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SANTA CRUZ

**THE MISSIONIZATION OF GENDERED VIOLENCE: THE COLONIAL
GAZE IN INDIGENOUS/LATINX COMMUNITIES**

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

LITERATURE

by

Rain C. Ramirez

June 2024

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Abstract: The Missionization of Gendered Violence: The Colonial Gaze in
Indigenous/Latinx Communities by Rain Cardiel Ramirez

The genealogy of violence against Indigenous women is a product of settler colonialism ideologies. I will trace the intergenerational inheritances of toxic masculinity through memoirs and my own lived experiences. The essay interweaves a close reading of the book *Bad Indians* by Deborah Miranda, which dissects the multifaceted aspects of settler violence and gendered masculinity. The paper asks the reader to question modes of scholarship in studying biography, family and ancestral relations, and oral tradition. The form of this paper switches between scholarly and analytical framing through *Bad Indians* and then to a personal narrative. The personal narrative is essential in reflecting the different tropes of orality. Although the creative aspects reflect memoirs, a critical distinction is needed: the sense of collective and individual experience. Although my experience is centralized in my understanding, these stories are told through the generational and collective experiences of trauma through the colonial gaze and moments of indigenous culture and survivance.

Acknowledgments

I want to acknowledge my ancestors who have set the path for my understanding of female indigenous survivance and strength. I also want to thank my mother and the many women in my life who have been instrumental in sharing their stories; they will never be forgotten; and as always for the healing and survivance of our Indigenous mothers, daughters, fathers, and sons. Ometeotl.

She changes into her clothes, which hug each curve of her body. She walks on the West Cliff, smelling the salty ocean. Her hair is in braids, and she wears the necklace her mother made for her. Each bead represents a red, black, and yellow connection to her culture. She feels beautiful and connected with the land. Walking alone, she is aware of her surroundings and the looks of lust on men's faces. Specifically, the male gaze, Men in trucks are catcalling, whistling at this native girl. She starts to feel scared, nervous, and guilty. Should she have worn something different? Loose clothing? Maybe if she were taller, her curves would not be as visible. She walks faster, relieved she made it safely back to her car. She could not say anything to these men, and they were free to fetishize her in their minds while undressing her with their eyes. After all, she was a short Indigenous woman, relating to her centuries-old forms of harassment used to intimidate and harm Indigenous women.

The male colonial gaze continues to exist in the realm of Latino culture. I propose to study the colonial gaze through the replication and reconstruction of the colonial gaze. My research will counter the colonial male gaze by highlighting indigenous women's narrative as a prime methodology in my familial archival research. The project's chronology begins in 1776- 2023 when the colonial gaze permeated the lives of Latina and indigenous women. The colonial gaze lingers in racist school projects, gendered violence, and patriarchy. Despite these barriers, the

gaze is combated through the stories of native/Latina women. My research and writing counter the gaze by highlighting the oral stories of native/Latina women's survivance, retaliation, and truth.

This paper will focus on an alternating analysis of Deborah Miranda's book *Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir* while interweaving personal experience to highlight the perpetuation of gendered experiences. Specifically, the framework intertwines a close analysis of Deborah Miranda's literary possibilities regarding historical documents and using storytelling to reclaim indigenous experience. Deborah Miranda forms a broader strategy of using pedagogical/didactic forms (mission project, elementary school activity books, glossary, etc.) in order to retell parts of the story that the dominant narrative suppresses. Each section of *Bad Indians* leads the reader on a new pedagogical trajectory; by renaming the section's mission project, glossary, and elementary school activity books, Miranda reclaims this pressurized learning into her narrative. The power is shifted into her sphere of influence so that she can collect and recount the stories of the past through intentional bluntness and truth. Deborah Miranda's strategy is imperative in using the colonial narrative to reestablish the power of oral tradition. My studies will also focus on Rizzo Martinez and Valentin Lopez. *We Are Not Animals: Indigenous Politics of Survival, Rebellion, and Reconstitution in Nineteenth-Century California*. The historical formation of this book is an example of using oral tradition to establish the truth; more importantly, the book focuses on fulfilling the gaps in the historical narrative by centralizing stories of native women's resistance, justice, and autonomy. Through these narratives, the

reader learns that amidst colonialism and slavery, native women were not passive bystanders. The power of oral tradition declared native women as active agents in the past and present; thus, my project uses these forms of oral traditions to study how gendered violence seeped into the Latinx and indigenous communities and, more importantly, how these stories of atrocities continue to leave a colonial legacy in gendered norms.

I will rely on using Deborah Miranda's form to replicate effectively to trace my family's archive through pictures and oral tradition to study how literary forms of oral traditions are vital in revealing different modalities of truth in the past and present. The form of this paper switches between scholarly and analytical framing through *Bad Indians* and then to a personal narrative. The personal narrative is essential in reflecting the different tropes of orality. Although the creative aspects reflect memoirs, a critical distinction is needed: the sense of collective and individual experience. Although my experience is centralized in my understanding, these stories are told through the generational and collective experiences of trauma through the colonial gaze and moments of indigenous culture and survivance. Inspired by Miranda's use of the memoir form to write herself and her relations into a dominant history that has worked to erase them, I mix my analysis of Miranda's text with my memories, images, and experiences. The pictures of my family archives serve as a remembrance and statement of indigenous visibility and truth. Although at first glance, one might assume the picture is a non-sentient being, the photos reveal a

legacy of survivance and energy. The narrator moves through the lenses of historical framing, starting at the earliest memories of her 4th-grade mission unit.

Colonial missionization continues through the fourth-grade mission unit project in California's grammar school curriculum. Despite Deborah Miranda's lack of completion of the 4th-grade curriculum; "I left California after kindergarten and completed my schooling in Washington State... So I never had to produce a Mission Project. This book is, in a way, my belated offering at the particular altar" she offers this book as an offering to readers and also ancestors of the missions; this story is theirs to keep. Similarly, my hybrid trope of scholarship uses this platform of archival work as an offering to the native/Latina women who have encountered gendered violence.

The fourth-grade mission unit is critical to many Californians' educational careers. Amidst the sun of California, Oasis is a picturesque golden stamp of appeal. The California missions infiltrate the minds of 4th graders and are immortalized in the eyes of tourists. Miranda effectively points out the irony of recreating the missions:

Part of California's history curriculum, the unit is entrenched in the educational system and impossible to avoid... Intense pressure is put upon students (and their parents) to create a "Mission Project" that glorifies the era and glosses over Spanish and Mexican exploitation of Indians during American Rule... Can you imagine teaching about slavery in the South while requiring each child to lovingly construct a plantation model, complete with happy darkies in the fields,

white masters, overseers with whips, and human auctions? Or asking fourth graders to study the Holocaust by carefully designing detailed concentration camps (Miranda xvii)

The pressure many California students face is the desire to complete a beautiful replication of the mission; However the mission project “glosses” over the horrendous conditions of the missions. Once a native child completes this project, a sense of historical erasure occurs. Since the project is impossible to avoid, the students are forced into a false narrative of history; therefore, archival work is crucial to remedy the lies. In discussing these historical truths and pointing out the irony of the mission project, Miranda leads the reader through the uncovering of the colonial gaze. Through the stories and archival research, a clear link exists between gendered norms and violence that replicates itself in indigenous and Latinx communities. The California missions emphasized Spain’s colonizing narrative and established standards of subservience and discipline over Indigenous Peoples.

Settler ideology created a foundation and framework for the settler’s genealogy of violence. The study of memoir and oral tradition allows Indigenous scholars to understand the generational legacies of Spanish colonization, missionization, and conquest without accepting settler ideology as a given. The mission is a remembrance of the past juxtaposed with physical beauty and haunting history. Like Fred Botting’s signaling of a gothic atmosphere, he states, “Gothic atmospheres- gloomy and mysterious have repeatedly signaled the disturbing return of pasts upon presents and evoked emotions of terror and laughter” (Botting 1).

Although the mission infrastructure does not reflect Gothic architecture, it does bridge a gloomy atmosphere. The mission bells along the 101 freeway signal the proximity of the next mission, signaling the arrival of a gothic atmosphere. Haunting of the past and present through colonial ideology that viewed the new world as feminine and colonization as sexual, violently sexually, assaulting the geographical space of California.

The masculine colonial gaze has a hierarchical and vile hold in history. The feminized space of America is a picturesque oasis of opportunity for the colonizers. The gendered terrain of the Americas is highlighted in Margarita Zamora's article on Gender and Discovery. Zamora states :

Amerigo Vespucci, the voyager, arrives from the sea. A crusader standing erect, his body in armor, bears the European weapons of meaning. Behind him are the vessels that will bring back to the European West the spoils of paradise. Before him is the Indian "America," a nude woman reclining in her hammock, an unnamed presence of difference, a body which awakens within a space of exotic fauna and flora. . . . An inaugural scene: after a moment of stupor, on this threshold dotted with colonnades of trees, the conqueror will write the body of the other and trace there his own history. From her, he will make a historied body blazon of his labors and phantasms (Zamora 152).

Zamora sets a framework to understand the imagined state of America. The depiction establishes distinct gender spaces and missions. Miranda's work highlights how the missions acted as a poster of California idealism; more specifically, the missions

represent a space of architectural beauty and a retelling of the falsified story of California Indians as passive bystanders. Similarly, the crusader is a welcomed visitor encapsulating the idealistic mannerisms of masculinity, an erect positionality, and heavy weaponry. In comparison, Indian women have been depicted as a collective unit in the feminine space, embodying America. The settler mindset is to rape everything from the land, spiritual freedom, bodily agency, and individuality. To trace the history of violence against Indigenous women, one would have to interrogate the missionization of California Indians critically.

Part memoir and part scholarly investigation, *Bad Indians* by Deborah A. Miranda maps the colonial ideologies contributing to toxic masculinity. At first glance, her book provides a historical timeline of California from 1776 to 1863 and into the twentieth century in the second half of the book. However, she develops more profoundly into the native American experience through her form. Miranda uses different modalities in her writing to deliver a hybrid of historical perspectives. One form she uses is a personal memoir, particularly a tribal memoir. She delivers a poignant and personal relationship with the historical archives through memoirs. The memoir correlates distinctly with the gaps in historical research. In particular, the acknowledgment of oral tradition as a distinct historical methodology.

Miranda engages with the historical material, but it serves as a response to the decolonization of these methods. Deborah Miranda's book *Bad Indians* is an example of the themes presented by Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Smith explains, "Writing has been viewed as the

mark of superior civilization”(32). In essence, writing has been depicted as superior to truth; although Miranda does use writing, she threads together oral tradition/ and tribal memoir as a critical component of her research. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* is effectively dismantling the ideology that historical truth can only be told through the lens of a written form. The questions I contemplate are: How does Indigenous scholarship redefine the theoretical and methodical frameworks, with careful consideration not to reinforce eurocentric research? What are the limitations of historical narratives? In particular, the Indigenous female in historical accounts? Miranda’s book disrupts the form of linearity of writing as a definitive account of history. Miranda’s form of poetry, personal memoir, moves the reader toward having an alternative modality of what constitutes history as historical, verified, or “true.” She states, “Who was telling our story? Non- Indians, for the most part... The story is the most powerful force- in our world, maybe in all worlds. The story is culture. A story like culture is constantly moving...It exists as the truth. As a whole” (Miranda xvii). The words directly respond to Linda Tuhiwai Smith's decolonizing methodologies project; Miranda believes that the storytelling disrupts normative writing format in particular, “ The idea that the story of history can be told in one coherent narrative. This idea suggests that we can assemble all the facts in an ordered way so that they tell us the truth or give us a very good idea of what really happened in the past. In theory it means that historians can write a true history of the world. (Smith 32). The idea of storytelling needing to be coherent is closely tied to the formality of a traditional narrative. The

more a story reflects linearities, such as the beginning and end, the more it is stated as a fact. Many oral traditions/memoirs/stories dismantled the formal coherency of the story. However, history has relied on timeslots of “coherency,” and oral tradition functions as gaps missing in the dominant narrative. At first glance, *Bad Indians* use a traditional historical form of organization, using timestamps, but redefines the chapters using different structures and historical evidence. It is evident that Deborah Miranda is aware of the importance of time stamps but also collects “untraditional” evidence of history. In her introduction, she states:

I chose to make this book to create a space where voices can speak after long and often violently imposed silence. Constructing this book has been challenging, listening to those stories seep out of old government documents, BIA forms, field notes, the diaries of explorers and priests, the occasional writings or testimony of Indians, family stories, photographs, newspaper articles; it's been painful, dreaming of destruction, starved children, bones that cry. But at the end of it, I feel voices present that the world hasn't heard for a long, long time... My ancestors, collectively, are the story bridge that allows me to be here. (Miranda xx)

Deborah Miranda provides a choice in the engagement of oral tradition; she interweaves the historical accounts and reverses the power dynamic in the gendered sphere of historical accounts. Her book construction is intentional and reveals an untraditional route of collecting evidence through “testimony of Indians,” “family

stories,” and photographs. The list of the different constructions of the book reveals the additional evidence produced. In having an extensive array of evidence, Miranda is closing gaps of historical silences. She is not minimizing the use of historical archives but is building a relationship between traditional historical scholarship, storytelling, and her ancestry. This is evident in her account of Vicenta's story told through the voice of Isabel Meadows, who retold Vicenta's in the presence of a white historian, J.P. Harrington. Although Miranda is engaged with historical archives, it does not reinforce Eurocentric methodologies. Specifically, Vicenta's story is told through Isabel Meadows; she actively inserts the story and highlights the power of oral tradition. Despite Harrington's desire to extract only coyote/trickster stories, Isabel Meadows reasserts her power in discussing stories he did not want but heard. The power of having the extractor hear the stories of Vicenta forces Harrington to acknowledge the atrocities of the missions and the stories that persisted despite attempts to have them silenced. She is reclaiming the agency of oral tradition in the historical archives and highlights the decolonized methodologies that existed independently and closely with the missionization of California Indians.

The fourth-grade mission unit mirrors the desired space, femininity, and beauty. Miranda says, “ Intense pressure is put upon students (and their parents) to create a “Mission Project” that glorifies the era and glosses over both Spanish and Mexican exploitation of Indians, as well as American enslavement of those same Indians during American rule”(Miranda xvii) The project must exemplify the standards of the desired space “the mission project. To glorify the missionized space,

the Spaniards needed to position themselves as god-like over the Indigenous people; they did this by exploiting the “Indians” to create architectural masterpieces of the missions. The creation of missions thus creates an oasis of California ideals and Edenic beauty. Furthermore, the mission is a religious establishment, which contributed to the Spanish depicting themselves as god-like figures and placing Indigenous people in a binary of either innocent or evil. Thus, the religious alibi and Edenic vision of the land continue in the fourth-grade mission unit—a little native girl in a mix of dual identity, “student self,” and Quahuatl.



(Family Archive, Young Girl in Ceremony, Taken in Santa Barbara, California, photographer unknown.)

The teacher passed out the worksheet “Mission Project” and an itinerary of the missions our fourth-grade class would visit. The 8-year-olds gleefully start talking about their assigned mission. The excitement of the course is overwhelming: a field trip and a chance to go to the craft store Michaels. She went home excited to tell her mom about the project in her school uniform, although she admitted she felt worried. Her mom is a Jefacita of Calpulli Malinalxochitl, with long obsidian black hair mirroring her Indigenous roots. Her mother was a dancer in her traje with long feathers and always smelled of sage or copal and loathed the missions. The little girl wanted to relate to her other classmates and their parents, relishing in ignorant bliss. She begged her mom to get her mission for her fourth-grade project. She relented and bought her one. The little girl opened the box and smelled the fresh cupboard, the beautiful and intricate white styrofoam. The red adobe roof pieces and the cute little figurines of priests and their cattle all bury the truth of the mission experience. She was ambivalent, happy to build her project but scared to enjoy and have pride in the result. Little did she know it was the facade of the Missions and the product of colonization in her generational experiences.

At first, the Spaniards portrayed themselves as “saviors,” but inaccurately, they were lustful owners of Indigenous women. The historical writings of the Spanish colonizers revealed their true character. Miranda quotes from the record written by Junipero Serra. Serra describes a Spaniard and Indigenous encounter as a hunt rather

than a meeting. “Both men and women at sight of [them] took to their heels, but the women were caught with Spanish ropes Indian men defended their wives they were prey for Spaniard's unbound lust only to be shot down by bullets” (Miranda 3). The scene depicts how settlers considered Indigenous women property and treated them not as humans but as cattle. Furthermore, the dehumanizing mindset of the unbalancing of female autonomy; in particular, the women cannot save themselves physically. While trying to defend their wives, the settlers shot down the women's husbands. These men lost their homes, families, and lives as they were instantaneously shot down. The dismissive attitude of the Spaniards against Indigenous men is evident, and they are no competition for their inflated ego and armor. Thus, the imbalance between Indigenous men creates a space of hierarchy. The Indigenous men are unable to protect squaw (Indigenous wives). Thus, the inability to safeguard contributes to the hopelessness of defending the Indigenous women in current society; they must emulate the aggressiveness of colonialism.

He walks with his braided hair underneath his cap. The petite Yaqui/Salvadorean female with tan skin and wide hips walks beside him. He is a Mexican/Chicano/ Mexica/ Purepecha from Norwalk. His height mirrors the colonizer's height. They are holding hands in Capitola, near the beach, happy to be near each other. She feels bliss; the sun blinds her eyes, and she smells the salty smell of the waves. She looks at him, engrossed in his beauty. The men in the truck move closer; she gets nervous; she sees them in her peripheral vision. She thought to herself, “Please do not do anything.” The men roll down their windows, mouths out like dogs, salivating

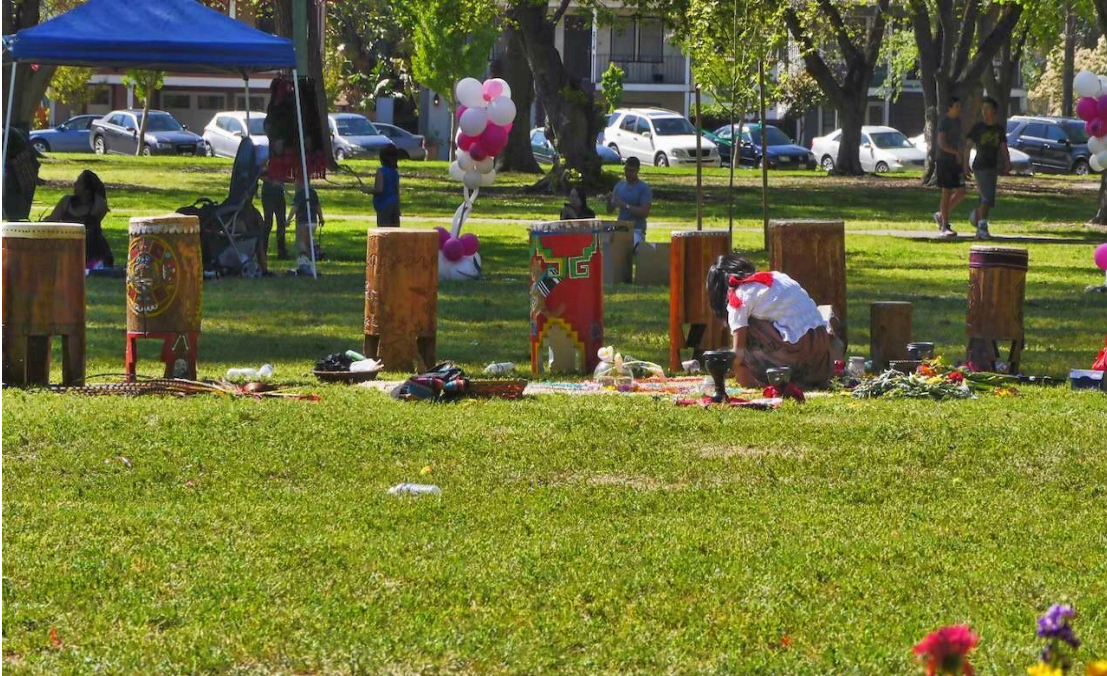
at their meal. She feels him tighten up, his hands gripping hers in a protecting shield. The men have a subtle smile, smugness, and challenging the man- the tensity lingers in the palpable air. Her muse builds in anger, the inner anger and violence begging for release. The truck continues to slow. Her muse, “ What the fuck are you looking at bitch?” who was the man right before this moment? He was in utter bliss and gentle. He transformed into a protector; a protective dog against these men. She stood silently, contemplating and observing her sadness, guilt, and relief. Why could she not protect herself? Who was she in the mix of this dual? Was she a person or an object?

The first stage of claiming Indigenous women was to minimize their humanity through perpetual stereotyping. To condone violent acts, Spaniards needed to dehumanize native women. The easiest way to abuse them was to define them as “sinful.” The settlers needed to establish natives as children. Miranda reflects on the ironic justification she says:

California Indians often made mistakes or misbehaved even when they had been told the rules. Records left behind tell us how the Indians lied, stole, cheated on their spouses, killed their own babies, ran away from the missions, tried to avoid their work, practiced pagan witchcraft, and games, or snuck off to gather or hunt extra food for their families without getting permission from the padres first (Miranda 10)

The passage emphasized the extensive list of stereotypes associated with Indian culture. In particular, the list also shows the relationship between historical archives and truth; “Records Left Behind Tell Us” also emphasizes the biases ingrained into

dominant narratives. The list itself does not give enough context of the cultural significance or autonomy but instead reflects the categorization of culture practiced as “practiced pagan witchcraft.” Despite religious tactics to force assimilation, native ceremonial practices persisted.



(Family Archive The alter of Xilonen Indigenous Ceremony, Sacramento, CA, photographer unknown)

The sound of the huehuetl heartbeat of the soul gets louder and louder. The aroma of the copal hits the popoxochimtl; the woman says the words in each direction. The young girl enters the velacion following her mother's footsteps; she bows her head and cleanses with a stick of eucalyptus and different herbs. The unified voices of Nahuatl songs are a welcomed entrance. She wears red around her waist, head, ankles, and hands. Her mother calls her name “ Quaihuatl.” The aroma of

smoke fills her lungs with healing and prayer. In this space, there is sacredness, the presence of the ancestors on the altars, movement, and stillness. The muffled memories penetrated the scope of colonized ideologies of practiced witchcraft—the normalcy of the ceremonies and practices juxtaposed to societal normalcies.

I hug my mom's waist as I hide underneath her shawl. The copal has lingered in every part of her fabric. The calpulli is in a circle as the waves crash in the distance. My mother is a figure of “witchery” but a model of Indigenous female



survivance.

(Family Archive, Pagan Witchery- Indigenous Survivance, Santa Barbara, CA
Photographer unknown)

Spanish colonizers desperately and violently attempted to missionize the Indians through forced religious conversion. However, their attempts did not eradicate all Indigenous practices. The rhetoric reflects the sarcastic tonality of the hypocritical ideologies of settler colonialism. The passage highlights the unbalanced relationship between Indians and colonizers. The historical narrative often deemed

natives “misbehaving.” This use of language reflects the colonizer's justification for abuse. The hypocrisy is evident in “cheated on their spouses.” Nevertheless, Spaniards sexually assaulted native women ‘and killed their babies.” Infanticide is the power they had left to protect their children from the concentration camp. The most daunting “pagan witchcraft” Indigenous spirituality did not mold into the barriers and limitations of Christianity. Despite the Spaniard's many attempts to eradicate Indigenous beliefs, Indigenous women still prevailed. Colonizers desperately tried to assimilate the Indians in forced religious conversion. However, the Indigenous community maintained their practices even in the scope of demonized labels. The power of Indigenous ceremonies is critical in maintaining bodily and mental agency and autonomy.



(Family Archive Ceremony of the Tlalli, Malibu, Photographed by Jo Cardiel)

Fourteen-year-old, her hair in braids, she headed for the elders' house. Her mom had traveled from Santa Barbara to Sacramento to bring her here. She was not fully aware of why it was such a big deal that she got her period. She flashes back to the moment, scared and humiliated, seeing the blood in the toilet. Her mom looked excited; she told them they would make a temescal for her. As she reached the house, the elder greeted them with hugs, and the aroma of frijoles and chile was cooking in the background. Her mom and elder showed her the space outside and the sticks they would use. The three of them made a temescal and sang songs. It finished, and she started to get nervous and excited; they let go of the manufactured clothes and simply

wore a loose sheet. She entered, feeling Mother Earth underneath her, the heat rising; she wanted to cry. The sweat and heat felt like a warm hug. She lay on the ground, letting the dirt touch her face with light kisses. She looked around the temescal and saw her elder, with grey hair and wrinkles, looking happy and wise, and her mom, with beautiful black hair and an electric smile. She felt protected and loved; her mother and spirit guided her to a place of solace and comfort. The three women sat and talked in the temescal, thanking the Creator, Mother Earth, and ancestors. If only they could stay there; the women in the temescal had all experienced abuse; this was their place of healing and grounding. How long had native women been subjected to abuse? Whom were they healing for, if not just themselves? She loved feeling naked and accessible; in the temescal, she felt safe, her body untouched by lustful eyes.



(Family Archive, Temescal, Malibu, CA Photographed by Jo Cardiel)

The Spanish padres used religious tactics to instill ideologies that forced Indigenous women into sexual suppression. Indian women faced a transition from bodily agency to commodified objects. The change interjected sexist ideologies and ownership of Indian women's bodies in disguise for religious justification. Miranda says :

The padre baptized us, gave us names and godparents; he taught us our catechism, posted our marriage banns, performed our weddings, baptized our babies, administered last rites, listened to our confessions, and punished us when we prayed to the wrong god or tired of our wives or husbands...He made us wear clothes (our bodies were shameful) (Miranda 19).

The padre is a crucial element in creating a hierarchy of gender. Padres at the mission use religious coercion to oversee authority in Indian women's religious choices and bodies. The padre "baptized us," enforcing an unbalanced relationship; the padre is the savior, and the "us" is the victim in need of saving, thus erasing Indian women's autonomy. The padre had ultimate authority over many facets of Indian women's experience, such as "gave us names," they renamed Indian women's names. To retain ownership, Padres would infiltrate themselves into the Indian women's offspring "baptized our babies," perpetuating generational privilege. The padres introduced the ideology of shame: " he made us wear clothes; our bodies were shameful." This lens contributed to the idea that "nakedness" is sinful. To maintain a respectful demeanor, Indian women must cover up appropriately and maintain respectful conduct and

compliant behavior. Thus, clothing became another chain of ownership and promoted the sexist ideologies that Indian women are to blame if they are sexualized. These atrocities still occur in contemporary cultures, such as normalized catcalls. In particular, the masculine colonial gaze creates a hierarchal relationship between the perpetrator and native women. The issue is that the right to Indian women's bodies is perpetuated in Indigenous society, creating manipulative tactics to shame Indian women's attire.

To understand domestic abuse, one must begin with the violent, UNPROVOKED treatment of Indigenous women. The historical legacy of California begs to erase any undesirable stories of their falsified oasis. The historical archives and Spanish language controlled the narrative to blame the Indian women, refraining from blame or accountability. However, the San Francisco Bulletin, May 12, 1859, negligently leaked an everlasting example of horrendous indefensible abuse of an Indigenous couple. Miranda studies the San Francisco Bulletin and highlights the story:

An old Indian and squaw were engaged in the harmless occupation of gathering clover on the land of a Mr. Grisby when a man named Frank Hamilton set Grigsby's dog upon them (which, by the way, are three very ferocious ones,) and before the dogs were taken off of the Indians they tore and mangled her body of the squaw in such a manner that she dies shortly after. It is said that the dogs tore her breasts off (Miranda 59).

The story highlights the extreme brutality of the murder of the Indian couple. The detailed death of the squaw (Indigenous wife) indicates the desensitization of violence against Indigenous women. In particular, the descriptors of her mangled body highlight the eradication of her recognized self. "Mangled" here suggests how Indigenous women's bodies are violated in historical accounts. For such an indigenous body to be mangled, it must first be stripped of its humanity. The landowner, Mr. Grisby, does that when he sends his dogs after the Indians. Although Grisby had the legal mechanisms of territorial dispossession working in his favor, he chose not to address the couples' purported trespassing through civil means. However, instead, he converted the human beings into prey and then sent his domesticated animal to attack them."

Furthermore, the historical accounts mirror a hierarchal chain of domination, with men at the top and Indian women at the bottom, reinforcing a legacy of violence. The violence seeps into the generational domains of domestic violence. The violence began under the drunken haze of liquor, another form of violence introduced into indigenous communities.

Although native fermentation existed before colonialism, Liquor is a product of Spaniard colonialism transcending into Indigenous communities, acting as a silent killer. The historical archives document the progression of alcohol and its drastic effects, such as toxic masculinity, anger, and violence. The Sacramento Union, November 14, 1851, the news article states :

A disturbance took place in Los Angeles on the evening of the 25th. Indians got into a quarrel over a bottle of liquor and, attacking the guard, drove them off the ground. Sepulveda, the Marshal, finding that he could not contend with the Indians and that they appeared determined to burn the house came to town for assistance and returned with seven Americans. How many of the Indians were killed is perhaps not positively known but eight bodies were piled up before Ivarra's house (Miranda 55).

The news article begins with a tonality of blame, "A disturbance," to whom the disturbance is causing is speculative. The place "Los Angeles" is the location of the disorder, indicating a definition of Culture as a place of "crime" and unrest still perpetuating in current society. The link between "disturbance" and "Indians" is imperative in understanding the dominant biases in historical documents. The disturbing element of this news article is that the source of the quarrel is a "bottle of liquor," thus insinuating that Indians are slaves to the bottle. Additionally, the rhetoric implies a lack of guilt. The news lacks mention of the colonizers supplying the booze; the colonizers' origin and intentionality are absent from this news article. The violent account foreshadows the complex relationship between urban Indians and alcohol, resulting in generational alcohol dependency.

Abuelo, I see you in your hut in El Salvador. I see you reaching for food. The hunger pains are in the pit of your stomach—the picture of you surrounded by your siblings, all dressed in your best attire. You have a solemn face and are dressed in a little girl's dress with ruffles and small places of lace. As you age, you walk the

Pueblo streets; the small rocks hit your feet. You pass the street vendors with a desire to purchase a pupusa, but you know you cannot. In the distance, you see her- walking down the street with long black hair; she is carrying mangoes and sugar canes. You talk near the mountains of Metapan, El Salvador, and fall in love with her wit. Abuela is a girl who once came from a legacy of wealth but now found herself at sixteen, caring for her younger brothers. Her mother died from a stroke, and her father, who gambled and drank away all their money, had a deep affair. The inability to share his feelings in the pueblo locked him into a cell of misery. He felt the heavy gun in his hand; the rifle opened his mouth and shot himself. You both hold hands, cementing a promise of opportunities with your kids and family, a chance to do it differently. She left first for the United States on an airplane; the plan was for you to meet her with your two sons. The coyote was paid, and you packed your bags to reunite with your wife. You headed on your journey, the backpack, and your two little boys, eight months and 1 ½ years old. The man carries his sons toward the coyote. The coyote has a large group of Central Americans. The baby starts crying, and the group gets annoyed, "Shut that baby up!" You cover the baby's mouth and get closer to the river. The water is cold, and you are holding both of them in your arms, moving with the current; you see the lights at the end. Then you hear the shout, "la migra, la migra!". It is over. You did not make it- yet. The one-year-old is now thirty, recounting this story on the Fresno River with his children; the tears are moving down his face. The alcohol has seeped into the vortex of generational trauma and experience. He takes one more sip- takes a breath, and continues.



(Family Archive Salvi Family Portraitist unknown)

The Salvadoran man reeked of Smirnoff. His favorite flavor of peach leaked out of his mouth. He goes home to his two boys asleep on their beds, the living room couches. The older boy hears his father open the door, and panic and sweat trace the outlines of his face. His dad is holding the nearly empty bottle in his right hand and chucks it across the wall, creating a firework of glass. Their mother comes out screaming; he grabs her by the hair, drags her outside, and screams to her children to look away. The oldest boy shields his little brother's ears. Once he removes his hands, he runs outside and fights his dad “ Fuck you, stay the fuck away from my mom.” The anger is there, festering like infectious fungi. He will not be afraid. He will beat anyone's ass who comes near him or his loved ones. Where does he go to feel strong?

To feel safe? To Feel empowered. The streets -he loathed- find love back in them. He claims them with his homies.



(Family Archive- Night Owl- Los Angeles 1990s Photographer unknown)

Far away from Once

Once a warrior

Drinking the can of Modelo words, slurred and stomach acid boiling up

Once a Warrior

Slamming his fist into the white wall, scraping his skin and knuckles

Once a Warrior

Walking the concrete streets of Los Angeles

Once a Warrior

Breaking a Gate with a Fist

Once a Warrior

Speeding down the freeway, kids in the back drink, spinning heads

Once a Warrior

Pulling his dad off of his mom, fists in the air
Once a Warrior
Cruising with his friends down Imperial, filling his lungs with THC
Once a Warrior
Sleeping in a Honda with his family
Once a Warrior
"Bitches, Riches, Fuck life," music pounding
Once a Warrior
"I cannot wait to tap that."
Once a Warrior
"You fucking talk too much."
Once a Warrior
He pounds his face in
Once a Warrior
He breaks a man's head in
Once a Warrior
He goes to church to rectify his sins
Once a Warrior
They all sit back and drink their modelos
Once were all Warriors.

The oldest boy is now 50. He carries his father's casket and hides his face under the false privacy of sunglasses. The men fill their woes with each other, passing along modelos, bottles of Don Julio, and Corona. The man thinks of his father under the haze of drunkenness, a warm blanket of shame and pain. The father dies of alcohol dependency complications, the son retreats to his children, and his son passes him another modelo, and so on.

An intersectional issue between patriarchy and racialization: To gain more domination over Indigenous communities, white men needed to eradicate their competition, Indian Men. The horrendous conditions Indians faced in the 1800s

reveal a perpetuation of the community as commodities of function and monetary value. One of the atrocities committed against Indigenous communities was scalping. Miranda says, “ In 1851 and 1852 Congress appropriated and paid out over one million dollars in bounties to white men who harvested Indian scalps taken from men, women, and children by men eager to make easy money... \$25 dollars for male body part and then \$5 for a child or woman”(Miranda 45) The history of bounty hunting indicates a hierarchal relationship, the white man hunting the Indians. The passage highlights the dehumanization of Indians, seeing them as “hunted prey.” The concept of money is evident; in essence, money holds more value than an Indian's life, contributing to the ideology that only individual lives are worth living. The hunting scalping also shows the importance of Indian men's body parts over women and children. A male scalp or body part is worth 25 dollars, thus indicating that he is worthy of a higher price because he poses a more significant risk, physically fighting and posing threats against white men. Whereas women and children are only worth \$5 because their death and life do not pose as much of a threat, the native women and children are deemed “defenseless” and serve as functions in the domestic and sexual sphere.

Indigenous females and children held a different value in the slave trade in California; in their search for gold, white men could buy their desires in the slave market. The bounty hunters understood the concept of desirability and value; instead of killing Indian women and children immediately for a smaller price, they could capture them and sell them for a higher profit. Miranda says:

More patient bounty hunters had other uses for women and orphaned children; they sold them as slaves- yes, actual slavery existed in California... Many Indians had been enslaved to work in the gold rush camps of whites... In 1844 Pierson Readings, one, of John Sutter's managers, wrote, "The Indians of California make as obedient and humble as slaves as the Negro in the south... Young girls, of course, were bought up by single men, for about a hundred dollars a piece"(Miranda 49)

The concept of "other uses" is infinite and enhances the commodification of Indigenous women. The correspondence between Gold and "treasure" mirrors the white men's perspective on Indigenous women as objects of desire. The difference is that white men would have searched for gold and not always guaranteed rewards. At the same time, the slave market is guaranteed access for instant gratification. The manager of John Sutters Mill embodies the historical entitlement of white men, describing the enslaved Indians as "obedient and humble" in correlation with enslaved black people, indicating unified discrimination against women of color. Thus, the writing correlates Indigenous "young girls" as profitable and exchangeable, intermingling the fetishization of young Indigenous women.

Spaniards at the mission would alter their punishment for the Indigenous females to secure their sexual appetite. The Spaniards would physically brutalize the Indigenous people of California. The differences in abuse differed in gender; both are equally abusive but altered for different reasons. Like abuse and control of livestock, Spaniards would "discipline" Indian women with the same devices. Miranda

introduces the *corma* in the glossary section, Miranda an intentional distinction to highlight the pedagogical form of the book. The glossary section shows different aspects of the mission, but the distinct voice of Deborah Miranda returns to an account of violence to our understanding of the mission. One object she describes is the *corma*, “ a hobbling device for misbehaving neophytes. Developed first for use on livestock, such as horses, who require some movement to graze but might run away if left completely unshackled” (Miranda 15). The descriptor indicates the intended use of the *corma* on livestock, thus showing the intertwining of native women and animals; there is no clear distinction. Simultaneously, the device sheds light on the drastic difference between native peoples' cosmology on respecting all living inhabitants; whereas the missionary intended to secure ownership of both the cattle and natives. Miranda says “ The *corma* could be used to punish Indians and allow them to perform simple tasks, such as cleaning wheat or grinding corn... thought the *corma* especially appropriate to chastise Indian women who were guilty of adultery or other serious “faults” (no doubt because the *corma* forced the wearer to keep his/her legs together)”(Miranda 15). The *corma* as a form of punishment is an example of the dehumanization of Indian women. The Indian women are disciplined because of “adultery” or other serious faults. The issue is that the Spaniards are deciding what “adulterous” is, therefore, the sexual agency of Indian Women shifts to “sinful nature.” The entrapments “keep her legs together,” preventing her from sexual freedom. Thus, Spaniards could hide and guard her genitalia while “safeguarding” their sexual object. Since the Indian woman is unable to move, this also ensures that

she is enslaved. The device also contributes to gendered domestic roles. The accused can perform “simple tasks,” such as cleaning and cooking. The containment of Indian women contributed to the gendered experience of many Urban Indian women.

The Spaniards would whip the natives into submission using numerous devices, resulting in continuous abuse and violence. Spaniards would beat and torture the Mission Indians to establish a dominant relationship. Miranda says, “Wooden club used to strike quickly; alcades, soldiers, and sometimes padres carried these for spontaneous corrections throughout their day. The alcades used these during services in church to remind the Indians to stay quiet, pay attention, and stay awake”(Miranda 15). The violent outbursts of Spaniards were a common occurrence in the Missions. The “spontaneous” beatings became a normalized experience, which resulted in generational trauma and abuse. Thus, abuse evolved into a normalized response to disobedient behavior.

The mission system provided ideas of how to discipline the Indian children; Miranda’s counter disciplining, she uses her memoir to teach the truth instead of using corporal punishment like the padres to instill values of patriarchy. The mission wanted to portray itself as a place of obedience and exemplified power. The missionaries noticed that native parents had drastically different ideas of parenting. Miranda says, “ When it concerns the children... their parents love them to such an extent that we might say they are little idols”(Miranda 15). The ideals of native parents show that they idealize their children as their beings. The Spaniards do not understand “ child love or agency ideals.” Native parents perceived their children as

gifts, but not objects or commodities. The Indian children inhabited their realm of individuality. The missions wanted to portray the love of the children as “excessive.” The irony is that love was “excessive, ” not discipline or abuse. The concept of discipline continued in the relationship between emotions and regulation. Many current urban Indians face the complexities of established gendered expectations. The suppression of emotions is evident in the Genealogy of Violence Part 2; this aspect of the book is a continuum of Miranda’s formal aspects of sections. The section is a mixture of other overlaying archival documents and family memories. She notes how her father and brother are caught up in this genealogy of violence.

Miranda engages with the mission statements and delivers a poignant response to surprised male emotions in looking at the relationship between her father and little brother. Miranda uses different forms to establish the power dynamic between the missions and the memories. The statements are emboldened to show the grandness of the effect of the mission’s ideologies. Miranda responds to the shaming of excessive love towards their children instilled by the missionaries. She recalls, “ Our father scoffs, pushes his small four-year-old son, saying “Aw, it's just a damn tooth, come on, no crying.” Our father’s voice is harsher now, making fun of the tears. “Ay, little baby, only babies cry! Are you a baby? (Miranda 33). This scene highlights the distinct reaction of shame about emotions. First, Al belittles the pain of the tooth and then belittles his son. The reference of a four-year-old to a baby labels the societal expectations that crying is only isolated and accepted for an infant. Firstly Al

establishes mental dominion over his son; then, dissatisfied with his inability to stop crying, he establishes physical dominion over his son.

Once the verbal warning to stop crying is not met with satisfaction, physical superiority is established through abuse. The dichotomy between father and son relations to father and daughter differs in gendered expectations. Miranda writes, “You want something to cry about”? You want the belt?” our father yells, embarrassed by his cowardly son, this son waited half a lifetime to have, this son who carries on the family name as none of seven sisters can, this son whose tears break every rule my father ever learned about surviving in this world”(Miranda 34). The scene highlights the hypocrisy of the suppression of emotions. Al is shaming his son over his inability to contain his emotions but is unable to constrain his emotions. Anger is an emotion from the realm of feminized emotions, an expectation of the rule; anger is the only emotion allowed to seep into the space of masculinity. The interaction between son and father also indicates the generational experience of cultural normalcy.

She sees the tears run down his cheek, each tear falling like a bullet on his flannel. His deep voice echoes a valley of pain. It is raining outside, and the windows fog up from their breath. He is huddled in his arms, telling her of his abuse. The little boy with his black hair and woody costume. He apologizes, “ I am sorry I should not be crying this much.” She sees it and instinctively wants him to talk to someone, perhaps a therapist offered at the student health center. He tells his family about his therapy “ Why are you being a little bitch? You do not need to tell anyone all your

shit?” The anger builds up, and the fire gets bigger and bigger into oblivion. He remembers being eight years old, homeless, and without much food. He wanted to help get food for himself and his family; the school provided food, and he returned happy with a cheerful disposition. “Why are you telling everyone our business?” The tears begin again; he should not have done it, he should not have said anything, he should not have done it. He wipes the tears away. Transported back from his memory, he never lets people feel bad for him. Always maintain a scary/ intimidating demeanor so no one fucks with you!

Find other ways to numb your pain, cry, and talk. No- Let the anger build up and see how it is unleashed. Grown men do not cry; that is only a female thing. She held his arms and saw the pain and flashes of native men in his eyes. His deep brown eyes harbored all these secrets, a vortex of loss of identity. He realized the only appropriate emotional behavior was anger and physical violence. As he seemingly experienced this trope his entire life. A process of assimilation, stripping the pieces of cultural identity and shaping him and her into gendered spheres, was usually produced in religious parameters.

The first process of assimilation was the Padre's mission to impose religion to emphasize the superiority of Spaniard culture and the inferiority of Indigenous culture. Spaniard colonialism drastically differed from other European groups, and the Spanish used catholicism to enforce a colonized space. The Spaniards needed to justify and condone their actions. The padre belief reinforced their mission of mass conversion. Miranda says, “ As Padre Lasuén (who took over for Padre Serra as

president at San Carlos) wrote sensibly, “It is evident that a nation which is barbarous, ferocious and ignorant requires more frequent punishment than a nation which is cultured, educated, and of gentle and moderate customs” (Miranda 11). The Spanish needed to reflect a higher culture and education; the irony is that punishment was justified because the Indians needed saving. The quote shows the complex and hierarchical relationship between the Padres and the Indians; the Padres signify the ultimate authority, instilling fear of an unforgiving and judgmental God. The descriptors of the Indians as “ barbarous, ferocious, and ignorant” emphasize the othering of native people juxtaposition of the “holy” civilization of the Spaniards. The biased narrative of the Padre exists in current society, influencing Latinx and Indigenous communities with the ideologies surrounding religion. Thus, Christian and catholic religions are heavily engrossed in Latinx and Indigenous culture, perpetuating gendered expectations.

She recalls the moment she saw the purity ring in the church store. The silver engraving of the word “purity” is illuminating in the center. Her dad continuously brought her to the church on his monthly custody visitations; her stepmom and siblings all resembled a nuclear family. She saw her dad go up and ask for saving and forgiveness, tears of gratitude strolling down his face. The vulnerability juxtaposes his usual stern machismo demeanor. Her ex-stepmom and father would consistently shame her “basketcase Indian mother.” Her half-siblings were a replica of Christian ideals and assimilation, with zero connection to their Salvadorean or Indigenous culture. Her stepmom and father were a “god-fearing” couple,

embodying Christian ideals and judgemental ideologies. The couple elicited the statement “ Do as I say, not as I do,” particularly the topic of sexuality. The “pseudo” stepmom was unmarried and cohabiting with their children's father, yet heavily pressured her stepdaughter on the greatness of saving her virginity. The teenage girl touched the silver ring and tried it on. Her father and stepmom displayed immense pride when deciding on a purity ring. She put on the ring and immediately felt a wave of pressure and safekeeping. Her virginity felt separate from her, a treasure, an object; if she lost her virginity, she would lose her father's respect and be damned to the eternal flames of hell. As she pondered the ring, she felt the heaviness, the cold silver mimicking the chains of enslavement. She returned to her mother's house and tossed the ring into the abyss. Her mother told her the truth, the words haunting her soul, that no matter the “purity” of Indigenous women, padres would still rape them even in a place of worship, specifically in the missions.

The missions were a hunting ground for the Padres in having accessibility to Indigenous women. The word “padre,” translated to father, suggests a distorted relationship between the Padres and young native women, resembling the women as their daughters. The genealogy of violence has a common theme regarding Spain's contribution to violence, rape, and soldiers. Rape was a continuous horrendous act in the mission system. Miranda highlights a native woman's testimony in a letter to Vicenta Gutierrez. Isabel Meadows says

When [she was] a girl and went to confession one evening during Lent, Father Real wanted her to grab her over there in the church. Moreover, the

next day, there was no trace of the Padre there, and he was never seen again. He was a Spaniard. He grabbed the girl and screwed her. The girl went running to her house, saying the padre had grabbed her” (Miranda 22).

The story highlights the entitlement of the Padres in the missions. The girl was fulfilling the embodiment of religious assimilation in a falsified place of “worship” and “safety.” Father Real saw the confessional as a baiting ground to fulfill his warped desires, “He wanted her,” indicating the power and pedestal the padres placed themselves on; if he wanted to rape a little girl, he could, he would. The emphasis on “ He was a Spaniard” indicates the imperativeness of the distinction between Spain and Indigenous Peoples. The girl “saying the padre grabbed her” shows the extreme importance of oral tradition and preservation. Vicenta and Isabel are using the archive to communicate Padre’s culpability. The oral tradition is a prime example of how Indigenous women are continuously sexually assaulted under the scope of religious ideologies. Similarly, the experience of Vicenta’s assault reflects the continuum of gendered violence that still permeates a collective experience.

She was fourteen. The sun and heat beamed in Los Angeles; she was excited to head to the beach to escape the smog of Downey. Her bikini matched had yellow polka dots; she checked her watch and needed to hurry to the bus. As she left her bedroom door, her uncle stood outside, asking where she was going. Her uncle had always been a father figure, buying her clothes and records of 80s music and her beloved albums of The Cure. Nonchalantly she replied, “I am heading to the beach,” she noticed a sudden glimpse down her torso and boobs. Her uncle had a look of

desire and salvation. Her body started to tense up. He told her to get on the bed. During the assault, she looked into the ceiling, imagining herself at the beach, the waves crashing back and forth. At this moment, she is separated from the assault,

Her flesh is the vessel of abuse; her soul is beaming in the sun's heat. She has jerked back into the assault, her uncle saying, " God would want this." Once he finished, he said, " If you tell anyone, God will send you to hell'. Immediately after she attempted suicide, he whispered to her, " I never have to apologize to you, only to God; maybe you should not have worn that bikini." The truth echoed into the family; only a few knew and accepted the fact. The uncle was never arrested, yet his notoriety is rectified in these words. In this story of collective and individual experience, he is penetrated by the villainization of his character. His reputation still remains as the facade of a "god-fearing man," that is, until today, we know the truth and will continue to speak the truth. Similar to Vicenta's story, it is a direct reflection of the power of oral tradition; this story is told through oral tradition, a naming of Padre Real, not as a man of religious integrity but of perversion. Likewise, this story of a mother telling her daughter, but it also a sister to sister, a grandmother to granddaughter, a wife to husband; it lasts into the generations to establish the justifiable truth in the space of injustice... It will castrate his facade of patriarchal religious ideals. The story reclaims the narrative of agency, Indian women as active agents, directly or indirectly seeking justice amidst a violent reality.

In contrast to the dominant narrative that Indian women were passive bystanders, Martin Rizzo-Martinez, *We Are Not Animals: Indigenous Politics of*

Survival, Rebellion, and Reconstruction in Nineteenth-Century California provides a different perspective on the dominant historical biases of the missions. Martinez thoughtfully interweaves scholarship modes highlighting the narrative of the Indigenous experience in the Santa Cruz Mission missions. The Santa Cruz mission forms exist in the same system Deborah Miranda writes about, but this is a geographically different site. In particular, the Santa Cruz Mission is the local mission in the California town where I researched missionized violence, leaving a tie to the present and colonial past. Rizzo-Martinez's text forms a historical framework and grounding in traditional formality; however, the aspect of orality is a distinct methodology presented in the text. Thus, placing this historical work in dialogue with Miranda's creative/memoir work is critical to grounding research in oral tradition. I appreciate the emphasis on the native women's narratives being highlighted in the work. In centralizing on the woman perspective, the power of the missions has been glamorized as a postcard for California Oasis. The book dispels this notion by using orality to showcase the resistance to Native American assimilation and missionization. Rizzo-Martinez's work specifically highlights the Indigenous women's experience in the missions. The text begins by showing the conditions of the monjeros "Spanish as monjeríos (girls' dormitories or, literally, nunneries) and jayuntes (boys dormitories), were locked at night to keep people from leaving and signified a major shift in family organization...Unmarried women, girls aged ten and older, and widows were held in the monjeríos, with unmarried and adolescent men in the jayuntes. Both structures separated unmarried youth from their families, while

married couples were permitted to live in homes surrounding the mission. The padres used these buildings, in essence, to impose abstinence and sexual control over Native women” (Rizzo-Martinez 53). The passage highlights the power the colonizers imputed onto the native communities. Furthermore, the concept of “locked at night” adds to the idea of commodification, the native women seen as property. This also adds to the theme of sexual suppression, in that the room functions as a physical space and a mental suppression. The dual functionality imposes a standard of ownership and property.

The book shifts the narrative that native women were “passive bystanders” in the male-dominated sphere of the missions. Rizzo-Martinez successfully highlights native women as active agents in the rebellion against horrendous treatment from the colonizers. The many stories of infanticide and abortion highlight the resistance against forced assimilation, the mothers thus shifting the power to their own and not allowing their children to be subjected to abuse. A story that continued to amplify the female narrative experience is the planned assassination of Padre Quintana, the Santa Cruz mission's main priest: “In October 1812, a group of Indigenous men and women, pushed to their limits by an abusive padre, responded through the extraordinary act of assassinating this cruel and sadistic figure— Padre Andrés Quintana” (109 Rizzo-Martinez), Quintana was a representation of corporal punishment the missionaries used against the indigenous people. The historical key point highlights the indigenous people's rebellion in direct and indirect response. Padre Quintana embodied the development of violence in Mission Santa Cruz. His

notoriety was his abuse, and he began to develop new whips to appease his sadistic punishments :

Quintana's penchant for corporal punishment and his fashioning of this "special" whip to inflict deeper wounds played a crucial role in motivating the conspirators to take matters into their own hands. The severe beating of these two young men prompted a meeting of conspirators who eventually planned the assassination. (Rizzo-Martinez 116)

The Indigenous people are active agents in maintaining Quintana's reputation as an abuser. Despite the unjust reality of missionized slavery, indigenous people sought justice in prompting a response: assassination. The methodical planning of his assistance highlights an indigenous woman leader named Yaquenonsat.

The methodical woman behind this act of rebellion was "Yaquenonsat." His assassination was designed intentionally, as well as the placement of his body. "After committing the deed, the conspirators placed Quintana's dead body back in his quarters, making it appear as if he had died in his sleep" (Rizzo-Martinez 118). Once the colonizers learned of the assassination, they did not appear to have been apprehended or identified by Spanish authorities, as it seems that the Spaniards, with their patriarchal perspectives, failed to conceive of a woman playing a central role in the assassination(Rizzo- Martinez 119); thus, Yaquenonsat rejects the notion that native women were meek and docile, she used the patriarchal society to her advantage

and orchestrated the assassination. The story of Yaquenonsat is a clear example of rebellion against sexual abuse under the pretense of religious parameters. Additionally, the story is an active example of the power and survivance of oral tradition. The story persisted through oral traditions, starting with the captivity mission and as historical evidence of female empowerment, leadership, resistance, and justice. The sweet revenge of justice and dismemberment of his penis and placing him back in bed signifies the castration of patriarchy and also the reversal of power. The castration is all of the native people's reward. Since she was the orchestrator, the story also signals the drastically different perspectives of female leadership and autonomy within the Indigenous communities. Therefore, she directly pushes against the Spanish ideologies of gendered roles chained to domestic and sexual labor. The book effectively shifts away from archival biases and uses oral tradition as a credible historical methodology.

Despite attempts to eradicate the terrible truth of the missions, native women found ways of asserting agency through oral traditions. Yaquenonsat's story is a clear example of oral survival. Similarly, Isabel Meadows is another example of a native woman using oral tradition as a way to reassert agency in the historical sphere. Isabel Meadows spoke to Ohlone and Esselen, an informant for J. P. Harrington. Miranda says:

Meadows knew she was a valuable resource to Harrington; he returned to her repeatedly, pleased with her to work with no one else, and snapped up the bits and pieces of cultural information and language she fed him. But in

between the language lessons and Coyote stories Harrington was after, Isabel snuck in the stories she wanted to salvage: her private project, a memorial, and a charmstone of hope for future generations(Miranda 28)

The historian J.P. Harrington used Isabel to extract information on a surface level, but Isabel Meadows was not a passive bystander. Isabel knew she was “a valuable resource,” and he needed her more. Therefore, the power dynamic shifted in Isabel’s favor. She knew he wanted stories of “coyotes” and “languages” and would feed him the “interesting” aspects of native culture. Whereas Isabel shifted the narrative power, “ Isabel snuck in stories she wanted to salvage,” the stories create a space to see history through the lens of an Indigenous woman. Thus, the interaction between Isabel and Harrington reflects the imperativeness of oral tradition as a historically accurate scope of the past.

The Missions embody the majestic picture of California, the red adobe tile, and the grand architecture. The mission is still a historical landmark, creating a facade of a welcoming demeanor. The fourth-grade mission unit reinforces the lies that Missions was a fantastic place. Behind the travel pamphlets on California lies a dark past, a historical truth that would shatter the fragility of picturesque California. To grasp the horrendous abuse of Indigenous women in the missions, the study of historical archives would have to accompany oral tradition. The sexual and domestic abuse of Indigenous women continues to seep into current society. The ripple effects of Spaniard colonialism now find their falsified solace in the homes of Latinx and Indigenous communities.

The haunting of the missionized violence leaks into the walls of controlled daughters, alcoholism, modelos filling cans of trashcans, incest, domestic violence, self-harm, and suppressed emotions. Drive down the 101 highway in California, and notice the bells distinct amidst the wildflowers on the freeway. In the drive, notice different sighs signaling the closeness of the missions, the bells getting louder and closer, although they do not make a sound. I notice a deep feeling in my stomach, which is heavy, as I see a picturesque Adobe Mission on the side of the freeway. Hold my breath- keep driving forward. Get closer to somewhere.

Nevertheless, the stories follow and haunt the dark past of generations, revealing themselves in a mask of normalcy. However, the legacy of a darkened sphere is not the only encounter; once the storyteller reconnects with oral tradition, a distinction of the agency is reclaimed. There is the presence of a welcoming haunting that follows the continuum of storytelling and oral tradition. The mission begs to silence the oral tradition, and the loud presence of bells begs for a physical presence and remembrance of authority. Since the narrative of Indigenous women was often told through a male-dominated lens, the Indigenous woman regains her voice, piercing through the layers of trauma. Her narrative glitches the structured sphere of enslavement by using oral tradition. She does not cling to the victimized story of oppression; she acknowledges the domestic, physical, sexualized flesh in her words. The words that continue to reclaim the space of her imprisonment. I have realized the bountiful modalities of reassuring my narrative in conjunction with the atrocities of the past in order to maintain an alternative agency of my historical truth. In order to

maintain historical truth, I used a form central to indigenous scholarship. I reflect on methodologies of historical framing, analysis, and personal response. Creative writing is a particular method of reasserting native presences. I engaged with Miranda's work and formed responses grounded in familial archival research, photos, and oral tradition. The methods address the history of violence while showing a path toward the agency in historical dialogue regarding indigenous communities and legacy. My voice will not be silenced; it will be amplified along with my ancestors who continued the oral tradition.

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