea Smith note, the struggles of anti-racism in the United States are employed to obscure the broader goal of challenging colonialism and capitalist modernity. Instead, they argue that anti-racism becomes the allowable parameters of debate with both sides supporting settler colonial regimes.³⁸ The struggles of either racial inequality, exploitation of labor, and land dispossession thus must be united in decolonial alternatives to Western hegemony. These must occur in both political organizing and through critical reflection of historic consciousness to shift our paradigms towards challenging colonial/modernity mega trends that support global capitalism.

The legacies of multifaceted colonial racism and land dispossession, anti homosexual prejudice, and sexism implicit in the colonial logics of the body, along with the colonial logics that persist in geopolitical politics of space must be revealed and abolished in any decolonial project. In relation to the project of Chicana/o Indigeneity, the politics of space and body intersect in ways specific to the Southwestern United States, which now influence the entire country. Revelation of the intersection of politics of the body and politics of space are a

³⁷ Glen Coulthard, "From Wards of the States to Subjects of Recognition? Marx, Indigenous Peoples, and the Politics of Dispossession in Denendeh," in Audra Simpson, *Theorizing Native Studies* (Duke University Press Books, 2014) 62. For an analysis of Marxism and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America, refer to Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "Indigenous Peoples and the Left in Latin America," *Monthly Review* 59, issue 03 (July-August 2007): <http://monthlyreview.org/2007/07/01/indigenous-peoples-and-the-left-in-latin-america/>.

³⁸ Refer to Robert Nichols, "Contract and Usurpation: Enfranchisement and Racial Governance in Settler-Colonial Contexts," in *Ibid.* For an analysis of the interconnections between anti-Black racism and Indigenous dispossession, refer to Andrea Smith, "The Colonialism That Is Settled and the Colonialism That Never Happened," *Decolonization*, accessed February 11, 2015, <https://decolonization.wordpress.com/2014/06/20/the-colonialism-that-is-settled-and-the-colonialism-that-never-happened/>.

pertinent issue in decolonial scholarship within Chicana/o Studies.³⁹ The scholars of this Chicana/o Studies sub-field have reached various conclusions regarding the importance of revealing colonial logics as part of a decolonial project. For the most part though these scholars have not contended what I contend here that the unifying factor tying together Chicana/o Studies scholarship, along with Chicana/o activists agendas that seek self-determined control over the trajectory of their communities, is an epistemological pathway for a “pluri-versal world as a universal project.”⁴⁰

The Decolonial Challenges and Nuances of Chicana/o Indigeneity

Conceptually, Chicana/o Indigeneity has inspired attempts to abolish colonial logic and move towards more pluriversal ways of thinking. The epistemological project of Chicana/o Indigeneity has its roots in broader twentieth-century trends in the movements for self-determination, which sought a break with the political dominance of western epistemology in the social and political institutions that governed the formerly colonized. Decolonial projects possess the objective of rejecting the supremacy of western thought.⁴¹ Overcoming colonialism thus means recovering consciousness of heritage and culture that provides the pathway to alternative ways of knowing. In the post WWII era, the idea of recovery has been posed in many ways, from the “national question” addressed by African anti-colonial movements and intellectuals like Frantz Fanon to the calls for Indigenous Peoples’ sovereignty and self-determination across the Americas. Recovery has also been posited among Chicana feminist like Gloria Anzaldúa who reveal ways of knowing oppression from the perspectives of the

³⁹ For a concise statement on intersectionality, refer to the foundational scholarship Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = La Frontera*, 4th ed., 25th anniversary (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012), 42-45. For a more elaborate discussion on the value of understanding intersectionality in the context of decolonial thought, refer to Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas Into History* (Indiana University Press, 1999).

⁴⁰ Mignolo, “Delinking,” 317.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 304-307.

marginalized, specifically the perspective from the Borderlands filled with mestiza/o knowledges informed by Indigenous heritage.⁴²

In the context of U.S. Chicana/o social movements, beginning with the Chicana/o Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, for many Chicanas and Chicanos the project of recovery as an alternative historic consciousness took the form of reinvigoration of Indigenous heritage. During the Chicana/o Movement, Indigenous cultural revival was articulated within the framework of a proto-nationalism parallel to the civil rights advocacies, and the many influences from global anti-colonial movements of the middle twentieth-century.⁴³ Since then, claims of Chicana/o Indigeneity have been critiqued for its ties, both imagined and unimagined, to the problematic of nationalism as it pertains to the silencing of dissent, assignment of privilege, and attempts at hegemony, both truthful and exaggerated. More importantly, I critically examine Chicana/o Indigeneity and its epistemological influences for the purpose of differentiating the decolonial potential of Chicana/o Indigenous cultural vitality from the problematic of nationalism. Indeed, the project of Chicana/o Indigeneity does possess a decolonial potential, and with the critical examination of contradictory influences, has even more potential for providing examples of pluriversal thinking.⁴⁴

The problematized ties between Chicana/o Indigeneity and nationalism stem from the origins of Chicana/o Indigeneity within the *Chicanismo*, which united civil rights activism to a Chicana/o cultural ethos. *Chicanismo* followed global mid-twentieth-century anti-colonial nationalist trends that sought ideological avenues towards conceptualizing liberation. However, these anti-colonial ideological trends tended to over simplify colonial relations between the west

⁴² Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*.

⁴³ For the origins of Chicano Nationalist ideas, refer to the *Plan de Aztlán*.

⁴⁴ I will further demonstrate how Chicana/o artists, activists, and teachers have gone far beyond the problematics of Mexican and Chicano nationalisms through detailed analysis of groups and organizations in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

and the rest, as well as romanticized the resistances of anti-colonial movements. As subaltern studies scholar Partha Chatterjee highlights:

Resentment and impatience, the depravity of the rich and the virtue of the poor, the guilt of Europe and the innocence of Asia and Africa, salvation through violence...those are the elements of nationalist thought. Each of them is an export from Europe, like the printing press, the radio, and television. Nationalist opposition to European rule is driven by a faith in a theory. Yet the theory itself, and indeed the very attitude of faith in a theory, are the gifts of Europe to the rest of the world. Nationalism sets out to assert its freedom from European domination. But in the very conception of its project, it remains a prisoner of the prevalent European intellectual fashions.⁴⁵

The inherent binding of anti-colonial nationalism with the intellectual processes of classification within western civilization highlight the complexity of decolonial endeavors that propose a delinking from western hierarchies. As a result of historic consequence, all peoples of this planet have been affected by the historical trends of colonialism and modernity vis-à-vis capitalism. Thus, it is not enough to position a recovery of Indigenous heritage in opposition to the oppression of westernized nation-states and globalized economies. Decolonial endeavors are postulated to include critical self-reflections that lead to ways of conceptualizing attempts at liberation free from the parameters of “European intellectual fashions.” I contend that in the time since the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o activists have demonstrated the potential for Indigenous revitalization vis-à-vis Chicana/o Indigeneity as a decolonial endeavor that is inclusive of critical self-reflection, even if at times Chicana/o Indigenist intellectuals are overly optimistic about the progress of social change.

Chicana/o cultural revitalizations stem from a consciousness of Indigeneity that was part of a larger Chicana/o Movement trend. During the movement, participants exhibited a cultural pride as a means of inspiring political activism and conceiving of a historicized Chicana/o resistance to the domination of western society enacted by the political control of nation-states.

⁴⁵ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse* (Tokyo: United Nations University, 1986) 9-10.

Projects of revitalization as a means of envisioning liberation, revolution, or other political endeavors have met criticism from cultural scholars that question whether or not these projects are “invented” or “imagined” to better fit aspirations for hegemonic political power.⁴⁶ Many Indigenous Peoples make important distinctions in their self-determination stances. In his assessment of Indigenous nationalisms, Gerald Taiaiake Alfred notes the important distinction in Indigenous nationalisms where the political aspiration is for autonomy to arrange self-governing structures and cultural sovereignty in Indigenous communities.⁴⁷ He further distinguishes the difference between Indigenous sovereignty movements and nationalist independence movements:

Community sovereignty and state-based nationalist movements have essentially different natures. Whereas the state-based form undermines the structural integrity of the state within a specified territory in the attempt to replicate state institutions for a more limited constituency, the community sovereignty form seeks only to limit the extent of the state’s jurisdictional authority in the attempt to promote distinctiveness of a limited constituency.⁴⁸

Alfred further elaborates that Indigenous sovereignty movements, for the most part, accept the present existence of nation-states and seek to preserve the ethnic integrity of their communities and a coexistence of community control and relations with national governments.⁴⁹ This distinction is similar to Chicana/o communities since the Chicana/o Movement who in part sought ethnic autonomy, but most efforts concentrated on control and influence of local government structures and equal democratic participation at the state and national level.⁵⁰ So, even during the movement, Chicana/o rhetoric had a proto-

⁴⁶ For critiques of “invented traditions” and “imagined communities” refer to the works of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, Reissue edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and Benedict R. O’G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁴⁷ Gerald Robert Alfred, *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Toronto; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) 14.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 15.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Refer to Barrera, *Beyond Aztlan*; Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez, *Making Aztlán*.

nationalist stance, was counter-hegemonic and inclusive of a right to self-determine cultural identity, and ultimately sought democratization of governing institutions. Since the Chicana/o Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, Chicana/o and Indigenous activists have moved beyond democratic interpretations of civil rights, and followed a trajectory of struggling for globalized human rights protections, inclusive of cultural rights.

The affirmation of cultural pride as part of political demands affirmed by the Chicana/o Movement also called into question whether or not cultural attributes were malleable or whether movement cultural politics and arts ascribed to essentialist understandings of cultural identity. In their effort to interpret the significance for their Indigenous heritage as a resistance to oppression inherent in colonialism and capitalism, Chicana/o intellectuals were not exempt from historicist essentialisms. Nevertheless, Chicana/o intellectuals exhibited decolonial potential more so than exclusionary tactics. Literary and arts critic Sheila Marie Contreras provides perhaps the first extensive examination of Chicana/o intellectual frameworks based on her interpretation of emphasizing her notions of aesthetic Indigenism. She contends that Chicana/o Indigenous cultural recognition empowered an oppressed minority in the U.S. However, she also claims that Chicana/o Indigenisms followed the same romanticized mythological intellectual trends exhibited by Mexican nationalist, as well as European and Euro American, intellectuals, and thus, is subject to the same criticisms.⁵¹ There is of course false equivalism here and an unexplained relativism. Contreras depicts a paradox in Chicana/o Indigenist intellectual trends that empowers Chicanas and Chicanos, provides a discourse to challenge Western oppression and hegemony, but she further charges these trends continue to ignore the plight of contemporary Indigenous Peoples.⁵² She does not refer to activism and the

⁵¹ Sheila Marie Contreras, *Blood Lines: Myth, Indigenism, and Chicana/o Literature* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008) 40.

⁵² *Ibid*, 165.

claim is counter-factual and essentialized because some of Indigenous Chicana/o activism trends are about contemporary Indigenous rights, as are shown in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

Along with critiques of essentialism, some academics charge that Chicana/o Indigeneity claims romanticize Chicana/o history as a means to occlude a history of violence between Chicana/o and Native American in the southwestern U.S. In her critique of Chicana/o romanticized Indigenism, Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernández both makes important points and also states her negations while overlooking how in the twentieth-century Indigenous and Mexican civil rights concerns joined. She contends that this “romanticism” celebrates a mythical colonial hybridity that hides the violence that historically influenced Spanish, Mexican, Native American, and Chicana/o relations in the Southwest from the colonial era to the early twentieth-century.⁵³ Similar but more revealing of her implications, Guidotti-Hernández also argues that although Chicano Nationalist and Chicana Feminist scholarship has posited Mexican racial and gender identity as a refuge from the violence of white supremacy in the U.S., it has also served as a collusion with western nationalist attempts to erase the history of colonial violence towards Indigenous Peoples.⁵⁴ As a result, Guidotti-Hernández concludes, “Chicano cultural studies too often systematically forgets the history of violence embedded in its uncritical narratives of so-called resistance based on homophobic, essentialist indigenous neonationalisms in an Anglo/Mexican binary.”⁵⁵ Here, Guidotti-Hernández’s assessment of Chicana/o Indigeneity as a “neonationalism” is over generalized. Late twentieth century Indigenous Chicana/o activists efforts do not to occlude the human rights and sovereignty demands of Native Americans and other Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. Instead, Indigenous Chicana/o activists support

⁵³ Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernández, *Unspeakable Violence: Remapping U.S. and Mexican National Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2011) 4.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 8.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 19-20.

Indigenous human rights and sovereignty, which has occurred through collaboration within global Indigenous Peoples rights campaigns, as will be described later. Although these movements are not universally free of the tropes of essentialism and nationalism, the discussions of Indigeneity, cultural heritage, and democracy within these movements have provided the forums for pushing to challenge these unclear ideas.

Even though early rhetorical proclamations of Chicana/o cultural pride in Indigenous ancestry may have essentialized Indigenous history, they occurred in the context of Chicana/o Movement activist circles that sought to underscore the specific positionality of Chicana/o communities. The Chicana/o positionality that activists highlighted demonstrated the unequal relation to U.S. power structures in an attempt to challenge those power structures.

Underscoring racial inequality in political campaigns, however, did not mean that Chicana/o activists and intellectuals did not push for more complicated discussions of cultural identities that went beyond Anglo/Mexican binaries. The cultural renaissance of the Chicana/o Movement highlighted the need for Chicanas and Chicanos to partake in critical interpretations of their history. Chicana/o poets, theater troupes, and writers emphasized the need for Chicanas and Chicanos to critically interpret history, informed by the intuition of their historic experiences, as a means to better analyze the social, economic, and political inequality between Chicana/o and white communities.⁵⁶ By itself, the success of the Chicana/o Movement in influencing critical historical consciousness as a means to challenge injustice would influence Chicana/o

⁵⁶ For examples of Chicano Movement literature that emphasizes the contributions of an intuition influenced by Chicana/o historical experience, refer to Luis Valdez and Teatro Campesino (Organization), *Luis Valdez--Early Works: Actos, Bernabé, and Pensamiento Serpentino*. (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1990); Rodolfo Gonzales, *Message to Aztlan: Selected Writings of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales*, Hispanic Civil Rights Series (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2001); Alurista, *Floriscanto en Aztlan*, 2nd edition (Los Angeles: University of Washington Press, 2012).

intellectuals for decades and would lead to the self critiques as a means to better develop critical historic consciousness.⁵⁷

Historic consciousness became the key to understanding relations of power between Chicana/o communities and white society in the United States, but it did not stop there. What the current critics of Chicana/o Indigeneity proclaim to be simplified binary oppositions between victimized Mexican Americans and oppressive white society, actually demonstrated implied critical self reflections of historicity. Critical self-reflection and analysis of complex power dynamics have remained prominent goals among Chicana/o intellectuals since the 1970s. Among historians, however, analysis of complex power dynamics called for critical interpretations free from romanticism. For example, early Chicano Historian Jesús Chavarria highlights the nascent beginnings of Chicano History within the Chicana/o Movement that were highlighted by unclear objectives among intellectuals about the importance of historic self-awareness. Intellectuals like Chavarria postulated clear goals to move beyond the modes of populist rhetoric exhibited by Mexican nationalist scholars at earlier times. In particular, Chavarria called for a transnational Chicano History that took into account the historic trends in the southwestern U.S. as part of broader power relations between the countries of México and the United States, or for that matter Latin America.⁵⁸ Moreover, Chavarria challenged over simplified conceptualizations of Chicana/o History that posited a binary opposition between internal Chicana/o colony and the colonizing U.S. government and instead called for a complex analysis of Chicanas and Chicanos that described their role as a minority within the United

⁵⁷ As Contreras depicts in *Bloodlines*, Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* continued the Chicana/o Movement trend of examinations of Chicana/o Indigeneity in the vein of critical historic consciousness, while both critiquing the lack of a female and queer perspectives in Chicano historical narratives and at the same time romanticizing the Indigenous.

⁵⁸ Jesús Chavarría, "On Chicano History: In Memoriam, George I. Sánchez 1906-1972," in *Humanidad: Essays in Honor of George I. Sánchez*, ed. Américo Paredes (Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Center Publications, University of California, Los Angeles, 1977) 46.

States.⁵⁹ This, according to Chavarria, could occur while at the same time giving positive attribution to Chicana/o Indigenous heritage.⁶⁰

In his call for complex interpretations of Chicana/o history as a means for Chicana/o self-definition, and thus critical historic consciousness, Juan Gómez-Quiñones challenged simplified oppressor/oppressed binaries, defines Chicano History as the study of peoples of Mexican descent (which he defines as indio-mestizo-mulatto), and calls for interpretations that are “best understood within the framework of colonial relations and patterns.”⁶¹ He goes on to say, “A modified colonial framework allows us to relate multiplicities that heretofore have been kept separate...Some of these aspects are the collective memory of its experience and its collective perception...”⁶² In these statements, Gómez-Quiñones points intellectuals towards analysis of colonialism that takes into account the globalized and disparate elements that influence their complex interplay with localized historical contexts and senses of peoplehood. He further states, “The status of the Chicano community as a minority-territorial enclave is analogous to other colonial cases in different parts of the world.”⁶³

Early Chicana/o historians like Gómez-Quiñones and Chavarria pushed for historical analyses that encompassed broad and conflicting perspectives, like critiques of unjust power within the national experience with racism and the global trend of colonialism. At the same time, they demonstrated the potential of Chicana/o self-reflections of heritage and history that

⁵⁹ Ibid, 51. For contentions of the internal colonial model, refer to Mario Barrera, Carlos Muñoz, and Charles Ornelas, “The Barrio as Internal Colony,” in *People and politics in Urban Society: Urban Affairs Annual Review*, ed. By Harlan Hahn (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1972); Tomás Almaguer, “Toward the Study of Chicano Colonialism,” *Aztlán* 2 no. 1 (Spring 1971): 7-21; and Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America: The Chicano's Struggle Toward Liberation* (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1973). Acuña has revised his book by stepping back from the internal colony thesis and turned it into a text book. For the latest issue, refer to Rodolfo F. Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 8 edition (Boston: Pearson, 2014).

⁶⁰ Chavarria, 44.

⁶¹ Juan Gómez-Quiñones, “Toward a perspective on Chicano History (vol. 2, no. 2, fall 1971),” in *The Chicano Studies Reader: an anthology of Aztlan*, ed. by Chon A. Noriega, et. al. (Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Center Publications, University of California, Los Angeles, 2001) 29.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid, 30.

helped inform a self-defined Chicana/o identity. In these reflections, Gómez-Quiñones and Chavarria incorporated the historical reality of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage into complex analyses of centuries of western political domination. They sought to understand how resistance to this domination, in both its successes and failures, points to pluriversal alternatives to western hegemony that influence struggles for a society organized in more socially just ways. In this vein, many Chicanas and Chicanos have further pushed beyond simplistic romanticism and have moved toward critical Indigenous historicism that illuminates the decolonial potential of Chicana/o claims of Indigeneity in the globalized framework of human rights. This critical historic consciousness engages centuries of discourse on Indigeneity that tie to broader historical megatrends of Indigenous agency in a world politically, socially, and economically dominated by Western society.

Chicana/o Indigeneity and Consciousness in Contexts of Rights

During centuries of complex links between the past, myth, and contemporary oppositional ideologies, twentieth-century Chicana/o adherence to Indigenous culture and philosophy form part of trends in historicism occurring in Mexico and the United States that run much deeper than mere romanticized allusions to a simpler past. During the Chicana/o Movement, activists drew upon long established connections between history and myth. A consciousness of Indigeneity formed part of a larger Chicana/o Movement trend where participants exhibited a cultural pride as a means of inspiring political activism and conceiving of a Chicana/o historicized place in society.⁶⁴ Since the Chicana/o Movement, necessary critiques have pushed for more egalitarian practices among Chicana/o activists in ways that challenge exclusivity, authenticity, and

⁶⁴ Ignacio M. García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997) 3.

essentialist intimations.⁶⁵ In this way, critics have pushed for discussions about Chicana/o identity to recognize both the diverse historical influence on Chicana/o subjectivity, as well as the heterogeneous status of Chicana/o communities.⁶⁶ However, in doing so, these critics have not made distinctions between the essentialism of the state, and the necessary essentialism among Indigenous Peoples, which they depend on for cultural survival whose requirements are very specific. Chicana/o activists drew from elaborations of cultural identity among performance artists to strengthen understanding and political advocacy for a more equal and democratic United States.⁶⁷ The opposition between long established exclusionary nationalisms and the civil and human rights advocacy that challenged them necessitates an examination of how Chicanos create the trajectory of their cultural identity despite the context of Western political dominance.⁶⁸

Looking at how Mexican American constructions of identity and culture relate to national politics reveals complex interplays that go beyond essentialist constructs. Although challenging essentialism in western nationalist discourses is necessary to subvert the hegemony of the state, when the same critiques of essentialism are applied to Indigenous Peoples' proclamations on culture, history, and identity, critics many times assume attempts at Indigenous historicity possess ethnocentric trajectories.⁶⁹ Arif Dirlik contends Indigenous peoples' historicism is integral to Indigenous cultural survival because it insures agency over Indigenous Peoples'

⁶⁵ For examples to challenges to Chicana/o Indigeneity, refer to Contreras, *Blood Lines*.

⁶⁶ For historic influences, refer to Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*. For challenges to the homogeneity of Chicano subjectivity and a call to recognize heterogeneity, refer to Angie Chabram Dernerseian, "And, Yes...The Earth Did Part: On the Splitting of Chicana/o Subjectivity," in Adela de la Torre and Beatriz M. Pesquera, eds., *Building with Our Hands: New Directions in Chicana Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

⁶⁷ Juan Gómez-Quíñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990); Ignacio M. García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997).

⁶⁸ Arif Dirlik, "The Past as Legacy and Project: Postcolonial Criticism in the Perspective of Indigenous Historicism," *Contemporary Native American Political Issues* (London: Altamira Press, 1999),

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 78.

cultural trajectory.⁷⁰ Considering the historical context of division of Native societies, Indigenous Peoples' attempts to reconstruct their collective identity challenges Western hegemony more so than it is an attempt to establish hegemonic control. In sum, Dirlik calls for distinctions between the essentialism that validates state/corporate power, and the essentialism of Indigenous Peoples' attempts at cultural survival.⁷¹

What is logically and historically mandated is a shift from a focus on semantic faults to the political implications of historicism, imposing power or challenging it, and away from reactionary stances that reject any notion of essentialism. A major theorist, Linda Tuhiwai Smith notes the importance of Indigenous peoples' adherence to an essential collective identity when they advocate for human rights.⁷² When authoritative claims about Indigenous cultural identity are challenged for being essentialist, these critiques attempt to dismember the validity of Indigenous claims to human rights based on collective identity. In this aspect, attempts to universalize discourse on cultural identity as heterogeneous incorrectly assume that negating all essentialisms preempts attempt to set up a hierarchical power structure based on ethnocentrism.

The over extension of cultural diversity and inter-relations as a means to quell Indigenous grievances of dispossession are clearest in the long history of *mestizaje* in México. Through out the twentieth-century, both Mexican intellectuals' interpretations of historical cultural identity have, for the most part, operated under the paradigm of Indigenismo inspired by *mestizaje*. The term *mestizo* has existed since the Spanish colonial era and has formed the base for nationalist discourse in México as a means of establishing hierarchical socioethnic order.⁷³ From the 1910

⁷⁰ Ibid, 86.

⁷¹ Ibid, 81.

⁷² Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Zed Books, 1999), 74.

⁷³ For the colonial origins of *mestizaje* in México as the base for nationalism, refer to Andrés Molina Enríquez, *Los Grandes Problemas Nacionales* (Mexico: Impr. de A. Carranza e hijos, 1909). For a revisit of Molina Enríquez's arguments about race, class, and *mestizo* nationalisms, refer to Agustín Francisco Basave Benítez, *México Mestizo: análisis del nacionalismo mexicano en torno a la mestizofilia de Andrés Molina Enríquez* (Fondo

revolution to the mid twentieth-century, *mestizaje* ideology was renamed *Indigenismo* and upheld progressive nationalist historical narratives that rationalized capitalist modernity. *Mestizaje* ideology posits that the blending of Spanish and Indigenous, primarily Mesoamerican, cultural ancestries to create a new culture that emerged from colonial cultural syncretism. Mexican ideologue José Vasconcelos elaborated *mestizaje*, in modernist linear historical understanding of change over time, as the culmination of syncretism between two civilizations that gave birth to *mestizo* Mexicans.⁷⁴ Although this ideology ascribed positive value to Indigenous cultural heritage, *mestizaje*'s significant flaw is that it omits Indigenous persons in its conceptualization of progress in México, and it defines progress over time as the Westernization of México. As Mexican scholar Guillermo Bonfil Batalla states:

...en la ideología del mestizaje predomina la valoración de lo indio sólo como pasado, sólo como origen. El indio vivo, en cambio, se percibe como degradado precisamente por haber mantenido su pureza (sea pureza de sangre o aislamiento por apego a una cultura estancada y también degradada); es decir, el indio vivo se devalora ante la mirada del mestizo en razón de que permaneció indio y no “avanzó” hacia la etapa superior que encarna el mestizo gracias a la confluencia del componente europeo.

[...in mestizaje ideology, the valoration of the Indian as only the past, only the origin, predominates. The living Indian, in return, is perceived as degraded precisely for having maintained her/his purity (whether its purity of blood or for addiction to a stagnant and degraded culture); that is to say, the living Indian is devalorized in the mestizo's gaze because she/he remained Indian and did not

de Cultura Económica, 1992). For elaborations of pre-nationalist argumentations of *mestizaje* by colonial officials in New Spain, refer to D. A. 1936- (David Anthony) Brading, *First America: Spanish Monarchy, Creole Patriots and the Liberal State, 1492-1866* (Cambridge University Press, 1993); and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World*, Cultural Sitings (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001). For early questioning of *mestizaje* by Chicana/o Studies scholars as proposed by José Vasconcelos in *The Cosmic Race/La Raza Cósmica*, trans. and intro. by Didier T. Jaen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), first Spanish publication in 1925, refer to Nicandro F. Juárez, “José Vasconcelos and La Raza Cósmica,” in *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 3, no. 1 (October 1972): 51-82.

⁷⁴ For basic ideas and programmatic recommendations regarding operative Mexican nationalism, refer to the varying ideas, yet cosmopolitan, about Mexican Nationalism by thinkers and administrators, refer to Justo Sierra, *Historia general*. (Mexico: Oficina de la secretaria de fomento, 1891); Manuel Gamio, *Forjando patria: pro nacionalismo* (Mexico: Librería de Porrúa Hermanos, 1916); José Vasconcelos, *The Cosmic Race/La Raza Cósmica*, trans. and intro. by Didier T. Jaen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), first Spanish publication in 1925; Alfonso Caso, *El Pueblo del Sol* (México: Fondo Cultura Económica, 1953); and María Angel Garibay, *Historia de la Literatura Nahuatl*, 2 Volumes (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1953-1954).

“advance” towards a superior age that the mestizo embodies thanks to the confluence of the European component.]⁷⁵

Thus, after the 1910 revolution, a Mexican nationalism emerged, based in the ideology of *mestizaje*, that was an idealized cultural milieu bound by Western ideological parameters that restricted Indigenous Peoples’ autonomy, and their possible contribution to a Mexican nation. In short, although the goal was to recognize plural cultural heritage, Mexican nationalism in the middle twentieth-century continued the trend of negating Indigenous Peoples’ right to define their cultural trajectories. Even though Indigenous Peoples have always recognized their heterogeneity, they continue to possess the right to define themselves as essentially Indigenous.

The farce of Mexican nationalism demonstrates that focus on cultural qualities, whether heterogeneous or perceived homogeneity, can lead to hegemonic constructs of national identity that exclude and privilege. Many Indigenous Peoples in México, in their resistance to this hegemony, define essential cultural trajectories that align them with broader challenges to the violent imposition of western society through colonialism and modernity. In this definition, Indigeneity becomes a right tied to a trajectory challenging western hegemony that stems from Indigenous cultural heritage. For many Chicanas and Chicanos, Indigeneity thus also stems from a historic consciousness of Indigenous cultural heritage that challenges imposition of western colonialism. Further, Chicana/o cultural change over time sheds light on how these processes are tied to unequal power dynamics that influence the way in which elaborations of Indigenous cultural identity have many times been tied to political struggles for civil and human rights. These links come as no surprise since Chicana/o communities maintain strong stances on the

⁷⁵ Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, “Sobre la Ideología del Mestizaje (O cómo el Garcilas Inca anunció, sin saberlo, muchas de nuestras desgracias),” in *Decadencia y auge de las identidades (Cultura nacional, identidad, cultural y modernización*, ed. José Manuel Valenzuela Arce (Tijuana, B.C.: El colegio de la Frontera Norte, 1992), 39.

right to exist as culturally autonomous from western society, while at the same time possessing the right to engage and participate in western society as democratic equals.

Since the nineteenth-century, Chicana/o struggles for civil and human rights have been tied to U.S. citizenship rights and concepts of democracy. Beginning with the U.S.-Mexico war and the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexican Americans⁷⁶ have utilized rights outlined in the Treaty to establish their ideological and political claims to citizenship rights in the United States. These political struggles have been intrinsically tied to Mexican American cultural ideology. Examination of this ideology begins to illustrate the ties political struggles for democracy and human and civil rights have with Chicana/o Indigenous cultural ideology.

Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo's ninth article in theory granted citizenship to all Mexicans in the conquered territory, the U.S. government inserted its own legal precedents to ensure they maintained established racial order and settler-colonial privileges to deny citizenship privileges to non-whites in the Southwest. Martha Menchaca demonstrates the intense persecution of Indigenous People in the Southwest after the U.S.-Mexico war. In the aftermath of the war and under the pretext of the Indian Intercourse Act of 1834, which sought to place Indigenous Peoples on reservations, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) agents were sent into the Southwest to evaluate whether Mexican communities were Mexican or Indigenous. If the BIA officials determined whether these communities were "nomadic Indians," the people of these communities would fall under federal jurisdiction that negated any citizenship rights and declared them enemies of the state. Specifically, this meant that they would fall under the specific jurisdiction of the War Department and the U.S. Army.⁷⁷ Menchaca goes on to describe the fate of several Indigenous towns based on their classification by the BIA as either Indian or

⁷⁶ The term Mexican American is used here to recognize that the term Chicana/o is not all-inclusive and remains a late twentieth century term. Thus, Mexican American refers to a broader ethnic group, with varying cultural and political ideologies, of Mexican descent that was historically affected by the terms laid out in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

⁷⁷ Menchaca, 218-220.

Mexican. The towns that were classified as Mexican fared a little better under the American onslaught since their land ownership rights were respected, even though many of these townspeople had to ironically sell their lands to pay for legal fees to defend their ownership.⁷⁸ Consequently, the benefits of remaining in centuries old homelands and from dodging the barrels of the U.S. Army guns makes it probable that many Mexican Americans, whose ancestry was tied to the Indigenous People of the Southwest and northern Mexico, had to deny their Indigeneity as a means to maintain certain social, economic, and political privileges, even if these privileges were relatively small.

The context of violence and the possibility of gaining some social, economic, or political advantages by denying Indigenous and Mexican cultural heritage have provided the nexus for conflict among Chicana/o communities regarding cultural ideology. In his depiction and analysis of Chicana/o political and cultural strategies for attaining community and equal rights, Mario Barrera explains that Chicanas and Chicanos have historically advocated for two goals. On the one hand, Chicanas and Chicanos have advocated for cultural autonomy, and on the other, they have advocated for political, social, and economic equity. Barrera argues that most Chicana/o gains in political, social, and economic equity have led to degrees of Chicana/o assimilation, which were clear negations of cultural autonomy. Barrera also contends that, for the most part, ethnic autonomy and political, social, and economic equality have been contentious strategies among Chicana/o political, social, and activist organizations in the United States.⁷⁹

During the violent eras of the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century, Mexican American political leadership promoted assimilation cultural ideologies to support

⁷⁸ Ibid, 240-242.

⁷⁹ Mario Barrera, *Beyond Aztlan: Ethnic Autonomy in Comparative Perspective*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988) 4.

struggles to improve social, economic, and political conditions.⁸⁰ Mexican American ethnic politics are indicative of a century of racism, ethnocentrism, and enforced segregation that forced civil rights advocacy to occur along ethnic and racial lines. Mexican American political leaders and activists have maneuvered whatever political avenues for advocacy available to them vis-à-vis American political institutions.⁸¹ Unfortunately for clearer understanding, some historians have misinterpreted the contentious political strategies regarding assimilation for a dominant trend in Mexican American cultural identity.⁸² Instead, cultural ideology among a broader Mexican American population in the early twentieth-century must be analyzed in the context of multiple perspectives within the Chicana/o community. Furthermore, one must not confuse aversion of violent state oppression by adhering to western cultural norms as dominant ideological leanings towards assimilation among Mexican Americans. Instead, the persistence of Indigenous ideologies reveal that Chicanas and Chicanos possess a desire for autonomy over cultural trajectory, and attempt to define this trajectory within the context of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage.

Chicana's and Chicano's persistent support for pro Indigenous cultural ideology is revealed in the oral narratives that refer to cultural ideology, even in the face of assimilationist political leadership and violent persecution of Indigenous peoples. Menchaca utilizes an autoethnographic method in her study to reveal the continuity of Indigenous heritage among her family. For example, her husband's family descended from Chumash Indians and Mexicans in

⁸⁰ For an analysis of early and mid twentieth-century Mexican American civil rights organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the GI Forum, refer to Juan Gómez-Quíñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990): 61-63, and for analysis of Mexican American assimilation ideology in the context over the debate regarding immigration, refer to David G. Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 71.

⁸¹ Gutiérrez, 214.

⁸² Refer to George J. Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) 273. Although I acknowledge that adoption of U.S. cultural norms was an attractive cultural stance for some Mexican Americans, I do not agree with Sánchez's conclusion that the Mexican American working class adopted American values in similar ways to other ethnic groups (primarily European) during the 1930s given that this historian did not fully appraise historical differences.

Santa Barbara, CA, and among his family, the prominence of Mexican or Chumash culture was debated. A consensus was reached on the fact they were a product of a bicultural upbringing. Menchaca, concludes that although racial categorization has resulted in an unequal racial organization of society, a history of interracial interactions provides examples of people with more harmonious, in varying degrees, visions of the significance of racial and ethnic difference.⁸³ These more harmonious visions also apply to understanding that cultural change and adoption of either U.S. or Spanish cultural elements does not negate a primarily Indigenous view of cultural identity. The poet Simon Ortiz demonstrates that the use of traditional culture and values, in this case among the Acoma Pueblo Indians, proves to be an integral element for maintaining a community's cultural autonomy and degrees of economic, political, and social self-determination.⁸⁴ Ortiz acknowledges that cultural exchange during colonialism had undeniable effects on Acoma Pueblo Indians, but nonetheless, religious and linguistic transformation remained rooted in Indigenous culture.⁸⁵ Similarly, Chicana/o ideologues, recognized this cultural perspective to link a positive valuation of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage during the Chicana/o Movement.⁸⁶

Chicano scholars have depicted cultural stances during the Chicana/o Movement as a historical moment when Chicanas and Chicanos challenged their oppression in the United States based on a revival, recognition, and pride in their cultural heritage.⁸⁷ The Chicana/o Movement

⁸³ Menchaca, 299-301.

⁸⁴ Simon Ortiz, "Towards a National Indian Literature: Cultural Authenticity in Nationalism," *Melus* 8.2 (1981)

⁸⁵ Ortiz 8.

⁸⁶ Refer to works by Luis Valdez and El Teatro Campesino in *Luis Valdez—Early Works, Actos, Bernabe, and Pensamiento Serpentino*; Alurista, *Floriscanto en Aztlan*; Juan F. Herrera, *Mayan Drifter: Chicano Poet in the Lowlands of America*, First Edition edition (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997); Inés Hernández Tovar, "Poems ('Salgo a caminar...', 'Cáscaras y sustancia')," *Revista Chicano-Riqueña* 8, no. 3 (1980): 29; and Lin Romero, *Happy songs, bleeding hearts*. ([San Diego, Calif.]: [Toltecas en Aztlan], 1974).

⁸⁷ Refer to Juan Gómez Quiñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990), Barrera, *Beyond Aztlan*, and Ignacio M. García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997). Also refer to writings by Chicana/o activists such as José Angel Guitiérrez, *The Making of a Chicano Militant: Lessons from Cristal* (Madison:

marks a moment in time when Chicana/o pro Indigenous cultural ideology was tied to struggles for human and civil rights in the United States. Thus, ideologues like Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales and Luis Váldez made Indigeneity an integral part of their discourse on rights. Since then, critical reflections on Chicana/o Indigeneity have revealed decolonial applications of self-determined cultural identities in the collective goal of subverting the hegemony of western rationales that permeate political institutions.

Conclusion

The decolonial applications of cultural identity in Chicana/o social movements demonstrate important intersections of cultural self-determination and political advocacy of human and civil rights. In varying degrees since the Chicana/o Movement, many Chicana/o activists center their proclamations of Indigenous cultural identity as the rationale for their inherent right to human rights across borders in the Western Hemisphere. Along with fighting for these rights for all Indigenous Peoples, Chicana/o activists inspired by a revitalization of their Indigenous cultural heritage demonstrated integral intersections of cultural identity and human rights advocacy. These relied on critical historic consciousness of colonial injustice, the advocacy to change that injustice in the present, and the goal of decolonizing in the future through education. In the remainder of this dissertation, I lay out these aspects of Chicana/o Indigeneity in hopes of better understanding how their intersection reveals decolonial understandings of community membership and autonomy.

University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzalez, *Message to Aztlan: Selected Writings*, ed. Antonio Esquibel (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2001), Reies López Tijerina, *They Called Me “King Tiger”: My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, trans. and ed José Angel Gutiérrez (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2000), and Enriqueta Vasquez, *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement: Writings from El Grito del Norte*, ed. Lorena Oropeza and Dionne Espinoza (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2006).

CHAPTER 2

Aztlan Y Que!: Chicana/o Cultural Survival as a Civil Rights Claim during the Chicana/o Movement

Introduction

Since the 1960s, human and civil rights struggles that challenged the colonial logics of power have taken the form of addressing treaty violations that guaranteed the necessary land rights inherent in Indigenous cultural survival. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Chicana/o and Indigenous activists have paralleled their struggles for cultural survival with broader civil rights struggles in the United States. In this chapter, I focus on these activists' articulation of civil rights based in redress of treaty violations that ostensibly guaranteed cultural survival and land rights. The issues of treaty rights as they related to cultural rights were central to the contentions of the La Alianza de Federal de Mercedes (La Alianza) and the Crusade For Justice in New Mexico and Colorado, respectively. In the context of the Chicana/o Movement, La Alianza demonstrated a juridical strategy inspired by fraternal gestures of solidarity, while the Crusade for Justice demonstrated a solidarity that underscored material support for the American Indian Movement. Both of these organizations collaborated with American Indian activist organizations to assert cultural and land rights as inherent civil and human rights.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the Chicana/o Movement era political alliances between Native American and Chicana/o activists that set the stage for 1980s and 1990s Indigenous Peoples' transnational activism where Chicanas and Chicanos were recognized as Indigenous. In this chapter, I demonstrate the how multi-ethnic and Chicana/o and Indian collaborative activism during the 1960s and 1970s aligned Chicana/o political goals of civil rights with American Indian demands for sovereignty. The intersection of these two goals lay in the demand for cultural survival, and redress of treaty violations, which formed the foundation of Chicana/o Indigeneity claims beginning in the late 1970s. For many Chicanas and Chicanos

since the *movimiento*, especially in New Mexico, the core concern was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the citizen and land ownership rights guaranteed therein. These concerns began with land grant claims in New Mexico in 1963 and continued through the multiethnic organizing around the Poor Peoples campaign in 1968 to eradicate poverty. They culminated in the 1970s with proposed Civil Rights legislation that sought to honor the rights guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and Chicana/o support for Native American sovereignty at Wounded Knee. Through these advocacies, Chicana/o and Native American activists created new bonds characterized by shared goals of anti-colonial liberation. In other words, Civil Rights era activism cemented the activists and community bonds between Chicanas, Chicanos, and Native Americans to begin undoing the violence of colonialism and instead set the model for equitable political participation in national and international forums.

Colonial Conflict and Intersections before 1960

The historical context of the Southwestern US demonstrates complex intersections of Indigenous presence, Spanish colonialism, and U.S. imperialism. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo related to complex land claims that have particularized the local history of parts of the Southwest. The question of Chicana/o Indigeneity has a unique history in the Southwest, whose history is defined by a long and complex history of interethnic familial and social relations along with political struggles regarding land tenure policy. Most importantly, diverse Indigenous populations have inhabited New Mexico for millennia. With the onset of colonialism, New Mexico became home to some Spaniards and Tlaxcalans from central Mexico.¹ Spanish colonialism also brought with it the violence of conflict over resources and land many times resulted in armed conflict like the 1680 Pueblo Revolt and later conflict in the nineteenth-

¹ For a history of racial and ethnic compositions of colonial era migrations from central Mexico to New Spain, refer to Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*.

century. Conflicts also have resulted in legal battles in courts for land and water rights for Indigenous Peoples to the present.² Over several centuries of Spanish colonialism, Chicana/o ancestors in the New Mexico and southern Colorado integrated their cultures with the Native Populations of the area within the context of Spanish colonial violence. These relations created uneasy bonds whose tensions remained a prominent point of contention in the context of cultural survival and land claims between Mexican and Native American communities.³

Complex colonial relations were further complicated by the imposition of U.S. imperialism in the Southwest vis-à-vis nineteenth-century expansion under the guise of Manifest Destiny.⁴ Beginning in the 1820s, U.S. imperialist endeavors connected New Mexico with Missouri via the Santa Fe Trail. The trade on the Santa Fe Trail boosted U.S. capitalist development and the profits from trade fueled interest in U.S. imperial expansion.⁵ Imperialist expansion fueled racist violence in the Southwest that culminated with the U.S.-Mexico War in 1846 and the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. Articles IX, XI, and XII of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, as well as the attached 1848 Disturnell Map and the Queretaro Protocol, guaranteed southwest Mexican American and Native American land, property, and religious rights.⁶ Following the war, court battles over land claims and state sponsored violence

² For a history of land tenure in New Mexico, refer to Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance: a History of Land Tenure in New Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007). For colonial violence and resistance to it, refer to Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*; Gómez-Quiñones, *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940*.

³ For the context of violence in the formation of familial bonds between Mexicans and Natives in New Mexico, refer to James Brooks, *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill [N.C.]: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2002). For the broader Northern Mexican to plains areas of the Southwest, refer to Curtis Marez, “Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans: Indian Captivity and the History of Chicana/o Popular Performance” in *American Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (June 2001): 267-307. In California, refer to Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers: The Making of Mexican Culture in Frontier California* (University of California Press, 1993).

⁴ For an examination of the racialization of Mexican Americans as a result of Manifest Destiny, refer to Laura E. Gómez, *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race* (New York: New York University, 2007).

⁵ Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 76-77.

⁶ The Mexican government in its 1824 constitution recognized Indigenous Peoples’ citizenship, which was an effort by Mexican liberals to undo colonial era *castas* and create a homogenous Mexican citizenry. Thus the

had detrimental effects to Native American and Mexican American communities' land ownership and self-determination.⁷ The outcome of the war, in many ways, intersected Mexican and Native American land claims by forcing claimants to maneuver through U.S. land ownership policy and the Bureau of Indian Affairs' regulations and politics. All of these aspects were further complicated by the battle ensuing from forced proletarianization and economic development in the Southwest through intense modernization.⁸

The pattern of land loss, racism, and modernized economies of the late nineteenth-century continued through the twentieth-century. Capitalist investment in Southwest exploited Mexican American and Native American labor, as well as solidified Anglo land grabbing by raising the price of land and through increased mining and railroad operations. According to historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, the primary cause for loss was the take over of common land holdings lost to the growing population of Anglo settlers.⁹ The declining economic opportunities for Native and Mexican American communities made them increasingly dependent on wage labor as a source of income. By the mid-twentieth century, the loss of land that led to declining economic opportunity served as a catalyst for a renewed resistance to Anglo land grabbing, which amounted to new calls for the respect of land rights. These manifested themselves in calls to honor the cultural and land rights guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo by

Treaty of Guadalupe's guarantee of land and citizenship rights should have also included the Native American populations of the Southwest. For the Treaty in its entirety, refer to <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/ghtreaty/>. For a discussion of the Disturnell Map, refer to *Amoxltli San Ce Tojuan: We Are One—Nosotros Somos Uno*, prod. and dir. Roberto Rodríguez and Patricia Gonzales, 59 min., Xicano Records and Film, 2005, Digital Video Disc.

⁷ For a comprehensive examination of the effects of the Treaty on Mexican Americans in the Southwest, refer to Gómez-Quíñones, *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940*; Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*. For the implications of racism and violence on law and policy, refer to Gómez, *Manifest Destinies*. For a focus on the effects of the Treaty on New Mexico, refer to Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*. For primary sources that depict Anglo racism towards Mexican Americans dating back to the early nineteenth-century, refer to David J. Weber, ed., *Foreigners in Their Native Land: Historical Roots of the Mexican Americans*, 30th anniversary pbk. ed (Albuquerque, N.M: University of New Mexico Press, 2003).

⁸ For the effect of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on community identity, refer to Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*. For the effects of modernization on Native American and Mexican social hierarchies, refer to Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*.

⁹ Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 120.

Chicana/o and Native American civil rights activists. Through their efforts, the 1960s marked a decolonial turning point in the Southwest, where over the last decades of the twentieth-century, Chicana/o activists allied with Native American began to resolve colonial conflict vis-à-vis united efforts to challenge U.S. genocide and imperialism in the Southwest.

Civil Rights Era Activism and The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

The Civil Rights era in the United States, coinciding with anti-colonial movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, provided the social historical context for overt and publicly exhibited calls for redress of historic injustice to permeate national and international consciousness.¹⁰ For Chicana/o and Native American activists, this opportunity contributed to new successes in building cross country political unity, further developing a critical historical consciousness of injustice, and seeking redress for more than a century of treaty violations and civil rights denied in the Southwest. Nowhere was this more evident than during the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) organized Poor Peoples Campaign in Washington, D.C. during the spring of 1968. The Poor Peoples Campaign marked a shift in Civil Rights era activism towards eradicating poverty. For Chicana/o and Native American activists, the Poor Peoples' Campaign was an opportunity to gain attention from U.S. federal officials for social and economic demands

¹⁰ For an influential work on anti-colonialism for Civil Rights activists in the U.S. during the 1960s, refer to Frantz Fanon, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Homi K. Bhabha, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox, Reprint ed. (New York: Grove Press, 2005). For links between the Civil Rights Movement and anti-colonial struggles, refer to Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Gerald C. Horne, *The End of Empires: African Americans and India* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960*, 1st Printing edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944-1963* (Albany, N.Y: State Univ of New York Pr, 1985); Carol Anderson, *Eyes off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955*, y First edition edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). For the Civil Rights Movement as part of a long historical and broad international context, refer to Jonathan Rosenberg, *How Far the Promised Land?: World Affairs and the American Civil Rights Movement from the First World War to Vietnam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 1, 2005): 1233–1263. For radical though inspired by these contexts, refer to Robin D. G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*, New edition ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003).

including land and education rights outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as a way to uphold community survival.

During the late 1960s, La Alianza and the Crusade for Justice actively sought national platforms for their civil rights campaigns. Prior to 1968, Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales sought to nationally organize youth as a base for a national Chicana/o civil rights movement. Influenced by youth of the Civil Rights and Anti-Viet-nam War movements, these efforts put him in contact with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the Conference on New Politics in Chicago on Labor Day weekend in 1967. King was there to promote the Poor People’s campaign, and at this meeting, he came into contact with Gonzales, Reies López Tijerina, and other Mexican American activists.¹¹ Tijerina, and to a lesser extent Gonzales, used the Poor Peoples Campaign to seek redress for violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Similarly, Native American activist Hank Adams, who worked with Clyde Warrior, also participated in the Poor Peoples Campaign, and saw it as an avenue to seek redress for violation of fishing rights in Frank’s Landing, Washington State that been guaranteed by Treaty in 1854 and 1855.¹² The Poor Peoples Campaign provided the opportunity for the formation of activist bonds that linked the intersecting concerns of treaty violations among Chicanas, Chicanos, and Native Americans. Chicana/o activists involved in the Poor Peoples Campaign demonstrated a potentially provocative extension of land rights struggles within civil rights advocacy.

¹¹ Ernesto Vigil, “Personal Interview,” by José Luis Serrano Nájera, Feb. 29, 2012.

¹² For Clyde Warrior’s role in the American Indian Movement, refer to Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: New Press, 1996) 36-59. For more on Hank Adams, refer to David E. Wilkins, ed., *The Hank Adams Reader: An Exemplary Native Activist and the Unleashing of Indigenous Sovereignty* (Golden, Colo: Fulcrum Publishing, 2011). For Native American twentieth-century activism, refer to Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty*, Reprint ed. (University Press of Kansas, 2008).

Intersections of Cultural Survival and Land Rights

During the Poor People's Campaign, Chicana/o and Native American activists highlighted their intersecting demands of redressing treaty violations to ensure cultural survival and land rights. For instance, Native Americans, Chicanas, and Chicanos from New Mexico aligned their land claims based on Treaty rights. As Tijerina reports, "The Native Americans and the Indo-hispanos had the same claim and complaint against the government of the United States: the violation of treaties to the detriment of our land and culture."¹³ The redress of treaty violations became intersected causes for Native American and Chicana/o activists because the land and citizen rights outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, relevant to both Chicana/o and Native American communities in the Southwest, were protections necessary for cultural survival.

The activist alliances formed by Chicana/o with Native American activists demonstrates how civil rights guaranteed by treaty were necessary for cultural survival. Prior to 1968, La Alianza and Reies López Tijerina had developed relations with Hopi Nation in regards to uniting in seeking redress for violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in national and international legislative and judicial bodies.¹⁴ Similarly, the Crusade for Justice had been sympathetic to Northwestern Native American fishing rights struggles during the mid 1960s. By the time of the Poor People's Campaign, both the Crusade for Justice and La Alianza were working on developing these alliances in the context of a countrywide movement. During the Poor People's Campaign, Chicana/o activists built alliances with Black and White activists to eradicate poverty, as demonstrated by Tijerina during the Solidarity March in Washington, D.C.:

Today, we stand with the Indians, today we stand with the Black People, today we stand with the White People. All and everyone as brothers, united by the affliction and

¹³Reies Tijerina, *They Called Me "King Tiger": My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights* (Houston, Tex: Arte Público Press, 2000) 106.

¹⁴For correspondence between La Alianza and Hopi Nation, refer to Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research. I will return to this correspondence later in this chapter.

oppression of the bankers, politicians and including those clergymen: who have failed their duty to mankind.¹⁵

These alliances solidified at the Poor People's Campaign march on the Supreme Court to address U.S. treaty violations towards Native Americans.

Ernesto Vigil, member of the Crusade for Justice from Denver, recounts the importance of Chicana/o support for redress of U.S. government violation of treaties with Native American nations during this march:

Probably the key contacts were made in the Poor People's Campaign...occurred overnight when all the Indians in the Southwestern delegation abruptly moved out and established their official headquarters in a church that had been loaned to them. They felt as Native people they needed to have their own physical base from which to operate. A delegation came and they approached Rodolfo Gonzales and other people in the Southwestern contingent. And we were housed at a private school called Hawthorne, and they explained that they had been organizing for a number of years in the Pacific Northwest, to try to force the government to live up to at Treaty they gave to the people of the Northwest their rights to fish as they were accustomed to do in their land base and the rivers that flowed in their area...They had fought for a number of years and they were trying to have they're treaty upheld in the Supreme Court. They had approached the leadership of the SCLC who were reluctant to support them in a demonstration going before the Supreme Court. When they spoke to this concern that they had and the two people that I recall who were specifically the ones that had come, were Hank Adams...and the other man was a man named Al Bridges. And Al Bridges brought his daughters...they were teenagers, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, they went on to become important leaders in the fishing struggles in Washington State. I believe that all of them were from the Nisqually Nation that took the forefront. And we went to the Supreme Court, and many accounts written on the Poor People's Campaign, many accounts say that the most dramatic and the most militant protest, and the most successful protest at the Poor Peoples Campaign, was the protests at the Supreme Court. And when the Southwestern delegation, which was primarily Mexican joined with the Indian Contingent to the Supreme Court, we marched past resurrection city where the bulk of the African American and White activists membership was staying and they poured out in mass and the SCLC realized that they had lost control of their own constituencies, so they joined in the march and changed their position.”¹⁶

Chicana/o support for redress of Native American treaty rights struggles, even in the face of SCLC resistance to militant protest, demonstrates their recognition of the integral need to support

¹⁵ “Reies Lopez Tijerina, Speech on June 19 (1968), Solidarity March Day in Washington, D.C.” in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

¹⁶ Ernesto Vigil, “Personal Interview,” by José Luis Serrano Nájera, Feb. 29, 2012.

Indigenous Peoples rights as a precondition for universal social justice. Conscious of the historical legacies of colonialism, Chicana/o activists recognized that supporting Indigenous People's rights provided a decolonial trajectory for all human beings.

The decolonial imperative of first and foremost supporting Indigenous Peoples' rights to sovereignty were articulated by Tijerina during the Poor Peoples Campaign. He emphasized the importance of addressing the struggles of Native Americans first, as a way of reversing the effects of colonialism in the U.S. As he states:

...yo le pedí al Doctor King cuando me pidió que colaborara. Le dije con una condición iba cooperar o colaborar en las marchas de los pobres en 1968. Que la condición que yo ponía era que los derechos de los indios los presentáramos primero en Washington. Luego los derechos de los Afro-americanos. Y al último los derechos del Indio-Hispano. [...I asked Doctor King when he asked me to collaborate. I told him that I would cooperate or collaborate under one condition in the Poor Peoples Campaign in 1968. The condition I posed was that we would present the rights of Native Americans first in Washington. Then the rights of African Americans. And lastly, the rights of the Indio-Hispano.]¹⁷

Tijerina prioritized Native American concerns during the Poor People's Campaign ahead of African American and Chicana/o demands. As he recalls arguing with Reverend Ralph Abernathy and other organizers of the Poor Peoples Campaign regarding their inability to understand the need to address Native American concerns when he stated, "I presented, in detail, the rights of the Native Americans to justice. I explained that if Native Americans did not obtain justice, nobody could. If we do not ask for the Native Americans first, then we are not asking for us."¹⁸ As a result of the Poor Peoples Campaign march on the Supreme Court, Tijerina and other Chicana/o activists followed the lead of Native American activists and began to relate among themselves in their struggles to gain international redress of treaty violations.

¹⁷ Cecilio García Camarillo, "Reies López Tijerina on Espejos de Aztlan, May 31, 1999," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

¹⁸ Tijerina, 107.

In following the Native American lead during the Poor Peoples Campaign, Chicana/o activists were informed on how supporting Indigenous sovereignty internationally upheld their own concerns with violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Native American activists outlined the need to internationalize sovereignty struggles as follows:

WE DEMAND that the United States immediately present the issue of Genocide, and the Deprivation of Right, against any Indian population or tribe within any American Nation before the Security Council and General Assembly of the United Nations for thorough investigations, hearings and appropriate resolution.¹⁹

Native American activists during the Poor Peoples Campaign further internationalized their struggle by relating their oppression to the violence towards Indigenous Peoples in Brazil during the late 1960s and by forwarding Native American demands for redress of treaty violations that guaranteed fishing rights in the Pacific Northwest:

“The destructive actions now being taken against the defenseless Indian population of Brazil are not unlike the cultural devastation and total disregard for the human and property rights that this nation has directed toward ourselves in the past and yet today. But our situation, as in the state of Washington, now calls for affirmative and uncompromised exercise of our human right as we now seek the ensured survival of Brazilian Indians, we must now place our own lives in the cause to make our way of life secure.”²⁰

By participating in the support of Indigenous Peoples rights through an international perspective of sovereignty, Chicana/o activists were later able to relate how their demands were tied to Indigenous People’s transnational land and cultural survival struggles.

The transnational context of Indigenous Peoples’ land and cultural survival struggles across the Americas aligned Chicana/o demands of redress of Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo violations with support for Native American sovereignty. As such, the Poor Peoples Campaign, and the Civil Rights Era in general, helped shift Chicana/o claims of cultural autonomy and land rights away from supporting Spanish colonial orders in the Southwest and towards a unity with

¹⁹ “Statement of Indian People of the Poor People’s Campaign: June 1, 1968,” in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

²⁰ Ibid.

the transnational Indigenous struggle to decolonize. Chicana/o unity with Native Americans in many ways is still occurring presently. Recollections of activists such as Ernesto Vigil punctuate the origins of political and legal articulation of Chicana/o Indigeneity in relation to transnational Indigenous Peoples movements in the Chicana/o Movement. The following sections of this chapter demonstrate how this shift from Spanish colonialism to transnational Indigenous Peoples sovereignty began in the 1960s and early 1970s within La Alianza and the Crusade for Justice.

¿Los Herederos de Que?: La Alianza and the Question of Land

To be sure, the shift from the context of Spanish colonialism to present day transnational Indigenous Peoples sovereignty has a complex and broader context that encompasses the entire Western hemisphere and began with Indigenous rebellions during the colonial era.²¹ In the Southwest, that shift has been based in non-linear ideological and familial relations dating back to the origins of colonialism in 1598 and complicated by the overlapping of two colonizations and the racism of modernization in the centuries since then.²² The 1960s, however, demonstrate a sharp acceleration in the direction of decolonization given the global context of anti-colonial movements, and the national context of Civil Rights activism. In regards to New Mexico land grant struggles, Tijerina utilized the Poor Peoples Campaign as an avenue to redress violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo with his demands to the State Department:

²¹ For Indigenous rebellions in northern México during the colonial era, refer to Maria Elena Galaviz de Capdevielle, *Rebeliones indígenas en el norte del reino de la Nueva España, siglos XVI y XVII* (México: Editorial Campesina, 1967); and María Teresa Huerta Preciado, *Rebeliones indígenas en el noreste de México en la época colonial* (México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1966). For complex intersections of Indigenous and colonizer ideologies, refer to Brading, *First America*; and Enrique Florescano, *Memory, Myth, and Time in Mexico: From the Aztecs to Independence*, 1st ed, Translations from Latin America Series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994).

²² For colonial violence in the western U.S., refer to Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008). For the effects of overlapping colonialisms and modernity in the Southwest, refer to Curtis Marez, “Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans;” Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*; and Brooks, *Captives & Cousins*.

(1) THAT an impartial committee investigate the validity of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo; (2) THAT an immediate executive order be given setting priority to Spanish language and culture on all levels in the Southwest; (3) That all the land grants confiscated be returned immediately; (4) THAT compensation be given to the immediate needs of the victims; and (5) THAT cases pending in courts directly related to the land question against individuals be withdrawn on the grounds that the treaty is a defective document.²³

La Alianza demonstrated this shift in the Civil Rights movement to address poverty necessitated remedying the colonial consequences of land dispossession in the Southwest for both Native American and Chicana/o communities.

The Alianza Federal de Mercedes was incorporated on February 1, 1963 to coincide with the anniversary of the 1848 signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The Alianza consisted of 1700 land grantees, which claimed rights to 100 million acres of land in the Southwest.²⁴ La Alianza sought the return of these lands in the Southwest to redress land rights violations after the U.S.-México war. As they explained:

Por esta razón es que a buen tiempo nació la Alianza Federal de Mercedes (AFDM) para unir a todos los derechosos y herederos que por mas de cien años se les ha negado su derecho y su Justicia. Esta es y será la labor de la AFDM de reclamar y demandar todos los derechos que les pertenecen a los herederos de la Mercedes, y entre los cuales están también muchos derechos civiles que como al negro también se nos han negado por mas de cien años. [For this reason the Alianza Federal de Mercedes (AFDM) was born at a good time to unite the rightful heirs who for more than one-hundred years have had their rights and justice negated. This is and will be AFDM's labor; to reclaim and demand all the rights that belong to the heirs to Mercedes, which among these rights there are also many civil rights that have been denied to us like they have been to African Americans.]²⁵

La Alianza linked civil and land rights struggles in ways that demonstrated the material basis to make freedom possible. They isolated their rights to the land as the necessary resource for self-

²³ "Press Release, Poor Peoples Campaign, Mexican-American Contingent, June 11, 1968," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

²⁴ Reies Tijerina, *They Called Me "King Tiger": My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights* (Houston, Tex: Arte Público Press, 2000) 48.

²⁵ "Al Fin se Regreso el Chamisal, n.d," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

determination, which they saw as a right guaranteed to them by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

La Alianza's demands for self-determination were based in their mission to seek redress for historic abuse of power. In their 1966 manifesto, La Alianza depicts historic neglect by the federal government in protecting Mexican American civil and land rights, and rejects efforts to make Mexican Americans dependent on state aid:

Energéticamente protestamos al despojo del cual hemos sido víctimas durante los últimos cien años, por descuido del Gobierno Federal hacia nuestros derechos. Estrictamente protestamos al trato y abuso que se le ha hecho al Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo por parte de los Jueces y abogados del Estado...

También protestamos al trato inferior que por los extranjeros se le ha dado a nuestra cultura, causando que muchos de nuestros hijos se avergüencen de su propio origen cultural. Protestamos en contra de la infamia a que hemos sido sometidos, por falta de protección Federal, que en el Tratado se nos prometió pero no se cumplió...

Energéticamente protestamos a la ayuda pública ("public-welfare") en leche de polvo que el Gobierno Federal nos ha dado en lugar de la Justicia que nos prometió en el referido Tratado...

El Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo fue ocultado de nuestros padres...Nuestros padres fueron tenidos y guardados en ignorancia completa respecto a todos sus derechos que se les reconocieron en el Tratado que los E.U. hicieron con el Gobierno de México...

Estamos demandando que el Gobierno Federal inmediatamente intervenga y establezca medios y remedio a nuestros males. ¿De qué nos sirven las pruebas en las manos y las evidencias documentales si el gobierno se niega a escuchar y considerar nuestras quejas y nuestras evidencias? Por haber faltado el Gobierno federal a su responsabilidad que prometió en el Tratado, los extranjeros nos dan nombres malos y nos tratan como raza inferior y estúpida.

[We energetically protest the dispossession to which we have been victims during the last one-hundred years due to the Federal Government's disregard of our rights. We strictly protest the treatment and abuse towards the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo by state Judges and lawyers...

We also protest the inferior treatment of our culture by foreigners, which has caused that many of our children to feel ashamed of their cultural origins. We protest against the infamy we have been submitted to, due to lack of Federal protection, which was promised in the Treaty, but not fulfilled...

We energetically protest public assistance (public welfare) in the form of powdered milk that the Federal Government has given us in place of the Justice it promised us in the referred to Treaty...

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was hidden from our parents...Our parents were kept in complete ignorance in respect to all their rights that were recognized in the Treaty made between the U.S. and the Mexican government...

We demand that the Federal Government immediately intervene and establish the means to remedy our ills. What good is the proof in our hands and documentary evidence if the government refuses to listen and consider our greivances and evidence? As a result of the Federal Government's failure to maintain its responsibility to uphold promises made in the Treaty, the foreigners give us bad names and treat us like an inferior and stupid race.]²⁶

La Alianza's manifesto demonstrated there isolation of the U.S.-México war and violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that led to Anglo land grabbing as the root cause for Mexican American poverty and racism hindering Mexican American self-determination. Moreover, the U.S. conquest, according to La Alianza, interrupted an Indo-Hispano community from coming to full fruition in the Southwest, which ultimately amounted to the powerful charge of interrupting and disrupting the historical development of a people. The social basis of the Alianza must be kept in mind, they were the poor disinherited still Spanish speaking, often living in historical communities or with strong memories of these who knew their ancestry and relatives. These were not the deluded *ricos* who claimed hispanicity.

The Alianza's land grant claims were based in their interpretation of historic cultural hybridity in the Southwest, which they rooted in their understanding of the Chicana/o community as an Indo-Hispano community. The Alianza designated their group identity in a cultural hybridity that underscored the Indio. As Tijerina explains:

Nuestro pueblo comenzó aquí en 1492. España, después de muchos años, cruzó los mares y llegó aquí, se hizo historia, hubo, como siempre ha habido, choques, conflictos, pero poco a poco las sangres se fueron uniendo, funcionando, integrando, hasta que se formó un pueblo del Indio y del Español. Se formó un nuevo pueblo de los dos. Y allí se vino formándose la sangre, la historia del Indo-Hispano. [Our people began here in 1492. Spain, after many years, crossed the ocean and came here, and history was made. There was, like there has always been, crashes, conflicts, but little by little, the blood lines became united, functioning and integrating, until an Indigenous and Spanish people were formed. A new people was formed out of the two. And there is were the blood line began to form and the history of the Indo-Hispano].²⁷

²⁶ "Manifiesto de los Herederos de Todas Las Mercedes Amparadas Por El Tratado De Guadalupe Hidalgo, 1966," Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

²⁷ Reies López Tijerina . "Interview by Cecilio García Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan, May 31, 1999," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

To be sure, Tijerina's interpretation of historic cultural hybridity somewhat resembles notions of blood quantum and *mestizaje* that supported colonial/modern rationales for oppression of Indigenous Peoples by the U.S. and Mexican states. Moreover, the "choques" and "conflictos" amounted to war and slave trades.²⁸ However, La Alianza also hoped to, in many ways, establish that Native American and Mexican populations in the Southwest possessed the right to large degrees of autonomy during the Spanish colonial era. Even though these Spanish laws had the intent of settlement and not autonomy, La Alianza and its leader Tijerina hoped to reimagine the parameters of these laws to ensure community autonomy in the present and future. Rooted in citations of Spanish colonial legal precedent, La Alianza hoped to establish Native American and Chicana/o autonomy in the Southwest in their challenge of U.S. imperialist expansion.

A Doctrine of Rediscovery?: The Colonial Precedent of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

La Alianza's legal argument for upholding land rights in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo lay in their reference to colonial legal precedent that, according to them, established land rights and community autonomy. They cited Pope Alexander's VI *Novert Universi* on May 5, 1493 as the basis for perpetual protection of land rights in the Southwest from the colonial era to infinitum.²⁹ La Alianza further explained how the legal precedent of colonial law has continued in the U.S. based in the Laws of the Indies (La Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias):

The Laws of the Indies or, technically, La Recopilacion de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias, is the codification of all the laws promulgated by the Spanish Monarch in his capacity as the King of the Indies. The codification was issued in 1681 and is contained in three books (tomos). The laws contained in the Laws of the Indies governed almost all

²⁸ Refer to Brooks, *Captives & Cousins*; Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*; Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*.

²⁹ Alianza Federal de Mercedes, "Origen de las Mercedes Protegidas por El Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo, 1963," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research. *Novertunt Universi* was Pope Alexander VI's decree that supposedly gave Spain and Portugal the permission to colonize the Americas. This decree followed the May 4, 1493 Papal Bull *In Caetera* that granted Spain the right to "discovery" of non-Christian lands.

the Western Hemisphere—including most of the present-day United States—For well over 300 Years (1492-1821). The effects of these laws is present today in greater or lesser degree through-out North and South America, including the United States. The Laws of the Indies still form part of the laws of the Southwestern United States.³⁰

Given Spain's use of these laws to enforce colonial control in the Americas, La Alianza's reliance on these laws seem problematic in relation to Native American claims to the same land in New Mexico. At face value, La Alianza seemed to be arguing for the right to reassume control of colonial hierarchies in the Southwest. However, when La Alianza referred to Laws of the Indies, they did so in ways to support the community autonomy of Chicana/o land grant and Native American communities in New Mexico. La Alianza's reference to the Laws of the Indies had resonance with the right of local communities in Iberia and those of local communities in Meso-America. The flawed and cut Treaty was the "papers" Chicana/o and Native American communities had vis-à-vis the U.S. overlord, but the colonial precedent for these was much older.

During the 1960s and 1970s, La Alianza struggled to define how colonial legal precedent could support coeval community autonomy in New Mexican Chicana/o and Native American communities. Reflective articulation of these legal arguments led to the organization's name change from La Alianza Federal de Mercedes to La Alianza de los Pueblos Libres. La Alianza explained its rationale for the name change as follows:

[The new organizational name is] Alianza de los Pueblos Libres (Alliance of Free City-States). Formerly the name was Alianza Federal de Mercedes (Federal Alliance of Land Grants). The name was changed to emphasize the truly exciting social and cultural implications of the governmental characteristics of the community land grants (pueblos) under the laws of the Indies as free city-states.³¹

³⁰ "The Alianza: What, Where, and Why, n.d." in Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Sanford, Calif.

³¹ "The Alianza: What, Where, and Why, n.d." in Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Sanford, Calif.

Through examination of the Laws of the Indies, La Alianza sought to utilize colonial legal precedent to ensure the community autonomy of land grant and Pueblo communities. Moreover, the link between the colonial and the U.S. periods, The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, demonstrates, according to La Alianza, that the citizen and land rights promised by the U.S. entailed the respect of these rights in the form of community autonomy and self-determination.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as a Land and Human Rights Guarantee

Even though La Alianza's demands for redress of land and cultural rights violations were not based in Chicana/o Indigeneity as it would become in the 1980s, their activism possessed the basis for redress of colonial injustice continued in perpetuity by nation-states. At the core of La Alianza, and New Mexico Native American activism for the redress of land and cultural rights violations lay in the guarantees outlined in Articles VIII, IX, X of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that entitled Mexican citizens the right to maintaining their lands and upholding their culture vis-à-vis language rights. Although compartmentalized in the Treaty, land and culture were rights dependent on one another. Consequently, Anglo land grabbing in the Southwest after the U.S.-Mexico War threatened the cultural survival of Native American and Mexican communities.³²

These land grants were taken by corrupt U.S. government institutions that, according to La Alianza, committed egregious fraud:

... both Congress and the Court of Private Land Claims (1891-1900) together patented only about 6.5 million acres to grant holders; and much of this was to Anglos (e.g. the 1.7 million acre Maxwell Land Grant) and other fraudulent conspiracies such as involved Kit Carson (a many time perjurer) Thomas B. Catron, and his famous Santa Fe Ring."³³

³² "The Alianza: What, Where, and Why, n.d." in Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Sanfords, Calif.

³³ "The Alianza: What, Where, and Why, n.d." in Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Sanfords, Calif.

The relevancy of the Treaty as an avenue to address land and cultural rights for Chicana/o land grant communities became the La Alianza's central point of advocacy in demanding community autonomy.³⁴ Moreover, the violation of the Treaty became the central emphasis on which, according to La Alianza and activists since the Chicana/o Movement, gave Chicanas and Chicanos avenues of redress in national and international governing institutions to demand community autonomy and land rights.

La Alianza's demands for cultural survival and land rights were based in Tijerina's analysis of the events surrounding the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Protocol of Querétaro. As he stated,

...Oh yes! (looks through book) See, Treaty series no. 207, Mexico, 1848. That's where it begins. The whole history is here. Article X was stricken out. Now, Mexico accepted it stricken out, with the condition that the protocol would be inserted. But the United States has now claimed that the protocol is a piece of paper. But James Polk wrote in here-- you'll read it--that the protocol was a correct interpretation of the treaty. So the protocol is the strongest piece of paper that we have to guarantee every legal validity of these land grants.³⁵

He continued his depiction of the contention between Washington and ambassadors negotiating the Treaty in Mexico City in regards to the validity of the Queretaro protocol as follows:

...the United States now claims now that it's invalid. I've got everything marked down in here, the letters that they wrote to each other, see? They wrote letters to each other and boy, they fight and flames sparks all over, see? Because the United States, of course, hated the-see, De la Rosa was the Secretary of the Exterior of Mexico, and there's a letter to Clayton, see, and then he answers. And then back and forth, back and forth. And boy, hot words all over. But then you see what James Polk admitted, that it was the correct interpretation of the treaty. But in seconds, President Taylor rejected it. So the whole

³⁴ "El Tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo sera reconocido y considerado como la base mas reciente de la Alianza Federal de Mercedes, n.d.," Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

³⁵ Peter Nabokov, "Interview with Reies Lopez Tijerina, n.d.," in Audio Recordings, 1967-1977, Peter Nabokov Papers, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico. For more on the Protocol of Querétaro, refer to Susan Green, "Protocol of Querétaro (1848)," in *Multicultural America: A Multimedia Encyclopedia* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2013), <http://knowledge.sagepub.com/view/multicultural-america/n712.xml>.

sauce and fire between us and the State Department, because the State Department is the one that refused to recognize the protocol.³⁶

Given his analysis of the Protocol of Queretaro and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Tijerina notes that the Federal government should have honored laws dating back to the colonial era that gave Pueblo and Chicana/o communities the rights to community self-determination. These, according to him, were the rights that still demanded redress after the Civil Rights era, which La Alianza attempted to push through Congress during the 1970s.³⁷

La Alianza demanded community autonomy by highlighting the hypocrisies of U.S. judicial and legislative institutions. Citing violations of the Laws of the Indies upheld by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, La Alianza noted the unwillingness of the Supreme Court to uphold this precedent and the culpability of the U.S. government for its own possession of stolen lands:

First... the Supreme Court has repeatedly stated that this is a question to be settled by the Congress and only in a few instances has Congress yet done so. Second, most of the land we are talking about is still occupied by the U.S. government itself, primarily in the National Forests.³⁸

As a result, La Alianza sought action from Congress, and was determined to take the issue to the United Nations given the global and historic context of rights guaranteed by colonial and national powers. La Alianza's primary focus was on the U.S. government's possession of stolen land, of which they demanded the following:

(1) The U.S. Federal government recognize violaciones of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; (2) that the U.S. federal government open negotiations with la Alianza Federal de las Mercedes; (3) The federal government should fund the research for the case; (5) The U.S. fund a tribunal; (6) Que el Gobierno Federal nos de garantia DE NOVO, sobre

³⁶ Peter Nabokov, "Interview with Reies Lopez Tijerina, October 6," Audio Recordings, 1967-1977, Peter Nabokov Papers, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

³⁷ Cecilio García Camarillo, "Reies López Tijerina on Espejos de Aztlan, May 31, 1999," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

³⁸ "The Alianza: What, Where, and Why, n.d." in Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Sanfords, Calif.

nuestros derechos de cultura, según lo estipulado en el PROTOCOLO del Tratado de Guadalupe; (7) demand attention to these demands within the limits of justice.³⁹

Garnering support from congressmen and senators, La Alianza had their demands heard in Congress vis-à-vis the Community Land Grant Act.

During the early and mid 1970s, Harry B. Gonzalez introduced the Community Land Grant Act in the House of Representatives several times, of which the first was on March 13, 1969.⁴⁰ The Community Land Grant Act upheld La Alianza's linking of communal land ownership and cultural survival.⁴¹ In the early and mid 1970s, Gonzalez reintroduced the resolution in the Senate, while Rep. Augustus Hawkins of Los Angeles, CA. supported the bill in the House.⁴² Hawkins introduced the final iteration of the Act on January 28, 1975 in the House, and it still maintained the core of La Alianza's demands, albeit a little watered down:

...the purpose of this Act is to fulfill the obligations of the United States undertaken in the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo of 1848. Declares that these obligations are: (1) to guarantee, and, when necessary, to restore the community land grants belonging to the descendants of the former Mexican citizens; (2) to protect the civil and property rights of such descendants now citizens of the United States; and (3) to secure effectively the right of such descendants to self-determination consistent with their status as U.S. citizens.⁴³

In his 1975 address to the Senate, Sen. Gonzalez noted the culpability of Congress in the land grabbing of the late nineteenth-century required Congress to remedy the harm:

The federal government, under authorization by Congress, saw fit to establish an adjudicatory body, the court of provident claims, for the purpose of settling land claims, the court worked from 1891 until 1904, approximately 300 private claims were adjudicated. The commission did not, however, settle the questions of ownership any title of the Pueblo, or Community grants. The reasons for the commission ignoring

³⁹ "Nosotros Los Herederos de las Mercedes REALES, n.d.," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁴⁰ Henry Gonzalez, "House Resolution 318, March 13, 1969," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁴¹ Peter Nabokov, "Interview with Reies Lopez Tijerina, October 6, (find year)," in the Peter Nabokov, "Interview with Reies Lopez Tijerina, October 6," Audio Recordings, 1967-1977, Peter Nabokov Papers, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁴² Augustus Hawkins, "H.R.9422 – 90th Congress (1971-1972): Community Land Grant Act," legislation, June 24, 1971;" and "H.R.5937 – 93rd Congress (1974-1975): Community Land Grant Act", legislation, April 14, 1975."

⁴³ Augustus Hawkins, "H.R.2207 - 94th Congress (1975-1976): Community Land Grant Act," legislation, January 28, 1975, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/94th-congress/house-bill/2207>.

legitimate claims by Pueblo members has never been clear to the descendants and heirs of the pueblo residents. The land is now under federal control, in the form of National Forests, Parks, Lease Lands, other federal programs and agencies.⁴⁴

He continued in his weekly column to criticize Congress for not addressing land rights in the Southwest in his February 16, 1975:

I have introduced this resolution now for several Congresses. I have no indication that it will get any further this Congress, than it has in the past, but nevertheless I feel I should reiterate my position that there is a need for a study of the Spanish land-grants and to try to resolve the suits and claims which are pending in our courts. I feel that it is still imperative that we be sure that no persons were bilked out of the rightful land.⁴⁵

Although some efforts were made to establish a commission to study the land grant issue, most of the Community Land Grant Act failed to make it out of the Committee on Insular Affairs. As Sen. Gonzalez expected, Congress failed to redress land and self-determination as a civil rights issue.

Through their advocacy, La Alianza revealed the national and international obligation to address the U.S. government's violation of the Treaty of Guadalupe and the inherent relationship between community survival and land rights. However, an examination of these advocacies alone does not demonstrate how La Alianza was bridging Native American and Chicana/o concerns over treaty violations in coeval ways. In fact, La Alianza struggled through out its existence in basing their land claims in rights of Spanish colonial settlement, while at the same time seeking Native American alliances. This struggle led to attempts to bring together Native American and Chicana/o grievances regarding land rights violations in line with each other through alliances. La Alianza demonstrated this during the Poor Peoples Campaign, as mentioned before, and beyond in New Mexico attempting to work with Native American communities. The following section of this chapter demonstrates how Chicana/o and Native

⁴⁴ Henry Gonzalez, "Address to Senate, n.d (1975)" in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁴⁵ Henry B. Gonzalez, "Weekly Column, February 16, 1975" in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

American demands for land rights coalesced during the Chicana/o Movement. These alliances and coalescence of movements set the stage for future Chicana/o Indigenous cultural revitalization within international movements to redress treaty rights and human rights violations towards Indigenous Peoples.

Intersections of Chicana/o and Native American Land Rights Activism

The ways in which La Alianza's attempted to align their land rights claims in cohort with Native American ones is better understood when examining how they worked with Indigenous communities to advocate redress of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. As La Alianza President, Tijerina himself expressed his intent to relate Chicana/o and Native American land rights:

Antes que yo empezara la lucha, consulte a los indios, yo fui a Taos y hablé con el gobernador. Cuando comencé! Porque mi consciencia me decía que los indios tenían los mayores derechos, los viejos, los ancianos. Habían estado aquí primero. Aunque éramos Indo-Hispanos, nuestra madre había sido indígena, pero nuestro padre había sido español. Y pedíamos...consulte al gobernador del pueblo de Taos y al gobernador de Santo Domingo, y otros gobernadores antes de comenzar La Alianza. Consulté y pedí permiso de ellos. Y todos me apollaron. Pues la prensa nunca dijo eso porque la prensa quería crear oído contra la causa, contra La Alianza. Crear una campaña negativa. [Before I began the struggle, I consulted Native Americans, I went to Taos and spoke with the governor. When I started! Because my conscious told me that Native Americans had the most rights, the old ones, the elders. They were here first. Even though we were Indo-Hispanos, our mother was Indigenous, but our father was a Spaniard. We asked...I consulted the governor of the Taos Pueblo, the governor of Santo Domingo [Pueblo], and other governors before I began La Alianza. I consulted and asked permission from them. And they all supported me. The press never mentioned this because the press wanted to create hate against the cause, against La Alianza. Create a negative campaign.]⁴⁶

Prior to the founding of La Alianza in 1963, Tijerina met with Pueblo Indian governors, Apaches, and Frank Tom-Pee-Saw of the League of Nations-Pan-American Indians who during the 1950s petitioned for recognition at the United Nations. His more established connections with Native American communities, however, were with the Hopi community of Hotevilla,

⁴⁶ Cecilio García Camarillo, "Reies López Tijerina on Espejos de Aztlan, May 31, 1999," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

which itself had an established history of rejecting U.S. influence through the BIA.⁴⁷ Tijerina's efforts to build alliances with the Hopi of Hotevilla demonstrate critical divergences from the Spanish colonial intent of settlement and domination.

La Alianza's support of the Hopi's claims of autonomy demonstrates a convergence, albeit partial, of Chicana/o and Native American self-determination claims. La Alianza formed bonds with Hopi activists Thomas Banyacya, who also sought national and international redress of violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Banyacya had worked since the 1940s to seek an avenue for the recognition of Hopi independence, which he claimed was outlined in the 1847 Disturnell Map, attached to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, that noted the Hopi had remained independent since the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.⁴⁸ In the 1960s, Banyacya's claims for Hopi independence revolved around a rejection of the war in Viet-nam and the draft of Hopi young men.⁴⁹ Banyacya reasserted Hopi independence vis-à-vis the guarantees in the Treaty of Guadalupe and autonomous land rights upheld by the Supreme Court in 1876. As a result, he upheld the right to seek redress at international forums and implore the Mexican government to uphold protections guaranteed in the Treaty. As Banyacya stated:

The Supreme Court of the United States in 1876 rendered the decision that the Pueblo Indians hold their lands superior to that of the United States, so now it is 1966, and what would a WORLD COURT decide against the United States? Mexico could and should be the precision instrument by which The Hopi Independent Nation gets upon the docket for a hearing before the Nations, that justice may reign and the cause of peace be served. This is the responsibility of Mexico. May she not shirk or evade. We implore assistance.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Lorena Oropeza, "Becoming Indo-Hispano: Reies López Tijerina and the New Mexican Land Grant Movement," in Alyosha Goldstein, ed., *Formations of United States Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2014) 197-199.

⁴⁸ Refer to Disturnell Map discussion in *Amoxili San Ce Tojuan: We Are One—Nosotros Somos Uno*.

⁴⁹ The Hopi House, "Letter to the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., October 11, 1966," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁵⁰ The Hopi House, "Letter to the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., October 11, 1966," in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research. Here, the Hopi House is referring to *United States v. Joseph*, 1876 by ruling that Pueblo Indians "hold their lands by a right superior to that of the United States. Their title dates back to grants made by the government of Spain before the Mexican revolution -- a title which was fully recognized by the Mexican government, and protected by it in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, by

Banyacya's reliance on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in his opposition to U.S. imperialism converged with similar claims by La Alianza. Even though the 1680 Pueblo Revolt that rejected Spanish colonial rule is prominent in Banyacya's argument for independence, Banyacya did not reject working with La Alianza who in some ways based their land ownership in upholding the laws of Spanish colonialism.

When Tijerina and La Alianza took over the Echo Amphitheater Park in the Carson National Forests in October of 1966, Banyacya supported La Alianza's claim that the land belonged to land grant heirs as outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.⁵¹ He went on to further describe the similarities between the Hopi and the Chicana/o land grant struggles when he stated to La Alianza:

I have also received...more documents as to what area Hopi or Moki have rights to land under the Mexican government and Spain perhaps. This is what the U.S. Government should respect or protect but failed to do so like your land-grants.⁵²

Similarly, La Alianza member Gerry Noll expressed the similarity of the Hopi and La Alianza struggles for rights within the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and expresses the historical conjuncture of these two groups in stating, "The meeting and understanding our people came to is of great historical significance; for it is the first of such since 1680, that is, in 286 years."⁵³ As

which this country and the allegiance of its inhabitants were transferred to the United States." For more on this case, refer to "United States v. Joseph 94 U.S. 614 (1876)," *Justia Law*, accessed May 30, 2015, <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/94/614/case.html>. For more on courts role in Mexican and Native American land rights in relation to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, refer to Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans*, 1st ed, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001) 215-276.

⁵¹ Thomas Banyacya, "Letter to Gerry Noll of La Alianza, December 12, 1966" in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁵² Thomas Banyacya, "Letter to Feliberto Garcia of La Alianza, December 14, 1966" in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research. "Mokis" or Moquies is the name of the Hopi in the 1847 Disturnell map.

⁵³ Gerry Noll, "Letter to Thomas Banyacya, December 19, 1966" in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research. For *mestizo* and Indian alliances during the 1680 Pueblo Revolt, refer to Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*, 43; Gómez-Quíñones, *Roots of Chicano Politics, 1600-1940*, 31-33; Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race*, 92.

a result, the convergence of land grant and independence claims led to mutual support in activism between the Hotevilla community and La Alianza.

La Alianza and Hotevilla collaboration resulted in joint advocacy and activism through a redress of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. For his part, Banyacya advocated for a transnational alliance between the Hopi, La Alianza, Indigenous Peoples of México, and the Mexican government in an effort to overthrow the BIA supported Hopi “puppet” government and regain Hopi independence.⁵⁴ Although transnational alliances materialized beyond the early 1970s, Banyacya was successful in working with La Alianza in advocating directly to federal U.S. officials. In March of 1967, Banyacya helped arrange a meeting with BIA commissioner Robert Bennett, in which he hoped La Alianza could also advocate their claims to land rights guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.⁵⁵ For their part, La Alianza gained a response of their queries from New Mexico State Department Legal Advisor Andrew Brennan, whom advised Alianza members to question Mexico’s pre-1848 title to New Mexico, and thus, subverting the U.S. claim via treaty.⁵⁶ Furthermore, La Alianza sought participation of Banyacya in their October 1967 convention in Albuquerque, NM to help him spread his message of Hopi independence through television coverage of the conference. This alliance between La Alianza and Hopi from Hotevilla demonstrates a radical shift in Chicana/o activism that upheld Indigenous sovereignty in relation to Chicana/o human rights struggles.

Although La Alianza never accomplished an explicit denouncement of Spanish colonial rule, their activism laid the groundwork for later critiques of the two layers of colonial logic imposed on the Southwest through Spanish and U.S. conquest. La Alianza demonstrated that if Chicana/o critiques of conquest and colonialism were to be decolonial, the critiques had to be in

⁵⁴ The Hopi House, “Letter to the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., October 11, 1966”

⁵⁵ Thomas Banyacya, “Letter to Reies Lopez Tijerina, March 7, 1967,” Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁵⁶ Gerry Noll, “Letter to Thomas Banyacya, March 9, 1967” in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

conjunction with Native American sovereignty claims. La Alianza attempted this by claiming both Native American and Chicana/o communities maintained degrees of autonomy as city-states in the colonial Southwest:

A free city-state, also known as a “pueblo,” is the approximate English description of the status of the community land grants under the laws of the Indies. In general, each pueblo had its own flag, municipal government, administration building, police force, judge, mayor, seal, and other such independence attributes. The heavy majority—often over 95%—of the land was held in common (the ejido) for use by all and could under no circumstances be alienated (except for short term leasing for the benefit of the entire pueblo as propios.) The only hereditary land was the small parcels of each family’s private plot for the dwelling house and garden; and these required actual living on the premises—absentee ownership was not permitted. Outsiders, as long as the council (ayuntamiento) did not disapprove, were welcome to enter, receive a parcel of land, and start life as a member of the pueblo. In many ways, the pueblo is like the “Indian” pueblo in New Mexico today.⁵⁷

Here, La Alianza overlooks the context of violence that upheld “pueblo” communities rights under the Laws of the Indies. However, their historical imagination demonstrates a desire to establish autonomous coeval Chicana/o and Native American communities as a means to move beyond the legacy of colonialism. This, however, required reconciliation of competing land claims.

Given that land has been disputed as part of a long history of conquest and violence dating back to 1598 in the Southwest, La Alianza struggled to position itself as oppositional to U.S. conquest without owning up to the role of mixed heritage and assimilated Indigenous Peoples in the conquest of the Southwest during Spanish colonialism. When questioned regarding overcoming conflicting Native American and Chicana/o land claims stemming from colonial violence, La Alianza attempted to reconcile the two the following way:

This question is an important one, even though its form does decided injustice to the “Indians” in suggesting the lack of merit of their claims. First, under the Laws of the Indies, the “Indians” were rather substantially protected in their property rights as well as in their persons and civil rights. Spanish settlements would not be established with many

⁵⁷ “The Alianza: What, Where, and Why, n.d.” in Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.

miles of “Indian” ones. Philip II of Spain established first civil rights law in the Americas in 1573 setting forth the absolute equality under the law of the offspring of Spaniards and “Indians.” On the other hand the Anglo-American policy toward “Indians” was simple: Extermination! It is interesting to note that, while only about 600,000 “Indians” are alive today in the U.S. north of the Rio Bravo (Rio Grande), nearly 100,000,000 are living south of it. And we must remember that even today in the U.S. by the Constitution itself “Indians” are second-class citizens. Second, the ancestry of the heavy majority of “Indo-Hispanos” (Mexican Americans, Chicanos, Spanish-Americans) in the U.S. is overwhelming “Indian.” (And, of course, these “Indians”—present in the Americas for tens of thousands of years excelled their fellow men throughout the world in many, many pursuits, including, some are beginning to believe, how to live life itself). For this latter reason, the argument of “returning the land to the Indians” in fact strongly reinforces the Alianza’s position.”⁵⁸

By omitting the violence during the colonial era, La Alianza sought a focus on the immediate abuses of power from the U.S. and New Mexico governments. They importantly note the severity of U.S. conquest. However, at the same time La Alianza insufficiently addressed the need to also redress the violations by the Spanish and Mexican governments of Indigenous Peoples sovereignty. La Alianza’s insufficiencies reveal a lack of engaging the cultural legacies of Spanish colonialism, along with that of U.S. conquest, which demonstrated La Alianza’s confusion due to a lack of understanding of the dual context of colonialism in the Southwest.⁵⁹ In other words, the creation of the Indo-Hispano was built on the violent dispossession of Indigenous People’s lands and communities, and remedying that context required peeling back further on the colonial context of the Southwest underneath the layer established in 1848.

La Alianza insufficiently engaged the violent legacy of Spanish colonialism in the Southwest. One can argue that the historical scholarship was insufficient in this regard, since scholarship that existed at the time by and large lauded Spanish colonialism. Nevertheless, La Alianza’s efforts do demonstrate an important divergence from Spanish colonial legacy. As Gerry Noll mentioned, La Alianza’s activism marked first time since perhaps the 1680 Pueblo revolt that Native American and Mexican communities worked together to contest colonialism.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ For more on “double colonization context,” refer to Gómez, *Manifest Destinies*, 47.

Based in La Alianza's examination of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and their analysis of the Laws of the Indies, La Alianza highlighted rights promised and denied to Indigenous and mixed heritage peoples under Spanish colonialism and the Mexican national state. Thus, similar to Native American treaty advocacy in other parts of the U.S., La Alianza and its Native American allies sought the redress of rights promised to them by two colonizing powers. Realization that Chicana/o communities formed part of this history in the Southwest helped La Alianza set the precedent for articulating rights and privileges of mixed heritage populations in ways that ran coeval to Native American sovereignty struggles; not in competition with them. These land based articulations of privilege, rights, and justice set the foundation for Chicana/o activists to root their Indigeneity in the broader support for Indigenous People's rights in the Americas.

Culture and Self-determination: The Crusade for Justice

Along with La Alianza, the Crusade For Justice in Denver, CO provided integral steps toward the binding of Chicana/o Indigenous cultural revitalization with the demands for self-determination, which was an integral concept of the Chicana/o Movement and covertly or overtly important to Indigenous activism. Formed in 1966, the Crusade for Justice was a community organization that consisted of about thirty working-class Chicana/o families and worked towards gaining civil rights for Mexican-American communities, challenged discrimination in schools and police brutality, and supported community cultural programs.⁶⁰ The Crusade for Justice's activism during the Chicana/o Movement highlighted culture as an inherent human right, protected by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which they integrated in their calls for the protection of Chicana/o civil rights. These, in turn, demanded the autonomous control of

⁶⁰ Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez, *Making Aztlán: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* (UNM Press, 2014) 116. For an extensive examination of the Crusade for Justice's political organizing, and the violent response by police and the FBI, refer to Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice*.

Chicana/o communities by Chicanas and Chicanos, in the Crusade for Justice's call for community self-determination. Through the Crusade for Justice's organizing, they thus promoted the integral role cultural survival as part of the political organizing to establish community self-determination.

During the Chicana/o Movement, the Crusade for Justice sought community self-determination as a means of ensuring cultural survival. To accomplish this, the Crusade for Justice members emphasized creating a national movement to address the civil rights needs of Chicana/o communities. Their participation in the 1968 Poor Peoples Campaign is demonstrative of the goal to create a national awareness of Chicana/o populations and the need for the U.S. government to address violations of their cultural and land rights. There, Crusade for Justice members distributed their Plan del Barrio, in which they stated:

We are basically a communal people...in the pattern of our Indian ancestors. Part of our cultural rights and cultural strengths are our communal values. We lived together for over a century and never fenced our lands."⁶¹

Here, Rodolfo Gonzales, Crusade for Justice President and author of the Plan del Barrio, stresses a historical consciousness of community organization based on Indigenous heritage. By proposing this view of Chicanas and Chicanos on a national stage, Gonzales was integrating the necessary role of cultural rights in the institution of civil rights protections in Chicana/o communities.

Within El Plan del Barrio, Gonzales also noted the obligation of the U.S. government to respect Chicana/o communities' right to cultural autonomy as outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo:

⁶¹ Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, "El Plan del Barrio," in Rodolfo Gonzales, *Message to Aztlán: Selected Writings of Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales*, Hispanic Civil Rights Series (Houston, Tex: Arte Público Press, 2001) 32. An unabridged version of El Plan del Barrio is available as "Mexican-American Demands: Demand from Denver Group, 1968," Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

Because our cultural rights are guaranteed by treaty and because the U.S. says in its constitution that all treaties are to be the law of the land...we demand the kind of living areas, working places, educational and recreational facilities be planned by U.S. to reflect our cultural needs and cultural strengths.”⁶²

As a result of protections of cultural rights guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and an government obligation to respect the democratic participation of all citizens, Gonzales demanded the following: 1) Housing resources that made it “...possible for extended family homes be situated in a communal style...”; 2) Educational institutions that supported communal cultural arrangements that were free of charge all the way through college, an education that was bilingual, and demonstrated Chicana/o historical and social contributions to society in the Southwest; 3) Community owned and operated businesses that maintained capital in Chicana/o communities; 4) Agricultural reforms that redressed the land lost by illegal seizure after the U.S.-México war in violation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; 5) Community controlled job training and professional development, abolishment of racist practices in hiring processes, and the resources to organize laborers and professionals in trade unions; and 6) the immediate investigation of police brutality and wrongful imprisonment that disproportionately affected Chicana/o, African American, and Native American communities and the eventual abolishment of the police to be replaced by a neighborhood controlled protection that made the necessary conflict resolution decisions that ensured community safety.⁶³ The demands made by the Crusade for Justice as part of the Southwest contingent of the Poor Peoples Campaign demonstrated its goal to link the cultural survival of Chicanas and Chicanos with Civil Rights they were entitled to as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the U.S. Constitution.

⁶² Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, “El Plan del Barrio,” in “Mexican-American Demands: Demand from Denver Group, 1968,” Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁶³ Ibid. For a more accessible abridged version, refer to Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, “El Plan del Barrio,” in Gonzales, *Message to Aztlán*, 32-34.

The Crusade for Justice further highlighted the role of education as an integral guarantee to protecting Chicana/o civil rights to cultural survival. In a statement to the Office of Education during the Poor Peoples Campaign, Gonzales referred to the state of public schools from the kindergarten to college levels as the “psychological ethnic destruction by the over-whelming brainwashing machine called education...” and further states, “We will no longer accept placidly to be socially castrated nor will we any longer allow our brothers to commit ethnic suicide and deny their heritage of their people.”⁶⁴ To remedy this violation of the right to cultural survival, Gonzales and the Crusade for Justice demanded that the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, through the Office of Education, include curriculum on Mexican Americans in all schools, repay all students for “psychological destruction” by making all education to the college level free, compliance with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo by providing bi-lingual education, and the creation of neighborhood controlled school boards.⁶⁵ He further demanded that the federal government withhold funds from school districts “...employing teachers, curriculum and textbooks which distort and/or omit the history, contributions and language of the Mexican-Americans.”⁶⁶ The integral role of education in cultural survival formed part of a broader effort among the Crusade for Justice to bring national attention to Chicana/o specific demands and to create the necessary national connections to support this advocacy through activist networks.

Creating A National Base

The Crusade for Justice’s efforts to create a national base of activists in tune with the specificity of Chicana/o communities demands for civil and land rights based in culture stemmed from the organization’s driving philosophy of nationalism. The 1969 Denver Youth Conference outlined

⁶⁴ Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, “Poor Peoples Campaign Statement: Office of Education, 1968,” Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Poor Peoples Campaign Press Release, 1968,” in Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

Chicana/o nationalism in the Plan de Aztlán in which members of the Crusade for Justice in conjunction with youth organizations from across the country announced:

El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán sets the theme that the Chicanos (La Raza de Bronze) must use their nationalism as the key or common denominator for mass mobilization and organization. Once we are committed to the idea and philosophy of El Plan de Aztlán, we can only conclude that social, economic, cultural, and political independence is the only road to total liberation from oppression, exploitation, and racism. Our struggle then must be for the control of our barrios, campos, pueblos, lands, our economy, our culture, and our political life. El Plan commits all levels of Chicano society - the barrio, the campo, the rancho, the writer, the teacher, the worker, the professional - to La Causa.⁶⁷

They further outlined their goals of national unity across socioeconomic classes, economic, social, and political self-determination, as well as an awareness of cultural history and values that, according to the Crusade for Justice, strengthened the Chicana/o Movement.⁶⁸ By 1969, then, the Crusade for Justice began broadening the emphasis on Civil Rights more towards the global anti-colonial politics of liberation. To be sure, there are no clear demarcations in time regarding coeval anti-colonial and Civil Rights movements. Moreover, as outlined in the first chapter of this dissertation, anti-colonial nationalisms are not free of colonial logics of power, of which Chicano Nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s followed in trend. Nevertheless, the declarative tone of liberation gained strength with the Plan de Aztlán due to the Crusade for Justice's successes in nationalizing Chicana/o cultural ideas related to the right to self-determination. The Crusade for Justice helped many other urban Chicanas and Chicanos understand, along with all U.S. inhabitants, that gross historic violations of Chicana/o human rights required specific redress of cultural and land rights denied.

The Crusade for Justice's national promotion of the links between cultural survival and land rights was guided by a liberatory interpretation of nationalism. In his 1972 address to the

⁶⁷ *El Plan Espiritual De Aztlan*, 1969.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Congreso on Land and Cultural Reform, Gonzales explained the links between nationalism, cultural survival, and liberation as follows:

There is no greater issue in any social, economic or political struggle than land. Land is the base on which our cultural values are created. Land then is necessary to create a nation with a political philosophy constructed on unity, unity of a total people based on our common history, our culture and our roots.⁶⁹

Gonzales hammered on the issue of land constantly, which of course referred to holdings in his state of Colorado. However, he also demonstrated important queries regarding what “land” meant in urban territories. He further explains the unification of cultural survival and nationalism as an attempt to organize activists under a shared goal of liberation as follows:

The cultural step of identity has been taken and we see an awakening and awareness coming alive across Aztlán. The second step of nationalism...we use as a tool to organize, not as a weapon for hatred nor a shield for people who are guilty of treason to protect themselves. The third step is understanding how the class system is used to divide us...The Chicano struggle in relation to land, culture and political movement must embrace a collective struggle of the people against individual selfishness, greed and opportunism. Our people educated around these ideals can and will create a real Raza Unida.⁷⁰

In his address, Gonzales demonstrates the potential for nationalism to provide an avenue for Chicana/o activists to challenge the individualistic paths to self-determination under the guise of professional opportunity. In other words, Gonzales called for the self-determined success of Chicana/o communities without having to assimilate to U.S. social and political norms of capitalism and oppression. Instead, he called for the unification of multi-class interests within the Chicana/o Movement that aligned the goals of professionals, workers, and youth with the cultural survival of the community centered on autonomous lands.

The Crusade for Justice’s pursuit of a spatial base for the Chicana/o Movement, however, was not free of the contradictions of anti-colonial parameters of proto-nationalistic discourse.

⁶⁹ Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, “Message to el Congreso on Land and Cultural Reform,” in Gonzales, *Message to Aztlán*, 238-239. Originally appeared in *El Gallo: La Voz de Justicia*, (Oct. 1972).

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 239-240.

This discourse struggles with unresolved queries that question whether or not the nation state is a continuation of the colonial process and whether the state is a political logical conclusion of colonialism. The matter of land claims in the context anti-colonial discourse are always convoluted and in contention. Land claims are especially pertinent in the Americas where all land is Indigenous land usurped at some point after 1492. However, the Crusade for Justice, like La Alianza, also marked an important change trajectory towards recognizing how Chicana/o land claims formed part of broader challenge to colonial land usurpation. So, instead of continuing the trend of Indigenous land usurpation, the Crusade for Justice also formed alliances with Native American activists struggling for sovereignty rights. In doing so, the Crusade for Justice also helped form the bonds that set the stage for transnational Indigenous Peoples coalitions inclusive of Chicanas and Chicanos as Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Alliances and Supporting Sovereignty

The Crusade for Justice's nationalism developed in conjunction with support for Native American struggles for land rights and political sovereignty. This occurred the most with the Crusade for Justice's collaboration with the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the early and mid 1970s. Within the context of anti-colonial ideas about liberation, Crusade for Justice members, along with other activists of the Chicana/o Movement, re-interpreted their *mestizaje* mythological origins in cohort with American Indian sovereignty, and not as a replacement for it as had been the case for Mexican nationalist after the 1910 revolution. As author and Crusade for Justice member Ernesto Vigil states, "the stress on Mexican History and the identity of Mexican People, that is what predisposed us to be very sympathetic to the struggle of Native People"⁷¹

⁷¹ Ernesto Vigil, "Personal Interview," by José Luis Serrano Nájera, Feb. 29, 2012.

Apart from solidarity at the Poor People's Campaign, the Crusade for Justices' sympathy towards Native American sovereignty struggles materialized in the form of providing Wounded Knee AIM activists supplies, participating in the occupation of Pine Ridge reservation which resulted in the shooting of Chicano medic Rocky Madrid, and the transnational organization of Chicana/o and Puerto Rican activists to plan support protests in Denver, New Mexico, New York, Los Angeles, and Mexico City. The Denver Protest alone gathered approximately 1200 protesters in support of AIM's struggle at Wounded Knee.⁷² These protests demonstrated a commitment to prioritizing Native American sovereignty struggles as a primary step to challenge U.S. conquest and colonialism. Furthermore, the Crusade for Justice provided confidential and specific assistance to AIM activists at their times of need. In prioritizing AIM's struggle to redress Native American sovereignty violations, the Crusade for Justice also began engaging historic familial bonds between Native Americans, Chicanas, and Chicanos in the Southwest in ways that upheld the cultural and social survival of Indigenous communities.

To be sure, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, familial ties between Native Americans, Chicanas, and Chicanos in the Southwest have been characterized by both unified resistance to colonialism and conflict. Both stem in large measure from Spanish and Mexican impositions dating back to the colonial and postcolonial order. The U.S. imposition aggravated prior impositions and imposed modern practices of control and domination of minorities. Nevertheless, if Native American and Mexican relations are historically familial, like all families, some are more harmonious than others, especially given the contexts of colonial and post colonial dominations. During the 1960s and 1970s Chicana/o and American Indian Movements, within the context of anti-colonial ideas about liberation, these relationships took

⁷² For the shooting of Rocky Madrid, refer to Smith, *Like a Hurricane*, 225. For Crusade for Justice support of Wounded Knee occupation, refer to Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice* 202-205.

more collaborative and politicized trajectories. As Ernesto Vigil states, familial ties both stemmed from and contributed to Crusade for Justice and AIM collaborative political organizing:

...one of the founders of AIM was Clyde Bellecourt, whose brother Vernon Bellecourt lived in Denver. He formed an AIM chapter in 1970. And by that time, my girlfriend, later to be my wife, was Jessica Bordeaux, whose father is from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota. They are of the Sicangu band of Lakota on the Rosebud reservation. Many of her family members, her father, big Jesse Bordeaux, her brother Jesse Max Bordeaux, her sister Linda Bordeaux, her sister Janet Bordeaux, and her grandmother Alice Blackhorse and their cousins in the holy elk face family were all key members of the original Denver AIM chapter. So through that marriage, we also had ties into the AIM chapter in Denver and those ties were stronger from 1970-1973, and they endured as long as the Denver AIM chapter stayed alive, which was up until late 1976. And in the course of our support for these various Native struggles, we were able to host Vernon and Clyde Bellecourt, Thomas Banyacya, Russell Means and Dennis Banks, the Bridges sisters, Hank Adams.⁷³

By utilizing familial connections to collaborate, Crusade for Justice and AIM activists constructed the networks that continue to support transnational Indigenous Peoples rights movements. Further, transnational connections, defined and constituted by Indigenous bonds, helped further push Chicana/o Movement and AIM activism towards a decolonial effort across the Americas in the late twentieth-century.

Like La Alianza, the Crusade for Justice also promoted transnational unity among Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Native Americans in the Southwest through relations with Hopi from Hotevilla and further south. For Vigil, Hopi Nation traditionalist leader Thomas Banyacya stood out as an effectual leader in promoting this transnational cultural perspective. Banyacya emphasized transnational unity as a basis for cultural survival in Mexican and Indigenous communities on both sides of the border. As part of Hopi oral history, Banyacya promoted cultural connections between Mexicans and Hopi. As Vigil explains:

In terms of their folklore or oral history, they view themselves as linked to the Mexica...and in fact the common language...all these languages have common roots. There were those commonalities. So people like Thomas Banyacya talked about prophecies where the native people of Mexico and the Native People of the Southwest

⁷³ Ernesto Vigil, "Personal Interview," by José Luis Serrano Nájera, Feb. 29, 2012.

would unify. So he would talk all these prophecies and he believed, and carried forth his belief to action to seek out Mexican communities, Mexican organizations, Mexican struggles to give his support and seek support for those things that were dear to the hearts of the Hopi. He was sort of a roaming ambassador for the traditionalist in his own community.⁷⁴

Although Chicana/o transnational Indigenous activism would take hold in the 1980s, the Crusade for Justice's hosting of leaders such as Banyacya helped root the discussion of Chicana/o Indigeneity in human relations among Chicana/o and Indigenous communities.

Beginning in the late 1960s with discussion of *mestizaje*, as demonstrated by Gonzales' 1968 poem "I am Joaquín," to the forming of solidified political alliances with AIM in the mid 1970s, the Crusade for Justice exemplifies how the Chicana/o Movement changed Chicana/o cultural attitudes regarding Indigeneity. Their maturation in cultural philosophy demonstrated that "*mestizo*" remained another colonial legacy to be reckoned with. The Crusade for Justice's struggles to ensure cultural survival within political and social institutions would further and further push Chicanas and Chicanos to consider how that survival is tied to Indigenous heritage, and relations with Indigenous Peoples. Critical engagement of the colonial logics of Spanish colonialism implicit in Mexican ideas about *mestizaje* remained elusive during the Chicana/o Movement. Organizations like the Crusade for Justice helped engage this cultural heritage in ways that upheld Native American struggles to redress the effects of colonialism, and as such, incremented the still developing push for the decolonization of the Americas.

Conclusion

La Alianza Federal de Mercedes and the Crusade for Justice shifted the discussion of Chicana/o civil rights into the historic context of anti-colonial liberation. By broadening the discussion of Civil Rights denied in the U.S. to centuries of colonial/modern violence towards Indigenous

⁷⁴ Ernesto Vigil, "Personal Interview," by José Luis Serrano Nájera, Feb. 29, 2012.

Peoples in the Americas, these Chicana/o Movement activists, among others, set the stage for critical historical inquiries of Chicana/o Indigeneity. These activists aligned these inquiries with the broader decolonization of the Americas through the support of Indigenous Peoples sovereignty and overall community self-determination. At the core of decolonization has been the remedy of colonial land dispossession and cultural survival for Indigenous Peoples. The Chicana/o Movement, American Indian Movement, and the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., under the influence of post-WWI global anti-colonial struggles, helped bridge the concerns of Chicana/o and Native American activists into unified demands for land rights and the right to cultural self-determination.

La Alianza, in conjunction with Native American activists, helped push for governing institutions to recognize a need to redress land rights guaranteed by treaty. In terms of land rights, La Alianza demonstrated the most change over the 1960s to 1970s in regards to aligning Chicana/o land claims with Native American ones. When asked in 1999 about the legacy of La Alianza's activism on post-Chicana/o Movement Pueblo Indian successes, Tijerina expressed happiness his movement had an affect on Pueblo Indians attaining land claims from the federal government. Tijerina recalled that Taos Pueblo thanked him in the early 1970s with a birthday party for prioritizing Native American justice before any other retribution of historic injustice. They especially thanked his contribution to this retribution considering it came at the cost of Tijerina's own imprisonment. He went on to state:

Cosa que me da mucho gusto de saber ahora que ya se pagó el precio, que los mismos políticos estan admitiendo que la causa de la Alianza era justa, buena, y santa. Y por eso ahora ellos mismos, como dicen en las campañas políticas eran como John y la bandwagon. [Something I was very pleased to know today is that the price has been paid, that even the politicians are admitting that La Alianza's cause was just, good, and holy. And that is why today the politicians themselves, like they say in the political campaigns, are like John and the bandwagon.]⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Cecilio García Camarillo, "Reies López Tijerina on Espejos de Aztlan, May 31, 1999," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

As the last chapter of this dissertation demonstrates in detail, the ability to form alliances between Chicana/o land grant communities and Native American communities in New Mexico around land rights would have ramifications in future activism in New Mexico that ensured the water and land rights of these historic communities.

However, Tijerina and La Alianza did not completely engage the legacy of Spanish colonialism in the Southwest, which upheld colonial logics within the Hispanic cultures of the Southwest. Tijerina relied on mythological constructs of *mestizaje* that overlooked the complex context of violence that upheld Spanish colonial power in the Southwest for nearly three centuries. He relied on the Laws of the Indies and the Doctrine of Discovery to uphold the legitimacy of mixed heritage populations in the Americas, which upheld assimilation into Hispanic cultural norms as the means of gaining political legitimacy for human and land rights in the Americas. Taken alone, these lines of thought, whether intentional or not, amount to the support of Spanish colonialism over a U.S. one. Nevertheless, he began to query the meaning of being mixed heritage in the Southwest, if not all of the Americas, in ways that aligned with Native American sovereignty struggles in the late twentieth-century. La Alianza, and Tijerina, asserted U.S. take over of the Southwest as a conquest and colonialism, which was an important step in recognizing an anti-colonial stance is applicable to a nation-state that sells itself as a democracy. In doing this, Tijerina began the long process of regaining “Indo-Hispano,” and other mixed heritage peoples, agency in determining which trajectory to follow in a decolonial pathway.

Along with La Alianza’s queries regarding mixed heritage peoples’ agency, the Crusade for Justice further demonstrated that Chicana/o cultural survival was dependent on aligning its expression with the support of Native American sovereignty. In doing this, the Crusade for Justice, and other Chicana/o activists of the 1960s and 1970s, developed the foundation for a

discussion of Chicana/o Indigeneity in degrees that are both similar and different to those of other Indigenous Populations of the Americas. This has helped Chicana/o activists define a place for themselves in support of Indigenous Peoples struggles. As Vigil states:

I think that [the Chicana/o Movement] era has predisposed young activists in the Mexican community and the Latino community today to continue to be very supportive to show solidarity with native struggles and the struggle for native sovereignty...in terms of historical issues and questions, Mexicans and the Native Nations of the so called U.S. have treaties with the central government. Every treaty has been violated and broken.⁷⁶

The recognition of similar historic experiences with U.S. empire, in conjunction with complex relations during two and a half centuries of Spanish colonialism and Mexican state violence, set the stage for alliances and support in defense of Indigenous Peoples sovereignty in the Americas. The Crusade for Justice helped ensure these lines of support by building an enduring network of Native American and Chicana/o activists. Through these networks, the Crusade for Justice maintained a line of thought through a demand for education that supported the development of critical historical consciousness among young people.

As the next chapter in this dissertation demonstrates, an entire alternative education movement stemming from Chicana/o activism in the 1960s and 1970s helped push further discussions of Chicana/o cultural survival as intrinsically tied to the decolonial articulation of Chicana/o Indigeneity. Although the discussions of Chicana/o Indigeneity do not always sufficiently address Spanish colonialism in the Southwest, after the Chicana/o Movement they at least began to take into account how Chicana/o claims for freedoms can work in cohort with Native American struggles for sovereignty. Organizations like the Crusade for Justice helped start that discussion, began to take into account how mixed heritage peoples have aligned with past colonial projects, and opened up the discussion that would later relate Chicana/o activists to transnational decolonization of the Americas.

⁷⁶ Ernesto Vigil, "Personal Interview," by José Luis Serrano Nájera, Feb. 29, 2012.

CHAPTER 3

Pedagogical Legacies: Indigenous Consciousness, Critical Pedagogy, and Steps to Ensuring Paths to Decolonization

...[the] Tonantzin youth challenge was formed, and I'll tell you man, it brought new life into Tonantzin.¹

Introduction

There have been various influences of Chicana/o Indigenous consciousness on Chicana/o cultural self-representation and Chicana/o activism since the Chicana/o Movement. This is the process by which individuals relate aspects to Indigenous knowledge as a means to find alternatives to western hegemonic thought. For Chicanas and Chicanos, Indigeneity reflects a growing historic consciousness that: 1) on the one hand, inspired nuanced critiques of the unjust legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and a critique of current global capitalism²; and 2) on the other hand attempted to “delink”³ Chicanas and Chicanos from the epistemic hegemony of western civilization through a reappraisal of Indigenous culture. Chicanas and Chicanos of the late twentieth-century partake in a global trend of anti-colonial movements and decolonial projects that have begun to erode the universalism of western thought, and subsequently the rationale of western political hegemony.

Chicana/o Indigeneity within the context of anti-colonial thought was not possible without conscious Chicana/o Movement leaders who understood the importance of employing a method of teaching to inspire critical dialogue. This dialogue helped students’ questioning of self and the world and helped educators develop a varied curriculum. Educators helped peers

¹ David Luján, interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera, March 30, 2012.

² These critiques of power fall in line with more globalized critiques of the “coloniality of power” that is practiced by modern nation-states and transnational corporations. For more on the “coloniality of power,” refer to Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, ed. by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (New York: Routledge, 2010).

³ Here I refer to the concept of “delinking” described in Walter Mignolo, “Delinking: The Rhetoric of Modernity, The Logic of Coloniality, and the Grammar of De-Coloniality,” in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, ed. by Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar (Routledge, 2010) 303-354.

and future generations to critically reflect on the significance of history. By reflecting on history, educators inspired continued Chicana/o Movement values for human and civil rights advocacy that rectified historic injustice. One of the Chicana/o Movement's legacies has manifested itself in various pedagogical efforts to help youth and young adults develop critical consciousness of important Chicana/o Movement values. These include respect for cultural diversity and heritage, as well as a strict adherence to the democratic principles of social equality. These efforts were part of broader civil right struggles to undue generations of horrid unequal mis-education of Chicana/o children in the U.S.⁴ Chicana/o Movement social movement values demonstrate the long-term effect of the Chicana/o Movement on Chicana/o social movements and pedagogical ethos. For instance, for more than forty years, Chicana/o Studies programs in universities across the United States provide students with a social science and humanities education with curriculum on historic Mexican American civil rights struggles.⁵ The Chicana/o Movement has also influenced various pedagogical efforts outside of universities that have inspired youth by empowering them to take pride in the value of their cultural heritages. Paired with a historic consciousness of the unjust legacies of colonialism and capitalism, Chicana/o Movement activists inspired youth and young adults to utilize Chicana/o Movement values as a means to counter historic injustice and imagine a more egalitarian future.⁶

⁴ For the discrimination of Chicanas and Chicanos in public schools in the United States, refer to Guadalupe San Miguel, *“Let All of Them Take Heed”: Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981*, 1st ed, Mexican American Monograph 11 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); Gilbert G. Gonzalez, *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation*, Al Filo: Mexican American Studies Series no. 7 (Denton, Texas: UNT Press, 2013); Guadalupe San Miguel, *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*, 1st ed, University of Houston Series in Mexican American Studies no. 3 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001); and *Chicano School Failure and Success: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. by Richard Valencia, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2011).

⁵ For a history of Chicana/o Studies, refer to Rodolfo F. Acuna, *The Making of Chicana/o Studies: In the Trenches of Academe* (Rutgers University Press, 2011).

⁶ For an examination of cultural ethos during the CCM, refer to Ignacio M. García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1997).

Although the Chicana/o Movement has many cultural and political ideological legacies,⁷ in this chapter, I focus on Chicana/o activist organizations that established educational components aimed at helping youth and adults develop a critical consciousness of Chicana/o Indigenous cultural heritage and history. I highlight two phases of Chicana/o Indigenous consciousness, the first one during and shortly after the influence of Chicana/o Movement cultural ideas, and the second one within the context of transnational Indigenous Peoples human rights movements after 1980. The development of Chicana/o consciousness of Indigeneity through critical pedagogy inspired nuanced critiques of the unjust legacies of colonialism and imperialism, a critique of current global capitalism, and a critique of public education because it re-enforced the power of colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism. Through out this chapter, I employ the terms critical and pedagogy that refer to a teaching method and form that sought to inspire in youth and young adults continuous questioning of the self and the world.⁸ I demonstrate how the pedagogical legacy of the Chicana/o Movement has produced examples of teaching and learning about democratic principles of equality while at the same time emphasizing a respect for cultural diversity. The purpose of this chapter is to draw from the pedagogical legacy of the Chicana/o Movement, and its now four-decade project in ethnic revitalization of Indigeneity, a means to better understand how cultural identity and cultural diversity are connected to human struggles to attain democracy, social equality, and build community. Chicana and Chicano activists that utilized education to develop critical consciousness of Indigeneity and social justice formed part of broader twentieth-century trends that sparked and revitalized social movements. Attempts to establish alternative forms of

⁷ For various goals, intentions, consequences, and legacies of the CCM, refer to George Mariscal, *Brown-eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); and Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez, *Making Aztlán: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014).

⁸ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New rev. 30th-Anniversary ed. (New York: Continuum, 2005) 83.

education that inspired critical consciousness were integral components of twentieth-century social struggles for equality, freedom, and democracy in the Americas.⁹

This chapter provides examples of activist organizations that instituted and evolved Chicana/o Movement values for social equality and cultural diversity in formal and informal curriculums and pedagogies. The institution and evolution of these curriculums and pedagogies changed over time as *Chicanismo* and *Indigenismo* changed in relation to developments in transnational Indigenous Peoples movements in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. As adoption of *Indigenismo* grew during and after the Chicana/o Movement, some Chicana/o activists' desires to rectify inequality grew into efforts to rectify global historic injustice through involvement in transnational human rights activism. As part of this activism, activists incorporated youth through educational programs that helped young people develop ways to question domination, power, culture, and oppression in social institutions. In turn, these youth developed agency and a public voice that they utilized to demand social equality among diverse peoples of the world as a requisite for true democracy.¹⁰ Although adoption of Chicana/o Indigeneity varied among these youth organizations, they all sought the respect for cultural diversity understanding that ethnic groups in a true democracy should not be forced to assimilate into the cultural values and worldviews of western civilization. These organizations looked towards a future where Indigenous Peoples, and other ethnic groups, had autonomous control of who formed part of their cultural communities and their cultural trajectories. From that platform, Chicana/o activists sought participation in geopolitics as equals to cultural "others" as part of a global citizenry.

⁹ For other examples of the uses of critical pedagogy in other civil and human rights movements of the Americas, refer to Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; and William Westerman, "Folk Schools, Popular Education, and a Pedagogy of Community Action," in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*, ed. by Antonia Darder, Marta P. Baltonado, and Rodolfo D. Torres, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008) 548-549.

¹⁰ For a discussion on the role of cultural revitalization in a pluriversal and democratic society, refer to Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *Pensar nuestra cultura: Ensayos*, 1st ed. (México, D.F.: Alianza Editorial, 1991).

Critiques of Critical Pedagogy: Indigenous Sovereignty vs. Individual Rights

Critical pedagogies within the context of social movements make essential strides in questioning the undemocratic and unjust practices of nation-states towards its citizens. However, critical pedagogy's reliance on definitions of democracy and justice that are philosophically and culturally defined by western notions of individual rights are problematic to Indigenous Peoples concerned with upholding their rights to sovereignty.¹¹ Education scholar Sandy Mari Anglás Grande notes that as a result of the post-modern turn, critical pedagogy scholars have increasingly criticized essentialized notions of identity and have advocated for hybrid understandings of identity.¹² Grande contends that although hybrid scholars are correct in noting the dangers of "authenticity" as essentialism, the emancipatory potential of fluid identities is based on rights within western principles of individual rights and do not recognize that American Indians are primarily concerned with sovereignty. Grande highlights the problem in critical theory, the ideological base of critical pedagogy, is that "...critical theorists retain "democracy" as the central struggle concept of liberation, they fail to recognize Indigenous peoples' historical battles to resist absorption into the "democratic imaginary"—and their contemporary struggles to retain tribal sovereignty"¹³ Although the western philosophical undertones of critical pedagogy contradict Indigenous Peoples' right to cultural autonomy, Grande does conclude that American Indian scholars share concerns with critical scholars. Both regard the need to use education to develop critical agency and that this work should be done through multicultural coalition

¹¹ For transnational efforts by Native Americans for recognition of their sovereignty, refer to Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014); and Ken S. Coates, *A Global History of Indigenous Peoples: Struggle and Survival* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

¹² Sandy Mari Anglás Grande. "American Indian Geographies of Identity and Power: At the Crossroads of Indígena and Mestizaje," in *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*, 185-188. For critiques of essentialism in education, refer to Peter McLaren, *Revolutionary Multiculturalism: Pedagogies of Dissent for the New Millennium*, The Edge, Critical Studies in Educational Theory (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).

¹³ Grande, 183.

building.¹⁴ Grande calls for scholars to partake in critical dialogue to develop a critical pedagogy that supports Indigenous theories of liberation and demands Indigenous communities' right to sovereignty, self-determination, and cultural survival.

Although not all Chicana/o activists have been concerned with sovereignty (although some strongly do concern themselves with this), the discussion of cultural survival is important in describing activists' efforts to uphold and maintain an Indigenous identity. These efforts are reflected in pedagogy and curriculum since the Chicana/o Movement that valued the survival of Chicana/o Indigenous culture. Chicana/o activists conceptualized an alignment with an Indigenous "way of life" and an understanding of Indigenous based historicity. They formed the foundation for imagining Chicanas and Chicanos' place in the historical and cultural context of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas. As a result, Chicana/o activists used an Indigenous based pedagogy to develop younger advocates that continued working for the respect of human rights. The ways Chicana/o activists' pedagogy informed advocacy for human rights might point towards potential uses of education to nurture the cultural survival of Indigenous Peoples. This pedagogy may also establish the training necessary to participate politically in democratic transnational advocacy in a way that does not purport citizenship defined by western cultural values as a prerequisite for political and human rights.

Phase One: Cultural Revitalization and Educational Civil Rights

The need to teach a critical consciousness of culture, history, and politics among youth and young adults inspired many Chicana/o Movement activists to create alternatives to public education systems. In the context of Civil Rights era educational reform, Chicana/o Movement activists centralized cultural relevancy in Chicana/o youth and young adult education along with

¹⁴ Ibid, 203.

access to necessary resources for an equitable education. Led by the courageous activism of young people that began in 1968 with the Chicana/o high school “blow-outs,” Chicana/o Movement activists demanded well funded educational institutions that supported their right to cultural autonomy and agency. Chicana/o Movement activists contended that instituting a culturally relevant education was an integral Civil Rights era reform to rectify historic socioeconomic inequality and injustice suffered by Chicanas and Chicanos in the United States.¹⁵ By the 1970s, Chicana/o Movement era activists began to establish alternative K-12 schools and colleges to accomplish the goal of providing youth with an education that upheld their cultural autonomy. These schools were founded in locations across the southwest and all had a desire to instill its students with the ideology and values of the Chicana/o Movement.

The reasons Chicana/o Movement activists founded these schools varied from a desire to operate autonomously from restrictive and culturally biased local school district boards to a desire to implement experimental educational pedagogies and curriculums that fostered critical consciousness. These schools attempted to create an educational environment where children and young adults combined a value for cultural heritage and history that countered historic trends of instilled racist ideology in public schools that viewed Chicana/o culture as an educational deficit. These educators sought to train students to develop a critical consciousness of human rights that inspired young people to grow up with the ideological inspiration to continue to struggle for social justice.

¹⁵ For the efforts towards educational reform by CCM era youth activists, refer to Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Mexican Students Por La Raza: The Chicano Student Movement in Southern California 1967-1977* (Santa Barbara, Calif: Editorial La Causa, 1978); and Carlos Muñoz, *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement*, Haymarket Series on North American Politics and Culture (London; New York: Verso, 1989). For an example of attempts to reform pedagogy and curriculum during the CCM, refer to Southwest Network et al., *The Recruitment, channeling, and placement of Chicano teachers: a training document distributed by Southwest Network and Study Commission on Undergraduate Education and the Education of Teachers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Printing and Duplicating Service, 1974).

Chicana/o Movement Alternative Schools

Many Chicana/o Movement activist organizations demonstrated their value for education by founding alternative schools. These organizations supported efforts to build community, as well as train young people to continue struggling for human rights. For instance, in September 1969, the United Farm Workers (UFW) union began running its California Farm Workers Community School in Delano, CA. Although not an alternative to public education, the Community School offered its students supplemental education twice a week for three hours. The Community school sought to help students in reading, math, science, singing, crafts, painting, and Spanish. The school also trained students in social justice by having them participate in UFW picket lines as a way to teach students the importance of union organizing and the respect of workers' fundamental human rights. Spanish language instruction also demonstrated the Community School's attempt to provide Chicana/o children with a culturally relevant education. By improving their Spanish language schools, teachers helped students have a better appreciation for Chicana/o culture and better relations with their many times monolingual Spanish-speaking parents. The school relied on Union staff and community volunteers to provide students with educational services and its purpose was aligned with the broader goal of the UFW to build a movement to help the poor.¹⁶ Although the UFW exemplified the importance of education in training young people to fight for human rights, its status as an after school program limited the effects this type of education had on young people. Instead, other Chicana/o Movement activist organizations sought alternatives to public institutions as a means to provide another option besides westernized educational modes.

Along with the UFW's Community School, the Escuela Tlatelolco, founded in 1970 by the Crusade for Justice in Denver, CO, also aligned the education of young people with the

¹⁶ Joan Kalvelage, "Cinco Ejemplos," in *Edcentric* Oct./Nov. Issue (n.d.): 31-34, Academia de la Nueva Raza and the Rio Grande Institute Records, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

broader cause of a Chicana/o Movement activist organization. However, unlike the Community School, Escuela Tlatelolco was an alternative and completely private school rather than an after school program. During the late 1960s, the Crusade for Justice was active in the improvement of public education in the Denver area. The organization supported and advised high school students protesting the racist actions of a social studies high school teacher at West High School in 1969. After helping students and parents meet with school officials that ignored their demands, the students of West High led the largest school walk-outs, up to that point, in Denver's history.¹⁷ The protests influenced the Crusade for Justice to organize and host the National Chicano Youth Liberation conferences. At these conferences, the organization spurred the ideology that guided Chicana/o youth activism and educational goals through out the country. The Crusade for Justice's influence on youth activism and cultural education is most notably exhibited in the resulting *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán* that called for Chicanas and Chicanos to rally behind the cultural needs of the Chicana/o community.¹⁸ Along with supporting high school protests and nationally organizing Chicana/o youth, the Crusade for Justice supported Chicana/o and African American student organizations at the local Denver college and university, as well as helped diminish racial tensions among Chicana/o and African American youth.¹⁹

The Crusade for Justice's social activism in support of youth inspired the teaching philosophy behind the Escuela Tlatelolco. The Escuela Tlatelolco began functioning as a year-round private school in 1970. The school relied on volunteers as instructors, teaching assistants, administrators, cooks, and janitors who made it possible to provide education to Chicana/o youth without charging them. Escuela Tlatelolco provided education to youth of kindergarten age to

¹⁷ Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999) 81-87.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 95-100.

¹⁹ Ernesto Vigil, interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera, February 23, 2012.

undergraduate education of young adults. Students learned to speak Spanish and Indigenous languages as a way for them to take pride in their cultural heritage. As one student, Melissa Montoya, put it, “You learn what you are...and not to be all hidden up inside yourself like a cocoon.”²⁰ Escuela Tlatelolco students also participated in Crusade for Justice activities like writing articles for the prominent Chicana/o Movement newspaper *El Gallo*, participating in picket lines, and campaigning for La Raza Unida Party.²¹ These activities stemmed from the Crusade for Justice instilling the cultural and political values of the Chicana/o Movement into the curriculum of Escuela Tlatelolco. They also accommodated the needs of Escuela Tlatelolco students who sought a curriculum and teaching that valued their cultural heritage, which was not supported in public schools. As a result, many of the first Escuela Tlatelolco students in 1970 were organizers of student protests in 1969 that left public schools to seek a better education.²²

The Escuela Tlatelolco also offered college level instruction up to a B.A. In partnership with the Goddard College in Plainsfield, VT, the Escuela Tlatelolco offered undergraduates the opportunities to earn credits in traditional classroom settings as well as through service learning as teaching assistants for the K-12 students.²³ The Escuela Tlatelolco’s bridging of K-12 and undergraduate education demonstrates overall Chicana/o Movement desires to utilize education as a way to help Chicana/o communities maintain cultural autonomy while engaging the U.S. political system as equals to whites. The Escuela Tlatelolco ultimately provided students with alternative forms of education that fostered community building, cultural pride, and political activism in ways that supported the goals of the Chicana/o Movement. Escuela Tlatelolco educators sought to gain equality and respect of human rights for Chicanas and Chicanos during

²⁰ Kalvelage, 6.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice*, 161.

²³ Kalvelage, 29.

the Civil Rights era. Consequently, efforts to find alternatives to K-12 public education grew to include providing alternatives to undergraduate and graduate education.

Along with the Escuela Tlatelolco, the Colegio Jacinto Treviño in Mercedes, TX provided a means to train educators for Chicana/o communities. The school was founded in 1969 by teachers who spent weekends working in the fields of the Rio Grande Valley and operated in an abandoned monastery. The Colegio focused on helping high school “push-outs” pass equivalency exams for high school diplomas. In 1970, the Colegio began offering graduate courses in education and in 1971 its first M.A. graduates stayed on to help teach undergraduates at the college.²⁴ Graduate students at Colegio Jacinto Treviño took courses in history of Chicana/o cultural ideology, or Chicanismo, and history courses critical of colonialism and capitalism in the Americas. Along with these history courses, these future teachers took courses in critical pedagogy guided by the writings of Paulo Freire and Frantz Fanon.²⁵ The coalescence of critical historical studies and critical pedagogy in the Colegio’s curriculum demonstrates that administrators and teachers at this school knew the importance of education in training young people to be conscious of global and transnational aspects of oppressive power structures. Whether these structures were historic colonialism or global capitalism, Colegio teachers emphasized the importance of being culturally grounded in an effort to resist these global oppressive power structures. On top of fostering this critical consciousness, the importance of having graduates return to the Colegio as teachers demonstrates the mission of this school to put their ideologies into practice by ensuring students continue to pass on their lessons to future generations.

²⁴ Ibid, 38.

²⁵ “Colegio Jacinto Treviño Course Catalog,” Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.

In the same context of Texas Chicana/o Movement activism, Juárez Lincoln University was another Chicana/o Movement alternative to traditional institutions of higher learning in Austin. Juárez Lincoln held extension campuses in Denver, CO, San Antonio, TX, and Mission, TX. In 1971, Juárez Lincoln began a partnership with Antioch College of Yellow Springs, OH and offered bachelors degrees in Liberal Studies and masters degrees in Education.²⁶ The formation of Juárez Lincoln was a product of the Mexican American Youth Organization's (MAYO) political activism to improve education for Chicanas and Chicanos.²⁷ The goal of the university was to create "un colegio Chicano" where Chicana and Chicano students would benefit from the cultural relevancy of an education based on bilingual and bicultural instruction, as well as curriculum based in Chicana/o history and culture. The philosophy behind Juárez Lincoln's pedagogy also drew its influences from Paulo Freire and Chicana/o Movement Chicanismo by emphasizing that students learn through involvement in community programs.

Juárez-Lincoln employed its pedagogy within a bachelors program with an interdisciplinary structure that was organized around five themes of communication, environment, social process, humanities, and professions. These themes were meant to "prepare the student to serve as a social change agent for the Chicano community..."²⁸ Juárez Lincoln educators emphasized practice in the curriculum through accreditation of course credit accomplished by student service learning.²⁹ These teaching practices demonstrated that faculty sought to provide students with the knowledge and experience, an essential combination of

²⁶ "Juárez Lincoln University 1975-1976 Catalog," Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif. For the progressive views of Antioch College on racial equality in the U.S., especially after WWII, refer to Burton R. Clark, *The Distinctive College: Antioch, Reed & Swarthmore* (Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co, 1970) and Kerrie Naylor, "Antioch: vision and revision," in Utah Education Policy Center, *Maverick Colleges: Ten Notable Experiments in American Undergraduate Education* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah Education Policy Center, Graduate School of Education, the University of Utah, 1993).

²⁷ For a history of MAYO and their activism, refer to Armando Navarro, *Mexican American Youth Organization: Avant-garde of the Chicano Movement in Texas*, 1st ed. (Austin, Tex: University of Texas Press, 1995).

²⁸ "Juárez Lincoln University 1975-1976 Catalog," Raul Salinas Papers, 22.

²⁹ "The B.A. Program," Juárez-Lincoln Records, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin.

critical pedagogy, so that these students became agents of social change. The masters program in Education at Juárez Lincoln employed a degree design model that was created by each student under the auspices of an advisor.³⁰ By related the curriculum to students' professional aspirations, the student had more power in determining the parameters of her/his education based on her/his interests and goals. In the context of the Chicana/o Movement, the faculty's emphasis on training agents of social change demonstrates the Juarez Lincoln's commitment to find practical ways of attaining the broader goals of social equality and respect for cultural difference in the era of Civil Rights and the Chicana/o Movement.

Concurrently with Juárez Lincoln, La Universidad Aztlan in Fresno, CA also provided Chicana and Chicano students with alternative paths to earning higher education degrees through an education informed by Chicana/o Movement ideology and critical pedagogy. Founded in 1970 by professors at Fresno State College, students from several San Joaquin Valley colleges, and staff from the Mobil Educational Guidance Project, La Universidad Aztlan was meant to provide Chicanas and Chicanos with an educational option that incorporated an examination of Chicana/o experience in its curriculum. Although La Universidad Aztlan sought to eventually provide a K-12, undergraduate, and graduate education, it only succeeded in establishing a two-year junior college El Colegio de la Tierra, which was named by its first class of students. Like other Chicana/o Movement era alternative education projects, these Chicana/o educators accomplished much with little resources, but were nonetheless restrained by the lack of funds to accomplish much more ambitious goals.

La Universidad de Aztlan educators utilized critical pedagogy by emphasizing service learning as the primary method for students to attain knowledge through experience. El Colegio de la Tierra emphasized service learning by defining the whole San Joaquin Valley as the

³⁰ "Self Study," Juárez-Lincoln Records, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin.

university campus.³¹ The curriculum and pedagogy of the Colegio de la Tierra was formatted as a “team learning” environment where students pushed the direction of the course. The teachers only guiding the courses by ensuring students developed critical questions. El Colegio de la Tierra, like other aforementioned examples, also provided interdisciplinary general studies courses organized around emphases on: 1) Alternatives to Education; 2) Social Organization; 3) Communication; 4) Government; 5) Community Health; 6) Humanities; 7) History; and 8) Physical Science. Students also developed independent projects that emphasized activism in Chicana/o communities.³² The interdisciplinary organization of courses and the emphasis on in the field service learning demonstrates El Colegio de la Tierra’s commitment to utilizing education to enhance the activism of the Chicana/o Movement. Utilizing college education, the founders of La Universidad hoped to ensure that the efforts of the Chicana/o Movement to struggle for the respect Chicanas’ and Chicanos’ civil and human rights would continue among a future generation.

Although Juárez Lincoln and La Universidad Aztlan demonstrated attempts to provide alternative options to traditional educational institutions, their education models were limited to traditional milestone standards of associates, bachelors, and masters degrees. Other Chicana/o Movement schools sought to fill the void of adult education for students seeking skills, personal growth and other goals not limited to earning traditional degrees. La Academia de la Nueva Raza in Dixon, NM was founded in 1969 by, among others, social workers Facundo B. Valdez and Tomas C. Atencio. During the 1970s, La Academia de la Nueva Raza focused on its mission to emphasize human learning based on historical and life experiences. The school founders sought to create a learning society rather than an education that served externally imposed

³¹ “La Universidad de Aztlan: El Colegio de la Tierra Catalog,” Academia de la Nueva Raza and the Rio Grande Institute Records, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

³² Ibid.

curricular milestones. Before its dissolution in 1978, La Academia de la Nueva Raza expanded to offices in Brawley, CA, El Paso, TX, Las Cruces, NM, and Phoenix, AZ to support the adult educational needs of Chicana/o communities.³³ Valdez specialized in building community organizations and had experience in educational activism through school boycotts and other forms of community organizing like helping form a cattle feedlot cooperative among Chicanos in northern New Mexico. Atencio specialized in mental health, adult education, and developed the concept of “Community Life Education.”³⁴ Perhaps Valdez and Atencio’s background in social work contributed to La Academia’s emphasis on personal development, community activism, and critical consciousness of history in New Mexico without trying to fit these goals into the traditional requirements of associates, bachelors, or masters degrees.

La Academia de la Nueva Raza’s non-institutionalized educational goals are exemplified by the efforts of staff and students to document the oral tradition of Chicanas and Chicanos of northern New Mexico. La Academia established an oral history project center in Dixon, which out-reached to the small towns of Penasco, Truchas, Chimayo, Medanales, Mora, Anton Chico, Rachitos, Las Vegas, and Cordova for oral history interviews as well as photographic documentation.³⁵ Along with programs in “personal history” and participation in performing arts, students at La Academia were able to reflect on the importance of cultural traditions, history, and personal experience as a way to gain a critical consciousness of historic injustice and methods of rectifying that injustice. La Academia provided this form of education to community

³³ La Academia was succeeded by the Rio Grande Institute in 1982, which focused on Praxis Learning and Action Research. The Rio Grande Institute was created and maintained largely due to the efforts of Consuelo Pacheco, Thomas Atencio, and others. For more on the Rio Grande Institute, refer to Academia de la Nueva Raza and the Rio Grande Institute Records, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

³⁴ “La Academia Comprehensive Plan and Report, 1972” Academia de la Nueva Raza and the Rio Grande Institute Records, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

³⁵ Ibid.

members as a way to “creat[e] an awareness, conscientiousness, a thirst for justice, and a commitment to work towards a free society.”³⁶

The educators at alternative Chicana/o schools during the Chicana/o Movement cemented its pedagogical legacy as a movement that sought to instill in young people a value for critical understandings of democracy and history. Through education, Chicana/o Movement activists and teachers also hoped to provide a space for Chicanas and Chicanos to critically reflect on their own histories, cultural heritage, and value for community. Infused with a positive value for Indigenous heritage within *Chicanismo*, critical reflections on heritage, culture, and history led to understandings of Chicana/o historicity based in Indigeneity. Chicana/o Movement alternative schools, along with the Chicana/o Movement as a whole, provided the discursive space that helped many Chicanas and Chicanos isolate their Indigenous heritage as the viable trajectory for Chicana/o community building. This realization would form the ideological basis for many forms of Chicana/o resistance to global oppressive forces through collaboration with other Indigenous Peoples of the Americas in transnational social movements.

Indigenous Consciousness Leads to Critical Indigenous Pedagogies

Chicana/o Movement alternative schools demonstrated the importance of striving for alternative education rooted in the Chicana/o Movement ideology of *Chicanismo* by providing students with nuanced views on cultural diversity and democracy. These views inspired young people to envision new possibilities in understanding their past while working towards a more just and egalitarian future. A significant outcome of these alternative schools has been their contribution to providing the educational space to discuss the importance of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage and the political significance of Indigeneity. This contribution helped spur alternative schools

³⁶ Ibid.

rooted in a philosophy that prioritized the development of Chicana/o Indigeneity and supported decolonizing efforts of Indigenous Peoples across the Americas. Since the Chicana/o Movement, these Indigenous based K-12 schools and colleges have helped continue and develop Chicana/o Indigeneity, as well as served as a base of support for Indigenous Peoples transnational activism and advocacy.

The Escuela de la Raza Unida in Blythe, CA exemplifies the role alternative schools had in advancing Chicana/o Indigeneity. Founded on May 1, 1972, the school began as out door classes in temperatures of 110 to 115 degrees Fahrenheit at Blythe City Park. Students, parents, and volunteer teachers held these classes in defiance of the local school board as a way to provide Chicana/o youth with a Chicana/o Studies curriculum. The school also depended on support from the local UFW offices for administrative space and the community center The Teen Post for library and folkloric dancing space.³⁷ The school maintained permanence into the 1990s and upheld a pedagogical philosophy that allowed for “Chicano and other students the opportunity for substantive participation in the creation, initiation and actual implementation of educational goals and objectives” as well as the fostering of critical consciousness of political, social, and economic injustice.³⁸

Much like the schools of the Chicana/o Movement era, the Escuela de la Raza Unida promoted culturally relevant education among Chicanas and Chicanos in an effort to develop cultural ideas utilizing critical pedagogies. In this context, Alfredo A. Figueroa, founder of the Escuela de la Raza Unida, helped make the Escuela a local base for transnational Indigenous activism and connectivity. In 1986, La Escuela was a stopping point for a pilgrimage from

³⁷ “The Birth of a New Educational System: A School Without Walls La Escuela de la Raza Unida!” in *Escuela de la Raza Unida: Celebrando el 20avo. Aniversario* (1992) Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [Accession #1995-01504] Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

³⁸ Board and Staff, “Philosophy,” in *Escuela de la Raza Unida: Celebrando el 20avo. Aniversario* (1992) Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [Accession #1995-01504] Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

Ixateopan, Guerrero, México to Los Angeles, CA that honored the last Mexica Tlatoani Kuahtemok. This pilgrimage was a ritually symbolic effort by Mexican *Indigenistas* to promote the importance of Mexicans, Chicanas, and Chicanos' Indigenous past and revitalize Mexican and Chicana/o Indigeneity in the present. The 1986 pilgrimage inspired Figueroa and others to make the same pilgrimage in reverse to Ixateopan, Guerrero, México in 1987. This was done to maintain the Indigenous connectivity these Mexican *Indigenistas* and U.S. Chicanas and Chicanos established in 1986. The Escuela de La Raza Unida would further serve as a local center for broader transnational Indigenous Peoples efforts to build collectivity by supporting the Peace and Dignity Journeys of 1992 and 1996.³⁹

The role the Escuela de La Raza Unida had in supporting Chicana/o Indigenous ideas and activities demonstrates the importance of creating spaces where critical pedagogy can go hand in hand with culturally autonomous ideas that empower and motivate students. As broader developments in Chicana/o Indigeneity unfolded due to transnational communications and advocacy in the 1980s and 1990s, this Chicana/o Movement era alternative school demonstrates how Chicana/o connections with México helped develop local historic consciousness of Indigeneity. In turn, this historic consciousness helped keep the Escuela de la Raza Unida operational as a discursive space for discussion and development of critical political, social, and economic concerns through out the late twentieth century. This school remained a space for discussion regarding advocacy for civil rights during the Chicana/o Movement, and continued to do so during advocacy of human rights in the 1980s and 1990s in the context of transnational struggles for the respect of Indigenous Peoples' human rights.

³⁹ Alfredo A. Figueroa, "Forward," in *Escuela de la Raza Unida: Celebrando el 20avo. Aniversario* (1992) Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [Accession #1995-01504] Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection; and Alfredo Acosta Figueroa, "Ancient Footprints of the Colorado River: La Cuna de Aztlan," revised edition (Manuscript, 2013) 71-82.

Along with connections to México, Chicana/o Indigeneity also developed in relation to collaborative educational efforts among American Indians, Chicanas, and Chicanos since the late 1960s. These collaborative educational efforts are best exemplified in California by the opening of DQ⁴⁰ University (DQU) in July 1971. DQU demonstrated the most ambitious curricular and pedagogical mission to utilize Indigeneity as the philosophical base for an educational mission to develop decolonial thought during this era. The efforts to establish an American Indian and Chicana/o university in California began in the mid 1960s when American Indian educators committed themselves to study the educational needs of American Indian and Chicana/o children in Central California. In 1967, educators, among them David Risling and Jack Forbes, founded the California Indian Education Association (CIEA). The CIEA focused its efforts on acquiring land for a school site, and in 1969, they applied for ownership of an abandoned 643 acre surplus U.S. Army communication site outside of Davis, CA.⁴¹ Citing treaties that guaranteed return of surplus U.S. government land to American Indians, the founders of DQU had to contend with a competing bid from the University of California, Davis (UCD). Although the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) assured the founders of DQU that their treaty rights would be respected, the land was awarded to UCD. As a result, on November 2, 1970, American Indian and Chicana/o youth took over the site to draw media attention to what they saw as a back door deal that slighted the DQU's rightful bid to the land. The media attention forced UCD to rescind their claim and on January 14, 1971, the DHEW awarded the land to DQU board members.⁴²

⁴⁰ DQU is named after the founder of the Iroquois Confederation and Quetzalcoatl, the pre-columbian Toltec political and spiritual leader. Since the founding of DQU, board members of the university learned that the use of the Iroquois founders name should only be used in ceremonial circumstances. I will respect that decision and only use the DQU abbreviation in this text.

⁴¹ "A Negotiable Education," *DQU Report* 1 no. 21 (1971): 1.

⁴² Kalvelage, 35-36.

The activism that led to the formation of DQU would later demonstrate its pedagogical commitment to an education that critically engaged Indigenous Peoples' right to cultural autonomy. This helped educators develop a critical consciousness of culture and politics among its students. Educators demonstrated this, like many other Chicana/o Movement era schools, by prioritizing seminars, workshops, fieldwork, and work-study as methods for students to learn through experience, instead of utilizing the "banking" method of the lecture format. As a result, DQU students earned college credit from experience rooted in hands on learning through community experience. DQU also offered opportunities to students that had been "pushed-out" of high school by letting them work towards their high school equivalency certificates while also working towards their A.A. or B.A. degrees.⁴³ Faculty and staff at DQU helped ensure that students negatively afflicted by the public K-12 school system received an opportunity to return to school and work towards earning their diplomas and degrees that would have otherwise been denied to them.

The curriculum at DQU offered students the opportunities to fulfill requirements in topics like English, Government, Social Sciences, History, Fine Arts, Psychology, Health, Music, Science, and Philosophy like all other public and private colleges. However, these topics were taught from a perspective that supported American Indian and Chicana/o cultural autonomy. For instance, Government courses were taught on the government and political structures of traditional tribal governments and Chicana/o political thought. Other government courses analyzed the implication of the U.S. Constitution in relation to American Indian treaty rights. DQU faculty utilized a curriculum that provided students with a political education that sought to encourage them to compare, analyze and evaluate western and Indigenous forms of governing as a way to consider political alternatives to western hegemony. Other government courses focused

⁴³ Ibid, 37.

on the role of Chicanas in social institutions, which encouraged students to analyze and evaluate how patriarchy influenced political thought and action towards and within Chicana/o communities. Literature, art, and music courses focused on art by American Indians, Chicanas, and Chicanos. By focusing on this art, educators encouraged students to appreciate the autonomous production of culture by Chicana/o and American Indian writers, musicians, and artists. These courses were also intended to inspire students create their own artistic and/or literary productions.⁴⁴

The curriculum at DQU also emphasized a negotiation between the student and university faculty so that the student ensured her/his education was relevant to her/his needs. As former executive director of DQU José de la Isla explained:

DQU offers a negotiable education. A mutually agreed program of study will be worked out by the student and the University. From that point it is the responsibility of the University and the student to live up to the terms of the agreement. This means hard work on both sides, but more importantly that that it means a relevant education, a people's education, and not one determined by arbitrary requirements.⁴⁵

The negotiable format of the curriculum at DQU exemplifies its commitment to provide a relevant education to Chicanas, Chicanos, and American Indians. By empowering students to create a coursework plan that related to their goals, DQU faculty and staff promoted students' ability to self-determine their educational paths based on their needs. This exercise in self-determination in combination with lessons on Chicana/o politics and American Indian sovereignty claims demonstrates the usefulness of employing a critical pedagogy. DQU staff and faculty established a space to discuss and develop broader understandings of the significance of Indigeneity in the Americas. These critical pedagogical efforts would further ideological developments that helped Chicanas and Chicanos coalesce their elaborations of Indigeneity with

⁴⁴ "Central Program Courses," *DQU Report* 1 no. 21 (1971): 4-5.

⁴⁵ José de la Isla, "Letter," *DQU Report* 1 no. 21 (1971): 2.

Indigenous Peoples' struggles to attain sovereignty in the Americas, and with de-colonial efforts across the globe.

By the 1980s, DQU became a space that fostered the development of ideas and actions to support transnational struggles to respect the sovereignty and human rights of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas and to support the sovereignty and de-colonial efforts from people across the globe. These efforts are demonstrated by DQU's hosting of the American Indian International Tribunal on September 20th to 25th 1982. The Tribunal featured statements from Rigoberta Menchu, Philip Deede of the Creek from Oklahoma, Bob Brown of the All African People's Revolutionary Party, David Nbada and Norma Kitson of the African National Congress, and Iranian scholar Heydar Reghaby. The conference focused on the effects of U.S. domestic policies on American Indians, U.S. foreign policies on the peoples of Africa and the Middle East, and the relation between the two. Conference participants agreed on the need for international solidarity that supported American Indian sovereignty and recognition that U.S. denial of American Indian sovereignty is intrinsically linked to U.S. imperial efforts abroad. Heydar Reghaby summed up this concern in mentioning a need for an "international consciousness" that linked sovereignty claims across the globe as part of a broadly linked effort at decolonization.⁴⁶

By hosting the American Indian International Tribunal and utilizing a critical pedagogy and culturally relevant curriculum, DQU demonstrated its critical role in the development of Chicana/o Indigeneity. By collaborating with American Indians at DQU, Chicanas and Chicanos had the opportunity to develop the critical consciousness of American Indian political claims to sovereignty, understand the importance of developing a critical consciousness of their own Indigenous heritage, and coming into contact with global trends in decolonial politics and ideologies. As a result, Chicanas and Chicanos reevaluated their concerns for civil rights

⁴⁶ "American Indian International Tribunal Sept. 20-25, 1982 Davis, CA." Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.

reforms through the lens of Indigenous autonomy. By partaking in transnational Indigenous Peoples' movements, Chicanas and Chicanos also evaluated their Indigenous cultural heritage as they critically challenged and sought redress of historic human rights abuses in the United States and Mexico. These contributed to the development of Chicana/o Indigeneity in ways that helped Chicanas and Chicanos conceptualize and create paths to self-determination. These paths were in conjunction with American Indian struggles for respect of their sovereignty, and in many ways, the collaboration with American Indians helped Chicanas and Chicanos gain a critical awareness of their Indigenous historicity.

Although many educators sought to build alternative educational institutions, efforts like those at the Escuela de la Raza Unida and DQU were restrained by requirements they needed to meet determined by state and federal officials that govern educational attainment. Ever increasing state imposed educational standards in the form of standardized testing during the 1980s and beyond would further restrain the establishment of alternative schools.⁴⁷ Although finding ways to navigate these requirements guarantees more exposure of critical ideas to young students, supplemental educational programs have the advantage of less restrictions and more room for curricular creativity and exposure to social relations. In this vein, Chicana/o cultural centers, also products of the Chicana/o Movement, would partake in education as a means to promote a critical consciousness of Chicana/o Indigeneity through culturally relevant education and critical pedagogy during the 1980s. These centers became a space where a reflection on Chicana/o Indigenous historicity was linked to the development of a philosophy supporting the human rights of Indigenous People across borders. This philosophy would also contribute to ideologies and solidarity in support of decolonial efforts to challenge injustice across the globe.

⁴⁷ For an examination of the detrimental effects of standardized education on Chicana/o students, refer to Richard Valencia, Bruno J. Villarreal, and Moises F. Salinas, "Educational testing and Chicano students: issues, consequences, and prospects for reform," in *Chicano School Failure and Success: Past, Present, and Future*, 2nd edition, ed. by Richard Valencia (New York: Routledge/Falmer, 2002) 253-309

Indigenous Curriculum and Pedagogy at Los Centros Culturales

Chicana/o Movement era educational efforts to utilize cultural consciousness of Chicanismo and Indigenismo as a means to provide Chicana/o youth with critical teaching methods many times also took place at Chicana/o activist cultural centers. These centers attempted to provide youth with a useful education relevant to their cultural, social, economic, and political experiences. Many times, cultural centers continued after the *movimiento* into the late twentieth-century and beyond. In the 1980s, as Chicana/o activists aligned with changing transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements, their efforts in cultural centers began to reflect an advocacy for Chicana/o self-determination that aligned with the transnational respect of Indigenous Peoples' human rights and sovereignty.

Many times, cultural centers partook in their own pedagogical efforts to expose young people to critical historic consciousness of Indigeneity in the Americas. During the 1980s, cultural centers like El Centro Chicano in Austin, TX began the Programa Educativo del Barrio (or "la escuelita") that implemented an Indigenous critical pedagogy to instill in youth the importance of Chicana/o Indigeneity. For these activists, Indigeneity was a vehicle to cultivate critical consciousness of decolonial ideologies and Chicana/o historicity. *La escuelita* did this utilizing a culturally relevant curriculum with a focus on history, mural art, and performing arts that targeted at risk youth in the Austin area. El Centro Chicano also sponsored youth travel to Pine Ridge Reservation in Ogala, SD where youth interacted with Sioux youth. During these interactions, Chicana/o and Sioux youth related to each other culturally through ceremonies and politically through recognition of similar experiences with poor education, poverty, and violence

suffered by youth in American Indian and Chicana/o communities.⁴⁸ El Centro Chicano in Austin, like DQU, helped foster critical consciousness of Chicana/o Indigeneity.

Although El Centro focused on younger children, age 3-13, their objective also to help Chicanas and Chicanos align their goals with those of American Indian children. They worked towards a future where both communities would enjoy respect of their human rights and the opportunity for self-determination. In some ways, El Centro Chicano accomplished these goals because it did not have to rationalize its educational activities as part of fulfilling educational requirements established by westernized school boards. Nevertheless, like alternative schools, these centers are bound by the rules governing non-profit organizations as well as with the task of securing the necessary funds to ensure these programs keep going.

During the 1980s, El Centro Cultural de La Raza in San Diego, CA demonstrated how considerable success in securing funding also brought with it struggles to balance decolonial goals with the rules and regulations of non-profit organizations. Founded in 1970 by the artist collective Toltecas de Aztlan, El Centro Cultural de La Raza was a product of Chicana/o Movement era activism in the San Diego area. Since the mid 1960s, the artists collective Toltecas de Aztlan recognized a need for an artistic space for Chicanas and Chicanos. After a take over of Balboa Park, they founded El Centro Cultural de la Raza with the mission to encourage art of “those indigenous to the border region.”⁴⁹ The origins of El Centro Cultural de la Raza in Chicana/o Movement era activism would influence future advocacy for the use of arts as curriculum and pedagogy for Chicana/o youth. Through the arts, El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff sought to teach the importance of cultural autonomy, human rights, as well as help

⁴⁸ “Centro Escuelita Builds Self-Esteem,” and “Youth Attend a South Dakota Gathering,” Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.

⁴⁹ “Statement of Purpose” *Tenth Anniversary Celebration July 11, 1981: Centro Cultural de la Raza: Celebrating a Decade of Producing Indian, Mexican, and Chicano Arts and Crafts*, Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

students develop a broader international consciousness. By the 1980s, the success of El Centro Cultural de la Raza allowed for it to promote and utilize its curriculum and pedagogy through various educational programs with students as young as 4 years old to teachers in training at San Diego State University.

Early in its history, El Centro Cultural de la Raza demonstrated a commitment to youth education that used art to help Chicana/o youth develop an Indigenous based sense of identity and historicity. For instance, El Centro Cultural de la Raza ran year round arts education programs during the 1970s that taught youth, ages 3-19, art and performance. El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff used an arts curriculum to help channel youth's activities towards creative expression as a way to draw them away from drugs and violence. El Centro Cultural de la Raza also sought to use art and performance to "awaken inner potential" and promote "cultural awareness."⁵⁰ Youth accomplished their potential and awareness of cultural heritage by participating in *danza azteca*, Folkloric dance, *teatro*, and painting. Within these activities, youth engaged in a curriculum that supported a value for Chicana/o cultural heritage that served as a way to build confidence and relate to the community. Youth were also encouraged to perform and/or exhibit their art publicly as a way to develop self-confidence and a community perspective on the value of their artistic efforts.⁵¹ Efforts like this youth art program demonstrate El Centro Cultural de la Raza's commitment to an education that emphasized the role of Chicana/o cultural awareness as a base for reversing the racist public education that only valued western cultural norms.

El Centro Cultural de la Raza efforts to reverse the effects of racism in public education became rooted in Indigenous "world views." This supported the staff's objectives to help youth

⁵⁰ "Human Resources Proposal Review for "Summer Creative Workshops for Youth 1974," Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁵¹ Ibid.

develop a self-determined sense of identity. As they stated in an early 1970s workshop for educators, “Here at the Centro Cultural de la Raza we are dedicated to breaking from the traditional concept of ourselves by developing awareness of our Chicano Heritage. This workshop emphasizes the need for Chicanos to be free to express themselves as Chicanos.”⁵² El Centro Cultural de la Raza curriculum builders go on further in seeing their role as nurturing Indigenous cultural and philosophical continuity among Chicana/o youth:

[Children] see themselves as part of their environment, which is an important concept in the indigenous way of living; being at one with the world. This concept should not be destroyed by the educational system, but rather cultivated and encouraged.⁵³

This particular workshop helped teachers nurture youth’s connection to the environment by promoting Indigenous philosophical concepts through the interpretive and creative mimes. El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff helped teachers with ways of using miming to help youth self-express cultural symbolism that formed part of their heritage. Through miming that utilized Aztec, Mayan, and Toltec philosophical symbols, El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff hoped to train teachers to use Indigenous thought about the world among young children. El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff helped teachers and youth utilize Chicana/o heritage as a valuable avenue towards an Indigenous defined self-determined Chicana/o identity. El Centro Cultural de la Raza’s early curriculum and its philosophical rooting in Aztec, Mayan, and Toltec cultural symbolism demonstrate a nascent Indigeneity among Chicanas and Chicanos. Although its reliance on Aztec and Toltec symbolism reflects influences of Mexican nationalist discourse of the twentieth-century, El Centro Cultural de la Raza’s focus on using these symbols to empower disenfranchised youth points towards decolonial intentions more so than an attempt to build hegemonic consensus towards the goal of political domination. These decolonial intentions

⁵² “Escuelita Tolteca,” Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁵³ Ibid.

would later help El Centro Cultural de la Raza develop a multicultural curriculum that emphasized the cultural rights of diverse peoples and promoted the equality of these people in ways broader than national boundaries and nationalist discourse.

By the 1980s, El Centro Cultural de la Raza used a philosophical foundation rooted in Chicana/o Indigenismo to promote a plural-cultural and multicultural curriculum and pedagogy and sought to utilize arts education as a decolonial tool. In their statement on philosophy of education, El Centro Cultural de la Raza emphasized the need for a multicultural curriculum that:

...gives learning opportunities to acquire knowledge about cultural differences, to develop interpersonal and thinking skills and attitudes that will foster the individual to get along with, feel comfortable with, and appreciate people of diverse cultural/ethnic backgrounds.⁵⁴

The staff at El Centro Cultural de la Raza goes on to state the importance of education in nurturing self-realization among youth that helps them develop a “positive self-image and concept.”⁵⁵ For Chicana/o youth, the use of Chicana/o cultural elements was necessary to accomplish positive self-image and respect for cultural diversity. El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff sought to have Chicana/o youth identify values and cultural customs of their communities to utilize them in social, educational, and cultural activities and programs at the center.⁵⁶ El Centro Cultural de la Raza’s educational staff rooted their multicultural education in a philosophy of Chicana/o Indigenismo so that Chicana/o youth possessed a positive view of their Indigenous heritage. This curriculum served as the conceptual foundation upon which to engage cultural others in a discussion on equality that valued cultural difference in a diverse world.

To establish a strong foundation upon which Chicana/o youth could engage in critical discussions on cultural diversity, El Centro Cultural de la Raza’s curriculum utilized Chicana/o

⁵⁴ “Chicano Culture Interdisciplinary Program,” Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ “Youth Projects: Preliminary Narrative,” Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

culture to help students develop critical thinking skills, ethical principles, values, and awareness of hereditary culture. To accomplish these objectives, El Centro Cultural de la Raza's staff identified a lack of arts education in local schools and proposed an arts education program for K-12 students to the Wolf Trap Foundation.⁵⁷ After successfully acquiring funds from the Wolf Trap Foundation, El Centro Cultural de la Raza Cultural created its Performing Arts Training and Child Development program that served 1000 Head Start program children, teachers, and parents in 1983-1984 through out San Diego County. Through this program, professional dancers, actors, and musicians visited 25 Head Start programs. The goal of the program was to train parents and teachers to use performing arts to help children improve self-awareness, build self-confidence, foster group awareness and social competencies, as well as foster individual artistic creativity.⁵⁸ The culmination of this program was the "Children's Performing Arts Festival" on April, 27, 1984. During the festival, Head Start program children performed dances and plays that ranged from instruction on nutrition to appreciation of Chicana/o Indigeneity through *danza azteca*.⁵⁹ The program helped Chicana/o children develop positive self-image of their culture to the point where they could publicly perform Chicana/o cultural dances, as well as utilize the art form as a base for other skills, such as good nutritional habits.

El Centro Cultural de la Raza Staff's efforts at utilizing Chicana/o cultural values based in Indigeneity were not limited to Chicana/o children. El Centro Cultural de la Raza created The Chicano Mural In-service Program utilized mural painting to promote cultural understanding among various ethnic groups. The goals of the program were to offer youth "direct, visual evidence of beliefs, attitudes and values at the heart of the barrio pictorialized in mural

⁵⁷ "Education Committee 1983-1984," and "Centro Education Committee 1983-1986," Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "Children's Performing Arts Festival," Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

symbolism and its interpretation.”⁶⁰ El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff described the implication of utilizing mural art to help students of all ethnicities understand the cultural and historical context of Chicana/o communities as follows:

The inservice program is an articulation of Chicano mural slides that presents a theory for understanding the nature and purpose of symbolism, defines a methodology for group interpretation of the mural, involves participants in group mural interpretation and shares with them the barrio interpretation of the mural vision.⁶¹

El Centro Cultural de la Raza Cultural staff created this program to help non-Chicana/o students develop the skills for intercultural communication that was free from the racist definitions of cultural differences embedded in Western society. For instance, in partnership with teachers and students from Spanish language programs at Bird Rock and Lowell elementary schools, El Centro Cultural de la Raza staff helped non-Chicana/o children. To help them learn to speak Spanish, the staff used Chicana/o art forms to solidify these students’ Spanish language instruction with Chicana/o cultural values. These students participated in designing and painting a mural at Chicano Park in San Diego. These non-Chicana/o students would therefore be better situated to understand communication with Chicana/o communities in a way that taught students the cultural and historical context behind the Spanish language communication among and with San Diego area Chicana/o communities.

El Centro Cultural de la Raza also worked to establish ways to provide arts education and training to teenage and college age youth in the San Diego area. Between 1981 and 1983, El Centro Cultural de la Raza worked with San Diego area colleges to have college students complete their service hours at the center. These students participated in helping out with

⁶⁰ “The Chicano Mural Inservice Program: Its Analysis and Use for Increasing Cultural Awareness Among Educators,” Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁶¹ Ibid.

administrative tasks as well as participation and creation of art workshops.⁶² El Centro Cultural de la Raza education staff worked with the City of San Diego's Regional Youth Employment Program that provided funds for summer jobs in 1983 to provide teenage youth with employment and cultural training. Although these teenagers primarily were responsible for clerical duties, they did have the opportunity to participate in research projects to help develop future El Centro Cultural de la Raza art projects.⁶³ In 1985, El Centro Cultural de la Raza education staff established the Drug Education/Prevention Theatre project to help teens stay away from drugs. Utilizing the Chicana/o Movement era tradition of Chicana/o Teatro, El Centro Cultural de la Raza Cultural staff used a critical pedagogy to provide young Chicana/o students with ways of participating in a Drug Prevention education.⁶⁴ These efforts provided teens with arts education rooted in Chicana/o artistic traditions demonstrate El Centro Cultural de la Raza's commitment to use a critical pedagogy and culturally relevant topics.⁶⁵ They helped youth overcome social obstacles like drug use and provide them with a means of developing self-confidence by allowing them to have input on community art projects.

El Centro Cultural de la Raza arts education was a product of a commitment to a legacy of Chicana/o activism in education, as well as the result of strong partnerships with private and government institutions. As the funding from the Wolf Trap foundation and the City of San Diego's Regional Youth Employment program demonstrate, El Centro Cultural de la Raza Cultural was extremely successful in gaining funding for their programs, while at the same time

⁶² "Student Affirmative Action Transition Program 1981-1983," Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁶³ "Regional Youth Employment Program 1982-1983," Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁶⁴ For descriptions of Chicana/o Movement theater, refer to Jorge A Huerta, *Chicano Theater: Themes and Forms*, Studies in the Language and Literature of United States Hispanos (Ypsilanti, Mich: Bilingual Press, 1982). For analysis of teatro's political uses, refer to Harry Justin Elam, *Taking It to the Streets: The Social Protest Theater of Luis Valdez and Amiri Baraka* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997). For an examination of the most influential theater troupe, El Teatro Campesino, refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*.

⁶⁵ "Drug Education/Prevention Theatre Project 1985," Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

maintaining certain degrees of autonomy.⁶⁶ Their interpretation of multicultural education was inclusive of diverse people's struggles to obtain human and civil rights. Their emphasis on cultural autonomy and human rights demonstrates El Centro Cultural de la Raza's contribution to decolonial thought in education. Moreover, El Centro Cultural de la Raza's educational efforts demonstrate the importance of rooting decolonial efforts in self-determined and critical interpretations of Indigeneity. These objectives were accomplished utilizing critical pedagogy rooted in and Indigenous philosophy so that the tensions of western individualistic values and mores were replaced by collective community efforts at self-determination.

Phase Two: Transnational Chicana/o Indigenismos and Pedagogies

The late 1980s and early 1990s marked a shift in Chicana/o *Indigenismo* that developed in connection with developing transnational Indigenous Peoples' Rights movements. Chicana/o participation in UN advocacy and International gatherings of Indigenous Peoples helped Chicanas and Chicanos further develop an *Indigenismo* that contributed to a conceptualization of many Chicanas and Chicanos' Nahuatl heritage.⁶⁷ As the last chapter of this dissertation demonstrates, these trends in activism and advocacy helped Chicanas and Chicanos understand the implications of their role in transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements at the local level. Consequently, ideological, political, and social shifts to Indigeneity by Chicana/o activists also influenced the philosophy behind pedagogical efforts to instill youth with the values of Chicana/o *Indigenismo*. The role of education became one that utilized critical pedagogical methods, creative and performance arts, as well as ritual to further develop Chicana/o

⁶⁶ During the 1980s, El Centro Cultural de la Raza obtained the funding sources to exist as a self-sustaining institution. This was rare for Chicana/o Schools or Arts Centers, which demonstrates the abilities of its executive board to acquire funding.

⁶⁷ For more on Nahuatl philosophy, refer to Miguel León Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture; a Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind.*, trans. Jay I. Kislak, The Civilization of the American Indian Series; 67; (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1963).

Indigenismo. The alternative school movement that began during the Chicana/o Movement helped bridge developing Chicana/o Indigeneity in the 1970s with the eventual role of Chicanas and Chicanos in transnational Indigenous Peoples movements in the 1980s and 1990s.

Laying the Seeds: The Xinachtli Project's Nahuatl Education

The Xinachtli project in Phoenix, AZ exemplifies pedagogical implementation of Chicana/o Indigenous philosophical thought. Founded in 1991, this project resulted from Chicana/o activists' efforts to utilize Chicana/o Indigenismo to counter the racial inequality in public schools that fostered self-doubt and destructive behavior among Chicana/o youth. Even though this was a part-time program and not a full-time alternative school, the Xinachtli project efforts demonstrated the importance of incorporating the education of youth utilizing the values of transnational Indigenous Peoples social movements. These educational efforts formed an integral part of attaining and working towards the decolonization of Chicana/o and other ethnic groups in the Americas.

The Xinachtli program began with the sole focus of elementary school students and later expanded to include junior and high school students. The program also included a parent component to ensure that Chicana/o communities had a say in their children's education, as well as provide parents with knowledge of the public education system. Xinachtli served the Valley, Murphy, Phoenix Elementary and High School, Roosevelt, Avondale, and Tolleson school districts. Through collaboration with the Phoenix Unified High School District (PUHSD), Xinachtli Director Tupac Enrique and PUHSD Title VII Specialist Deborah Ortiz obtained funding for Xinachtli sites at Camelback, North, and Carl Hayden High Schools for Limited

English Proficient students.⁶⁸ Xinachtli educators were also members of the Tonatierra Chapter of the National Chicano Human Rights Council (NCHRC) and the Maricopa County Organizing Project, both of which were involved with transnational advocacy of Indigenous Peoples' Rights at the U.N. The Tonatierra chapter of the NCHRC made strong arguments in world forums that posited Chicanas and Chicanos as a distinct Indigenous population of the Americas.⁶⁹ This international activism influenced Xinachtli program objectives of the Xinachtli program. The Xinachtli program curriculum underscored historical ties to the role of education in Chicana/o activism as well as the relationship to Chicana/o Indigenismo to international Indigenous Peoples social movements. As the goal of the Xinachtli program states:

The goal of the current Xinachtli Project...is to plant the seed of tradition within the context of the public education format. It is a beginning...

The outcome of the project on the individual student is an enhanced knowledge and appreciation of the indigenous heritage and history of the Chicano-Mexicano people, and increased sense of self-worth, and an opportunity to pursue further studies in the Nahuatl culture.⁷⁰

The Xinachtli Program's emphasis on helping youth develop a self-worth demonstrates the pedagogical legacy of the Chicana/o Movement was alive and well among Chicanas and Chicanos in Phoenix during the 1990s, albeit under new ideological influences of transnational Indigenous Peoples social movements.

Although the Xinachtli Project respected "all other native traditions that are present in the Chicano-Mexicano reality besides Nahuatl," project founders operated under Nahuatl philosophical influences "...due to the importance of Nahuatl mythology and philology in the development of [Chicana/o-Mexicano] communities."⁷¹ They utilized three aspects of Nahuatl

⁶⁸ "Phoenix Union High School Title VII Collaborates with the Xinachtli Project," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁶⁹ "Xinachtli Seed of Culture: Pilot Project for the Reintroduction of Nahuatl Culture in the Public Schools of the Chicano-Mexicano Community," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [Accession #1995-01504] Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁰ "Xinachtli Seed of Culture."

⁷¹ Ibid.

philosophy to guide their curriculum and pedagogy: “1) Tezcatlipoca—the aspect of memory and history; 2) Quetzalcoatl—the aspect of intelligence, consciousness; 3) Huitzilopochtli—the aspect of will.”⁷² The curriculum consisted of homework, maps, and presentations by Xinachtli program staff. These historic and contemporary materials made connections between Chicana/o communities and the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. For example, students were exposed to a presentation of the Tonalpohalli, or Aztec Calendar, and learned the significance of Nahuatl cosmology. Students were able to interpret these cosmological meanings in ways that related to their own lives.⁷³ The solidification of this knowledge was instituted through pedagogy inclusive of performance art, Nahuatl writing exercises, and the participation of youth in *danza azteca* at the high school level.⁷⁴ The high school curriculum formed part of curriculum Xinachtli staff members named Mexicayotl Studies. They argued that Mexicayotl Studies provided educational services to students that reflected an Indigenous Mexican perspective. Utilizing this perspective, the Xinachtli program helped meet the culturally relevant educational needs of Chicana/o youth in ways that were supported by teachers and parents.⁷⁵

The effectiveness of the Xinachtli program was demonstrated by student and teacher surveys conducted by Xinachtli staff. After asking 240 students what they liked best about the Xinachtli program presentations and curriculum, they responded with 263 positive comments. These comments highlighted the importance of learning about Chicana/o Indigeneity with responses that demonstrated the students liked learning about “Mexican history and culture,” “Learning about our ancestors and symbols,” and “Learning about Indian culture and history.” When asked what they found most important and interesting, 93 students responded that they

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ “Xinachtli Project Handouts,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁷⁴ “Xinachtli Seed of Culture,” Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [Accession #1995-01504] Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁵ “Project Prime Proposal,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

found Aztec symbolism and philosophy most important and 73 students regarded “information about our ancestors, [and] Mexican history and culture” most important. Teachers also found the Xinachtli program curriculum valuable when 100% of them evaluated the Xinachtli activities as either above average or superior. Moreover, when answering the question regarding whether or not the Xinachtli presenter facilitated students’ positive self-esteem and promotion of their culture, 91% of them responded the presenter always did this and the other 9% responded that the presenter did this most of the time. When evaluating the relevance of Xinachtli presentations to students’ lives, 100% of teachers stated that the presenter maintained this sort of interest among students either most of the time or always.⁷⁶

As Xinachtli staff members recognized in the analysis of their surveys, the Chicana/o youth found this program appealing because it related to their culture, history, and fostered the development of their self-confidence and identity.⁷⁷ Teachers’ responses to the Xinachtli program survey demonstrated that this curriculum provided students with a way to develop a positive understanding of their cultural heritage, which helped develop among youth a pride in their cultural identity. This outcome is integral in helping youth develop the self-confidence necessary to succeed as adults and demonstrates that this must be done in a way relevant to the history and culture of students. The students’ positive responses regarding Aztec/Nahua symbolism in particular also demonstrates the importance of understanding Mexica history and culture for Chicana/o and Mexican youth. The particular historic importance of the Aztecs in regards to resistance to European colonialism becomes an important avenue for Chicana/o youth to understand their right to explore and proclaim their Indigeneity including appraising its diverse manifestations. Students explore the implications of an Indigenous positionality

⁷⁶ “Phoenix Union High School Title VII Collaborates with the Xinachtli Project,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

acknowledging the broader struggles for the rights of Indigenous Peoples to rectify the injustices of colonialism and empire. Some of these students may later find that they are more closely related to other Indigenous or non-Indigenous Peoples of México or the United States than the materials cover. Nevertheless, their introduction to Indigeneity vis-à-vis Aztec/Nahua thought and culture as it relates to Indigenous Peoples rights in the present remains an integral political introduction to the implications of Indigenous claims to sovereignty and human rights.

Chicana/o youth in the *Xinachtli* program also understood claims of Chicana/o Indigeneity as they related to the challenges of injustice, violence, and inequality in a globalized capitalist world built on the foundation of colonialism. These political, historic, and cultural understandings are integral to train Chicana/o youth to become self-confident and self-determined young adults that can carry on the values, ethics, and morals of Indigenous Peoples' social movements. These lessons are valuable whether they inspire youth to continue activism as adults or through the promotion of self-confidence and determination through cultural activities among their families and communities.

The *Xinachtli* program staff demonstrated the ways in which the Chicana/o participation in transnational Indigenous Peoples movements is accompanied with educational efforts to help instill the values of these social movements among youth. The decolonial and self-determined perspectives of these movements were nurtured by an education that utilized critical pedagogy and a curriculum based in Indigenous philosophy. This helped youth critically understand how their history and culture affected the circumstances of their political, social, and economic positions in Western society. The effects on students were multiple and interrelated. First, students understood and developed a pride in their heritage, which helped counter racist depiction of Indigenous peoples that relegated their importance to pre-historical times. Another effect of cultural pride on Chicana/o youth was its effect on their ability to challenge racism in

public education. Finally, Xinachtli curriculum and pedagogy created the dialogical space that would teach students the need to respect and fight for the human rights of Indigenous Peoples. This space also provided youth with the opportunity to push the ideas and values of transnational Indigenous Peoples movements in ways that helped all participants of these movements envision and then fight for avenues towards a decolonized future.

Towards Peace and Dignity: Tonantzin Indigenous Youth Group

Like the Xinachtli program in Phoenix, the Tonantzin Indigenous Youth Group (TIY) in Albuquerque, NM was an outgrowth of a Chicana/o activist organization. Beginning in 1982 the Tonantzin Land Institute advocated and focused their activism on fighting for Pueblo Indian and Chicana/o land, sovereignty, and water rights. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the Tonantzin Land Institute also served as a chapter of the National Chicano Human Rights council and supported Indigenous Peoples' testimonials to the UN. In 1991, the Tonantzin Land Institute founded TIY after receiving a grant to train youth and young adults in community organizing with an emphasis on advocacy on environmental issues.⁷⁸ Much like other Chicana/o Movement legacy organizations, the Tonantzin Land Institute navigated public funds in an effort to establish critical training of young people. Through out the 1990s, TIY trained youth to develop a critical consciousness of Indigenismo, Indigenous Peoples rights, and broader transnational efforts that challenged racism towards and exploitation of Indigenous Peoples. Although the Tonantzin Land Institute activists trained youth to advocate local issues, they did so in a way that helped students gain an understanding of how their local issues related to broader concerns of anti-colonization. The youth participated in local activism that connected local issues to global efforts emphasizing self worth and self-determination. Although Tonantzin activists did not

⁷⁸ "Tonantzin Youth Track Proposal," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

necessarily conceive of this training as pedagogy, their incorporation of youth into the Tonantzin Land Institute demonstrates the lasting legacy of the Chicana/o Movement to instill social movement values into younger generations. Whether explicitly or implicitly pedagogical, future generations learned to keep pushing for a more just and egalitarian future.

After its foundation in 1991, TIY operated out of the Tonantzin Land Institute and focused on training a core group of 15 young people to serve as youth leadership. This small youth board served as way to link hundreds of high school and college students in the Albuquerque area. The board consisted of Pueblo, Diné, and Chicana/o youth that attended West Mesa High School, UNM, and the New Mexico School of Natural Therapeutics. Many of the young adults on the board also worked as youth, drug, and alcohol counselors at non-profit organizations and in Pueblo Communities. The board sought to outreach to young people to participate in Tonantzin Land Institute activism through out the 1990s. TIY contributed heavily to the Tonantzin Land Institute's gathering of international testimonies regarding the violation of Indigenous Peoples rights in 1993. These formed part of broader global efforts to commemorate the international year of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples. TIY youth also organized protests to challenge the destruction of petroglyphs in west Albuquerque with the extension of Unser Blvd. and Paseo del Norte throughout the 1990s.⁷⁹

The intent of outreaching to youth to participate in these events was to “Utilize these events as hands on community mobilization training and empowerment activities.”⁸⁰ As the staff from the Tonantzin Land Institute explained, “It is our hope that the youth will have a clear understanding of power and its elements at any political level. It is our hope that these young people will become more active, in the issues that concern them, in their community, and as

⁷⁹ “La Raza Dreams,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico. For TIY activism in the 1990s, refer to “Tonantzin Youth Track Proposal,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁸⁰ “Tonantzin Youth Track Proposal,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

Native American Young People.”⁸¹ The staff of Tonantzin demonstrated an activist tradition of using activism as pedagogy to teach youth to be critical of power and train them to develop political agency to advocate for their communities’ needs. Although Tonantzin Land Institute staff preferred the language of political organizing instead of one based on pedagogy and education, their focus on training youth exemplifies the need to teach youth empowerment strategies through experience in activism rather than through traditional classroom means. This ensured that the youth enacted and practiced ways to collaborate with others as they challenged injustice.

In addition to helping youth challenge injustice, TIY also helped Chicana/o and American Indian youth relate to one another and develop a pride for their Indigenous culture, heritage, and identity. An example of this is the primary role TIY had in coordinating the New Mexico leg of the Peace and Dignity Journeys in 1992 and 1996.⁸² TIY planned the logistics of the journey, which included consulting with Pueblo elders to gain support and permission for the runners to run through the reservations. TIY youth also participated in the journey as the primary runners for the event, which affected and influenced their understanding of Indigeneity. One TIY member reflected on the run and explained that he learned the importance of land, his Indigenous heritage, the importance of sovereignty rights, the connections between Chicana/o and Pueblo communities in New Mexico, and the need for unification of Indigenous Peoples of North America with those in Central and South America. He especially underscored the importance of Chicana/o and Pueblo unity when he explained historic trends of unity between these communities dating back to the 1680 Pueblo Revolt. This TIY member made connections

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² For the role of TIY in the Peace and Dignity Runs, refer to “Peace and Dignity Journeys,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

between 1990s struggles for environmental and social justice in New Mexico communities to historic relations between Native Americans, Chicanas, and Chicanos.⁸³

The participation of youth as leaders during the Peace and Dignity Runs exemplifies that when youth are taught to have pride in their culture and heritage they become empowered to challenge racism. TIY members were brought into broader transnational networks of Indigenous Peoples in the context of social movements that sought to decolonize the Americas. TIY youth learned valuable lessons from transnational activism about the ways Indigenous Peoples could exist as culturally autonomous peoples and retain their rights to sovereignty. In this context, TIY members partook in an activist pedagogy that nurtured their agency and taught them to challenge unjust power while exploring the significance of their Indigeneity. TIY demonstrates the evolution of a Chicana/o Movement practice of teaching youth through activism. By the 1990s, the Tonantzin Land Institute utilized this practice in the context of transnational Indigenous Peoples social movements that helped youth envision decolonial possibilities for the future. As a result, TIY members were influenced to challenge abuses of cultural, human, and sovereignty rights through their activism.

Although the Tonantzin Land Institute demonstrated the legacy of the Chicana/o Movement in utilizing activism as pedagogy for youth, Tonantzin leadership had doubts as to whether working with youth was related to their overall efforts at fighting for Pueblo and Chicana/o land, sovereignty, and water rights. As former director David Luján explained, the founding of the Tonantzin Land Institute was based on working with Pueblo and Chicana/o community elders. The elders of these communities possessed the respect of the rest of the community, which made them the most important component of political organizing. Consequently, some of the leadership felt adding a youth component drew focus away from

⁸³ “Peace and Dignity Journeys,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

working with elders.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, Tonantzin Land Institute leadership agreed with younger members of the organization and decided to give the youth group a chance. Quickly after its foundation, TIY youth changed the minds of Tonantzin Land Institute leadership that opposed the youth group. As Luján explains:

And sure enough...[the] Tonantzin youth challenge was formed and I'll tell you man it brought new life into Tonantzin. It was new life that brought it back alive and gave it more strength, gave it, you know, a brighter outlook *y todo eso* [and all of that] and they did a lot of good work...And the important thing *tambien* [also] for the [youth]...was that we could...impress upon them was this is not a youth club...the things they were going to be touched by were going be...part of them for the rest of their life. Like water rights and sovereignty rights. They picked them up *de volada* [right away].⁸⁵

TIY youth's vigor and strength demonstrated to the Tonantzin Land Institute's more hardened veteran activists the value of the relationship between adults and youth in activist settings. The aforementioned contributions TIY made to the Tonantzin Land Institute activism impressed adult activists. The youth injected vigor into a many times daunting social struggle, and in doing so, changed the mind of adults who were at first skeptical of incorporating youth into the land and water rights organization. Moreover, the creation of a space for dialogue among youth and adults better established the ideological environment where activists determined goals for the future. Although the Tonantzin Land Institute staff referred to TIY as training for youth, the way in which they provided youth with activists training through experience exemplifies the creation of a critical pedagogy space where veteran activists and youth learned from each other and inspired each other in struggles for social justice.

The incorporation of youth in Tonantzin Land Institute activism provided hardened activists with the vigor to continue their work. Training a future generation also inspired veteran activists to continue the work of fighting for their communities' right to self-determination and sovereignty knowing a future generation would carry on their work. The outcome of the TIY

⁸⁴ David Luján, interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera, March 30, 2012.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

program was the development of a new generation of New Mexico leaders that were influenced by the ethics and values of transnational Indigenous Peoples social movements. The former director of the Tonantzin Land Institute David Luján explains that many TIY members are now community leaders:

...well you know this was about 10 years ago so...I see a lot of them in leadership positions. They may not all be in organizing or all be in, you know, activist groups but... if they're in their in communities...they're spokespeople you can go to.⁸⁶

The TIY program created a group of young adults that became empowered community leaders. They helped these youth develop their agency in ways that continue the important aspect of social movements, which pass on a commitment to social justice to future generations.

The TIY program also exemplifies the extremely urgent need to provide Chicana/o and American Indian youth positive educational options that supports the self-determination of their future trajectories. As Luján explains, TIY helped youth avoid problems with substance abuse and alcoholism and instead focused on provide community youth positive role models:

And one of the important parts of that too is that the persons, the young people that initiated that whole youth component...they have all been as we say... in all this talk, they had been to the bottom. They had been, you know, affected by drugs, affected by drinking, and they had gotten out of that. That's why they knew the importance of bringing other young people. So their sobriety and their, you know, their respect...for being clean and staying away from drugs carried over to these other young people. And it was a fabulous part.⁸⁷

The role the TIY had in helping youth develop the agency to self-determine their futures best exemplifies why Chicana/o activists, since the Chicana/o Movement, have worked so hard to establish ways to incorporate youth into social movements. The activist training that TIY members received did much more to empower students and develop their agency than any traditional classroom curriculum. The Tonantzin Land Institute's effect on these youth was one

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

where the youth developed the confidence, self-determination, and courage to stand up for their community's rights. With these strengths, TIY members were better able to reject the predetermined exploited, rejected, criminalized, and victimized socioeconomic roles planned for them in U.S. society that public schools reinforced through mis-education.

Conclusion

Since the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o activists have utilized pedagogy to help develop young people's critical consciousness. Even within the context of regulations, lack of funding, or lack of access to students, these activists and educators utilized a critical pedagogy and a creative curriculum that valued diverse cultural heritage. They pushed students and youth towards critical understandings of equality and democracy while helping students develop and mature their agency. As a result, these young people began to voice their concerns regarding their role in society, and demanded respect for cultural autonomy for individuals and communities. During the Chicana/o Movement, this resulted in a sense of pride in cultural heritage and the ability to exist in a culturally diverse society without having to renounce cultural heritage in exchange for social and economic success. Since the Chicana/o Movement, many Chicanas and Chicanos' adoption and evolution of Indigeneity and participation with transnational Indigenous Peoples movements resulted in the evolution of this activist pedagogy to be inclusive of a critical understanding of Indigenous Peoples' rights to sovereignty. These rights have also been articulated in a moral call to participate in global struggles for decolonization. The continued trend of activist education that instills the values of social movements in young people is indicative of a long-standing tradition among Chicana/o activist. Chicanas and Chicanos in these organizations were committed to utilize education to help younger generations continue a commitment to social justice. They were also committed to help

youth develop the intellectual means to remain creative individuals that pushed all aspects of ideological and material life towards a future that is better than the present.

The educational efforts utilized by activist organizations in this chapter demonstrate the potential within social movement pedagogies to develop educational models that produce self-determined, creative, and critically conscious young people. Chicana/o activists used visual and performance arts in organizations and alternative schools to develop young peoples' creativity as a means to help them develop self-confidence and self-esteem. This was a central concern among Chicana/o activists because they recognized a need to adapt curriculum and pedagogy to contest the mis-education of young people. This was an essential effort to undo the damage of a public educational system that only replicates the exploitative and discriminatory trends of Western society. These Chicana/o organizations challenged these trends by training young people to value their heritage as a means to both develop the self-esteem of youth, as well as develop their value for cultural diversity. After developing young peoples self-esteem and respect for cultural others, youth began to understand the need to commit themselves to social justice struggles. They sought the respect of their rights to politically and socially participation as equals in the institutions that governed their communities. By teaching young people through activism, these organizations helped them develop the political agency to demand respect of the human and civil rights in their communities. These Chicana/o organization also ensured a continued commitment to social justice by training young people to value the role mentorship and leadership have in ensuring community survival.

Although youth empowerment in the aforementioned Chicana/o activist organizations can be described as typical of any activist organization, their particular emphasis on Indigeneity and Indigenous sovereignty demonstrate trajectories towards decolonial thought, practice, and more egalitarian futures. The Chicana/o Movement established a trajectory of demanding the

right to maintain self-determined cultural community identities while at the same time demanding respect of civil rights that guaranteed social, economic, and political equality. These Chicana/o Movement struggles promoted critical understandings of human rights that are inclusive of a community's right to determine for itself how it can move towards a more prosperous and just future. Coupled with continued critical examination of Chicana/o Indigeneity, Chicana/o activist developed an understanding of their Indigenous heritage that became the basis for which they advocated for the rectification of historic injustice.

In cohort and communication with transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements, Chicanas and Chicanos related their own struggles for community self-determination with those of Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty rights. The educational spaces created by these activist organizations became integral to the ideological and political understanding of human and civil rights. In these spaces, activists linked civil rights struggles to broader historic and contemporary struggles for the rectification of injustices towards Indigenous Peoples. As a result, Chicanas and Chicanos in these organizations embraced the cultural and political heritage of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas as their own in a unique way. Chicana/o activists sought an understanding of human rights that were inclusive of Indigenous Peoples right to sovereignty and advocated for those rights in transnational arenas. Their pedagogical practices demonstrate a mode of establishing methods of training young people to be creative, self-determined, and most importantly courageous enough to continue to challenge global injustice historically built on the exploitation and genocide of Indigenous Peoples. The youth trained by these Chicana/o activists demonstrate a way to understand the legacy of these Chicana/o social movements. Although transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements continue to struggle for protection of their human rights, and many battles in this struggle have been lost, the value of these social

movements is in the way they ensure youth empower themselves and continue a resilient resistance that in many ways has persisted since 1492.

CHAPTER 4

“*Pensamiento Serpentino*”: Chicana/o Movement Teatro Cultural Empowerment Strategies, 1970-1978

*Debe nutrirse de las raíces culturales de nuestros ante
pasados para sembrar semillas de liberación en el presente
y para cosechar en el futuro la Victoria de nuestro pueblo.*¹

Introduction

Beginning in the 1960s, the improvisation of Chicana/o Theater, or *teatro* provided activists and actors a two-fold instrument that reinforced the importance of Chicana/o historic consciousness and Indigeneity.² *Teatro* provided a means to utilize this consciousness as a means to challenge unjust and exploitative social relations determined by racism and capitalism in western society. Actors in *teatro* troupes many times recall that their participation helped them develop a stronger sense of self worth due to the growing consciousness of Chicana/o culture. In particular, actors *in teatro* encountered Indigeneity as part of a developing critical historical consciousness of socioeconomic forces that inhibited Chicanos’ and Chicanas’ right to self-determine the cultural and social trajectories of their communities.³ To develop performance materials along the lines they were aesthetically committed, Chicana/o *Teatros* bridged the pre-colonial to the present, which meant they had to interrogate sources and individuals appropriate to their program goals. The performance of historical consciousness and political ideology demonstrates the relationship between performance and resistance to oppressive power.

¹ Teatro Nacional de Aztlan, “Manifiesto del Teatro Nacional de Aztlan,” *Chicano Theatre Three* (1974): i.

² Use of the Spanish word for theater will be used for the remainder of this chapter because Chicana/o Movement theater troupes defined themselves with the Spanish language term to acknowledge their particular form of popular theater.

³ Refer to recorded interviews of ETC members in the El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara and Yolanda Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement*, 1st ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994); Jorge A Huerta, *Chicano Drama: Performance, Society, and Myth*, Cambridge Studies in American Theatre and Drama (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the Indigenous cultural recognition and revival by Chicanas and Chicanos during the Chicana/o Movement from 1970 to 1978. I focus on the cultural philosophies of the most prominent *teatro* of the Chicana/o Movement, *El Teatro Campesino* (ETC), and the propagation of Indigeneity in the largest coalition of *teatro* troupes of the Chicana/o Movement era, *Teatro Nacional de Aztlan* (TENAZ). To accomplish this, I focus on a history of Chicana/o activists' consciousness of Indigeneity performed in Chicana/o *teatro* performances and publications during the Chicana/o Movement. Although *teatros* some times, for the sake of audience clarity, simplified complex colonial histories, I contend that they drew from historic consciousness of Chicana/o cultural Indigeneity to help Chicana/o Movement activists and community members understand the broader significance of Chicana/o Movement era cultural stances on self-determination.

In the past, some scholars have focused on *teatro* politics, analyzed its aesthetics, or have provided a descriptive history of specific *teatro* troupes' evolution and accomplishments. I appreciate these findings and am interested in further steps—that is in analyzing the historical and cultural implications of Indigeneity depicted in *teatro* to Chicana/o civil rights advocacy during the 1970s. Although some scholars have noted *teatro* Indigenous themes and practices, they have not thoroughly analyzed how the Indigenous ideology promoted by *teatro* groups outlines a strategy for cultural empowerment.⁴ Cultural themes and practices served as the ideological backbone for Chicana/o Movement activists who sought civil rights reform and fair labor practices. *Teatros* used Indigenous cultural ideology to encourage Chicanas and Chicanos to attain critical understandings of culture, politics, gender, the economy, and society. Yet, *teatro* shifts towards Indigenous cultural ideology remains an understudied consequence of both *teatro* and the Chicana/o Movement. In this chapter, I bring a new productive analysis of the

⁴ For previous examinations of Indigenous themes and practices in Chicana/o *teatro*, refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*; Huerta, *Chicano Theater*; Huerta, *Chicano Drama*.

Indigenous cultural themes and practices of *teatros* during the Chicana/o Movement. Thus, I focus on *teatros* that promoted an Indigenous ethos to challenge racism and inequality during the Civil Rights era. To be sure, Chicana/o *teatro* is diverse in topics, political ideology, aesthetics, purpose, and has changed drastically over time. Nevertheless, the 1970s mark an era when *teatros* were significant leaders in Chicana/o communities in influencing the progress and evolution of Indigenism among Chicanas and Chicanos.

The Chicana/o Movement was not the first time that theater or other performance presentations were used in the Americas to challenge unjust power, for example the use of satire and humor in *carpa* performance. In her seminal work, Diana Taylor discusses the long historic context performing cultural memory in the Americas. She demonstrates that performance helped Indigenous Peoples transmit cultural memory, maintain cultural agency, and resist Spanish colonialism.⁵ She contends that performance “transmit[s] communal memories, histories, values from one group/generation to the next. Embodied and performed acts generate, record, and transmit knowledge.”⁶ Chicana/o Movement *teatro* formed part of a long tradition of diverse performance in the Americas that drew from a collective historical experience from the colonial through the modern period. *Teatro* also formed part of the long historic context of Indigenous cultural continuity and resistance to colonialism in the Americas. *Teatro* troupes utilized a collective memory of Indigeneity to posit that Chicanas and Chicanos formed part of the diverse Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. This positionality meant that Chicanas and Chicanos possessed the right to understand their Indigenous knowledge, philosophical, and cultural heritages as well as have these heritages respected by public social and political institutions.

⁵ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Duke University Press Books, 2003) 44-50. Here, Taylor discusses how Nahua populations of Central Mexico subverted Catholic ritual performance by “transferring” the meanings of Indigenous spiritual understandings onto Catholic saints, *virgenes*, and rituals. In this manner, performance served as a means to continue historic consciousness of Indigenous culture, while at the same time challenging the attempted domination of the Catholic Church.

⁶ *Ibid*, 21.

Chicanos and Chicanas utilized *teatro* to depict that these heritages had historically been repressed for many mixed heritage *mestizos*. Historic cultural repression formed part of long established patterns of violations of Indigenous Peoples' human rights in the Americas since the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth-century.

The aspects of Chicana/o *teatro* that challenged violations of inherent human rights constitute the value of *teatro* for cultural revitalization during the Chicana/o Movement, especially among youth. Chicana/o movement *teatros* drew most of its membership from youth in their late teens to early twenties searching for experiences that reflected their growing appreciation for their cultural heritage. These youth combined their reappraisal of their Indigenous heritage with their desire to impel social change in an unjust society.⁷ Chicana/o *teatro* served both its young actors and audiences as a medium to develop ideas of Indigeneity within Chicana/o communities that would inspire stances critical of racism, capitalist exploitation, and human rights violations. *Teatros* encouraged Chicanas and Chicanos of the Chicana/o Movement era to envision the dynamic relationship between their right to their Indigenous cultural heritage and historic human rights, which all humans may claim at birth. Thus, violations that resulted from having these heritages violated are that much more compelling to be addressed.

Art of the Chicana/o Movement

During the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o activists united a consciousness of cultural heritage with political struggles for human and civil rights.⁸ Literature and art united consciousness of

⁷ Refer to interviews by young members of ETC in the early 1970s in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University of California, Santa Barbara. I discuss these examples in more detail later in this chapter.

⁸ For a discussion of the significance of culture, identity, and politics during the Chicana/o Movement, refer to Mario Barrera, *Beyond Aztlan: Ethnic Autonomy in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988) 35-44; George Mariscal, *Brown-eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement*,

Indigenous heritage with struggles for civil and human rights among Mexican Americans in a cultural ideology known as “Chicanismo.”⁹ In many ways, Chicana/o Movement cultural ideological evolution followed examinations of Indigenous culture and philosophy that were already occurring in Mexico.¹⁰ Works by well-known Mexican *Indigenista* authors Alfonso Caso and Miguel Leon Portilla were already in circulation during the Chicana/o Movement, some of which were available in English.¹¹ These cultural elaborations also exhibited influence from Mexican *mestizaje* ideas.

In other ways, the art of the Chicana/o Movement challenged the hegemony of western premised domination in the context of anti-colonial sentiment of the Chicana/o community during the middle twentieth-century. Chicana/o Movement art, within a Mexican cultural context of *mestizaje*, also pushed for a rereading of Chicana/o history and culture as a means of self-determination with artists including *teatro* activists leading the way. Chicano poet Alurista explains the importance of artists in inspiring social movements in the following statement:

Well...artists...are the ones that propagate the symbols, the music, the painting that will define a people. Artists lead the way. They often do it intuitively, not because they've been trained to do it, but because they have the skills and they can learn and direct their art form in a way that is not European based. That to me was important in order to assert our...self-identity, and self-determination...our self-respect.”¹²

The art of the Chicana/o Movement demonstrated a revival of elements of Indigenous heritage that had been stripped in the cultural constructs of colonialism. By propagating the Indigenous

1965-1975 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005) 25-51; and Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez, *Making Aztlán: Ideology and Culture of the Chicana and Chicano Movement, 1966-1977* (UNM Press, 2014) 55-58.

⁹ Refer to Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, “I am Joaquín,” in *Message to Aztlán: Selected Readings*, 16-29.

¹⁰ Beginning in the 1930s, many Mexican professionals and college students, especially in Mexico City, begun had begun to critically engage the implications of Mexican Indigeneity among mixed heritage peoples in much more complex ways than the *Indigenismo* of the Mexican state. For an examination of these *Indigenistas*, refer to Alicja Iwańska, *The Truths of Others: An Essay on Nativistic Intellectuals in Mexico* (Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman Pub. Co, 1977).

¹¹ Refer to Alfonso Caso, *El Pueblo del Sol* (México: Fondo Cultura Económica, 1953); Miguel León Portilla and Jay I. Kislak, *Aztec Thought and Culture; a Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind*, The Civilization of the American Indian Series; 67; (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1963).

¹² Alurista, “Interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera,” July 13, 2012.

symbols in the context of cultural syncretism, Chicana/o Movement artists began to reread *mestizaje* in a way that upheld the revival and survival of Indigenous culture in Chicana/o communities.

Noting that *mestizaje* had been an arguable anticolonial construct to counter European colonial domination, Chicana/o artists' cultural affirmations contested U.S. racism and began to reinterpret *mestizaje* different from the late colonial era in a way that valued the Indigenous as present and future during the 1960s and 1970s Chicana/o Movement. One example of this was Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales' influential poem "I am Joaquín" where he constructs Chicana/o cultural identity as a synthetic product of Spanish and Indigenous heritages in equal parts. In contrast to Mexican nationalists who sought a means to modernist progress and national hegemony, Gonzales posits this split heritage as an affirmation of cultural autonomy and as a means to struggle for civil and human rights in the U.S. Gonzales' poem enjoyed a large readership through publication in various Chicana/o Movement newspapers, and especially among Chicana/o college students. These students gained awareness of Gonzales and the Crusade for Justice as a result of the 1969 Denver Youth Conference.¹³ They also enjoyed "I am Joaquin" as a videotaped performance by El Teatro Campesino that circulated college campus across the country during the Chicana/o Movement.¹⁴ This poem celebrates the survival of Chicana/o culture during hundreds of years of colonization, which provides the ideological foundation to conceptualize Chicana/o political, social, and economic self-determination.¹⁵ In short, whereas Mexican nationalists posit *mestizaje* as a nationally hegemonic ideology over diverse demographics, Gonzales' poem exemplifies a Chicana/o Movement ideology that

¹³ For more on the Crusade for Justice and the 1969 Denver Youth Conference, refer to Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice*; Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez, *Making Aztlán*.

¹⁴ For viewing of "I am Joaquin (1969)" performed by El Teatro Campesino, refer to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6M6qQG2O-o>.

¹⁵ Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, 16.

asserted an avenue for cultural autonomy by examining and embracing Chicana/o culture and ancestry vis-à-vis a dominant society.

“I am Joaquín” may have inspired many Chicanas and Chicanos to explore their Indigenous ancestry as a means to embrace Indigeneity given its persuasively forceful tone. Many Chicana/o activists analyzed their struggles for equal rights from an Indigenous perspective that incorporated critical historical consciousness of colonialism, instead of just from a point of underprivileged origin from which to strive towards a modernist future. Therefore, in the context of the early Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o *mestizaje* served as foundational affirmation of the right to cultural autonomy, and an optional avenue for cultural autonomy. Nevertheless, *mestizaje* arguably could be considered a restrictive cultural ideology that, for many Chicana/o activists, resembled too closely the cultural nationalist notions promoted by Mexican state agencies.¹⁶ As a result, many activists sought to distance themselves from *mestizaje* given their knowledge of Mexican hegemony based in *mestizaje* ideas.¹⁷ Chicana/o Movement cultural elaboration of *mestizaje*, however, demonstrated nuanced critiques of culture that dismantled modern understandings of static Indigenous and Western cultures.

By the early 1970s, many activists of the Chicana/o Movement began to more and more emphasize their right to claim Indigenous heritage as trajectory for Chicana/o communities’ cultural self-determination, even if Chicana/o ancestors chose otherwise. Chicana/o ideologues,

¹⁶ For rejections of Mexican nationalist cultural emphases of *mestizaje* in *teatro*, refer to Alma Martinez, “¿Un Continente, Una Cultura?: the Political Dialectic for a United Chicana o and Pan-American Popular Political Theater Front, Mexico City, 1974,” 2006. For interviews with *danzantes* that demonstrate an empowering *mestizaje*, refer to Poveda, “Danza De Concheros En Austin, Texas.” Usually the key Mexican state agency that promoted hegemonic *mestizaje* was the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP). For more on cultural politics in Mexican schools, especially the rural ones, refer to Fernando Solana, Raúl Cardiel Reyes y Raúl Bolaños Martínez, *Historia de la Educación Pública en México (1876-1976)* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1981); and Mary K Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson, Ariz: University of Arizona Press, 1997). For an overall examination of Mexican state agencies that promoted an *Indigenismo* based in the premises of *mestizaje*, refer to Alexander Scott Dawson, *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico* (University of Arizona Press, 2004).

¹⁷ For early examples of *Indigenismo* in Mexican nationalism, refer to Manuel Gamio, *Forjando patria: pro nacionalismo* (Mexico: Librería de Porrúa Hermanos, 1916); and Caso, *La religión de los aztecas*.

like Luis Váldez and Alurista recognized this cultural perspective to link a positive valuation of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage during the Chicana/o Movement.¹⁸ Chicana/o Indigenous cultural revival during this period was largely influenced by the Chicano Nationalism expressed in the Plan de Aztlan, and more specifically the cultural ideas expressed in its preface El Plan Espiritual de Aztlan. As Alurista stated:

It was then that I wrote the Plan Espiritual de Aztlan. Back then, everyone was talking, especially Corky, was talking Chicano Nationalism. That's good, but if you are going to be talking nationalism, you need a nation, you know?! Cause we have a culture, we have a language, but we don't have a common economy, we don't have a central political government of our own. So we needed a name for the nation and I came up with Aztlan.¹⁹

Chicanas and Chicanos rooted themselves by naming a place of belonging in further inspired inquiries about Chicana/o Indigeneity in the Southwest. This rooting help Chicanas and Chicanos see themselves as part of a larger Indigenous population with ancestral origins in the Americas going back thousands of years. As Alurista iterates:

[Indigenismo] gives us an original identity. We are originals... Amerindians. They go back to this land, they don't go back to anywhere else. This land was Amerindian...was populated while Europe was populated, Asia...at the same time we come from anywhere. Que las straits de Bering y que la fregada. Its puro pedo.”²⁰

Eventually, inquiries in to Indigeneity in the Southwest contributed to Chicana/o ideas about Indigeneity in the Americas through time and space.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Chicana/o activists engaged their Indigenous heritage in ways that revealed historic trends of *mestizaje* that incorporated the idea of

¹⁸ Refer to works by Luis Valdez and El Teatro Campesino in *Luis Valdez—Early Works, Actos, Bernabe, and Pensamiento Serpentino*. For Alurista’s pivotal influence on the culture of the Chicana/o movement, refer to Alurista, *As Our Barrio Turns: Who the Yoke B On?* (Calaca Press, 2000); Hayes-Bautista, *Floriscanto en Aztlan*. For his analysis of Chicana/o Movement cultural nationalism, refer to Alurista, “Cultural Nationalism and Xicano Literature During the Decade of 1965-1975,” *MELUS* 8, no. 2 (July 1, 1981): 22–34.

¹⁹ Alurista, “Interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera,” July 13, 2012. For an elaboration of Alurista’s three levels of Aztlan, refer to “The Alurista Interview” in Cecilio Garcia-Camarillo, Roberto Rodriguez, and Patrisia Gonzales, eds., *Cantos Al Sexto Sol: A Collection of Aztalahuac Writing* (San Antonio, Tex: Wings Press, 2002) 323-332.

²⁰ Alurista, “Interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera,” July 13, 2012.

Indigenous cultural survival. Indigenous identity thus became an important source of inspiration for Chicana/o activists to challenge Western cultural hegemony in the Americas. As Alurista stated:

Indigenous heritage became central in my political organizing. That's how Toltecas in Aztlan came to being and the Centro Cultural de la Raza. So then, through the Centro Cultural de la Raza, I tried to promote Indigenous research, thought and practice instead of doing ballet folclórico Mexicano y gachupín, I got everybody, including the big dance group, into Indigenous dancing. Through that and the art forms, painting, muralism, poetry, music we complicated Indigenous culture as an important side of our mestizaje. Because in our mestizaje, the Indigenous side has traditionally been denied or obscured or not talked about.²¹

Through an Indigenous cultural revival, Chicanas and Chicanos of the *movimiento* established methods of reviving Indigenous cultural heritage in a way that challenged the definitions of Indigeneity on both sides of the U.S.-México border. Chicanas and Chicanos called into question blood quantum and language abilities on both sides of the border that defined Indigeneity. In doing so, Chicana/o activists use art to demonstrate the right Chicanas and Chicanos had to reclaim their Indigeneity and use it to strive for a better future. Alurista explains the benefits of Chicanas and Chicanos recognizing their Indigeneity as follows:

Well, like I said, we [at the Centro Cultural de la Raza] represented the Indian side of us, which had been denied by our parents and grand parents. By asserting it today we've become better people because we don't consider ourselves superior to anyone. I have a poem that says something along these lines, talking to the gringo, I am superior to you to the degree that I realize you and I are equal. I am superior to you to the degree that I realize you and I are equal and you don't.²²

Ideologues like Alurista made Indigeneity an integral part of their discourse on rights. Since the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o participation in Pan-Indigenous activism has evolved Chicana/o elaborations of their own Indigenous heritage. Pan-Indigenous activism is rooted in many of the connections that Chicana/o Movement era leaders made south of the U.S.-México border in

²¹ Alurista, "Interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera," July 13, 2012.

²² Alurista, "Interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera," July 13, 2012.

order to develop a Chicana/o Indigeneity beyond the constraints of the geographical limits of both the nation-states, as well as the ideological limitation of cultural nationalism.²³

Towards an Alternative Vision: El Teatro Campesino's Cultural Philosophy

During the 1960s Civil Rights era, Chicanas and Chicanos participated in struggles for equality that sought to improve their social and economic conditions. ETC was part of this struggle as performance artists that sought to narrate and depict the methods of achieving self-determination and equal rights. Beginning in 1965, ETC primarily performed short plays, or *actos*, that dealt with farm workers' political and economic contestations against farm owners in the tradition of *carpa* and consistent with its model drawn from the San Francisco Mime Troupe.²⁴ As an educational and organizing project, ETC educated and recruited Chicana/o farm workers for the United Farm Workers Union (UFW). In 1967, ETC left the UFW to form an independent *teatro* group that wrote and performed plays depicting a wider range of the Chicana/o experience in the United States.²⁵ ETC's methods also evolved to include *corridos*, an adaptation of oral history performed as Mexican ballads, and *mitos*, or mythos that delved into Indigenous origins of Chicana/o culture through stories.²⁶

In many ways, ETC's *mitos* formed part of a Chicana/o Movement of *Chicanismo* that politicized cultural heritage in ways that simplified colonial history inclusive of interethnic violence and romanticized mid-twentieth-century anti-colonial resistances. As a result, ETC

²³ Artist on both sides of the border needed to talk about omnipresent and powerful U.S. cultural impositions. Chicana/o artists that clearly understood this were Juan Felipe Herrera and Lin Romero. Refer to Juan Felipe Herrera, *187 Reasons Mexicanos Can't Cross the Border: Undocuments 1971-2007*, 1st edition (San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 2007); and Lin Romero, *Happy songs, bleeding hearts*. (San Diego: Toltecas en Aztlan, 1974).

²⁴ For more on Luis Valdez's early experience with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, refer to Huerta, *Chicano Theater*; and Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*.

²⁵ El Teatro Campesino, "El Teatro Campesino," *Chicano Theatre Two* (1973): 9.

²⁶ For an examination of *corridos* by ETC, refer to Huerta, *Chicano Theater*; Broyles González, *El Teatro Campesino*. Also refer to several writings by Luis Valdez and the publication of El Teatro Campesino's and Luis Valdez's work in Valdez and Teatro Campesino (Organization), *Luis Valdez--Early Works*.

mitos portrayed Chicana/o Indigenous positionality of victimization. ETC portrayals of Chicana/o Indigeneity did not take into account complex colonial degrees of privilege nor did it differentiate between the Indigeneity of “*mestizo*” peoples and the Indigeneity of Indigenous peoples that refused to integrate into colonial and modern societies.²⁷ These layered relations involved complex colonial power dynamics that continue to affect the material conditions of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples who refused the colonialism they faced experienced harsher conditions than Indigenous Peoples of mixed heritage, since mixed heritage peoples enjoyed some small privileges. However, differentiation in historic effects of colonialism and types of Indigeneity expressions highlight the importance of ETC’s attempts to depict Chicana/o Indigeneity in its *mitos*. Perhaps ETC was overly ambitious in trying to construct a mythology from Mesoamerican Indigenous and colonial era materials. Their attempts to construct a conceptual pathway for Chicanas and Chicanos to embrace their Indigeneity, however, demonstrate aesthetic initiative.

ETC exhibited a decolonial turn in Chicana/o cultural production in the context of U.S. power structures that emphasized racial, gender, and class inequalities. As a means to challenge these power structures, ETC challenged its actors to both investigate the significance of their Indigenous heritage, and subsequently, motivate them to challenge all peoples’ perceptions of humanity and knowledge. ETC established its Indigenous epistemological perspective within its theater method, “Theater of the Sphere.” Theater of the Sphere intended to challenge identity fragmentation by supporting the performance of holistic human characters that had been reconstituted by embracing Indigenous culture and identity.²⁸ Through “Theater of the Sphere,”

²⁷ For more on Indigenous Peoples that refuse to be recognized (i.e. citizenship) and refuse to recognize colonial/modern nation states (i.e. colonialism), refer to Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*.

²⁸ For more on the contribution of ETC’s Theater of the Sphere, refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, 119-127. For an example of an ETC play where Chicana/o characters are reconstituted by embracing Indigeneity, refer to the *mito* “Bernabé” in Luis Valdez and Teatro Campesino (Organization), *Luis Valdez--Early Works: Actos, Bernabé, and Pensamiento Serpentino*. (Houston, Tex.: Arte Publico Press, 1990) 135-167.

ETC encouraged actors and audiences to perceive their existence, both physical and spiritual, in more humane and just ways. The Spherical method was modeled on knowledge communicated to ETC actors by Domingo Martínez Paredes about the twenty days of the Mayan calendar that represent the human body, heart, mind, and soul.²⁹ By applying the meaning of the twenty days into *viente pasos* (twenty steps) for Chicana/o theater method, ETC actors used cultural awareness of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage in its efforts to contest government and corporate exploitation. These contestations supported the human right to self-determination and equal rights necessary for a democratic society. Furthermore, as ETC actor Olivia Chumacero reported, ETC's theater method served as a counter-hegemonic pedagogy that instilled in actors a way of life in support of learning through practice as a means to put into practice social justice.³⁰ ETC's promotion of Chicana/o Indigeneity, even if at times simplifying colonial history, laid the foundation for counter-hegemonic unity that sought the dismantling of colonialism.

Chicana/o activists during the Chicana/o Movement promoted a cultural understanding that served to unify its participants as a means to challenge hegemonic notions that valorized Western society as superior to Indigenous societies. ETC accomplished this by presenting to Chicana/o Movement activists, and Chicana/o communities, that their cultural heritage was linked to the legacy of the Indigenous populations of the Americas. As ETC director Luis Valdez explains:

Man has been in the Americas for more than 38,000 years. White men have been around for less than five hundred. It is presumptuous, even dangerous, for any one to pretend that the Chicano, the "Mexican –American," is only one more in the long line of hyphenated-immigrants to the New World. *We are the New World...*

During the three hundred years of Nueva España, only 300,000 gachupines [Spaniards] settled in the new world. And most of these were men. There were so few

²⁹ Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, 95-119.

³⁰ Olivia, Chumacero, "Cassette A6939—Olivia Chumacero Interview by Celia Trujillo, 1972," in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara. Also refer to "Cassette A6935—Phil Esparza Interview by Celia Trujillo, 1972," and "Cassette A6938—Rosemary Apodaca Interview by Celia Trujillo, 1972," who also discuss *teatro* as a way of life.

white people at first, that then years after the Conquest in 1531, there were more black men in Mexico than white...

Miscegenation went joyously wild, creating the many shapes, sizes, and hues of La Raza. But the predominant strain of the mestizaje remained Indio. By the turn of the nineteenth century, most of the people in Mexico were mestizos with a great deal of Indian blood

The presence of the Indio in La Raza is as real as the barrio. Tortillas, tamales, chile, marijuana, la curandera, el empacho, el molcajete, atole, La Virgen de Guadalupe—these are hard-core realities for our people. These and thousands of other little human customs and traditions are interwoven into the fiber of our daily life. América Indígena [Indigenous America] is not ancient history. It exists today in the barrio, having survived even the subversive onslaught of the twentieth-century neon gabacho commercialism that passes for American culture.³¹

Valdez proposed a historic consciousness that positions Chicanas and Chicanos in millennia old lineages of Indigenous American peoples. According to Valdez, Chicanas and Chicanos could utilize this cultural continuum to undo the psychological effects of hundreds of years of colonization and oppression. At the same time, Chicanas and Chicanos could organize to change the social, political, and economic structures to ensure the cause of those detrimental psychological effects were dismantled. In this way, Valdez and other activists of the Chicana/o Movement were establishing the foundations for the decolonial intent of understanding and restating Chicana/o Indigeneity. For these Chicana/o Movement cultural ideologues, Indigenous cultural revival was the key to challenging colonialism.

Chicana/o Movement era Indigenous cultural revival went hand and hand with civil rights organizing. According to Valdez, politically organizing with a cultural understanding of Indigenous heritage was necessary because:

...the barrio is a colony of the white man's world. Our life there is second hand, full of chingaderas imitating the way of the patron. The used cars, rented houses, old radio and TV sets, stale grocery stores, plastic flowers—all the trash of the white man's world mixes with the bits and pieces of that other life, the Indio life, to create the barrio. Frijoles and tortillas remain, but the totality of the Indio's vision is gone. Curanderas make use of plants and herbs as popular cures, without knowing that their knowledge is

³¹ Luis Váldez, "La Plebe," introduction, *Aztlán: An Anthology of Mexican American Literature*, ed. Luis Valdez and S. Steiner (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972) xiii-xxxiv.

what remains of a great medical science. Devout Catholics pray to the Virgen de Guadalupe, without realizing that they were worshipping an Aztec goddess, Tonantzin.³²

Political organizing based in Indigeneity was a necessary outcome of ETC's theater as a means to inspire a self-determined future for Chicanas and Chicanos. This approach depicted the philosophical significance of common historical and cultural roots in Chicana/o communities.

In the early 1970's, ETC developed theater based in Indigenous Philosophy and taught it to other *teatro* groups in order to orient Chicana/o Movement activists towards a critical understanding of Chicana/o Indigeneity in historic and cultural terms. Luis Váldez's own critical reflections of his own Indigenous heritage began in 1969. According to Váldez, he had a dream he was in a circle surrounded by Indigenous feet and had to jump from one side of the circle to the other. When he jumped, the barefooted people yelled, "Chaac," and the beings turned to *calaveras* (skeletons) and disappeared. He later learned that Chaac was the Mayan deity of rain associated with rings, which inspired him to seek Mayan knowledge through connections with elders and scholars in México.³³ Although the meaning of Valdez's dream are best left for him to interpret, the dream inspired him to connect to Mexican elders to learn more about Indigenous culture and philosophy. These efforts demonstrate an analysis of the detrimental and still evident effects of colonialism through a critical reflection on historic consciousness of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage. Nowhere is this more evident than in ETC's performance of the Chortí Mayan ritual dance *Baile de los Gigantes*.

ETC's first performance of "Baile de los Gigantes" demonstrated their utilization of Indigenous ritual to disseminate Indigenous culture, through language, poetry, philosophy, and dance. ETC first performed "Baile de los Gigantes" in México on the first day of the Teatro

³² Luis Váldez, "La Plebe" xvi.

³³ "2 016: Luis Valdez-Interview 1983-1984, Interview by Paulina Sahagun, Assistant Librarian, Chicano Research Center L.A., UCLA," in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara. For connection with Mexican elders, refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, 85, 95-97.

Nacional de Aztlan (TENAZ) Chicano and Latin American Theatre Festival at the temples of Teotihuacan, Mexico in 1974.³⁴ The ritual dance reflected Luis Valdez's exploration of Mayan philosophy and ETC's interactions with Mexican Indigenous elders and teachers, such as Domingo Martínez Paredes, Ignacio Magaloni Duarte, Virgilio Vallardes Aldaco, and Andrés Segura Granados.³⁵ ETC held regular encounters with these elders in the United States and Mexico to learn how to utilize Indigenous culture and articulate an Indigenous Chicana/o identity. In maintaining close ties with respected elders and teachers, ETC demonstrated a commitment to pursue an Indigenous philosophical perspective as the means to envision an alternative to colonial logics in western society. As such, their value for Indigenous knowledges, although sometimes mistakenly ahistoricized, demonstrates a decolonial goal to envision "post-colonial" Chicana/o culture.

The ETC's version *Baile de los Gigantes* utilized Mayan creation and origin mythology in the *Popul Vuh* [The People's Book], which depicts the *Quiché* Mayans pre-colonial history and mythology.³⁶ The ritual dance depicts Mayan deities and twin brothers *Hunahpu* and *Ixbalamque* defeating the forces of the netherworld and ignorance. This preceded the creation of human beings by the forces of creation, which represented the origins and elements of Mayan civilization. By utilizing this Mayan origin story, ETC performed an example of Indigenous moralities as a means to conceptualize how these moralities could serve as alternatives to colonial logics and ethics. Like *Hunahpu* and *Ixbalamque*, Chicanos and Chicanas in the

³⁴ Shank, 56.

³⁵ In his interview on danza, José Flores, "Interviewed by José Luis Serrano Najera," May 27, 2014 refers to El Teatro Campesino as one of the the first Chicana/o Movement organizations to out reach to Mexican elders. For more on the fruition of these efforts in the 5th Annual TENAZ festival, refer to Alma Martinez, "¿Un Continente, Una Cultura?: The Political Dialectic for a United Chicana/o and Pan-American Popular/Political Theater Front, Mexico City, 1974," (PhD. diss., Stanford University, 2006).

³⁶ For a depiction of the Chortí Maya version of *Baile de los Gigantes*, refer to Rafael Girard, *Esotericism of the Popol Vuh*, 1st English ed (Pasadena, Calif: Theosophical University Press, 1979). For video of El Teatro Campesino's performance of *Baile de los Gigantes*, refer to "007: Baile de los Gigantes undated," in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, available for online viewing at <http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/ETCList.html>.

Chicana/o Movement saw themselves in a battle against forces of injustice and ignorance to establish a decolonial age of existence that was “post” western cultural hegemony. By continuing ritual depiction of pre-Columbian religion, and colonial cultural resistance, ETC performed “*Baile de los Gigantes*” to demonstrate a linkage between Chicanas and Chicanos and Indigenous Peoples’ struggles for self-determination.

Although “*Baile de los Gigantes*” helped ETC depict the relevance of Indigenous Peoples’ self-determination among Chicanas and Chicanos, they did so under heavy scrutiny from some critics. Many Marxist critics were vehemently opposed to what they referred to as a “mystification” of culture rather than what they prioritized in the depiction of material inequalities as a basis for class struggle.³⁷ Although these critics may have revealed ETC’s ambitious mythological interpretations of Indigeneity, they missed how seeking alternative cultural perspectives is part and parcel of the material struggle for resources in challenges to domination. ETC’s performance of “*Baile de los Gigantes*” reflects an integral function of theater to promote critical understandings of culture, agency, human rights, and injustice, all of which form part of anti-imperial and anti-colonial struggles.³⁸ Chicanas and Chicanos found themselves in a U.S. nation-state where they suffer from hegemony, exploitation, oppression, and are suppressed into a lower socioeconomic class of society. Therefore, as ETC’s performances demonstrate, culture and political power are intrinsically linked, and both must be utilized to self-determine a decolonial trajectory for Chicana/o communities.

³⁷ For more on Marxist critique of ETC’s “*Baile de los Gigantes*,” refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, 120-121; and Jorge González, “Pensamiento Serpentino: A Cultural Trampa or Is the Teatro Campesino Campesino?” *La Gente de Aztlán* 5, no. 1 (1974): 5, 14.

³⁸ For the use of theater as critical pedagogy, refer to the seminal work by Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1985).

Teatro Nacional de Aztlan

Along with ETC, many other Chicana/o *teatros* partook in propagating the idea of Chicana/o Indigeneity as a critical tenet of Chicana/o Movement decolonization. Given both their prominence and the need to organize *teatros*, ETC assumed a leadership role in organizing other *teatro* groups in to the coalition TENAZ. Within TENAZ, *teatros* depicted the importance of “unity” rooted in Indigenous culture. By helping organize *teatro* groups through out the United States, and Latin America, TENAZ leadership sought to demonstrate the possibility of organizing *teatro* troupes as cultural leadership organizations in Chicana/o communities. Many *teatros* assigned themselves the task of depicting the value of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage and used this value to inspire activism against racist and exploitative injustice in the U.S.

The idea for TENAZ originated during Second Annual Festival de los Teatros held at Cabrillo College, Aptos, CA in April 1971.³⁹ According to the *Chicano Theatre One* editorial staff, “[TENAZ workshops were] able to instill a feeling of unity so that in the near future all *teatros* could either exchange political and theatrical ideas or even participate as part of TENAZ.”⁴⁰ By 1974, TENAZ consisted of 75 *teatro* groups from California, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, New York, and Mexico City.⁴¹ TENAZ’s goals were to: “1.) establish communication between Teatros; 2.) provide a means for sharing materials, i.e., actos, songs, etc.; and 3.) establish a summer workshop for representatives from as many *teatros* as possible.”⁴² Through communication and sharing, TENAZ also provided Chicana/o *teatros* a space to draw from cultural collectivity through dialogue. TENAZ hosted Indigenous elders like *danza capitán* Andrés Granados Segura who shared valuable Nahautl cultural knowledge with Chicana/o *teatro* members at their annual

³⁹ “TENAZ,” *Chicano Theatre One*, eds. Andres Gutierrez, Jose Delgado, Olivia Chumacero, and Rogelio Rojas (1973): 31.

⁴⁰ “TENAZ,” *Chicano Theatre One* 31.

⁴¹ “TENAZ Directory”, *Chicano Theatre Three* (1974): 50-54.

⁴² Huerta, “En Torno,” 3.

festivals. These sort of interactions with elders and teachers provided *teatro* members with interaction and exchanges that allowed for their depiction and understanding of Chicana/o Indigeneity to develop.

TENAZ's support of performance that depicted the cultural and political significance of Chicana/o Indigeneity demonstrates the significant relationship between culture and struggles for human rights in a modern world still guided by colonial ruling ideologies. TENAZ's practice demonstrated its mission: for Chicanas and Chicanos to utilize culture in their struggles for political, social, and economic self-determination. TENAZ stated their mission as follows:

Los Trabajadores del [The Workers of] Teatro Nacional de Aztlan are committed to a way of Life/Struggle ayudandole a la gente entender el porque de sus problemas sociales individuales [helping the people understand the why of their individual social problems] and to search for solutions. Que sea nuestro Teatro el arco iris humano: [May are theater be the human rainbow]: let it create Teatro para toda la palomia—para los niños, juvenes, viejos, mujeres, estudiantes, obreros, campesinos y hasta para los tapados. [for the children, adolescents, the old, women, students, laborers, farm workers, and even for the constipated.] Debe nutrirse de las raices culturales de nuestros ante pasados para sembrar semillas de liberacion en el presente y para cosechar en el futuro la Victoria de nuestro pueblo.

[Our ancestors' cultural roots should be nurtured to plant the seeds of liberation in the present and to harvest a Victory in the future for our people.]

La organización de [The organization of] TENAZ, which will work with all oppressed peoples, must develop a humane revolutionary alternative to commercial theatre and mass media. It is also necessary that we work and unite with all theatres struggling for liberation donde quiera, particularmente en Latinoamerica [wherever, particularly in Latin America]. It should serve as a tool in the Life/Struggle of la Raza by developing Teatros as community organizations.

El Teatro debe ir al pueblo y no el pueblo al Teatro. [The Theater should go to the people and not the people to the Theater.]⁴³

Chicanas and Chicanos strategically utilized the concept “Roots of our ancestors” in their manifesto to provide a “revolutionary alternative” to not just commercial theater, but to modernity and capitalism as well. They challenged western ruling elite of the modern world who relied on racist colonial depictions of Indigenous people. Many Chicana/o *teatros* based their ideology in the traditions of Indigenous communities of the Americas to gain a holistic

⁴³ Teatro Nacional de Aztlan, “Manifiesto del Teatro Nacional de Aztlan,” *Chicano Theatre Three* (1974): i.

perspective on the human right to self-determination. *Teatro* Indigenous based ideology led Chicana/o *teatros* to unify with other theater groups across the Western hemisphere as a means to challenge colonial logics beyond the U.S.-México border region.

Common Indigenous heritage with Latin Americans invoked a need to organize *teatro* groups internationally. As an international *teatro* coalition, TENAZ helped Chicana/o actors develop an understanding of Indigenous heritage that linked them to anti-racist and anti-colonial struggles of the Americas. In turn, the *teatro* community grew to include peoples on both sides of the U.S.-México border. Moreover, as community theater troupes, Chicana/o *teatros* also served as activist organizations that partook in the overall Chicana/o Movement and in contemporary Latin American social movements' struggles for self-determination.

Los Festivales de Teatros

The annual TENAZ theater festivals provided *teatros* the chance to develop their performance methods that sought to promote consciousness of Indigeneity within Chicana/o communities. The TENAZ festivals had three main purposes, which were presentation of plays and actos by participants, workshops, and daily discussions.⁴⁴ These festivals were key to developing a Chicana/o *teatro* movement in the early 1970s, which is exemplified by the growth of membership in TENAZ from 1971-1974.⁴⁵ During the first festival in the spring of 1970, ETC director Luis Váldez explained that the festivals would create common ground for Chicana/o *teatros* from across the country. The goal for this, according to Váldez, was to promote unity and diminish the distance that contributed to regionalism among the *teatros*.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ "The Second Festival of the Teatros de Aztlan," 1.

⁴⁵ "TENAZ Directory," *Chicano Theatre Three* (1974): 50-54.

⁴⁶ Luis Váldez paraphrased in "Chicanos Meet: First Festival," *The Fresno Bee* 5/9/1970, in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.

The festival also promoted this unity transnationally, which was exemplified by the participation of Los Mascarones from Mexico City. Mariano Leyva, Lourdes Perez Gay, and Enrique Vallejo of Los Mascarones promoted a cultural unity among Mexicans, Chicanas, and Chicanos. Through their interactions with Chicanas and Chicanos, Los Macarones drew inspiration from the cultural ideas of “Chicanismo” for their own ideas about Mexican culture. As they state, “Esos valores que los Chicanos esgrimen en su lucha son Zapata, Netzahualcoyotl, Morelos, la Raza de Bronce, Juarez, y La Virgen de Guadalupe.”⁴⁷ Through transnational connections with *teatro* groups like Los Mascarones, Chicana/o *teatros* further developed a critical historic understanding of the linked resistance to colonialism and modern capitalism. This critical historic understanding developed through a convergence between the Chicana/o Movement and its contemporary social movements and revolutions in México and Latin America. Through transnational iterations of resistance to colonialism and capitalism at the annual festivals helped Chicana/o *teatros* develop their political outlook, *Teatros* learned theatrical play writing skills to portray the social justice struggles of Chicana/o communities and to incorporate an activist purpose into theatrical performance.

The need for *teatro* actors and actresses to become activists in the Chicana/o Movement, instead of merely performing, had been evident to ETC founders since the mid 1960s when the first actors were activists and performed on United Farm Workers Union picket lines. However, a means of developing a method of teaching *teatro* actors to also be activists became a necessary TENAZ objective. At TENAZ festivals, novice actors struggled with combining performance with politics. In early April 1971, Chicana/o *teatros* at the annual Chicana/o theater festival at Cabrillo College in Aptos, CA discussed the purpose and method of Chicana/o *teatro* as a method of challenging hegemony and oppression:

⁴⁷ Mariano Leyva, “De México: Los chicanos son nuestros,” *El Teatro* (1970): 6, in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.

The ideological problems that an actor finds himself in have to be solved artistically. We reached the following conclusions in the daily discussions of practical theory. At the beginning the talks were directed towards form and content of the performances but then there came an apparent change in the discussion. Which was, that the artists combines his social experiences through his work of art. He seeks to express politically an uneasy combination of reality. The artist's intention is to awake an unconscious public to official propaganda and to make it aware of the social and economic oppression in which it lives. The type of teatro, that is to say, we try to wake the consciousness of our people regardless of the structure or place where our performances take place. Our role as Chicano artists is to present a clear and strong testimony of this divided world, which has been distorted by gabachos who are only now slowly beginning to see the deterioration of their political and economic power.⁴⁸

As a result of the discussions at this festival, Chicana/o *teatros* formalized the creation of the TENAZ coalition of *teatro* troupes with activist intentions. Through TENAZ, Chicana/o *teatros* learned that the emphasis of their performance lay in the political and cultural message and not aesthetics. Since most *teatros* lacked the funds and facilities of traditional theater companies, it was problematic for Chicana/o *teatros* to mimic traditional theater methods. *Teatros* utilized techniques that required little funds, and that could be performed in the street. The importance of the political and cultural message required *teatros* to go into Chicana/o communities utilizing performance methods to promote Chicana/o Indigenous self-awareness and challenge colonial logics. Ultimately, TENAZ became the space for experienced *teatros* to teach novice troupes to embrace political and cultural theater.

The transnational importance of cultural awareness and political solidarity further developed at the 4th annual TENAZ festival in 1973. The importance of *teatro* in creating these transnational bonds was exemplified by the decision by festival participants to unify Latin American and U.S. Chicana/o *teatros* in developing the political purpose of theater. At the 1973 festival, TENAZ, El Teatro Campesino, Centro Libre de Experimentacion Teatral y Artistica

⁴⁸ "The Second Festival of Los Teatros de Aztlan," *El Tenaz* 1, no. 4 (1971): 5.

(CLETA), and Los Mascarones committed to a joint theater festival in Mexico City in 1974.⁴⁹

These efforts were further attempts to utilize *teatro* to break down borders and create transnational unity based in cultural and political consciousness that was critical of colonial logics and modern capitalism.

Performing Heritage: El Quinto Festival in México

From June 24 to July 7, 1975, TENAZ helped sponsor the fifth annual Chicana/o theater festival in Teotihuacan, Veracruz, and Tajín, which was attended by 700 *teatro* group members from the U.S., México, Central America, and South America. As a collaborative effort, the festival was sponsored by TENAZ and CLETA in Mexico City.⁵⁰ This festival served as a valuable exchange of ideas and methods that were disseminated by the more experienced troupes to the novice groups. Different perspectives on culture from political, social, and historical perspectives of Latin America and the United States were exchanged among Chicana/o *teatro* members and their Latin American counterparts. These exchanges demonstrated *teatro*'s critical role in transnational cultural and political connections between Chicana/o and Latin American cultural performers and activists.⁵¹

TENAZ intended for the México City festival to demonstrate the significance of a common Indigenous heritage that united U.S. Chicanas and Chicanos with Latin Americans. The purpose of promoting this unity was an attempt by festival leaders to create transnational

⁴⁹ Marie Acosta, "Festival de los Teatros," *La Raza Magazine* (June 1973): 11, in El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁵⁰ For an extensive examination of the festival, refer to Alma Martinez, "¿Un Continente, Una Cultura?: The Political Dialectic for a United Chicana/o and Pan-American Popular/Political Theater Front, Mexico City, 1974," (PhD. diss., Stanford University, 2006). For a depiction of the festival from a participant, refer to Martha Ramirez Oropeza, "Huehupohualli: Counting the Ancestors' Heartbeat," *Community, Culture, and Globalization*, ed. Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard (New York: The Rockefeller Foundation, 2002) 48. For a depiction contemporary to the time of the festival, refer to Theodore Shank, "A Return to Aztec and Maya Roots: At the Chicano and Latin American Festival," *The Drama Review* 18, no. 4 (1974): 56-57.

⁵¹ Jorge Huerta, "The Influences of Latin American Theater on Teatro Chicano," *Mexican American Theatre: Then and Now*, ed. Nicolás Kanellos (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1983) 72.

bonds in the struggle against U.S. hegemony. An example of this can be seen on the announcement for El Quinto Festival de los Teatros in the *Chicano Theatre Three* publication. The announcement utilizes Indigenous iconography by adapting the *tonalmachoitl* (Aztec Calendar) as the symbol for the Quinto Festival. The *Nahui Ollin* (four movement symbol) in the center of the *tonalmachoitl* is changed to reflect the history of the Americas during the last 500 years.⁵² The precolumbian Aztec *tonalmachoitl* is summarized in one quadrant of TENAZ's reinterpretations with the *Ollin* glyph symbolizing the fifth sun of movement. The next quadrant of TENAZ's reinterpretation contains a shield with a cross to symbolize European colonization. The last two quadrants note contemporary (1960s and 1970s) symbols of resistance with the United Farm Workers eagle and the famous image of Ernesto "Che" Guevara. TENAZ's re-adaptation of the *tonalmachoitl* demonstrates their goal for the fifth annual festival was to raise consciousness of both the operative value of valorizing Indigenous knowledge and utilizing that knowledge to challenge perpetual colonialism in the Americas. Thus, TENAZ intended to utilize *teatro* performances to help Chicanas, Chicanos, and Latin Americans realize the emancipatory and revolutionary potential of their Indigenous heritage.

Indigenous philosophy became the integral tool for *teatros* to teach their audiences to conceptualize an alternative to the colonial and westernized governing bodies of the Americas. TENAZ's Fifth annual theater festival mission statement emphasizes the use of Indigenous philosophy and popular theater to disseminate cultural knowledge in Chicana/o and other oppressed communities:

LA JORNADA DE LOS TEATROS CHICANOS [THE CHICANA/O THEATER JOURNEY] to Mexico this summer is an acto becoming mito. A political act becoming myth. Teatro becoming ritual. It is a journey into the very heart of unity.⁵³

⁵² The Aztec calendar depicts their mytho-historical origins. For a discussion of the calendar, refer to Miguel Leon Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, 25-61.

⁵³ TENAZ Festival Committee, "El Quinto Festival de los Teatros Chicanos," 3.

The mission statement continues by explaining that the *mito* and ritual are integral to creating unity among Chicana/o and Latin American oppressed communities:

Un continente y una cultura. Somos uno. Marchamos desde los cuatro vientos para juntarnos en el Corazon de America, in TEOTIHUACAN. La Ciudad de los Dioses, donde comenzo nuestro destino, aqui en esta tierra, en este Quinto Sol. Nuestra lucha revolucionaria tiene sus raices cosmicas en la infinita Guerra de Nuestro Padre Solar con la Noche. [One continent and one culture. We are one. We march from the four winds to gather in the Heart of America, TEOTIHUACAN. The City of the Gods, where our destiny started, here on this earth, in this Fifth Sun. Our revolutionary struggle has its cosmic roots in the infinite war between Our Solar Father and the Night.] We struggle against the forces of darkness, against the forces of ignorance and disease, against hatred, violence and exploitation. Against disunity.⁵⁴

Teatro depictions of Indigenous cultural origins were central to helping audiences understand historic injustice in the Americas that stemmed from colonialism. Through performance, *teatro* members attempted to construct an alternative and just societal structure based in a positive recognition of Chicana/o Indigeneity.

The TENAZ festival in Mexico was crucial to the development of Chicana/o *teatro*'s depiction of a cultural identity based in Indigeneity. One example is the influence of Teatro Mascarones, from Mexico City, on Chicana/o *teatros*. Their choral poetry based in *Nahuatl* poetic traditions of flower and song encouraged Chicana/o *teatros* to also perform in ways that overtly proclaimed Chicana/o Indigeneity.⁵⁵ Another example was the performance of a *Nahuatl* wedding ritual by Tlaxcalans that performed this cultural ceremony to depict the harmony and unity between marriage and the cosmos.⁵⁶ This performance demonstrated the enhanced significance of cultural rituals. By connecting the bride and the groom to the universe, the ceremony represents unity and stability. This stability empowers ritual participants through their

⁵⁴ TENAZ Festival Committee, "El Quinto Festival de los Teatros Chicanos," 3.

⁵⁵ Jorge Huerta explains that the Mascarones were very influential to Chicano *teatros* by teaching them a Latin American perspective on Indigeneity that also taught Chicanas and Chicanos the politically empowering capabilities of Indigenous thought in "The Influences of Latin American Theater on Teatro Chicano," 70-71. For an elaboration of the *Nahuatl* poetic tradition of flower and song, refer to Miguel Leon-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, 74-79 and Miguel León Portilla, *Pre-Columbian Literatures of Mexico*, The Civilization of the American Indian Series [v. 92] (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1969). 34.

⁵⁶ Shank, "A Return to Aztec and Maya Roots," 60.

union. By participating in this ritual, Chicana/o *teatro* members learned that surviving colonialism is dependent on the ability of the oppressed to harmonize with universe through Indigenous ritual. Through participation in Indigenous ritual, Chicana/o *teatro* members became inspired to further investigate their place in the Pan-Indigenous community of the Americas. As such, Chicana/o *teatros* partook in the initial steps of an Indigenous cultural trajectory for Chicana/o communities as a means for decolonization.

Although the Quinto Festival demonstrated unique and long lasting transnational connections, reflections of culture and politics, and decolonial trajectories, the festival also revealed tensions in Chicana/o *Indigenismo* and Marxist-Leninist ideologies prominent among Latin American theater troupes and some Chicana/o groups.⁵⁷ Given the context of the Mexican government's state agencies to refer to *Indigenismo* as an element in state discourse, Mexican and other Latin American theater troupes were critical of Luis Valdez's use of Indigenous symbols in his theater. The differences between Leftists and Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos demonstrated the need for *teatros* to clarify references to Indigenous knowledge, as well as reveal Latin American Marxists groups' prejudice towards Indigenous ways of knowing. Moreover, among Chicana/o *teatros*, a growing challenge to patriarchy by Chicana/o feminists further challenged Chicana/o *teatro* to depict female subjectivity in their plays more fully and critically.⁵⁸ Although challenges to capitalism and patriarchy developed among Indigenous Chicana/o activists well beyond the late 1970s, they did so outside of *teatro* in activist and cultural spaces.

⁵⁷ For a more detailed look at these schisms, refer to Chapter 6 of Alma Martinez, “¿Un Continente, Una Cultura?”

⁵⁸ For the schisms in Marxist and Indigenous ideologies in theater, refer to Guillermo Loo et al., *Tenaz: teatros nacional de Aztlan, the popular theater movement*, videorecording (Primavera, 1982). For critiques of patriarchy in El Teatro Campesino, refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*.

TENAZ in the Late 1970s and 1980s

By the late 1970s, TENAZ sought a reorientation away from a primarily Indigenous cultural orientations and towards a redefinition of TENAZ purpose that shifted away from the original “Manifesto of TENAZ.”⁵⁹ TENAZ began to focus on professionalizing theater performance methods rather than engaging in cultural inquiries on the historic significance of Indigeneity. Instead of the free flow of ideas that had characterized the early TENAZ festivals, the eighth annual festival was invite-only, as organizers stated, to display *teatros* that:

...have demonstrated a sense of commitment of the acto of doing Chicano teatro, displayed strong discipline and have made a genuine attempt to develop aesthetically and progressively. En otras palabras, this will be an invitational festival in which we will say to the community: “Aqui tienen lo mejor del Teatro Chicano.”⁶⁰

TENAZ oriented itself to professionalizing Chicana/o *teatro* theater methods in ways that focused on practice and aesthetics. By focusing on the quality of the performance, the member *teatros* no longer explicitly sought unified expressions of Indigenous Chicana/o cultural ideas. Although TENAZ’s focus on professional theater methods came at the cost of an emphasis on Chicana/o Indigenous heritage, improving performance and better organizing *teatros* helped TENAZ address critical questions regarding political issues in Latin America and female subjectivity in *teatro* plays.

By the early 1980s, TENAZ reoriented its focus towards performing *actos* that engaged the political issues in Chicana/o communities, and in Latin America. The 1981 TENAZ festival was renamed the “International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival,” where TENAZ members produced a more politically and internationally focused manifesto:

Chicano theatre was born out of the social struggle of La Raza and given birth by farmworkers who remain workers. This is our origin. The form known as “teatro” was

⁵⁹ Adrian Vargas, Jorge Huerta and Liliana Delgadillo, “Present Goals and Objectives of TENAZ,” *TENAZ Magazine* (Junio 1979): 2, in Chicano Movement Newspaper Collection, CEMA 80, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁶⁰ “8th Annual TENAZ Festival Outreach Letter, 1977,” in Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

conceived out of the sheer necessity to communicate. Teatro is the reflection and spirit of the Chicano social movement. It is the mirror of Tezcatlipoca (the god of darkness) who demonstrates the evil that surrounds us; it is also the spirit of Quetzalcoatl (the god of light) in which we discover the will and hope of our people. Teatro is the voice of the barrios, the community, the underdogs, the humble, the oppressed and the colonized.

The cultural workers of Teatro Nacional de Aztlan (TENAZ) are committed to a way of life/struggle which helps our people understand the roots of our problems, be they social, cultural, political or economic. Let our theatre be a human rainbow. Let us create theatre for all people: children, youth, the aged, women, students, farmworkers and all workers. Let it grow out of the past and present conditions of our people so that it will help build a liberating consciousness. What theatre gives to people should be nothing less than what it receives from them (in terms of their realities).

Working with all oppressed people, the national TENAZ organization must develop a human yet revolutionary alternative to commercial theatre and the mass media. It must continue to solidify and unite with all progressive theatre companies through out the world, particularly those in Latin America and the Caribbean which struggle to produce an art that truly represents the expression of their people.

If La Raza will not come to the theatre, then the theatre must go to La Raza.⁶¹

Although the manifesto demonstrates the origin of Chicana/o *teatro* in the Indigenous cultural ideas of the Chicana/o Movement, its focus is on political representation of injustice in Latina/o communities and in Latin America. In this revised version of the TENAZ manifesto, TENAZ members omitted the goal to nourish Indigenous cultural heritage that was part of the original 1974 manifesto. That manifesto explicitly noted historical consciousness of Indigenous heritage as a means of liberation when TENAZ members wrote, “Debe nutrirse de las raíces culturales de nuestros antepasados para sembrar semillas de liberación en el presente y para cosechar en el futuro la Victoria de nuestro pueblo.”⁶² By 1981, the member *teatros* of TENAZ no longer sought to explicitly depict Chicana/o Indigenous heritage, and instead, focused on political issues in Chicana/o communities.

⁶¹ Quoted in Hank Tavera, “Puro Teatro: TENAZ adopts New Resolutions, Ideologies, and a Manifesto, 1981,” in Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁶² Teatro Nacional de Aztlan, “Manifiesto del Teatro Nacional de Aztlan,” *Chicano Theatre Three* (1974): i.

Although Chicana/o *teatro* moved away from explicit Indigenous cultural representation in Chicana/o communities during the late 1970s and early 1980s, it made significantly important strides in challenging patriarchy through artistic representation of Chicana subjectivity. Contradictions between community liberation and patriarchic ideas of femininity during the 1970s remains one of the biggest critique of *teatro* during the Chicana/o Movement.⁶³ For example, theater critic David Copelin's description of a Chicana *teatro*'s performance at the fourth Chicano theater festival in 1973 demonstrates the challenges for Chicanas to theatrically portray their agency. A Chicana *teatro* troupe, Teatro de las Chicanas, performed a play that challenged sexist stereotypes exhibited by Mexican and Chicano men by portraying men who transferred Anglo oppression on them to Chicanas at home. Copelin describes the response to this play by festival participants as follows:

Reaction within the Chicano theatre to the militancy of this group was mixed. While their right to perform as they please seems not to be in question, there are fears that these women are more concerned with sexual politics than with the cultural and class struggle of the entire Chicano community. However, even in those teatros in which men are the majority, the Chicanas are alert and immediately responsive to any suggestion of the male chauvinism endemic to the system in which they all grew up.⁶⁴

The performance by Teatro de las Chicanas demonstrates that many Chicanos were not critical of their paternalistic values and views on politics, as well as how they depicted this patriarchy in their theater.

To counter dominant male subjects in Chicano theater, Chicana *teatro* members established the Women in Teatro (WIT) caucus of TENAZ in 1978. Their goal was to establish a foundation to produce Chicana actresses, playwrights, producers, and all other occupations

⁶³ Refer to Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino* 129-164, Yvonne Yarbo-Bejarano, "The Female Subject in Chicano Theatre" 389-407, and Aida Hurtado, "The Politics of Sexuality in the Gender Subordination of Chicanas," *Living Chicana Theory*, ed. Carla Trujillo (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1998) 383-428.

⁶⁴ David Copelin, "Chicano Theatre: El Festival de los Teatros Chicanos," *The Drama Review* 17, no. 4 (1973): 75.

associated with theater to better depict Chicanas as subjects in Chicana/o *teatro*.⁶⁵ Although WIT was necessary to establish Chicana agency in Chicana/o *teatro*, the caucus was formed after the Indigenous cultural emphasis of the Chicana/o Movement era *teatro* had ended, and ETC had become a more mainstream theater troupe. Although Chicana/o *teatro* exhibited Chicana agency, the connection between this agency and Indigenous heritage was never linked and performed by Chicanas and Chicanos at the height of TENAZ in the Chicana/o Movement.⁶⁶ Consequently, theatrical, as well as cultural, social, and political, methods of challenging patriarchy based on Indigenous heritage were not solidified in Chicana/o Movement discourse and strategies for liberation within TENAZ prior to 1978.

Although solidified links between feminism and Indigenous heritage in Chicana/o performance did not become prominent in the late 1970s, Chicana activists laid the foundation for portraying female subjectivity in *teatro*. In 1979, TENAZ focused on portraying female subjectivity in Chicana/o *teatro* in its eight objectives:

1. To develop an understanding of the role of women in Teatro Chicano
2. To develop playwrights
3. To develop TENAZ as a lobbying force in relation to funding sources as well as political issues that may effect our work and communities
4. To develop a directory of groups and update it annually
5. To Coordinate Sponsorship and communication between TENAZ groups
6. To obtain funds for a TENAZ staff and office
7. To Strengthen ties with other progressive groups
8. To establish communication with non-member Chicano Teatros⁶⁷

The new goals for TENAZ demonstrated a more formalized activism inclusive of issues of gender discrimination that would place women in integral leadership positions that would enable

⁶⁵ Yarbo-Bejarano, "The Female Subject in Chicano Theatre" *Theatre Journal* 38, no. 4 (1986): 396. Also see Yvonne Yarbo-Bejarano, "The Role of Women in Chicano Theater Organizations," *Revista Literaria de El Tecolote* 2, no. 3 (1981): 4.

⁶⁶ This has since changed and there are prominent Chicana/o performance groups that exhibit feminist interpretations of Chicana/o Indigeneity. Please refer to the work of art and performance groups like Mujeres de Maiz, at <http://www.mujieresdemaiz.com/about-us.html> and to Susy J. Zepeda, "Queer Xicana Indígena cultural production: Remembering through oral and visual storytelling," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 3, no. 1 (2014): 119-141.

⁶⁷ Adrian Vargas, Jorge Huerta and Liliana Delgadillo, "Present Goals and Objectives of TENAZ."

them to ensure female subjectivity in *teatro* plays. The struggle to ensure Chicana leadership in *teatro* organizations was indicative of broader Chicana/o Latina/o activism that demanded female leadership in activists in community, professional, and educational organizations that would continue well into the 1990s.

The Chicana/o *teatros* of the civil rights era of the 1960s and 1970s also did not challenge patriarchic definitions of sexuality. Consequently, Chicana/o homosexuality remained, and continues to be, ignored in broader cultural discourse. *Teatro* during the Chicana/o Movement rarely touched upon gay and lesbian issues, and when it did, these issues were depicted by comic characters. Realistic, complex, and critical depictions of gays and lesbians were not seen in *teatro* until the late 1980s when an overall U.S. society became more accepting of homosexuality.⁶⁸ Although depictions of gay and lesbian characters became more prevalent after the 1980s, there continues to be a lack of intellectual inquiry and artistic endeavor in developing an understanding between Chicana/o Indigenous heritage and Chicana/o homosexual orientation.⁶⁹

Conclusion: The Legacy of Chicana/o Teatro

ETC and TENAZ demonstrated the role of *teatro* as one to harmonize and unify Chicana/o communities. The performance and promotion of Chicana/o Indigeneity proved the essential unifying element for this task. Chicana/o Indigeneity also served as the primary ideological tool

⁶⁸ Jorge Huerta, "When Sleeping Giants Awaken: Chicano Theatre in the 1960s," *Theatre Survey* 43.1 (May 2002): 32. For an elaborate discussion of Chicana/o gay and lesbian theatre, refer to Huerta, *Chicano Drama* 140-182.

⁶⁹ Although sexuality remains an understudied aspect of Chicana/o Indigeneity, important strides have been made in the last couple of years to focus on this subsection of Indigenous Chicana/o activists. For examples of "queer" Chicana Feminist *Indigenismo*, refer to Susy J. Zepeda, "Queer Xicana Indígena cultural production, 119-141. For elaborations of a queer Indigenous Chicana/o identity, refer to Cherríe L. Moraga, *A Xicana Codex of Changing Consciousness: Writings, 2000–2010* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2011) and Adelaida R. Del Castillo and Gibran Guido, *Queer in Aztlán: Chicano Male Recollections of Consciousness and Coming Out* (Cognella Academic Publishing, 2015).

to challenge colonial logics, whose core premises of western cultural superiority continues to serve as the means of facilitating capitalist state power. By reconnecting and portraying Chicanas and Chicanos as part of the struggle to obtain Indigenous Peoples' self-determination, Chicana/o *teatros* demonstrated to their audiences Chicana/o cultural pride, self-esteem, and empowerment to challenge colonialism. These portrayals, along with other art forms of the Chicana/o Movement, helped develop a model for Chicana/o cultural autonomy.

Cultural Legacy

In developing models for cultural autonomy, Chicana/o *teatro* left an undeniably Indigenous reorientation to Chicana/o cultural identity. *Teatro* philosophy heavily influenced the discourse on Chicana/o identity, and since the Chicana/o Movement, a discussion on Chicana/o culture and identity nearly always includes Indigenous heritage. Luis Váldez elaborated this consequence as one of his goals when he stated:

In one sense, *being Chicano*, means the utilization of one's total potentialities in the liberation of our people. In another sense, it means that Indio mysticism is merging with modern technology to create *un nuevo hombre*. A new man. A new reality, rooted in the origins of civilization in this half of the world.⁷⁰

Váldez notes that cultural autonomy goes hand and hand with democratic ideals of individuals' equality and leadership accountability. As Chicanas and Chicanos, Chicana/o Movement participants rooted their challenges to colonial legacies in U.S. racism in establishing their right to self-determination as Indigenous Peoples. Cultural affirmations of Indigeneity allowed Chicana/o Movement activists to better understand unjust and unequal social order in the United States as a result of colonialism.

Teatro also demonstrated that discourse on cultural heritage required more than just intellectual theorizing by a privileged few authoritative intellectuals. Valdez depicts this

⁷⁰ Valdez, "La Plebe" xxx.

necessity in his poem “Pensamiento Serpentino,” when he states, “European concepts of reality/ ya no soplan [don’t work anymore]/ Reason alone no es todo el cuento [is not the whole story]/El indio baila/ He DANCES his way to truth/in a way INTELLECTUALS will/never understand.”⁷¹ Valdez’s statement depicts the necessity for culture to be understood from multiple perspectives that include the people who practice culture. *Teatro* established a framework for bonding spiritual, emotional, and physical understandings of culture with intellectual ones to form a holistic understanding of culture that was more significant to Chicana/o practical every day use. Consequently, practical understandings of culture inspired by Indigenous heritage allowed for Chicanas and Chicanos to better understand their struggle to reverse unjust social, political, and economic order that originated with colonization.

ETC, and other Chicana/o *teatros*, also realized that undoing hundreds of years of colonialism and negative interpretations of Indigeneity would require patience, commitment, and room for error. In their first manifesto, TENAZ states:

The impression we leave is rasquachi and intellectual, political and spiritual, inspired and clumsy, but we are alive and growing, or alive and dying, and none of us are standing still. We are alive and growing, or alive and dying, and none of us are standing still. We are exploding in every direction, around the central core of our UNITY IN SOCIAL STRUGGLE. This above everything else makes our teatro as real as the sudor, lagrimas, suspiros, y carcajadas [sweat, tears, breaths, and laughs] it takes to pull it together. Somos de los de abajo, de los trabajadores, y de los jodidos, y entre pedos y sobresaltos [We are the ones from the bottom, the workers, and the worn ones, and between conflict and jumping obstacles] we are discovering our universality by getting to know our faults and virtudes [virtues] in the struggle.⁷²

ETC’s goal for cultural autonomy, self-determination, and human and civil rights thus became one that required the constant work of evaluation, implementation, reevaluation, and reimplementation. As a result, ideas and assumptions about Indigenous heritage were tested through implementation in the struggle for social, economic, and political rights during the

⁷¹ Valdez, “Pensamiento Serpentino,” *Luis Valdez—Early Works, Actos, Bernabé, and Pensamiento Serpentino* 177.

⁷² TENAZ Festival Committee, “El Quinto Festival de los Teatros Chicanos” 6.

Chicana/o Movement, and what resulted were some practical solutions for a more equitable organization of society.

Historical Consciousness

Chicana/o *teatro* provided audiences with critical understandings of culture, philosophy, democracy, and social agency during the Chicana/o Movement. Actors demonstrated to audiences operative ideological tools that could be enacted in every day scenarios so that Chicanas and Chicanos would know how to ensure their rights were being respected. Also, broader cultural narratives helped Chicana/o *teatros* depict the moral implications of the broad historic trends of racism, exploitation, and capitalism. The significance of these lessons also lays in *teatros*' abilities to portray them in manners that were culturally relatable to Chicana/o Indigenous heritage.

Rogelio "Smiley" Rojas demonstrates the effect of *teatro* on critical historical consciousness of Chicana/o cultural Indigeneity. Rojas mentions that he was first politicized from a Marxist point of view, but he was not satisfied by Marxist rhetoric because it lacked cultural relevancy. He states, "cultura is not just another topic, its your life...its what your made of."⁷³ After his experience with ETC, Rojas demonstrates his understanding for a need for ideological tools that supported his desire to nurture his Indigenous heritage and his ability to be creative. He states:

Yeah, I finished high school. And like I was planning to go to college. I like teaching and I like teaching kids. And like what crossed my mind was going to get into Chicano Studies. But not going to regular college because...I would go with people and take part in activities and stuff there on college campuses and I don't like it all the way the institution. People are just made to be a certain way. Its like a factory producing more. And like I was planning to go to Jacinto Treviño Chicano college. Things work there in a

⁷³ "Cassette A6934, Rogelio "Smiley" Rojas-Interview 1972," Interview by Celia Trujillo, El Teatro Campesino Archives, CEMA 5, Department of Special Collections, University Library, University of California, Santa Barbara

way...hablan de la familia [they talk about family] so mucho es el base indígena [a lot is the Indigenous base] and... your credits work there the way you produce, your creativity, and es igual aquí [it's the same here][at El Teatro Campesino]. No mas que [Only there]...tienen teatro [they have teatro], but its something on the side.⁷⁴

Rojas' critique of institutional education demonstrates how the cultural ideology of the Chicana/o Movement was transformed by Chicano *teatros*. Rojas felt he lacked critical understanding of his cultural history as a young activist performer in Texas. He found that critical historical consciousness within the cultural emphasis of workshops led by *teatros* such as ETC and TENAZ. Once Rojas joined ETC, he utilized the experience as an education that was much more culturally relevant and promoting of creativity than traditional educational institutions. He found an Indigenous inspired way of life was much more rewarding than the material comforts of a middle class life style that came with traditional colleges. His interest in the alternative school Jacinto Treviño and his desire to become a teacher also reveals how his participation in ETC, according to Rojas, helped him develop a more critical perspective of institutional education. Rojas critical perspectives of education were molded through his critical investigations of Chicana/o Indigeneity within the context of *teatro*.

Rojas' self-determination of culture, heritage, and life purpose within the context of his membership in ETC demonstrates that *teatros* provided a method to depict a spiritual understanding of Chicana/o life. Jorge Huerta explains the spiritual aspects of *teatro* as follows:

The Chicano movement is in need of some sort of spiritual guidance, and *teatros* may be the source of that guidance for many Chicanos. The concept of In Lak'ech [tu eres mi otro yo or you are my other self] is a beautiful metaphor for unity. If you are my other me, then I must respect you as I do myself; we must draw energy from one another in order to be able to survive the daily onslaughts of negative experiences... This drawing from our ancestors is an important means of giving the Chicano a stronger hold on his roots; of helping us identify ourselves in the cosmic world.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Huerta, "En Torno," 5.

During these years *teatros* reinvigorated themselves, and their communities, to Indigenous spirituality. *Teatros* provided the Chicana/o Movement a vision of an alternate value system that emphasized importance of defending and depicting the importance of humanity. *Teatros* oriented audiences to Aztec or *Nahuatl* philosophical understanding of creation, Creator, and balance:

El verdadero camino revolucionario [The true revolutionary path] is the path with the heart. It is the aesthetic of compassion. It is the love of creation (not destruction). It is the struggle to achieve unity with all life, to balance all contradictions in a single, powerful overwhelming CREATIVE MOVEMENT.⁷⁶

The importance of the link between the human heart and movement is described by Miguel Leon Portilla: “In Nahuatl, *yollotl* (heart) is derived from the same root as *ollin* (movement), which may be defined as the dynamic quality inherent in the human being.”⁷⁷ Through dynamic movement, which was a balance of contradictions to attain unity with all life, *teatros* rooted the Chicana/o Movement with Indigenous philosophical understandings Chicana/o humanity.

New Directions

In 1978, Luis Valdez and ETC produced the play “Zoot Suit,” which in 1979 began its short, but momentous, run on Broadway.⁷⁸ This marked a turn in ETC, as well as Chicana/o theater goals and aesthetics. Moreover, in 1980, ETC ceased to be a collective theater troupe when most of the original core members left the troupe, and ETC became a theater company under the direction of Luis Váldez. In 1987, Váldez also made his mark on Hollywood with his television

⁷⁶ TENAZ Festival Committee, “El Quinto Festival de los Teatros Chicanos,” *Chicano Theatre Three* (1974): 5.

⁷⁷ León Portilla and Jay I. Kislak Reference Collection (Library of Congress), *Aztec Thought and Culture; a Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind*. 5.

⁷⁸ For the movie version of “Zoot Suit,” refer to Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit*, Drama, Play, 1982. For a text version of the play refer to Luis Valdez, *Zoot Suit and Other Plays*, 1st ed. (Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1992).

special “Corridos: Tales of Passion and Revolution,” and his movie “La Bamba.”⁷⁹ Valdez’s new mainstream theatrical and writing aesthetics demonstrated a new strategy to reach broader audiences with depictions of Chicana/o experience in the United States.⁸⁰ These mainstream aesthetics, however, were met with criticisms for straying away from Chicana/o Movement community oriented ideology and for continuing to portray women in the periphery of the movie and play story lines.⁸¹ Moreover, the 1980s marked the end of *teatro*’s centralization of Indigenous heritage to theatrically depict Chicana/o culture.

Although the 1980s marked the end of *teatro*’s leadership in developing and understanding Chicana/o Indigeneity, Chicanas and Chicanos have continued to develop and enrich Chicana/o understandings of Indigeneity. Chicana/o Movement activists, subsequent generations of Chicanas and Chicanos, and Indigenous teachers and elders in the United States and Mexico have continued to elaborate in more detail the significance of Chicana/o Indigeneity.⁸² The further elaboration of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage by Chicanas and Chicanos since has since superseded *teatro* of the Chicana/o Movement era views of Indigenous history, culture, and spirituality. The elaboration of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage as a means of historic consciousness and political empowerment is further elaborated in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation that follow the trajectory of Chicana/o Indigeneity in politics and cultural expression in the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Nevertheless, the view of Indigenous history and spirituality in Chicana/o Movement *teatro* provided a foundation for a new and more rounded expression of Indigeneity in the late twentieth-century.

⁷⁹ Luis Valdez, *Corridos: Tales of Passion & Revolution*, Music, N/A; Luis Valdez, *La Bamba*, Biography, Drama, Music, 1987.

⁸⁰ Huerta, *Chicano Drama* 33.

⁸¹ Refer to Huerta, *Chicano Theatre*, Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, and Carlos Morton, *Critical Response to Zoot Suit and Corridos* (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso, 1984).

⁸² For more information about the continued development of Indigeneity among Chicanas and Chicanos, refer to the documentary *Amoxtli San Ce Tojuan: We Are One-Nostros Somos Uno*, Produced by Roberto Rodriguez and Patricia Gonzales, Xicano Records and Films, 2005.

CHAPTER 5

***Danza Mexica* and the Peace and Dignity Journeys; Chicana/o Historic Indigenous Consciousness through Ritual**

*“In tlaneztia in tonatuih”
Que su sol sea brillante,
que su sol de luz.”¹*

*“When the eagle of the North
and the Condor of the South
fly together,
the Earth will awaken.”²*

Introduction

After Chicana/o *Teatros* began to partake in Indigenous rituals in the early 1970s, many Chicana/o activists involved in the CCM began to explore other forms of ritual that helped them revitalize their Indigenous heritage. This was a purposefully orchestrated diffusion in contradistinctions to single circumstance occurrences, which may have occurred early perhaps where nahua settlers went north to New Mexico and Texas. Although regional variations on ritual occur in the modern era, in this chapter, I focus on two major ritual forms that have emerged as prominent practices among Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos; *danza* and running. These rituals promoted Indigeneity as a method of decolonization throughout the United States by promoting practices among regular people that antedate colonization. First, beginning in the late 1970s, many Chicanas and Chicanos began to partake in *danza conchera* and *danza mexicana* in conjunction with the *mexicanidad* movement that was occurring in Mexico. With origins of *danza* dating back to colonial era Mexico, *danza* became a more prominent expression of Indigeneity among Mexicans in conjunction with the Indigenismo of the Mexican Revolution from the early to middle twentieth-century. Although they happened in conjunction, I do not

¹ Andres Segura, “Interview on September 20, 1981 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

² Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodríguez, “Running for Peace and Dignity,” in Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

argue that Mexican Indigenismo sponsored by the state and *danza* are part and parcel of the same phenomena of nationalism. Instead, I contend that within the context of Mexican nationalism, these groups partook in the revitalization of Indigenous culture that shattered the parameters of nationalist advocations, while providing avenues for decolonial investigation of Indigenous cultural revival. These investigations supported the right of individuals to proclaim Indigenous heritage in conjunction with respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples to demand redress for colonialism.

Another aspect of *danza* that I engage in this chapter is the differences between *danza conchera* and *danza mexicana*. As the subsequent review of historiography and my examination of primary sources reveal in more detail, even when these two branches of *danza* differ in perspectives of Indigeneity, they both have been important to the spread of Indigeneity as a viable path to decolonization for Chicanas and Chicanos. In this way, I contend that stances between these branches regarding whether *danzantes* should acknowledge *mestizaje*, or renounce in total European influence demonstrate importance of debate regarding the significance of Indigeneity.³ Among participating Chicanas and Chicanos, and all Indigenous Peoples, these debates contribute an overall richness to the feasibility of Indigeneity as an option for decolonization. Complex debates regarding western influence on Indigeneity highlight the difficult task of taking inventory of historical consciousness and circumstance. I thus consider both branches of *danza* as part of the broader process of Chicana/o Indigeneity as decolonization that is still in progress, as well as plural and multifaceted.

As the differences in *danza conchera* and *danza mexicana* went along with the changes in Indigenous Chicana/o activism in the 1980s and 1990s, Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos also

³ Here, I do not equate *mestizaje* as described by *conchero danzantes* with the *Mestizaje* of Mexican nationalism. Instead, as I will depict later in this chapter, *mestizaje* as described by *concheros*, is the Indigenizing of some European cultural attributes, particularly Christianity. Indeed, writers in South and North America use *mestizaje* as a descriptive term for a long and mixed geneology in various ways.

began to partake in ceremonial running that united Chicanas and Chicanos with Indigenous Peoples across the Americas. As a result of transnational Indigenous Peoples movements to reject the celebration of the Columbus quincentennial celebration in 1992, Indigenous Peoples in the Americas instead chose to honor Indigenous resilience with the Peace and Dignity Runs. In this chapter, I also focus on the Peace and Dignity Runs as an example of Chicana/o ritual uniting with other Indigenous Peoples efforts to protect their rights to cultural survival. I contend that these rituals extended Chicana/o consciousness of Indigeneity to incorporate an understanding of the interdependence all humans have with each other and Mother Earth. Moreover, these runs signified a growing consciousness of the place for Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos in the broader spectrum of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas that was defined by Chicana/o participation in this broader Indigenous community. These now decades long endeavors in transnational Indigenous community participation, rooted in ritual practiced in the Americas for centuries, demonstrate that Chicana/o Indigenous identity was much more than romantic allusions of an imagined Indigenous past.

In sum, in this chapter I seek to depict, elaborate on, and analyze the how these ritual demonstrate Chicana/o consciousness of Indigeneity as a means of constructing pathways to decolonization. As such, I do not seek to reveal, discuss, or even pretend I am well versed in the esoteric knowledge encased within these rituals. That task is better left to current spiritual leaders who, like their elders Andres Segura, Tlakael, Florencio Yescas, and Domingo Martínez, were more than willing to teach this knowledge as long as students are willing to do the heavy work that comes with ritual. Instead, my purpose for this chapter is to provide a narrative of the change and continuity of ritual among Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos that, beginning in the 1970s, began recovering Chicana/o Indigenous heritage and by the 1990s helped point the way toward a decolonial future.

The Historical Background of *danza* in the México

Chicana/o participation in Indigenous ritual forms both part of cultural and religious trends dating back millennia, as well as the Chicanas and Chicanos' consciousness of their place within these long established traditions. However, viewing Chicanas and Chicanos as possibly picking up where Mexica *danzantes* left off before 1519 would be an erroneous assumption. Instead, Chicana/o Indigenous ritual also forms part of historic trends of Indigenous Peoples, who for centuries have maintained their right to cultural survival in the face of colonialism and modernity. In short, these ceremonies never stopped, and never stopped changing in relation to changing historical circumstances. In the this section of this chapter, I examine a sample of literature that demonstrates the ebb and flow of historical cultural continuity that encompasses change, but never the less, highlights Indigenous trajectories.

Both Chicana/o *danza mexicana* and *conchera* have origins in the historical *conchero* tradition that emerged soon after the conquest in the sixteenth-century. According to *danza conchera* elder Andres Segura, *danza conchera* has its origins in Querétaro during a battle among *Chichimecas* in 1537. As Segura states:

Según la tradición, a mitad de esta batalla se apareció el señor Santiago llevando su estandarte en le que hay una cruz. Posteriormente apareció una cruz enorme con mucha luz, por la cual nuestros antepasados entendieron que había llegado un nuevo camino. [According to tradition, in the middle of this battle, Saint James appeared carrying his staff on which there is a cross. Afterwards, an enormous cross with lots of light appeared, which our ancestors took to mean that a new path had arrived]⁴

Although the origin story connotes the colonial vision of Christianized Indians, Segura goes on to demonstrate the implicit Indigenous interpretation of this story. He cites archaeological evidence of the cross symbolizing life in Indigenous societies and an interpretation of death as transition to conclude, “Es por esto que dije que surgió, para cierta gente, un sincretismo; para

⁴ Pablo Poveda, “Danza de Concheros en Austin, Texas: Entrevista con Andres Segura Granados,” *Latin American Music Review/Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 2, no. 2 (1981): 285.

nosotros, un reencuentro [This is the reason that I said, for some people, a syncretism emerged; for us, a reencounter].”⁵ After the reconnection and subsuming of Christianity within an Indigenous knowledge, according to Segura, *danza conchera* allowed for Indigenous expression within the Catholic Church, and spread to Guanajuato, Jalisco and parts of Michoacán and San Luis Potosí.⁶

However to root the origins of *danza* on solely this time, the early colonial period, would negate the rather complicated historical influences on *danza* that demonstrate the non-linear parameters of transmitted historic consciousness of cultural heritage and identity. As *danza* scholar Jennie Marie Luna states,

According to much of the literature Danza is a “product” of the invasion, a syncretic blending of both Indigenous and European/Catholic belief systems. In actuality, it is a product of a much longer trajectory of Indigenous world-views and cosmology. The Danza one sees today is both a recording of the painful history and reality of colonization, and a renewed rejection of that colonization.”⁷

Here Luna notes the tension between the larger megatrends of Indigenous cultural continuity that are millennia old with less lasting but extremely influential trends of colonialism and modernity in the last five hundred years. While Luna leans more towards to an examination of continuity, I interject with a slightly different contention that the syncretic elements of *danza* cannot be ignored in the context of continuity. I do not privilege the influence of European culture or religion because I reject the notion that cultural and religious syncretisms are only a bi-product of colonialism. I prefer an interpretation of culture that does not essentialize Indigenous and

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Jennie Marie Luna, “Danza Mexica: Indigenous Identity, Spirituality, Activism, and Performance” (PhD diss., University of California, Davis, 2011) 115. For pre twentieth-century literature on *danza*, refer to Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl, *Obras Historicas* (México: Editorial Chavero, 1891); and Jerónimo Román y Zamora, *Repúblicas de Indias. Idolatrias y gobierno en México y Perú antes de la conquista*. Colección de Libros Raros o Curiosos que tratan de América, XIV. I (Victoriano Suárez, Madrid, 1897). For literature on *danza* in central México during the 1940s, refer to Armando Solorzano and Raúl Guerrero, “Ensayo para un estudio sobre la Danza de los Concheros de la gran Tenochtitlan,” *Boletín Latino-Americano de Música* 5, no. 5 (1941): 449-476; Raúl Guerrero, “Danzas Mexicanas,” *Anales del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia* no. 2 (1946): 259-278. For a more well known study on *danza* in México, refer to Martha Stone, *At the Sign of Midnight: The Concheros Dance Cult of Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1975).

European cultures prior to the sixteenth-century, and instead focus on the Indigenous Peoples' agency, even if it was severely limited in the colonial era. In this way, Indigenous Peoples' histories are not static, and within the context of agency, rejections of colonialism are various, multifaceted, and demonstrate decolonial approaches to interethnic interactions, like those with the Catholic Church, that do not contradict Indigenous cultural continuity.

For much of the colonial era, *danza conchera* was a Catholic Church ritual and, for the most part, seen as an indication of Indigenous Christianization. However, as *danza* elders like Andres Segura contend, in spite of the asymmetrical power of colonialism, Indigenous Peoples managed to Indigenize Catholicism and incorporate their belief system into the church. This was a matter of social and cultural survival given the violence of colonialist practices towards Indigenous Peoples who did not convert.⁸ By the early nineteenth-century, the *concheros* had long established their connection with the church as a way to maintain their ceremonial traditions intact. This practice would influence mid-nineteenth and twentieth century *conchero* defense of the church in face of liberal reforms.⁹ Although this may be seen as assimilationist, given the survival of the *conchero* tradition had been tied to being allowed to conduct ceremony in the church since the colonial era, it then comes as no surprise that they would side with the church in the early twentieth-century when the nationalist state came after the institution.

Although the *conchero* tradition had relied on the church for space during much of the colonial and early modern eras, the mythology of the Mexican Revolution and nationalist fervor for the Indigenous changed the dynamics of *danza* and the *conchero* tradition in the twentieth-century. Given the prominence of Indigenous Peoples in México's nationalistic art, and the

⁸ Andres Segura, "Interview on September 20, 1981 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research. I will return to Andres Segura's concept of Indigenizing Catholicism later in this chapter. For a discussion of broader Christianization in central México during the colonial era, refer to James Lockhart, *The Nahuas After the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth Through Eighteenth Centuries*, 1 edition (Stanford University Press, 1994) 205-260.

⁹ Jennie Marie Luna, "Danza Mexica," 130-131.

commodification of that art in the tourist and film industries, *danza conchera* during the early twentieth-century began a complex interplay with the mythology of state nationalism. This interplay is reflected in both the portrayal of *danza conchera* in folkloric displays of national culture and the adoption of *danza* in the national arts curriculum by the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (SEP) in the 1920s.¹⁰ This surely contributed to the growth in *danza conchera* and its changing aesthetics during the middle twentieth-century. By the 1940s, there were nearly 6,000 *danzantes* in the Mexico City area, and approximately 50,000 in the central Mexican Bajío. This time period also marks the emergence of *la mexicanidad* movement that, although influenced by nationalism, also challenged the state's continued oppression of Indigenous Peoples. Both the continuity and the challenge to continued oppression exhibited by *la mexicanidad* movement are related to the historicity of colonialism.

The growth in *danza* during the middle of the twentieth-century marks its changing appearance and philosophy that became the split between the *conchero* and the *mexica danza*. Although this can be characterized as a split between acceptance and negation of western acculturation, when examined through a decolonial lens, both contribute a complex trajectory towards decolonization that demonstrate the lag between colonial mentalities and decolonial potential.¹¹ In México, *la mexicanidad*, which began in the 1950s with the founding of the *movimiento confederado restaurador de la cultura anhuac* (MCRCA), which was composed mostly middle class professional Mexicans that put together various public protests,

¹⁰ For nationalist identity construction in Mexican education, refer to Mary K Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson, Ariz: University of Arizona Press, 1997). For several examples of *danza* in grade school curriculum, refer to Mexico and Secretaría de Educación Pública, "Boletín," *Boletín*. (1922). For changing aesthetics and incorporation into folklore and film, refer to Yolotl Gonzalez Torres, *Danza Tu Palabra: La Danza De Los Concheros* (México, D.F: Plaza y Valdés, 2005) 152-158.

¹¹ Here I draw from Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas Into History* (Indiana University Press, 1999) 14-15.

conferences, and political organizing to promote a nationalistic revival of *mexica* culture.¹² Other Mexican *Indigenista* groups, in the context of antisystemic movements and new age religious fervor of the 1960s, sought autochthonous spiritual practices to move away from western religions.

For *danza* in México, the nationalism of certain Mexican *Indigenistas*, and the global challenge to the hegemony of western culture, produced splits in the *conchero* tradition. As anthropologist Yolotl González Torres reports, the context of 1950s-1970s global social movements split *danza* practitioners in México into three groups. The first, was, and continued to be, the *conchero* tradition that maintained their ties to Catholic religion, even if some changed their dress to appear more “aztec.” The second group, influenced by the *mexicayotl* movement, took an anti-colonial stance and sought to create ceremony free from western influence, which they felt closer resembled the religion of the Aztecs. Finally, the third group was influenced by global new age movements that gave Mexican nationalists an autochthonous religious practice that both served as a rejection of the colonial and the new age religious mode that González Torres refers to as a romantic allusion to primordial doctrines in a religious mode of “religión a la carta [religion a la carte].”¹³

Although the splits from the *conchero* tradition demonstrate the problematic of romanticism and nationalism, they still nevertheless demonstrate an intention to find a path towards the decolonial. Each of these branches of *danza* sought to find alternatives to the

¹²For an examination of MCRCA refer to Alicja Iwańska, *The Truths of Others: An Essay on Nativistic Intellectuals in Mexico* (Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman Pub. Co, 1977); and Lina Odena Güemes, *Movimiento confederado restaurador de la cultura de anáhuac* (Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, 1984).

¹³González Torres, *Danza Tu Palabra*, 160-161. For more on the origins of *mexicayotl* as a reference for Mexican *Indigenista* based ideas, refer to Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc, *Crónica Mexicáyotl* (UNAM, 1992). For *mexicayotl* in *la mexicanidad* movement, refer to María del Carmen Nieva, “*Mexikayotl*,” *esencia del mexicano: filosofía náuatl* (Editorial Orión, 1969). For new age version of *la mexicanidad* refer to Francisco de la Peña Martínez, *Los hijos del sexto sol: un estudio etnopsicoanalítico del movimiento de la mexicanidad* (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2002).

hegemony of colonial/modern mentalities. Even the historical *conchero* tradition, which maintained Catholic rituals, maintained an alternative Indigenized interpretation of Catholicism in ways that challenged the church on its own teachings and mythology. By the end of the twentieth-century, these branches of *danza* would form part of broader Indigenous Peoples movements in the Americas. *Danza* supported these movements through their ceremonial performance at important anti-Columbus celebrations in 1992 and their support of the Peace and Dignity Runs at their ceremonies in Teotihuacan. The spread of this tradition, however, is due in large part to the spread of *danza* to the U.S. and its prominence in the development of Chicana/o Indigeneity.

Recovering Chicana/o Indigenous Ritual

Danza became a prominent part of Chicana/o Indigeneity as a result of Chicana/o Movement connections with *danzantes* from the *conchero* tradition, the *mexica* tradition, and the broader *mexicanidad* movement. Although there were instances prior to the 1970s,¹⁴ Chicanas and Chicanos began to practice *danza* more prominently in the early 1970s as part of the Chicana/o Movement through two main conduits. Chicanas and Chicanos first came into contact with *concheros* from México primarily through *teatros*. Andrés Segura Granados participated in the *Chicano Teatro Festivals* in the early 1970s. Before deciding on this participation he consciously chose to carry the word to Mexican communities, eventually including those north of the U.S.-México border.¹⁵ During these encounters, El Teatro Campesino invited Segura and other members of *Danza Xinachtli* to El Teatro Campesino's headquarters in San Juan Bautista,

¹⁴ Florencio Yescas first came to the United States in the 1940s, but like with Segura, his *danza* did not resonate until the cultural renaissance of the Chicana/o Movement that popularized the celebration of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage.

¹⁵ Andres Segura, "Interview on September 20, 1981 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

CA.¹⁶ He became close friends with the Váldez family and influenced Luis Váldez's *teatro*, and Daniel Váldez's music. After that, Segura made connections with El Centro Cultural in San Diego, CA and started *Danza Xinachtli* groups in California, Texas, and New Mexico.¹⁷

The other significant influence for *danza* among Chicanas and Chicanos was the efforts by Florencio Yescas and his followers who also sought to promulgate their perspectives and practices to young Chicanas and Chicanos. They more closely resembled the *mexicanidad* and *mexicayotl* movements of Mexico in its rejection of Catholicism and the promotion of *danza* by El Centro Cultural in San Diego, CA. Yescas first moved to the U.S. in 1948, and in the 1950s, he performed *danza* in Las Vegas, NV. Yescas also worked with Señora Angelbertha Cobb who first introduced *danza mexicana* to Chicana/o folkloric dancers in the Sacramento area in 1967 and introduced Indigenous ceremonies to Chicanas and Chicanos later associated with Toltecas de Aztlan at Chicano Park in San Diego in the late 1960s.¹⁸ By 1975, Yescas' group was teaching *danza mexicana* at El Centro Cultural de La Raza in San Diego and touring with his students across the country.¹⁹ The teaching and performance of *danza* at El Centro Cultural de la Raza demonstrated the Toltecas de Aztlan's commitment to not only teach Indigenous art form, but to also teach the philosophy behind it. This was all, as Toltecas en Aztlan founding member Alurista puts it, to exercise a "reassessment of values," which helped in the process where, "You are reassessing what you believe in, what your faith is, what makes you, you."²⁰

¹⁶ Arnoldo Carlos Vento, "Aztec Conchero Dance Tradition: Historic, Religious and Cultural Significance," *Wicazo Sa Review* 10, no. 1 (1994): 61.

¹⁷ Lauro Silva, et. al., "Interview on March 2, 1998 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan," in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research

¹⁸ Jennie Marie Luna, "Danza Mexica," 168-169. Toltecas de Aztlan was the founding group of El Centro Cultural in San Diego, CA at Chicano Park in 1970.

¹⁹ Mario Aguilar, "The Rituals of Kindness: The Influence of the Danza Azteca Tradition of Central Mexico on Chicano-Mexcoehuani Identity and Sacred Space," (Ph.D., diss., Claremont Graduate University and San Diego State University, 2009) 144.

²⁰ Alurista, "Interview by José Luis Serrano Nájera," July 13, 2012.

As a result of the efforts of El Centro Cultural, Andres Segura, and Florencio Yescas, both *danza conchera* and *danza mexicana* have become prominent identifiers of the Indigenous Chicana/o efforts to engage substantially in decolonization. An alternative performance form, through which an alternate philosophy and culture could be practiced, *danza* served as an avenue to reclaim Indigeneity as a pathway to decolonize. Although *danza* had this purpose, reclaiming Indigeneity in Chicana/o communities meant many paths that at times went along side one another, and at other times crossed each other in contentious ways. In *danza*, these contentions took the form of two general trajectories: 1) the Indigenization of Catholic religion that recognized a universal philosophy among human beings; and 2) the rejection of Catholicism as part of a general rejection of Western hegemony in favor of trying to rebuild *Mexica* ceremony. Although these opposing viewpoints many times led to contentious relations among Chicanas and Chicanos, both demonstrate different pathways of decolonization. These opposing decolonial efforts provide insight into the overall complexity of Chicana/o Indigeneity in the way it contributes to a conception of Indigeneity that highlights how opposing colonialism and following tradition provides varying positions on the significance of Indigenous heritage.

Indigenizing the European: The Influence of Andrés Segura

Andrés Segura Granados and his Danza Xinachtli group introduced the *conchero* tradition to Chicanas and Chicanos in the U.S. in the early 1970s in the middle of the Chicana/o Movement. He had a similar trajectory as many Chicanas and Chicanos of the Movement era who were the first to attain a college education and match their professional goals to those of maintaining cultural autonomy in Chicana/o communities. *Maestro* Segura was born in 1931 and grew up in Mexico City. Although he reached his third year of medical school, Segura dedicated himself to

danza.²¹ He first became aware of the *conchero* tradition at the age of 5 when his uncle passed away. He learned about his family's participation in the *conchero* tradition, and in 1951, Segura partook in his first *danza* ritual.²² Segura explained that the purpose of *danza* is religious and its objective is to "buscar una integración cósmica [to find a cosmic integration]."²³ He describes the purpose of *danzantes* as follows:

...nosteros tratamos de representar la armonía cósmica. En este sentido, él que está llevando la danza simboliza el planeta que en cada momento determinado está ejerciendo su influencia sobre todo el sistema solar. [...we try to represent cosmic harmony. In this sense, the one that is partaking in *danza* symbolizes the planet which in all moments is exercising its influence on the solar system]²⁴

Segura first visited the United States in 1970 with the Mexican theater troupe Mascarones in their participation at TENAZ *Chicano Theatre Festivals*.²⁵ He talked with Chicanas and Chicanos through out California, gave a formal presentation on *danza* philosophy at Sacramento State University, and in 1972, taught for a semester at the University of California, Irvine.²⁶ Segura had an extensive academic career in both México and the U.S. having also taught and researched for the *Instituto Nacional de Antropología* and as an instructor at UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, and the State University campuses in San Fernando, and Fresno.²⁷ Segura taught Chicana/o *danzantes* the *conchero* tradition along with the dance. He taught them how seemingly Catholic prayers to the Virgin Mary and the Holy Father also represented veneration to the female energy of the earth and the male energy of the sun.²⁸

²¹ Pablo Poveda, 282. For other videos on *maestro* Segura, refer to Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, "¡El Es Dios!" (México: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 1965); and Bruce Lane and Ethnoscope (Firm), *The Eagle's Children* (Rochester: Ethnoscope, 1992).

²² Pablo Poveda, 283.

²³ Ibid, 287.

²⁴ Ibid, 288.

²⁵ Gayle Elizabeth Armstrong, "Danza Azteca: Contemporary Manifestation of Danza de los Concheros in the United States" (M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1985), 39.

²⁶ Ibid, 39.

²⁷ "Andres Segura Folder," in Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

²⁸ Poveda, 293.

Segura's success in spreading the *conchero* tradition among Chicanas and Chicanos in the United States was his emphasis on reinterpreting Catholicism from an Indigenous perspective. This Indigenous re-reading of Christianity allowed for Segura to reveal that both Catholicism and Indigenous religions were both based on solar pantheons that followed the same universal principles. According to Segura, the inscription of Indigenous knowledge on rituals associated with the Catholic Church allowed for *concheros* of the colonial era to keep their knowledge inscribed in the *danza*. When describing the solar principles of both western and Mexica religions, Segura states:

Ambas parten de un punto común: EL MITO SOLAR, diferenciándose simplemente en su maifestación cultural. La religión cristiana representa la cultura del trigo y la indígena del maíz, fuente y origen del indígena americano. [Both stem from a common point: THE SOLAR MYTH, simply differentiating in their cultural manifestation. The Christian religion represents the wheat culture and the Indigenous religion represents the maize, the source and origin of the Indigenous American.]²⁹

Given the similarities among both religions, according to Segura, *concheros* of the sixteenth-century insisted on choosing saints whose celebration days fell on the same day as their pre-colonial traditional ceremonies.³⁰ Since the *concheros* of the sixteenth-century understood the solar basis of Christianity more so than the friars, their choice of saints whose celebrations correlated with traditional ceremonies demonstrates an enacted agency in cultural survival. Segura's teaching of this, thus, demonstrates a much more nuanced understanding of cultural syncretism that highlights Indigenous People's agency, even in the context of colonial violence. Moreover, Segura's teaching of this in twentieth-century Mexican and Chicana/o communities demonstrates a nuanced historic consciousness of Indigeneity in cultural customs that had been previously described as signs of Indigenous assimilation towards European cultural norms.

²⁹ Andres Segura, "Monografía De Las Danzas de Concheros, 1967," in Tomas Atencio Papers and Academia de la Nueva Raza / Rio Grande Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

³⁰ Andres Segura, "Continuidad de la tradición filosófica nahuatl en la danza de concheros, 1977," in Victor Ochoa Papers, CEMA 66, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

Segura's nuanced interpretation of Indigenous Peoples' Catholicism as a cultural syncretism embedded with an understanding of Indigenous Peoples' agency led him to contend that *concheros* formed part of a broader subtle conquest of the conquistadors. Segura states:

Con este claro conocimiento de Dios, surge este sincretismo, entre la religión cristiana y la religión de nuestros antepasados. Ellos entendían y sabían, todo ese mecanismo de las leyes cósmicas; tan lo entendían, que es verdaderamente satisfactorio y halagador demuestra con ésto, que en cierta forma los conquistadores, como siempre sucede, fueron los conquistados. De una manera muy sutil, puesto que únicamente se tomó un nuevo nombre, el concepto permaneció el mismo, porque había un comprensión y un conocimiento claro. [With this clear understanding of God, a syncretism surges between Christian religion and the religion of our ancestors. They understood and knew all the mechanisms of cosmic laws; they understood it so much that it is truly satisfactory and flattering to demonstrate with this, that in certain forms the conquistadors, as it always happens, were the ones that were conquered. In a very subtle way, seeing as how it only took a new name, the concept remained the same because there was a clear comprehension and understanding.]³¹

Segura thus lays out the contours of a counter-*conquista* that inscribes Indigenous meaning to the imported religion of Catholicism. As such, Segura, and all *concheros*, terms the *conchero* tradition as *la danza de conquista*. He explains that the continuity of Indigenous knowledge among *concheros* within the context of Catholic devotion as a way to keep alive the Indigenous math, science, and spirituality:

...podemos decir, el día que Teotl se deje de crear a sí mismo, el mundo, el universo entero dejará de existir. Este reconocimiento matemático y realmente científico, es la base raíz y la razón de ser de las danzas de conquista. Así lo decimos en el siguiente canto:

Santa Rosita, santo remedio,
vamos diciendo El es
vamos cantando
vamos danzando
vamos diciendo El es Dios.
—Para nosotros, no hay problemas

Este canto que acabamos de escuchar, se denomina de conquista, lo utilizamos en algunas ceremonias de nosotros, muy especiales y sobre todo cuando vamos a iniciar el día, es decir, cuando comienza la madrugada, cuando el sol ha conquistado la noche, cuando se

³¹ Andres Segura, "Continuidad de la tradición filosófica nahuatl en la danza de concheros, 1977," in Ochoa, Victor Papers, CEMA 66, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

vá a manifestar El. Como? Usando el vehículo Sol. Así es el por que, les llamamos Cantos de Conquista.

[...we can say, the day that Teotl stops creating him/herself, the Earth, the entire universe will cease to exist. This mathematic and realistically scientific understanding is the base root and reason for the existence of *las danzas de conquista*. We say it this way in the following prayer song:

Santa Rosita, santo remedio,
we go on saying, He is
we go on singing
we go on dancing
we go on saying He is God
--For us, there are no problems

This prayer song that we just heard is called *de conquista*, we use it in some of our very special ceremonies and above all when we initiate the day. That is to say, when dawn begins, when the sun has conquered the night, when He is going to manifest himself. How? Using the vehicle of the Sun. That is why we call them *Cantos de Conquista*.]³²

Segura goes on to elaborate on the conquest metaphor for *danza* when he states: “Muy sencillo, porque se trata de conquistas espirituales que el hombre tiene que realizar, para poder conquistar, es decir, llegar a ser “Verdadero Hombre” o sea Dios. [Very simple because its about spiritual conquests that man has to realize to be able to conquer, that is to say, to become a “Real Man [Human]” that is God.]”³³ In this way, Segura highlights the spiritual need to reinterpret Catholicism by revealing its solar origins as a way to decolonize the religion. The use of the term *conquista*, thus, serves as decolonial a re-reading of Catholicism to inscribe it with Indigenous ways of knowing the interrelational dependence of the universe and spirituality.

The decolonial re-reading of Catholicism that Segura promoted through the *danza de conquista* was also elaborated on by Chicanas and Chicanos in the United States. In his understanding of the implication of the *conchero* tradition, *danza capitán* Lauro Silva from Albuquerque, NM elaborates on the humanizing aspects of *danza* during a 1998 interview:

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

...cada uno de nosotros puede sacar esa expresión de humano, de la humanidad. Y después de eso, fui entendiendo como yo no tenía que andar peleando con tanto coraje en mi corazón. Que ahora puedo encender una lumbrecita, una luz más bien. Por eso la palabra *in tlaneztia in tonatuih*, quiere decir que la luz de su sol sea siempre más brillante. Es un saludo como buenos días, buenas tardes, buenas noches que la luz de su sol sea siempre más brillante. Que su luz crezca, que floresca la luz, que floresca esta luz en cada uno de nosotros para que nosotros tengamos amor para nuestros prójimos, nuestras familias, hasta para nuestros enemigos o para quienes quieran ser nuestros enemigos. Esa es la capacidad del ser humano para extender esa voluntad...es una fuerza poderosa que debemos tener otra vez. [...every single one of us can reveal that expression of being human, of humanity. And after that, I began understanding how I didn't have to always fight with so much rage in my heart. Know I can light a small fire that gives very good light. That is why the word *in tlaneztia in tonatuih* means that may the light of your sun always be more brilliant. Its a salutation like good day and good afternoon, may the light of your sun always be more brilliant. May your light grow, that your light flourish in every single one of us so that we can have love for our fellow humans, our families, even for our enemies or those that want to be our enemies. That is the capacity of being human, of humanity, to extend that will...its a powerful force that we should have again.]³⁴

Silva demonstrates here the implications of a historic consciousness of Indigenous cultural continuity within the *conchero* tradition that equates the decolonial potential of *danza* to humanization. Through *danza*, Silva learned to join his fiery resistance to colonial historical circumstances with his agency to build alternatives. Both re-interpreted acceptance of Catholicism and the resistance to cultural domination has ensured the survival of Indigenous culture since the colonial era. In turn, reinterpretation and resistance are both a problematic of colonialism and means for reckoning with the perforce reality of social and ethnic cross blending. This, in sum, is a series of conceptualizations whereby rather than being driven apart the Indigenous and the *mestizo* are brought together in thought and practice.

Indigenous cultural continuity in the context of colonial domination demonstrates the need to understand the implications of Indigeneity among historically categorized “*mestizos*” in the Americas. As Segura explains:

³⁴ Lauro Silva, “Lauro Silva, Anna Maria Guillen, and Raquel Saenz Interview about Andres Segura on March 2, 1998 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

“Para iniciar esta charla y pedirles que tratemos de entender una nueva mentalidad, que predispongamos nuestra mente a captar otro concepto totalmente diferente al que estamos acostumbrados en nuestro cotidiano pensar, puesto que éste, es el resultado de una educación y un ambiente de tipo occidental, materialista y casi podría decir pseudocientífico, absolutamente ajeno al pensamiento indígena que es espiritualista. De esto, creo yo, surgirá la solución al problema del desconocimiento de la causa real y verdadera de nuestra incomprensión como mexicanos, es decir, como MESTIZOS. [To begin this chat and to ask you all that we are trying to understand a new mentality, that we predispose our minds to capture another concept totally different to the one we are accustomed to in our daily thinking, since our daily thinking is a result of an education and a western environment, that is materialistic and practically pseudoscientific, that is completely foreign to Indigenous thought, which is spiritual. From this, I believe, will surge the solution to the problem of ignorance of the real cause of our incomprehension as Mexicans, that is to say, as MESTIZOS.]³⁵

Here Segura notes the need to undo centuries of Western hegemony as the main objective for Mexicans to clarify their lack of understanding their Indigenous heritage. As a result, Segura and other *concheros* saw the tradition as an avenue for Mexicans, Chicanas, and Chicanos to gain a clearer historic consciousness of their Indigeneity.

As a means to aid Chicanas and Chicanos acquire a clearer historic consciousness of their Indigeneity, Segura interpreted his role in bringing the *conchero* tradition to Chicanas and Chicanos of the United States as a teaching mission. In an interview with Chicana/o students at California State University, Fresno in 1978, Segura explained that what he wanted Chicanas and Chicanos to take from his teachings was:

[To] acquire a consciousness of identity. Because I feel that this is the problem of the Mexican de alla (of Mexico), and of the Chicano over here. Over there, like over here, we have a mestizo complex. That is a historical social phenomena. After the conquest, the indigenous people were negated a cultural value. And had that problem of identity, because if he considered himself a human value, it was not because of the indigenous presence, but for other parts that were not indigenous.”³⁶

Segura thus notes the historical implications of valuing the European that have negated the humanization of Indigenous Peoples in a world dominated by western governance. With this

³⁵ Andres Segura, “Continuidad de la tradición filosófica nahuatl en la danza de concheros, 1977.”

³⁶ Felix J. Contreras and Dianne Solis, “A Conversation with Andres Segura,” *La Voz de Aztlan* (May 1978): 3. Located in the Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12., Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

realization in mind, he related his need to teach with the relation of the *conchero* tradition among Chicanas and Chicanos during the Chicana/o Movement. In part, a thrust of the *movimiento*'s cultural ideas regarding a need to revive the Indigenous matched well with the intent Segura had for *danza conchera* to revive Indigenous culture among “*mestizos*.”

The relations between Segura's *Danza Xinachtli* and Chicanas and Chicanos in the United States during the Chicana/o Movement demonstrated the transnational context of anti-colonial movements and thought during the middle of the twentieth-century. As with many peoples across the world during this time period, Chicanas, Chicanos, and Mexicans were challenging European hegemony with a renewed interest in Indigenous heritage and seeking strengthened camaraderie through religion across the U.S.-México border. When relating the shared interest to value Indigenous heritage among Chicanas, Chicanos, and Mexicans, Segura stated:

Tal vez buscamos lo mismo. Es un fenomeno muy natural propio de nuestra cultura. Cuando no tenemos algo, lo buscamos, cuando tenemos algo, lo ofrecemos. Ese es el mecanismo tal vez. Nosotros aya bajo tenemos el mismo problema que la gente de aca arriba. Hemos sentido lo que llamaban, no se el termino, el shock de la conquista. [Perhaps we are looking for the same thing. Its a very natural phenomenon of our culture. When we don't have something, we look for it and when we have something, we offer it. Perhaps that's the mechanism. We from down south have the same problem that the people up north. We have felt what you call, I don't know the term, the shock of conquest.]³⁷

Segura demonstrates the context of cultural revitalization that was occurring around the world during the Chicana/o Movement. For Mexicans, Chicanas, and Chicanos, that cultural revitalization took the form of transnational collaboration on a range of political and cultural fronts. As *danza capitán* of *Danza Xinachtli* in Austin, TX José Flores states:

But I think what connected the Maestro more to the young Chicanos was the fact a similar revitalization movement was going in Mexico City and Mexico at the same time it was going on over here. La mexicanidad for them begins around [the] late 70s. This idea

³⁷ Andres Segura, “Interview on August 24, 1981 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

of reclamando lo indígena [reclaiming the Indigenous], reconociendo las raíces indígenas and tomando fuerza from them. That was going on with them at the same time. Therefore, you have the connection of the teatros. For example, Teatro Mascarones con Luis Valdez [and] poetas, you have Jose Angel Gutierrez in becas de Aztlan were young [people]...could go and study for free at UNAM. So I think the maestro saw within the Chicano Movement, more than anything else, a similar search and a similar reasserting of identity and reclamando lo indígena... That was Andres' connection the way I see it. He felt that by teaching us or showing us la mexicanidad, la conneccion de Aztlan the roots de lo Azteca/Mexica. In a sense he was serving his own purpose as a Mexicano in showing us that we had that in us and also he made that connection. Not too many people like that. There were not that many Andreses who made that effort to connect with los Chicanos...when he met the movimiento (chicana/o) he realized we were the same people with sometimes very similar struggles. Because, what were they fighting against if not the European assimilation idea.³⁸

Flores thus explains the broader context for Mexican and Chicana/o connections during the movement that brought the *conchero* tradition together with Chicanas and Chicanos seeking an avenue towards decolonization. Although some may classify these connections as an extension of nationalism in Mexico based on a *Mestizaje* that prioritized assimilation of Mexicans into European cultural norms. However, as the examination of agency in Segura's philosophy has demonstrated, the context of Indigenous agency in centuries of the *conchero* tradition demonstrates a more nuanced and empowering understanding of cultural mixture. For Chicanas and Chicanos in the U.S. during the Chicana/o Movement, there was high appeal for understanding the implications of Indigenous cultural continuity in the context of colonial and modern intermixture and acculturation known as *Mestizaje*. Rather than validating traditional nationalism, Indigenism in thought and practice is a repudiation conscious or implicit of western systemic policies whether in México or the U.S.

Chicana/o activists of the 1970s thus sought avenues for understanding their colonial and anti-colonial cultural history from Indigenous perspectives as a means to better understand how they too formed part of an Indigenous presence in the Americas since time immemorial. As a result, *danza* became a prominent Chicana/o Indigenous cultural expression in the late 1970s.

³⁸ José Flores, "Interviewed by José Luis Serrano Najera," May 27, 2014.

By 1977, Segura had traveled all over the Southwest and he established the *danza* collective *Xinachtli de Aztlan* with subgroups in Texas and New Mexico. Segura notes that he was sought out by “jóvenes nacionalistas chicanos de ambiente universitario y pensamiento indigenista [young Chicano nationalists from universities whom possessed Indigenist thought].”³⁹ This resonated with him since he was part of an Indigenous cultural revival in Mexico that also sought to understand the significance of Indigenous heritage among Mexicans. Segura recognized the same struggle within the Chicana/o movement and sought to expand what was already going on in México:

Es muy sencillo. Es el reencuentro de si mismos. No he hecho nada nuevo. No he hecho nada extraordinario. Dentro cada uno de los Mexicanos, o decendientes de los Mexicanos, los mas recientes o los mas viejos, todos tenemos una parte de Indigena. Y esa parte genetica es la que se esta manifestando. Yo no he hecho nada. Ya esta dentro de todos de cada uno de nosotros. [Its really simple. Its the reunion of ourselves. I haven't done anything new. I haven't done anything extraordinary. Within every single Mexican, or descendents of Mexicans, from the youngest to the oldest, we all have an Indigenous part. And that genetic part is what is manifesting itself. I haven't done anything. Its already inside every single one of us.]⁴⁰

As he conveys here, Segura saw his role in the spread of *danza conchera* among Chicanas and Chicanos as part of a broader imperative for Mexican peoples to find themselves within their Indigenous heritage. This heritage needed to come to terms with the fact that Mexicans, Chicanas, and Chicanos also descend from Spanish colonizers or from Indigenous Peoples who accepted European cultural norms. As Austin, TX *danza capitán* José Flores explains:

How can I deny my mestizaje. To deny that I am not a combination of all of these things, including simbolos cristianos y simbolos parte de Europa, to deny that to me would be to deny my sense of who I am.⁴¹

As a result, Chicana/o *concheros* during the 1970s took on the complex historical circumstances of colonial miscegenation, migration, and Indigenous cultural continuity to determine a

³⁹ Poveda, 282.

⁴⁰ Andres Segura, “Interview on September 20, 1981 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan.”

⁴¹ Flores, “Interview,” May 27, 2014.

decolonized reinterpretation of European cultural symbols from an Indigenous perspective. This linked with the imperative of the Chicana/o Movement of cultural autonomy within the revival of Indigenous heritage as an avenue towards decolonization for Chicana/o communities that reinterpreted the significance of *mestizaje*.

The idea of Indigenous ceremonies that related to the *mestizaje* experience of Mexicans, Chicanas, and Chicanos resonated with the cultural ideas of the Chicana/o Movement. As José Flores states about his initial experience with *danza* in the 1970s:

My wife and I, my friends, we were just into the [Chicana/o] *movimiento* because I think the *movimiento* hit the hardest in CA in the 60s and 70s. When we saw [*danza*], we somehow became immediately connected to the spiritual *mexicanidad*. We were students at UT. So, at the same time, Alurista the poet was hired as a lecturer here at UT, we're talking about 75-76, around that time. We kept wanting to know about the *danza*. From the little things that they brought over here...the formas...we really saw it as a truly mestizo expression. They weren't trying to be Lakotas, they weren't trying to join the Sufi movements, or any other spiritual movement. This seemed like something very Mexican and very mestizo. We were really attracted to that.⁴²

Flores demonstrates the need to comprehend the significance of mixed heritage to better understand the significance of Indigeneity, especially in the context of complex intermixture of Africans, Native Americans, and Europeans in the Americas for five centuries.⁴³ As a result, Flores and the rest of the young Chicanas and Chicanos at UT Austin formed a connection with Andrés Segura. As Flores states:

And from then on it was a constant connection and apprenticeship with Andrés Segura. There he took us to his apartamento in colonia herrera. We saw his altar and did ceremonias. And he told me personally, "you want to follow the tradición, follow the tradición. Don't even question it. Later on you'll see what it means, what it does, and by that he was talking about the tradición de los Concheros that had been in D.F. So, I came back with that and we already had people here attempting hacer danza conchera and we started the grupo and Andrés Segura kept coming. At times, twice a year. And us as a

⁴² Flores, "Interview," May 27, 2014.

⁴³ For the historical significance of understanding racial and ethnic intermixture in the Americas, refer to Jack D. Forbes, *Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples*, 2nd edition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993). For a focus on racial and ethnic intermixture on Mexican American identity in the southwest, refer to Martha Menchaca, *Recovering History, Constructing Race: The Indian, Black, and White Roots of Mexican Americans*, 1st ed, Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Series in Latin American and Latino Art and Culture (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001).

group went over there as often as we could en D.F, to do ceremonias in Chalma, Remedios, Santiago Tlatelolco, en la Villa, these major ceremonias were concheros would gather. And we worked with Andres Segura until his death. Always learning, his way of teaching was for you to see things you're not going to sit down...you want to learn the danza, you learn by doing it. You want to learn the tradición through the velaciones, go do a ceremonias. And do them...that's how we've been doing it, learning a little bit at a time, until now.⁴⁴

The *conchero* tradition thus provided some Chicanas and Chicanos with avenue towards a decolonial understanding of their cultural identity that embraced different heritages without privileging the European over the others. Beginning with the Chicana/o Movement, and into the present, the *conchero* tradition offered this decolonial pathway, and in doing so, demonstrates a long context of Indigenous agency that, even though in the context of colonial violence, accomplished an embrace of Catholicism on Indigenous terms, through Indigenous epistemologies.

Since the Chicana/o Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, *danza conchera* has responded to more clearly developed stances on the legacy of colonialism and Indigeneity within more globalized contexts of capitalism and migration. When recently asked why he did not identify with the local Indigenous people of Texas, *danza conchera capitán* José Flores states:

I say, well local is not defined to me. I wouldn't know were to go. I wouldn't know what to do. And yet the mestizaje is so there for me and that's the beginning of our conversation is that there is a mestizo tradition and it represents what many of us feel and lo que somos.⁴⁵

Flores reveals a complex legacy of centuries of migrations on the Indigeneity claims of Chicanas and Chicanos. Flores' family is from San Luis Potosí and his grandparents feared being attacked by Native American groups in Texas when they went there to trade coffee and sugar. Thus, his family had no connection to the Indigenous groups in Texas, nor did he have any knowledge of connections to groups in San Luis Potosí where there is a history of colonial migrations due to

⁴⁴ Flores, "Interview," May 27, 2014.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

gold and silver mines farther north. As such, Flores, like many others, adopted a “huge movement of recognizing the larger community of indigenismo that was nahuatl or Azteca/Mexica.”⁴⁶

Flores also demonstrates the inability to relate to local Texas groups, who do not accept *mestizaje* in the following statement:

Another thing is that these small groups like the Cuahiltecos and Comecrudos do not claim a *mestizaje*. Its the same with the Arapahuo or the Lakota, its an anti-*mestizaje* movement.⁴⁷

Flores demonstrates the ability for Indigenous culture, usually defined by land, to travel with migrants, through generations of migrations, to new places. Flores’ inability to fit into local Indigenous cultures and instead opt for Nahuatl culture more closely related to the areas of his family’s origin demonstrates the mobility of Indigenous culture through time and space. Flores highlights his development of the *conchero* tradition, through nearly forty years of practice, to add a nuanced interpretation of Indigeneity within the context of late twentieth-century migrations on top of nuanced understandings of cultural hybridity or *mestizaje*.

Although the *conchero* tradition practioners have made important strides towards understanding Chicana/o and Mexican Indigeneity in the context of centuries of cultural change and migrations, their membership has remained relatively low. As Flores explains:

...we don't attract a lot of people. So once you get older, once in a while you get the people coming in. Its hard for a group to become larger and it turns into more of a family thing. Pero, we still connect to the elders in Mexico. Just about every group I know here claims to connect to some elders in Mexico. But some of those elders in Mexico are not really elders anymore. Some of them are young people who have taken on a leadership role. By elders I mean those people who still remember the tradición. And who can tell you, for example, if you want an estandarte you have to do this and you have to do that, and the people have to do this and that, and you have to come in on your knees and all of that. Those elders, many of them are dying or dead. But we still have some that guide us.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

The low membership of *conchero* groups may be due to these groups strict rules of membership. According to *capitán* Lauro Silva in New Mexico, Segura was strict as a means to “know the true tradition.”⁴⁹ As a result, the *conchero* groups in the United States followed a strict order of membership and approval for new groups. As Flores elaborated, Segura initially only established four groups in Texas, New Mexico, California, and Mexico City and the *conchero* groups that came after the 1970s did so through connections with the first four groups.⁵⁰ Expansion of the *conchero* groups was limited and controlled through the 1980s and 1990s.

Another aspect of the *danza conchero* that may have detracted from its membership during the 1980s and 1990s was the adherence to militaristic terminologies and hierarchies. Segura explained that the militarism stems from a continuity of pre-colonial military orders that formed part of the religious institutions of the *Mexicas* and other Indigenous civilizations.⁵¹ Nevertheless, this structure resembles the militarisms of the imperial domination that have dominated the globe for centuries for many prospective members. These critiques would lead to other avenues of *danza* that shed the militaristic structures and adopted more politicized stances on global state violence.

Although parameters of controlled growth and militaristic terminologies detracted many from joining the *conchero* groups, their intent was not exclusively limited to growing their membership. Instead, they focused on continuing a centuries old tradition of maintaining pre-colonial spiritual and scientific knowledge alive within religious veneration of Catholicism from an Indigenous perspective. These ceremonial practices demonstrated nuanced re-reading of Catholicism in ways that demonstrate the decolonial potential to Indigenize European cultures to

⁴⁹ Lauro Silva, “Lauro Silva, Anna Maria Guillen, and Raquel Saenz Interview about Andres Segura on March 2, 1998 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio Garcia Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

⁵⁰ Flores, “Interview,” May 27, 2014.

⁵¹ Andres Segura, “Interview on September 20, 1981 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan.”

remove hegemonic tenants. Thus the *concheros* have worked to critically appropriate the European into the Indigenous in the Americas for centuries. This perspective demonstrates a nuanced sensitivity cultural syncretism inclusive of Indigenous agency. However, for other Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos, this process has been too slow and too accepting of European culture. For the *danza mexicana* members, there was a need to reject much of the European influence in the Americas and strive to construct a Chicana/o Indigeneity culturally autonomous from western cultures.

A Rejection of the Colonial: The Appeal of Florencio Yescas

The rejection of Catholicism as an instrument of colonialism within *danza*, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, stems from the division in the *conchero* tradition dating back to the 1940s in Mexico City. *Danza mexicana* also made its way to the United States as a result of the renaissance of Indigenous cultural revival during the Chicana/o Movement and helped further clarify the significance of Chicana/o Indigeneity. The primary influence for *danza mexicana* was the teachings of *maestro* Florencio Yescas from Mexico City. According to *danza* scholar Jennie Luna, Yescas first arrived to the United States in 1948 and performed *danza mexicana* in Las Vegas, NV during the 1950's, and moved to the Los Angeles, CA area in the 1960's.⁵² Although Yescas had already lived in the United States for more than two decades, his teachings were more folkloric than based in Indigeneity. His teachings were not recognized by Chicanas and Chicanos until the context of cultural revival of the Chicana/o Movement, which also shifted Yescas' focus.

Like Segura, Yescas was contacted by the Centro Cultural de la Raza in San Diego, CA in the early 1970s. As *capitán* Mario Aguilar of *Danza Mexicayotl* in San Diego recalls the

⁵² Jennie Marie Luna, "Danza Mexica," 168-169.

Centro's outreach to *danzantes* from both the *conchero* and *mexica* traditions, "It was in 1974 when we went to the *Chicano Teatro* festival in Mexico City that we saw Andres Segura's *conchero* group...I came back inspired by the *danza*...Then I saw Florencio's group in Tijuana and before I knew it, they were here."⁵³ By 1975, Yescas and his group moved their base across the border to San Diego to teach *danza mexicana* at the Centro Cultural de la Raza in San Diego's Balboa Park and soon after that Chicanas and Chicanos from San Diego joined Yescas' group and toured in Texas, New Mexico, and Minnesota during the late 1970s.⁵⁴

In 1980, Yescas took Chicanas and Chicanos from San Diego to Mexico City to have the group formerly recognized as the independent group *Danza Mexicayotl*. As *capitán* Aguilar explains:

Danza Mexicayotl, a traditional Chicano-Azteca cultural group was formed on December 12, 1980 in Mexico City, Mexico. There, Mario Aguilar received recognition as CAPITAN or tribal leader of his dance group from the traditional Azteca dance elders of Mexico. Capitán Aguilar had been brought to the traditional ceremonies at Tepeyac by his maestro, Florencio Yescas. Mario was given the title of TLATOANI or elder for his work in teaching *danza* in Aztlan to Chicanos.⁵⁵

Since 1980, *Danza Mexicayotl* practices a *danza* that, although not affiliated with the *danza conchero* groups, maintained a nuanced acceptance of *mestizaje* inclusive of Indigenous agency. Indeed, according to Aguilar, Yescas' teachings also adhered to an Indigenous interpretation of Catholicism, particularly the supposition of Indigenous deities over Catholic saints.⁵⁶ Like the *concheros*, *mexica danzantes* came to the United States to teach Chicanas and Chicanos nuanced interpretations of *mestizaje* inclusive of an understanding of Indigenous People's agency to

⁵³ Arnoldo Carlos Vento, "Aztec Conchero Dance Tradition: Historic, Religious, and Cultural Significance." *Wicazo Sa Review* 10, no. 1 (1994): 61.

⁵⁴ Mario Aguilar, "The Rituals of Kindness: The Influence of the Danza Azteca Tradition of Central Mexico on Chicano-Mexcohuani Identity and Sacred Space" (Phd diss., Claremont Graduate University and San Diego State University, 2009) 144.

⁵⁵ Mario Aguilar, "Chicano Currents in Danza Azteca Essay, 1986," in Centro Cultural de la Raza Archives, CEMA 12, Department of Special Collections, University Libraries, University of California, Santa Barbara.

⁵⁶ Mario Aguilar, "The Rituals of Kindness," 73-74.

interpret Catholicism from an Indigenous world-view. However, unlike some of the *concheros*, teachers like Florencio Yescas did not tie their ceremony to the Catholic Church and underscored the need to teach *danza* to as many people as possible.

The divide in *danza* regarding affiliation or rejection of the Catholic Church dating back to the 1940s in Mexico City made its way to U.S. Chicanas and Chicanos during the Chicana/o Movement. According to Luna, Yescas broke his affiliation with the *concheros* and the Catholic Church to engage in a revival of *Mexica* that more closely resembled the ceremony of the precolonial era.⁵⁷ Luna describes Yescas' rationale for this break:

Eliminating *la religión*, Catholicism, and dancing outside of the Churches meant that danzantes no longer had to dance for the saints, but could return to the ceremonial centers and sacred sites of the Mexicas. Peeling away the vestiges of colonialism meant moving toward an entire opposite spectrum and embracing (oftentimes romanticizing) an Indigenous Mexican identity that existed prior to the arrival of the Spaniards.⁵⁸

The appeal of an oppositional stance to the Catholic Church related greatly to Chicana/o Movement era activists who promoted anti-colonial stances prominent around the world from the end of WWII to the 1980s. This paralleled anti-church movement related protest directed at the Catholic Church in Texas and California. Given the Catholic Church's role in the colonization of the Americas, many Chicana/o Movement era activists were not willing to accept ceremonies tied to the church. Thus, Yescas' conscious appeal to anti-colonial ideologies drew more attention and participation than the *conchero* tradition that was seemingly more linked to church related ceremonies since the colonial era.

The aspect of *danza mexicana* that probably had the most profound impact on Chicana/o Indigeneity after *danza* itself was the openness *maestros* of this ceremony to tolerate looser membership requirements, which led to its mass proliferation and diverse interpretations of

⁵⁷ Jennie Marie Luna, "Danza Mexica, 134-136.

⁵⁸Ibid, 136.

Indigenous ritual. When contrasting the loose membership requirements of *danza mexicana* to the *concheros*' controlled growth through strict membership and hierarchy, Aguilar states:

Yescas taught Danza Azteca wherever there were Mexcoehuani that were interested in learning. He also made an effort to bring other traditional dancers from Mexico to teach from their own experiences and local traditions. This was something that Segura did not do very often.⁵⁹

From a *conchero*'s perspective, José Flores describes the appeal of *danza mexicana* taught by

Yescas, who had his largest following in California:

Now in California, it was different because Yescas went over there and ended up living and staying there. And he had a totally different idea about what the danza should be. He called his group Aztec Splendor and it was definitely more towards the culture and more towards the performance adopting danza so they go beyond the repetitions to something more spectacular. That was very attractive to a lot of Californios. Totally getting away from the macehual. There are two types of danza from the beginning [of *danza* in the pre-colonial era to the present]. There are the mitotes which were more celebratory and the macehual, which means merecer as a sacrificio. So if you go more toward the mitote where there isn't the sacrificio of staying up all night, for example, you are gonna attract a lot more people. I think what happened in California is that there was a very attractive method of danza. [There was] a lot more freedom, a lot more art, politics, and cultura.⁶⁰

Danza mexicana opened the door for a much less controlled ritual interpretation of Chicana/o

Indigeneity that had both positive and negative outcomes. In positive terms, *danza mexicana* called

for interpretations of Chicana/o Indigeneity that demanded accountability from the Catholic

Church for its role in colonialism. The call for the rectification of colonial violence is pertinent

to Chicana/o ritual given that colonial mentalities still threaten the cultural survival of

Indigenous Peoples in the Americas, vis-à-vis transnational neoliberal policy. However, the lack

⁵⁹Mario Aguilar, "The Rituals of Kindness," 142. Aguilar refers to Chicanas and Chicanos as Mexcoehuani, which he explains: "I have decided to use the term "Mexcoehuani" (mesh-ko-e-wan-i) for identifying Chicanos/as, Mexican-Americans, Mexicanos, for several reasons. The main reason is that in Nahuatl (the language of the "Aztecs"), Mexcoehuani is gender neutral, thus avoiding the troubled waters of Chicano versus Chicana. Mexcoehuani also does away with the battle between "Mexican-American," "Latino," and "Hispanic." As is the case with verbal nouns in the Nahuatl language, Mexcoehuani can be both singular and plural, thus eliminating the confusion of him/her, his/her/their/its. For this study, Mexcoehuani in general means "a person whose ancestors arose, were born, or came from Mexico." Particularly, I will focus on Mexcoehuani who seek membership in the indigenous heritage of Mexico, and that seek a spiritual path based on that heritage," in Mario Aguilar, "The Rituals of Kindness," 9.

⁶⁰Flores, "Interview," May 27, 2014.

of oversight in the interpretation of Indigenous Chicana/o ritual has led to over the cliff claims of authenticity that rival the exclusivity and mythology of nationalism. Claiming authentic links to the precolonial Aztec civilization, some of these groups have made pejorative and offensive claims towards Indigenous Mexicans and Native Americans.⁶¹

Given the looser and more prolific membership of *danza mexicana* and the broad interpretation of culture, politics, and art, there is a broad spectrum of *danzantes* in this tradition that have responded varyingly to the structure of *danza* since the 1980s.⁶² Besides the exclusionary extreme, *danzantes mexicana* have incorporated critiques of militarism and sexism. As Luna reports, the present day status of *danza* demonstrates significant decolonial strides:

Today, while many Danza groups continue to hold onto the hierarchical military terminology, some Danza groups have re-named the hierarchical positions with Nahuatl terminology or will simply say that one has “palabra,” meaning they have given their “word” to carry on a duty within the group or within a ceremony. Some Danza groups have done away with the entire idea of hierarchy; rather than have a “Capitana” of a group, the leader is simply referred to as la maestra/teacher or cabeza/head of a group. Some groups strive to keep an organizational structure, while letting go of the rigid military subtext that is associated with war, violence and conquest—all painful parts of the history of colonization for Indigenous peoples. La Malinche is usually called Malintzin or sahumadora (woman smoke carrier) and has been re-interpreted to represent women as the center of the circle, like the sun, giver of life. She is a reminder of the matriarchal and matrilineal origins of Nahua peoples and reclaims her space and her role that was subjugated upon Spanish arrival.⁶³

⁶¹ Mario Aguilar, “The Rituals of Kindness,” 192-193. For the complex paradox of exclusive nationalist constructs and teaching youth cultural knowledge, refer to Elisa Diana Huerta, “Embodied Recuperations: Performance, Indigeneity, and Danza Azteca,” in *Dancing Across Borders: Danzas y Bailes Mexicanos*, edited by Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Norma Cantú and Brenda Romero (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) 3-18.

⁶² For a comparison between a more politically oriented *danza mexicana* group and a more culturally oriented one, refer to, María Teresa Ceseña, “Creating Agency and Identity in *Danza Azteca*,” in *Dancing Across Borders: Danzas y Bailes Mexicanos*, edited by Olga Nájera-Ramírez, Norma Cantú and Brenda Romero (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) 80-94.

⁶³ Jennie Marie Luna, “Danza Mexica: Indigenous Identity, Spirituality, Activism, and Performance” (Phd diss., University of California, Davis, 2011) 128. Although Malintzin has become an important symbol for Chicana Feminist Indigeneity, Malintzin was not Aztec, but instead a bilingual Indigenous woman who spoke Mayan and Nahuatl, who with the inclusion of a Spanish soldier who spoke Mayan and Spanish, translated between the Aztecs and Hernan Cortes’ forces. Nevertheless, however mistaken some Chicana feminist writers, along with Mexican ones, have made her an important symbol of varying ideologies about feminity and Indigeneity in México and the U.S.

As Luna demonstrates, *danza mexicana* possesses an openness in cultural interpretation to more easily define decolonial trajectories. For one, many groups have embraced an Indigenous influenced democratic structure that demonstrates the decolonial critiques of power and privilege. Moreover, the *danzantes mexicana* have been able to incorporate an explicit critique of sexism, in the form of Chicana/o feminism that originated in the activism of the Chicana/o Movement. Chicana feminist interpretations of Indigeneity developed further as an ideological critique in Chicana/o activist and intellectual circles in the 1980s and 1990s.⁶⁴ Since the 1980s, *danzantes* have developed an interpretation of the subjugation of women as part and parcel of colonial violence. Although explicit reformulations of *danza* that address violence towards women since the colonial era are not universal among all groups, groups that challenge sexism demonstrate a decolonial trajectory that articulates methods of dismantling the power and privileges of patriarchy.

Since the 1980s, the decolonial trajectories demonstrated by many *danza mexicana* groups provided many Chicanas and Chicanos in the U.S. with a means to articulate and develop a Chicana/o Indigeneity that addressed the specific concerns related to the effects of historic colonialism on this community. In the 1980s and 1990s, *danzantes* pushed the revival of Indigenous culture that began with the Chicana/o Movement towards a recognition that Chicanas and Chicanos were Indigenous to the Americas. *Danzantes* stressed that the cultural survival of Chicana/o communities depended on a proliferation of the idea that Chicanas and Chicanos are Indigenous. These internal elaborations of Chicana/o Indigeneity vis-à-vis Indigenous ceremony happened in the context of many Chicanas and Chicanos adopting and developing their

⁶⁴ For the most widely read Chicana Feminist tract principally through literary criticism, *Indigenismo* is referred to by Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = La Frontera*, 4th ed., 25th anniversary (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012). Although she is prominently read by scholars and students alike, Anzaldúa was a creative writer mostly concerned with herself and her upbringing and not a trained historian. For more recent examples of Chicana Feminist *Indigenismo*, refer to Susy J. Zepeda, "Queer Xicana Indígena cultural production: Remembering through oral and visual storytelling," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, & Society* 3, no. 1 (2014): 119-141.

Indigeneity among and within cultural survival movements among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. In cohort with these movements since the 1980s, Chicanas and Chicanos also began to participate in Indigenous ceremonies created in the late twentieth-century to promote a hemispheric Indigenous unity to ensure the cultural survival of Indigenous peoples for the next 500 years.

Running for the Future: The Peace and Dignity Journeys

Like Chicanas and Chicanos, Native Americans in the U.S. and Indigenous Peoples in Latin America went through their own cultural revitalization movements in the context and influence of the anti-colonial movements of the middle twentieth-century.⁶⁵ Revival alone, however, did not ensure cultural survival in the future. Thus, Indigenous Peoples, in the context of transnational Indigenous Peoples movements since 1980, created new ceremonies to culturally support the creation of Indigenous Peoples unity in the Americas. Drawing on centuries if not millennia of ceremonial running that linked Indigenous Peoples across the hemisphere, Indigenous Peoples organized the Peace and Dignity Journeys in the early 1990s.⁶⁶ The rationale for choosing running as the ceremony to unite Indigenous Peoples of the Americas was explained by run organizer Gustavo Gutiérrez:

Running lies at the core of the Peace and Dignity mission, as spiritual purity lies at the core of Native American running. The exertion, tenacity, and stamina demanded by long-distance running, when coupled with the will to defend our traditions, serve our Elders, and promote our children, can elevate us, men and women alike, to the status of

⁶⁵ For Native American cultural revival, refer to Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). For the context of revival within the American Indian Movement and twentieth-century Native American activism in the U.S., refer to Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: New Press, 1996); and Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty*, Reprint ed. (University Press of Kansas, 2008). For Indigenous Peoples cultural revival in Latin America, refer to the an example in Guatemala in Roderick Leslie Brett, *Social Movements, Indigenous Politics and Democratization in Guatemala: 1985 - 1996* (BRILL, 2008).

⁶⁶ For descriptions of ceremonial running since the precolonial era, refer to Peter Nabokov, *Indian Running: Native American History and Tradition* (Ancient City Pr, 1987) 11-32.

warriors. It is in such a state of grace, disencumbered by life's common subversions, that we fall into stride with the heartbeat of the mother planet...⁶⁷

As such, Gutiérrez and other run organizers sought to promote an alternative trajectory for the planet than the one projected by colonialism in 1492. This promotion of an alternative future, based in an Indigenous world-view, formed the essences of the rejection to celebrate the 1992 quincennial celebration of Columbus' landing in the Caribbean. The Peace and Dignity Journeys were part of an effort by a coalition of Indigenous Peoples from across the Americas to honor Indigenous Peoples resilience and resistance in the face of five hundred years of colonialism and promote an decolonial future for the planet.

Chicana/o participation in ceremonial running began with the first Peace and Dignity Journeys in 1992. For Chicanas and Chicanos, participation in the Peace and Dignity Journeys extended the Chicana/o ceremony to a transnational display of Indigenous values as alternatives to global capitalism and colonial mentalities. As Chicana/o Studies scholar Roberto D. Hernández states regarding Indigeneity exhibited by Chicanas and Chicanos in the Peace and Dignity Journeys, their views on “resistance and social change in the *longue duree* aim to change the structures of knowledge that dictate how we think of ourselves in relation to land, property, value, and each other.”⁶⁸ The purpose of the run was two fold. One was to invigorate the values appropriate for the positive interdependence among all human beings and Mother Earth. Second, the Journeys were also an attempt to at the practice to solidify Indigenous Peoples hemispheric unity in the struggle to value each other and the Earth during the next five hundred years.

⁶⁷ “Peace and Dignity, 1996,” Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁶⁸ Roberto Hernández, “Running for Peace and Dignity: From Traditionally Radical Chicanas/os to Radically Traditional Xicanas/os, in Ramon Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Jose David Saldívar, eds., *Latino/as in the World-System: Decolonization Struggles in the 21st Century U.S. Empire* (Paradigm Publishers, 2006) 132-133.

Forgetting Columbus and Honoring 500 Years of Resilience

The Peace and Dignity Journeys originated as part of the hemispheric Indigenous Peoples' response to the celebration of the 500th anniversary of Columbus' landing in the Caribbean by the Vatican and Spain with the support of the U.S. and Canadian governments. In July of 1990, 400 representatives of 120 Indigenous nations, tribes and organizations of the western hemisphere met in Ecuador to discuss struggles for self-determination, strategize a unified response to the Columbus celebrations, and ensure Indigenous cultural survival in the future.⁶⁹ The Peace and Dignity Journeys supported the goals of cultural survival that was dependent on protection of the environment. As Peace and Dignity organizers commented:

We want to celebrate, not 500 years of glory, but 500 years of survival during which we had to struggle for our auto-determination, our lifestyle, our relationship with Mother Earth, and our relationship with the universe.⁷⁰

The Peace and Dignity Journeys served as a ceremonial run to spread consciousness of the interdependence between Indigenous culture and land. The Peace and Dignity runners also sought to ceremonially create and foment Indigenous Unity in the Americas.

The Peace and Dignity Journeys were organized out of Chicago, IL through a board of coordinators that consisted of the President, Aurelio Díaz, Secretary Eileen Alicea, Treasurer, Leticia Zaval, North American Peace and Dignity Journey Coordinator, Alfonso Perez, and South American Peace and Dignity Journey Coordinator, Tlakaelel.⁷¹ The Journeys consisted of two simultaneous relay runs; one began in Alaska and the other in Argentina. The two runs met in Teotihuacan, México on October 11, 1992 and entered the temple grounds for ceremony. The following is a recall of the events of that day by Peace and Dignity Journeys participants:

⁶⁹ Chantlaca, "UNPFIP Network: Declaration of Quito, 1990," *UNPFIP Network*, September 10, 2012, <http://unpfip.blogspot.com/2012/09/declaration-of-quito-1990.html>.

⁷⁰ "Peace and Dignity Journeys Pamphlet," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷¹ "Peace and Dignity Journeys Documents, 1992," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

On October 11th we joined as one and marched into the temple grounds at Teotihuacan, where the Temples of the Sun, the Moon, and Quetzalcoatl are situated. To celebrate the unification of the two continents, we conducted ceremonies all day on October 11th and 12th with prayers, music and dances from the different Indian Nations that were present. The Cocopahs brought their Bird Singers and they sang, the Pomo Indians performed the Bear Dance. Ceremonies of prayers and songs from the different intercontinental Indigenous Nations that lasted throughout the night.⁷²

The ceremonies performed at the Teotihuacan temples demonstrated a cultural unity and ceremonial display of harmony as a means to sustain continental Indigenous Peoples' cultural survival and protection of the environment in the next 500 years.

The Journeys' intent was to unite humans in more harmonious relationships to the land vis-à-vis an Indigenous world-view. Peace and Dignity Journeys President Aurelio Diaz explained:

[The] Peace and Dignity Journey is a run for all people to unite, to heal and bring harmony. We are not selling the run to any corporations that have conditions. We want to gain the respect and trust of our elders. Long ago, 4 arrows were sent from the center of Mexico to reach the people of all directions. We are fulfilling the prophecy of the 4 arrows coming back together in the center⁷³

Drawing on interpretation of oral traditions that recall the migrations of Indigenous Peoples in central Mexico to all the corners of the Americas to spread knowledge, Díaz calls for an adoption of Indigenous world-views as alternatives to western capitalism.⁷⁴

Through the Peace and Dignity Journeys, Chicanas, Chicanos, Native Americans, and Indigenous Peoples south of the U.S.-México border sought to extend Indigenous perspectives to all inhabitants of the Americas. The coordinating board of the Peace and Dignity Journeys further elaborated the value of having all humans adopt an Indigenous world-view as follows:

⁷² "Peace and Dignity Journeys Memos, 1992," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷³ "Peace and Dignity Journeys Documents, 1992," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁴ For more on the four-arrow migration, refer to Gertrudis Zenzes & Patricia Hueze Tlakaheel with Isabel Luengas, *Nahui Mitl: The Journey of the Four Arrows* (Mexicayotl Productions, 1998); or in Spanish, refer to Tlakaheel, *Nahui Mitl (Spanish Edition)* (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 1995).

We want to take this opportunity to, with a spirit of peace, make our lifestyle understood and, at the same time, offer the rest of the world our ways of belief. Many myths have been written about our indigenous ancestors, but we only need to look at the great constructions, math calculations, natural medicine, our astronomy studies and our direct relationship with Mother Earth to know that ours were truly advanced civilizations.⁷⁵

Through the Peace and Dignity Journeys, participants sought to extend consciousness of Indigenous Peoples' science, integrated into their cultural knowledge, as a better alternative to the exploitation of natural resources in western capitalism. As Arizona coordinator Gustavo Gutiérrez stated, "The focus of the Peace and Dignity Journeys is on the pollution of the water, pollution of the land."⁷⁶

Along with spreading consciousness of the value of Indigenous world-views in protecting the environment, Peace and Dignity runners and organizers sought to ceremonially unite Indigenous Peoples of the Americas so that cultural bonds would support Indigenous Peoples transnational political efforts. As such, the Peace and Dignity Journeys had seven purposes:

1. Initiating a spiritual run as a prayer to heal our nations
2. Reinforcing unity among all indigenous nations from North, Central, and South America
3. Informing the world of our desire for a peaceful coexistence with the 4 colors of the world
4. Recognize 500 years of strength and survival of indigenous people's self-determination to preserve language, culture and spirituality
5. Honoring our Elders, Medicine people, heroes, leaders, children, future generations, and all of those who are in the spirit worlds.
6. Making people aware of the sacredness and delicate balance of nature and the environment.
7. Promoting a cultural exchange between indigenous nations, where art, dance, music and ceremonies can be shared and respected.⁷⁷

These purposes demonstrated the reevaluation of values and ethics in ways that demonstrated the links between cultural assertion and political activism. The Peace and Dignity journeys thus

⁷⁵ "Peace and Dignity Journeys Pamphlet," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁶ Scott C. Seckel, "Arizona Indians to Participate in Transcontinental Relay Run," *The Arizona Republic/The Phoenix Gazette* (March 25, 1992): 3. In Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁷ "Peace and Dignity Journeys, 1992-1996," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

promoted cultural unity as a means to strengthen political advocacy. As such, the Peace and Dignity Journeys had the following political purposes:

1. To unite all the sacred staffs to form a Confederation of the Original Peoples of this hemisphere
2. To get formal recognition as a people from the United Nations.
3. Send a letter to the countries that have diplomatic relations with the Vatican, for similar recognition relating to our form of worship to the Creator.
4. That all our sacred temples and sacred mountains of worship be respected and given back to the original caretakers.
5. To bring the sacred staffs to Arizona and that Ron Van Fleet Sr, and Gustavo Gutierrez have the primary responsibility of taking care of the sacred staffs.
6. To visit as many Indian Nations as possible with the sacred staffs. To bring about a better understanding and a more harmonious working relationship between the tribal Governments and the traditional people.
7. To have intertribal runs between the different Indian Nations for the next three years and on the fourth year, 1996, have a second Intercontinental run.⁷⁸

The Peace and Dignity participants also agreed upon the need for transnational protection of Indigenous Peoples rights vis-à-vis the institution of systems of international redress at the United Nations where Indigenous Nations could protect their right to self-determination.⁷⁹ The 1992 Peace and Dignity Journeys demonstrated the necessity of unifying peoples through ceremonies as a means to build the necessary cultural and political bonds to ensure cultural survival.

Enacting Indigenous Unity for the Next 500 Years: 1992 and Beyond

Ensuring lasting bonds among Indigenous Peoples in the Americas necessitated a long term recurring Peace and Dignity Journeys for the next 500 years. As such, an outcome of the first run was the shared commitment to continue the Peace and Dignity Journeys every four years after 1992. Thus, planning for the 1996 run began almost immediately after the 1992 run. The

⁷⁸ “Peace and Dignity Journeys Memos, 1992,” Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁹ “A Journey’s Recollection,” in the Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

1996 Peace and Dignity Journey was organized out of Tempe, AZ, since the Chicago headquarter office had not yet recuperated from the economic effort they made in 1992.⁸⁰ The Coordinating Council consisted of new and old organizers of the Peace and Dignity Journeys. The members were Aurelio Diaz Tekpankalli, Marina Villalobos, Francisco Melo Nahui-Mazatl (southern run coordinator), Gustavo Gutiérrez (northern run coordinator), Virginia Alvarado Xochiquetzal, Roseanne “Rocky” Rodriguez, Fredy Arevalo, Salvador Reza⁸¹ The 1996 run would maintain the same relay run structure with two points of origin, Alaska and Argentina, and a single destination point in México.

To maintain the broad intent of unifying Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, 1996 Peace and Dignity organizers sought clearer commonalities that went beyond the rejection of Columbus. Moreover, among organizers of the run, there was disagreement regarding the incorporation of political desires into ceremonial practices. During the planning meetings in January and February of 1994, committee members discussed themes of the run including warning of the dangers of global capitalism, the youth and future generations, unity of the four races, and overall unity of all humans.⁸² Within the theme of unity, some planning meeting participants sought for an avenue for addressing the material needs inherent in cultural survival. Noting the intrinsic links and interdependence between spirituality, land, and material conditions, one organizer noted:

So I know...[we] took that position that there is no political issues involved in this, all of this. Each one of us, as Indians, as family, as community, especially as a bigger community among these Americas, we have brought a consciousness and involved community in our survival. In that respect there is a relation there. What Brother Mike

⁸⁰ “Newsletters, December 1995: *Making Tracks: Weaving the Journeys of Peace and Dignity 2*” in Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

⁸¹ “To all my relations,” in the Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

⁸² “January 14, 1995 Planning Meeting Minutes of the Peace and Dignity Journeys in Phoenix, AZ,” Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

wants to talk about issues with people of color,⁸³ I think all those colors are there, so that something we learn from the spiritual way of life that all colors are there in the natural way of creation. Those corn represent all those color; when we talk about people of color there red people red corn, black corn, purple corn there yellow corn and there white corn so all people have color so we're all people of color. We learn those lessons from those spiritual ways of life. So once again there is no separating who we are with our spirit way of life and our physical existence problems we're facing. So talking about some of those problems and issues that we're involved with in the community and trying to face them and confront them from a spiritual perspective those are the things that we are trying to do on this community unity also.⁸⁴

Other organizers noted the political implication of the run as they were tied to a context of transnational Indigenous Peoples organizing at the United Nations.⁸⁵ Even if the run sought ceremonial ways of building cultural bonds among Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, runners necessarily recognized that building those bonds, and having them survive, required political advocacy for protection of cultural rights. The Peace and Dignity Journeys therefore demonstrated the spiritual and cultural work of decolonization that ensured long-term commitment to Indigenous Peoples rights.

The long-term commitment to Indigenous Peoples rights necessitated a decolonial intent to ensure a reevaluation of moral and ethical outlook all human minds and spirits to undo the effects of colonial hegemony. The run's long-term intent was for the decolonization of all peoples on this planet as a means of building more harmonious relations between people and the land. As the North American run coordinator Gustavo Gutiérrez stated:

When the runners arrive in Teotihuacan, their prayers will be for the future generations and for the healing of the earth's four sacred colors—red, black, yellow and white which

⁸³ Big Mike had previously referred to ill treatment of students and inequalities in the educational system in Guadalupe. Browns and Bangs law firm filed a class action lawsuit regarding the denial of special needs, bilingual, and handicap services to students of color. Mentions Roosevelt school district and the following schools: Cartwright, San Carlos, and Phoenix.

⁸⁴ "January 14, 1995 Planning Meeting Minutes of the Peace and Dignity Journeys in Phoenix, AZ," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁸⁵ "January 14, 1995 Planning Meeting Minutes of the Peace and Dignity Journeys in Phoenix, AZ," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

represent all the peoples of the world. So that we all live in harmony...That's the commitment.⁸⁶

The Peace and Dignity Journeys established the foundation for more harmonious outlooks on the relationships between all the planet's peoples in ways that stripped the colonial rationale for exploitation of people and land.

The Peace and Dignity Journeys continue every four years, with the next run scheduled for 2016. Chicana/o Participation in these runs continues as well and demonstrates a committed trajectory among many Chicanas and Chicanos to partake in the decolonization of the Americas from an Indigenous perspective. Moreover, within the context of this transnational ceremony, the 1992 and 1996 Peace and Dignity Journeys affected Chicanas and Chicanos in ways that influenced their consciousness of local Indigeneity in the transnational context. When reflecting on the 1992 Peace and Dignity Journey, Jaime Chavez reflected on the local connections between Chicanas, Chicanos, and Pueblo Indians in New Mexico whose historic connections date back centuries. Chavez centralized the historical 1680 Pueblo Revolt and the Atrisco Land Grant issue as key markers of Chicana/o and Pueblo relations.⁸⁷ Moving forward, participation in these types of ceremonies provides the potential for Chicanas and Chicanos to continue to enact their Indigeneity in cohort with other Indigenous Peoples. In this way, through ceremony, Chicanas and Chicanos form the decolonized cultural bonds with other Indigenous Peoples of the western hemisphere in ways puts to the forefront community participation, familial relations, and a commitment to cultural survival and autonomy as the markers of Indigeneity, rather than relying on government measurements of blood quantum or Indigenous language capabilities.

⁸⁶ Patrisia Gonzales and Roberto Rodríguez, "Running for Peace and Dignity," in Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

⁸⁷ "Peace and Dignity Reunion, 1993," in Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

Conclusion: The Implications of Chicana/o Ceremony for the Next 500 Years

Indigenous Chicana/o ceremony, in cohort with transnational cultural bonds with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, demonstrates the definition of Indigeneity based in community membership. What *danzantes* helped establish was a self-defined Indigenous Chicana/o identity that made explicit the Indigenous bonds that unite the Americas, which have implicitly remained under the surface since the onset of colonialism. In spite five centuries of colonial hegemony and capitalist extraction of land and exploitation of labor, Indigenous Chicana/o identity has survived in the implicit knowledge integrated into the *danza*. As *danzantes* begin to contemplate the next five hundred years, they demonstrate the role of ceremony in cultural survival in the chaos of cultural change regardless of who has or does not have power. As *danzante* José Flores explains:

The basis of the *danza* is still the movement that developed after the conquista, the invasion, where you had to have the *sincretismo* to survive. That essentially went on until the 1930s, is still the essence of what all *danzantes* do. I don't know where its going, but...it'd be interesting to think about that...I'm going to go to New York to talk to one of the *jefas* that does *ceremonia concheras* over there. They've got a pretty firm *grupo de danza conchera*. They still have the *conchas de armadillo* and all of the symbolisms that come with that.⁸⁸

Given the resilience of *danza* ceremony to help Mexican Indigenous culture survive and spread to far off places like New York, cultural bonds formed through familial and ceremonial linkages will continue to ensure the survival of Indigenous world-views.

The bonds that have helped Chicanas and Chicanos maintain an Indigenous identity for five centuries have the potential to be strengthened by transnational ceremonies like the Peace and Dignity Journeys. Through sustained Indigenous People's unity through cultural bonds formed by ceremonial running, some Chicanas and Chicanos partake in an articulation of their Indigeneity in cohort with other Indigenous Peoples. This takes place through community

⁸⁸ Flores, "Interview," May 27, 2014.

engagement that, as the Peace and Dignity runners describe, leads to community connections and relations:

But overall, the people were glad to see us. They're Indians, just like us. They have their own languages, customs, dances...sometimes we'd come in at four or six in the afternoon and dance until ten or twelve at night in their ceremonies.⁸⁹

The power of the Peace and Dignity to help Chicanas and Chicanos envision transnational connections without the hegemony of empire also resonated in Native American communities.

Ferma Means, a San Carlos Apache activist and culture interpreter recounts her two miles with the run and the honor to carry the main sacred staff. On the effect of the run, she states:

...I can only say I felt them coming and once they arrived, it was hard to keep my eyes off of them because there seemed almost a visible glow from their faces, and when I ran a brief distance with them, I felt myself become a part of them, connected to a wave of energy sweeping across the land. And then they pulled away from me, and continued on, and I returned to my own life. But none of us, not a one of us who were touched by this prayer, will ever be the same. Each time I go for a walk now or even a short run, I can see those faces again, the faces of Peace and Dignity and the possibility of the realization of that most powerful prayer seems closer than ever.⁹⁰

Ultimately, the Peace and Dignity Journeys continue to lay the foundations for the cultural bonds that will uphold Indigenous Peoples survival in the next five hundred years. Along with the powerful prayers these runs entailed, the Peace and Dignity Journeys are building the bonds that will ensure the necessary unified front to challenge the assaults from western or any other powers that be.

For participants, the cultural bonds that ensure unity in the face of hegemonic power also rely on the internalization of the empowerment of Indigenous alternatives within ceremony. For Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos, this means finding the paths to decolonize in consciousness of Indigenous heritage. In an interview with Cecilio Camarillo, New Mexico *Danza Xinchtl*

⁸⁹ "A Journey's Recollection," in Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

⁹⁰ "Prayerful Running, November 1996," in Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, Accession #2002-02528, Arizona State University Libraries; Chicano Research Collection.

member Raquel Saenz explains that the *conchero* tradition helped her fill the spiritual hole that the Catholic church could not fill, and helped pass on a tradition to her children, who according to her, “se han desarollado firmemente.”⁹¹ *Danza* helped her develop a consciousness of Indigeneity that helped her envision how her profession as a social worker correlated with the decolonial intent of Indigenizing Chicana/o communities. When referring to *maestro* Segura’s mission to connect Chicanas and Chicanos to their Indigenous heritage, Saenz states:

En varias platicas que dio aqui por Nuevo Mexico...su meta era de despertar la consciencia en muchos modos. No solo con platicas, pero con danza...y todavia creemos que los danzantes [siguen] cumpliendo con esa mision. Tambien las danzas, las ceremonias son para la comunidad, para todos, pero para nosotros nos da mas fuerza para seguir con nuestros trabajos, nuestras familias o lo que este en nuestro camino. [In various talks that he gave in New Mexico...his goal was to awaken consciousness in many ways. Not only with talks, but with *danza*...and and we still believe that the *danzantes* continue fulfilling that mission. Also, the *danzas*, the ceremonies, they are for the community, for everyone, but for us it gives us more strength to continue with our work, our families, or whatever is in our path.]⁹²

Saenz demonstrates the conscious decolonial intent that guides the empowering potential, hopefully for her, of Chicana/o Indigeneity. She is able to thread together her personal, spiritual, and professional lives through the guidance of Indigenous Philosophies that help give her overall purpose. As a result, the steps that the Peace and Dignity runners and *danzantes* are taking are building the path towards a decolonized five centuries to come.

⁹¹ Raquel Saenz, “Lauro Silva, Anna Maria Guillen, and Raquel Saenz Interview about Andres Segura on March 2, 1998 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

⁹² Raquel Saenz, “Lauro Silva, Anna Maria Guillen, and Raquel Saenz Interview about Andres Segura on March 2, 1998 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio García Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

CHAPTER 6

From Chicano to Xicano: Indigenous Chicana/o Transnational Advocacy for the Respect of Human Rights

*...they cared
they wanted to learn
they wanted to help
they were hungry for the truth...¹*

Introduction

A major ideological cultural aspect of the 1960s and 1970s Chicana/o Movement was the exploration of historical Indigenous roots and legacies. As a result of expanding social movement relations and intersections, since the 1980s, Chicana/o cultural formation and political advocacy in the U.S. has occurred in the context of transnational human rights social movements. In particular, Indigenous Peoples' social movements in the western hemisphere have utilized international forums to seek redress for nation-state's human rights abuses and treaty violations.² This chapter will focus on efforts by Chicana/o and Indigenous activists in the Southwestern United States to gain support for efforts to create global recognition of treaty rights in forums like the United Nations (UN). Although critics may argue the irony of appealing to a western international forum under the auspices of the most powerful empires of the world, members of this movement sought to establish agency for Indigenous Peoples in these forums as part of an effort to regain Indigenous sovereignty. As activist David Luján put it, "We were trying to avoid talking to ourselves. We wanted to be part of the world and were making strong head ways there so decided to stay on that track."³ Indigenous sovereignty thus requires the political recognition of that sovereignty by other nations of the world. Even if appealing to

¹ FF 57-1981-Hopi Symposium in Honor of the Ancestors (transcript), Rodolfo ("Corky") Gonzales Papers, WH1971, Western History Collection, The Denver Public Library, 5.

² For a discussion of North American transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements, refer to Ronald Niezen, "Recognizing Indigenism: Canadian Unity and the International Movement of Indigenous Peoples," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, no. 01 (2000): 119–148.

³ David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

western governments yields little to no results, during this advocacy Indigenous Peoples redefined sovereignty in ways that centered on localized control of community politics. In this way, these transnational coalitions sought international avenues to protect and demand respect of their sovereignty rights and seek redress for historic violations of these rights.

In this chapter, I will focus on the coalition networks, like the International Indian Treaty Council and the National Chicano Human Rights Council (NCHRC) that sought the respect of treaty rights for Native Americans at the international level during the 1980s and 1990s. These organizations advocated for Indigenous Rights at the international level and helped form transnational coalitions that united Indigenous Peoples from as far north as Alaska, and as far south as Tierra del Fuego. I will also depict examples of 1980s and 1990s local manifestations of transnational Indigenous Peoples' struggles through an examination of the community organizations Tonantzin Land Institute and Tonatierra whose membership also participated in the NCHRC. In particular, these organizations sought avenues to redress grievances regarding the violation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed by the U.S. and México in 1848. The efforts of these activist coalitions led to collaboration, like the Treaty of Guadalupe Project in the mid 1980s, and eventual coalescence of social movements striving for civil rights and human rights. Beginning in the late 1970s, transnational efforts for the respect of Indigenous Peoples rights and Chicana/o efforts to gain civil rights became one movement where Chicana/o activists sought redress of their grievances with the U.S. government at international forums as part of a broader coalition of Indigenous Peoples seeking redress for treaty violations.

The late 1970s marked a new era of Chicana/o activism in the U.S. as Chicanas and Chicanos sought to resolve human rights abuses committed by the U.S. government to Native Americans, Chicanas and Chicanos in violation of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Chicana/o activists' main grievances sought redress of the negation of citizenship rights and land

rights outlined in the Treaty.⁴ These efforts coalesced with broader Indigenous Peoples advocacy at the UN that contributed to the creation of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2000 and the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (DRIP) by the UN General Assembly on September 13, 2007. The rights outlined in the Declaration refer to the rights of Indigenous people to not suffer from discrimination and marginalization, maintain their cultural identity, and determine for themselves the social and political trajectory of their communities.⁵ The rights outlined in the DRIP demonstrate the context of cultural revitalization within Indigenous Peoples' social movements. Chicana/o political activists within these movements further evolved their cultural projects in Indigenism and Indigeniety, as well as desires to self-determine cultural, social, political, and economic trajectory of Chicana/o communities. Thus, late twentieth-century Indigenous Peoples' collaborative human rights activism demonstrates the context of Chicana/o cultural revitalization within social movements.

Chicana/o and Native American Transnational Indigenous Peoples Advocacy

Although Native American and Chicana/o alliances, and conflicts, have a long history in the Southwest, in this section, I focus on the late twentieth-century as a moment towards a trajectory of cooperation in transnational activism. Motivated by the historical legacies of mid-twentieth-century U.S. Civil Rights Movements, Global Anti-colonial Movements, and a historic consciousness of colonial injustice, some Chicanas, Chicanos, and Native Americans sought international avenues to seek redress for historic injustice. Influenced by the shortcomings of a Civil Rights framework, these activists embraced the moral imperative of the protection of

⁴ For a legal analysis of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo's human rights implications, refer to Armando Rendón, "The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and Its Modern Implications for the Protection of the Human Rights of Mexican Americans," *Chicano Manifesto*, 25th anniversary ed. (Berkeley, CA: Ollin & Associates, 1996).

⁵ "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," *International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)*, accessed March 07, 2015, http://www.iwgia.org/publications/search-pubs?publication_id=27.

human rights globally. Fed up with the broken promises of nation-states, and cognizant of the emerging trend of global capitalism, these Indigenous activists sought redress of human rights violations committed against them in international arenas. In this way, coalitions of localized groups demanded they be recognized as sovereign nations on the global stage, and pushed ending the legacies of colonialism.

Quito 1990 and Burying Columbus 500 Years Later

In the 1980s, Indigenous People's global activism and advocacy for human rights at the UN coincided with western efforts to celebrate the quincentennial of Columbus' landing in the Bahamas. In 1982, with the support of the U.S. and Canada, Spain and the Vatican proposed to the UN General Assembly that October 12, 1992 be celebrated as the "encounter" between Europeans and Indigenous Americans that, according to the Vatican and the Spanish officials, gave the gift of civilization and Christianity to Indigenous Peoples. As historian Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz recounts, "The 'Doctrine of Discovery' had reared its head in the wrong place."⁶ In response to the proposal, the African Delegation walked out and returned with a statement condemning the UN for its support of the celebration of colonialism. Along with the pantheon of pilgrims and frontiersmen, Columbus has served as the base for settler-colonial mythology. The celebration of October 12 in the U.S. stems from late nineteenth-century narratives of belonging for Irish and Italian immigrants at the same time the U.S. military was clearing space for them in the West through campaigns of extermination.⁷ To no surprise, the proposed celebration of the quincentennial of Columbus' stumble into the Americas was met by coalitions of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples seeking the rectification of colonial injustice.

⁶ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Beacon Press, 2014) 197.

⁷ For the history and meaning of Columbus Day celebrations, refer to Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Beacon Press, 1997). For depiction of the Indian wars, refer to Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*.

In July of 1990, Indigenous Peoples from across the hemisphere met in Quito, Ecuador at a conference to define a clear and unified declaration of sovereignty, autonomy, and cultural self-determination. The conference was organized by the South and Meso-American Indian Information Center in Oakland, CA (SAIIC), the Confederation of Indian Nations of Ecuador (CONAIE), the Organization of Indian Nations of Colombia (ONIC), the Awakening of Indian and Campesino People of Ecuador (ECUARUNARI), and the Confederation of Indian Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE). They declared a call to action that countered planned global celebrations of Columbus' quincentennial:

We are calling on all sectors of society to form an alliance to counter the planned Quincentennial Jubilee and demand that governments, religious institutions, and educational institutions tell the truth about what took place 500 years ago and examine how these injustices continue unabated today.

Genocide and ethnocide have been committed against us Indian people by European invaders in the name of "God, civilization and democracy." We realize that we are just one population of many which have been and continue to be victimized by the system imposed upon us by the Western/European culture. African-Americans, brought to this continent as slaves and the Mestizo populations continue with us in our struggles for freedom, justice and respect.

On July 17-21, 1990, nearly 400 Indian people, representing 120 nations, tribes and organizations of the Western Hemisphere met for the first time in Quito, Ecuador to discuss their peoples' struggles for self-determination and strategize for a unified Indian response to the 1992 Jubilee celebrations. Despite the offensive denial of truth in the official histories, we choose instead to use this symbolic date to reflect upon what the invasion has meant to us, to work with a renewed effort for our autonomy, to educate the people of the world, to celebrate that we are still here and our cultures are still alive thanks to 500 years of resisting, and to formulate alternatives for a better life, in harmony with Mother Earth.

As a result of the conference, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples across the western hemisphere used the Columbus quincentennial as an opportunity to gain international attention for the 500 year legacy of Indigenous resistance to colonialism and its central role in the preservation of the rights of the Earth as a living entity. Moreover, the conference served as a starting point for broader transnational Indigenous activist networks that helped Indigenous

Peoples of the North and South spread a consciousness of Indigenous connectivity in the western hemisphere that dates back prior to colonization.

Although the conference occurred some two decades after critical consciousness of historic Indigeneity within the Chicana/o Movement coalesced with American Indian movement, the conference demonstrates an important watershed of transnational Indigenous Peoples organizing. Conference participants challenged the nation-states of the globe to honor the rights of Indigenous People and Mother Earth. As result of two decades of activism, the participation of Chicana/o activist at this conference demonstrates Indigenous autonomy over the definition of who is or is not Indigenous. In his recollection regarding the significance of the 1990 conference twenty years later, Indigenous Chicano activist Gustavo Gutiérrez states:

Well I think that...There are a lot of Indigenous People in the North, but a lot of them have lost their identity through time. I feel that there has to be a process of *concientización*, I always promote that concept...And we bring people together and we talk about this, I think that's the way we're going to resolve it. *Concientización* is...I really feel that a lot of the brothers and sisters from the north, of Abya Yala, should come down here and see what's going on and what's taking place so that they can get a better understanding. Like when Floyd Westerman came, he was all surprised, and he said, you want to see where there's Indians, go to South America, to Abya Yala South, and you'll see. He even composed a song for them. So, that was the only way that they were going to open up their consciousness. I was really happy to see our Navajo brother here, our Diné brother. That's the only way we're going to open their consciousness.⁸

Gutiérrez thus demonstrates that Indigeneity is about consciousness of historic relations and shared responsibility to Mother Earth. The openness of Indigenous communities to accept the Indigeneity of Chicanas and Chicanos was a result of this activism and the work of spreading a critical historic consciousness of colonialism. In opening up, Diné activist Earl Tulley reflects on the significance of building a continental council of Indigenous nations and the need for U.S. Native Americans to be open to incorporating others:

⁸ Gustavo Gutiérrez, "La Concientización del Continente," Interview by Tupac Enrique, June 21, 2010. Interview available at <http://tonatierra.org/eagle-and-condor/>.

This is gonna be really important. Our communities are becoming more blended. We're bicultural, biracial, and bilingual. We have a group of people who may not be Indigenous, but their heart is Indigenous. And we need to absorb those people and to invite them to come into our circle. It is important because as we begin to expand our knowledge and we begin to share this...it is gonna be really important to bring in all sorts of people into this circle. I believe that at a certain time Indigenous Peoples are going to be told just like scientist our told with this oil spill in the gulf, "give us your experts and tell us how we're going to cap this particular oil well." I believe there is going to be a time when the nation leaders are going to be coming to Indigenous People and say share with us your knowledge so we can become in harmony again with Mother Nature.⁹

The conference in 1990 thus served as both a reflection of renewed hemispheric Indigenous Peoples unity and the beginnings of a movement to centralize Indigenous Knowledges in the struggles to protect the environment. For Chicanas and Chicanos involved in this movement, this journey began with a need to clarify the human rights implications of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Now more than four decades later, Chicana/o activists' interpretations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo have unified with the struggle for Indigenous sovereignty or autonomy in the Americas. This struggle coincides with the recognition of the interdependence of human beings to each other and to Mother Earth in ways that balances community autonomy with migrant peoples human rights. Thus, Indigenous Chicana/o activists, as part of a broader Indigenous Peoples movement, provide a unique critiques of colonialism that bridges the concerns of peoples who have historically suffered the two prong legacies of land dispossession and proletarianization, mainly through becoming migrant labor forces, of colonialism.

International Indian Treaty Council

The work of Chicanas and Chicanos in transnational Indigenous Peoples movements forms part of the long history of Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty struggles dating back to the European

⁹ Earl Tulley, Diné Nation, "Greetings of the Dawn Continental Council of Nations and Pueblos of Abya Yala," Interview by Tupac Enrique, June 16, 2010. Interview available at <http://tonatierra.org/eagle-and-condor/>.

invasions of the Americas beginning in 1492.¹⁰ Native Americans never consented to the colonization of the Americas, but instead negotiated treaties with European settlers as a way to maintain sovereignty and coexistence. However, the treaties arrangements made between Native Americans and the early U.S. and British colonial representatives were not respected by colonial governments. Since the colonial era, Native Americans have struggled for the respect of their sovereignties in the face of a settler-colonial onslaught that has violated treaty agreements.

In the twentieth-century, the emergence of international political institutions like the UN provided an arena where Native Americans could have their grievances heard regarding violations to their sovereignty by first colonial governments, and then the nation-states of the Western Hemisphere. As early as 1923, Native Americans represented by Haudenosaunee Deskaheh¹¹ (Iroquois leader also known as Levi General) appealed to the League of Nations to redress the violations of the two-row wampum or *Teioháte* (Two Paths/Roads in Mohawk Language) agreement made between the Iroquois League and Dutch settlers in the early seventeenth-century. The Deskaheh cited the two-row wampum as the first of many treaties between European colonist and Native Americans that was violated to favor colonialism and imperialism. Deskaheh challenged the League of Nations to redress this long history of treaty violations and restore Native American sovereignty rights. Deskaheh's advocacy began a twentieth-century trend of transnational Indigenous Peoples activism.¹² The League of Nations, however, dissipated as World War II ensued.

¹⁰ For a comprehensive examination of the History of Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty struggles, refer to Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Beacon Press, 2014); and Ken S. Coates, *A Global History of Indigenous Peoples: Struggle and Survival* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

¹¹ The Haudenosaunee are also known as the Iroquois nation. Deskaheh is a Haudenosaunee title for leadership.

¹² For more on Deskaheh's appeal to the League of Nations, refer to Deskaheh, Six Nations, and League of Nations, *The redman's appeal for justice*. (S.l.: s.n., 1923). For modern day Onondaga nation efforts to regain sovereignty and land rights, refer to the "Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign" website at <http://honorthetworow.org/>

Native American advocacy for redress of historic treaty violations at the International level continued after World War II and the establishment of the UN in 1945. The UN Charter outlines its role “to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained.”¹³ In 1948, the UN General Assembly adopted The Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a means to protect individual rights everywhere in the world.¹⁴ The UN Charter and Universal Declarations of Human Rights, together, relate to Native American treaty rights violations, which center on grievances regarding respect for human rights. The UN provided Native American activists a potential audience of international diplomats to hear grievances regarding treaties and human rights violations in the U.S. In particular, the UN provided southwestern U.S. Native Americans an international forum to address the implications of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to the respect of Native American sovereignty and human rights.

Beginning in 1959, Hopi spiritual leader Tomas Banyacya began to visit the UN as a means to address grievances related to the U.S. governments’ violation of Hopi land and religious rights.¹⁵ Banyacya’s efforts were part of Hopi peoples’ affirmations of sovereignty that, according to them, were rights granted to them via the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. By 1966, Hopi advocates sought support from the Mexican government regarding a planned case in the World Court in hopes that their sovereignty rights outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo be respected. These efforts had gained a new sense of urgency in 1966 with the active recruitment of Hopi young men by the U.S. military to fight in Vietnam. The Hopi advocates sought from the Mexican Government sponsorship to have their testimony heard before the UN,

¹³ “Preamble, in “Charter of the United Nations,” accessed June 20, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>.

¹⁴ For an accessible copy of the declaration, refer to “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” accessed June 20, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.

¹⁵ “Part III of Sovereignty Videos,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

since the Hopi, and all other Indigenous nations, did not possess official status in the UN.¹⁶ The efforts like those of Benyacya laid the foundation for late twentieth-century Indigenous Peoples' advocacy at the UN and the foundations of Chicana/o participation in these movements, since violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo by the U.S. government also pertained to Chicanas and Chicanos.

During the civil rights era, the American Indian Movement (AIM) pushed forward 1960s and 1970s gains in Native American civil rights and a revival of pride in American Indian cultural identity among young Native Americans in the U.S.¹⁷ On June 8-16, 1974, AIM organized the First International Treaty council of the Western Hemisphere in Standing Rock, South Dakota that was attended by more than 5000 representatives of 98 Indigenous Nations.¹⁸ The result of this meeting was the foundation of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), which sought to unify Indigenous Peoples in their efforts to have treaty rights respected. For Indigenous peoples of the United States, the IITC is committed to having the U.S. government respect Treaties it made with sovereign Indigenous Nations:

The United States Government in its Constitution, Article VI, recognizes treaties: as part of the Supreme Law of the United States. We will peacefully pursue all legal and political avenues to demand United States recognition of its own Constitution in this regard, and thus to honor its own treaties with Native Nations.¹⁹

In 1974, the IITC condemned the U.S. government's long history of treaty violations with Indigenous Nations, and in particular for violating the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty with the Great Sioux Nation at Wounded Knee. To address these issues, the IITC committed itself to gaining

¹⁶ "Letter to The Mexican Embassy from The Hopi House, Oct. 11, 1966," Reies Tijerina Papers, University of New Mexico, Center for Southwest Research.

¹⁷ For American Indian political struggles, refer to Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Allen Warrior, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee* (New York: New Press, 1996). For renewed cultural pride, refer to Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal*.

¹⁸ See the IITC website at <http://www.treatycouncil.org/about.htm>. Also, refer to International Indian Treaty Council, "Declaration of Continuing Independence by the First International Indian Treaty Council at Standing Rock Indian Country June 1974" (International Indian Treaty Council, June 1974), <http://www.treatycouncil.org/about.htm>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

access to the UN for “recognition and membership of the sovereign Native Nations” and to support similar efforts by Indigenous Peoples around the world.²⁰ In 1977, the IITC was the first Indigenous Organization to gain Non-Governmental Organization status in the UN, which entitled them to consultative status in the UN’s Economic and Social Council.²¹ As a result of IITC and other world wide Indigenous Peoples’ advocacy, The Working Group on Indigenous Populations in the UN was founded in 1982. Twenty-five years later, along with the work of other Indigenous organizations from around the world, IITC advocacy led to the UN general assembly passing the DRIP in 2007, which is the first global document that outlines the cultural rights of Indigenous Peoples as inherent human rights.

The IITC’s sponsorship of Chicana/o organizations stemmed from recognition of similar claims to self-determination among Chicana/o and Native American communities dating back to activism in the 1960s and 1970s. In the early 1980s, the IITC incorporated Chicana/o demands for redress of violations of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as part of broader demands for the U.S. government to honor its treaties with Native Americans. They made this stance official in 1986 when they submitted documentation “referring to the Chicano pueblo as another indigenous population in the Americas whose human rights have been violated” as a result of a history of colonialism.²² In an effort to undo centuries of colonial divide and conquer methods, the IITC sought to strengthen Native American and Chicana/o coalitions seeking redress to U.S. treaty violations. To do so, however, required clarification of Chicana/o claims regarding the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. As IITC staff explained:

What is lacking (and yet is considered by many to be a need) is the development of a plan whereby the Chicano can begin to explore international standards and procedures where human rights violations are addressed by indigenous peoples such as ourselves.

²⁰ Ibid. In the declaration, the IITC allies itself with Puerto Rican struggles for Independence.

²¹ IITC website.

²² “IITC Memo to State Treaty Guadalupe Hidalgo Liasons, May 8, 1986.” Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

Although the TGH was signed by two colonizing government forces and intentionally excluded the indigenous peoples of the land in question, the treaty can be a catalyst for uniting the Chicano and the Indians of the Southwest, as well as initiating a dialogue of how best to derive benefits, given the reality of the situation and its existing institutions.²³

To help develop a plan for Chicanas and Chicanos to gain access to international forums and strengthen decolonial efforts by both Native American and Chicana/o groups in the Southwest, IITC realized that their:

...responsibility lies also in examining the past twenty years of Chicano activism and determining a course for Chicano self-determination. De-colonization and defining ourselves clearly will be a more difficult process, but when we can agree on common goals and principles we can reach our destination together.²⁴

These efforts to build a unified path to decolonial efforts demonstrate the IITC's recognition of Chicana/o Indigenous claims. However, recognition of Chicana/o Indigeneity by members of the IITC had to harmoniously integrate the self-determination of Southwestern Native Americans with Chicana/o claims, which many times were in conflict with each other.

The IITC stance on recognizing Chicana/o claims to self-determination is particularly innovative given that even today, many criticize Chicana/o Indigeneity for its romanticism and neglect for recognizing centuries of conflict in the Southwestern United States. In an effort to heal those historic conflicts and promote Indigenous People's unity, the IITC co-sponsored the Treaty of Guadalupe Project in the 1980s where Chicanas, Chicanos, and Native Americans sought to clarify how Chicana/o claims to Indigeneity and self-determination could co-exist and work in relation to those of Southwestern Native Americans. To clarify the intent of Chicana/o Indigeneity claims, the IITC presented the following statement from the 1982 Chicano caucus of the IITC to other Native nations:

The Chicano nation loves the Southwest as our Motherland. We look forward to ongoing discussions with the Indian nations of the Southwest in order to protect our Mother Earth from destruction and to insure the survival of our peoples. We recognize with all due

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

respect the sovereignty and independence of the Indian Nation and see our basis for seeing the Southwest as our homeland as one of relationship to the land, and not to ownership. We honor the prophecies of the Southwestern Indian Nations that predict the unity of the Indian Nations with the Chicano people in our struggles for self-determination.²⁵

The signs of mutual respect of decolonial goals, shared commitment to challenging colonialism and protecting the environment, as well as the ability for Chicanas and Chicanos recognize homeland without claiming ownership marked a direction in which Chicana/o self-determination claims that were interjected in to global trajectories in the recognition of Indigenous people's sovereignty claims. These values for decolonial trajectories shared by the IITC and Chicana/o activists guided coalition and joint Chicana/o and Native American struggles that by the 2000s would join with global Indigenous Peoples movements.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Project and the National Chicano Human Rights Council

In the 1970s, the IITC's efforts at redressing treaty rights at the UN coalesced with Chicana/o efforts to challenge the U.S. government to uphold the land and citizenship rights outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Moreover, Chicana/o Movement era cultural revitalization that inspired Chicanas and Chicanos to value their Indigenous heritage in the context of social activism allowed for networks of Native American and Chicana/o activists to better relate to each other and work together on human and civil rights advocacy. One result was the founding of the National Chicano Human Rights Council (NCHRC) under the sponsorship of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC). Chicana/o activists like Tupac Enrique, Raul Salinas, Roseanne Rodríguez, and Gustavo Gutiérrez joined IITC organization meetings in Flagstaff, AZ and Denver, CO, as well as served as international observers to the UN's Commission on Human

²⁵ These statements by the Chicano Caucus of the IITC are included in "IITC Memo to State Treaty Guadalupe Hidalgo Liasons, May 8, 1986." They are made by Chicana/o members of the Treaty of Guadalupe Project that would lead to the formation of the National Chicano Human Rights Council.

Rights in Geneva in 1987.²⁶ IITC's sponsorship of the NCHRC was part of the recognized tie between Native Americans and Chicanos/Chicanas in relation to challenging violations to human and land rights in the Southwest.²⁷ By the 1980s, Chicana/o and American Indian activists had for more than two decades developed coalitions that sought redress for violation of civil and treaty rights in the U.S.²⁸ As a result of this collaboration, many American Indian and Chicana/o activists realized their common ancestral roots and the commonality of their historic experiences of government oppression in the nation-states of the western hemisphere. These activists also critically examined historic conflict between Mexican Americans and Native Americans that stemmed from Western political tactics of divide and conquer. Consequently, one of the goals of the NCHRC was to work in unity with American Indian activists so that Chicana/o attempts to gain self-determination did not conflict with American Indian efforts to do the same. In unity, NCHRC and the IITC hoped to develop lasting relations that presented a united American Indian and Chicana/o front in efforts of decolonization.²⁹

The NCHRC's advocacy origins stem from the Chicana/o Movement era activism that began with civil rights organizing and led to considerations of Chicana/o Indigeneity and human rights. NCHRC Co-founder and human rights lawyer Armando Réndon exemplifies how Chicana/o Indigenous based activism stems from civil rights struggles during the Chicana/o Movement. Réndon became an activist when he began working with the United Farm Workers (UFW) in 1964. He was one of the first reporters to cover the UFW movement in the Sacramento area of California. In 1967, Réndon moved to Washington D.C. to work with the

²⁶ "The National Chicano Human Rights Council Pamphlet, n.d. (early 1990s) " Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University.

²⁷ Armando Réndon, "Personal Interview," February 12, 2012.

²⁸ For examples of Chicana/o and American Indian collaboration, review the efforts of the Crusade for Justice in Denver in Ernesto B. Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999). For Chicana/o movement era multiethnic activist coalitions, refer to George Mariscal, *Brown-eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

²⁹ "The National Chicano Human Rights Council Brochure," Raul Salinas Papers.

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, where he traveled and met with various Chicana/o Movement leaders. He was able to write on the relationship between the Indigenous inspired ideology of *Chicanismo* and meet with members of Chicana/o activist organizations from across the U.S.³⁰ The result of these actions and writings was Rendón's book *Chicano Manifesto* (1971), where he outlined Chicanas' and Chicanos' rights to self-determination.³¹ Inspired by his activities, writings, and relationships with CCM leaders Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales and Reies López Tijerina, Rendón entered American University Law School in Washington D.C. There he focused on international human rights law with an emphasis on the significance of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to Chicanas and Chicanos.³²

Late 1980s and early 1990s NCHRC efforts to redress human rights abuses as violation of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty form an extension of Chicana/o Movement era efforts to legally reinterpret the treaty as a human rights document. As early as 1974, El Centro Cultural de la Raza and San Diego area Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan (MEChA) groups called for legal clarifications of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ramifications on land titles, citizenship, and nationality. The groups' efforts were part of a broader Chicana/o and Native American attempts to analyze colonization of Indigenous Peoples in the Southwestern territories affected by the treaty. In 1976, the demand for legal clarification of human rights outlined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was taken to the California Attorney general by the California state-wide MEChA conference.³³ During the 1980s, Chicano delegations seeking clarification of the ramifications of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo participated in the International Indian Treaty Conferences, participated in IITC delegations to the UN, and

³⁰ Armando Réndon, "Personal Interview," February 12, 2012. For *Chicanismo* ideas, refer to Ignacio M García, *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican Americans* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).

³¹ Armando B. Rendón, *Chicano Manifesto*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971).

³² Armando Réndon, "Personal Interview," February 12, 2012.

³³ "Xicano Legal Offensive," *La Mazorca* (1974). Quoted in Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

Chicana/o and Native Americans from the Southwest formed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Project to help clarify this treaty's effects on Indigenous Peoples' human and land rights.³⁴

The mid 1980s Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Project resulted from nearly two decades of Native American and Chicana/o activist coalitions in the Southwest in the 1970s and 1980s. Along with the IITC and NCHRC, the Tonantzin Land Institute helped found the Treaty of Guadalupe Project in 1986, which sought "to look at the Treaty and the status of Chicanos within the realm of Indigenous people throughout the Western hemisphere."³⁵ The goal of the Project was "to help define a clear goal or goals of the Chicano-Indio-Mexicano and of their relationship to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo."³⁶ To accomplish this, the Project trained representatives from Tribal and Land Grant communities to prepare testimony regarding the human rights violations to these communities and present them before tribunals of the UN.³⁷ The project also sought to convince members of the U.S. congress to critically examine the status of land claims in the Southwest.³⁸ In 1987, the International Indian Treaty Council accepted the testimonies prepared by the Treaty of Guadalupe Project and credentialed the first Chicano observers to attend the UN tribunals in Geneva, Switzerland.³⁹ During the meeting of the UN's Human Rights Commission, the IITC's Chicana/o delegates addressed UN officials seeking redress for human rights violations by the U.S. government towards Chicanas and Chicanos. The IITC delegation referred to the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and demanded the UN Human

³⁴ "Tonantzin Land Institute Press Statement, April 21, 1989," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ "Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo 1848-1986 Encuentro National, November 1986," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

³⁷ "Tonantzin Land Institute: Treaty of Guadalupe Project, October 1988" Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

³⁸ "Letter from Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, September 28, 1988" Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

³⁹ "Chronology of Events Related to The Treaty of Guadalupe Project, 1988" Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

Rights Commission address the human rights implications of international treaties.⁴⁰ These efforts would serve as the foundation for Chicana/o participation in UN and other international advocacy and diplomacy forums and establish the international recognition of Chicana/o Indigeneity from Indigenous Peoples across the globe.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Project held annual *encuentros* in 1986 and 1987 that attempted to address the status of Chicanas and Chicanos “within the realm of Indigenous People throughout the Western Hemisphere” and clarify the implications of the land grant struggle for a “predominantly urban Hispanic population.”⁴¹ The 1986 *encuentro* formed the basis for a unified statement of Chicana/o and Native American advocacy for the right to self-determination through interpretation of rights in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. These *encuentros* led to members of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Project to frame their local activist efforts as part of transnational human rights struggles. National and transnational Chicana/o and Native American interpretations of human rights and international law influenced local activists’ efforts and defined the methods the NCHRC used to translate local community activism into larger international advocacy.

Through the Treaty of Guadalupe Project, Chicanas and Chicanos were able to draw from the International Indian Treaty Council’s experience with advocating for sovereignty rights at the international level and learn the position of Chicanas and Chicanos among the other Indigenous People of the Americas. As former director of the Tonantzin Land Institute David Luján explains:

⁴⁰ For a diary of day to day events of the first Chicana/o delegates to the UN Human Rights Commission, refer to Ron Sandoval “In the Spirit of Truth! American Indians and Chicanos Face the United Nations: A Journal-Part Two,” *Chicano Human Rights Bulletin: News and Commentary from Aztlan to the World* 3, no. 1 (1992): 7-9. A copy of the bulletin can be found in Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #1995-01494], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁴¹ “Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo Project,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

At first Chicanos didn't know where they fit in. The colonized experience we went through, we really lost contact with our Indigenous roots. It was an uncomfortable experience or place to be. Like I said earlier, the most comfortable thing we could say was that *y tenemos sangre india*, we have Indian blood. We just didn't have the avenues or the teachers that would take us beyond that. But with this experience with the Treaty council and this opening at the UN and the establishment of Tonanztin Land Institute, and other groups *tambien* [also], we found ourselves as Chicanos playing a real unique, important and respected part, and that was serving as a bridge between the north and the south representatives and leaders of the Indigenous movement.⁴²

Luján continued to explain that the experience with Indigenous elders helped teach Chicanas and Chicanos the profound relationship they had with issues of Indigenous sovereignty. By the 1990s, during UN advocacy, Chicanas and Chicanos stood together at the UN with other Indigenous Peoples of the Americas seeking redress on an international level.⁴³

As a result of collaborative activism between these Chicana/o and Native American activists, the Treaty of Guadalupe Project became the NCHRC in 1988. The project took the form of a non-profit organization with headquarters in California. The NCHRC was made up of a coalition membership from pre-existing Chicana/o activists organizations like the Tonantzin Land Institute in Albuquerque, NM and in the 1990s the Tonatierra Community Development Institute in Phoenix, AZ, as well as independent chapters in Fresno, CA, Denver, CO, Austin, TX, and San Francisco, CA. The NCHRC's primary goal was to bring attention to the violation of Chicanas and Chicanos' human rights in international forums. In particular, Mexican Americans, according to the NCHRC, possessed a unique position in international human rights laws due to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that outlines Mexican American civil rights.⁴⁴ Consequently, the NCHRC helped organize conferences regarding the significance of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to Chicana/o human rights guarantees through out the Southwestern U.S. in the late 1980s and 1990s, as well as sponsored Chicana/o advocacy at the UN.

⁴² David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Armando Réndon, "Personal Interview," February 12, 2012, and "The National Chicano Human Rights Council Brochure," Raul Salinas Papers, M0774, Dept. of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.

NCHRC efforts to protect Chicana and Chicano's human rights stem from decades of civil rights advocacy originating in the Chicana/o Movement. The links between the Chicana/o Movement and the NCHRC are demonstrated in the experiences of its chairwoman Roseanne Rodriguez. Rodriguez's activist origins stem from her participation in the Denver area high school walkouts during the Chicana/o Movement in 1969. She subsequently attended the Crusade for Justice's alternative school, Escuela Tlatelolco, where she finished her high school degree and an undergraduate degree in Chicano Studies.⁴⁵ In conjunction to her activist links, Rodriguez's critical reflection on her Indigeneity influenced her value for protecting Indigenous People's rights. Like many Chicanas and Chicanos that inherit Indigenous cultural practices from family members, Rodriguez's link to Indigenous knowledge stems from her interactions with her grandmother while growing up, which she states "taught me a lot about *curanderismo* because that's what she was, a *curandera*. She healed, she was a traditional doctor...I guess her Indian ways rubbed off on me. That I always valued."⁴⁶ These activist experiences and familial Indigeneity coalesced later in Rodriguez's life through her work to advocate for the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples with the NCHRC, as well as her aspirations to practice traditional medicine and advocate for environmental justice. Rodriguez also emphasized challenges to systemic power systems, like patriarchy, that were part of broader decolonial efforts to respect the land, earth, animals, and spiritual beings that are devalued by western colonial epistemologies.⁴⁷ In this way, Rodriguez demonstrates a developing Chicana/o Indigeneity with the decolonial objective of centering woman's knowledge in challenges to land abuse. Although some may refer to this as an essentialist perspective of women's role in

⁴⁵ Malia Davis, "Philosophy Meets Practice: A Critique of Ecofeminism through the Voices of Three Chicana Activists," in Devon Gerardo Peña, *Chicano Culture, Ecology, Politics: Subversive Kin* (University of Arizona Press, 1998) 204-205. For more on the Denver area Chicana/o Movement high school walkouts, refer to Vigil, *The Crusade for Justice*, 81-87, 94-95.

⁴⁶ Malia Davis, 204.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 223.

protecting nature, Rodriguez exercises human responsibility for the state of the world.

Rodriguez's legal advocacy for the protection of Indigenous land rights reveals intersections of oppression based on race, class, ethnicity, and gender, which she challenges in international political arenas and goes beyond social and biological arrangements.

In the 1980s, Rodriguez linked a decolonial interpretation of Chicana/o Indigeneity to her struggle to protect Indigenous People's land rights. As chairwoman of the NCHRC, Rodriguez directed the NCHRC's interpretation of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo as a human rights document and a title of Chicana/o self-determination. In a statement she prepared for the UN's Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP), Rodriguez outlined the NCHRC's position on seeking redress for human rights violations utilizing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. She highlights 1980s 'Hispanic' assimilation trends and English only initiatives that amounted to what she call "cultural genocide", and calls for the WGIP to recognize the right Chicanas and Chicanos have to recognition of their Indigeneity as a means to seek redress of human rights violations toward Chicana/o communities. Rodriguez states:

The National Xicano Human Rights Council asserts that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is a living Human Rights document and we further assert the human right to seek address and redress of past and present grievances in the international arena, at the United Nations, and other world forums. We recommend that the WGIP consider in its deliberations with the Draft Declaration of Indigenous Principles all Indigenous Peoples who have never entered into any agreements with states, nor want to, not be excluded from participation of all efforts being made by Indigenous Peoples in the International struggle for self-determination and sovereignty.⁴⁸

Here, Rodriguez highlights the overall similar concerns over seeking arenas for redress between Native Americans that entered into treaty arrangements with the U.S. government and those that did not. This is especially true for Native American communities in the Southwest that entered the realm of U.S. political control through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, along with Mexican

⁴⁸ Roseanne Rodriguez, "National Xicano Human Rights Council Statement for the WGIP" in Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

Americans. Building off the UN's Charter, and its adoption of the The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the NCHRC and other Indigenous groups sought an international oversight of treaty violations as they pertained to human rights. In this statement, the NCHRC demonstrates a need to ensure that Indigenous People without treaties, and those included in the treaties between nation-states, were not stripped of their Indigeneity for lacking the "proper credentials." Instead, the NCHRC's perspective protects Chicana/o determination of Indigeneity, and helps ensure Chicanas, Chicanos, and other Indigenous communities whose Indigeneity has suffered from historic attempts of cultural genocide had the international avenues to seek redress for this colonial injustice.

The NCHRC demonstrates key efforts to bring international attention to the historic trends of defining Chicana/o communities as alien to the Southwest, when in fact their familial ties to the Indigenous Peoples of the area date back centuries and their history forms part of a bigger mega-trend of Indigenous migrations dating back millennia. As chairwoman Rodriguez stated:

I've been working all my life to unify brown and red people, because we are very similar. Our struggle is the same, our enemies are the same, and our goals are the same...Once people understand...that every Mexican did not swim over the Atlantic Ocean to get here, they start to understand that we're not half-breeds. We're not Europeans."⁴⁹

As Rodriguez implies in stating Chicanas, Chicanos, and Mexicans are not Europeans, the NCHRC's work to legally and politically define Chicana/o Indigeneity aligned Chicana/o human rights advocacy with those of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. In doing so, Chicanas and Chicanos that partook in this movement revolutionized definitions of Indigeneity with a critical historic reflection of the complex heritage of Indigenous civilization. Indigenous Peoples' history is defined by historic colonial genocide and forced assimilation to western norms. This history is also defined by Indigenous Peoples' agency to manipulate and overthrow

⁴⁹ Malia Davis, 205.

these oppressive conditions. Chicana/o communities that have defied colonial logic and embraced their Indigeneity shed light on pathways to claim Indigenous sovereignty, without the boundaries of colonial definitions of Indigenous determining who is Indigenous. Instead, Chicana/o activist revealed ways of struggling for Indigenous sovereignty while maintaining that Indigenous peoples come from diverse historical experiences.

The work of the NCHRC and other Chicana/o activists organizations led to several local activists efforts that helped outline the international legal argument regarding the violation of Chicana/o international human rights that utilized the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. These efforts established recognition of Chicana/o claims of violation of their human rights at the international level. Moreover, NCHRC's political advocacy at the international level helped strengthen and develop coalitions at local levels that resulted in extensive American Indian and Chicana/o collaborative community activism. Collaborative activism also led to linked transnational efforts among North American and South American Indigenous Peoples during the 1980s and 1990s. Indigenous Peoples' movement values of transnational protection of human rights influenced localized efforts to defend Chicana/o and Native American rights to community self-determination.

Local Foundations to Chicana/o Transnational Organizing

The broader coalition work that characterized the political organizing of the IITC and the NCHRC was based in the localized efforts of community activist organizations. Rooted in the legacies of the American Indian Movement, Native Peoples civil rights litigation, and the Chicana/o Movement, these southwestern U.S. community organizations sought local, regional, national, and transnational redress of violations to their civil and human rights. In particular, these organizations served as the grassroots backbone for the larger network of Indigenous

Peoples movements across the hemisphere. For Chicanas and Chicanos in this network, their participation demonstrated the complexity of colonial historic contexts and the decolonial potential of Indigenous movements. Chicana/o activists' realization of their Indigeneity cut at the core of colonial logics that dominate modern power. They challenged the one-way progressive directions from Indigenous civilization to modernity that relegate Indigeneity to an essentialist past and mixed heritage as signs of western cultural assimilations.

Chicana/o activists demanded the right to call themselves "Indigenous" in ways that challenged governing states to prioritize Indigenous Knowledge when enacting economic, social, and political policy. These demands demonstrated the decolonial potential of Indigenous Peoples movements in ways that pointed towards building human relationships free from the hierarchical prejudice of colonial logics. These movements provided a commitment to equality and respect for one another and Mother Earth and a view of human society as pluriversal.

Tonantzin Land Institute

The NCHRC's transnational advocacy was based on the political organizing among Chicana/o community organizations that implemented a Pan-Indigenous world-view to localized political struggles. Beginning in the 1980s, the Tonantzin Land Institute began organizing Native American and Chicana/o communities in New Mexico. The Tonantzin Land Institute sought to protect the land and water rights of Hopi, Pueblo, Navajo, Havasupai, and Chicana/o communities. Native American groups accepted the name of the organization after Chicana/o groups defined Tonantzin as follows:

Tonantzin refers to our most beloved Earth Mother. And that is how we see...the *Virgen de Guadalupe* and this is the patron saint of all of us as Indian People. This is the name of the *Virgen* before Catholicism. This is the same goddess or deity that our people prayed to and related to. And it relates to the land.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

The Tonantzin Land Institute's membership and the populations they advocated for were Chicana/o and Native American, who in many cases, had historic ties to each other and the New Mexico region dating back 400 to thousands of years. Tonantzin's primary goal was to address the need to find a proper arena to file grievances regarding Chicana/o and Native American land and water rights.

Beginning in the 1970s, Tonantzin director David Luján began to work with the Legal Aid organization and as a graduate student to help Chicana/o and Pueblo communities that had water rights through the long established irrigation systems known as Acequias.⁵¹ Luján is a Chicano from Roswell, NM who got his start in activism as an organizer for the United Farm Workers and also performed as a *teatro* actor as a means to galvanize the UFW effort. After attaining a graduate degree and teaching Chicana/o Studies at a local community college, Luján left New Mexico to work for the Hopi in Arizona. With the Hopi, Luján gained a new insight on the significance of Indigenous cultural traditions to the survival of Indigenous peoples and the relationships between Chicanas, Chicanos, and American Indians in the Southwest. After his work on the Hopi reservation, Luján moved to Albuquerque where he led an effort to organize Chicanas and Chicanos around the issue of Chicana/o Indigeneity and the shared grievances they had with other Native populations of the Southwest. Inspired by his experiences with the Hopi, Luján stated, "...we can't ignore this, we have a tie here with native peoples. We're Chicanos and that's part of who we are and we need to try to recoup and try to learn as much about that as we can."⁵²

From the 1970s onward, Luján worked with Legal Aid and subsequently the Tonantzin Land Institute to protect the land and water rights of Chicana/o and Native American

⁵¹ Acequia waterways were established early on during the Spanish colonial era, and provided the only form of obtaining water for Pueblo and Chicana/o farming communities.

⁵² David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

communities. After collecting oral histories from elders in Chicana/o and Pueblo communities, Luján utilized his experience as an organizer to identify the leadership of these traditional land grant and native communities. Tonantzin Land Institute's political organizing resulted in the foundation of a statewide Asequia Association that represented 1500 Asequia communities with the potential to represent approximately 60,000 traditional water users.⁵³ The Asequia Association utilized Pueblo elders' leadership who could function as political mediators because of their local political clout. This allowed for advances in land title disputes that had been tied up in courts for twenty-five years. The Asequia Association also advocated for their water rights to ensure that the state government, private developers, and civil engineers would not infringe upon the water rights of traditional communities.⁵⁴

Tonantzin also worked to advocate for the rights of historic Chicana/o Land Grant communities. The organization drew up support from both the Pueblo and Chicana/o communities to protest the building of the for profit Petroglyphs National Park on the Atrisco Land Grant and Tierra Amarilla's land claims against the Phoenix Land development corporation. The collaboration between Pueblo and Chicana/o communities helped them to understand the importance of these shared concerns to Chicana/o Indigeneity. In the process of political organizing, Chicanas and Chicanos learned the importance and profound significance of Indigenous sovereignty. To Chicana/o activists, sovereignty was a new issue, but nevertheless, it remained an issue related to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and all other treaties between nation-states and Indigenous populations.⁵⁵ Consequently, Tonantzin, along with other Chicana/o and American Indian organizations, sought an international arena to help implement

⁵³ David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012; and "Tonantzin Land Institute: Treaty of Guadalupe Project, October 1988," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁵⁴ David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

policy to protect the rights and respect the sovereignty of Chicanas, Chicanos, and Native Americans in New Mexico.⁵⁶

In the 1990s, Tonantzin took the lead in creating a forum for Chicana/o activism based in Indigenous ideology, or *Indigenismo* in New Mexico. The Tonantzin Land Institute became the organization where Chicanas and Chicanos developed their Indigeneity in ways that both redefined them as Indigenous Peoples and demonstrated how mixed heritage peoples can align with Indigenous Peoples claim to sovereignty. Developing Chicana/o Indigeneity served as a base for coalition building in the Southwest. Coalitions among Chicanas, Chicanos, and Native Americans as part of the Tonantzin Land Institute helped to have Indigenous Peoples grievances heard on an international stage at places like the UN. On December 9-13, 1993, the Tonantzin Land Institute organized and hosted the International Sovereignty Testimonials in Albuquerque, NM. During this event, Tonantzin gathered testimonies regarding the violation of Indigenous Peoples' human rights by nation-state governments from all over the western hemisphere.⁵⁷ The conference was held around December 12 to honor Tonantzin or the *Virgen de Guadalupe* as a symbol of Indigenous cultural continuity among Chicanas and Chicanos and as a way to honor mother earth.⁵⁸ The conference came on the heels more than a decade of organizing in the UN that, at this point, had resulted in the recognition of 1993 as the year of Indigenous Peoples. The conference had an open invitation to all Indigenous Peoples of the hemisphere, and with collaboration with the International Indian Treaty Council, Tonantzin activists gathered testimonies from elders, lawyers, and scholars and transcribed them for presentation to the UN.

⁵⁶ “Tonantzin Land Institute: Treaty of Guadalupe Project, October 1988,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁵⁷ For transcription and recordings of these testimonials, refer to the Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁵⁸ David Luján, “Personal interview,” March 30, 2012.

At the end of the conference, the Council of Indigenous Listeners concluded “the oppression by Western Hemisphere’s nation-states continues unabated.”⁵⁹ Conference participants declared the need for nation states to recognize their right to sovereignty, which they have continued to possess “despite 501 years of invasion, genocide, and cultural, legal, political, social, and religious ethnocide.”⁶⁰ The Council of Indigenous Listeners also noted that the conference served as a valuable unifying event that helped grow the alliances of the diverse Indigenous communities of the Western Hemisphere. This unity was leading towards efforts of extending the International Year of the World’s Indigenous Peoples to a decade.⁶¹

Although the testimonies would have been used to advocate on behalf of Indigenous peoples at the UN tribunals regardless of the historical context, three weeks after the conference on January 1, 1994, the uprising by the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) in Chiapas, Mexico garnered international support for the plight of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas. Consequently, the testimonies gathered in December of 1993 were utilized to present the case for the violation of Indigenous Peoples’ human rights as the UN appointed special rapporteur Dr. Miguel Alfonso Martínez to study treaty agreements and constructive arrangements between States and Indigenous Peoples in response to the EZLN uprising. In 1994, the former member and Chair of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, and First Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the UN Human Rights Council, Martínez met with Indigenous Peoples across the Americas in an effort to compile sources for his report on treaties. In September of 1994, he visited the Sandía Pueblo in Albuquerque where he heard testimonies

⁵⁹ “Council of Indigenous Listeners Press Statement: International Testimonials on the Violation of Indigenous Sovereignty Rights,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁶⁰ “Declaration of Indigenous Sovereign Peoples,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁶¹ “Council of Indigenous Listeners Press Statement: International Testimonials on the Violation of Indigenous Sovereignty Rights,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

on the land, water, and human rights abuses of Chicana/o and Native communities in person, and was presented with the video and transcripts of the 1993 conference.⁶² During the meeting, Dr. Martínez commented on the need to utilize these testimonies to advocate for the recognition of Indigenous Peoples rights as collective entities.⁶³ Martínez' eventual report, much like the initial report of the Council of Indigenous Listeners from the 1993 conference, highlighted the plight of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas who in the late twentieth-century still faced threats to their cultural way of life, genocide, colonization, deforestation, and desecration of their religious sites and customs.⁶⁴

Chicanas and Chicanos in New Mexico came to understand that the struggle for their rights was intrinsically tied to the same struggles among Pueblo Indians. The effects of the Indigenous Testimonials on the Violation of Indigenous Sovereignty Rights and the reports to the UN special rapporteur Dr. Martínez solidified the position of Chicanas and Chicanos at the international political level as Indigenous Peoples. The UN rapporteur and the International Indian Treaty Council recognized that Chicanas and Chicanos had long established connections to Indigenous communities and cultures. Recognition of this in New Mexico was a result of political organizing by Tonantzin and the traditional Land Grant and Tribal communities, which built on Chicana/o and Native American activism dating back to the 1960s. Efforts that began as ways to protect water and land rights resulted in the revelation that Pueblo and Chicana/o communities had historic familial ties. As Luján reports, the meetings would often be helped by recognition that Pueblo Indians had "*padrino[s]* from [Chicana/o] land grant [community] so and so..." Familial relations enriched, elevated, and helped develop Chicana/o Indigeneity on an international stage within the context of transnational Indigenous Peoples's human rights

⁶² "Tonantzin-UN 9/17/94," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁶³ "Tonantzin Hearings 9/18/1994," Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁶⁴ David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

advocacy. The solidarity shown by Chicanas and Chicanos towards Native Americans helped them gain recognition of their Indigeneity from Indigenous political leadership from around the world.

Tonatierra Community Development Institute

Along with the Tonantzin Land Institute, the Tonatierra Community Development Institute in Phoenix, AZ demonstrates implementation of transnational perspectives on Indigenous Peoples' human rights to local activism that sought redress of human rights violations. Founded in December of 1993, Tonatierra had its roots in the farm worker union organizing of the Chicana/o Movement and advocacy for the rights of undocumented immigrants through the Maricopa County Organizing Project (MCOP).⁶⁵ The context of Tonatierra's origins helped this organization develop a strong case for valuing Mexican and Chicana/o Indigeneity that emphasized these groups' ancestral rights of freedom of movement across state imposed borders. Thus, Tonatierra applied a revitalization of Indigenous cultural identity among Chicanas and Chicanos to develop a human rights stance on undocumented immigration from Mexico to the U.S. that interpreted this migration as an ancestral right of all Indigenous Peoples, including peoples of Mexican descent. Tonatierra based its claims in the fact that Indigenous People's maintained a right to sovereignty in the western hemisphere that has been denied for more than five centuries.

Tonatierra's link to advocacy and activism for migrant farm workers dates back to the Chicana/o Movement and Tonatierra founding council member Gustavo Gutiérrez's participation in United Farm Worker (UFW) labor organizing in Arizona during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Born in Chandler, AZ on August 21, 1932, Gutiérrez worked as an agricultural worker in

⁶⁵ "Tonatierra History and Mission, n.d." Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

his early life. In 1967, he helped found the Arizona chapter of the UFW to combat unjust labor conditions for agricultural workers, like the lack of drinking water and access to restrooms.⁶⁶ In 1968 he began organizing agricultural workers in Tolleson, AZ. In 1972, Gutiérrez and UFW leaders including César Chávez helped lead the UFW's response to Arizona House Bill 2134 that barred farm workers from collectively bargaining labor contracts and conducting labor strikes and boycotts. The UFW's response to HB 2134 was organizing a recall campaign of Governor Jack Williams. Gutiérrez targeted Williams for his support of the American Farm Bureau Federation, which the UFW alleged was nothing more than a tax-exempt lobbying group for U.S. agribusiness that supported right-wing anti-labor political causes.⁶⁷ Although UFW national leadership was comprised of mostly Chicanas and Chicanos in the 1960s and 1970s, Gutiérrez's labor organizing in Arizona also depended on support from Native American communities. In one instance, 300 Navajo and Tohono O'odham families supported a UFW strike, and on several occasions depended on solidarity from Benjamin Hanley, one of the first elected official from the Navajo nation to the Arizona State Legislature.⁶⁸ Gutiérrez's early activism and collaboration with Native Americans on protecting the civil and human rights of agricultural workers demonstrates the beginning of a developing perspective on Chicana/o Indigeneity that interpreted the rights of Chicanas and Chicanos as peoples Indigenous to the U.S. Southwest and entitled to freedom of movement across state imposed borders.

Tonatierra's origins as a community organization with an emphasis on the plight of undocumented workers stems from its beginning as the Maricopa County Organizing Project (MCOP) in 1977. Former UFW members Lupe Sánchez and Gustavo Gutiérrez founded the

⁶⁶ "Gustavo Gutierrez at the Arizona State Capitol," YouTube video, 685 seconds, posted by "Tonatierra," September 9, 2012, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbNNxT4rEkg&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

⁶⁷ "The Farm Bureau, Enemy of La Causa" *El Malcriado* 5, no. 3, (1972): 6; and "Voters Move to Recall Arizona Governor," *El Malcriado* 5, no. 3, (1972): 7.

⁶⁸ "Gustavo Gutierrez at the Arizona State Capitol," YouTube video, 685 seconds, posted by "Tonatierra," September 9, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbNNxT4rEkg&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

MCOP to emphasize the particular needs of undocumented farm workers. In 1977, the MCOP backed the first large-scale strikes by undocumented Mexican workers in Arizona history, when Mexican National citrus harvesters led the Goldmar Strike against the Arrowhead Ranch north of Glendale, AZ that was jointly owned by the prominent agribusiness owning families of the state the Goldwaters and Martoris. After resisting the strike-breaking efforts of these families, who utilized the U.S. Border Patrol to deport striking workers, the undocumented workers and the MCOP obtained an agreement from the Goldwater and Martori families to grant the farm workers their initial demands. After the Goldmar strike, the MCOP supported nearly 3000 undocumented and documented farm worker strikes in Maricopa County. In 1979, after helping negotiate a contract with the Arrowhead Ranch, MCOP's efforts led to the formation the Arizona Farm Workers Union, which took the lead in farm worker contract negotiations in Arizona through the 1980s.⁶⁹

As a result of the founding of the Arizona Farm Workers Union, through the 1980s, the MCOP focused on legal representation for undocumented and documented migrant laborers. They continued to focus on issues of pesticide regulations and farm worker civil rights in Arizona. Their advocacy for farm workers also utilized appeals to the Mexican Consulate to apply bi-national political leverage to help rectify migrant workers' demands to receive payment for completed labor from employers. These employers exploited workers' migratory status to deny them wages by threatening their employees with deportation.⁷⁰ During the 1980s, the MCOP also focused on broader transnational efforts to help develop farm worker economic self-determination, as their mission states, the MCOP:

⁶⁹ "History of MCOP, n.d." Maricopa County Organizing Project Records, MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁰ "Correspondence: Letters from Consulate, 1977," Maricopa County Organizing Project Records MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

[provided] technical assistance and support for farm worker economic development projects in rural Mexico under auspices of the closely associated Farmworker Economic Development Corp. and the *Cooperativa Sin Fronteras* (Cooperative Without Borders); [which possessed a] special concern for the legal and related informational needs of Mexican National and other undocumented Central American farm workers on both sides of the U.S. border; [and] participat[ed] in important public policy discussions and public education regarding labor, immigration, rural development, and Central American issues in both the United States and Latin America.⁷¹

In addition to transborder farm co-ops, the MCOP developed the *Proyecto Legal Sin Fronteras* (Legal Project Without Borders) that had legal staff on both sides of the U.S.-México border to help undocumented migrants with legal concerns.⁷² The MCOP trans-border efforts at providing legal services to migrant workers and helping them establish economic self-determination demonstrates the organization's developing transnational concerns for the protection of human and civil rights. This developing concern for transnational human rights would guide the MCOP's critique of immigration policy reform in the 1980s.

In 1986, the U.S. Congress passed the Immigration Control and Reform Act (IRCA) (also known as the Simpson-Mazzoli Act), which provided undocumented immigrants in the U.S. a path to legal residency, while at the same time provided funding for increased militarization of the U.S.-México border. Although the MCOP supported the rights of undocumented workers, they possessed a heavy critique of IRCA and the Reagan administration for continued persecution of undocumented immigrants, and for unjust military intervention in Central America. MCOP's critique of IRCA was demonstrated at the "Conference Against the Simpson-Mazzoli/Roybal Immigration Legislation" on March 29-31, 1985. In conjunction with the Chicano Advocacy and Training Institute and the Arizona Farm Workers Union, the MCOP held the conference to gather migrant workers, Mexican and U.S. scholars, U.S. and Mexican clergy that supported the Sanctuary Movement to support Central American refugees, and civil rights

⁷¹ "History of MCOP, n.d." Maricopa County Organizing Project Records MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷² Ibid.

attorneys and union organizers from both sides of the U.S.-México border.⁷³ As demonstrated by the resolutions drafted at the conference, participants demanded that any immigration reform take into account the international human rights of undocumented immigrants. The first resolution demanded undocumented workers deserved to have redress for human rights violations be heard at the UN. Moreover, conference participants condemned the U.S.'s selective asylum policies based on foreign relations between the U.S. and Central American nations for not taking into account how U.S. intervention in Central America provoked the violence that forced refugees to seek asylum in this country.⁷⁴ The MCOP's, along with the Arizona Farm Workers Union and the Chicano Advocacy and Training Institute, critique of U.S. foreign policy and its links to immigration demonstrate a critique of restrictions of movement in the Americas. The MCOP held a goal to "uphold [migrant Mexican and Central American workers'] human rights to have decent jobs; in essence the centuries-old struggles of La Raza for justice, peace and equality and dignity."⁷⁵ MCOP organizers concluded that to protect the rights of migrant workers required that their human rights be respected across borders. MCOP activists demonstrated efforts to locally address changing labor structures influenced by geopolitical violence tied to the Cold War. They also highlighted the need to challenge the changing global capitalist economy that employs transnational strategies to restrict the movement of workers and facilitate their exploitation. Moreover, in the Americas, Indigenous Peoples have continued to be one of the populations most affected by geopolitical violence and changing labor markets.

The connections between the MCOP's goals to protect the rights of migrant workers converged, as they have in the past, with the efforts to protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples in

⁷³ For more on the U.S. Sanctuary Movement, refer to Susan Bibler Coutin, *The Culture of Protest: Religious Activism and the U.S. Sanctuary Movement* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993).

⁷⁴ "Conference Against Simpson-Mazzoli/Roybal Immigration Legislation Resolutions, March 1985," Maricopa County Organizing Project Records, MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

the Americas. In the late 1980s, the MCOP became part of larger Native American, Indigenous, and Chicana/o activist networks that sought the respect of Indigenous People's rights across the western hemisphere. In the mid to late 1980s, MCOP co-director Tupac Enrique, and board member Gustavo Gutiérrez both participated in transnational advocacy led by the IITC and the NCHRC. Tupac Enrique served as one of the first Chicana/o observers at the UN's Commission on Human Rights in Geneva during their 1987 meeting. Tupac reported back from the Geneva trip to the MCOP that there needed to be a closer examination of the implications of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to the human rights of peoples of Mexican descent in the U.S., and in particular, the immigrant population.⁷⁶

Connections with Indigenous Peoples of México, Central, and South America also resulted from MCOP connections with the South and Meso-American Indian Information Center (SAIIC), and participation at Conferences of Indigenous Peoples held in Quito, Ecuador in 1989 and 1990. Organizers of these conferences sought to utilize them to organize a transnational Indigenous Peoples resistance to the upcoming 1992 celebration of the quincentennial of Columbus' voyage and Spanish Invasion of the Americas by the Vatican, Spain, and numerous Latin American governments, which they titled a "Discovery of America" celebration.⁷⁷ The result of the conference was a counter campaign titled "500 Years of Indian Resistance" led by the Confederation of Indian Nations of Ecuador (CONAIE). This effort sought to utilize the campaign to build unity among the Indigenous Peoples of North and South America by developing political consciousness of and political support for Indigenous Peoples' right to full access to their ancestral lands and territories. Importantly, the conference marked 1992 as the

⁷⁶ "United Nation, 1987," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁷ "Letter from the South and Meso-American Indian Information Center, 1989," Maricopa County Organizing Project Records, MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

year of Indigenous Peoples' Self-Determination.⁷⁸ The participation of MCOP members Tupac and Gutiérrez marks the convergence of the MCOP's focus on transnational migrant workers rights with a focus on transnational Indigenous Peoples Rights. This convergence demonstrates a more explicit connection between injustice towards workers and a legacy of colonialism that still dominates the governing policies of nation-states of the western world.

In the early 1990s, MCOP's shift to what became the Tonatierra Community Development Institute is apparent in their Conferences for Human Rights in 1991 and 1992. During these conferences, the MCOP utilized workshops to draw connections between the exploitation of migrant farm workers and migration law. These were concurrent with cultural and educational discussions regarding the rights of migrant workers within the framework of the freedom of movement across the Americas entitled to Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, during the 1992 Human Rights Conference, "Cumbre de Aztlan," conference organizers began discussing the threat of international free trade on Indigenous Peoples' rights to economic self-determination. They thus incorporated critiques of change global capitalist economies with discussions of Indigenous peoples self-determination and human rights.⁷⁹ As a result, conference participants also critiqued the Mexican Federal government for its political repression of political dissent. They challenged the government to uphold the democratic and egalitarian ideals of the Mexican Revolution instead of validating authoritarian practices purported by the Carlos Salinas de Gortari administration that used its influence to establish neo-liberal economic policy in

⁷⁸ "500 Years of Indian Resistance: 1492-1992," Maricopa County Organizing Project Records, MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection. For the resolved demands of the 1990 Quito Conference, refer to "The Declaration of Quito: Indigenous Alliance of the Americas on 500 Years of Resistance, July 1990," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁷⁹ "Newspaper Articles: Newsletters on Human Rights Actions, 1990," Maricopa County Organizing Project Records, MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

Mexico.⁸⁰ The convergence of political concerns regarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the rights of immigrant populations in Arizona marked the foundation for the reorganization of the MCOP into Tonatierra.

The reorganization of the MCOP into the Tonatierra Community Development Institute finalized in December of 1993. This reorganization was a result of a long convergence of the MCOP's efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers with late twentieth-century Indigenous Peoples' sovereignty movements that began in the 1980s. As a result, according to Tonatierra:

...during this period...the search for ancestral cultural and historical roots as Xicano peoples led to the rebirth of the indigenous traditional practices and values within the Xicano Movement. This development set the stage for traditional alliance with other indigenous nations from the region, known traditionally to Mexica people as AZTLAN. After a year long structured program of organizational development, in December 1993 TONATIERRA was born...TONATIERRA is an organizational vehicle that has invoked the ancestral traditions, and universal values of our peoples to promote indigenous sovereignty, environmental justice, community empowerment, and the defense of human rights.⁸¹

What resulted was a community organization that operated as another local hub for broader transnational networks of Indigenous peoples political and cultural alliances. Tonatierra's Indigenous perspective on migrations, informed by a historic consciousness of millennia of Indigenous Peoples migrations in the Americas, helped influence a Indigenous view of immigration across the U.S-México border as an inherent human right for Indigenous Peoples. In this way, Tonatierra demonstrated the long context of Indigenous cultural revival among Chicanas and Chicanos that began with the Chicana/o Movement in the 1960s and converged with transnational Indigenous Peoples human rights movements in the 1980s and beyond.

Since the late 1990s, Tonatierra has emphasized a struggle against anti-immigrant discrimination and policies from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples' right to transverse the

⁸⁰ "National Chicano Human Rights Council," Maricopa County Organizing Project Records, MSS-353, Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

⁸¹ "Tonatierra History and Mission," Gustavo Gutiérrez Papers, [ACC #2002-02528], Arizona State University Libraries: Chicano Research Collection.

western hemisphere. Beginning in the 2010, these goals came into contention with the xenophobia that manifested itself with Arizona's State Legislature passing SB1070, which gave local police forces the power to racially profile and persecute Mexican immigrants and their families. While most media outlets and many sympathetic activists framed SB1070 as an immigrant rights issues, Tonatierra members understood this as an Indigenous Peoples' rights issue. As Gustavo Gutierrez proclaimed in the State Legislature:

When they pass all these repressive laws like 1070...it was a form of harassment so that we would leave the state, so that the Mexicanos, Chicanos, Tohono O'odham and Cocopah from Mexico, and Lipan Apache from Mexico would leave this country, but they all have the right to be here. They have all the right to be here because they are from this hemisphere. We have been here since time immemorial. And we have been transversing this continent since time immemorial. All the way from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. This isn't some new phenomena...⁸²

Tupac Enrique Acosta further clarifies the ways in which present xenophobia is an extension of colonial doctrine, even in the logics of liberals who are sympathetic to immigrant's rights:

With SB1070, even Amy Goodman can get away with talking about this as an immigration law when it is really another technique and tactic of colonization of Indigenous Peoples of this region we now know as Arizona as a result of manifest destiny which is an extension of the Doctrine of Discovery. This is all well known and corroborated on the highest levels of academic presentation, which we took the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples a couple of weeks ago...and there was absolutely no rational response on the part of the governing states, not just the U.S., but all of the government states of the hemisphere. There is no way to justify the Doctrine of Discovery.⁸³

Here, Tupac and Gutiérrez demonstrate an analysis of recent anti-immigrant policy as an extension of colonization. In turn, their critique of empire and colonization leads Tupac and Gutierrez to the realization that something must be done to challenge colonization at its core with a challenge to the Doctrine of Discovery.

⁸² "Gustavo Gutierrez at the Arizona State Capitol," YouTube video, 685 seconds, posted by "Tonatierra," September 9, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbNNxT4rEkg&feature=youtu.be_gdata_player.

⁸³ "Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win: TONATIERRA and The Catalyst Project," *PodOmatic*, accessed November 21, 2012, http://ushrnetwork.podomatic.com/entry/2012-02-15T11_29_02-08_00. Here, Tupac refers to Amy Goodman, host of the progressive radio show Democracy Now! The War and Peace Report.

The analyses of colonization and strive for decolonization at Tonatierra demonstrate how transnational Indigenous Peoples movements' challenges to colonialism influence both the coalition of Indigenous Peoples across the globe and localized efforts to challenge policy that supports colonial power. Tonatierra continues to serve as a participant in international forums to advocate for the global protection of human rights. In a presentation to the UN's Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples in 2007, Tupac participated as a member of an Indigenous Peoples alliance there to denounce the continued following of the Doctrine of Discovery's legal precedent in present day nation states. As Tupac states:

All of us presented with the antiquity of reality that these doctrines are a base of supremacy and civilizational precedent that emerged from the era of colonization. [These] have to be put to rest and we have to move on collectively with collective actions to address the human rights violations that have been perpetuated in the name of these concepts of civilizations. One of the things that did come to light, besides the denunciation of the crimes committed against Indigenous nations territories and peoples, was also the fact that these violations are also violations [towards] European Americans themselves. [This is also about] their right to be human and to have a human relationship with the rest of us on this planet and not have to engage with us within the constraints of the doctrines of colonization, such as the Doctrine of Discovery. So its a healing process that we were engaged in at the UN to bring humanity back to our relationships as human beings with each other with out the constraints and deformations of doctrines and colonization.⁸⁴

Tupac demonstrates a challenge to decolonize all humans and seeks to cut at the core of colonial logics that prevent human beings from being able to relate to each other in ways other than those that demarcate hierarchical orders based on race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.

Tonatierra's localized efforts for continued community support of Chicanas, Chicanos, Mexicanos, and Native Americans in the Phoenix area are localized implementation of these broader efforts to decolonize the planet.

Tonatierra also continues to challenge the global expansion of capitalism by struggling to ensure community self-determination by various participations. One example of Tonatierra's

⁸⁴ Ibid.

support for community self-determination occurred when the UN appointed University of Arizona Professor James Anaya as Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of Indigenous Peoples to study the necessary means to implement the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the local level. Anaya invited Tonatierra activists to contribute to compiling the report. These individuals contributed a critique of the North American Free Trade agreement as an assault on Indigenous Peoples right to self-determination. As Tupac states:

Our particular intervention had to do with the issues of Indigenous Peoples within the U.S. context, and also as they interrelate with the context of NAFTA...NAFTA today is in the same frame as the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria and the Mayflower. And so what we're speaking of now and what we presented to Mr. Anaya is the need to provide an analysis regionally to the human rights violations towards Indigenous Peoples in the three states of the U.S., Canada, and Mexico and the overarching economic paradigm of NAFTA. [We asked that this] regime be addressed as a system or infrastructure that never provided informed consent; the opportunity for us as Indigenous Peoples to consent to that economic regime. As a result, it returns to be another instrument of colonization, where our land, territories, and labor are exploited and expropriated for the benefits of these economic enterprises, which turn out to be manifestations of colonization. [This] is a crime, it is illegal. There has to be accountability for these processes. September [2012] will be the 5th year since the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted in the UN...[This is] the first time we as Indigenous Peoples also have the right as self-determination as equal to other peoples. That did not exist until four years ago. So we are in the fight for self-determination, we are fighting genocide. In terms in the battle against genocide, the first battle must be to recognize that we are part of humanity. And that's what the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples finally does for the first time.⁸⁵

Tonatierra's current challenges to the advent of global capitalism demonstrate the multiple strands of historic consciousness and social movement legacies that influence Chicana/o Indigeneity.

Developed in the context of Indigenous self-determination movements, Indigenous Chicana/o activists shifted from a civil rights to a human rights framework that challenges the colonial trajectories of power in modern economic and political institutions. These activists

⁸⁵ "Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win: TONATIERRA and The Catalyst Project," *PodOmatic*, accessed February 15, 2013, http://ushrnetwork.podomatic.com/entry/2012-02-15T11_29_02-08_00.

highlighted the divide and conquer techniques of colonial powers manifested themselves in the attempts to de-indigenize populations and turn them into a proletariat class. Tonatierra's revitalization of Chicana/o Indigeneity challenges global capitalism's systemic urge to exploit labor and expropriate resources in attempts to maintain capitalist profit. Tonatierra's future trajectory in the continued fight to protect Indigenous rights in many ways is a localized manifestation of the human imperative to exist in harmonious relationships with ourselves and with Mother Earth.

Conclusion

Chicana/o advocacy for Indigenous Peoples' rights at the international level helped develop and enrich Chicana/o claims of Indigeneity in the U.S. Prior to the late 1970s, many Chicana/o claims to Indigeneity were limited to cultural claims to Indigenous heritage. By the 1990s, Chicanas and Chicanos had formed strong political, social, and cultural ties to Indigenous Peoples across the hemisphere. Chicana/o organizations had formed constructive relationships with other Indigenous communities. Chicanas and Chicanos also played a pivotal role in transnational organizers since they served as the bridge between the Indigenous Peoples of North American and South America. Thus, by the 1990s, many Native American organizations fully accepted Chicanas and Chicanos as Indigenous Peoples. However, the strongest challenge to Chicana/o Indigeneity came from Chicanas and Chicanos themselves. As David Luján explains, "The hardest part for Chicanas and Chicanos is to determine for ourselves... how we should [be Indigenous]."⁸⁶ He continues in explaining that Chicana/o Indigeneity continues to be difficult to define, but highlights the importance of the right to seek a definition. As David Luján notes:

[The hardest part for Chicanas and Chicanos is] to determine for ourselves what role and how we should do that...I remember my dad or my step dad, I considered him my dad,

⁸⁶ David Luján, "Personal interview," March 30, 2012.

was very much Apache. You know, I took up that identity and he was my father since I was 2 years old. Although he never grew up in the Apache community, by this time politically, I felt like we as Chicanos, because this was the case for many of us who could not make that tie to Apache or even to Mexican, the closest ties that we were making was to the Azteca. Well my friend said “We can’t all be Aztecas or Nahuatl.” Which was funny you know but kind of true. We didn’t know anything else. Some of us were taking,...it was kind of risky and kind of scary, that step and saying that “I have some heritage from Taos pueblo” or “ I have some Navajo heritage” Like me I have some Apache and not being able to say more than that just that.⁸⁷

Lujan notes the difficulty of claiming an Indigenous identity as Chicanas and Chicanos, given the history of native language and blood quantum requirements within colonial definitions of Indigeneity. Nevertheless, Chicana/o activists pushed for more community defined interpretations of Indigeneity, and as mixed heritage peoples, demonstrated the diverse historical and cultural circumstances among the population of Indigenous Peoples in the vast western hemisphere.

The passage of the DRIP in 2007 highlights the right to proclaim self-definition, and Chicana/o communities must look to the right of self-identification in the context of transnational Pan-Indigenous community membership. As David Luján exclaims:

How its defined is not as important as not letting us disappear as Hispanics or Latinos, you know, these generic terms. You know working every day: the *matachines*, the *bautismos* [baptisms], *las mantanzas* all those things we don’t pay attention to but bring us together, those are going to work towards our survival. *Mientras tenemos esas cosas* [As long as we have those things], I think we’re okay. *Todavía hay esperanza* [There is still hope].⁸⁸

As I mention earlier, Indigenous peoples recognition of Chicana/o Indigeneity among Indigenous organizations at the UN is full and accepted. The rights outlined in the DRIP are as much for Chicanas and Chicanos as they are for Indigenous Peoples. Luján explains that the first time Chicanas and Chicanos visited the UN in 1987, they had a lot of self doubt regarding whether or not they should consider themselves Indigenous or just partners. But through international

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

activism, Chicana/o activist organizations that participated in Indigenous Peoples advocacy at the UN helped Chicanas and Chicanos develop their Indigenous identity in relation to other Indigenous groups. As one of the intents of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Project stated, “These persons/organizations will be very important toward the on going work of the Chicano-Indio-Mexicano national identity, direction, and international relationships.”⁸⁹ The collaborative work between the IITC, the NCHRC and Chicana/o and Native American organizations at the International level, and the local community efforts of Tonatierra and Tonantzin were pivotal in the development of Chicana/o *Indigenismo* and recognition of Chicanas and Chicanos as an Indigenous people of the Americas.

Even if self-defining as Indigenous may continue to be a contentious issue among Chicanas and Chicanos, the foundations laid out by the activists in this chapter demonstrate multiple interpretations of this Indigeneity in non-hegemonic formats. For instance, Luján believes Chicanas and Chicanos could gain recognitions of their Indigeneity in similar ways as the Métis of Canada who are legally recognized as Indigenous Peoples of Canada even though they possess European and Native American heritage.⁹⁰ Whether or not the Métis model is a viable option of Chicanas and Chicanos, Chicana/o Indigeneity maintains the potential for a new decolonized trajectory for cultural identity that coincides with a political agenda of ensured protections of human rights across the globe and an end to cultural genocide.

Given the non-hegemonic objectives of international Indigenous Peoples Movements that sought to challenge colonial definitions of Indigeneity, Chicana/o activists chose to present

⁸⁹ “Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo 1848-1986 Encuentro National,” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

⁹⁰ David Luján, “Personal interview,” March 30, 2012. For a critical examination of the implications of adopting the mixed race definition of “Métis” that makes it impossible for the Métis to make political claims as Indigenous nation, refer to Chris Andersen, *Metis: Race, Recognition, and the Struggle for Indigenous Peoplehood*, Reprint ed. (University of Washington Press, 2015).

themselves on the international stage as Chicanas and Chicanos defying colonial labels. As

Lujan notes:

...we decided it was going to be as a Chicana or Chicano. The last time I went [to the UN], there were three people that gave their testimony as Chicanas or Chicanos. There was one young lady from California and another one from different parts...That was a step forward. And nobody [no UN official or Indigenous Person] denied it.⁹¹

The last time he visited the UN in 2000, Chicanas presented their testimony as Indigenous women, and no one denied their Indigeneity.⁹² In the twenty-first century, Chicana/o activists within transnational Indigenous Peoples' social movements and human rights advocacy form part of these struggles as Indigenous Peoples. Chicana/o activists redefine Indigeneity to align with actions of Pan-Indigenous community membership and political activism, instead of dated notions based on blood quantum or cultural *mestizaje*.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

CONCLUSION

Critical Indigenous Practice: Advocating the Respect of Cultural Rights as Human Rights

“...se han desarrollado firmemente”¹

“These persons/organizations will be very important toward the on going work of the Chicano-Indio-Mexicano national identity, direction, and international relationships.”²

Indigeneity expressions have evolved over five hundred years. This History is an infinite amount of human activities, complicated to quantify, in a region analogous to multiple regions of the globe that have changed over time politically, socially, economically, and culturally. In historical consciousness, however, five hundred years serves as only one epoch of a myriad of day-to-day human practices occurring since time immemorial. Consciousness of this helps humans place themselves in History, or in other words, determine their historicity. For Chicanas and Chicanos in Indigenous Peoples Movements, their developing consciousness of Indigeneity and a lived experience in the Americas since ancestral time inspires them to determine their place in the History of the Americas and their contributions to the future. In determining an Indigenous historicity, Chicana/o Indigenous activists, from the 1960s to the present, challenged the colonial logics implicit in definitions of Indigeneity determined by blood quantum or assimilationist *mestizaje*.

With ties to the past, Chicana/o activists' challenges to implicit colonial logics binding popular definitions of Indigeneity surged in conjunction with civil rights activism during the Chicana/o Movement during the 1960s and 1970s. Chicana/o Movement queries of the meaning and significance of colonial legacies extended out to politicized demands for retribution of

¹ Raquel Saenz, “Lauro Silva, Anna Maria Guillen, and Raquel Saenz Interview about Andres Segura on March 2, 1998 by Cecilio Camarillo on Espejos de Aztlan,” in Cecilio Garcia Camarillo Papers, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

² “Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo 1848-1986 Encuentro National, 1986” Tonantzin Land Institute Records, Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico.

historic injustice. In the early 1960s, La Alianza Federal de Mercedes rooted queries of historicity in the demand of redress of land rights violations guaranteed in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Although not fully rooted in queries of Indigeneity, La Alianza leadership increasingly linked U.S. dispossession of Indigenous and Mexican Peoples lands with a broader context of global colonialism occurring since the fifteenth-century, which entailed the dispossession of native lands and disruption of cultures. Even though La Alianza, and its president Reies López Tijerina, attempted to engage the legitimacy of mixed heritage “Indo-Hispanos” land claims, their queries into land rights insufficiently challenged the detrimental effects of Spanish colonial law on Indigenous Populations in the Americas. However, this colonial law did provide some recognition to Indigenous land rights. Moreover, La Alianza revealed modern U.S. land policy as an extension of worldwide colonial processes of imposition of power that required redress in national and international arenas. La Alianza’s initiative communicated with Chicana/o groups and organizations, which led to a profound effect on later twentieth-century transnational Chicana/o and Indigenous Peoples activism.

By the 1970s, consequently, Chicana/o Movement organizations began to align more elaborated demands for civil and human rights aligned with Native American demands for sovereignty that should have been guaranteed by treaty. The Crusade for Justice in Denver exemplified how queries in Chicana/o Indigenous heritage helped Chicana/o activists support Native American sovereignty. Their queries into Indigenous Heritage, however, informed by its president Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’ poem “I am Joaquin,” presented notions of *mestizaje* and culture as enunciated in México during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but not as a more complex understanding of cultural development as it has occurred since the colonial era. Even so, the Crusade for Justice demonstrated a trajectory in Indigenous inspired activism in many ways. The Crusade for Justice called for the increased role of Chicanas and Chicanos in

the decolonization of the Americas. Moreover, their substantive support of the American Indian Movement (AIM), and other Indigenous activists, occurred in cohort and in dialogue with Crusade for Justice demands for Chicana/o cultural rights as inherent civil rights. Citing the arguable guarantee of cultural protections in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Crusade for Justice engaged in building a national network of Chicana/o activists that emphasized political activism as the avenue of maintaining civil rights. These activist networks would continue the legacy of the Chicana/o Movement in demanding that attainment of human and civil rights should not require cultural assimilation into the norms of western society.

To ensure the legacy of the Chicana/o Movement would continue in future generations, activists educators have developed critical pedagogies as a way to develop young peoples critical historical consciousness and promote community engagement. Beginning in the Chicana/o Movement, educators at alternative schools rooted in nascent Chicana/o Indigeneity proclamations developed curriculum and pedagogy that taught students they should unite a sense of cultural authenticity with their demands for a democratic society. As the activists from the Chicana/o Movement shifted towards transnational Indigenous Peoples movements, activist educators evolved their curriculum and pedagogy to include a critical historic consciousness of colonial injustice and Chicana/o Indigenous heritage. Both these lines of thought helped activist educators and young activists push for the rectification of injustices towards Indigenous Peoples as the primary tension needing resolution in a path towards decolonization. Consequently, from the 1980s forward, these Chicana/o alternative schools provided the discursive spaces where Chicana/o Indigeneity was discussed, examined critically, and further developed to align with the respect of Indigenous Peoples rights in the Americas.

Also within the Chicana/o Movement, Chicana/o activists began to query the significance of their Indigenous Heritage as a developing historical consciousness of the continued legacies of

colonial injustice. Within the performing arts, El Teatro Campesino and the Teatro Nacional de Aztlan began to query Chicana/o Indigenous heritage and engage its significance to Chicana/o identity. They strove to make explicit a Chicana/o cultural narrative that linked Chicana/o identity to a legacy of Indigenous culture. To be sure, these theatrical explorations were nascent queries of Chicana/o Indigeneity that oversimplified Indigenous cultural syncretism during the colonial era in México and neglected the context of Spanish colonial violence towards Native Americans in the U.S.-México Borderlands. Nevertheless, they served as a catalyst for further queries of Chicana/o Indigenous heritage within the context of civil and human rights movements in the mid twentieth-century.

Elaborated articulations of Indigeneity by Chicana/o activists occurred during the last decades of the twentieth-century as a result of the Chicana/o Movement. Chicana/o activists built from the legacies of identity expression, anti-colonial interpretations of historic colonial policies, and nationalized activists networks of the 1960s and 1970s era. As a result, Indigenous Chicana/o activists in the 1980s and beyond began the process of articulating an Indigenous Chicana/o identity. Beginning during the Chicana/o Movement, and continuing today, *danza* and the Peace and Dignity Journeys helped build the transnational cultural bonds on which Chicanas and Chicanos became part of a hemispheric Indigenous community. Through *danza*, Chicana/o *danzantes* helped recover a Chicana/o Indigenous heritage that had survived five centuries of colonial hegemony. In joining these ceremonies occurring in México since the colonial era, Chicana/o *danzantes* reveal centuries of Indigenous culture and knowledge maintained in ceremony, which demonstrates a continuing legacy of Indigenous cultural agency. These *danzantes* also demonstrate a complex historical excavation that reveals an even more complex Indigenous assimilation of western cultural norms previously interpreted as assimilation into western culture. Through the philosophical explorations of *danza*, Chicana/o *danzantes*

reveal an historic Indigenous cultural agency among mixed heritage peoples that challenges previous definitions of Indigeneity. Chicana/o *danzantes* demonstrate that there are different types of Indigeneity in the Americas as a result of historic Indigenous cultural agency to absorb western cultural practices and subsume them to Indigenous knowledges. In short, Chicana/o *danzantes* propose a mature understanding of their own Indigeneity as mixed heritage peoples with the right to choose an Indigenous trajectory for the next five-hundred years.

Building on historic cultural agency within *danza*, Chicanas and Chicanos expressed their unique Indigeneity in cohort with Indigenous Peoples across the Americas by participating in the Peace and Dignity Journeys. Beginning in 1992 as a rejection of Columbus and a celebration of Indigenous Peoples resilience, the Peace and Dignity Journeys are strengthening the transnational bonds among Indigenous Peoples that is necessary for the decolonization of the hemisphere. Through ceremony, the Peace and Dignity Journeys unify diverse Indigenous Peoples over the vast western hemisphere. Indigenous Peoples of the Americas possess diverse heritages with complex histories of familial relations, intersecting cultures, and millenia of interactions and social, political, and cultural change. The Peace and Dignity Journeys are helping rebuild and link together a hemispheric Pan-Indigenous community. Obviously, a community with such vast geographic distance and cultural diversity demonstrates different definitions of Indigeneity based in local community self-determined memberships and identities. Chicana/o membership in a Pan-Indigenous community has been a result of critical understandings of unique Chicana/o Indigenous heritage inclusive of complex intersections with western culture through *danza*. Taken together with *danza*, Chicana/o participation in the Peace and Dignity Journeys builds bonds with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas as a way to ensure a decolonized future in the next five hundred years.

While education, performance, and ceremony provided the spaces to build community bonds and engage in a critical historical reflection of Chicana/o Indigeneity, activist organizations rooted themselves in these bonds and critical historic consciousness to advocate for the global respect of Indigenous Peoples rights. Beginning in the late 1970s, the International Indian Treaty Council began proposing that the demands to redress of U.S. treaty violations should be taken to the United Nations. In the 1980s, they helped sponsor the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Project and then the National Chicano Human Rights Council who both sought the means to address treaty violations as they related to Chicana/o communities. For Indigenous Chicana/o activists, land rights still remained a prominent concern in relation to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, especially in New Mexico. In regards to this, the Tonantzin Land Institute in Albuquerque helped further the unification of Chicana/o land grant and Pueblo Indian land rights demands. Through this organization, Chicana/o and Native American communities became a united front and were considerably successful in protecting land and water rights in New Mexico historic communities through out the 1980s and 1990s. By the 1990s, the Tonantzin Land Institute extended their work in uniting Chicana/o and Native American activism to a transnational level. They hosted international gatherings of Indigenous Peoples and developed testimonials of violations of their human rights, took these testimonials to the United Nations as part of advocacy for the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and maintained member organization status in the National Chicano Human Rights Council.

Along with the Tonantzin Land Institute, the Tonatierra Community Development institute in Phoenix formed part of the member organizations of the National Chicano Human Rights Council. Tonatierra further developed Indigenous Chicana/o activism by uniting the broader transnational struggle to protect Indigenous Peoples rights with local community activism to support migrant workers. Evolving out of an immigrant rights organization,

Tonatierra helped unite a human right demand for mobility across borders with a definition of Indigeneity not bound by nation-state borders. Tonatierra contributed to an interpretation of the Treaty of Guadalupe that increasingly developed its value in the protection of human rights. Taking off on Armando Rendón's legal analysis of the Treaty of Guadalupe's potential in guaranteeing a unique transnational protection of Chicana/o and Mexican rights, Tonatierra pushed for a transnational protection of human rights coupled with a responsibility to protect the environment.³

By the 1990s, Tonatierra promoted a historical consciousness of the dual affects of proletarianization and land dispossession that have forced Indigenous Peoples to leave their localities and hearts to join the migrant labor forces of the Americas during five hundred years of colonialism and modernity. Furthermore, Tonatierra linked the detrimental effects of colonialism on humans to the pollution of the environment by colonial and modernized economies. As a remedy for these historic colonial/modern circumstances, Tonatierra today demands for the end of globalized capitalism, the restriction of human movement across borders, and the right to self-determine localized communities future trajectories. In doing so, they root their activism in a matured Chicana/o Indigeneity, built on local and transnational community bonds with other Indigenous Peoples, and a recognition of the interdependent relations humans have with each other and the earth. These are the values that will hopefully ensure decolonization in the Americas.

³ Armando B. Rendón, "The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and Its Modern Implications for the Protection of the Human Rights of Mexicans," in *Chicano Manifesto*, 25th anniversary ed. (Berkeley, CA: Ollin & Associates, 1996) 307-327.

Indigenous Chicanas and Chicanos: Past and Future Trajectories

Indigenous Peoples have struggled for decolonization since the onset of colonialism. However, the latter half of the twentieth-century provided the historical context that uniquely challenged the continual extraction and annihilation of resources, land, and people that originated among western colonial powers. Although these demands continue and are no longer limited to western European nations, the global success of anti-colonial movements after WWII problematized the epistemic dominance of western cultural hegemony. Within this historical window of time, the predicted march towards modernity was challenged on its epistemological principles. Activists and revolutionaries challenged ideas of modernity and questioned them on fundamental levels. Ideologically alternative trajectories gained traction among progressives and radicals seeking to build a more humane and just future.

Although Indigenist alternative knowledges have continued destabilizing the epistemological domination of Western ideas of modernity, by no means are post-modern logics free from the historic circumstances of coloniality. Anti-colonial stances have many times been bound by nation-state emulations that replicate unjust social hierarchies imbedded with privileged to underprivileged spectrums.⁴ Decolonial queries seek to make sense of the complex dismantling of colonial logics that are implicit in the institutions of power across the globe. Indigenous Chicana/o activists, as part of a broader transnational collective of Indigenous community activists, are building the decolonial pathways to a better future through a conscious prioritization of Indigenous Peoples rights. Through this prioritization, late twentieth-century Indigenous activists, as their ancestors had done for centuries, challenged powerful institutions, but in ways that take advantage of the post-WII anti-colonial push. Although Indigenous

⁴ Refer to an elaborate explanation of the paradox of anti-colonial nationalism in Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton Studies in Culture/power/history (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1993) 9-10.

Chicana/o activists have not been free of the paradoxes of nationalist stances, over the last decades of the twentieth-century their Indigenous challenges to western hegemony have demonstrated a maturing decoloniality.

The development of Chicana/o Indigeneity from the Chicana/o Movement to the end of the twentieth-century has formed part of a decolonial process still in progress. Certainly, this process is also part of a *longue duree* of Indigenous resistance, agency, and survival in the Americas that began in 1492. More specifically however, pro Indigeneity Chicanas and Chicanos of the late twentieth-century have contributed modes of analysis and action to employ Indigenous knowledges in the challenges to racism, capitalism, institutional violence, and the restriction of movement across Indigenous lands imposed by national borders constructed by colonialistic authorities. Indigenous Chicana/o activists, in line with the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, propose an alternative for societies in the Americas rooted in the Indigenous knowledges. Indigenous Chicana/o activists and ceremonial leaders help build the paths towards a decolonized future. These leaders reveal the utility of reviving Indigenous values of interdependent human relations with each other and the earth. Like the Peace and Dignity Runners that transverse the hemisphere, Indigenous Peoples movements are building the paths towards a decolonized five centuries to come; step by step.

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