

Forgotten Pueblos  
*La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* and the Cultural Politics of Indo-Hispano

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**Abstract**

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As one of the formative organizations of the Chicana/o movement in the 1960s and '70s, *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* waged a dynamic and controversial campaign in New Mexico for the recovery of Mexican and Spanish land grants that had been lost in the aftermath of the Mexican-American War in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This dissertation draws from a diverse collection of archived writings and publicity materials produced by La Alianza over the span of its roughly 15 year existence and situates the movement as a rich site of cultural production. I consider these documents as an archive of subaltern history writing that countered nationalist histories that naturalize private property and sanction collective amnesia of Mexican and Native land dispossession under US sovereignty.

By offering a sustained and critical engagement with La Alianza's history writing, this dissertation examines the movement's use of *Indo-Hispano* as a term invoking a past of *mestizaje* distinct from dominant Chicana/o imaginings of *mestizaje*. My analysis reveals the complex ties between Indo-Hispano and the political economy of New Mexican land grant tenure and dispossession. This project argues that Indo-Hispano re-writes the *mestiza/o* pasts of *genízaro* Indians, detribalized Plains and Pueblo Indian captives who were forcibly resettled into land grants as a buffer to protect the Spanish colonial interior in New Mexico from Plains Indian

raids during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the context of genízaro Indian land grant tenure and loss, La Alianza's textual production challenges dominant understandings of Chicana/o mestizaje offered by Chicana/o, Latina/o, and Latin American studies. Indo-Hispano insists that mestizaje ought to be considered in a much longer history of colonial hybridity and gender violence in the Americas that is not bound to the Mexican nationalist version of mestizaje appropriated by the Chicana/o movement.

In these terms, this dissertation reframes La Alianza's status in Chicano/a studies in a way that opens up the field's relation to indigenous studies and Latin American studies. From this perspective, I link Indo-Hispano to genízaro land tenure and loss in order to recuperate an alternative imaginary for indigenous land reclamation and mestizo/a hybridity in the Americas. I unearth this imaginary by reading Indo-Hispano alongside an array of multi-ethnic border narratives that center linkages between mestizaje and indigenous territoriality across the Americas. In other words, my focus on the writing of Indo-Hispano is also about rendering visible cognate indigenous modes of telling the past and reclaiming the land that inhere within a multiplicity of borderland positions. In particular, I read Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead* and Ana Castillo's *So Far From God* as texts that give me a language to resignify Indo-Hispano's transnational, hybridized, and coalitional nature. At stake here is making the case for how the writing of Indo-Hispano converges with the temporalities of transnational indigenous land reclamation struggles of our contemporary moment.

For

Ventura Chávez

Cruzita Chávez

Gail B. Trujillo

Jesse O. Baros

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and his work and life has established new meaning to the labor of community building. Sergio Casillas offered no shortage of conversation and critical ponderings of the racial politics of Seattle.

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## Introduction

The Almanac of Indo-Hispano: *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* and the Writing of Mestizaje in New Mexico

Autobiography is usually thought of as seizing the authority of authenticity. But in order not to be authoritative, I've got to speak autobiographically.

—Stuart Hall

If I were to revise the following pages, I would have to sharpen them so much and weigh them down with such detail of documentation, that they should lose their naïve passion, which I still endorse. Please read them as the first stirrings of a work that remains in progress with no end in sight.

—Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Let me begin with a story about my connection to *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes*. My grandparents, Ventura and Cruzita Chávez, were active *Aliancistas* in the 1960s and early 70s. As the family storyteller, my grandfather had for a long time told his grandchildren about his work trying to get the land back with La Alianza. As I was growing up, he had mentioned on numerous occasions how he punched a jailer in the face who shot a pistol at him and Tijerina during the courthouse raid. I recall stories told at our dining room table while I was in middle school about “our People,” the “Indiano,” who needed to become educated because “an education is the one thing that they can't take away from you.” There was also the time, while chopping onions for dinner, he nicked his finger with the knife. It started to bleed.

“There went the Iberian part of me,” he joked as he washed his hands.

I laughed, but did not understand. Indeed, for the majority of my life, I did not have an ear for his history. I did not know how to listen to his stories. I recall in 2002, a census worker

who came to our house in Albuquerque to obtain information on our family. By that time, my mom, sister, and I had been living with my grandparents on the Westside of Albuquerque for about three years after my parents' divorce. When the census worker began his interview, he asked my grandfather questions about his work and recent retirement. He then asked my grandfather about his racial status.

“Are you Hispanic, sir?”

“Hispanic?” my grandfather replied and laughed a bit. “No. We are Indianos. Some people have called us Indo-Hispano. We are mixed, half Native American and half Iberian, mostly Jewish. We are not Hispanic.”

The census worker looked confused, smiled, and didn't know what to do. And neither did I. Before this encounter, I had heard this narrative many times. “Our people are Indiano. We are not ‘Spanish’ because ‘Spain’ was not a sovereign country when Columbus came here. And we are not *only* Iberian. My great-great grandmother was half Apache and half Cherokee. She became a slave to the Spaniards and was named Dolores Lucero. We are mixed.” The census worker suggested that my grandfather fill in the “other” category on the census sheet. I took the encounter as yet another example of my grandfather's “eccentric” historical worldview.

In 2005, I moved to Seattle to begin the PhD program in English at the University of Washington. After my second year, I became interested in Black cultural politics and the visions of freedom produced by Black radical intellectuals that surpassed the narrow versions of democratic freedom imposed by the US state. Late in the summer of 2007, I was in a bookstore close to the Ave and found a book by Angela Davis with the title, *If They Come in the Morning: Voices of Resistance*. This book in particular contains writings by and about imprisoned radical intellectuals. As I flipped through the book, I landed on an entry on Reies López Tijerina and La

Alianza. Tijerina's name struck an uncanny chord with me. As I began to read the entry, stories of the courthouse raid from my grandfather began to resurface. Memories recurred of an old and tattered book that I had once been shown which had a picture of him being held by the State Police at the Alianza camp in Canjilón after the raid. Memories of Tijerina visiting our house for breakfast one morning came back vividly. It now made sense why my family would refer to the time my grandfather ran for US President against Richard Nixon, while my grandmother ran for Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico. It was literally one of those moments where you can recognize that things will never be the same in your life. It was also one of those moments where you recognize that before you lay a long, tangled, and mysterious journey, one with many paths, and many codes to decipher and with no definite point of arrival.

*Forgotten Pueblos: La Alianza Federal de Mercedes and the Cultural Politics of Indo-Hispano* comprises an attempt to decipher what this itinerant journey has revealed since that one summer night in 2007 when everything changed. In the subsequent years I have interviewed both of my grandparents and my mom, Gail Trujillo. I have become acquainted with and interviewed Reies López Tijerina. I have read everything I could find in our library on Tijerina, La Alianza, and the Chicana/o movement. I delved into the historiography of Spanish and Mexican land grants in New Mexico. I sifted through boxes and boxes of possessions stored in my family's garage looking for any hidden or forgotten documents or flyers from back in the day. With the assistance of a fellowship through the New Mexico Office of the State Historian, I performed over 80 hours of archival research on La Alianza in the Center for Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico. If anything, my encounter with the massive amount of archived and uncollected documentation on the movement affirms Hayden White's observation that the "historical documents are not less opaque than the texts studied by the literary critic. Nor is the

world those documents figure more accessible. The one is no more ‘given’ than the other. In fact, the opaqueness of the world figured in historical documents is, if anything, increased by the production of historical narratives.”<sup>1</sup>

As a literary critic and descendant of former Aliancistas engaging with a topic generally reserved for historians, I approach the writings produced by and about La Alianza as a rich site of cultural production. These writings take multiple forms: articles in local, national, and international newspapers; scripts of radio and television speeches; public flyers, posters, and pamphlets; letters to state, federal, and international politicians; *corrido* lyrics; internal position papers; and “direct action” planning documents. The primary focus of each chapter centers upon various historical writings engendered by La Alianza over the span of its roughly 15-year existence. By situating these documents as cultural texts, I demonstrate how La Alianza significantly interrupted the institutionalized forgetting of Native and New Mexican land grant loss within US law and public culture.

La Alianza’s discourse of mestizaje is a central mode of refusal of the border-making practices of US national sovereignty, private property, and public culture. *Forgotten Pueblos* reads La Alianza’s history writing for the way it uses the term Indo-Hispano to invoke a distinct past of mestizaje that is tied to New Mexican land grants. As a term, Indo-Hispano is derived from Tijerina’s legal and historical research in the archives of Spanish colonial law located in Mexico, Spain, and Santa Fe. Through this research, Tijerina discovers the term Indo-Hispano in *Las Leyes de las Indias*, the civil and administrative codes of Spanish colonialism. Throughout and beyond Tijerina’s tenure with La Alianza, the “Royal Laws of the Indies” provided numerous historiographical, legal, and public world-making functions for the movement’s strategy of land grant reclamation. Often paired with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the

constitutions of the United States and the State of New Mexico, Indo-Hispano resignified the mestizo/a legacies of New Mexico's land grant heirs as "offspring of the Indian and the Spanish," born on Oct. 19, 1514. With this history, Indo-Hispano is frequently invoked in multiple Alianza representational forums as the term assigned to children of mixed European and indigenous descent meant to signal their status as a novel race.

A central intervention I am attempting to make with this project is to situate La Alianza's deployment of Indo-Hispano in a way that disorganizes dominant understandings of mestizaje in the United States offered by Chicana/o, Latino/a, and Latin American studies. This is significant because mestizaje is often considered the privileged term for naming the legacies of colonial mixture and contact of European and indigenous peoples in the Americas and provides a dominant logic of racial and gendered identity underwriting Latin American postcolonial nationalisms. Chicana/o, Latina/o, and Latin American studies also reference mestizaje as the central trope of Chicana/o racial identification. These fields of study produce a historical script of Chicana/o mestizaje as an appropriation of post-revolutionary Mexican national discourse in an effort to affirm a racially mixed subject of legal and cultural rights that counters the historic and contemporary forms of US white supremacy based on the racial purity and hypodescent of the black/white binary.

Despite its explicit attachments to Spanish colonial discourse, Chicana/o historiography characterizes Indo-Hispano as both influential to visions of Chicana/o mestizaje and as a predominantly regionalized formation reflecting the idiosyncrasies of New Mexican race relations.<sup>2</sup> As a result, Indo-Hispano is cast as predating, reinforcing, and yet diverging from the construction of several foundational symbols and imaginaries of Chicana/o mestizaje within and

beyond a cultural nationalist context that appropriate Mexican nationalist discourse, which include Aztlán, the critical deployment of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and the Borderlands.

*Forgotten Pueblos* situates Indo-Hispano as a discourse of mestizaje localized in New Mexico and discrete from Chicana/o mestizaje. I argue that Indo-Hispano re-writes the mestiza/o pasts of genízaro Indians, detribalized Plains and Pueblo Indian captives who were forcibly resettled into *ejido* land grants as a buffer to protect the Spanish colonial interior in New Mexico from Plains Indian raids during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Given the high number of women and children captives taken from Pueblo and Plains tribes, I situate the political economy of genízaro land grant tenure and loss in New Mexico as processes constituted through a transcultural “traffic in women” which bound together mestizaje, male honor, slave holding, and hybridized colonial and tribal territorialities. Many of the *ejido* land grants that came to be occupied by genízaro Indians are the very settlements that were targeted for dispossession with the imposition of private property under US law. In this sense, I situate La Alianza’s history writing as a subaltern historiography born from the intersection of Tijerina’s transnational archival research and the subjugated memories of genízaro Indians and their tenure on and loss of *ejido* land grants under US national sovereignty.

Within these overlaid colonial constraints, La Alianza’s textual production insists that Indo-Hispano ought to be considered in a much longer history of colonial hybridity, gender violence, and tribal insurrection in the Americas that is not bound to the Mexican nationalist version of mestizaje appropriated by the Chicana/o movement. Rather, linking Indo-Hispano to genízaro land tenure and loss recuperates an alternative imaginary for indigenous land reclamation and mestizo/a hybridity in the Americas. This act of recuperation is not interested in submitting La Alianza’s history writing to an empirical ledger of historical truth and falsehood.

Rather, I situate these documents as one site in a larger strategy undertaken by La Alianza to unthink the nationalist histories that naturalize private property and the force of US national sovereignty. In other words, La Alianza's deployment of Indo-Hispano is relevant because it teaches us something about the relevance of writing as a social movement strategy. This has prompted a reading of Indo-Hispano alongside an array of multi-ethnic border narratives that center linkages between mestizaje and territoriality across the Americas. In other words, my focus on the writing of Indo-Hispano is also about rendering visible cognate modes of indigenous insurrection that refigure the labor of writing into non-modern strategies of telling the past and reclaiming the land that inhere within a multiplicity of borderland positions.

### **The Almanac as a Model for the Subaltern Historiography of Indo-Hispano**

To clarify the points made above and to come to a working definition of the term "subaltern historiography," I want to turn to a brief reading of a section in Leslie Marmon Silko's novel, *Almanac of the Dead*.<sup>3</sup> The centrality of the "Almanac," a text that itself circulates within the novel, gives me a language to resignify the transnational, hybridized, and coalitional dimensions of Indo-Hispano. In my second chapter, I examine *Almanac of the Dead* as a site of cultural production that offers an alternative theorization of indigenous and mestiza/o difference to the foundational tropes and historiographical scripts of Chicana/o mestizaje. Yet for the purposes here, I will explain how the novel permits a reappraisal of the geo-historical boundaries by which we know La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics. At stake here is making the case for how the writing of Indo-Hispano invokes a radicalism that converges with the temporalities of transnational indigenous land reclamation struggles of our contemporary moment. In these terms, this is a project about reframing La Alianza's status in Chicano/a studies

in a way that opens up the movement's relation to indigenous studies and Latin American studies.

The epistemology of the writing and circulation of the Almanac as a text within the ongoing and emergent indigenous uprising depicted in the novel offers a paradigmatic metaphor of history writing by which I am able to interpret the scattered, heterogeneous, and multiform texts that comprise *Indo-Hispano*. The Almanac makes its appearance into Zeta and Lecha's lives through their Yaqui grandmother, Yoeme. In the section entitled "The Border" we are transported to Lecha and Zeta's childhood encounter with Yoeme one afternoon. Seeing the "rapidly moving...very old woman, dressed in a long black dress and black shawl" Zeta whispers to Lecha, "the old woman was an Indian."<sup>4</sup>

"*You* are Indians!" Yoeme yells as she turns into the gateway. "Dumb girls! I'm your grandmother!" As their maternal grandmother, Yoeme is treated as the family pariah. The girls "had heard their uncles and aunties discuss a certain someone. Zeta had overheard them wishing the old woman had died...because she is an Indian. Grandpa Guzman's family didn't like Indians." As Yoeme and the twins become acquainted, we learn the significance of the family disdain for "Indians" and Yoeme's prolonged exile through a story of cottonwood trees. Yoeme tells the twins, "the fucker Guzman, your grandfather, sure loved trees."<sup>5</sup> As a Mexican settler, Grandpa Guzman owned Indian slaves who would transport cottonwood saplings hundreds of miles from the Rio Yaqui to the family's ranch. Yoeme importantly situates Guzman's practice of slave owning in the context of colonial warfare over tribal lands. "They had been killing Indians right and left. It was war! It was white men coming to find more silver, to steal more Indian land. It was white men coming with their pieces of paper! To make their big ranches.

Guzman and my people had made an agreement. Why do you think I was married to him? For fun? For love? Hah! To watch, to make sure he kept the agreement.”<sup>6</sup>

Casting marriage as a clandestine strategy of tribal and colonial coalition for the protection of tribal lands, Yoeme’s encounter with Guzman is evocative of legacies of *genízaro* captivity and land grant tenure and loss in New Mexico. Yet as Yoeme’s tale continues, we learn the significance of the cottonwood trees for Guzman as tools for Indian lynchings because “bullets, she explained, cost too much.”<sup>7</sup> Unable to stand the sight of the cottonwoods being used as tools for colonial warfare and terror, Yoeme orders a crew of Guzman’s gardeners to raze the trees. After cleaning out Guzman’s safe, Yoeme and the gardeners run off to their villages in the mountains, never to be seen again until the birth of Zeta and Lecha.

It is in this context of colonial warfare for land, tribal exile and coalition, and the violent racial and gendered legacies of *mestizaje* that Yoeme’s notebooks gain significance as the *Almanac*. Chanette Romero argues that “Unlike the three known Mayan almanacs named after the European cities in which they are now located—Madrid, Dresden, and Paris—Silko imagines a fourth almanac that is protected for centuries from destruction and obsolescence by American Indians from multiple tribes located on either side of what is now the U.S.-Mexico border.”<sup>8</sup> As a text that relies on its survival through cross-border tribal coalitions, we learn that Yoeme tasks Zeta with the labor of deciphering “Yoeme’s scrawls in misspelled Spanish.”<sup>9</sup> Lamenting that a section of the notebooks had been lost before it was given to her, Yoeme tells the twins that they must “understand how carefully the old manuscripts and its notebooks must be kept. Nothing must be added that was not already there. Only repairs are allowed, and one might live as long as I have and not find a suitable code.”<sup>10</sup>

As a text that circulates within the novel's plot, the almanac is depicted as a collectively authored palimpsest of tribal storytelling, a living text of tribal survivance waged through what Gerald Vizenor calls the "ruins of representation" that constitute Euroamerican epistemology.<sup>11</sup> Yet this vision of the almanac is not merely a thematic concern. It is rather the constitutive element of the novel's form. The novel itself takes the almanac as its own formal principal. The almanac form is a key site for the self-referentiality of the novel's narrative strategy. That is, there is a productive slippage between the *Almanac* as the name of the novel and the almanac as a text that circulates within the novel's layered narratives of land reclamation.

This slippage heightens the paradoxical work Zeta and Lecha must perform with the Almanac. On the one hand, Yoeme tasks them to keep the Almanac strictly preserved and unchanged. Yet this command is complemented by the presumption that the almanacs are coded texts that require the labor of decipherment and transcription. That is, in order for the stories and knowledges of the past and future to be recognized, they must be rearticulated within the languages, mediums, technologies, and identities of a certain present. Indeed, as a passage in the Almanac states, "Sacred time is always in the Present." Yet at the same time, as Zeta relays to Lecha one afternoon, "Those old almanacs don't just tell you when to plant or harvest, they tell you about the days yet to come—drought or flood, plague, civil war... Once the notebooks are transcribed, I will figure out how to use the old almanac."<sup>12</sup>

The prophetic dimensions of the Almanac are amplified as we learn that Zeta works smuggling gold, drugs, and military arms with Calabazas, a Mexican-Yaqui Indian, while Lecha has gained international fame as a television psychic with powers to locate the dead. Part of the process by which Lecha gains knowledge of the dead's whereabouts is the keeping of her own notebooks. These notebooks allow Lecha to do the "translation work" of casting Yoeme's

“broken Spanish” and “corrupt Latin that no one could understand” into “narratives in English.”<sup>13</sup>

The interdependent issues of translation, memory, narrative, temporality and colonial violence condensed in the Almanac come to a head in Yoeme’s story of the “Journey of the Ancient Almanac.”<sup>14</sup> Yoeme’s story of the Almanac’s journey begins with a group of “fugitives” on a “long journey from the South...who carried the manuscript [and] suffered great hardships.”<sup>15</sup> The fugitives are the “last of their kind...those few survivors of the Butcher.” Faced with impending colonial annihilation, the fugitives argue over what to do with the manuscript. Some suggest sending the “strongest to make a run for it.” Others make the case for “dying together and allowing the almanac to die with them.” Yoeme states that the almanac “Was what told them who they were and where they had come from in the stories.” The debate among the fugitives is settled by dividing the almanac four ways among three young girls and a small boy to be carried North. “This way, if only one of the children reached safety far in the North, at least one part of the book would be safe. The people knew if even part of their almanac survived, they as a people would return someday.”<sup>16</sup>

Directed to elude “the slave catchers on horseback with dogs,” the four children leave at night with pages of the almanac sewn into their clothes. “They were told the ‘book’ they carried was the ‘book’ of all the days of their people. These days and years were all alive, and all these days would return again. The ‘book’ had to be protected at all costs.”<sup>17</sup> The journey is filled with hunger and takes the children through “barren terrains” where no large animals lived “because the aliens had slaughtered all these creatures to feed themselves and their soldiers and their slaves.” Hunger drives one of the children to begin to consume parts of the Almanac written on “horse gut” as they encounter an abandoned village where they meet a “hunchbacked woman left

behind by the others when they fled the invaders and their soldiers.”<sup>18</sup> After deciding to stay, rest, and help the woman collect bulbs and roots to make a stew, three of the children slept. The eldest, although unable to read the writing of the almanac, commits a page written on dried horse-gut to memory and drops it in the stew.

The stew re-nourishes everyone, and the children come to the realization that the hunchbacked woman would have probably died were it not for their arrival. Yet the girl who had first sucked on the horse gut page, suspecting the source of the stew’s nourishment, tells the other children. They fight but ultimately decide to not eat anymore of the almanac and to continue going north, in spite of the realization that their departure will certainly bring death to the old hunchback woman. After strategizing their route and time of departure, the children notice the old woman beckon them in a language they couldn’t understand to put another page of the almanac in the pot. “But their elders had warned them they must be prepared for ‘such hosts’ because the epoch that was dawning was known by different names from tribe to tribe, but their people called the epoch Death-Eye Dog. During the epoch of Death-Eye Dog human beings, especially the alien invaders, would become obsessed with hungers and impulses commonly seen in wild dogs.”<sup>19</sup>

Upon their departure, the girl who had sucked on the horse gut page decides to stay for a while longer and promises to follow right behind. Refusing the warnings from the oldest girl to come along, we learn that the “last they ever saw of her was in front of the house of woven river reeds, accepting a bowl of stew from the crippled woman, who was smiling broadly and nodding her head enthusiastically.”<sup>20</sup> The next day the eldest girl sneaks back to the village while the others slept. “She had gone for the pages, not for their companion.” Upon her arrival she finds the hunchback woman sleeping under a cottonwood tree and searches among the abandoned

houses until she comes to a “structure that had been used by the men for ceremonial purposes.” Paralyzed with fear yet certain that she must enter, she finds her companion dead, “hanging from the crossbeams of the roof.” Realizing that the hunchback woman had probably “feasted upon the liver or the heart, known to be the preferred delicacies,” and had not yet begun eating the pages, the eldest girl puts the garment over her own and escapes. We are told, “The epoch of Death-Eye Dog is, of course, notorious for just this sort of thing.” “Death-Eye Dog has been seated on the throne for five hundred years. His influence has been established across this entire world.”<sup>21</sup>

It is here that Yoeme reiterates the power of the almanac. “You see, it had been the almanac that had saved them. The first night, if the eldest had not sacrificed a page from the book, that crippled woman would have murdered them all right then, while the children were weak from hunger and the longer journey.”<sup>22</sup>

Yoeme’s story of the Almanac offers the realization that contemporary territorial arrangements in the Americas inherit structures of power that maintain the erasure of tribal life worlds. Yet her story adds to this the revelation that Euroamerican territorial dominance is imposed and, more important, contested at the level of discourse and representation—or what the novel calls “stories.”<sup>23</sup> The point is not to tell the definitive story. It is about keeping open the possibility of telling more stories. The almanac thereby importantly links the concerns of historical temporality, territorial contestation, and identity formation in Euroamerican colonial modernity through the mediatory site of culture. Yet in doing so, the Almanac refuses a nationalist and cultural nationalist logic of defining culture as transmitted through tradition and familial inheritance. Bloodlines are at once broken, remade, disavowed, and held as inalienable. More important, it is the stories, not blood, that conjure the coherency of the people. The

transmission of the almanac mobilizes a logic of indigenous descent that cross-pollinates tribal and colonial regimes of historical discourse and territory.

And, equally as significant, the almanac refuses a logic of land reclamation based solely at the level of the law, or through legal redress. Reciting Yoeme's "arguments and crazed legal theories," Zeta ruminates that there "was not, and there never had been, a legal government by Europeans anywhere in the Americas. Not by any definition, not even by the Europeans' own definitions and laws. Because no legal government could be established on stolen land. Because stolen land never had clear title."<sup>24</sup> Instead, the Almanac offers a practice of counter-memory textualized through an unstable and clandestine set of narratives indexing a heterogeneous overlay of tribal, colonial, and national temporalities. "The pages of ancient paper had been found between the pages of horse-gut parchment carried by the fugitive Indian slaves who had fled north to escape European slavery." Through this overlay, cultural politics becomes in the novel a key site for reclaiming Native land and dismantling the geo-historical regimes of Euroamerican modernity. Lecha recalls, "Yoeme and others believed the almanac had living power within it, a power that would bring all the tribal people of the Americas together to retake the land."<sup>25</sup> Yet as a document that tells the story of a people, it is not an encyclopedia, not an origin story, not a dictionary. It is a collectively written text produced as a narrative contest to the duration of Euroamerican colonial genocide. As a mode of historical narrative, the almanac is partial, moving, incomplete. It is constituted through framed, coded, displaced, and layered narratives that confound a desire to locate history as a practice of authenticating pasts and storytellers. "Whole sections had been stolen from other books...Not even the parchment pages or fragments of ancient paper could be trusted; they might have been clever forgeries, recopied, drawn, and colored painstakingly."<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, the almanac offered prophecies to the people

“about the appearance, conflict with, and eventual disappearance of things European.”<sup>27</sup> In this sense, even as it is used for prediction, the almanac’s textual logic refuses to be subsumed in the master narratives and temporalities legitimating Euroamerican colonial modernity.

The layered narratives by which we apprehend the significance of the almanac offer a lexicon for apprehending indigenous presences within the Euroamerican representational venues charged with their erasure. In this sense, the almanac functions as a type of subaltern historiography. By using “historiography,” I want to mark how the almanac operates as an intervention into the *methodology* of history writing, recognizing that the method of Euroamerican historical writing is premised on genocidal principles of indigenous territorial and linguistic erasure. And I find the term “subaltern” useful to describe the displaced and fugitive nature of writing within the almanac. In this regard, taking the form of the almanac as a model for a type of indigenous subaltern historiography means that we must confront the heterogeneity of forms, identities, and positions by which tribal pasts, presents, and futures find articulation. As an intervention into the textualization of colonial histories that rationalize the practices and principles of genocidal violence against indigenous life worlds, the almanac affirms the utility of oral, performative, textual, and iconographic modes of historical representation. In these terms, *Almanac* can be seen as a text that works toward dislodging English as a European language and history writing as a colonialist and nation-building labor. Indeed, the novel’s rearticulation of historiography and the English language as vehicles for invoking a non-European indigenous future asks us to conceive of colonial languages and the labor of history writing as crucial sites for the re-indigenization of the Americas.

This insight offered by the novel opens up a mode of reading indigenous presences in Indo-Hispano cultural production that foregrounds the role of history writing in regulating the

forms of mestiza/o-tribal coalition and non-modern territorialities in the overlaid colonial and tribal orders localized in New Mexico. *Almanac* allows me to localize the cultural politics of Indo-Hispano as a discourse that articulates a coalitional Indigeneity that is non-analogous to an imaginary of Indian subjects trafficked by Chicana/o nationalism, Mexican mestizo nationalism, and the blood quantum racial politics of US Federal Tribal recognition. *Almanac* asks us to locate culture as a key medium of struggle in La Alianza's strategy of land reclamation. In other words, *Almanac* stakes a definition of culture as a site where indigenous territorial struggles are predicated on a network of tribal and mestiza/o coalitions that subvert the overlaid racial taxonomies of Spanish colonialism and US imperial nationalism. This insight allows me to resituate Indo-Hispano as a mode of subaltern historiography re-inscribing the tribal legacies of *genízaro* land grant tenure into a narrative that casts Indigeneity into coalitional terms, all with the purpose of dispensing with the dominance of US regimes of private property.

By framing Indo-Hispano as a subaltern historiography, my project does not offer an account of a particularist racial term nor am I seeking to "fill the gap" of Chicana/o and New Mexican land grant historiography. Rather, approaching Indo-Hispano as a subaltern historiography requires an account of the forces and discourses that enabled me to *not* hear my grandfather's stories. In doing so, I have pursued an investigation of the ways that La Alianza's emergence and production of Indo-Hispano permits rumination on what Lisa Lowe has termed "*the politics of our lack of knowledge*" that attend modern strictures of history, whiteness, and private property in New Mexico.<sup>28</sup> As texts re-writing the national histories that sanctioned collective amnesia of Mexican and Native land loss, La Alianza's history writing therefore also refused the racial, legal, and cultural borders constructed through the imposition of private property in New Mexico under US national sovereignty. And, as I detail in my chapter

breakdown, this project has sought to cultivate the relevance of literary production in the effort to speak back to my grandfather's narration of his labor in La Alianza and his critical account of what he calls "our people, the Indiano" or "Indo-Hispano."

**Writing the Local, Dismantling the National: The Chapter Breakdown of *Forgotten Pueblos***

If La Alianza remains a complex and contentious object of study, it is because it is constituted through a variety of historical forces, territorial designs, racial formations, institutional bodies, tribal legacies, and colonial empires that happen to converge in New Mexico. By engaging the multiple forces and institutions vying for control over the land now called New Mexico, *Forgotten Pueblos* is, quite simply, an attempt to tell a story of Indo-Hispano as a strategy of local insurrection that centers the politics of Indigeneity. As Silko's use of the Almanac reveals, thinking the local in indigenous terms is also an exercise in thinking globally with frameworks that diverge from national and colonial frames of temporality and territory. In a different register, Andrea Muehlebach claims that a hallmark of what she terms "the transnational indigenous movement" is its "attempt to achieve local freedom via the usage of a global language...that activists refuse to have reduced to claims to statehood."<sup>29</sup> Because of its affirmation of indigenous memory within global metaphors and languages, *Almanac of the Dead* acts as a paradigmatic text for thinking the local legacies of genízaro land grant mestizaje rearticulated by Indo-Hispano. In this way, *Forgotten Pueblos* attempts to render a story of Indo-Hispano mestizaje that affirms local and global imperatives condensed in La Alianza's movement. Yet, as each chapter demonstrates, in order to have the conditions to tell this story, the modern categories of the state, race, gender, law, property, history, and literary form through which we map and historicize what we now call New Mexico must be undone.

## **Chapter 1. *Mi Lucha por la Tierra* and the Fugitive Textuality of *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes***

My first chapter critically rehearses the story of *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* as offered through the discursive matrices of Tijerina's biographers, Chicana/o and Latina/o studies, and New Mexico historiography. In these terms, this chapter demonstrates how La Alianza is rendered as an object of knowledge in the service of a master narrative that situates the 1967 Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid as the apex of its social movement and Tijerina's political activism. I argue that the master narrative of the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid is structured through heteropatriarchal representational imperatives which confine La Alianza's knowability as an appendage to three distinct yet intertwined discursive formations: 1. Biographical accounts of La Alianza president, Reies López Tijerina; 2. The historiography of Chicana/o cultural nationalism; 3. The nationalist historiography of New Mexico. Even as these discursive formations remain crucial to understanding La Alianza's emergence, contradictions, tactics, and dissolution, I argue that they nonetheless inhibit a robust engagement with La Alianza's legacy of land grant recovery on its own terms and therefore act as a form of containment.

From this space, this chapter engages with the first of these dominant discursive modes of containment: the (auto)biographical discourse of Reies López Tijerina. By reappraising Tijerina's epic life story, *Mi lucha por la tierra* (1978), I situate the text as unevenly embodying the Latin American testimonio genre. Through the lens of testimonio, I begin to decenter Tijerina's pivotal role in coining La Alianza's Indo-Hispano mestizaje within the context of the state sanctioned modes of violence used to contain La Alianza's struggles. In this regard, my analysis of *Mi lucha por la tierra* takes the first steps in uncovering and crafting a story of La Alianza that exposes a much more fluid and tactical deployment of Indo-Hispano as a critique of the regimes of knowledge and punishment within state power in the Americas. Through the lens

of testimonio, the text sets in relief a coalitional discourse of indigenous protest at work that cannot be captured through by the state sponsored regimes of race, history, and territory of the US and Mexico.

**Chapter 2. Cartographies of Forgetting and Futurity: Indo-Hispano, Chicana/o Mestizaje, and *Almanac of the Dead***

This chapter traces the affinities and divergences between Indo-Hispano and Chicana/o *mestizaje* as told within Chicana/o, Latina/o, and Latin American studies. While the racial, gendered, and nationalist logic of Chicana/o *mestizaje* remains the subject of critical scrutiny from an array of disciplinary formations, very little attention has been paid to Indo-Hispano as a distinct iteration of *mestizaje* deployed in the context of La Alianza's struggle for Spanish and Mexican land grant reclamation in New Mexico during the 1960s and '70s. I argue that even as Indo-Hispano predated, co-existed, and summoned the construction of several "foundational" symbols and imaginaries of Chicana/o *mestizaje* within and beyond a cultural nationalist context, Chicana/o, Latino/a, and Latin American studies produce Indo-Hispano as a forgettable object of knowledge. I demonstrate how the forgetting of Indo-Hispano is achieved through a cross-disciplinary historiographical script that casts the emergence of Chicana/o *mestizaje* solely as a strategic appropriation of postrevolutionary Mexican national discourse within US based civil rights struggles. This account of Chicana/o *mestizaje* serves as perhaps the most prominent connective thread between cultural nationalist historiographical accounts of Chicana/o *mestizaje* and subsequent feminist and transnational interventions and critiques of Chicana/o *mestizaje* across multiple disciplinary formations. I demonstrate how this script produces a memory of Indo-Hispano as at once foundational, subsumable, and forgettable to a more "pliable" and "open-ended" Chicana/o cultural nationalism territorialized under the tropic force of *Aztlán*.

This chapter concludes by situating *Almanac of the Dead*, the epic novel of indigenous land reclamation by Leslie Marmon Silko, as a discursive stage of Indigeneity from which I can write against the performed forgetting of Indo-Hispano. I frame *Almanac* as a critique of the racial logic of nationalist and revolutionary projects of mestizaje and therefore read it against the unifying historiographical script of Chicana/o mestizaje that secures Indo-Hispano erasure. More specifically, I elucidate the ways in which the novel offers a sustained critique of the normative (cultural) nationalist geographies and temporalities tethered to the production of “Indian” subjects under Mexican and Chicana/o mestizaje. My turn to *Almanac of the Dead* is taken with the desire to formulate an elsewhere to the discursive constraints of Chicana/o mestizaje and open up a different type of knowledge project to think Indo-Hispano within the heterogeneity of mestiza/o and indigenous struggles for land reclamation in the Americas. Through this analysis, I elaborate on *Almanac of the Dead*’s status as a paradigmatic text of my dissertation for how it gives a language to map and narrate the emergence of Indo-Hispano as a local discourse of mestizaje waged within the nested problematics of land reclamation, cultural production, coalitional politics, language, territoriality, state violence, and historiography in the context of the overlaid tribal and colonial orders constituting New Mexico.

### **Chapter 3. “U.S.A. is Trespassing in New Mexico”: *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* and the Subaltern Historiography of Indo-Hispano**

To counter the cross-disciplinary narrative of Chicana/o mestizaje outlined in chapter two, this chapter analyzes La Alianza’s history writing to situate Indo-Hispano as a distinct iteration of mestizaje that re-articulates the pasts of *genízaro* Indians, detribalized Plains and Pueblo Indian captives who were resettled into *ejido* land grant formations as a buffer to protect the Spanish colonial interior in New Mexico from Plains Indian raids during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Rather than treating La Alianza’s writings solely as an effect of Tijerina, I position La

Alianza's history writing as a subaltern historiography born out of the intersection of Tijerina's transnational archival research and the subjugated memories of genízaro land-grant tenure and loss furnished by La Alianza members. While historiographical accounts of genízaro territoriality and the imposition of US State power in New Mexico depicts key conditions of emergence for La Alianza, these accounts are nonetheless insufficient for understanding La Alianza's historiography in its own right as a corpus of writing which at once sought to rearticulate the legacies of genízaro mestizaje and un-think the racial logic of US private property and the legal legitimacy of the US state.

As such, the main objective of this chapter is to map out how Indo-Hispano textual production and its genealogy in genízaro territoriality converges with the discourses and tactics of transnational indigenous social movements negotiating settler colonial power in the Americas. I explore how this convergence is manifest through the question of history writing as a vexed practice of subaltern insurrection and colonial counterinsurgency. By reading a handful of La Alianza public flyers and pamphlets, I trace the mestiza/o pasts of genízaro territoriality inscribed into Indo-Hispano in order to render visible the indigenous, hybridized, and coalitional nature of La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics. In doing so, I make the case for how Indo-Hispano as a discourse converges with the indigenous temporalities evoked by Zapatismo over *ejido* land grant struggles in Chiapas, Mexico, in our contemporary moment.

#### **Chapter 4. "Remember the Times when it was the Woman Who Did the Building": *El Grito del Norte*, *So Far From God*, and the Indo-Hispano as a Cooperative Mode of Power**

This chapter engages most explicitly with the gendered politics of writing in La Alianza's movement by analyzing the distinct articulation of Indo-Hispano mestizaje found in its newspaper, *El Grito del Norte*, and its complex textual relation with Ana Castillo's novel, *So Far From God*. By emphasizing the mestiza/o legacies of the land grants and abandoning Tijerina as

the implied author of La Alianza's textual production, I situate *El Grito* and *So Far From God* exist as distinct texts produced through the encounters of formally educated feminist writers with the subjugated legacies of race and gender tied to land grant territoriality localized in New Mexico. For this reason, even as both texts remain significant and distinct sites of Chicana feminist critique, this chapter explores their shared and uncanny articulation of La Alianza's discourse of Indo-Hispano mestizaje.

I argue that both texts elaborate Indo-Hispano's subaltern historiography into a radicalism that worked to "defeudalize" the masculinist strictures of La Alianza's organizational structure as well as the heteropatriarchal imperatives of Chicano cultural nationalism that rely on metaphors of the heterosexual family for signifying oppositional collectivity. As distinct yet cognate projects of mestiza textual defeudalization, I demonstrate how *El Grito* and *So Far from God* together articulate what I call a "cooperative mode of power" that differentially draws from the subaltern legacies of genízaro land grant mestizaje in order to render a vision of cooperativity that is in excess of the feudal constraints of familial collectivity tied to Chicano nationalism, La Alianza's masculinist organizational structure, and Mexican and US national power. As a result, I demonstrate how both texts outline a theory of writing memories of land grant mestizaje into narratives that cast indigeneity into coalitional terms and refuse the gendered and racial constraints of private property under US national sovereignty.

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1. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

2. George Mariscal writes: "It is important to note that Tijerina's 'nationalism' was not so much a 'Chicano nationalism' as it was an Indo-Hispano nationalism founded on the cultural particularities of New Mexican culture and history." Yet he also states that "Tijerina and the Alianza, far from the major urban centers, promoted an Indo-Hispano identity that coincided with and indirectly contributed to an emergent Chicana/o militancy in the cities." See, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 187.

3. Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992).

4. *Ibid.*, 115.

5. *Ibid.*, 116.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, 118.

8. Channette Romero, "Envisioning a 'Network of Tribal Coalitions:' Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*," *The American Indian Quarterly* 26 (4) (Fall 2002), 624-5.

9. *Almanac of the Dead*, 134; 246.

10. *Ibid.*, 129.

11. Silko writes, "They never discussed the story Yoeme had told them on the beach, but Lecha had been careful to write it down in the notebook with the blank pages. After she had written it, old Yoeme had demanded to see it, and it was then they realized it as the first entry that had been written in English. Zeta waited for Yoeme to break into a fury. But she had rocked herself from side to side, sighing with pleasure. Yoeme claimed this was the sign the keepers of the notebooks had always prayed for" (130).

12. *Ibid.*, 137.

13. *Ibid.*, 174.

14. *Ibid.*, 245.

15. *Ibid.*, 246.

16. *Ibid.*, 247.

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17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, 248.

19. *Ibid.*, 251.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, 252.

22. *Ibid.*

23. From Yoeme's notebooks: "One day a story will arrive at your town. It will come from far away, from the southwest or southeast—people won't agree. The story may arrive with a stranger or perhaps with the parrot trader. But when you hear this story, you will know it is the signal for you and the others to prepare" (135).

24. *Ibid.*, 133.

25. *Ibid.*, 569.

26. *Ibid.*, 570.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Lisa Lowe, "The Intimacies of Four Continents," in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 206.

29. Andrea Muehlebach, "What Self in Self Determination? Notes from the Frontiers of Transnational indigenous Activism," *Global Studies in Culture and Power* 10 (2003), 241, 244.

## Chapter One

### *Mi Lucha por la Tierra* and the Fugitive Textuality of *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes*

Perhaps the dead may be reduced to fixed forms, though their surviving records are against it.

—Raymond Williams

There are, for instance, several supernatural elements in the movement.

—Nancie L. González

### **The Framing of the Story**

This chapter critically rehearses the story of *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* as offered through the discursive matrices of Tijerina's biographers, Chicana/o and Latina/o studies, and New Mexico historiography. The story I strategically stage here is not meant to offer a definitive account of La Alianza, for to claim that this story has or should have a definitive account would defeat the purpose of my inquiry. Rather, this staging is a rehearsal and critique of a multiplicity of accounts of La Alianza's movement that have accrued definitive status. In these terms, this chapter demonstrates how La Alianza is rendered as an object of knowledge in the service of a master narrative that situates the 1967 Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid as the apex of its social movement and Tijerina's political activism. As Rudy Busto argues, accounts of La Alianza within Chicana/o and Latina/o studies remain dependent on the narratives contained within the four book-length biographies of Tijerina. These biographies are written by Anglophone writers and appeared within four years of 1967 courthouse raid. "Their immediate goal," Busto writes,

“is to provide the reader with an image of Tijerina at the height of his militant action and the Alianza’s visibility and potential successes in the land grant effort.” The effect of this constraint allows Chicana/o history to script “a master narrative assigning Tijerina the role of an armed Mexican revolutionary.”<sup>1</sup>

This chapter takes up Busto’s insight to reveal how the master narrative of the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid is structured through heteropatriarchal representational imperatives which confine La Alianza’s knowability as an appendage to three distinct yet intertwined discursive formations: 1. (Auto)biographical accounts of La Alianza president, Reies López Tijerina; 2. The historiography of Chicana/o cultural nationalism; 3. The nationalist historiography of New Mexico. Even as these discursive formations remain crucial to understanding La Alianza’s emergence, contradictions, tactics, and dissolution, I argue that they nonetheless inhibit a robust engagement with La Alianza’s legacy of land grant recovery on its own terms and therefore act as a form of containment.

As such, the critical rehearsal of La Alianza’s story engages with the discursive legacies transmitted from the historiography of Chicana/o cultural nationalism in order to re-evaluate, in the words of Emma Pérez, “the discursive formations that pattern the twentieth-century Chicana/o historical imagination defined as our self conscious recognition of who we are now and how we arrived here.”<sup>2</sup> As Pérez indicates, the labor of staging the dominant storyline of La Alianza is significant because it remains a powerful narrative unevenly documented in Chicana/o, Latina/o, and New Mexico historiography that continues to shape the ways in which these densely connected and conflicted fields of study historicize and map the contours of land loss, political struggle, racial identity, and historical transformation in New Mexico and the so-called US southwest. This is therefore not a critique of Chicana/o and Latina/o studies that

argues for an abandonment or a disqualification of these discursive formations. Rather, this chapter at once draws from, dwells in, and hews the limits of these intertwined yet distinct domains of knowledge. This means acknowledging that while La Alianza's presence and movement signifies a dense intersection of historical relations of force that exceed and escape the discursive, there is no site outside discourse from which I can know, tell, or redirect the telling of La Alianza's story. As a critical rehearsal, this chapter is compiled from a diverse set of textual sources, each produced in the demands of multiple social and historical contexts and ambitions. The task of rehearsing the story of La Alianza, therefore, treats these overlapped plotlines and historical narratives as both "collective fictions" and "undeniable truths."<sup>3</sup> The point is neither to "set the record straight" regarding La Alianza's role in cohering an emergent Chicana/o political class, nor is it about submitting the production of La Alianza's knowability to a stringently empirical ledger of truth and falsehood. This is instead an avowedly partial and situated rumination. It represents a reflection launched from the discourses generated by and about a profoundly contentious social movement that, in our present moment, finds itself elided from the "foundational" Chicana/o terms and imaginaries that it worked to construct. As such, a primary effort of this critical staging of La Alianza's story is to clear a space for refashioning the narrative arc, historical analytics, critical vocabulary, and cartographic imaginaries that Chicana/o and Latina/o studies offer for the comprehension of La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics in our contemporary moment.

From this space, this chapter concludes with a reappraisal of Tijerina's epic life story, *Mi lucha por la tierra* (1978). I situate the text as unevenly embodying Latin American testimonio writing in order to rethink Indo-Hispano mestizaje and the state sanctioned modes of violence used to contain La Alianza's struggles. By revisiting *Mi lucha por la tierra* as testimonio, I

intend to demonstrate that even as the scriptings of La Alianza produce and rely upon a codified structure of the past, they are nonetheless sites of interpretive contestation in the present. They are thereby evocative of a series of tactics and discourses with which the past may be remade.

In this regard, my analysis of *Mi lucha por la tierra* takes the first steps in uncovering and crafting a story of La Alianza that exposes a much more fluid and tactical deployment of Indo-Hispano as a contest to state power in the Americas, one that sets in relief multiple cartographies of indigenous protest at work that cannot be captured through by the state sponsored regimes of race, history, and territory of the US and Mexico. From this perspective, *Mi lucha por la tierra* depicts Indo-Hispano cultural politics in a way that asks us to rethink the politics of culture, indigeneity, citizenship, and racialized territoriality in the context of multiple state formations, colonial legacies, and tribal histories condensed in the locality we now call New Mexico.

### **The Story**

In the late 1950s, having fled a failed utopian project of Mexican American religious communalism called *El Valle de Paz* (The Valley of Peace) in Arizona, Reies López Tijerina arrives in New Mexico as a fugitive charged with possession of stolen land and an attempt to break his brother, Margarito, from the Pinal County Jail. All of Tijerina's biographers outline sketches of Tijerina's pre-activist life as a son among six children born to Mexican migrant farmworkers near San Antonio, Texas in 1926. They offer descriptions of Tijerina as an autodidact whose formal education extends no further than the acquisition of credentials to become a Pentecostal preacher from the Assembly of God Ministry in 1946. From then onward he is depicted as a highly unorthodox migratory minister, living hand to mouth, and crisscrossing the United States (even venturing into Mexico) with his first wife, Maria, and their three

children, David, Reies Jr., and Rose. It is noted that on several occasions during this period Tijerina is prone to undertaking sudden vows of poverty and renouncing all of his earthly possessions.

There accumulates an image of Tijerina in the years between his arrival in New Mexico and the official incorporation of La Alianza in 1962 as an erratically religious man who relinquishes his ministry duties in New Mexico to become engrossed with the Spanish and Mexican land grant history through conversations with community elders and local historical experts. He becomes acquainted with New Mexican *Penitentes*, a secret community of Catholic ascetics who are known for expressing religious devotion through self-flagellation and torture. He meets many ex-members of *Las Gorras Blancas* and *La Mano Negra*, two shadow organizations in northern New Mexico known for contesting Anglo encroachment on land-grant land with tactics of fence cutting, cattle rustling, and arson. In 1958, Tijerina takes a yearlong trip to Mexico to visit the General National Archives where he begins to study the history and politics of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. After a failed attempt to persuade the Mexican government to internationally intervene in the land grant struggle through the United Nations, Tijerina returns to the United States and begins to actively disseminate his findings of the land grant history to heirs around the state of New Mexico for the next three years.<sup>4</sup>

Modeled on the already existing Abiquiú Corporation in New Mexico—an organization primarily concerned with New Mexican land grant issues whose principal tactic involved juridical litigation against the state—La Alianza emerges publicly on February 2, 1963, the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The purpose of the organization is to “‘organize and acquaint the heirs of all Spanish land-grants covered by the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty’ with their rights.”<sup>5</sup> La Alianza’s first convention is held that October. It draws

representatives from fourteen land grants, and sets into motion a series of efforts by Tijerina to publicize the land-grant history and garner new membership. These efforts include an intensive letter writing campaign to US and Mexican governmental officials and a weekly column in a local paper, *The News Chieftain*, elucidating the struggles and history of the land grant claimants. Tijerina would continue to write his weekly columns until 1965, the same year he began a daily, 15-minute radio program in Spanish on KABQ entitled “The Voice of Justice” and a weekly television program on Channel 4 in Albuquerque.

In these publicity efforts, Tijerina begins to talk about the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the state constitution of New Mexico, and *La Recopilación de leyes de las Indias* (The Laws of the Indies). He makes claims that the United States has violated Articles VII and IX of the treaty, the articles protecting the property rights and citizenship of annexed Mexicans. He invokes the Laws of the Indies as the legal framework for the Spanish land grants that had been violated in the process of US annexation. He begins to refer to the land-grant heirs, New Mexican Spanish-Americans, and Mexican-Americans throughout the United States as Indo-Hispanos. He claims that the Indo-Hispano people, as stated in the Laws of the Indies, were born on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1514. The Indo-Hispano, he announces weekly on TV and radio, is the “new breed” of mixed Spanish and Indian descent sanctioned by the authority of Spanish colonial law. The local press responds by calling Tijerina the “Don Quixote” of New Mexico.<sup>6</sup>

But who exactly are these land grant heirs to whom Tijerina speaks? All of Tijerina’s biographers go to great length to narrate the character of land grant heirs as “wildly incongruous in modern times.”<sup>7</sup> They are called “Spanish-Americans” or “Hispanos.” They trace their lineage back to the Spanish conquistadors and settlers of New Mexico. They have retained folk songs, religious dramas, community festivals, and a Spanish dialect from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Aside from

use of the Spanish language, they have little in common with Mexicans or other mestizo/as. They are concentrated in roughly Mora, Taos, and Río Arriba counties or have been forced into the throes of migrant farm work around the US. In the racial hierarchy of New Mexico, they are at once in coalition with and subordinated by Anglos. They are understood as distinct from the Pueblo Indians, and set against identifying with blackness. Spatially distant from the centers of Mexico and overwhelmed by the forces of US modernity, they either cling to their disappearing cultural heritage with growing bitterness, or they have succumbed to the forces of Americanization by going *vendido*, by selling out. They are a “forgotten people,” deprived of their traditional modes of agricultural subsistence through the legalized dispossession of their land since US annexation.<sup>8</sup> They are dependent on US welfare programs, represent one of the highest concentrations of poverty in the United States, and thrive in a “rare pocket of cultural and economic retardation.”<sup>9</sup> They are disaffected, semi-primitive, semi-feudal, suspicious to outsiders, prone to violence, and bear memories of past dispossessions.

Numbers and anecdotes are given to comprehend the losses. Between 15 and 35 million acres of the land acquired by the US after the Mexican-American War in 1848 was in the form of a Spanish or Mexican land grant. By 1910, seventy percent of that land is lost through a series of legal wranglings, US property tax impositions, political maneuverings, mistranslations, and outright thieveries within the land-grant adjudication process.<sup>10</sup> The contentious histories of the Tierra Amarilla, Maxwell, and San Joaquín land grants are invoked as evidence. The group of Anglo American lawyers, administrators, and politicians known as the Santa Fe Ring are mentioned as key perpetrators of deception and land robbery—especially the deeds of Thomas B. Catron. Every Territorial Governor from the 1860s to 1885 is said to be part of the ring. Tales are told of the establishment of surveyor-general courts designed to set up the basis for orderly

ownership of the territory in the late 1800s. Catron and his colleagues offer legal representation to families seeking US titles to their land. Legal fees exceed the means of the families. They are told not to worry, that the lawyers are generous and will take payment in the form of property. Over and again there is a persistent inability to make provisions for incorporating the communal aspect of *ejido* land-grant structures in US law. Cases are deferred, denied, pending appeal. Land that is pending appeal is settled by or sold to other Anglos. More Anglos come. More cases arise. More land is needed for payment.

In 1832, the Tierra Amarilla land grant was estimated at around 580,000 acres; the San Joaquín grant at around 600,000. By 1969, Tierra Amarilla is reduced to 10,000 acres. The same year San Joaquín is decimated to roughly 1,500 acres.<sup>11</sup> By 1901, Thomas Catron becomes the owner of the largest holdings of land in the United States. Compounding the memories of loss among the land-grant heirs is the expansion of the US Forest Service in the early and mid twentieth century. They witness the US Forest Service appropriate land-grant land into use for the “public domain,” require permits for grazing, firewood, and fishing on that land, and then go on to lease that very land to large, out-of-state logging, mining, and other resource extraction corporations.<sup>12</sup>

The estimation of New Mexico’s “Hispano”/“Spanish-Americans” political class in Chicana/o historiography points in two directions. They are lauded for their commitment to preserving “Hispano” cultural practices that were overwritten in the context of US imperialism. And they are critiqued for a perpetuation of the myth of the “Spanish Southwest,” which entails a disavowal of a relation with Mexico as a strategy of assimilative passing into whiteness for the protections of US citizenship. Often framed in a relation of distinction from and similarity to the emergence of the “Mexican-American” generation in California, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, the

“Spanish-American” nomenclature is traced to a diversity of causes: New Mexico’s spatial distance from Mexico, a strategic negotiation of US anti-Mexican racism, and the coupling of “Mexican prejudice with Spanish affect” on behalf of the imperialist Anglo-Americans.<sup>13</sup>

It is often noted that the formation and doctrine of La Alianza put the myth of the “Spanish Southwest” in crisis and opened up a non-assimilative language for understanding the historical dispossession of land-grant land offered through narratives that figured New Mexico as a land of tri-racial harmony between Anglos, Pueblo Indians, and Spanish-Americans.<sup>14</sup> Understood as an extension of the Spanish-American tradition and yet emblematic of an emerging Chicana/o political class, La Alianza’s doctrine of land reclamation was of interest to the liberal journalist, the Southwestern historian, the Chicana/o historiographer, as well as the anthropologist. In her anthropological study on the emergence of New Mexican “Spanish-Americans” written in 1969, Nancie L. González outlines the broad contours of La Alianza’s legal and political foundation for land-grant recovery. She lists them as follows:

1. The Laws of the Indies provided that the land grants made in the territory of New Spain should never be sold but should be passed on to the descendants of the original settlers.
2. The Laws of the Indies explicitly recognized the legitimacy of those persons born in the Americas, whether of Spanish or of mixed Spanish-Indian descent. The Alianza today claims that its members are neither ‘pure blood’ Spaniards nor ‘pure blood’ Indians, but a new mestizo race. Therefore, they cannot be held responsible for the wrongdoings of either original group. They also claim a status more honorable than that of many other ‘races’ in that their ‘birth

certificate' was given to them by Phillip II, King of Spain, in 1573. They prefer the term 'Indo-Hispano' for themselves.

3. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between Mexico and the United States provided for the inhabitants of the territory annexed in 1848, giving them the rights and privileges of U.S. citizens. The Constitution of the United States guarantees the property rights of its citizens.
4. According to the constitution of New Mexico (1911), "All the rights, privileges and immunities, civil, political, and religious, guaranteed to the people of New Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo will be preserved inviolable."
5. Those Spanish-Americans who sold their land, and especially those who allied themselves with Anglo interests to purchase lands from their more unfortunate brethren, acted illegally and immorally.
6. The problems and ills of the Spanish-speaking population of the Southwest today all stem from the loss of the bulk of the original Spanish land grants, amounting to some 4 million acres in all.
7. The Anglo-dominated federal and state governments have also been remiss in failing to protect the Spanish-speaking citizens of New Mexico from discrimination in the schools and in employment opportunities.
8. The Spanish-Americans should band together, as have other minority groups (Indians and Negroes) in the United States in recent years to seek redress for their wrongs in the courts of the United States and to secure equal rights under the laws of this country [the US].<sup>15</sup>

Most studies on the group and Tijerina articulate the aim of La Alianza's tactics of making the land-grant history public at this point in La Alianza's existence was an overall engagement with the US state at the legal, institutional level. "Tijerina believed," according to Lee Bebout, "his historical knowledge could lead to the recovery of lost lands, but it could only do so through an agency invested with power."<sup>16</sup> This belief takes Tijerina to Mexico multiple times in 1964 to meet with officials from governmental, popular movement, and media agencies in an effort to publicize the land grant movement in the United States and Mexico. In these conversations, a motorcade from Albuquerque to Mexico City is planned in an effort to publicize land grant issues to publics in the US and Mexico. While mapping the route of the motorcade in Chihuahua, however, Tijerina is arrested and deported to the United States and the motorcade never materializes. In the spring of 1966, Tijerina travels to Spain in order to conduct further research on the Laws of the Indies and to petition then dictator Generalissimo Franco for intervention into the land grant struggle in the US southwest. Formal gestures of solidarity mark the extent of the effort made by the Spanish government and press to intervene into the land-grant struggle.

Tijerina's research and publicity trips abroad culminate that year into a three-day, 60-mile march from Albuquerque to the state capitol in Santa Fe on the July 4 weekend. Leading a group of roughly 300 Aliancistas and supporters, Tijerina arrives in Santa Fe to find then New Mexico Governor Jack Campbell out of the state. After camping on the lawn of the State Capitol building for a week, Tijerina and a handful of Aliancistas eventually meet with and persuade Campbell to petition President Lyndon Johnson for an investigation into land grant claims. The following week, La Alianza's efforts are again challenged by Dr. Myra Ellen Jenkins, the New Mexico state archivist, who advises Campbell against any further dealings with the

organization.<sup>17</sup> “There is little historical validity to any of their claims,” Jenkins states, “Many members of the so-called Alianza were not descendants of any Spanish or Indian grantees. I feel there are outside influences which are reopening this old issue for pecuniary gain.”<sup>18</sup>

These setbacks and institutional evasions on behalf of the US, Mexican, and Spanish governments are typically narrated as the catalyst for the tactical transformation of La Alianza’s mission of land-grant recovery into “direct action” and “militaristic” practices—or, in other words, a move away from legalistic toward symbolic politics.<sup>19</sup> The first of these “direct action” practices takes place in October 1966, when La Alianza proclaimed the 500,000 acres of the Kit Carson National Forest as belonging to the legitimate heirs of the San Joaquin del Cañon del Rio de Chama land grant. With roughly three hundred members on hand, La Alianza sets up camp in the forest and renames the territory the sovereign “Free City-State” of the Republic of San Joaquín del Río de Chama. Signs are posted that declare the new republic’s borders and warn against trespassing, while men with rifles and badges patrol the area. Eviction papers are served to William D. Hurst, Kit Carson Forest Supervisor. Two Forest Service rangers are “arrested” and placed on “trial” for trespassing on Republic land before a panel composed of Alianza heirs to the land grant. After the self-appointed court sentences the rangers, they suspend punishment, impound their vehicles, and release them. Federal officers disband the camp a few days later with a restraining order. In addition to the accumulation of local and national publicity, a key goal of the performed reclamation, as many scholars point out, is the arrest of Tijerina on charges of trespassing: “The Alianza was not requesting an investigation; rather, they were hoping to force one. By occupying government land and refusing to pay park fees, Tijerina hoped to be tried for trespassing. Such a charge would require the government to prove ownership of the disputed lands.”<sup>20</sup> At the press conference held during the takeover, Tijerina proclaims this

“move was taken in view of the fact that the U.S. Government has ignored all pleas and petitions relative to these land grants. The town (San Joaquin) didn’t cease to exist just because it hasn’t been alive....it was never dissolved and we are reviving it under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.”<sup>21</sup>

Although no arrest is made in the name of trespassing on federal property, Tijerina and five other Aliancistas are arrested for interference of forest ranger duties in the San Joaquin takeover.<sup>22</sup> The takeover brings both a heightened level of urgency within La Alianza and an intensified campaign of surveillance and scrutiny from both the federal and local governments. This surveillance and scrutiny is applied on multiple fronts, which includes FBI, CIA, and NM State Police infiltration of the group. It also exists in tandem with a growing chorus of criticism from NM District Attorney Alfonso Sánchez, State Police Chief Joe Black, the conservative organization called the John Birch Society, and the *Albuquerque Journal* and *Tribune*. Together, they call Tijerina a thief, a confidence man, and a manipulator of innocent and unknowing Hispanos with false hopes for his own monetary benefit and fame.<sup>23</sup>

For the remainder of 1966 and into the following year, La Alianza continues its intensive letter writing campaign to the White House and stages a large protest in Albuquerque’s Old Town Plaza in the spring of 1967. With the publicity garnered from the Echo Amphitheater takeover, La Alianza accrues a growing constituency of younger members and an increased dialogue with multiple emergent Chicana/o organizations, including The Crusade for Justice in Denver, the Brown Berets in New Mexico and California, and the United Farm Workers (UFW) movement in Delano, CA. The rhetoric of confrontation between Tijerina and the state escalates as he announces plans to take over the Tierra Amarilla land grant in Northern New Mexico. There begins talk of a “race war” in the works in northern New Mexico. Rumors abound of

assassination squads, underground stockpiles of automatic weapons, guerrilla training camps, and the importation of communist revolutionaries from Cuba. There is a resurgence of fence cuttings, cattle rustlings, barn burnings, and irrigation ditch wreckage targeting Anglo landowners.<sup>24</sup>

In response, Sánchez takes to the local television and radio stations to declare La Alianza a “bunch of commies” who are sending “the wrong image of our people.”<sup>25</sup> New Mexico Governor David Cargo, a Republican who won his first term by courting the disaffected Hispano vote in the north, seeks mediation with the Alianza. A rift develops between Cargo and Sánchez over the handling of La Alianza, and the Governor’s office and the police force operating at the behest of Sánchez begin to work cross purpose. All of Tijerina’s biographers depict Governor Cargo seeking mediation and an “in-system” solution to the escalating tension between the State and La Alianza. On the other spectrum, Sánchez is figured with an unshakeable belief that Tijerina represents a threat to the status quo, one with unknown yet unmistakable communist leanings, which must be met with stern and heavy policing. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, Sánchez files an order in the US District Court requiring La Alianza to submit its internal files and membership list. In response a week later, Tijerina resigns as the president of La Alianza, disbands the organization, and reconstitutes the group as *La Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres* (The Federal Alliance of Free City States). Under its new moniker, Tijerina announces plans for an upcoming convention in Coyote, a small northern New Mexican town, to take place on June 3, 1967.

On June 1, Sánchez authorizes a statewide search for Tijerina and establishes blockades on the roads leading to Coyote. That same weekend, Governor Cargo flies to Michigan for a Republican Party fundraiser held by then Michigan Governor, George Romney. Tijerina and other core Aliancistas go underground as eleven Alianza members are arrested by state police on

counts of “unlawful assembly and extortion.”<sup>26</sup> Frustrated by the arrest of the Alianza members, Tijerina relocates the convention through word of mouth to the ranch of Aliancista Tobias Leyba, at the nearby town of Canjilón over the weekend. At Leyba’s ranch, Tijerina hears over the radio that Sánchez is scheduled to appear at the Tierra Amarilla courthouse that Monday, June 5, to formally charge the eleven Alianza members arrested days earlier. With this news, Tijerina proposes a citizens arrest of Alfonso Sánchez to the Aliancistas present at the meeting. They vote and approve the measure. Upon approval, Tijerina and twenty “People’s deputies,” including his teenage daughter, Rosita, gather hunting rifles, shotguns, dynamite, and other semi-automatic weapons. Once armed, the group separates into three pickup trucks. Two members sit in the front cab, while the rest hide under tarps in the tail bed. The three trucks stagger their departure to the courthouse so as not to arouse the suspicion of the police patrolling the area.

As the primary dramatic focus for Tijerina’s biographers, the happenings of the roughly hour and a half raid—its participants, the timing and scope of police response, the injuries it tolls, and its immediate national and international response—are all depicted with varying detail. As a result, there remain deeply contentious mysteries regarding which Aliancistas were present, which committed “criminal” activity, the extent of the raid’s premeditation, and the scale and intensity of police surveillance that preceded the raid. Yet in spite of the multiplicity of mysteries, there are several details that are often invoked and noted. We know that Sánchez never attended the courthouse that day, and that the eleven arrested Alianza members had already been arraigned and released on bail by the time Tijerina and the raiding crew arrived. In the recreation of the raid’s chronology, the shootings of Deputy Nick Saíz and Jailer Eulogio Salazar are almost always noted. Saíz is said to have been the recipient of the first shot of the raid, the bullet puncturing his lung and shoulder bone, by Alianza member Juan Valdez after

being warned to drop his weapon.<sup>27</sup> The shooting of Saíz is said to have ignited a flurry of gunplay from Alianza members. Doors are shot open, windows are shot out, and a fleet of police cars that lined the courthouse entrance is sprayed with bullets.

The profoundly controversial shooting of Salazar continues to mystify. While jumping out of the window of the Sheriff's office, Salazar is shot through his cheek. Both men, including undersheriff Dan Rivera who suffers a head wound during the raid, are transported to a local hospital by an ambulance called by Alianza members and survive the attack. The rest of the courthouse employees are herded into County Commission room without injury. Other state police begin to arrive at the scene of the raid, yet are driven off with gunfire from Aliancistas perched on the buildings across from the courthouse. As the raid loses steam and as the window of unchallenged occupation dwindles, the raiding group makes their scattered exit into the nearby mountains and back to the campground in Canjilón.

All, that is, with the exception of Baltazar Martínez and Baltazar Apodaca. The story of the two Baltazars is another touchstone of the courthouse raid narrative, and is used to highlight a number of themes regarding the raid's violent, idiosyncratic, and improvisational character. As two of the more commonly referenced Alianza members, Martínez and Apodaca were respectively twenty-one and seventy-two-years-old at the time of the raid.<sup>28</sup> As the remaining Aliancistas flee the building, Martínez and Apodaca stay behind, each taking a hostage. Martínez takes UPI reporter Larry Calloway, while Apodaca sets in on Deputy Sheriff Pete Jaramillo. Under gunpoint, Calloway and Jaramillo are placed into a pickup truck and are driven back and forth Tierra Amarilla, paraded before different town folk. With Martínez at the wheel, the group makes several stops at abandoned police cars from which Martínez loots firearms, cameras, and radios and into which he unleashes rounds and rounds of ammunition. As the group makes their

way back through Tierra Amarilla, they pass by the house of Martínez's mother, Aurelia Martínez, who both admonishes her son and later assists with his escape from the police. While driving out of town, the group changes vehicles then stops at a local gas station to fill up and purchase sodas.

The state police begin to follow the group and eventually Martínez drives the car into a ditch and he and Apodaca split ways, each taking their respective captive. Once they split up, Calloway is able to overpower and escape from Apodaca, who is shortly after apprehended by state police. Martínez takes Jaramillo into the nearby woods and onto a dirt road where a car occupied by Aurelia Martínez waits. Martínez and Jaramillo enter the car and together they drive for another five miles. It is noted that at this point, Martínez and his mother argue for roughly fifteen minutes over what to do with Jaramillo, then Martínez forces Jaramillo to run into the forest with him. On their run, Jaramillo trips and falls in the trees and Martínez fires a couple of shots in the air and disappears into the mountains. Almost a month later, amid a statewide manhunt that included FBI forces, Aurelia Martínez reports to authorities that her son is ready to surrender. Upon Martínez's surrender on July 4, Aurelia Martínez collects the announced \$500 reward.

As local and state police descend on the Tierra Amarilla courthouse and the Alianza camp in Canjilón, Lieutenant Governor Francis E. Lee orders the deployment of the National Guard under the command of General John Pershing Jolly. Under Jolly's orders, the National Guard deploys jeeps, convoy trucks, a mobile medical van, flatbed tank trailers and over 400 soldiers armed with about 20,000 rounds of ammunition and two tanks.<sup>29</sup> Tijerina and other members of the raiding party disappear into the nearby mountains, while Rosita and others mix in with the campers at Leyba's ranch after burying their weapons. The group at Leyba's ranch

are searched, interrogated, and eventually held without arrest for roughly 50 hours in a cattle pen on the property.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, Sánchez orders the arrest of Tijerina's wife, Patsy, in an attempt to induce his surrender, and authorizes a wide array of police search and seizures of the houses of dozens of known Alianza members and sympathizers.<sup>31</sup> Five days later, after the arrest of twelve Alianza members on charges of kidnapping, assault with intent to commit murder, and the "dangerous use of explosives with intent to terrify others," Tijerina is captured without resistance in the outskirts of Bernalillo just north of Albuquerque.<sup>32</sup>

Across the board, the courthouse raid is credited as the lynchpin of Alianza's entrance into national and international consciousness and Tijerina's elevation to a national Chicano/a and civil rights leader.<sup>33</sup> In addition to catalyzing the largest manhunt in New Mexico's history, the raid deepens the festering rift between Sánchez and Cargo and opens it up in the local media.<sup>34</sup> The raid's militant radicalism and break from "traditional politics" is also said to have stoked the imaginations of Chicana/o Movement participants against both Anglo systems of governance and the visions of assimilation offered by previous generations of Mexican American and Spanish American leadership.<sup>35</sup> Yet the elevation of Tijerina into a symbol of resistance and spokesman for an emergent Chicano political class across the US occurs in deep tension with his entanglement with a number of court cases stemming from the courthouse raid and the Echo Amphitheater takeover. All of Tijerina's biographers, as well as numerous Chicana/o historiographers, note the state's response to Tijerina's ascendancy with an excessive campaign of surveillance and criminal and civil charges against him and other Alianza members.<sup>36</sup>

At once an object of heroification and criminalization, Tijerina gains a sharply polarized and contradictory symbolic status. His post-raid public image in numerous grassroots presses and *corridos* reanimates tropes of the Mexican/Mexican American *bandido* in his "taking the law

into his own hands” and subverting the order of Anglo-American law, providing one basis of unification for Chicanos all over the United States.<sup>37</sup> Yet his image as a bandido necessarily implies a cut the other way, and Tijerina is crafted in local mainstream media outlets as an instigator of mayhem. In local television stations and Albuquerque’s two largest daily newspapers at the time, Tijerina is fabricated as a figure with secret communist affiliations and a dangerous disregard for the sanctity of US law who parlays unchecked revolutionary power to a group of misled Hispanos.<sup>38</sup> This tension evokes stories of dynamic innovation regarding Tijerina’s tactics of land grant recovery, which include an increased dialogue and coalitional rhetoric with African American, Native American, and Puerto Rican social movements, as well as an emphasis on cultural and linguistic rights that synched with multiple Chicana/o social movements emerging at the time. By the same token, Tijerina and Alianza members become mired in repeated bouts of incarceration and court trials.

The rhetorical contest surrounding Tijerina’s political objectives and methods, as well as the momentum and scope of La Alianza’s influence, comes to a frightful head with the murder of Tierra Amarilla Jailer, Eulogio Salazar, on January 2, 1968. Found beaten to death in his own car in a snow-covered valley just west of Tierra Amarilla, Salazar had already gained notoriety by not only being shot through the cheek during the raid, but by also identifying Tijerina as his shooter in preliminary hearings six months earlier.<sup>39</sup> The discovery and attendant publicity of Salazar’s mutilated body triggers a statewide dragnet of Alianza members by Sánchez, revoking the bonds of Tijerina and dozens of other Aliancistas who were still pending trial from the courthouse raid. On the day Salazar’s body is discovered, when asked by reporters whether he felt Alianza members were responsible, Sánchez is often noted to have replied: “Of course, who else?”<sup>40</sup>

The months preceding Salazar's still-unsolved murder had been a crisscross between arraignment hearings and meetings with an array of leftist, African American, and Chicano/a organizations for Tijerina. That September he travels to Chicago for a New Politics convention where he meets with Martin Luther King, Jr, Julian Bond, Dick Gregory, and other leaders of the New Left. Upon his return, Tijerina appears before roughly 200 members at the Alianza's Albuquerque headquarters and announces plans to sign a treaty of mutual respect with African-American struggles and to invite King to the upcoming Alianza convention that October. Often noted as Tijerina's attempt to radicalize Alianza members into a new forum of political struggle, the Alianza convention in October extended invitations to the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), United Slaves (US), The Black Panther Party (BPP), the Black Congress, Crusade for Justice, and the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO). Although Dr. King does not attend the conference, a number of key members from multiple social movements are said to have taken part: Bert Corona, Corky Gónzales, José Angel Gutierrez, Tomás Ban-yac-ya of the Hopi nation, Maria Varela, and many others. Frequently repeated highlights include Ralph Featherstone's bilingual address to the convention that concluded with a chant of "*Poder Negro*" and his holding up of a bumper sticker that stated, "Che is alive and hiding in Tierra Amarilla." At convention's conclusion, representatives sign a seven-part treaty of 'Peace, Harmony, and Mutual Assistance.'<sup>41</sup>

Tijerina's forming coalitional rhetoric with multiple cultural nationalist groups—especially the ties articulated to Black power and civil rights movements—spawns a wide range of racist condemnation from New Mexican politicians and Spanish-American political elites. New Mexico's US Senator Joseph Montoya responds to the Alianza convention by claiming, "Spanish Americans will make no alliances with black nationalists who hate America. We do not

lie down in the gutter with Ron Karenga, Stokely Carmichael, and Rap Brown.”<sup>42</sup> That same month, the redbaiting of Tijerina and Alianza is given a renewed voice as the pamphlet “Reies Tijerina—the Communist Plan to Grab the Southwest” is issued by *American Opinion*, a publication of the John Birch Society.<sup>43</sup>

Arguably the event in La Alianza’s struggle most shrouded in rumor and mystery, Eulogio Salazar’s murder and the publicity it accrues in New Mexico’s mainstream media outlets worked to amplify and legitimize a portrait of Tijerina as a threat to law and order in New Mexico.<sup>44</sup> In response, the beginning months of 1968 is marked by the appearance of signs on fences of the Tierra Amarilla grant depicting a Pancho Villa-esque icon with bandoliers of ammunition across his chest above a caption that reads: a “*Tierra o Muerte.*”<sup>45</sup> In February, Tijerina travels to Los Angeles to speak at a program for the Huey Newton Defense Fund that includes Corky Gonzales, H. Rap Brown, Maulana Ron Karenga, Stokely Carmichael, and Bobby Seale.<sup>46</sup> While there, he also appears on a local Los Angeles television show to discuss issues of land theft, and spends a few days touring San Francisco and meeting with members of MAPA, the Brown Berets, and the UFW.

The following month, as New Mexico State Police fail to link any Alianza member to Salazar’s murder, Tijerina travels to Atlanta and meets with Martin Luther King Jr. In his meeting with Dr. King, plans are drafted for a nationwide Poor People’s March to Washington D.C. After the meeting, Tijerina states in an interview that Dr. King “said this march would not represent civil rights, but human rights. For the first time, black people would ask for land. Would demand land, not just jobs, education, and housing, but land. Just like the people in New Mexico are demanding land.”<sup>47</sup>

Dreams of a coalitional platform of land reclamation are blunted with the assassination of Dr. King on April 4, even as Rev. Ralph Abernathy, King's successor in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), selects Tijerina as the Southwest Coordinator for the Poor Peoples March later that month. In preparation for the summer's month-long encampment in Washington D.C., Tijerina organizes a fundraising banquet and march in Albuquerque. Along with Abernathy, representatives from the American Indian Movement (AIM), Mad Bear Anderson from the Tuscarora Indian tribe, Beaman Logan from the Seneca Nation, and Clifford Hill of the Creek Tribe speak with Tijerina at a rally the night before the march.<sup>48</sup> The seemingly improbable upward trajectory of Tijerina's growing national stature ignites novel tactics of state sanctioned violence against the group. Along with the bomb that destroys the car of Alianza vice president, Santiago Anaya, in March of 1969, the bombing executed by William Fellion is often noted. The same month Tijerina is finalizing plans for his departure to the Poor People's encampment in Washington DC, Fellion, an off duty Sheriff's deputy, blows off his own hand while attempting to plant a bomb at the Alianza's Albuquerque headquarters.<sup>49</sup>

Depictions of the month long encampment of the Poor People's Campaign in Washington DC, as told from the standpoint of Tijerina's biographers, his autobiography, and Chicano/a historiography point to a number of tactical and personality clashes between the SCLC leadership and the Native American, Puerto Rican, and Chicano/a organizations present. Much of the tension among and between the various organizations is said to stem from the exclusion of Chicana/o, Puerto Rican, and Native American organizations from the decision-making processes led by Abernathy and the SCLC.<sup>50</sup> Compounding the sense of exclusion was the lack of space for the Chicana/o, Puerto Rican, and Native American contingents at the SCLC's main encampment, Resurrection City, as well as a much-publicized *Washington Post* editorial by

Bayard Rustin that named the “realistic goals” of the campaign—all of which omitted issues specific to Chicana/o, Native American, Puerto Rican struggles.<sup>51</sup>

Setting up camp at the Hawthorne School, the Alianza and the Crusade take part in a number of exhibitions of solidarity for Native American land claims in front of the Supreme Court and other governmental bodies.<sup>52</sup> The assassination of Bobby Kennedy in early June as well as the difference in tactics and personalities is often noted as key sources of tension between Tijerina and Corky González over the direction of the Chicano contingent of the march.<sup>53</sup> Here, Tijerina is figured as a frenetic publicity hound narrowly focused on the land grant struggle, one who tirelessly seeks and gives interviews with television and newspaper reporters.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, Tijerina’s biographers also note this period as marked by a transforming rhetoric of cross-racial coalition that linked issues of culture, property rights, and poverty. Making claims in numerous speeches and rallies that the United States had perpetuated “cultural genocide against my people” and “genocide against the Indians,” Tijerina also states “The poor is the only sector of the country which has the right to question the legitimacy of the rich. I feel the poor, if well organized and properly directed, can bring the rich and the establishment machine to their knees.”<sup>55</sup> In spite of efforts at a sustained cross-racial and multi-class solidarity movement, tensions over tactics, objectives, and personalities—in addition to a vast government project seeking to disrupt the Campaign—Resurrection City was closed down by Washington Police on June 24.<sup>56</sup> Around the same time, Abernathy is arrested and remaining participants move to the Hawthorne school where Tijerina is selected as spokesman of the remaining Chicana/o delegation.<sup>57</sup>

In the aftermath of the Poor People’s Campaign, Tijerina returns to New Mexico on July 20<sup>th</sup>, where he faces the initial hearings over charges stemming from the courthouse raid and

begins a bid at electoral politics with the formation of the Peoples Constitutional Party (*Partido Constitucional del Pueblo*). With the People's Constitutional Party, Tijerina announces a run for Governor of New Mexico on a platform of bilingual education and the restoration of Indo-Hispano culture. Along with Tijerina's candidacy, numerous Alianza members make bids under the Party for several local, state, and national offices.<sup>58</sup> After numerous legal challenges from the state over the eligibility of Tijerina and other Aliancistas to run for public office due to their status as ex-convicts pending trial for other charges, the State Supreme Court rules Tijerina off the ballot a week before the election.<sup>59</sup> Hampered by these legal challenges, the Party receives less than two percent of the vote that fall.<sup>60</sup>

Tijerina's first trial over charges from the courthouse raid in November often marks the beginning of the end of the Alianza narrative for a number of Tijerina's biographies.<sup>61</sup> And yet in almost every account, the trial is described as yet another paradigmatic "David vs. Goliath" event in Tijerina's biography and the Alianza narrative due to Tijerina's self defense and eventual acquittal in court. With the trial set in Albuquerque, unlike previous cases against Tijerina which had been located in Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and Tierra Amarilla, Judge Paul Larrazolo originally initiated proceedings against Tijerina and nine Alianza members.

In these initial proceedings, the State of New Mexico, at the behest of Sánchez, pursue 54 charges against Tijerina and the Aliancistas that culminate into over 584 counts for the defendants. Citing a drain on the State's time and money, Judge Larrazolo declares a severance ruling, which postpones the trial of the nine other defendants and forces Tijerina to be tried alone. Unburdened from a group trial and with a team of attorneys at his council that include Beverly Axelrod and William Higgs, Tijerina enters the court on the morning of November 20 and petitions the court for permission to act as his own defense in trial. In response, Larrazolo

grants permission for Tijerina to act as his own defense and denies his motion for a five-month preparation period.<sup>62</sup>

After a contentious week-long jury selection with the prosecution, which includes D.A. Sánchez and former assistant US attorney Jack L. Love, the two-week testimonial period of the trial is told as the emergence of Tijerina's savvy, astute, flamboyant, tenacious, outspoken, and sometimes bumbling courtroom presence.<sup>63</sup> Centering his defense on the legal legitimacy of "Citizens Arrest," Tijerina's cross-examination with State Policeman Juan Santisteven is noted as key example in his unraveling of the prosecution's case against him.<sup>64</sup> As biographer John Gardner writes, Tijerina opens his cross-examination with the following:

"Mr. Sanisteven, are you acquainted with Amendment No. 1 to the Constitution of the United States?"

"No."

"Do you know what a citizen's arrest is?"

"No."

"Are you acquainted with the provisions of the Constitution of the State of New Mexico that pertain to citizen's arrest?"

"No."

"Did you know that citizens of the United States could arrest an officer if they believed they had a grievance against him?"

"No."

"Mr. Santisteven, isn't it your job to protect the rights of all citizens?"

"Yes."

“Mr. Santisteven, how can you protect the citizens if you do not know all their rights?”

The same questions were put to Pete Jaramillo and other testifying officers, and in each case the results were the same.

“Did you know that civil codes provide for arrest by citizens of law enforcement officers who are a threat to citizens or violate civil rights of citizens?”

“No.”

“Are you aware that an armed officer who does not know, has not been briefed on citizen’s rights, that that officer might be considered a threat to those citizens?”

“No.”

“Isn’t it possible that sooner or later these people, pushed to the brink of desperation, might assert their rights? That they had to teach you a lesson, a lesson your superiors do not teach you?”

“I don’t know.”<sup>65</sup>

Tijerina’s acquittal on December 13 exonerated him of charges of kidnapping, assault to commit murder, destruction of federal property, and assault on two officials stemming from raid. The decision stuns state officials, and is met with celebration by Alianza members and supporters around the state. Along with the performance of his own defense in court, Tijerina’s acquittal is also said to have been the result of over-zealous and imprecise charges made by Sánchez and the prosecution.<sup>66</sup>

The momentum gained by Tijerina’s legal victory and La Alianza’s widened public scope again collides with acts of violence against the group. In February of 1969, hours after Tijerina announces that a ranch in San Cristobal, New Mexico would be used as a cultural center a fire

erupts that destroys the buildings on the property. The following month, two other bombs are ignited, one at the Alianza headquarters and another at the house of an Alianza member.<sup>67</sup> That March also marks the organization of the National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver by the Crusade for Justice. Coinciding with a number of emergent Chicano student movements and activist projects across the US, the conference is noted for the proclamation of *Aztlán* as a unifying plan of Chicano cultural nationalism.<sup>68</sup> Intersecting with tropes of bandido heroification of Tijerina, the platform and territorial imaginary of *Aztlán* is often narrated as bearing influences from the imaginaries generated by La Alianza's land-grant recovery efforts. At the same time, scholars often point to *Aztlán*'s emergence as a reflection of a youth based, urbanized Chicano political movement whose goals both differ from and include the "regional" struggles of groups such as La Alianza.<sup>69</sup>

At once galvanized by and in tension with the imperatives of Chicana/o cultural nationalism outlined in *Aztlán*, Tijerina flies to Washington D.C. on June 3 in an effort to place Justice Warren Burger under citizen's arrest, charging that Burger has made "previous judicial decisions detrimental to the civil rights of minority groups."<sup>70</sup> After being denied access to Burger, Tijerina returns to New Mexico in preparation of La Alianza's celebration of the courthouse raid's third anniversary. Amid another round of inflammatory rhetoric from Sánchez that links Tijerina to communist revolutionary violence, La Alianza sets up camp on private land where members of Chicana/o movement organizations from across the US give speeches denouncing the violation of Mexican-American rights under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.<sup>71</sup> Two days later, Tijerina leads a caravan of 15 Aliancistas to Los Alamos to place Norris Bradbury, the Director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, under citizen's arrest for his part in

constructing weapons of mass destruction.<sup>72</sup> Yet, as with Justice Burger, Tijerina is denied access and leaves the warrant in Bradbury's mailbox.

After announcing to Alianza members and local media that Governor Cargo was next on his list, Tijerina accompanies his wife, Patsy, and a group of Aliancistas to the town of Gallina. With an audience of Alianza members, local media, State Police, Forest Service Rangers, and others, Patsy puts a match to a Molotov cocktail and throws it onto a large redwood Forest Service sign. A member of the crowd discharges the contents of a small pistol into the fire amid cheers and rejoicing, and the gathering moves to another Forest Service sign where about a dozen or more Forest Service and State Police await.

As the crowd approaches the sign, Forest Service investigator James Evans announces himself as a state official and declares Tijerina under arrest. After responding that he had done nothing illegal, Tijerina declares Evans under citizen's arrest for conspiracy, breach of the peace, and false arrest. A scuffle between Evans and Tijerina erupts in which rifles from both camps are brandished. Tijerina is taken into state custody along with seven other Aliancistas that include Patsy, his son Reies, Jr. and his brother Ramón. After his arrest, Tijerina is released on his own recognizance pending a preliminary hearing.

While on release, Tijerina again attempts citizen arrest of Evans. After maneuvers by Evans and Governor Cargo to disrupt Tijerina's attempt, Judge Howard C. Bratton revokes Tijerina's bond and he finds himself again in an Albuquerque jail cell. After a round of preliminary hearings that last throughout the summer, Tijerina is convicted in US District Court in Albuquerque on two counts of "aiding and abetting in the destruction of Forest Service signs and threatening a Forest Service agent, James Evans."<sup>73</sup> He is sentenced to three years in Federal prison. Tijerina's subsequent prison term is interspersed a twenty-one month confinement in a

mental hospital in Springfield, Missouri where he is subjected to psychological experiments and medical scrutiny. Tijerina's incarceration is hailed as the final blow to La Alianza's mission of land grant recovery and the cohesiveness of La Alianza as a movement. Although La Alianza votes to create "La Republica de Aztlán" as an independent nation while Tijerina is in prison, many sources point to his deep objection to notions of separatism and his subsequent resignation as president with his brother Ramón taking his place.<sup>74</sup>

The four Anglo authored biographies of Tijerina extend no further than this point in time. The studies in Chicana/o historiography that pick up where these works leave off consign La Alianza as an effectively dismantled, splintered, and directionless organization in the wake of Tijerina's conviction and his eventual release from two years in prison on July 26, 1971. The varied analyses of the movement's shortcomings and eventual failures are revealing. There is overwhelming focus on Tijerina's "cult of personality" and the eccentric and "meandering" nature of his tactics.<sup>75</sup> This focus on Tijerina's tactics often includes critiques that claim La Alianza's mission of land grant recovery as "impossible" and hampered by a failure to develop beyond its initial ideas. Compounding this constraint is a cited lack of funds and organizational discipline. Tijerina is also noted to harbor a tendency to fall back on rigid racialized distinctions and an "Indo-Hispano" ethnocentrism that produced a sole focus on rural and land-related issues to the neglect of the experiences of Chicana/o populations in urban settings.<sup>76</sup> Heavy police and FBI surveillance, infiltration, and harassment of the group complete the analysis as a central component of La Alianza's neutralization and evanescence.

With his release from prison contingent on not associating with La Alianza for the duration of five years, Tijerina is noted to have undergone a profound transformation (many speculate due to secret psychological experiments performed on him during his sentence) in his

activist pursuits, shifting into a preoccupation with “brotherly love between all races and ethnic groups and to better relations between the police and minorities.”<sup>77</sup> Some scholars mention Tijerina’s 1972 trip to Mexico to petition then President Luis Echeverría for an investigation into land grant claims in New Mexico.<sup>78</sup> Others also mention the publication of his “rambling” autobiography, *Mi Lucha por la Tierra*, in Mexico in the late 70s and his turn to “anti-Semitic” racial doctrines.<sup>79</sup> Yet aside from these fleeting events, Tijerina’s presence in Chicana/o history quietly fades and La Alianza’s narrative closes.

### **The Story about the Story**

On one level, the story of La Alianza staged here is productive of indelible imagery and terminology central to Chicana/o historical consciousness. From this standpoint, we are left with a portrait of La Alianza as an ornament in the narrative imperatives of Tijerina’s biography, the historiography of Chicana/o cultural nationalism, and the racial and regional eccentricities of New Mexico. Within these narrative constraints, La Alianza is credited as a foundational and subsumable organization for the emergence of Chicana/o cultural nationalism primarily due to its militancy and Tijerina’s embodiment as revolutionary bandido.<sup>80</sup> In addition to the courthouse raid, La Alianza is credited with the critical publicization of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, its deployment of Indo-Hispano, its articulation of the land grant struggle in the context of cultural, civil, and linguistic rights, its alliances with Black and Native American civil rights organization in the group’s participation and Tijerina’s leadership of the 1968 National Poor People’s Campaign and March. All of these elements are seen as crucial in this narrative to bringing Chicana/o historical consciousness and national and global attention to the rural, Hispano/Spanish-American of New Mexico. Narrated as residing “in one of the most impoverished areas of the US,” the Spanish-American is often cast as a type of holdover from

the days of Spanish colonialism, one overwhelmed, abandoned, dispossessed, and forgotten by the forces of US modernization. Caught up in fabricating the myth of a pure Spanish past for inclusion in the white racial boundaries of US citizenship, the Spanish-American in this narrative is either hailed or repelled by the Indo-Hispano counterhistory marshaled in La Alianza's mission of Spanish and Mexican land grant reclamation.<sup>81</sup>

It also becomes evident that we are presented with a vision of La Alianza as a movement led by one man and dominated by men in the throes of revolutionary militancy. The deeply heteropatriarchal structure of this narrative is reflected in the assignment of revolutionary bandido tropes to Tijerina's name, yet it is taken no further as a point of analysis. This is productive of a narrative of La Alianza premised on the erasure of women, children, and multiple non-male figures as social movement actors, and is evidenced in the dearth of analyses that engage with the gender politics of La Alianza.<sup>82</sup>

At the same time, the dominant scripting of La Alianza outlines a story of race, historical memory, militant insurgency, cultural politics, and the territorial designs of overlapping Euroamerican empires. It is also a story riddled with violent silences and mysteries. These silences and mysteries attest both to the narrative constraints of history telling in the present and provide the conditions of possibility for a multiplicity of alternative narratives about La Alianza and New Mexico. This is evident in the more recent revisions of La Alianza by Rudy Busto, David Correia, and Lorena Oropeza. In their respective ways, each scholar's work identifies La Alianza as being caught in certain structures of forgetting that have disabled a more complex and nuanced vision of the movement and the locality of New Mexico. Rudy Busto's work centers on the role of religion in Tijerina's activist pursuits and offers a biographical portrait of Tijerina that is not adherent to the timeline furnished to Alianza by Chicana/o

historiography. In the process, Busto both identifies how Tijerina's biography has been confined by the cultural nationalist imperatives of Chicana/o historiography, and argues that Tijerina's unique religious cosmology is a central component to his activist work both in and beyond La Alianza.

On a different scale, David Correia's work importantly engages with the multi-level forms of state sanctioned violence directed at La Alianza. In doing so, Correia argues that the cultural production of Indo-Hispano disrupted the narrative of New Mexico as a territory harmoniously inhabited by Native Americans, Anglos, and Hispanos. In Indo-Hispano's disruption of the territorial logic attached to this racial narrative, Correia demonstrates the ways in which the US state responded to La Alianza's challenges to New Mexico's territorial order with acts of violence against the group that worked to construct Tijerina as a "punishable" subject before the law.

Lorena Oropeza's work is linked to these concerns of refashioning the dominant logics narrating Tijerina's role in La Alianza's movement. In her work, Oropeza re-approaches the Alianza narrative in order to detail a social history of La Alianza. In doing so, Oropeza draws from scholar Elizabeth Jelin's work to frame Tijerina's presence in the movement as a "memory entrepreneur"—a term that is meant "to refer to those people who apply the full force of their personality and persuasive power to bring forth a new—or formerly suppressed—version of the past in service of a political cause."<sup>83</sup> In doing so, Oropeza's work opens up a space for rethinking Tijerina's role in La Alianza that decenters the courthouse raid as the apex of the movement and Tijerina's biography. By resisting the imperative to frame both Tijerina as a revolutionary militant and the courthouse raid as the apex of La Alianza's movement, Oropeza importantly resituates the group's symbolic reclamation of the San Joaquín land grant in the

Echo Amphitheater as representative of the group's cultural political contestations over race, memory, and land loss in New Mexico.

I affirm the work done by these scholars as being foundational for my critique of the containment of La Alianza in the narrative imperatives of Chicana/o cultural nationalism, Tijerina's (auto)biographical discourse, and the historiography of New Mexico's racial idiosyncrasies and regional particularity. In subsequent chapters, the narrative imperatives of Chicana/o mestizaje and New Mexico historiography will be engaged. But in what remains here, I will engage with the discourse of Tijerina's biography as it is laid out in his testimonio, *Mi lucha por la tierra* (1978). In this regard, the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to a re-evaluation of Tijerina's epic life story not for the sake of re-establishing his place within the pantheon of male Chicana/o leaders. Rather, I situate the text as an uneven embodiment of Latin American testimonio writing. In doing so, I approach the text less as the singular voice of Tijerina and more as a hybridized theory of US state violence that is central to the articulation of Indo-Hispano mestizaje.

### **The Story as Testimonio**

In his book-length study on Tijerina's religious vision, Rudy Busto offers probably the most sustained analysis of *Mi lucha por la tierra*. While his analysis highlights the generic contradictions and problems inherent in the text, Busto argues that "even the most casual reading of *Mi lucha por la tierra* confirms its place as perhaps the premier example of the Mexican American/Chicano/a memoir." Citing the "oral quality of the writing," a "nonlinear subject" and a frequent "characterization as rambling," Busto's approach to the text also usefully illustrates the dearth of critical attention paid to *Mi lucha por la tierra* and its tie to heteropatriarchal frames of racial representation. "The silence surrounding Tijerina's memoir," he argues, "in

large measure mirrors Chicano historiography.... Chicano history has not illuminated Tijerina's life so much as it has exposed the continuing function of traditional male leadership in cultural nationalist discourse. The installation of a specific, useful image of Tijerina in the 1960s pantheon of movement leadership not only circumscribed his career within the 1960s but it also literally erased him from the textbooks and consciousness of Chicanos in to the present day."<sup>84</sup>

In his reappraisal of *Mi lucha por la tierra*, Busto acknowledges what I would call the text's fugitive use of genre. Part memoir, historiography, legal analysis, political critique, sacred history, and religious prophecy, *Mi lucha por la tierra* stringently refuses easy generic classification. Busto states, "*Mi lucha por la tierra*'s overlapping genres and prophetic quality is expressed, for example, in his announcement of judgment against the United States (or other corporate bodies) and the threat of apocalypse." Yet in spite of the use of "overlapping genres," Busto claims that the text most closely approximates a memoir due to the way that it presents Tijerina not as a subject forming consciousness about his social surroundings but rather as a figure "unhampered by the continuing struggle to know and learn about self." As a memorialist, Tijerina is "free to interpret, reconstruct, and fashion the past from the privileged vantage point of a complete and utterly confident hindsight."<sup>85</sup> As such, Busto concludes that "Tijerina's text conforms in some measure to American literary types while at the same time standing squarely in the Mexican memoir tradition... Such rhetoric reveals an exaggerated, almost swaggering prophetic voice that is reinforced through a confident memoir subjectivity."

While my reading of *Mi lucha por la tierra* draws from Busto's insights on the conditions of the text's production and its hybridized generic deployments, I want to push against Busto's characterization of the text as memoir and pursue an inquiry into the text as unevenly embodying

the legacies of Latin American testimonio writing. Testimonio, as John Beverly discusses, indicates a

novel or novella-length narrative in book or pamphlet (that is, printed as opposed to acoustic) form, told in the first person by a narrator who is also the real protagonist or witness of the events he or she recounts, and whose unit of narration is usually a ‘life’ or a significant life experience. Testimonio may include, but is not subsumed under, any of the following textual categories, some of which are conventionally considered literature, others not: autobiography, autobiographical novel, oral history, memoir, confession, diary, interview, eyewitness report, life history, *novella-testimonio*, nonfiction novel, or ‘factographic’ literature.<sup>86</sup>

As a hybridized form of writing that materialized as a popular genre during national liberation and decolonial movements in the 1960s, testimonio exists in what Beverly calls “the margins of literature.” Its marginal character stems from its inhabitation of institutionally validated literary forms (the ones listed above by Beverly) combined with the presence of a third-party mediator/interlocutor who is tasked with transcribing the orally transmitted stories into a book-length narrative for a transnational readership. A paradigm of this mediating context for Beverly and other scholars is the relationship between Rigoberta Menchú and Venezuelan anthropologist, Elizabeth Burgos, that ultimately produced the hotly debated text, *I, Rigoberta Menchú* (1984).<sup>87</sup> Given its shared proximity to subaltern social struggles and an elite intellectual class, Beverly argues that

Testimonio represents an affirmation of the individual subject, even of individual growth and transformation, but in connection with a group or class situation marked by marginalization, oppression, and struggle. If it loses this connection, it ceases to be

testimonio and becomes autobiography, that is, an account of, and also a means of access to, middle- or upper-class status, a sort of documentary bildungsroman...Autobiography produces in the reader—who, generally speaking, is already either middle- or upper-class or expecting to be—the specular effect of confirming and authorizing his or (less so) her situation of relative social privilege. Testimonio, by contrast...always signifies the need for a general social change in which the stability of the reader’s world must be brought into question.<sup>88</sup>

In Busto’s classification of *Mi lucha por la tierra* as memoir, he refuses to discuss the relevance of testimonio “because it depends upon the conscious mediation of the historian/recorder/scholar between the subject and reader.”<sup>89</sup> Indeed, *Mi lucha por la tierra* was not produced under conditions in which Tijerina orally recounted the events of his life to an elite intellectual interlocutor. Nevertheless, I want to demonstrate that *Mi lucha por la tierra*’s formal hybridity, its relation to La Alianza’s struggle for land-grant reclamation, and the conditions of the text’s production all point to the relevance of testimonio as a lens for reading the text. To be clear, this move is not about confining the text within a rigid generic taxonomy or about determining Tijerina’s singular and “confident memoir subjectivity.” It is rather an attempt to flesh out the text’s fugitive use of genre and hybrid formal features tied to the articulation of Tijerina’s subject formation as a crucial and overlooked production of Indo-Hispano mestizaje.

An overall ambition of this dissertation is to flesh out the ways that Indo-Hispano as a discourse comprises a subaltern historiography that reinscribes the living legacies of genízaro mestizaje into three key discursive operations that converge with indigenous rights struggles of our contemporary moment. These operations include a discourse of coalitional indigeneity, a transnational strategy of inalienable cultural and territorial rights, and a theory of US state

violence. By situating *Mi lucha por la tierra* as a testimonio, these three operations of Indo-Hispano and its evocation of the memories of genízaro mestizaje become amplified in unexpected, dark, and fascinating ways. Approaching *Mi lucha por la tierra* as a testimonio allows me to eschew the trap of interpreting the text solely, in Busto's words, as an "example of a singular self drawn inexorably toward divine knowledge and illumination."<sup>90</sup> Rather, as testimonio, *Mi lucha por la tierra* in tandem with its English translation, *They Called Me King Tiger: My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, become powerful theories of the violence of the US state in containing the territorial, cultural, and linguistic challenges evoked by La Alianza's movement.<sup>91</sup> That is, *Mi lucha por la tierra* as testimonio illuminates a remarkable analysis of state sponsored punishment and violence that figured Tijerina and La Alianza as threatening targets.

### **The Writing of *Mi lucha por la tierra* and the State Punishment of Tijerina**

Transcribed from four leather bound notebooks that Tijerina had used to handwrite his life story during his Jubilee year (the year he turned 50), *Mi lucha por la tierra* was published by the Mexican publishing house, *Fondo de Cultura Economica*, in 1978. Many events collided to prompt publication. Having just finished his two-year stint in Federal prison in Texas and a twenty-one month confinement in a mental hospital in Springfield, Mo, Tijerina began to write his story out of fear of state sponsored death and harm. In an interview with Busto, Tijerina states, "While I was in prison, there were three attempts on my life...and that encouraged me to speed up. I could be killed at any time and I would write nothing...somebody else would be writing for me, or interpreting my life."<sup>92</sup> Even as he had been released from Federal prison on condition that he discontinue his work with La Alianza, Tijerina traveled to Mexico in 1975 where he petitioned President Luís Echeverría for Mexican assistance into the state sanctioned

destitution of Mexicans in the United States. While there, Busto notes, Echeverría asks Tijerina to write his life story. This request, combined with a publishing offer from the Fondo de Cultura Economica and Tijerina's ongoing relationship with Mexican intellectual Jorge Bustamante, resulted in the publication of 5,000 copies of the epic, 573-paged text.

The politics of colonial language and the violence of the US state is especially relevant to the unique relationship between Tijerina, Bustamante, and the Fondo Cultura Economica that formed *Mi lucha por la tierra*. Busto notes that Tijerina had received at least one offer for his life story from an English language publisher prior to his trip to Mexico, yet his choice to write in Spanish reveals a savvy strategy of negotiating techniques of US state punishment. Busto notes that "Writing in Spanish was a strategic move designed to forestall his Anglo detractors: 'See, I would advance the information of the organized terror against my life and my family and the land grants to my people first, you know, [before] giving it to the opposition.... I wanted that all the time. I wanted my people to learn first. So if I was killed by the opposition, at least my people had plenty of knowledge, information.'"<sup>93</sup> Yet even as Tijerina's strategy of publishing in Spanish refuses the mediation of the English language and its enshrinement by the violence of the US state, his encounter with the Fondo de Cultura Economica nonetheless imposed a unique mediatory constraint to *Mi lucha por la tierra*. Busto notes that Tijerina's "publisher told him that the four-volume handwritten manuscript was too repetitious" (165-166). As a result,

[t]he chapter divisions and subdivisions in *Mi lucha por la tierra* were imposed by the publisher and do not always coincide with the divisions in Tijerina's original manuscript. Unfortunately, the heavy-handed editing of the original four-volume manuscript resulted in a published version markedly different from Tijerina's handwritten version. A comparison of the opening paragraphs show, for example, the standardization of

Tijerina's colloquial Spanish, the omission of adjectives, and even the omission of persons involved in the Valle de Paz effort. The editorial decision to translate the vernacular 'Chicano' Spanish into a universal Castilian changed the narrator's voice, giving it a pompous quality. Yet, Tijerina's distinct, if moralistic, voice does manage to leak through the hundreds of changes. Unfortunately, the changes disguise the urgency and oral quality of Tijerina's intention.<sup>94</sup>

Given Busto's emphasis on *Mi lucha por la tierra* as memoir, his interpretation of the linguistic and editing constraints on the text are only relevant insofar as they affect Tijerina's "distinct, if moralistic, voice" and "intention." That is, by situating the text as memoir, Busto's analysis is preoccupied with identifying a stable and fixed "voice" and "intention" ascribed to Tijerina. This desire to identify Tijerina's stable and fixed "voice" confines the interpretive possibilities attached to the text. That is, there is an affinity between the imperative to read *Mi lucha por la tierra* for the singular voice of Tijerina and the historiographical script that encourages a consideration of La Alianza as the sole effect of Tijerina's leadership and charismatic personality. Both approaches require us to overlook the sites of coalition and collaboration between Tijerina, ejido land grant heirs, and a transnational professional intellectual class that constitute the text's use of voice. In this way, even as Busto claims to shed light on a neglected text within a long tradition of Mexican-American memoirist writing, his attachment to memoir replicates an epistemology of liberal authorship and masculine revolutionary subjectivity that aligns with the counterinsurgent forces working to contain La Alianza's legacy in the present.

It is here that the purchase of testimonio as an interpretive rubric becomes doubly relevant. Through the lens of testimonio, the linguistic and editing constraints that produce *Mi lucha por la tierra* provide an important mediating context that renders bare the complexities of

subaltern insurgency and ungovernability against the regimes of reason of the US state. Beverley argues that “the concept of ungovernability expresses...the incommensurability between the ‘radical heterogeneity’ of the subaltern and the reason of state. Ungovernability—the quality of resistance of persistence that is expressed in testimonial voice—is the space of resentment, recalcitrance, disobedience, marginality, insurgency. But ungovernability also designates the failure of formal politics and of the nation—that is, of hegemony.”<sup>95</sup> By terming *Mi lucha por la tierra* as memoir, Busto’s analysis deprives us a language and interpretive framework to address the complex forms of disobedience, marginality, mediation, and collectivity tied to the text’s use of voice and genre. Testimonio, on the other hand, inserts the problematics of state violence and collective dissent through strategies of textualization directly into the foray of *Mi lucha por la tierra*.

### ***Mi lucha por la tierra* as Testimonio of State Violence**

In his article on the state sanctioned violence mobilized against La Alianza, David Correia demonstrates that as “Alianza began to challenge the racial inequality underpinning the established social order, the state responded with covert action and physical violence. Tijerina became a ‘Rouser of the Rabble.’ As an identifiable threat to the social order, Tijerina became a target in proxy for the larger Chicano movement, and therefore experienced the full measure of coercive control. Controlling Alianza required punishing Tijerina.”<sup>96</sup> Indeed, Correia’s analysis of the practices of state punishment directed at Tijerina reveals an important context for interpreting the modes of state violence expressed in *Mi lucha por la tierra*. Yet while his analysis draws heavily from *They Called Me ‘King Tiger,’* Correia’s work does not offer an account of how either version of Tijerina’s testimonio operates in its own right as a meditation

on state violence and the modes of reason derived from the tactics of punishment endured by Tijerina.

It's useful to turn to *Mi lucha por la tierra* here. In the section entitled "El Gigante Psicopático" (The Giant Psychopath), Tijerina ruminates on his confinement in the mental hospital in Springfield, Mo:

How was it possible that the Anglo judges could perform so many injustices at once? They covered up the murder of Eulogio Salazar. They sanctioned the bombs that the police planted in my house and office. They did not serve justice to William Fellion, a known killer, when they arrested him. They abused my wife and tried me twice for the same "crime." They accused me of killing Salazar and illegally withheld money that rightfully belongs to my family. Why did they do these things? How long has their hate existed? What is the type of hate that the Anglo carries to such an extreme?

I needed strength to resist this savage machine that wanted to destroy my mind and spirit.

The Anglo was enraged over what I reclaimed for the Indian and the Indohispano within the law. For the Anglo, I was perhaps the living incarnation of the justice that he was expecting for his crimes, robberies, frauds, and lies.

Although the Anglo will not admit it, I revived all of his crimes. The Anglo saw in me the memory of his criminal past and could not accept it. He does not agree to what a nation composed of many races is discovering at this time: the bloody crimes that he has and continues to commit against the Indians, Indohispanos, other oppressed peoples. The White House put me in a mental institution so that the world would stop paying attention to me, so that my mestizo pueblo would consider me crazy. The Anglo hated

me, and I abhorred him as well. He was enraged, and I was even more so. Yet I showed him none of this because he held me behind his steel bars. He plotted to destroy me and yet I enlisted the army of heaven to throw him out of power. He hated me because I put into question his right to govern. I detested that he was destroying all of the human rights and principles of all of the land he educates. I abhorred him...because he neither respects his Constitution nor gives value to human virtues, because his way of life is a direct product of a psychotic and obsessive mindset.

During my secret studies in prison, I discovered that with Psychiatry, like the Bible, each person or race interprets what is most convenient. The rich and powerful use psychiatry, as they do, in order to not pay for their crimes. The poor and defenseless pay for their own faults, as well as the crimes and faults of the powerful. The value of psychiatry is relative to those who apply it. Psychiatry was in the hands of the enemies who wanted to destroy my mind.

By virtue of what they labeled me and how they harmed me, I learned all of the tactics and formulas used by Anglo psychiatrics. With the passing of the days and months in prison, I was discovering a new psychiatry. The psychiatrists were studying me to trace the evolution of my mental abilities, to discover why I fought against the greatest power in the world, the White House, without any weaponry or power similar to that of the White House. Only the crazy do that, and surely Reies must be crazy or psychopathic. On the other hand, the Anglo psychiatrists concluded that I would do nothing. In this way, while the psychiatrists who studied me would convene, I began to study not an Anglo individual, but rather the entire Anglo Saxon race. Why not? If psychopathy exists in an individual, can it not exist in entire races?

I began to study the history of the Anglo Saxon race in order to discover whether or not my suspicion was well founded. If the history of an individual reveals, according to the psychiatrists, the reason of his or her conduct, then the history of a race can also reveal the reason of its behavior. In my studies, I discovered that the differences existing between individuals also play out among races. Just as there are psychopathic persons, there are also psychopathic races. Here in the prison where the Anglo was studying me, I began to study much better. I discovered there that the Anglo as a race suffers from the mental illness known as psychopathy. There, I encountered the reason of his great hate for anyone who resists his history and his land rights in this continent ...

One crime led to another, and in this way he saw himself obligated to legalize piracy. When he obtained the power that did not belong to him through law and divine decree, he invited all who wanted to accompany him from other nations.

In 480 years, the Anglo Saxon complex and psychopathy has become worse. His conscience is tortured and his thought is crazed for having violated his own faith and his own law. Sooner or later, he will have to respond to the law by which he swears.<sup>97</sup>

Notice the connection between state sanctioned regimes of knowledge and punishment discovered by Tijerina. “The rich and powerful use psychiatry, as they do, in order to not pay for their crimes. The poor and defenseless pay for their own faults, as well as the crimes and faults of the powerful.” By revealing the connection between institutional forms of reason and practices of US state punishment, Tijerina discovers that his incarceration and subjection to psychiatric scrutiny occurs because he “put into question his [the Anglo’s] right to govern.” Rather than accepting the legal and epistemological mandates of the US state—and therefore his own culpability before the law—Tijerina subverts the discourse of criminality used by the US state

and frames the state as the criminal element. “Although the Anglo will not admit it, I revived all of his crimes. The Anglo saw in me the memory of his criminal past and could not accept it. He does not agree to what a nation composed of many races is discovering at this time: the bloody crimes that he has and continues to commit against the Indians, Indohispanos, other oppressed peoples.” By reflecting on the Anglo’s “criminal past” and “bloody crimes that he...continues to commit against the Indians, Indohispanos, and other oppressed peoples,” this passage does not reveal Tijerina as a figure coming to consciousness of his singular self. Rather, this passage illuminates Tijerina as a subject in relation to an Indohispano people who are situated relative to the “Indians” and other “oppressed peoples.” More significantly, the discoveries that Tijerina records of his experience are revelatory of the modes of psychiatric knowledge and legal violence deployed, at the behest of a counterinsurgent and illegitimate state power, to contain the territorial and cultural struggles of an emergent multiracial collectivity linked to Indo-Hispano.

Similar to his appropriation of the discourse of criminality as an indictment of the violence of US state, Tijerina seizes the discourse of psychiatry and inserts the history of US empire as his privileged object of study. “The psychiatrists were studying me to trace the evolution of my mental abilities, to discover why I fought against the greatest power in the world, the White House, without any weaponry or power similar to that of the White House. Only the crazy do that, and surely Reies must be crazy or psychopathic. On the other hand, the Anglo psychiatrists concluded that I would do nothing. In this way, while the psychiatrists who studied me would convene, I began to study not an Anglo individual, but rather the entire Anglo Saxon race. Why not? If psychopathy exists in an individual, can it not exist in entire races?... By virtue of what they labeled me and how they harmed me, I learned all of the tactics and formulas used by Anglo psychiatrics.” Here we are presented with Tijerina as a subject scrutinized by the

US state who also undertakes a clandestine pedagogical pursuit. In doing so, he expresses a startling revelation: the US state is not only a criminal network, but also the fabrication of a “psychopathic race.” Here we see an appropriation and refusal of not only the legal mandates of the US state, but also the epistemological means by which the state legitimates its violence.

The important thing to consider here is how Tijerina’s characterization of Anglos as “psychopaths,” operates as an appropriation of psychiatric discourse without ascribing it to a master narrative. That is, his diagnosis of “Anglo psychopathy” is not articulated from the standpoint of professional clinical expertise. Rather, his “secret” acquisition and deployment of psychiatry stems from being targeted as a “criminal” and “crazy” threat to the US state. From this standpoint, Tijerina’s use of psychiatric knowledge doubles as a discovery of the pliability of state discourse and its attendant forms of institutional knowledge. By dismantling and appropriating the so-called justice inscribed in US law and the reason proffered by psychiatry, *Mi lucha por la tierra* is a text that, in John Beverley’s words, “comes, like Antigone’s lament, from outside the limits of the state.” In this way, the text “is also implicated in tracing the frontiers of the authority of the state and expanding the compass of what counts as expression in civil society.”<sup>98</sup>

The inadequacy of Busto’s characterization of the text as memoir bears reiteration here. Were we to adhere to Busto’s use of memoir, our interpretation of this passage would focus on Tijerina as an individual and exceptional subject “unhampered by the continuing struggle to know and learn about self.” We would furthermore characterize Tijerina as a subject who experiences unfair persecution and punishment from an otherwise legitimate US state. We would render Tijerina’s appropriation of legal and psychiatric discourse as a textual strategy whereby Tijerina expresses “certain unalienable rights as an American citizen.”<sup>99</sup> In other words, reading

*Mi lucha por la tierra* as memoir preserves Tijerina as a culpable subject before US law. In this way, Busto's characterization of *Mi lucha por la tierra* as memoir works to uphold the criminality of the US state and rationalize the punishment endured by Tijerina. In contrast, the openings offered by testimonio allow us to comprehend this passage as a complex and contradictory form of textual insubordination to the legal and epistemological strictures of US state violence. Or, to reiterate Tijerina, the US state was erected because "one crime led to another, and in this way [the Anglo] saw himself obligated to legalize piracy." In this regard, we can begin to situate *Mi lucha por la tierra*'s textual disobedience and recalcitrance to the US state not as a transparent documentation of Tijerina's singular self. Rather, we are required to situate Tijerina's depiction of his experiences of state sponsored violence in relation to a collective condition of Indo-Hispano and Indian marginalization, dispossession, and punishment. In this light, *Mi lucha por la tierra* can be seen as articulating a valuable and subjugated component of La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics: a theory of US state violence.

### ***Mi lucha por la tierra* and the Coalitional Indigeneity of Indo-Hispano**

As testimonio, I have argued that *Mi lucha por la tierra* gains relevance not for the insights into Tijerina's singular subjectivity, but rather for the ways in which it articulates his subjectivity in fragmented generic constraints that are deployed both in relation to an emergent Indo-Hispano political class and as a refusal of the legal and psychiatric mandates of US state power. These elements of the text offer a significant challenge not only to liberal and bourgeois interpretive paradigms, but also to the cultural and revolutionary nationalist frameworks used to understand Indo-Hispano mestizaje offered by Chicana/o studies. As demonstrated earlier, adherence to the historiography of Chicana/o mestizaje confines Indo-Hispano merely as a regional variant of Chicana/o mestizaje that overvalues Spanish law and racial purity and de-

emphasizes Mexican presence in New Mexico. And were we to follow the imperatives of memoir or autobiography to interpret *Mi lucha por la tierra*, we would confine the derivation of Indo-Hispano mestizaje as the sole invention of Tijerina's idiosyncratic reading method in the legal archives of Spain, Mexico, and New Mexico.

Yet testimonio requires a different approach to the logic of Indo-Hispano mestizaje depicted in *Mi lucha por la tierra*. This approach, in the words of Beverley, insists on Indo-Hispano as "an art of memory...directed not only toward the memorialization of the past but also to the constitution of more heterogeneous, diverse, egalitarian, and democratic nation-states, as well as forms of community, solidarity, and affinity that extend beyond or between nation-states" (20). The section entitled "Mis Amigos los Apaches" (My Apache Friends) usefully illuminates this point. Set in the midst of "Mi Vida de Fugitivo" (My Life as a Fugitive), the text's longest chapter, this section depicts Tijerina's pre-Alianza travels in New Mexico on the run from State and Federal Agents.

I visited my old friends, the Apache Indians from Dulce, who opened their doors to me in 1957 and 1958. They left one of their houses for me to hide in with my family in a very beautiful place called Las Lagunitas. There, with the help of Don Manuel Trujillo, they allowed me to use a house that had a secret compartment. And many times I escaped federal agents in that hideaway.

The Apaches invited me to their grand fiestas. In one of them I noticed that there were brown people, or raza, but that there was not one Anglo. I asked the Apache police why there were no Anglos. They replied that Anglos were prohibited to attend by law. Only then I learned that such law existed. I felt very safe among the Apaches. I remembered that I had read a book by David C. Cooke called *Fighting Indias* (sic) of the

West. There I understood that Mexicans and Apaches had lived in peace and harmony until 1836, when the United States government sent James Johnson and 15 other Anglos from Missouri to sow divisions among the Apaches and Mexicans before waging war on Mexico.

The Anglo knew that all of the Apaches had Mexican or Spanish names. And he knew that the Apaches lived in peace (considering differences in culture) with Mexicans; that it was customary that the Apaches would attend the fiestas and ceremonies of the Spanish and Mexicans. Therefore the Anglo could not wage war against Mexico while this country considered the Apaches as friends. For this reason he sent over James Johnson and his gang, legalized pirates of the land that carried on the legacy of the marine pirates legalized by England.

This gang from Washington arrived at Santa Rita del Cobre in 1836, fifteen years after the Independence of Mexico. These assassins came with a premeditated plan to destroy the good relations between Apaches and Mexicans. They arrived a few days before the grand fiesta. More than 400 Apaches attended unarmed. If, as the Anglo says in this book, the Mexicans and Apaches hated each other, why would the Apaches come unarmed to Mexican fiestas? Why did Apaches have Mexican names? The Apache Chief was named Juan José and spoke perfect Spanish.

The Anglos arrived at the fiesta with two canons. Without mercy, when the Apaches were enjoying the fiesta, they unleashed the canons point blank. They killed the Apaches immediately with their firearms. Johnson personally shot and killed Juan José in the back, the same man who he had called days earlier, with empty words, 'my good friend.'

That massacre marked the beginning of fifty years of war between the Apaches and Anglos, until 1886, when the great Gerónimo quit the fight. But the Mexicans of Santa Rita del Cobre had to pay for having allowed the killers from the White House into their midst. From this savage and diabolical massacre arose the great Apache, Mangas Coloradas. He continued his brave and courageous inheritance from Gerónimo, whose name was used by the US Marines as a battle call during the World War II. Why would they not use the name of the father of this nation, Washington?

Having become familiar with the history of the Apaches, I was assured of the happiness I felt among the pueblo that I admired so much. I also encountered Zebedeo at the grand fiesta. Zebedeo was an Apache police for many years. He and Don Trujillo were the ones who introduced me to the Jicarilla Apache tribal council. The Apache pueblo also provided refuge and work for my brother Anselmo when he was a fugitive from the Anglos. For this reason I have frequently asked the Just Judge of all the Land to bring fortunate years of liberty to the Apaches. In part, I owe them my own debt. They showed me nothing more than love and goodwill...<sup>100</sup>

Here we see Tijerina as a fugitive subject pursued by the forces of US law whose secret alliances offer refuge in Apache land. His sanctuary occasions a number of encounters significant to the articulation of Indo-Hispano. In Apache land he encounters a territory inscribed with a form of sovereignty prescribed by law and indigeneity. "I noticed that there were brown people, or raza, but that there was not one Anglo. I asked the Apache police why there were no Anglos. They replied that Anglos were prohibited to attend by law. Only then I learned that such law existed. I felt very safe among the Apaches." Finding temporary refuge from the specter of US law, Tijerina then encounters a subaltern history of tribal and mestizo coalition and conflict

erased from nationalist historiographies. “I remembered that I had read a book by David C. Cooke called *Fighting Indias (sic) of the West*. There, I understood that Mexicans and Apaches had lived in peace and harmony until 1836, when the United States government sent James Johnson and 15 other Anglos from Missouri to sow divisions among the Apaches and Mexicans before waging war on Mexico.”

By evoking a subjugated past of tribal and mestizo coalition and strife in the midst of the piracy and gangsterism of US empire, this narrative echoes the mestiza/o legacies of ejido land tenure and loss tied to the genízaro Indians in New Mexico. In New Mexico historiography, genízaro Indians are typically referenced as a caste of detribalized Plains and Pueblo Indians captured by Spanish colonists in New Mexico during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were originally designated as a landless caste of servants, workers, and soldiers who congregated in the Barrio de Analco in Santa Fe. Yet the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 required Spanish colonial administration to resettle Genízaro Indians onto ejido land grants to buffer the frontiers of Spanish territory from the ungovernability and insurrection of multiple tribal formations, including the Apache. In many instances, Genízaro Indian tenure on ejido land grant land permitted them to act as travelling mercenary forces for both the Spanish and Native tribes. Often multilingual, genízaros acted as interpreters between the Spanish, Plains, and Pueblo Indians. One historian notes that although “individual genízaros were trusted as scouts or interpreters, as a group they were regarded as potentially traitorous and on a number of occasions some of the were tried for sedition.”<sup>101</sup>

As translators, soldiers, and potential traitors to the Spanish crown, genízaro Indians and their precarious tenure on ejido land grant signify an important and subdued legacy of mestizaje in the borderlands. With this legacy of Indian-aligned mestizaje in mind, Lorena Oropeza’s

characterization of Tijerina as a “memory entrepreneur” is especially apt. By terming Tijerina as a person who applies “the full force of their personality and persuasive power to bring forth a new—or formerly suppressed—version of the past in service of a political cause,” Oropeza’s analysis importantly decenters Tijerina’s role in La Alianza’s social movement.<sup>102</sup> Even as Oropeza focuses on La Alianza’s symbolic occupation of the San Joaquín land grant, her analysis provides the conditions of possibility to name a more collective and heterogeneous discovery of Indo-Hispano tied to the memories of genízaro land grant tenure and dispossession. That is, once we center the politics of collective memory within the epistemological and historiographical challenges embedded in *Mi lucha por la tierra*, then we can conceive of Indo-Hispano as born in the clandestine intersection of Tijerina’s transnational research in the colonial archives of Spain, Mexico, and New Mexico and his encounter with the memories of Native and genízaro ejido land grant tenure and loss localized in New Mexico.

To be clear, by situating Tijerina’s historical narrative of Apache-Mexican coalition and strife alongside the legacy of genízaro mestizaje, I am not interested in submitting Tijerina’s occluded history of Indian aligned mestizaje to the empirical rigors of modern historiography. That rigor is preoccupied with producing Tijerina a subject legible and accountable to the performed forgettings embedded in the historiographies rationalizing the modern states of the US and Mexico. Rather, I want to consider Tijerina’s narrative as the seizure of a clandestine memory of indigenous coalition in a moment of fugitivity in an attempt to think outside the legal, racial, territorial, and historiographical paradigms of US state power. In this regard, Tijerina offers a subaltern historiography of US state formation and its tie to imperial projects of Native and Mexican land theft. That is, rather than portraying the US state as the self evident arbiter of

justice, Tijerina's story of Native and mestizo/a strife presents the US state as a network legalizing the tactics of warmongering pirates.

In this way, the critique of US state power tied to Indo-Hispano is intricately bound up in the memories of genízaro land grant tenure and loss that frames indigeneity in coalitional terms. This point is especially vivid in Tijerina's following reflection on the subaltern legacy of Apache-Mexican-Anglo relations. After his time at the Apache fiesta, Tijerina returns to the hidden ranch of his friend, Don Manuel Trujillo and spent the night talking to Trujillo's son, Maximiliano. Tijerina writes:

Maximiliano told me later: "Why do those agents who persecute you say that you are a communist who runs around poisoning the mind of the people?" I replied: "Well, because they have no better reason for expelling me from the people. My own people, no less. Besides, they have a zealous fear that I will clear what they have planted in our minds. They want our people, like the Europeans who left their homelands to come over to this land, to renounce their language and culture. But the Anglo forgets that we do not abandon our homeland like they have. The mestizo does not come from Europe. He comes neither from the East or the West. The mestizo was born when the East and West joined together. Law 2, Title I of Book 6 of The Laws of the Kingdom of the Indies legalized marriage between the East and the West, between Indian tribes and Spanish citizens. That law created a formidable people. But the Anglo has been so busy condemning Spain that his hate has blinded his eyes and he can neither see nor recognize the rights of the mestizo. If the Anglo does not change, he will suffer greatly after nuclear war."<sup>103</sup>

By reflecting on the practices of state sanctioned counterinsurgency that label him a communist threat to “the mind of the people,” Tijerina offers a remarkable vision of coalitional indigeneity that refuses the historiography, aesthetics, and territorialities of state sponsored tribal and citizen identities of the US and Mexico. This is a temporality of mestizaje that does not align with the overvaluation of European modernity found in Postrevolutionary Mexican national discourse. It is not a disinheritance of tribal presence in an attempt to comply with the boundaries of US white supremacy. And as an open avowal of the rights derived from “legalized marriage...between Indian tribes and Spanish citizens,” it is at a disjunct with the racial imperatives of blood quantum that regulate US Federal Tribal recognition.

What is evident is an expansion of the range of how indigenous presence and insurrection can be narrated and stylized under the constraints of Euroamerican colonial power. This is seen in the tension between Tijerina’s deployment of Spanish law that legitimates mestizos and mestizas as indigenous to the Americas with his declaration that “The mestizo does not come from Europe.” “Born when the East and West joined together,” the mestizo is not like “the Europeans who left their homelands to come over to this land,” who “renounce their language and culture.” Even as he cites “Law 2, Title I of Book 6 of The Laws of the Kingdom of the Indies” he tells Maximililano later that “I do not believe in importing religions or ideologies...my ideology is the land, culture, and the liberty of my people.” In this sense, Tijerina’s deployment of Spanish colonial law in the service of Indo-Hispano’s subaltern historiography reflects a discovery of how to leverage the discursive technologies of colonial power into vehicles of hybridized and indigenous insurrection. Through this trickster logic, Indo-Hispano is not credited as a European import. Rather, this articulation of Indo-Hispano reflects a subaltern negotiation of nationalist and cultural nationalist deployments of mestizaje that finds inspiration from the

memories of tribal-mestizo coalition and strife tied to the political economy of ejido land grant tenure and loss.

Busto argues that Tijerina's appropriation of institutional and legal discourse reveals a "kind of innovative revision, or what Carlo Ginzburg called 'conjectural knowledge,' [which] relies not on the rigors of scientific, verifiable experimentation or cumulative quantitative knowledge, but on the 'mute forms of knowledge in the sense that their precepts do not lend themselves to being either formalized or spoken....[I]n knowledge of this type imponderable elements come into play: instinct, insight, or intuition.' For Tijerina, such conjectural knowledge is supported and shaped by his literalist evangelical worldview and the Mexican Catholic universe of the miraculous." Busto concludes this point by asserting, "reading *Mi lucha por la tierra* without an understanding of its religious impulse is to not read it at all...[it] violates the construction of the text as sacred artifact and sacred history."<sup>104</sup>

As a counterpoint, I have attempted to argue that to read *Mi lucha por la tierra* only for the exceptional nature of Tijerina's distinct religious worldview is to read away the complex legacies of coalitional mestizo/a and tribal struggles tied to the text's production and fugitive use of genre, colonial discourse, and memory. This is not to deny the role that religion continues to play in Tijerina's writings. But if we interrogate the text solely along the lines ascribed by Busto, the prophetic and sacred dimensions of *Mi lucha por la tierra* lose their ability to put into crisis the modern regimes of knowledge that rationalize Native and mestizo/a land loss and legitimate the violence of the US state. In this way, the scenes analyzed here comprise less a singular revolutionary or prophetic subjectivity of Reyes López Tijerina and more of a hybridized testimonio of the legal and epistemological operations of state counterinsurgency. From this perspective, *Mi lucha por la tierra* doubles as a crucial component of *La Alianza's* textual

production. The text operates as a sustained articulation of Indo-Hispano as a discourse that at once draws from the subaltern pasts of genízaro mestizaje in New Mexico and leverages Spanish colonial law toward the articulation of an inalienable regime of territorial and cultural rights that frames indigeneity in coalitional terms. As a form of subaltern historiography, Indo-Hispano reveals how history writing plays a fundamental role in the imposition and indigenous contestation of state sanctioned identities. This interpretation of *Mi lucha por la tierra* reframes Indo-Hispano mestizaje as an important instance of the ways history writing and the politics of memory enables indigenous politics to subvert, remake, and dismantle the constraints of colonial identities.

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1. Rudy V Busto, *King Tiger: The Religious Vision of Reies López Tijerina* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 16, 142.
  2. Emma Pérez *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 5.
  3. Jake Kosek, *Understories: The Political Life of Forests in Northern New Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 34.
  4. This story is a synthesis of accounts provided in the following texts: Rudy V. Busto, *King Tiger: The Religious Vision of Reies López Tijerina* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Richard Gardner, *¡Grito! Reies Tijerina and the New Mexico Land Grant War of 1967* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1970); Peter Nabokov, *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969); Patricia Bell Blawis, *Tijerina and the Land Grants: Mexican Americans in Struggle for Their Heritage* (New York: International Publishers, 1971); Michael Jenkinson, *Tijerina: Land Grant Conflict in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: Paisano Press, 1968); Arturo F. Rosales, *Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1997); Lee Bebout, "Hero Making in El Movimiento: Reies López Tijerina and the Chicano Nationalist Imaginary." *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 32 (2) (Fall 2007), 93-121; John Chávez, *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984); David Correia, "'Rousers of the Rabble' in the New Mexico Land Grant War: La Alianza Federal de Mercedes and the Violence of the State." *Antipode* 40 (4) (2008), 561-583; Nancie L González, *The Spanish-Americans of New Mexico: A Heritage of Pride* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969); Phillip B Gonzalez, "Struggle for Survival: The Hispanic Land Grants in New Mexico, 1848-2001." *Agricultural History* 77 (2) (Spring, 2003), 293-324; Juan Gómez-Quiñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998); George Mariscal, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Reies López Tijerina, *They Called Me 'King Tiger': My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*. Translated and edited by José Angel Gutiérrez (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2000); Enrique Lamadrid, "Los Corridos de Río Arriba: Two Ballads of the Land Grant Movement, New Mexico, 1965-70." *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano and Chicana Studies* 17 (2), 31-62. Clark S. Knowlton, "Reies Tijerina and the Alianza Federal de Mercedes: Seekers After Justice." *Wisconsin Sociologist* 22 (4) (Fall, 1985), 133-144. I also draw from a number of other sources that will also be subsequently referenced.
  5. Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo: A Legacy of Conflict*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 132.
  6. *They Called Me "King Tiger,"* 49.
  7. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 13.

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8. George I. Sánchez, *Forgotten Pueblos: A Study of New Mexicans* (Albuquerque: Calvin Horne Publishers, 1967).

9. ¡Grito! 19.

10. *Ibid.*, 63. For a sample of the historiography of Spanish and Mexican land grant dispossession in New Mexico, see the following: Charles L. Briggs and John R. Van Ness. *Land, Water, and Culture: New Perspectives on Hispanic Land Grants*. New Mexico Land Grant Series. 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1987); Ebright, Malcolm. *Land Grants and Lawsuits in Northern New Mexico*. New Mexico Land Grant Series. 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994); Rubén Sáenz Márquez, *New Mexico: A Brief Multi-History* (Albuquerque: Cosmic House Press, 1999); Phillip B. Gonzalez, "Struggle for Survival: The Hispanic Land Grants in New Mexico, 1848-2001" *Agricultural History*, Vol. 77, No. 2, Minority Land and Community Security. (Spring, 2003), pp. 293-324.

11. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 29.

12. For a study on the colonialist practices of land management in the National Forests in New Mexico, See Kosek, *Understories*.

13. Ramón Gutierrez states that part "of the New Mexicans' hostility to the term 'Mexican' stems from its association with Mexico and Mexican nationalism. New Mexico was always marginal to Spanish imperial politics and just as isolated from Mexico City" (380) in "Unraveling America's Hispanic Past: Internal Stratification and Class Boundaries" in *The Chicano Studies Reader: an anthology of Aztlán* (2001). Phillip González argues that while "Mexican independence sought to uproot Castilian identification, . . . on the dominant Anglo side, the Spanish nomenclature thus originally served to herd Latinos within a civic fold while leaving the foreign and threatening sense of 'Mexican' to operate on a negative plane of social control" (163). See "The Political Construction of Latino Nomenclatures in Twentieth-Century New Mexico" in *Journal of the Southwest*, Vol 35, No. 2 (Summer, 1993). See also, Pablo Mitchell, *Coyote Nation: Sexuality, Race, and Conquest in Modernizing New Mexico, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2005); Charles H. Montgomery, *The Spanish Redemption: Heritage, Power, and Loss on New Mexico's Upper Rio Grande*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); John Nieto-Phillips, *The Language of Blood: The Making of Spanish American Identity in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004).

14. See David R. Maciel and Juan José Peña's chapter "La Reconquista: The Chicano Movement in New Mexico," 275 in *The Contested Homeland: A Chicano History of New Mexico*. The authors state that rather "than allowing the land-grant issue to appear as an issue between communities, landowners, and the federal government, Tijerina framed the conflict as one between Nuevomexicano and Anglo-American societies" (275). John Chávez also argues that "Tijerina and the Alianza did rejuvenate the ethnic pride of a good number of nuevomexicanos. Though many Hispanos considered Tijerina and outsider, many others joined his organization, and in doing so reaffirmed their ties to Mexico through reference to the Treaty of Guadalupe

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Hidalgo, and to their Indian ancestors through acceptance of the facts of mestizaje (Indo-Hispano intermarriage). In New Mexico, no longer could ‘Spanish American’ politicians, who had generally held a representative number of positions in government, ignore their economically depressed constituents without opposition from Chicano militants around the state—for increasingly among nuevomexicanos the image of the Spanish Southwest was giving way to the image of Aztlan” (141).

15. *The Spanish-Americans of New Mexico*, 95-96.

16. “Hero Making in El Movimiento,” 102.

17. *King Tiger*, 67; *They Called Me “King Tiger,”* 72-73.

18. *Chicano!*, 160.

19. “Hero Making in El Movimiento, 103”; Matt S Meier and Feliciano Rivera, *The Chicanos: A History of Mexican Americans* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), 272.

20. “Hero Making in El Movimiento,” 103; Frances L Swadesh, “The Alianza Movement of New Mexico: The Interplay of Social Change and Public Commentary” in *Minorities and Politics*, edited by Henry J. Tobias and Charles E. Wodehouse. (University of New Mexico Press, 1969).

21. *Tijerina*, 61.

22. *Chicano!*, 161.

23. *They Called Me “King Tiger,”* 64-66.

24. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 28.

25. *New Mexico: A Brief Multi-History*, 533.

26. *Ibid.*, 533

27. The state of New Mexico claims that Valdez was responsible for shooting Saiz, yet Aliancista Geronimo Borunda also claims responsibility.

28. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 85.

29. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 108; *Tijerina and the Land Grants* 90; *¡Grito!*, 161.

30. *Chicano!*, 164.

31. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 112.

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32. *¡Grito!*, 167, 171.

33. John Chávez writes: “The reaction of the authorities brought the case of the Alianza to the attention of the entire nation. Imagining ‘a new Cuba to the north,’ the state government in Santa Fe sent out four hundred state troopers in an expedition into northern New Mexico that included the use of helicopters and the use of two tanks.” (*The Lost Land*, 140).

34. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 142.

35. “La Reconquista,” 276.

36. *Chicano!*, 165.

37. “La Reconquista,” 277, *Chicano!*, 167; “Hero Making in El Movimiento,” 106.

38. “Reies Tijerina and the Alianza Federal de Mercedes: Seekers After Justice,” 136.

39. *¡Grito!*, 176, 179.

40. *Ibid.*, 239.

41. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 193; “La Reconquista,” 274.

42. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 194.

43. “The Alianza Movement in New Mexico,” 77.

44. Swadesh writes, “A January 6, 1968 editorial in the *Albuquerque Journal*, signed by editor John McMillion stated: ‘If not directly involved, the Alianza is indirectly involved because it has nurtured such hate as never before existed in Rio Arriba County.’”

45. *Ibid.*, 78

46. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 195; *¡Grito!*, 251.

47. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 197.

48. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 117; *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 199.

49. *¡Grito!*, 259, *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 155, “Rousers of the Rabble,” 199, *Chicano!*, 167.

50. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 199; “The Alianza Movement in New Mexico,” 81; *They Called Me “King Tiger,”* 107; *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 248.

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51. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 199; *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 140.
52. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 125; *They Called Me "King Tiger,"* 107.
53. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 132, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 199.
54. *Tijerina and the Land Grants* 131.
55. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 141; *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 200.
56. *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 248.
57. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 200.
58. *Tijerina and the Land Grants* 146; *Chicano Politics*, 117.
59. "La Reconquista," 277; *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 146-151; *¡Grito!*, 261.
60. *Chicano Politics*, 117.
61. Nabokov states in the introduction to *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid* that he seeks to "trace the raid's immediate ramifications, the new arena into which it plunged the Alianza, the surfacing reactions of congressmen, police, and social reformers" and ends his study on "the five-week trial of Tijerina for charges resulting from the raid, surely as dramatic a closing as any storyteller would wish" (9). Michael Jenkinson's *Tijerina* ends with an epilogue briefly informing the reader of Tijerina's acquittal in court.
62. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 260; *¡Grito!*, 264.
63. *Ibid.*, 265; *Ibid.*, 271.
64. *Ibid.*, 261; *Ibid.*, 271; *Occupied America*, 341.
65. Gardner 271-72
66. According to Márquez: "Tijerina's acquittal came about because he was incorrectly charged. If he had broken the law, it had nothing to do with the kidnapping charge leveled against him, so he was found innocent," *New Mexico*, 535. After the trial, Nabokov quotes Tijerina's court appointed attorney stating "The state has charged him with the wrong crimes, the wrong offenses." *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*, 264.
67. *Crusade for Justice*, 406-07n18.
68. *Youth, Identity, Power*, 75; "Hero Making in El Movimiento," 98.

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69. "Hero Making in El Movimiento," 100.

70. *¡Grito!*, 284.

71. *Ibid.*, 285.

72. *Chicano!*, 168; *¡Grito!*, 285.

73. *¡Grito!*, 290; *Chicano!*, 169.

74. "Hero Making in El Movimiento," 109; *Tijerina and the Land Grants*, 169.

75. *Chicano!*, 170, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 200-201, "La Reconquista," 278.

76. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun*, 200-201.

77. *Chicano!*, 169.

78. *Ibid.*, 170.

79. *Chicano Politics*, 118.

80. Mariscal writes: "It was at the intersection of the militant pursuit of the community's rights and the shaking off of the legacy of white supremacy that Indo-Hispano cultural nationalism set an important precedent for other forms of radicalism invented by young Chicanos and Chicanas who pursued the struggle in other locations." *Brown-Children of the Sun*, 188.

81. *Chicano!*, 170. Muñoz writes: "Tijerina's objectives were restricted to the land grants issue, a struggle that he did not originally place in the context of a quest for Chicano identity and political power. Although Tijerina himself was of Mexican descent, his constituency was largely from the 'Hispano' rural class. Some were direct descendants of the colonizers who were given title to land by the king of Spain in the territory which became the state of New Mexico. Tijerina and his followers referred to themselves as indo-hispanos and not as Chicanos. Like New Mexicans in general, they de-emphasized their Mexican roots." *Youth, Identity, Power*, 7-8.

82. Recently, Lee Bebout has offered a revision of his article in his book, *Mythohistorical Interventions: The Chicano Movement and Its Legacies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011. In his chapter on La Alianza, Bebout considers Patsy Tijerina's role in burning the Forest Service sign that ultimately led to Tijerina's incarceration. In a similar manner, moving and illuminating testimonios by Rosa Tijerina and María Escobar, Tijerina's daughter and first wife, respectively, can be found in *Chicanas in Charge: Texas Women in the Public Arena*. Edited by José Angel Gutiérrez, Michelle Meléndez, and Sonia Adriana Noyola Lanham. MN: Altamira Press, 2007.

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83. Lorena Oropeza, "The Heart of Chicano History: Reies López Tijerina as a Memory Entrepreneur" *The Sixties* 1:1. 49 (2008), 50.

84. *King Tiger*, 202-203.

85. *Ibid.*, 160.

86. John Beverley, *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 31.

87. For a critical account on the debates over the "truth" of Menchú's testimonio, see, Arturo Arias, "After the Rigoberta Menchu Controversy: Lessons Learned About the Nature of Subalternity and the Specifics of the indigenous Subject." *MLN* 117 (2) (March 2002), 481-505.

88. *Testimonio*, 41.

89. *King Tiger*, 235 nn 30.

90. *Ibid.*, 172.

91. The English translation of *Mi lucha por la tierra, They Called Me 'King Tiger': My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*, was published in 2000 by Arte Público Press. Busto engages almost exclusively with the Spanish language original, yet my attention to *Mi lucha por la tierra* also draws from the English translation. Translated and edited by José Angel Gutiérrez, the text is abridged to nearly half of its original page count. In this regard, the utility of testimonio's emphasis on the processes of textual mediation is relevant to the presence of *They Called Me 'King Tiger'*. Rather than comparing the fidelity of the translation to Tijerina's "original" Spanish language version, testimonio asks us to approach the texts in articulation. In other words, I approach the two versions as a bilingual complex of textual insubordination born of collaborations between Tijerina, *ejido* land grant heirs, and a transnational professional intellectual class.

92. *King Tiger*, 165.

93. *Ibid.*, 165-66.

94. *Ibid.*, 167.

95. *Testimonio*, 18.

96. "Rousers of the Rabble," 578.

97. Reies López Tijerina, *Mi lucha por la tierra* (México City: Fondo De Cultura Economica, 1978), 355-357. My own translation.

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98. *Testimonio*, 19.

99. *King Tiger*, 204.

100. *Mi lucha por la tierra*, 70-72. My translation.

101. Russell M. Magnaghi, "Plains Indians in New Mexico: The Genízaro Experience." *Great Plains Quarterly* 10 (2) (Spring 1990), 91.

102. "The Heart of Chicano History," 50.

103. *Mi lucha por la tierra*, 72-73.

104. *King Tiger*, 204.

## Chapter Two

### Cartographies of Forgetting and Futurity: Indo-Hispano, Chicana/o Mestizaje, and *Almanac of the Dead*

As part of a larger dissertation project dedicated to resignifying the *Indo-Hispano* cultural politics of *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes*, this chapter traces the affinities and divergences between Indo-Hispano and Chicana/o *mestizaje* as told within Chicana/o, Latina/o, and Latin American studies. While the racial, gendered, and nationalist logic of Chicana/o *mestizaje* remains the subject of critical scrutiny from an array of disciplinary formations, very little attention has been paid to Indo-Hispano as a distinct iteration of *mestizaje* deployed in the context of *La Alianza*'s struggle for Spanish and Mexican land grant reclamation in New Mexico during the 1960s and '70s. I argue that even as Indo-Hispano predated, co-existed, and summoned the construction of several "foundational" symbols and imaginaries of Chicana/o *mestizaje* within and beyond a cultural nationalist context, Chicana/o, Latino/a, and Latin American studies produce Indo-Hispano as a forgettable object of knowledge. I demonstrate how the forgetting of Indo-Hispano is achieved through a cross-disciplinary historiographical script that casts the emergence of Chicana/o *mestizaje* solely as a strategic appropriation of postrevolutionary Mexican national discourse within US based civil rights struggles. This account of Chicana/o *mestizaje* serves as perhaps the most prominent connective thread between cultural nationalist historiographical accounts of Chicana/o *mestizaje* and subsequent feminist and transnational interventions and critiques of Chicana/o *mestizaje* across multiple disciplinary formations. I demonstrate how this script produces a memory of Indo-Hispano as at once foundational, subsumable, and forgettable to a more "pliable" and "open-ended" Chicana/o cultural nationalism territorialized under the tropic force of *Aztlán*.

The absence of Indo-Hispano within disciplinary comprehensions of mestizaje has profound implications for how scholars, artists, and intellectuals map and historicize what is now called the US-Mexico borderlands. As such, this chapter's preoccupation is to discern the disciplinary cartography of the so-called US Southwest that is generated by the forgetting of Indo-Hispano. To sketch this cartography of forgetting, I approach Chicana/o mestizaje as a regulative matrix for organizing disciplinary comprehensions of the geographical and historical boundaries of mestiza/o historical consciousness within what is now called the United States. As a regulative framework, this chapter reveals how the forgetting of Indo-Hispano within narratives of Chicana/o mestizaje exposes the persistence of a latent attachment to the nation-form within contemporary discussions on mestizaje that emphasize the transnational dynamics of Chicana/o cultural politics. I demonstrate how this attachment is reliant upon heteropatriarchal strategies of racial representation inherited from the historiography of El Movimiento, which are reproduced in contemporary discussions on Chicana/o mestizaje that employ transnational, feminist, and hemispheric analytics.

Yet outlining Chicana/o mestizaje's cartography of forgetting is only one component of this chapter's labor. This chapter is also concerned with setting a stage from which I can write against the performed forgetting of Indo-Hispano. *Almanac of the Dead*, the epic novel of indigenous land reclamation by Leslie Marmon Silko, is necessary for this purpose. I situate *Almanac* as a critique of the racial logic of nationalist and revolutionary projects of mestizaje and therefore read it against the unifying historiographical script of Chicana/o mestizaje that secures Indo-Hispano erasure. More specifically, I elucidate how the novel offers a sustained critique of the normative (cultural) nationalist geographies and temporalities tethered to the production of "Indian" subjects under Mexican and Chicana/o mestizaje. My turn to *Almanac of the Dead* is

taken with the desire to formulate an elsewhere to the discursive constraints of Chicana/o mestizaje and open up a different type of knowledge project to think Indo-Hispano within the heterogeneity of mestiza/o and indigenous struggles for land reclamation in the Americas. Through this analysis, I consider *Almanac of the Dead* as a paradigmatic text of my dissertation for how it renders a language to map and narrate the emergence of Indo-Hispano as a distinct discourse of mestizaje waged within the nested problematics of land reclamation, cultural production, coalitional politics, language, territoriality, state violence, and historiography in the context of the overlaid tribal and colonial orders constituting New Mexico.

### **Mestizaje as a Regulative Matrix in the Americas**

The emergence of mestizaje in the discourses of late nineteenth and early twentieth century postcolonial Latin American nationalisms, as a strategic rearticulation of a Spanish colonial caste formation, is notable less for its uniformity than for its profound heterogeneity across the hemisphere. Premised on the idealization of racial, cultural, and social mixing between white Europeans and various indigenous (and other non-white) social formations, the differential articulation of mestizaje in locations such as Brazil, Peru, Cuba, and Mexico were forged within a discursive field seeking to counter the social logics of US imperialism and its idealization of scientific doctrines of racial purity and hypo-descent.

In these terms, Nancy Appelbaum, Anne Macpherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt collectively point out that the varied iterations of mestizaje across Latin America, in figuring a mixed-raced subject as its ideal world historical agent, importantly reworked the hegemonic fastening of whiteness with modernity and citizenship.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, they note that in spite of the articulation of anti-imperialist social imaginaries, Latin American nationalist discourses premised on the logics of mestizaje often reproduced many key assumptions of the Euroamerican

powers they sought to counter. That is, even as mestizaje initiated discourses that claimed its utility in transcending conditions of racialized inequality, a number of Latin American scholars now routinely articulate its ascendance and circulation in tandem with multiple strategies of colonial exclusion, assimilation, and hierarchicalization of Black, indigenous, and other non-mestizo/a difference.<sup>2</sup>

These contradictions are especially apparent in the logic of mestizaje employed in the service of postrevolutionary Mexican national consolidation. In Mexico, the discourse of mestizaje takes its most recognizable form as a nationalist solution to the radical social fragmentation wrought by the Revolution years (1910-20) and was articulated in tandem with the elevation (and marginalization) of Indian difference in the state policies of *indigenismo* and strategies of anti-Chinese racism in the state of Sonora.<sup>3</sup> Within this context, Mexican social theorist José Vasconcelos is often identified as one of the chief architects of Mexican nationalist mestizaje due to the publication and circulation of his socio-philosophical treatise, *La Raza Cósmica (The Cosmic Race)* in 1925.<sup>4</sup> In this text, Vasconcelos constructs a vision of mestizaje that situates Latin American citizens as the closest approximation of a universal/“cosmic” race due to the continent’s colonial legacy of racial mixture. Although the mestiza/o figure of the “Cosmic Race,” according to Vasconcelos, is “composed of selections of the races already in existence,” it is “only the Iberian part of the continent contains the spiritual factors, the race, and the territory necessary for the great enterprise of initiating the new universal era of Humanity.”<sup>5</sup>

In this revolutionary nationalist context, Vasconcelos’ state sponsored discourse of mestizaje operates as a doctrine of white supremacy that idealizes the Iberian unit of its mestiza/o equation ironically through its counterpart in Mexican statist policies of *indigenismo*. María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo notes that, “as state policy, *indigenismo* set out to modernize the

Indian element in national cultures, integrating indigenous populations into mestizo life.”<sup>6</sup>

Launched through rural educational programs, agrarian reforms, and state sponsored projects of nationalized cultural production, doctrines of indigenismo figured the “Indian” as racial difference capable of being edited away in the service of revolutionary mestizaje. At the same time, doctrines of indigenismo enable the Mexican state to appropriate and proliferate Pre-Columbian Aztec and Mayan tribal iconography as the symbolics of revolutionary mestiza/o citizenship.

It is now commonplace within the domains of Chicana/o, Latino/a and Latin American studies to locate Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje as an appropriation of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalist discourse. According to this narrative, mestizaje is often referenced as the central trope of Chicana/o racial identification that emerges from, but is not bound to, a cultural nationalist context that sought to counter historic and contemporary forms of US white supremacy with strategic rearticulations of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalist discourse.<sup>7</sup> In deploying mestizaje as a central racial trope and critical analytic, Chicana/o projects of political and cultural representation participate in what Curtis Marez calls the “*indigenismo* of the antique.” Such discourses, he argues, “generally focus on the Spanish conquest of Mexico, singling out in particular the fall of the Aztec empire as the primal scene of Chicana/o identity and as a paradigm for the subsequent conquest of the territory now known as the U.S. Southwest.” Without doubt, the embrace of mestizaje within the ascendance of the Chicana/o movement offered a potent challenge to the historical, geographical, and racial coherency of US national sovereignty. By claiming a relation of Indigeneity and therefore a preconquest tenure in the Americas, mestizaje importantly enables forms of Chicana/o representation to counter “the

claims of manifest destiny and white nativism” that saturate the racial politics of the United States.<sup>8</sup>

Key reference points in the construction of this script of *mestizaje* within Chicana/o studies are the cultural nationalist imaginary of *Aztlán*, Corky González’ epic poem *Yo Soy Joaquín*, and Gloria Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. *Aztlán* and “El Plan Espiritual de *Aztlán*” are often respectively referenced as both a geo-social imaginary and platform of Chicana/o cultural nationalist unification drafted in the Denver Youth conference in 1969. Together, they provide the symbolic homeland for Chicana/o historical consciousness.<sup>9</sup> *Yo Soy Joaquín* is often viewed as the poetic counterpart to *Aztlán*. It is a text that famously depicts the rise of a unified Chicana/o people through the masculinized figure of Joaquín. Many critics have noted how Joaquín’s hybridized identity acts as a metonym for a larger Chicana/o political class through an indigenismo of Aztec and Mayan imagery.<sup>10</sup>

As a key point of intervention in the above imaginaries and tropes, Anzaldúa’s text is often understood as producing the touchstone term of a post-cultural nationalist Chicana feminism and cultural studies, one that shifts the domain’s understanding of the US southwest from a “conquered homeland” to a “borderland.” Critics have identified the ways that Anzaldúa’s borderlands index the multiple and overdetermined geo-historical forces that come to constitute both Chicana/o identity and regional spatial meanings. The cultivation of the “borderlands” trope in Chicana/o feminist thought indicates multiple lines of inquiry into the legacies of gendered and sexual violence of the US/Mexico border.<sup>11</sup> It also offers scholars from multiple fields a theoretical intervention in the nationalist logics of sociality that bind together and fracture identity, territory, and historical temporality more broadly.<sup>12</sup> Often, as Chicana feminist thought reveals, the process of identification as *mestiza/o* takes place on/between

multiple imaginaries of racialized and gendered territory that are themselves in flux, overlapped, and disjointed, often antagonistically.<sup>13</sup> In these terms, Anzaldúa's deployment of the borderland is emblematic of a constitutive fault line marking the deployment of *mestizaje* within Chicana/o studies, a jointure of impulses competing between the closure of identity and the open-endedness of critique—a tension between the rootedness and transience of territory, language, and historical descent.

This tension highlights the multi-functionality of *mestizaje* as a political practice and racialized trope across the Americas. Rather than settling this tension, I understand the heterogeneous deployments of *mestizaje* less as a one-way imposition of postcolonial state power, and more as a regulative matrix by which a multitude of disciplines, movements, and publics tell a history and produce a map of the Americas. Or, as Applebaum, Macpherson, and Roseblatt state, *mestizaje* ought to be considered a “negotiated framework” on which the “transformative, dialogic routines and rituals of rule take place.”<sup>14</sup> Approaching *mestizaje* as a regulative matrix for forms of colonial dominance and resistance enables me illuminate the territorializing elements that are in play within its deployment of a historiography of indigenous and European contact and mixture. This allows me to avoid spatializing the practice and discourse of *mestizaje* in terms of discretely unified projects of Latin American and US based Chicana/o political and cultural representation. Rather, this approach allows me to understand how the deployment of *mestizaje* in particular social settings works to territorialize transnational circuits of colonial power and their cultures of racialization within localized practices and geographies.

### **Chicano/a Mestizaje and the Cartography of Forgetting Indo-Hispano**

Comprehensions of La Alianza's deployment of Indo-Hispano within the historiography of Chicana/o mestizaje offer a revealing index of the regulative functions of mestizaje. In Rudy Busto's study on Tijerina's religious worldview, he demonstrates that part of this tension arises from the narratives through which La Alianza finds disciplinary presence within and beyond Chicana/o studies. Busto demonstrates that a general tendency within work on Tijerina and La Alianza is to narrate the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid as the apex of La Alianza's movement and Tijerina's political life. Busto identifies Matt Meier's and Felicano Rivera's historiographical work, *The Chicanos: A History of Mexican Americans* as both a source and effect of the scripting of Tijerina and La Alianza *solely* in relation to the courthouse raid. In doing so, Busto explains how their work frames *El Movimiento* as being cohered under the leadership of "the Four Horsemen," identified as Cesar Chávez, Rodolfo Gonzáles, José Angel Gutiérrez, and Tijerina. In Busto's words, this historiographical perspective "organized and united four distinct and only tenuously related movements" under the banner of a unified Chicana/o civil rights struggle: Chávez' United Farm Workers project of labor organizing in California; Gonzáles' Crusade for Justice organization in Denver; Gutiérrez' La Raza Unida political party in Texas; and Tijerina's land grant movement in New Mexico.<sup>15</sup> Busto argues further that "each of the four movements (there were others) represented by the horsemen spoke to particular issues and to specific Mexican descent populations. It was only when they were viewed in relationship to one another through a nationalist frame that the power of the horseman ideal (and so the power of the Chicano movement) could be fully articulated."<sup>16</sup>

Within Chicana/o movement discourse and historiography, the masculinized legacy of the four horsemen underwrites the unifying cultural nationalist trope of Aztlán. Hence, the

conjunction of the four horsemen ideal in relationship to Aztlán enabled “Tijerina and the Alianza [to be] adopted wholesale as representative of the New Mexican Hispano struggle [in which] the realities of local New Mexican land grant factionalism were all ignored by Chicano Movement ideology.”<sup>17</sup> Critic Lee Bebout gives texture to this insight by investigating the role La Alianza’s Indo-Hispano cultural politics played in the construction of a unified pre- and post-Aztlán Chicana/o movement. Bebout, like Busto, argues that the frozen connection between Tijerina and the courthouse raid worked to join La Alianza with the concerns of other emerging pre-Aztlán forms of Chicana/o nationalism in the 1960s primarily by fashioning Tijerina as one of the leaders of a unified Chicana/o nationalist project through revolutionary/bandido tropes.<sup>18</sup> With the cultivation of Aztlán in the late 1960s, Chicana/o cultural nationalism constructed a “usable version of the past” influenced by La Alianza’s publicization of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the revolutionary tropes generated from its raid on the Tierra Amarilla courthouse in the summer of 1967.<sup>19</sup>

Yet even as Bebout demonstrates these sites of convergence between La Alianza and Chicana/o cultural nationalism, he also argues for important differences between the tactics, counterhistories, and identity markers employed by both groups. According to Bebout, Chicana/o cultural nationalism’s use of Aztlán was “sprawling and pliable,” while Indo-Hispano relied on a “rigid, legalistic history” of Spanish and Mexican property ownership as a “strategy for land recuperation.”<sup>20</sup> In making this argument, Bebout casts La Alianza as unable to deploy the logic of mestizaje contained in Chicana/o cultural nationalism due to Indo-Hispano’s stated legitimacy of Spanish colonial rule and Chicana/o mestizaje’s glorification of a pre-conquest indigenous past and critique of Spanish and US colonization. This is significant because it indicates the ways in which the production and deployment of mestizaje acts as a site of tension and convergence

that regulates the ways in which Chicana/o studies spatially renders mestizo/a struggles in the US southwest. Bebout argues that by “the time ‘Chicano’ became a prideful ethnic identifier in the 1960s, Nuevomexicanos (New Mexicans) had long identified with their Spanish origins.” Here Bebout references the production of the “Spanish-American” political identity that, as a strategy for qualification of US citizenship, disavowed mestizo/a practices and productions in New Mexico and fabricated a pure Spanish past. Thus Bebout asserts that this glorification of a pure, unmixed Spanish past within New Mexico both existed in profound tension with emergent forms of Chicana/o mestizaje yet was importantly mediated by La Alianza’s deployment of Indo-Hispano.<sup>21</sup> In this context, Bebout recognizes that the difference between Chicana/o mestizaje and Indo-Hispano rests primarily on the former’s genealogy in postrevolutionary Mexican nationalism and the latter’s derivation from Spanish colonial “legal texts.” Yet within what Bebout calls “various sites of Chicana/o discourse” he argues that Indo-Hispano became “interchangeable” with Chicana/o, “provided the potential for a broader citizenry of the future Chicano nation” and was spatialized as a “mild regional preference” within New Mexico.

I want to pause here to make explicit the two unifying strategies of Chicano/a cultural nationalism that delimit the knowability of Indo-Hispano in nationalist space and time. The first strategy is Tijerina’s ascendance to a cultural nationalist leader through revolutionary/bandido tropes. As a heteropatriarchal strategy of racial representation, the revolutionary/bandido trope of the Four Horseman frames La Alianza within Chicana/o studies as an appendage of Tijerina’s national leadership. As a result, the Tierra Amarilla Courthouse raid and Tijerina’s biography become the privileged objects of study, reducing Indo-Hispano to the “effective, if unintentional naming project of Tijerina.”<sup>22</sup>

The second strategy is the construction of Aztlán as a trope, plan, and imaginary of Chicana/o unification. The “pliability” of Aztlán enables Chicana/o mestizaje to adjunct Indo-Hispano as a regional supplement to a unified Chicana/o political class. This account of Indo-Hispano frames New Mexico in general—and the emergence of La Alianza, in particular—as regionalized and forgettable objects of knowledge in relation to other Chicana/o “centers” within the annexed Mexican and Native territories of the US southwest. This is made possible by a historical narrative in which New Mexico is understood by its geographical isolation (both *within* the United States and *from* Mexico), as well as its inhabitation by a “Spanish-American” population who had come to reject its association with all things “Mexican” and “Indian” in order to mythologize pure ties to a “Spanish” colonial past. As such, this process of regionalization figures New Mexico and La Alianza with the capacity to be known as either over-particular (i.e. La Alianza/New Mexico have their own sets of singularities that don’t travel to the larger Chicana/o movement), or as particularity in a relation of sameness in the US southwest (i.e. La Alianza is just like other Chicana/o movements, but they call themselves “Indo-Hispanos”). This is a cognitive stalemate that maps mestiza/o heterogeneity in the so-called US onto normative frames of nationalized spatialization. In doing so, this cartography subdues the heterogeneity of mestiza/o struggles in the so-called US by relying on a regional imaginary of the US-Mexico border regulated by overwhelmingly (cultural) nationalist terms and norms provided by the US and Mexico. These terms and norms regulate the knowability of Indo-Hispano through a historiographical narrative of Chicana/o mestizaje that produces La Alianza’s complex conditions of emergence, cohesion, and cultural production in New Mexico as sites of forgetting within Chicana/o cultural studies and historiography.

I am particularly interested in the geo-historical contours of this erasure, for they are productive of a lens through which we can read for the persistence of the (cultural) nation form in a number of contemporary works in Latina/o, Latin American, and Chicana/o cultural studies on mestizaje. More specifically, we see this latent reproduction of national spatialization and temporality in works that explicitly re-approach both the critical utility and historical moorings of Chicana/o nationalist deployments of mestizaje in order to map out its transnational character and rethink its status as a racialized figure of colonial power. For example, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo's work joins conversations about mestizaje within the domains of Latin American and Chicana/o studies by locating Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje as an appropriation of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalist discourse. She argues that "the appropriation of mestizaje by Chicana/o nationalists in their attempt to fend off discriminatory practices in the United States borrows heavily from the colonial register of Indian subalternization under Spanish colonialism, making coalition across indigenous and Chicano movements difficult, if not impossible."<sup>23</sup> Because Chicana/o appropriations of mestizaje reproduce Mexican nationalist strategies of indigenous exclusion by deploying mestizaje as a biological trope of racial difference, Saldaña-Portillo critiques the logic of mestizaje outlined in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera* by stating that "what Anzaldúa does not recognize—indeed cannot recognize from her privileged position as First World minority rather than Third World subaltern—is that her very focus on the Aztec female deities is an effect of the PRI's statist policies to resuscitate, through state-funded documentation, this particular defunct Mexican Indian culture and history to the exclusion of dozens living indigenous cultures."<sup>24</sup> Although Saldaña-Portillo's critique of Anzaldúa overlooks the borderland feminist and lesbian interventions contained in *Borderlands/La Frontera*, I do think her assessment of Mexican and

Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje as a biological trope is useful in highlighting the forgetting of indigenous contemporaneity by casting indigenous cultures and life forms as the historically dead backdrop to mestiza/o agency.

Rafael Pérez-Torres engages with this constraint in *Mestizaje: Critical Uses of Race in Chicano Culture*. Pérez-Torres argues for mestizaje's utility not as a biological trope, but as a way of forging "an identity that highlights the relational and political dynamics of Chicana/o identity through the recognition of race and race mixture." As work seeking to join Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje with conversations within Latin American and American studies on race and nation, *Mestizaje* also situates Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje in the context of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalist discourse. Pérez-Torres writes "Mexican national ideology places at the center of Mexican identity the Spanish violation of the Indian mother and the inevitable abandonment by the Spanish father. To graft this psychosocial dynamic onto the Chicano psyche in the United States does not take a great leap of imagination."<sup>25</sup>

Alicia Arrizón's *Queering Mestizaje: Transculturation and Performance* both disrupts and repeats this impulse to unify Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje in the historical context of postrevolutionary Mexican discourse. Arrizón's work is a study that joins critical discourses of queer theory, performance studies, and Chicana/o and Latina/o theories of "hybrid epistemologies" in an effort to put forth an understanding of mestizaje as a way to signify "the racialized body and the elements of cultural/colonial difference...in a dialectical process that refuses to accept cultural dominance or total sovereignty."<sup>26</sup> In unpacking mestizaje's signifiatory labor within the domain of Chicana/o studies, Arrizón's work outlines Anzaldúa's interventions into the Chicana/o nationalist imaginary of Aztlán of the 1960s. In doing so, Arrizón reads for the ways in which Chicana/o nationalist articulations of Aztlán—as an

“inventive assemblage” of “ancient [Aztec] mythologies” and concerns over US territorial annexation—are conceptualized by Anzaldúa in “more complex terms as an in-between space, coinciding with the physical and metaphysical space of the U.S.-Mexican border.”<sup>27</sup> Although Arrizón’s focus on Anzaldúa opens onto an acknowledgment of the ways in which Chicana/o nationalist deployments of Aztlán coincided with La Alianza’s counterhistory of land grant recovery during the 1960s and 1970s, she summarily ends this acknowledgment with the following dismissal: “In practice, the goal of recovering land proved idealistic and romantic.”<sup>28</sup>

Although Arrizón, Saldaña-Portillo, and Pérez-Torres make important contributions in understanding the transamerican circulation of mestizaje within Chicana/o radical imaginaries, all three critics replicate the cultural nationalist historiographical provincialism that unifies Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje *solely* as an appropriation of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalism. For Saldaña-Portillo, this entails an erasure not only of Indo-Hispano, but also of the legacy of coalition between La Alianza and Mexican, Native American, and African-American social movements. In a similar manner, Arrizón’s dismissal of La Alianza’s cultural politics of land grant recovery both erases Indo-Hispano from contemporary Chicana/o concerns as well as overlooks the coalitional nature of La Alianza’s project of land grant recovery. These treatments of Indo-Hispano is evidence of the ways that the scripting of Chicana/o mestizaje within the legacy of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalism serves to regulate a geo-historical imagination about the US southwest in overwhelmingly nationalist terms and imaginaries. As a result, Chicana/o mestizaje subdues a comprehension of mestiza/o heterogeneity and writes out a consideration of La Alianza’s use of Indo-Hispano—as a distinct iteration of mestizaje—from the concerns of these disciplinary domains.

**“Invent Yourself a Name”: *Almanac of the Dead* as Critique of Mexican and Chicana/o Mestizaje**

We don't believe in boundaries. Borders. Nothing like that. We are here thousands of years before the first whites. We are here before maps or quit claims. We know where we belong on this earth. We have always moved freely. North-south. East-west. We pay no attention to what isn't real. Imaginary lines. Imaginary minutes and hours. Written law. We recognized none of that. And we carry a great many things back and forth. We don't see any border. We have been here and this has been continued thousands of years. We don't stop. No one stops us. You have a working name. That's nothing new. I made up my name. *Calabazas*, 'Pumpkins.' That's what you did. Invent yourself a name.

— Calabazas from *Almanac of the Dead*

The forgetting of Indo-Hispano is mapped. Now the question emerges: what narratives, theories, aesthetics, and knowledges about the US/Mexico borderlands must be refashioned through a recovery of La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics? To initiate an answer, I now turn to *Almanac of the Dead* in order to unpack the ways in which the novel acts as a site of culture that offers an alternative theorization of indigenous and mestiza/o difference to the foundational tropes and historiographical scripts of Chicana/o mestizaje. In that regard, I'm also interested in exploring how the novel permits a reappraisal of the geo-historical boundaries by which we know La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics. This is significant, for were we to accept the historiographical narratives of Chicana/o mestizaje, pairing La Alianza's deployment of Indo-Hispano and *Almanac of the Dead* would appear counterintuitive. Taking the scripts of Chicana/o mestizaje at their word, were we to even remember Indo-Hispano, it would be confined to a Chicana/o cultural nationalist context. We would note that it operated as a strategy of mestizaje that avowed the legitimacy of Spanish colonial law and only sought legal redress from the United States for Spanish and Mexican land grant heirs in New Mexico. While we

would acknowledge La Alianza's renowned use of militant force and political theater, and address its contributions to an emergent Chicana/o political class in the 1960s, we would also note that Indo-Hispano radicalized a "Spanish American" population whose (prior) identification with any form of Indigeneity in the context of US modernity was tenuous at best. Even were we to follow Saldaña-Portillo's critique of how Chicana/o mestizaje reproduces heteropatriarchal strategies of racial representation and the anti-indigenous racism of Mexican national discourse, we would still be without a language to name the heterogeneity of mestiza/o formations that diverge from Chicana/o struggles in the US. More significantly, even were we to reformulate mestizaje toward an intersectional analytic aimed toward dismantling the sexual and gendered logics of colonialism, as Arrizón asks us, our adherence to the historiographical script of Chicana/o mestizaje would have us dismiss the question of land reclamation as romantic in our contemporary moment.

To unsettle this script, I want to consider how *Almanac of the Dead* operates as a critique of nationalist and revolutionary deployments of mestizaje that opens up a space to re-politicize La Alianza's production of Indo-Hispano. Published in 1991, the year approximately marking the 500-year duration of European colonization in the Americas, *Almanac of the Dead* unfolds a series of dispersed and interwoven narratives that track the emergence of a transnational indigenous land reclamation movement seeking to abolish the Euroamerican abstraction of private property and "all things European" in the Americas.<sup>29</sup> Since its publication, many critics have noted how *Almanac* uncannily prefigured the militant emergence of *Ejercito Zapatista Liberación Nacional* (EZLN) in Chiapas and the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994.<sup>30</sup> As a text that disassembles the boundaries between literary practice and strategies of social movement insurgency, *Almanac* is a novel explicitly concerned

with the stakes of indigenous revolution in the Americas in a moment where socialism, Marxism, as well as cultural and revolutionary nationalism, had reached palpable limits in dismantling the structures of colonial power.

My reading of *Almanac* contends that its critique of mestizaje is central to the lexicon the novel generates for the comprehension of indigenous revolution and land reclamation in the present. The treatment of mestizaje is condensed most powerfully in the storyline surrounding the character Menardo, a mestizo counter-revolutionary insurance salesman located in Tuxtla Gutiérrez. In his pursuits, we learn that Menardo is a character who at once disavows connection to his family's indigenous pasts and is preoccupied with supplying a transnational neo-colonial elite with arms and security to fend off continuous and impending indigenous uprisings in Mexico. Literary critic Deborah Horovitz argues that Menardo is exemplary of the operations of what the novel calls the "Network of Destroyers." "The Destroyers secretly prayed and waited for disaster or destruction," we learn from the novel. "Secretly they were thrilled by the spectacle of death. The European invaders had brought their Jesus hanging bloody and dead from the cross; later they ate his flesh and blood again and again at the 'miraculous eternal supper' or Mass. Typical of sorcerers or Destroyers, Christians had denied they were cannibals and sacrificers."<sup>31</sup> The "Network of Destroyers," Horovitz argues, takes the most visible form in the genocidal operations of Euroamerican colonial rationality. This rationality mobilizes a civilizational world order predicated on violences that sever the past from the present and is "obsessed with exclusiveness, separateness, and hierarchical divisions."<sup>32</sup> While the metaphor of a "network of destroyers" is useful in naming colonial power's genocidal architecture, critics have yet to fully articulate how Menardo's embodiment of Euroamerican colonial violence is enabled and reproduced within nationalist productions of mestizaje. By fleshing out how the

story of Menardo reveals the immanent connection between Mexican nationalist mestizaje and the genocidal maneuvers of Euroamerican colonialism, I will detail how the novel critiques the production of nationalized mestizaje as a strategy of indigenous containment that is at once localized in the Mexican state yet nonetheless travels into multiple revolutionary projects in the Americas. This critique illuminates the ways in which anti-indigenous racism provides the occluded yet shared epistemic terrain between nationalist and revolutionary projects of mestizaje. This anti-indigenous racism, the novel demonstrates, relies on the reproduction of the self-evidence of the historical and territorial logic of the nation-form.

Our initial encounter with Menardo's storyline offers a useful illustration of these concerns. Opening the second part of the novel entitled "Mexico," we are introduced to Menardo as a child enthralled with his grandfather's stories of their indigenous ancestors and their interpretations of European colonization. Menardo's grandfather is "slow, lazy, and dangerous" yet he "had been interested in what the Europeans thought and the names they had in the planets and stars." He found the stories of the Europeans' system of naming "interesting only because their stories of explosions and flying fragments were consistent with everything else he had seen." Menardo's grandfather tells him that the "ancestors had called the Europeans...the 'orphan people.'" "Their God had created them but soon was furious with them, throwing them out of their birthplace, driving them away... They failed to recognize the earth was their mother. Europeans were like their first parents, Adam and Eve, wandering aimlessly because the insane God who had sired them had abandoned them."<sup>33</sup> We learn that "Menardo had loved the stories his grandfather told him...right up until the sixth grade when one of the teaching Brothers had given them a long lecture about pagan people and pagan stories." We see in this and the following passage how Menardo's disavowal of his grandfather's stories is legitimated by his

incorporation into Mexican regimes of mestizo racialization. Even as Menardo is ridiculed as *Pansón* by his classmates, it is another name that haunts him for the remainder of his life.

“Menardo could hardly think of it, let alone whisper it. When he looked into the mirror to shave, it always came back to him. Flat Nose. A slang name the Indians were called. ‘Flat noses that dogs don’t even have.’”<sup>34</sup> This prompts “a horrible discovery” for Menardo. “His grandfather’s nose had been much shorter and wider than his was; the people the old man called ‘our ancestors,’ ‘our family,’ were in fact Indians. All along Menardo had been listening to the one who was responsible for the taunts of the others. Without the family nose, Menardo might have passed for one of *sangre limpia*. Immediately, Menardo found excuses for not going down the street where the old man lived in a small *ramada* in a garden.”<sup>35</sup>

“Mestizo” is the title of this section in the novel, which introduces a number of themes regarding mestizo/a citizenship and indigenous racialization that resonate throughout Menardo’s storyline. As a character staging the practices of self-editing and indigenous disinheritance necessary for qualification into mestizo citizenship, the novel situates Menardo as a passing figure striving for the *sangre limpia*. As “Indian” turned “mestizo,” Menardo’s attempts at passing offers a vivid portrayal of the historical amnesias of colonial violence, underwritten by European Christianity, that constitute mestizo citizenship in Mexico. Like the Europeans his grandfather had told him about, Menardo’s entrance into mestizo citizenship calls for him to become “orphaned.” The disavowal of his relation with his grandfather and the stories of his ancestors is a prerequisite for Menardo to perform as white mestizo. Yet precisely due to Menardo’s status as a passing figure, the novel conveys his orphaned ascent into the racialized frameworks of mestizaje as an effect of stories. Before his grandfather dies, Menardo hears from his cousin that his grandfather “was begging to have Menardo visit him as before.” Yet Menardo

lies that he is “studying now to become an alter boy and had to spend all his free time at the rectory.” Faced with a small glimpse of regret, “Menardo almost felt sorry because the old man was the only one of all the adults who did not require anything in return, except that Menardo listen. The old man talked about other times and other worlds that existed before this present one.” In these terms, Menardo’s entrance into the Christian underpinnings of mestizo legibility is an incorporation into the master narratives of European colonial modernity that are premised on an appropriation and erasure of the stories of “other times and other worlds that existed before this present one.”<sup>36</sup>

As Menardo’s story unfolds, the logic of liquidation, motivated amnesia, and anti-indigenous racism constituting his embrace of mestizo whiteness saturates nearly all aspects of his adult life. After fabricating an alibi that his “Flat Nose” had been a result of a boxing injury, Menardo accumulates a vast amount of wealth from his self-made company located in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, “Universal Insurance.” In the novel’s inventory of Menardo’s financial success, we learn that

Wherever revolution, mutiny, uprising, or guerilla war might strike, Universal Insurance would be there to offer complete protection to clients. No need to depend on poorly equipped government forces. Besides, ‘government forces’ could not be trusted. Military officers hatched mutinies left and right, and disgruntled police might develop ‘blue flu’ and call in sick if the price wasn’t right. Universal Insurance would provide the answer for every security need. Legislative assemblies had fallen into the hands of radicals and madmen. Urgent needs to bolster the national defense were ridiculed by communists, terrorists, and anarchists of every sort. Chief executives of the future could buy policies

with Universal Insurance to indemnify themselves against violent uprising or revolution.<sup>37</sup>

As an extension of Menardo's participation in mestizo/a whiteness, Universal Insurance illuminates the workings of a transnational cohort of neo-colonial elite who traffic into Mexico massive amounts of arms, security forces, and videos depicting the torture and killings of political prisoners who are attempting to "pollute 'the pure springs of Mexican democracy.'"<sup>38</sup> In this regard, Universal Insurance exemplifies the collusion of state and corporate counterrevolutionary power under late colonial modernity, a period in which a privatized distrust of 'government forces' cohabitates with and finances the "urgent needs to bolster the national defense" against "mutiny, uprising" and revolution.

The sexual and gendered logic of Menardo's mestizo counter-revolutionary state violence is vividly articulated through Ileana, Menardo's first wife, whose "great-great-grandfather on her mother's side had descended from the conquistador De Oñate."<sup>39</sup> As yet another dimension to his participation in whiteness, Menardo's masculinity is secured not only through his ability to deliver on the guarantees of Universal Insurance, but also his ability to marry into the cloisters of Mexico's mestizo elite. Central to demonstrating his racial and masculine value for Ileana is the construction of a dream mansion in the middle of the Chiapas jungle. In the process, he meets, becomes obsessed with, and eventually has an affair with Alegría Martínez-Soto, a white Venezuelan architect in charge of designing the house. Alegría's vision of the house is revealing from the perspective of our focus on mestizaje. Alegría pushes against Ileana's desire for "high walls to shut out the jungle" and convinces the couple of a house filled with steel and glass walls with a white "marble staircase...to create the effect of a cascade of light, a waterfall of jungle light down the polished marble."<sup>40</sup> While the mansion's capacity to reflect white, radiant light

might seem like an arbitrary symbol of Menardo's aspirations for whiteness, it gains greater significance once we recognize that it is designed after a Mayan pyramid resembling ruins of Chichen Itza in the middle of the Chiapas jungle.<sup>41</sup> Tacho, Menardo's Indian chauffeur, notes "the marble stairs were imitations of the temple staircases the Indians had built."<sup>42</sup> As a counter-revolutionary and capitalist appropriation of Mayan architecture and iconography for an extension of a mestizo settler colonial project, Menardo's *mestizaje* embodies the anti-indigenous racism of state sponsored doctrines of *indigenismo*. Through Menardo's embrace of *indigenismo*, we see how the adornment of his life with appropriated indigenous artifacts, symbols, and aesthetics paradoxically enables him to believe that "Indians such as Tacho stayed poor because they feared progress and modern technology."<sup>43</sup>

At this point, it is important to highlight how *Almanac*'s critique of *mestizaje* as a nationalized culture of modern anti-indigenous violence occurs through subverting the temporality respectively assigned to the indigenous and European units of nationalized mestizo equations. In other words, *Almanac* gains its critical traction precisely by refusing to cast the indigenous unit of *mestizaje* as the historically dead and dispensable iconographical backdrop to mestizo agency. We see this played out vividly in the ways that Menardo's desperate and compulsive embrace of mestizo whiteness doubles as a mode of self-eradication. Once we learn of Ileana's death from a fall down the white marble staircase, Menardo becomes fearfully obsessed with death. At Ileana's funeral, he reaches out to touch her hand and "was surprised at the nothingness he felt...Death had flattened her out. She had no more substance than a photograph. He almost wished they didn't have to bury her. He almost wanted to watch, day by day, and to check from time to time on the progress of her decay."<sup>44</sup> At a funeral for a young girl killed in an explosion a few weeks later, we see Menardo repeat his fascination with death and an

inability to distinguish himself from the dead. Compulsively drawn to touching the young girl's corpse, "he could not remember *what* he had felt with his forefinger. He had not been able to distinguish her flesh from his own."<sup>45</sup> Unable to distinguish his living operations from those of the dead, Menardo becomes plagued with nightmares about his impending demise. "All night Menardo tossed and turned, jumping out of bed or sitting up in bed, muttering in his sleep. His nightmares were always about bombs exploding under [his] Mercedes, or masked assassins stepping through the bedroom door."<sup>46</sup>

Driven by relentless counter-insurgent paranoia over the indigenous uprisings across the Americas, Menardo constantly dons a bulletproof vest. The vest quickly becomes his sole source of comfort and relief. He wears it on nights out with Alegría, at business meetings, and when he goes to sleep. He becomes obsessed with the brochure that accompanies the vest, as well as its accessories. "According to the brochure, cheap switchblades or butcher knives would break off in the vest. Menardo imagined an attack on him by masked assailants. The first attacker would fire a .38 caliber revolver at Menardo's chest while the second would lunge with a big knife for his belly, but the knife would skid off the steel insert. Stunned by their failure, they would stand helplessly as Menardo pulled out his 9mm automatic, and the faithful Tacho opened fire with the Uzi he kept beside him on the car seat. The scenario was exhilarating. The bodies of the two guerrillas lay crumpled on the steps behind Menardo as he strode into the club for his afternoon meal. The scene soothed him to sleep."<sup>47</sup> So enthralled by the promises of modern technological protection, Menardo crafts a plan that finally puts him at ease: Have Tacho shoot him with the bulletproof vest on in front of his counterrevolutionary colleagues. "Menardo wanted perfect timing—he wanted Tacho to wait until the cars had pulled up, then he would greet his fellow shooting-club members, then Tacho must shoot... What an exhibition they would see! Here was a

man to be reckoned with—a man invincible with the magic of high technology.”<sup>48</sup> The vest fails and Menardo is killed at his own command by his Indian chauffeur. At first, “Tacho had not wanted to fire because he knew white men did not like to see an Indian shoot a mestizo unless they had given the order; otherwise Indians might get ideas and move from mestizos to shoot at white men.”<sup>49</sup> Nonetheless, it is verified by his colleagues and word spreads that “Menardo had been shot at his own request.”<sup>50</sup>

I account for the seemingly bizarre nature of Menardo’s death as a rejection of postrevolutionary Mexican mestizaje’s racial and temporal logic. To flesh this out, I want to situate Menardo’s brief, sad life and self-commanded execution as an occasion for the novel’s coterminous critique of revolutionary projects of mestizaje. The critique of revolutionary mestizaje is depicted through the character Bartolomeo, a Cuban revolutionary who offers “political instruction” at a Marxist school in Mexico City to an emergent indigenous revolutionary group called the “People’s Army” or the “Army of Justice and Redistribution” led by Angelita “La Escapía.” We are introduced to La Escapía and her partner, El Feo, as they perform surveillance on Menardo’s arms deals and his encounters with Alegría for Bartolomeo. Even as the “People’s Army” had “been able to amass one of the largest and most sophisticated arsenals in the region” by obtaining “the weaponry and supplies from at least a half dozen different groups representing more than a dozen foreign governments as well as underground groups,” Bartolomeo “reminded La Escapía and the other Indians about the expense and trouble involved in trying to educate them.”<sup>51</sup> In seeking to dismantle the capitalist operations of Menardo’s Universal Insurance, Bartolomeo wanted to talk to “some *good Indians* for a change, not to *treacherous tribalists*....Marxism did *not* tolerate these primitive bugaboos.”<sup>52</sup>

Here we see how Bartolomeo's anti-indigenous racism is importantly articulated through dogmatic Marxist revolutionary projects in the Americas. "Bartolomeo," according to La Escapía, "had somehow managed to exceed all the others in his disdain for history before the Cuban revolution. Before Fidel, history did not exist for Bartolomeo." Because of this disdain and performed forgetting of indigenous revolutionary modalities that diverge from modern statist forms, Bartolomeo is arrested by the People's Army, tried, and put to death before a "people's assembly" for "Crimes against Tribal Histories."<sup>53</sup> "What *history?*' Bartolomeo had fired back in a sneering tone. Jungle monkeys and savages have no history!"<sup>54</sup> After obtaining a verdict based on a "count of hands" from "all the people in the village plaza," Bartolomeo is sentenced to death. "La Escapía had pronounced the death sentence because Bartolomeo had had no respect for the true history of Cuba or any of the Americas except for the singsong 'Fidel Fidel Fidel Fidel!'"<sup>55</sup>

I want to linger over Bartolomeo's death and La Escapía's critique of the Cuban revolution as reinforcing Silko's assessment of the historical erasures of indigeneity built into postrevolutionary Mexican mestizaje. In this sense, Bartolomeo's execution in Mexico City by the People's Army is symbolic of a deep refusal of revolutionary modalities that reproduce the self-evidence of Marxist analytics of historical consciousness, linear temporality, and the territoriality of the modern Euroamerican state. The juxtaposition of Menardo and Bartolomeo underscores this refusal. While Menardo embodies the transnational and corporatized valences of counter-insurgent state violence under late racial capitalism, Bartolomeo is cast as a Cuban Marxist revolutionary agent entrenched in struggles to dismantle the world order in which Menardo actively participates and invests. Yet *Almanac* reveals how these two ostensibly polarized political positions and orientations toward revolutionary transformation share an

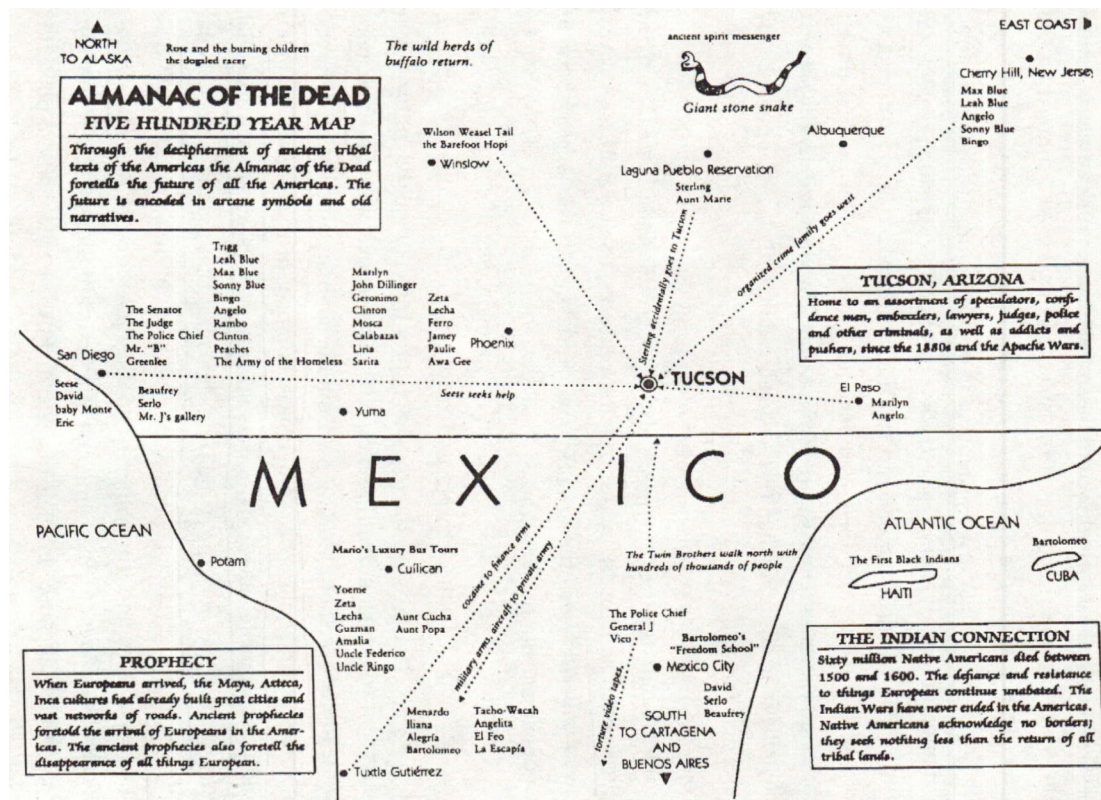
epistemic terrain of anti-Indian racism. In this regard, the disavowal of Menardo's indigenous past and present, as with Bartolomeo's myopic revolutionary historical consciousness, is principally responsible for their respective deaths. "That was [Bartolomeo's] crime," according to La Escapía, "that's why he died."

I understand the collective demise of Menardo and Bartolomeo as the novel's denial of futurity to their world historical projects organized through mestizaje. Through this rejection of mestizaje, we see that it is not Indigeneity that would be progressively modernized and bred away. It is the self-evidence and dominance of Euroamerican rationalities of identity, history, and territory that will vanish. After Bartolomeo's execution, La Escapía reflects, "the old people had stories that said much the same, that it was only a matter of time and things European would gradually fade from the American continents. History would catch up with the white man whether the Indians did anything or not. History was the sacred text...Of course the white man had never wanted Native Americans to contemplate confederacies between the tribes of the Americas; that would mean the end of European domination" (316; 530).<sup>56</sup>

**“History was the Sacred Text:” *Almanac of the Dead* as Cartography of Tribal and Mestizo/a Coalition and Futurity**

The Anglo knew we had prior rights to the land...I knew that the Alianza was what the Anglo had feared since 1846. The Anglo feared that the natives would unite and form an extraordinary force. The usurping Anglo knew that his day had come.

—Reies López Tijerina<sup>57</sup>



Reading Menardo's and Bartolomeo's death alongside the historiography of Chicana/o mestizaje outlined in the previous sections, it is indeed apparent how *Almanac of the Dead* anticipates Saldaña-Portillo's critique of the convergence between developmental and revolutionary temporalities in the Americas. Yet I privilege *Almanac* for its ability to open an alternative discursive and cartographical framework of indigenous futurity and tribal-mestizo/a coalition and conflict in the Americas with which I can repoliticize the geo-historical borders of

Indo-Hispano. This indigenous futurity is particularly evident in the novel's prefatory "Five Hundred Year Map." The map asks us to re-historicize the US/Mexico borderlands within the Americas in terms and spatial imaginaries that do not solely rely on US, Mexican, Chicana/o, or revolutionary nationalist discourse. As a map that at once introduces and complements the novel's layered and intersecting stories of land reclamation, it is significant because the term "Mexico" is writ the largest, while the US is not named. There remains only our assumption that the US is signified above. In these terms, the map does not render the US/Mexico borderlands as a peripheral region in relation to the geographical "centers" of the US nation. And equally as important, given the explicitly foregrounded placement of "Mexico," the map neither depicts *el norte*, nor Aztlán. Rather, the map negotiates the constraints of Euroamerican forms of regionalization within a cartographical imaginary indexing a field of indigenous struggle and contestation with multiple borderland jointures between tribal lands, colonial orders, revolutionary projects, and national legacies. This is evident in the map's placement of Tucson as its "center," which doesn't anchor its spatial representation solely in relation to its territorial counterparts in the so-called US Southwest. Instead, Tucson is figured as a conduit in a field of struggle whose relational coordinates index the interconnection of locales such as Haiti, Cuba, Mexico, Buenos Aires, Alaska, Albuquerque, and El Paso, to name a few. The interconnection of these locales thus presumes and defamiliarizes their recognizability in a national frame of reference. In doing so, Silko reminds us that the construction of a counter-European map of the Americas cannot presume to do away with the territorializing history of the nation-form. Rather, the map first and foremost asks its reader to conceive of the nation-form as a technology of historical amnesia overlaying dense territorial antagonisms and hemispheric terrains of interdependence. In this regard, *Almanac's* "500-Year Map" suggests that the question of land

reclamation in the Americas is a labor at once global, grounded in locality, and yet profoundly skeptical of national, imperial, and revolutionary regionalisms that regulate territorial boundaries.

This contentious terrain is also conveyed through the map's title and the legends. The legend called "The Indian Connection" states that "Sixty million Native Americans died between 1500 and 1600. The defiance and resistance of things European continue unabated. The Indian Wars have never ended in the Americas. Native Americans acknowledge no borders; they seek nothing less than the return of all tribal lands." Five hundred years here is not merely a chronicle, but a spatializing project. The map therefore articulates the inseparability of Euroamerican projects of spatialization with its construction of calendrical time. The so-called US Southwest is marked in the hemisphere, which is thus marked temporally and geographically. In this regard, the map also highlights the genocidal structure of violence subtending the fixity of the geo-historical order of Euroamerican colonial modernity. Yet in naming the construction of Euroamerican geo-historical knowledge as a necropolitical strategy of representation—that is, one premised on the historical eradication of indigenous epistemologies and life forms—the map also doubles as a cartography of the "unabated" defiance to "things European" premised on "nothing less than the return of all tribal lands."

Silko, in other words, prefaces her novel with a subaltern cartography of tribal decolonization that is embedded *within* the devivifying constraints of Euroamerican strategies of geo-historical representation. Indeed, this becomes a central site of tension and ingenuity for the cast of characters charged with continuing the recovery of tribal lands: How does one strategically marshal Euroamerican legal, cultural, and linguistic frameworks toward the simultaneous reclamation of tribal lands and abolishment of "all things European"?

The aporetic nature of indigenous land reclamation is amplified by the novel's rearticulation of the English language and the labor of history writing. As with the majority of *Almanac*, the map is scripted in English. As a representational practice maneuvering Euroamerican representational technologies and historical epistemologies toward their very demise, the map opens up new ways of conceiving of the positions, localities, and temporalities of indigenous land reclamation. La Escapía's encounter with *Das Kapital* in Bartolomeo's Marxist School also embodies this representational practice, as we are offered a reappraisal of Marx as a "tribal man and storyteller; Marx with his primitive devotion to the workers' stories."<sup>58</sup> She remarks that "Marx had been inspired by reading about certain Native American communal societies, though naturally as a European he had misunderstood a great deal." Nonetheless, "Marx had understood stories are alive with the energy words generate. Word by word, the stories of suffering, injury, and death had transformed the present moment, seizing listeners' or readers' imaginations so that for an instant, they were present and felt the suffering of sisters and brothers long past. The words of the stories filled rooms with an immense energy that aroused the living with fierce passion and determination for justice...."<sup>59</sup> "For La Escapía it had been the first time a white man had ever made sense. For hundreds of years white men had been telling the people of the Americas to forget the past; but now the white man Marx came along and he was telling people to remember. The old-time people had believed the same thing: they must reckon with the past because within it lay the seeds of the present and the future."<sup>60</sup> According to La Escapía, "Marx had never forgotten the indigenous people of the Americas, or of Africa. Marx had recited the crimes of slaughter and slavery committed by the European colonials who had been sent by their capitalist slave-masters to secure the raw materials of capitalism—human flesh and blood. With the wealth of the New World, the European slave-

masters and monarchs had been able to buy weapons and armies to keep down the uprisings of the landless people all across Europe.”<sup>61</sup>

La Escapía reconsiders Marx as a tribal storyteller conjuring the forces of the exploited dead through the energy of stories. This rearticulation of Marx is cognate with the novel’s appropriation of English, which asks us to consider indigenous land reclamation in the complex relationship between racial hierarchies, historical time, territorial conquest, and linguistic dominance. At the same time, La Escapía’s analysis of Marx sets in relief non-modern critiques of private property that are coupled with hybridized visions of redistribution, reclamation, and communal modes of production that refuse the Euroamerican state as their final determinant. In these terms, *Almanac* can be seen as a text that works toward dislodging English as a European language and history writing as a nation-building labor. Indeed, the novel’s rearticulation of Marxism and the English language as vehicles for invoking a non-European indigenous future asks us to conceive of the English language and the labor of history writing as crucial sites for the re-indigenization of the Americas.

With this emphasis on history writing and the seizure of colonial languages, *Almanac* suggests that writing and telling the stories of mestizaje in the Americas is rather central to the struggle of refusing or affirming the closure of nationalized territorial and historical projects. By this token, *Almanac* shows us how nationalist and revolutionary productions of mestizaje rely on historiographical narratives that erase tribal presences by overvaluing the historical temporality and spatial norms of Euroamerican colonial modernity. Yet through its engagement with and critique of the imaginaries and terminologies of mestizaje trafficked between Mexican and Chicana/o formations, *Almanac* opens up a distinct set of representational constraints through which to apprehend indigenous history and ongoing presence in the Americas on multiple

technologies, identities, geo-historical scales, and strategies of signification. By thus resisting the nationalized logic of *indigenismo* under the shared terms of Chicana/o and Mexican mestizaje, *Almanac* demonstrates a subaltern representational strategy of Indigeneity as a mode of relation mediated, yet never fully contained, by colonial legacies of race, language, historiography, and territoriality. Yet at the same time, *Almanac*'s radical narrative of tribal land recovery posits Indigeneity as a mode of relation de-linked from multiple nationalist and revolutionary paradigms of racial identity, territoriality, and historical temporality. This paradoxical narrative simultaneously releases a way of thinking about history writing as a central site of struggle for the re-animation of tribal life forms and the emancipatory dismantling of colonial modernity in the Americas. In this way, *Almanac* is explicitly premised on the idea that the frontiers established by settler colonial powers have never been closed. "The Indian Wars have never ended in the Americas." The notion of national enclosure is a ruse. While operating in different forms, positions, venues, and narratives from the "Indian wars" of the past, the struggle is just as fervent and open-ended right now, in this very moment.

At stake here is the assertion that Chicana/o, Latino/a, and Latin American studies must seriously engage with the modes of temporality, territory, culture, and coalition depicted in indigenous writing in order to rethink the foundational narratives of their own social movement and disciplinary formations. In this way, the absence of Indo-Hispano in the historiography of Chicana/o mestizaje is evidence of how the iconography of the "Indian" shared by Mexican and Chicana/o mestizaje has enabled this lack of engagement through latent attachments to nationalized temporalities and geographies. As I have demonstrated, this is not merely a problem isolated in the historiography of *El Movimiento*, but an issue with which post-nationalist, feminist, and transnational critiques of Chicana/o historiography and mestizaje have yet to

reckon. *Almanac of the Dead* offers a robust critique of the subalternizing logic of the “Indian” trafficked by Chicana/o and Mexican mestizaje that doubles as a cartography and historiography of indigenous futurity and mestizo/a heterogeneity. At the same time, *Almanac of the Dead* illuminates a distinct lexicon of Indigeneity, history writing, territory, regionalism, and land reclamation that is cognate with La Alianza’s deployment of Indo-Hispano. In this way, we can begin to decenter La Alianza’s use of militant force as its dominant and most effective strategy for land grant reclamation. Rather, as I will explore in the following chapter, we are able to situate Indo-Hispano’s tie to ejido land grant territoriality and its seizure of treaty discourse, Spanish colonial law, and the labor of history writing as converging with the lexicon of Indigeneity outlined by *Almanac of the Dead*.

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1. Nancy P Applebaum, Anne S. Macpherson, and Karin Alejandra Roseblatt. *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003) 20.
  2. See Richard Graham, ed. *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990).
  3. See Alan Knight "Racism, Revolution, and *Indigenismo*: Mexico, 1910-1940" in *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*, ed. Richard Graham (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990).
  4. For a longer discussion about the influence of Vasconcelos' text in fashioning a discourse of mestizaje in Latin America, see Marilyn Grace Miller *Rise and Fall of the Cosmic Race: The Cult of Mestizaje in Latin America* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).
  5. José Vasconcelos, *La Raza Cósmica* (Los Angeles: California State University Press, 1979), 7, 38.
  6. María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo "Who's the Indian in Aztlán" in *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, ed. Ileana Rodríguez (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 406.
  7. Carlos Muñoz. *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement* (London: Verso, 1989), 80.
  8. Curtis Marez, "Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans: Indian Captivity and the History of Chicana/o Popular Performance" *American Quarterly* Vol. 53 (2) (2001), 267.
  9. See Rodolfo A. Anaya and Francisco Lomeli, eds. *Aztlán: Essays on the Chicano Homeland*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989); Rafael Pérez-Torres "Refiguring Aztlán" in *The Chicano Studies Reader: An Anthology of Aztlán, 1970-2000*, eds. Chon A. Noriega, Eric R. Avila, Karen Mary Davalos, Chela Sandoval, Rafael Pérez Torres (Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center Publication, 2001).
  10. See Rafael Pérez-Torres, *Movements in Chicano Poetry: Against Myths, Against Margins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); José Limón, *Mexican Ballads, Chicano Poems: History and Influence in Mexican American Social Poetry* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992). Pérez-Torres articulates the significance of the poem in the following terms: "The sense of pride and connection, rebirth and respect implied in the term Chicanismo is nowhere made more manifest than in Rodolfo Gonzáles's opus classicus *Yo Soy Joaquín*. The poem manifests a Chicanismo comprised of cultural nationalism and connectivity to Mexican history and culture. It prefigures both the empowerment and contradictions inherent to Aztlán as a concept central to Chicano consciousness" (68).
  11. See Saldívar-Hull, Sonia. *Feminism on the Border: Chicana Gender Politics and Literature* (2000); Arredondo, Huertado, Klahn, Nájera-Ramírez & Zavella, eds. *Chicana Feminisms: A Critical Reader* (2003); Anzaldúa, Gloria, Ed. *Making Face, Making Soul: Haciendo Caras*

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(1990); Anzaldúa, Gloria and Keating, AnaLouise, eds. *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation* (2002); Brady, Mary Pat. *Extinct Lands, Temporal Geographies: Chicana Literature and the Urgency of Space* (2002).

12. For a sample of how Anzaldúa's work has been taken up in diverse disciplinary formations, see Mignolo, Walter. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (2000). See also, Vila, Pablo. "The Limits of American Border Theory," in *Ethnography at the Border* (2003).

13. See Norma Alarcón, "Chicana Feminism: In the Tracks of 'The' Native Woman" *Cultural Studies* 4(3): 248-256; Emma Pérez *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999); Chéla Sandoval, "Mestizaje as Method: Feminists of Color Challenge the Cannon" in *Living Chicana Theory*, ed. Carla Trujillo (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1998).

14. *Race & Nation in Modern Latin America*, 18.

15. Rudy V. Busto, *King Tiger: The Religious Vision of Reies López Tijerina* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 25.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*, 26.

18. Lee Bebout, "Hero Making in El Movimiento: Reies López Tijerina and the Chicano Nationalist Imaginary," *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* 32:2 (Fall 2007), 110.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *King Tiger*, 113.

21. *Ibid.*, 116.

22. "Hero Making in El Movimiento," 116.

23. María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 15.

24. *Ibid.*, 282.

25. Rafael Pérez-Torres, *Mestizaje: Critical Uses of Race in Chicano Culture*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) 14, 199.

26. Alicia Arrizón, *Queering Mestizaje: Transculturation and Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 4.

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27. *Ibid.*, 52.

28. *Ibid.*, 55.

29. Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), "500 Year Map."

30. See, Walter Mignolo and Michael Ennis, "Coloniality at Large: The Western Hemisphere in the Colonial Horizon of Modernity," *The New Centennial Review* 1 (2) (Fall 2001), 19-54; Channette Romero, "Envisioning a 'Network of Tribal Coalitions:' Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*," *The American Indian Quarterly* 26 (4) (Fall 2002), 623-640; T.V. Reed, "Toxic Colonialism, Environmental Justice, and Native Resistance in Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*," *MELUS* 34 (2) (Summer 2009), 25-42; Kimberly Roppolo, "Vision, Voice, and Intertribal Metanarrative: The American Indian Visual-Rhetorical Tradition and Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*," *American Indian Quarterly* 31 (4) (Fall 2007), 534-558.

31. *Almanac of the Dead*, 475.

32. Deborah Horowitz, "Freud, Marx, and Chiapas in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*" *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, Series 2, 10 (3) *Almanac of the Dead* (Fall 1998), 52.

33. *Almanac of the Dead*, 258.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, 259.

36. All quotes from this paragraph are on 259.

37. *Almanac of the Dead*, 292.

38. *Ibid.*, 272.

39. *Ibid.*, 269.

40. *Ibid.*, 280.

41. *Freud, Marx and Chiapas*, 59.

42. *Ibid.*, 339.

43. *Ibid.*, 500.

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44. *Ibid.*, 302.

45. *Ibid.*, 304.

46. *Ibid.*, 506.

47. *Ibid.*, 325.

48. *Ibid.*, 503.

49. *Ibid.*, 510.

50. *Ibid.*, 521.

51. *Ibid.*, 311.

52. *Ibid.*, 513-14.

53. *Ibid.*, 525.

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*, 315.

56. *Ibid.*, 316, 530.

57. Reies López Tijerina, *They Called Me 'King Tiger': My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights*. Translated and edited by José Angel Gutiérrez (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2000), 49.

58. *Almanac of the Dead*, 521.

59. *Ibid.*, 521.

60. *Ibid.*, 311.

61. *Ibid.*, 315.

## Chapter Three

“U.S.A. is Trespassing in New Mexico”: *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* and the Subaltern  
 Historiography of Indo-Hispano

Writing unfolds like a game that inevitably moves beyond its own rules and finally leaves them behind.

—Michel Foucault

Weasel Tail had introduced his poetry by explaining that he had abandoned law school because the deck was stacked, and the dice were loaded, in the white man’s law. The law crushed and cheated the poor whatever color they were. “All that is left is the power of poetry,” Weasel Tail had intoned, clearing his throat nervously.

Only a bastard government  
 Occupies stolen land!

Hey, you barbarian invaders!  
 How much longer?  
 You think colonialism lasts forever?

*Res ipsa loquitur!*

Cloud on title  
 Unmerchantable title  
 Doubtful title  
 Defective title  
 Unquiet title  
 Unclear title  
 Adverse title  
 Adverse possession  
 Wrongful possession  
 Unlawful possession!

...

We say, “Adios, white man,” to  
 Five hundred years of  
 Criminals and pretenders

Illicit and unlawful governments,  
*Res accident lumina rebus*,  
 One thing throws light on another.

*Worchester v. Georgia!*  
*Ex Parte Crow Dog!*  
*Winters v. United States!*  
*Williams v. Lee!*  
*Lonewolf v. Hitchcock!*  
*Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe v. Morton!*  
*Village of Kake, Alaska v. Egan!*  
*Gila River Apache Tribe v. Arizona!*

breach of close  
 breach of conscience  
 breach of contract  
 breach of covenant  
 breach of decency  
 breach of duty  
 breach of faith  
 breach of fiduciary responsibility  
 breach of promise  
 breach of peace  
 breach of trust  
 breach of trust with fraudulent intent!

Breach of the Treaty of Sacred Black Hills!  
 Breach of the Treaty of the Sacred Blue Lake!  
 Breach of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo!

*Res judicata!*  
 We are at war.

—*Almanac of the Dead*, by Leslie Marmon Silko

We feel this is a war of words, of law, of interpretation.  
 —Reies López Tijerina

In the late spring of 1966, a pocket-sized pamphlet entitled “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined” was published in Albuquerque, New Mexico under the byline of “Alianza Federal.” Organized into five sections, the pamphlet addressed what had become one of the most volatile and longstanding political issues of its moment: the legal and cultural status of Spanish and Mexican land grants under US law. “More than a century has passed since the United States of America invaded and occupied New Mexico,” the pamphlet declares, “yet the question of the Spanish Land Grants is still very much in the air.”<sup>1</sup> The pamphlet’s author—otherwise known as *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes*—was already a recognized and growing movement at the time of publication whose publicity of the land-grant issue was transforming the political landscape of New Mexico. Incorporated in 1963 and based on the already existing Abiquíu land-grant cooperative, La Alianza had been conceived with its president, Reies López Tijerina, as a movement seeking to mobilize disparately located and displaced land-grant heirs for the recovery of territory that had been lost or stolen in the aftermath of the Mexican American War in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Casting the US annexation of northern Mexico as an invasion and occupation that continues to imperil the property rights of the “Spanish people of New Mexico,” the pamphlet laments how “New Mexico has sunk into a morass of fraud, forgery, and perjury.” This disastrous condition stems from how the “new-comers to New Mexico, the Anglos...purporting to be the ‘conquerors’ brought their own laws and doctrines...into the region.” In doing so, they “have impinged upon the rights and concepts of the inhabitants of New Mexico...in order to terrorize the owners and heirs of these Land Grants into not exercising their rights under these grants.”

As a text infused with biblical references and multiple citations of international treaties and Federal and State legal precedents, the pamphlet in many ways precludes the radicalizing

discourses of *Aztlán* as an “occupied homeland” and “internal colony” that mark Chicana/o historiography in the wake of *El Movimiento* in the late 1960s and early ‘70s. Yet the pamphlet’s depiction of land-grant heirs as “Spanish,” coupled with its legal response to US occupation of the land grants, also marks a crucial point of tension between La Alianza and the decolonizing efforts of the Chicana/o movement organized through imaginaries of mestizaje and deployed through *Aztlán*. That is, rather than invoking the fall of the Aztecs and Mayans at the hands of the Spanish conquistadors as the primal scene of Chicana/o nationalism and mestizaje, the pamphlet reminds its reader of *La Recopilacion de las Leyes de las Indias* (the Laws of the Indies), the civil and administrative codes of Spanish colonialism. According to the pamphlet, these codes validate the rights of the land grants and their heirs. “Here on the Rio Grande, the Royal Laws of the Indies existed and still exists as the local law... [and] have never been repealed or abrogated by any duly constituted authority.”<sup>2</sup>

This “local law” of New Mexico at once refuses the “duly constituted authority” of the US and is internationalized in the pamphlet as residing under “the law of nations.” With this move, the land grants are reframed as “Pueblos” whose legal validity under the Laws of the Indies ensures that “it was and is impossible for any official or body or officialdom of the State of New Mexico or of the United States of America, to give away or cancel or alienate any perpetual right held in trust by these pueblos.” The text continues this thread by declaring that the “pueblo-republics are semi-independent city-states, capable of providing their own civil administration if left alone.” This assertion clears the ground for its more astonishing claim: that “these pueblos have all their rights intact and enforceable. And these pueblos have the right to exercise police power to support them in exercising their rights to their property, without complaint being made by any trespassers, or the criminal element in the State of New Mexico.”<sup>3</sup>

Given La Alianza's renowned history of militant insurrection, one can indeed interpret these lines as an overture to the movement's armed raid of the Tierra Amarilla courthouse and symbolic occupations of National Forest land in New Mexico that would materialize in the two years that followed the pamphlet's publication.<sup>4</sup> Yet, as a descendant of former *aliancistas*, I bring attention to "The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined" in order to launch a different kind of rumination on the nested issues of history writing, racial representation, and colonial territoriality within La Alianza's social movement.<sup>5</sup> With this focus, the pamphlet becomes equally remarkable as an effect of a transnational strategy of publicity and archival research of the land grants undertaken by Tijerina for at least six years prior to publication.<sup>6</sup> Through this lens, the research and writing of texts such as the "Spanish Land Grant Question Examined," in dialogue with the multiform modalities of protest initiated by La Alianza, become constitutive articulations of the movement's cultural politics of land grant recovery and its deployment of *Indo-Hispano* as a counterdiscourse of mestizaje distinct from dominant Chicana/o imaginaries.

What follows, then, is an intervention into discussions of mestizaje within Chicana/o, Latino/a, and Latin American studies that subordinate, subsume, or forget Indo-Hispano by invoking a historical narrative that casts Chicana/o deployments of mestizaje almost solely as strategic reappropriations of post-revolutionary Mexican national discourse within US based civil rights struggles. To counter this cross-disciplinary narrative, I analyze La Alianza's history writing to situate Indo-Hispano as a distinct iteration of mestizaje that re-articulates the pasts of *genízaro* Indians, detribalized Plains and Pueblo Indian captives who were resettled into *ejido* land grant formations as a buffer to protect the Spanish colonial interior in New Mexico from Plains Indian raids during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. By reading a handful of La Alianza public flyers and pamphlets, I trace the mestiza/o pasts of *genízaro* territoriality inscribed into Indo-

Hispano in order to render visible the indigenous, hybridized, and coalitional nature of La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics. In doing so, I make the case for how Indo-Hispano as a discourse converges with the temporalities of transnational indigenous struggles of our contemporary moment.

### **Chicana/o Mestizaje and the Forgetting of Indo-Hispano**

Throughout and beyond Tijerina's tenure with La Alianza, the "Royal Laws of the Indies," provided numerous historiographical, legal, and public world-making functions for the movement's strategy of land grant reclamation. Often paired with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the constitutions of the United States and the State of New Mexico, the Laws of the Indies also resignified the mestizo/a legacies of New Mexico's land grant heirs with the category of Indo-Hispano. As a term, Indo-Hispano appears unevenly in the "Spanish Land Grant Question Examined." While some printed versions make no mention of Indo-Hispano, others contain the following on the back panel:

THE INDO-HISPANO IS THE OFFSPRING  
OF THE INDIAN AND THE SPANISH. ....  
THE INDO-HISPANO WAS BORN  
OCT. 19, 1514 AND IS FROM  
60% TO 80% INDIAN.....<sup>7</sup>

The affirmation of Indo-Hispano's legacy as the "offspring of the Indian and the Spanish" and its birth date of Oct. 19, 1514 stems from Tijerina's gloss of the Laws of the Indies. With this history, Indo-Hispano is frequently invoked in multiple Alianza representational forums as the term assigned to children of mixed European and indigenous descent meant to signal their status as a novel race. Despite its explicit attachments to Spanish colonial discourse, Chicana/o

historiography characterizes Indo-Hispano as both influential to visions of Chicana/o mestizaje and as a predominantly regionalized formation reflecting the idiosyncrasies of New Mexican race relations.<sup>8</sup> As a result, Indo-Hispano is cast as predating, reinforcing, and yet diverging from the construction of several foundational symbols and imaginaries of Chicana/o mestizaje within and beyond a cultural nationalist context, which include Aztlán, the critical deployment of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and the Borderlands.

Yet even as Tijerina and La Alianza are venerated as a foundational force of the Chicano/a movement, a cross-disciplinary array of criticism that has taken Chicana/o mestizaje as its main object of study tells a different story about Indo-Hispano. As the central trope of Chicana/o racial identification and critique, Chicana/o acquisitions of mestizaje are typically narrated as the strategic appropriation of postrevolutionary Mexican national discourse in the context of US civil rights struggles. The Chicana/o texts and icons that operate within the discursive field of postrevolutionary Mexican nationalism are diverse, ranging from Corky Gonzalez's *Yo Soy Joaquin* to Gloria Anzaldúa's touchstone text of a post-cultural nationalist Chicana feminism, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Indo-Hispano's derivation from the Laws of the Indies and its denomination of land grant heirs who were formerly labeled as "Hispano," "Spanish," or "Spanish-American" places it in a peculiar position, for it is either omitted or reduced to a footnote in the numerous studies on the utility, history, and critical yield of Chicana/o mestizaje.<sup>9</sup> Adherence to this script is most evident in the work of Lee Bebout, who argues that many "land grant activists could not fathom claims to Chicano or indigenous identities."<sup>10</sup> With this claim, Bebout depicts Indo-Hispano as reliant on a "rigid legal history" that "exclusively applies to New Mexican land grant heirs" and therefore ultimately lacks the "open-ended" and "pliable" nature of Chicana/o mestizaje signified through Aztlán. In this light,

Indo-Hispano is scripted as a foundational yet regionally distinct iteration of mestizaje subsumed by Chicana/o appropriations of postrevolutionary Mexican national discourse. The erasure of Indo-Hispano is significant for it allows the iconography of the Indian forged through *Indigenismo*—Mexico’s state sponsored indigenous modernization program—to dominate Chicana/o aesthetics, geographies, and historiographies of tribal and mestiza/o life. Given the ways in which mestizaje acts as a site of tension and convergence between La Alianza and Chicana/o cultural politics, my point is not to argue for one proper or correct legacy of mestizaje. Rather, I approach the production of mestizaje as a regulative matrix by which Chicana/o, Latino/a, and Latin American studies historicize and map the boundaries of mestiza/o and indigenous struggles in what is now called the US southwest.

Underwriting the regulative effects of this dominant narrative of Chicana/o mestizaje is the overwhelming focus on Tijerina and the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid within Chicana/o studies. That is, while La Alianza is credited for bringing the forgotten histories of land-grant loss to the attention of US, Mexican, and international agencies and publics, much of the scholarly work on the group in the historiography of the Chicana/o movement relies on the four book length biographies of Tijerina which cast the 1967 Tierra Amarilla Courthouse raid as the apex of its politics of resistance.<sup>11</sup> Rudy Busto demonstrates how the scripting of the courthouse raid as the climax of La Alianza’s social movement produces a tendency in Chicana/o historiography to frame Reies López Tijerina as one of the “four horsemen” of the Chicana/o movement. According to Busto, the four horsemen ideal allowed “Tijerina and the Alianza [to be] adopted wholesale as representative of the New Mexican Hispano struggle [in which] the realities of local New Mexican land grant factionalism were all ignored by Chicano Movement ideology.”<sup>12</sup> Without doubt, Tijerina’s controversial land grant activism and the courthouse raid

continue to provide powerful memories of the movement in the present. Yet this emphasis relies on patriarchal frames of racial representation that obscure a more complex account of how La Alianza's roughly fifteen-year existence included a number of coalitional ties with Mexican, African American, and Native American social movements and an overall attempt to link New Mexico's land-grant issues "with property, cultural, and civil rights, all with the general goal of establishing the grants as 'free city states.'"13

In this light, Chicana/o movement historian Lorena Oropeza provides a point of departure for my inquiry. Her work addresses the problems posed with the overwhelming emphasis on Tijerina's biography and the courthouse raid by resituating Tijerina as a "memory entrepreneur"—that is, a person who applies "the full force of their personality and persuasive power to bring forth a new—or formerly suppressed version of the past in service of a political cause."14 With this move, Oropeza importantly focuses on La Alianza's 1966 occupation of the Echo Amphitheater, claiming that the event's combination of performative, symbolic, and legal tactics of protest "was ultimately more representative of the Alianza's aspirations and agenda than the courthouse raid. At the Echo Amphitheater, aliancistas directly challenged the US government's property ownership and offered an alternative vision based upon long-ignored communal rights."15 While affirming Oropeza's attempt to resituate Tijerina's role within La Alianza, I depart from her approach by taking seriously the movement's writing and archival research as a constitutive practice within La Alianza's legacy of "direct action" land grant activism. I therefore account for the labor of Tijerina's legal and historical research as a key component to his "memory entrepreneurship," yet interpret La Alianza's history writing without reducing it to the implied authorship of Tijerina. Rather than treating La Alianza's writings solely as an effect of Tijerina, I position La Alianza's history writing as a subaltern

historiography born out of the intersection of Tijerina's transnational archival research and the subjugated memories of genízaro land-grant tenure and loss furnished by La Alianza members. In order to think the legacy of genízaro mestizaje condensed in Indo-Hispano, I demonstrate how Indo-Hispano importantly links questions of knowledge production with histories of racialization and territorial struggle localized in the overlaid regimes of Spanish colonization and US nationalism constituting New Mexico. Therefore, this approach enables me to explicitly situate the La Alianza's textual production as an effect of a series of colonial, tribal, and postcolonial encounters and negotiations with New Mexico's racial, territorial, and cultural hierarchies.

### **Genízaro Indians, *Ejido* Land Grants, and the Racial Logic of Private Property**

Central to the administration of race and land in New Mexico under Spanish colonialism and Mexican decolonization was the practice of the *merced*, or land grant. Founded as a mechanism for empire building, the Spanish land grant system existed alongside colonial institutions such as the *encomienda*, the *repartimiento*, and the *congregaciones*.<sup>16</sup> These institutions enabled Spanish colonists to gain control over arable lands and appropriate systems of irrigation and agriculture from Pueblo Indians. In addition, they were part of a process by which Spanish colonists Christianized and coerced captive Pueblo and Plains Indians into systems of conscript and slave labor to generate tribute for the Spanish Crown. As institutions of Spanish colonial dominance, they operated through a contradictory racial and patriarchal hierarchy that valued racial purity and male honor as qualifications for property ownership and civic rights. Those categorized as *Españoles* sat atop of this tiered system, and were identified as having either newly immigrated from Spain or claimed two parents of pure Spanish descent. *Mestizos/as*, those legally categorized as having come from Indian and Spanish descent, were positioned below the *Españoles* and represented a much larger portion of Spanish colonial

society. Ramón Gutiérrez indicates that many Spanish and Mexican elites were classed as mestizo, and both the Español and mestizo categories inhabited *vecino* status—that is, status as landowning (and probably slave owning) Christian men with full voting rights in town councils.<sup>17</sup> Below mestizo status was the precarious formation of a detribalized Indian class known as *genízaros*. The precise definition of *genízaro* varies among critics, but most affirm that *genízaro* status refers to Pueblo or Plains Indians captured by Spanish colonists who were often converted to Christianity, acculturated to Spanish norms, and then put into slavery and servitude for colonial elites.<sup>18</sup> Below *genízaros*, Pueblo Indians were categorized as *indios* and Plains Indians as *gentiles* or *indios barbaros*.<sup>19</sup>

With the majority of Native captives being women and children, the racial and gendered logic of Spanish colonialism forged strong links with whiteness, property ownership, slaveholding, and male honor mediated through an “intercultural traffic in women.”<sup>20</sup> Spanish racial hierarchy was therefore beset with contradictions regarding the politics of interracial sexual intimacy. These racialized and gendered contradictions provide the conditions of possibility for *genízaro* captivity as “an important but overlooked source of *mestizaje* in the borderlands.”<sup>21</sup> Yet how does this subdued legacy of *mestizaje* significantly prefigure, constitute, and become rearticulated centuries later through La Alianza’s Indo-Hispano cultural politics? The answer resides in the connection between *genízaro* Indians and ejido land grant formations.

In Spain’s racial order prior to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, *genízaros* constituted a landless servant class of mestizo/as and detribalized Indians concentrated in the Barrio de Analco of Santa Fe. In this setting, *genízaros* were also conscripted as auxiliary soldiers in Spain’s colonial army and played an important function in rampant slave raids on Pueblo and Plains Indian tribes.<sup>22</sup> The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 indelibly altered Spain’s dynamic of colonial

dominance. Understood as a simultaneous insurgency of Pueblo and select genízaro Indians, with support given by Apache and Navajo allies, the revolt effectively exiled the Spanish colonial elite from New Mexico for thirteen years. Marked by the destruction of Spanish colonial records and Christian iconography, this brief period of emancipation would radically transform the racial and territorial administration of New Mexico following the Spanish reconquest in 1693. Thus, it is important to recognize, in the words of Roxanne Dunbar-Ortíz, that the “striking land-tenure patterns of northern New Mexico arose not from a change in colonial policy but from the particular situation of the colony, especially continued Indian resistance.”<sup>23</sup>

In these terms, I situate my understanding of genízaro Indians and the form of the ejido land grant in this dialectic of colonial territoriality and Indian resistance. In the wake of the Pueblo revolt and Spanish reconquest, Spanish administrators reframed New Mexico’s colonial function to that of a “frontier outpost to preserve the outer limits of their empire in order to protect the rich interior from competing powers.”<sup>24</sup> The most formidable of competing powers in this context were not necessarily the imperialist designs of other European empires, but rather the longstanding resistance of Pueblo Indians and the emergent territorial dominance of the Comanche, Navajo, Ute, and Apache Indians and their relentless attacks on Spanish settlements.

The ejido land grant form and its occupation by genízaro Indians are born in this context of colonial warfare and territorial struggle over tribal lands. Although different types of land grants existed, the ejido form of land grant was implemented as “a buffer for the colony against Indian attacks and...were an outlet for the increasingly poor, landless class, which thereby became propertied and self sufficient.”<sup>25</sup> Key features of ejido land grant formations include a legal and cultural emphasis on subsistence-based farming, communal ownership of land for grazing, timber, and irrigation among settlers, and their strategic placement at the crossroads of

Spanish settlements and Plains Indians territories. Genízaro occupation of ejido land grant lands thus represented a complex and ambivalent form of emancipation.<sup>26</sup> On one hand, genízaro acquisition of land implied ascendance in Spanish racial hierarchy to *vecino* status and expanded Spain's network of territorial and racial control. In this climate, genízaro settlers were granted land on the condition that they would defend the colony from Indian attacks. On the other hand, the communal and subsistence-based land tenure system of the ejidos, as well as their occupation by a largely derided genízaro class, represents an important site of temporal and territorial hybridity between colonial and tribal frameworks of land ownership.<sup>27</sup> The ejidos reflecting this hybridization of land tenure patterns—San Miguel del Bado, Las Trampas, Belén, Abiquíu, Tierra Amarilla, and San Joaquín, to name a few—are also the very settlements targeted for dispossession with the imposition of US regimes of private property.

Recent academic historiography on New Mexican land grants demonstrates how the imposition of US regimes of law and private property relied on historical narratives which cast the subsistence-based and communal practices of ejido land-grant territorial forms as “undeveloped,” “informal,” and the remnants of a decrepit colonial order.<sup>28</sup> In these terms, the political, legal, and cultural imposition of US private property in the wake of the Mexican-American war is understood to have initiated a colonial process by which the value of land was transformed into terms of modern capitalist ownership that emphasized market exchange, resource extraction, and individual or corporate ownership over communal occupancy.<sup>29</sup> Dunbar-Ortiz argues that this process required a dismantling of the subsistence-based political economy of ejido land-grant formations and their customary practices of communal ownership of grazing, hunting, mining, and timber lands. As such, the ascendance of US regimes of private property in New Mexico summoned a massive, racialized redistribution of land-grant and Native lands to

Anglo settlers and corporations which unevenly repositioned generations of former Mexican and genízaro settlers, along with Plains and Pueblo Indians, under the coercion of migrant wage labor and Federal and State welfare social services.

In this context of overlaid colonization, it is important to note how the loss of ejido and other Native land holdings accompanied the double erasure of genízaro Indians. This double erasure resulted from the term's formal abolishment under Mexican independence and the subsequent ascendance of "Hispano" and "Spanish American" as nomenclatures constructed as an assimilative negotiation with US racial doctrines of White supremacy and its incessant fetish of racial purity. John Nieto-Phillips demonstrates how the "Spanish-American" nomenclature, forged in the protracted withdrawal of statehood after US annexation, enabled a strategy of racial assimilation among annexed Mexican settlers that produced a myth of a pristine Spanish past as a qualification for US national belonging. Labeled the "Spanish-Anglo coalition" by Curtis Marez, this process is understood in the context of US national cultural production that framed New Mexico as a land of "tri-racial harmony" between US Anglos, Pueblo Indians, and Spanish-Americans. As the dominant racial nomenclature in New Mexico at the time of La Alianza's emergence, "Spanish-American" acted as a claim to citizenship and property ownership defined by the US state that at once set itself against identification with Blackness and severed historical and contemporary relationality with Indigeneity, genízaro mestizaje, and Mexico.<sup>30</sup>

### **Indo-Hispano and the Public Flyer as a Scene of Subaltern Historiography**

Indeed, the above historiographical account of genízaro territoriality and the imposition of US State power in New Mexico depicts key conditions of emergence for La Alianza. Yet this account is nonetheless insufficient for understanding La Alianza's historiography in its own right as a corpus of writing which at once sought to rearticulate the legacies of genízaro mestizaje and

un-think the racial logic of US private property and the legal legitimacy of the US state. As mentioned earlier, one objective of this essay is to map out how Indo-Hispano textual production and its genealogy in *genízaro* territoriality converge with the discourses and tactics of transnational indigenous social movements negotiating settler colonial power in the Americas. I'm interested in how this convergence is especially manifest through the vexed question of history writing as a practice of subaltern insurrection and colonial counterinsurgency.<sup>31</sup> José Rabasa identifies how national history writing doubles as a form of rationalizing the violences of the Euroamerican state. "[T]he call for 'good' history," he argues, "defines itself as a guardian of the past for the state's well-being. It defines the criteria of rationality and the acceptable discourses both in the court of public opinion and the court of law."<sup>32</sup> Given my focus on *La Alianza*'s textual engagement with the "criteria of rationality" of US law, I situate Tijerina as a subaltern historiographer and *La Alianza* as an experiment in collective history writing. From this standpoint, Tijerina is less a fiery revolutionary bandit or religious eccentric and more a subject who acquired a type of radicalism from encounters with memories of *genízaro* *mestizaje* and transnational engagements with archives of colonial law. By framing *La Alianza* as an experiment in collective history writing, I want to illuminate the role that localized memories of *genízaro* *mestizaje* played in Indo-Hispano's rearticulation of Spanish colonial law against the textual and legal codification of national historical narratives that rationalized the violent artifice of US state power in New Mexico.

An especially robust archive of *La Alianza*'s prolific historiographical production consists of public flyers and leaflets collected in the Papers of *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* and Reies López Tijerina that are housed in the Center for Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico. These artifacts reflect one outlet among a vast and multi-representational field

of cultural production engendered by La Alianza that spans over a decade of organized and informal struggle. This cultural field includes articles in local, national, and international papers, radio and television speeches, public rallies and marches, letters to state, federal, and international agency administrators, *corridos*, and the oft-cited direct action performances of symbolic land grant reclamation and militant insurgency. Yet I also focus on La Alianza's unpublished writings, internal position papers, and "direct action" planning documents whose audience is virtually unknowable. Given this focus on published and unpublished textual production, my analysis privileges the logic of the discourse being deployed in these documents rather than attempt to account for textual circulation or reception. I read these documents, in other words, for how La Alianza's history writing itself generates a theory of the politics of racial representation and the status of history writing in the maintenance and contestation of the localized dominance of US regimes of private property in New Mexico.

THE GREAT LAND ROBBERY

Why are so many of the Indo-Hispano and Indian people of New Mexico so poor today?

The answer is simple: They were robbed of their land.

How did this happen? When? Who did it? Why?

The answers follow.

At one time -- before 1846 and the war of aggression waged by the United States against Mexico to take the land of the present "southwest" -- the Indo-Hispano and Indian people of New Mexico owned over half of all the land in New Mexico, and the rest of the land was mainly unusable desert (See map on the back of this leaflet.). This was when Spain ruled New Mexico from 1598 to 1822 and when Mexico ruled from 1822 to 1846. Under Spanish law (La Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias - 1681), large grants of land were made to settlers with generally over 95% of this land being owned in common by all the settlers. Such grants became towns (villas or pueblos) with their own mayors (alcaldes) and town councils (ayuntamientos) and their own local government. The laws of the Recopilación clearly prohibited the sale of any of the common lands of the pueblos.

After the United States invaded the "southwest" and took it from the young Mexican nation that had just (1822) gained its independence from Spain, Mexico was forced at gunpoint to sign a treaty that gave the "southwest" -- then the Mexican areas of Alta California, Nuevo Méjico and Tejas -- to the United States. However, Mexico, afraid for the treatment that its former citizens in Nuevo Méjico and elsewhere in the "southwest" might receive at the hands of the U.S., refused to sign the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo unless the U.S. representatives agreed to protect the land grants of the Indo-Hispano and Indian citizens of Nuevo Méjico and the rest of the "southwest." The U.S. representatives -- the U.S. Attorney General and the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate -- finally signed the Protocol to the Treaty (May 26, 1848), after which Mexico signed the entire treaty (May 30, 1848). The Protocol pledged the U.S. to protect the land grants just as if they were still under the control of Mexico.

"The Great Land Robbery," a public flyer published in January 1970, offers a vivid scene for these concerns. The text is described as "An Historical Information Leaflet printed by Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres."<sup>33</sup> Like other public flyers disseminated by La Alianza, "The Great Land Robbery" opens by posing and answering a seemingly straightforward yet politically charged question: "Why are so many of the Indo-Hispano and Indian people of New Mexico poor today?...The answer is simple: They were robbed of their land."<sup>34</sup> The deployment of Indo-

Hispano in this question unsettles the colonial distinction between previously named New Mexican “Spanish Americans” and “Indians.” Here, “Indo-Hispano” displaces “Spanish-American” yet does not collapse into “Indian.” Rather, Indo-Hispano and Indian formations are framed in shared conditions of poverty, disempowerment, and social abandonment that are derived from histories of US imperial land theft. Within the question and answer therefore resides a complex portrayal of the history of land grant loss and the logic of racialization that are its effects and mediatory mechanisms. Refusing and rearticulating the overlaid colonial logics of racialization that often posited an antagonistic relationship and rigid difference between New Mexican Indians and Spanish Americans, the very deployment of Indo-Hispano requires us to think of the “poor” as a mode of relation and Indigeneity as a state of coalition.<sup>35</sup> Indo-Hispano’s discourse of coalitional Indigeneity here is further complemented by a deployment of the Laws of the Indies toward an articulation of New Mexican land grants as inalienable property with generally over “95% of this land being owned in common by all the settlers.”<sup>36</sup> The text here echoes the account of the Laws of the Indies depicted in “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined.” “when the United States of America invaded and occupied New Mexico, the Royal Laws of the Indies remained in force, except as changed by legislation; but such changes apply only to newly initiated rights and do not disturb prior vested rights, such as old royal grant rights.”<sup>37</sup> As a form of inalienable and communal property, the “pueblo” is defined as retaining an alternative structure of local government whose administrative autonomy is legitimated by the Laws of the Indies and protected under the jurisdiction of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. It is precisely through the deployment of treaties and colonial legal precedents that Indo-Hispano is leveraged toward articulating the inalienable and communal property and cultural rights of pueblo lands as superseded yet not rescinded under US law.

It is tempting to interpret this move as evidence of La Alianza's desire for a restorative project that overvalues European law and seeks liberal inclusion within a US legal order to the detriment of Native epistemologies and land claims. For example, Rudy Busto argues that Tijerina's religious training and his "obsession with text-based authority (as the word of God, or established, prior legal precedence), remains at the core of his land grant arguments."<sup>38</sup> Busto further notes that Tijerina's use of the "Spanish laws over the U.S. and New Mexican State governments" enabled him to declare the "system and the officials incompetent to interpret or exercise legal control over the land grants." At the same time, Busto concludes that even as Tijerina remains known as a "revolutionary nationalist," the pamphlet "clearly indicates that Tijerina believed in his rights of due process and equal protection as a citizen of the United States."<sup>39</sup>

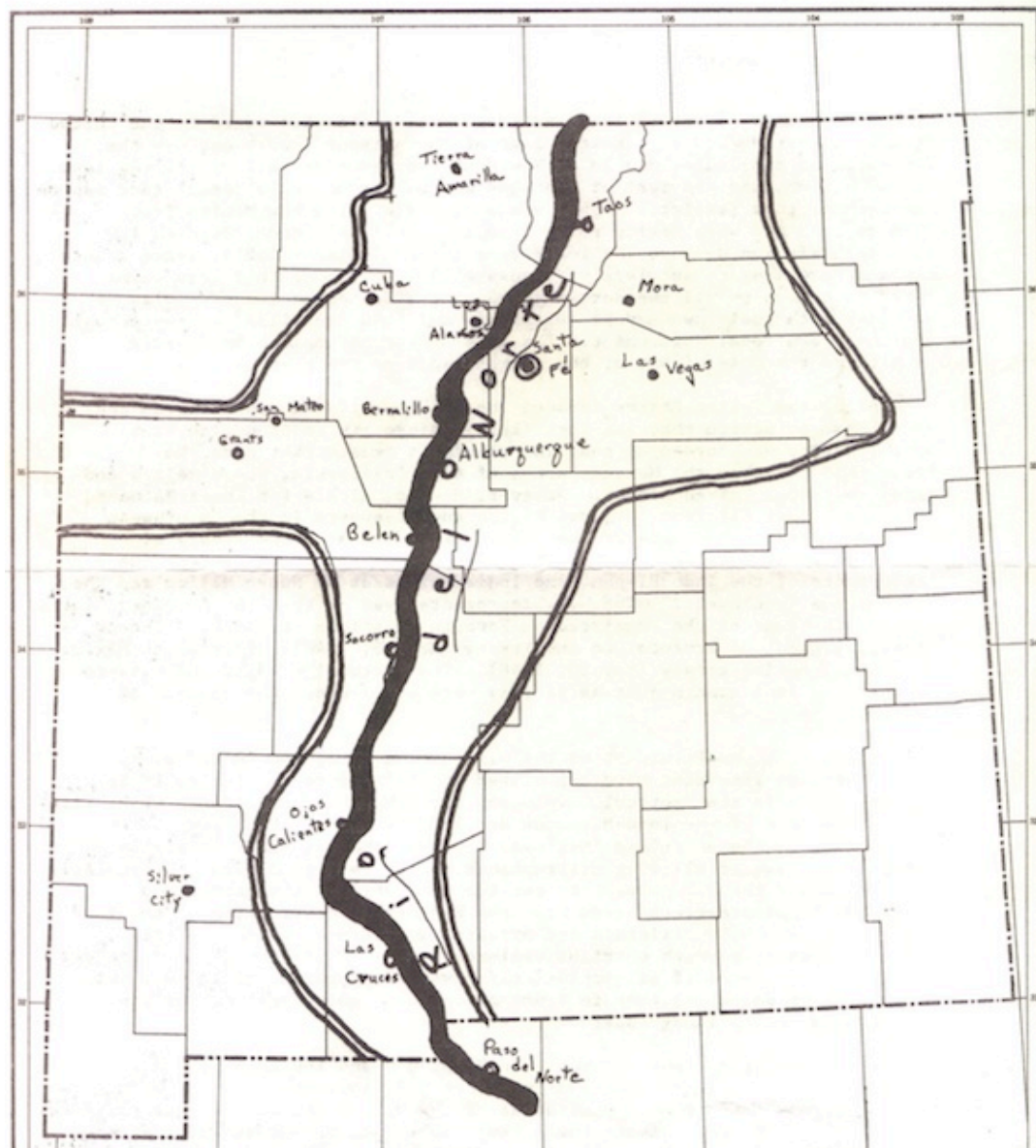
Yet when read through the trajectory of genízaro mestizaje and ejido land-grant loss, the reliance on the Laws of the Indies for La Alianza's historiography indicates less the desire for "equal protection as a citizen" or the restoration of a Spanish colonial order in the belly of US colonial modernity. "The reason why the Alianza is not seeking at this time, court decisions relative to this Spanish Land Grant question," "The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined" states in its concluding section, "is due to the fact that the Supreme Council of the Federal Alliance of Land Grants, has passed a resolution of non-confidence in the Courts of the State of New Mexico....The Spanish people do not want to seek to integrate with the Anglos."<sup>40</sup> In this light, the use of the Laws of the Indies here is less about declaring the rights of citizenship according to the US state, and more about piecing together a discourse by which the limits of US sovereignty may be articulated—all with the purpose of constructing in its stead a discourse of inalienable of property and cultural rights that frames indigeneity in coalitional terms.

This form of coalition also occasions an alternative cartography of Indian and Indo-Hispano “pueblo” territoriality by which we might have always known New Mexico. “The Great Land Robbery” offers one example of a multitude of cartographic representations that complement the historiography of La Alianza’s public flyer production.

At one time—before 1846 and the war of aggression waged by the United States against Mexico to take the land of the present ‘southwest’ –the Indo-Hispano and the Indian people of New Mexico owned over half of all the land in New Mexico, and the rest of the land was mainly unusable desert (see map on the back of this leaflet).

## ESTIMATED EXTENT OF SPANISH AND MEXICAN LAND GRANTS IN NEW MEXICO

(Note: This is a conservative estimate, since so many of the documents have been burned, stolen, destroyed or otherwise done away with by U.S. officials and other unscrupulous Anglo land thieves.)



The map at first glance appears no different than a satellite view of the state of New Mexico. Yet as an attempt to rearticulate the erased history of ejido land theft and link it to the poverty of the Indo-Hispano and Indian present, the flyer, as a historiographic artifact, seizes and subverts nationalist practices of spatial and narrative representation. Overwritten through the

middle of the state is a deep black line indexing the Rio Grande river, which is renamed as the “*Rio del Norte*,” the river’s name that circulated in the state from Spanish occupation up until US annexation. Alongside the river is the placement of many of the major towns and cities of New Mexico, which are contained by two alternative borderlines running north and south and into the west of the state. “Estimated Extent of Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in New Mexico” is scripted as a legend to the map. This is followed by the parenthetical note: “This is a conservative estimate, since so many of the documents have been burned, stolen, destroyed, or otherwise done away with by US officials and other unscrupulous Anglo land thieves.” Together, the map and the placement of the term “southwest” in scare quotes heightens both the performativity of reading and the materiality of language as it pertains to the regionalization of New Mexico in dominant cartographies of the United States. As a result, the map offers a complex critique of the production of territorial significations, the erasure of historical memory, and the appropriation of ejido land under US doctrines of private property.

In these terms, the flyer’s refusal of the racial, spatial, and temporal logic of private property at once interrupts the fantasy of national enclosure and opens up a vision of New Mexico as a heterotopic and pluri-temporal borderland condensing the territorial designs of multiple tribal and colonial projects. Mapping New Mexico as such permits the recognition of what José Rabasa calls “the continuum of Indian communalism. Nothing remains the same after the invasion, and yet modes of communalism and their corresponding life forms have survived to the present.”<sup>41</sup> The Mexican-American war has never ended and the frontier has never been closed, in other words. The paradox of Indian communalism within the irrevocable changes of colonial invasion is perhaps most visible and vexed in the production of treaty rights with settler nations. “The Great Land Robbery” articulates this paradox by narrating a history of the US

invasion of the “southwest” and the ways Mexico, on the heels of its own independence from Spain, was “forced at gunpoint to sign a treaty that gave the ‘southwest’—then the Mexican areas of Alta California, Nuevo Méjico, and Tejas—to the United States.” Writing against the historical logic of US doctrines of racialization and private property—both of which confine New Mexico’s *mestiza/o* and non-federally recognized tribal legacies to a dead past—the flyer emphasizes the scandal of broken treaty rights as both the perpetrator and protective mechanism of *ejido* lands: “The US representatives agreed to protect the land grants of the Indo-Hispano and Indian citizens of Nuevo Mejico and the rest of the ‘southwest’...just as if they were still under the control of Mexico.”

Here, we see Indo-Hispano as a transnational strategy for the assertion of inalienable land and cultural rights from the United States and Mexico *vis á vis* the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Through this treaty, the inalienable rights of culture and land apply to the “Indo-Hispano” and the “Indian” not because they are under the jurisdiction of the United States. Rather, as “citizens of Nuevo Mejico,” the Indo-Hispano and the Indian are bearers of rights “as if they were still under the control of Mexico.” The conditional tense deployed here, “as if,” is at once a displaced articulation of territorial and cultural sovereignty and a transnational strategy of rights that re-politicizes the logic of national borders and discrete racial identities posited by the US and Mexico. As a transnational rearticulation of US and Mexican racialized territoriality, Indo-Hispano stakes a claim of inalienable territorial and cultural rights to the Mexican and US states in terms that refuse the racialized logic of citizenship and discrete autochthonous subjects articulated by both national formations. Indo-Hispano, in other words, is neither Chicana/o, postrevolutionary Mexican *mestizaje*, nor is it Spanish-American. Yet it is an international demand for inalienable cultural and territorial rights from both the US and Mexican states.

**Genízaro Indians, Indo-Hispano, and Zapatismo: Naming a Continuum of Revolutionary indigenous Temporalities in the Americas**

In the 2001 issue of *Nepantla*, roughly seven years after the EZLN's (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*) armed insurrection against the Mexican state in Chiapas, the article "The Fourth World War has Begun" was published by Subcomandante Marcos.<sup>42</sup>

Elaborating a number of the hallmark critiques of neoliberal governmentality in the Americas that emanate from the ongoing the Zapatista insurrection, Marcos casts neoliberal capital accumulation as "The Fourth World War," a "total war" whose necessary target for destruction is the sovereignty of modern nation-states. Illuminating a world war waged with "financial hyperbombs" for the extension of the "totalitarian logic of [the market] into all aspects of life," Marcos names neoliberalism as a formation that rationalizes the divestment in "social spending" and reduces the state to its "bare minimum: its repressive force." The irony, Marcos is quick to point out, is that "Nation-states no longer hold the monopoly on violence: The market has put it up for auction."<sup>43</sup>

Yet "while neoliberalism pursues its war," Marcos reminds us, "protestors, hard cores of rebels, form across the planet." In this way, Marcos stylizes "the indigenous rebels of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation" as an "anti-neoliberal rebellion born in 1994" and offers a corrective to ongoing miscomprehensions of the movement:

On the question of indigenous rebellions, a parenthesis: the Zapatistas reckon that, in Mexico, the reconquest and defense of national sovereignty are part of the anti-neoliberal revolution. Yet, paradoxically, it is the EZLN that is accused of wanting to fragment the country. The reality is that the only ones to invoke separatism are the entrepreneurs of the oil-rich state of Tabasco and those deputies from the state of Chiapas who are members of the Institutionalized Revolutionary Party (PRI). The Zapatistas think that the defense

of the national state is necessary in the face of globalization, and that attempts to break Mexico into pieces stem from those in power rather than from the just demands for autonomy of Indian peoples.

The EZLN and the entire national indigenous movement do not want Indian peoples to separate themselves from Mexico: they intend to be recognized as an integral part of the country, but with their own particularities. They aspire to a democratic, free, and just Mexico. If the EZLN defends national sovereignty, the Mexican federal army protects a government that has destroyed its material infrastructure and offered the country to foreign corporations and to the drug traffickers.<sup>44</sup>

In the face of such radical critiques of the violent logic of neoliberal capital accumulation, how are we to take the Zapatista defense of Mexican national sovereignty? For Maria Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, the Zapatista defense of Mexican sovereignty paradoxically disorganizes how the Mexican state policy of *indigenismo* positions the Indian past of mestizaje as icon, ancient relic, and that in need of modernization by the mestizo nation. She argues that “this collection of discursive practices” at the heart of Mexican national mestizaje “serves to reinforce a hegemonic consciousness in which indigenous identity is always in a subordinate position to the dominant mestizo identity. Until January 1, 1994, for hegemonic mestizo consciousness, this translated into a veneration of noble Indian ancestors, but a general amnesia about the living Indian peoples of Mexico.”<sup>45</sup>

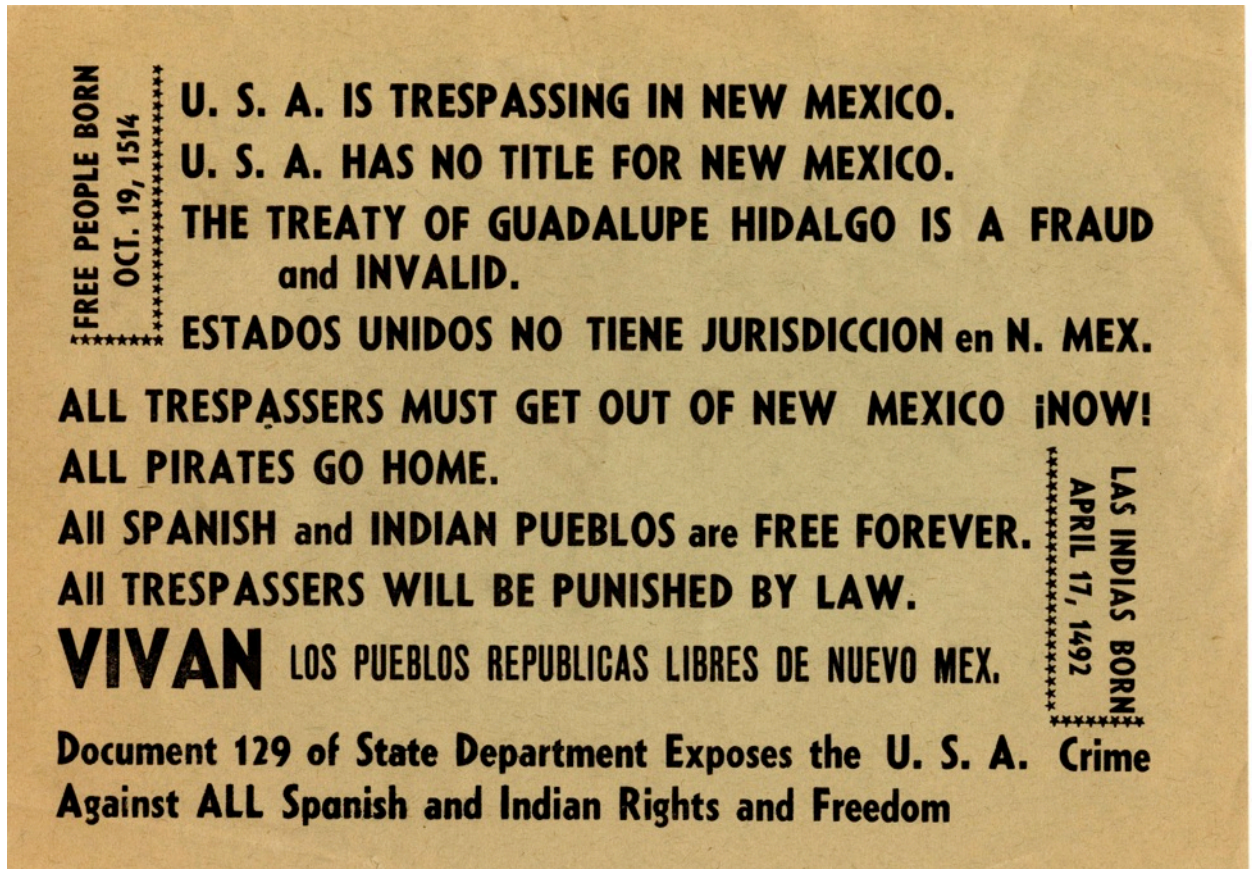
The production of the Indian under the Mexican state is therefore a strategy of racialized containment which appropriates premodern indigenous iconography for the futurity of the mestizo nation and marginalizes those contemporarily marked as Indian. Mexican mestizaje decrees that Indians must discard their Indian identity and “develop” into mestiza/o in order to

achieve political agency and legibility as citizen. For Saldaña-Portillo, Zapatismo's revolutionary innovations to this discourse entails a rejection of mestizaje and the figure of the Indian along developmental and biologicistic terms while at the same time positioning the movement as the defender of Mexican national sovereignty. Zapatismo's dismissal of the Indian and mestizaje through biological tropes reframes the Indian in Mexican national discourse from a position always "under erasure" to one occupying "the position of constitutional subject: the Indian citizen as Indian."<sup>46</sup> Saldaña-Portillo argues further that positioning the Indian as constitutional subject inaugurates new forms of governmentality that could "combine indigenous forms of representation with Western forms of federal and state representation, and could allow for the indigenous subject to write her- and himself into being in a reconstituted model of citizen-subject."<sup>47</sup>

José Rabasa argues further that Zapatismo's engagement with the nationalized production of "Indian" and citizen-subjects within Mexican national imaginaries demonstrates that the "modern and the nonmodern, capitalism and communalism, are contemporaneous and retain discrete temporalities." This insight pushes against the modern impulse to name indigenous cultural forms through a "folkloric" logic of tradition and authenticity that posits indigenous culture as irrational and historically anterior to the developmental logic of Euroamerican colonial temporality. Conceiving of "nonmodern" temporalities also resists the desire to grant a totalizing temporality to Western formations such as capital, the state, colonialism, neoliberalism, and modernity. Rabasa states that, "the denial of the existence of an *outside* history, capital, and the state would constitute one such single instance of single history regardless of the claims of nonteleology or the proposal of multiple understandings of history or, for that matter, the insistence on temporal heterogeneity. Single history is also implied in claims of an all-pervasive

modernity of the West on a global scale.”<sup>48</sup> Rabasa instead encourages a mode for reading the presence of indigenous and “nonmodern” temporalities in the representational venues of Euroamerican colonialism tasked with their erasure. Rabasa’s use of “nonmodern” instead of “premodern” eschews the linear logic of Euroamerican temporality and imbues the question of temporality with a constitutive spatial dimension. “The nonmodern should be considered as an ‘elsewhere’ unbound by modern conceptions of history that privilege the institutions, historical events, and philosophical concepts that have defined the West.”<sup>49</sup>

Rabasa’s conception of “elsewheres” represents the predicament of the impossible that is constitutive of Zapatismo’s indigenous subaltern discourse. The predicament of the impossible stems from the colonial production of the “Indian” as a subject without reason in Mexican national discourse in particular and in the Americas more broadly. “Indian” is the colonial misnomer through which the multitude of tribal formations in the Americas must speak through in order to achieve political, cultural, and legal representation. Yet the production of the “Indian” is an impossibility for indigenous actors because its signification in Euroamerican institutions and publics denotes fundamental cultural and biological inferiorities, an essential “backwardness,” and a general incompatibility with the rationality of Western political frameworks. Rabasa highlights this point by arguing that the mobilization of “Indian” in Zapatista discourse allows the reframing of the “impossible as a utopian horizon of alternative rationalities to those dominant in the West. This reflection informs our critique of the ideological constraints that have kept intellectual discourse from giving serious consideration to hybrid cultural and political practices that combine modern and nonmodern forms.”<sup>50</sup>



Uncannily, this utopian interpenetration of modern and nonmodern forms of insurrection is illustrated in a series of flyers that circulated alongside La Alianza's performances of reclamation of the San Joaquín del Río del Chama land grant and its strategy of mass arrest at the Echo Amphitheater in 1966. Through these posters and flyers, we are able to approach the collective acts of resistance engendered by Indo-Hispano against the US Forest Service as a way of naming the US state as a "Trespassing" state, a state formation in violation of its own treaties and legal mandates. One flyer in particular textualizes in bold script and declarative statements many of the themes of "The Great Land Robbery" and "The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined." Notice the statements that are framed by vertically scripted text at two of the flyer's corners that state: "Free People Born, Oct. 19, 1514" and "Las Indias Born, April 17, 1492." As documented in Tijerina's autobiography, the date of birth of "Free People" marks the emergence

of the Spanish colonial law that permits Spanish and Indian intermarriage. This marks the birthdate of the Indo-Hispano not in biological terms, but as an effect of an emancipatory legal code. The birthdate of “Las Indias” signifies the date where Columbus acquires royal permission for the infamous voyage. The rearticulation of the US state into a Trespassing agent deprives US property law of its universality and legitimacy and asserts an alternative pueblo temporality, legal order, and territorial jurisdiction for New Mexico. As a Trespassing state, the US is without “title” for the territory it occupies and administers. It is a state that traffics in piracy. The naming of a Trespassing state formation also repositions New Mexico as a territory outside the jurisdiction of the US, a territory with “Spanish and Indian” pueblos that shall be “Free Forever.” Hence, the naming of a Trespassing state is also a declaration of emancipation and sovereignty with a discrete temporality of law forged in a discourse that casts the “Indian” and the “Spanish” Pueblos in coalitional terms. As a document that furthermore affirms bilingual articulation of English and Spanish, New Mexico is therefore mapped onto the hemispheric temporality of “Las Indias,” one that rejects a linguistic order, geography, calendar, and racial imagination of US and Mexican nationalisms.

In this light, we are able to see the multi-dimensionality of Indo-Hispano cultural politics as a discourse of coalitional indigeneity, a strategy of inalienable cultural and property rights, and a theory of US state violence. As a hybrid writing practice, Indo-Hispano’s vision of coalitional indigeneity is inscribed with the subaltern pasts of New Mexico’s *genízaro* Indians, which offers both a representation of the “Indian” and a legacy of mestizaje in terms and imaginaries other than those provided by postrevolutionary Mexican nationalist mestizaje. Broadly conceived, *genízaro* Indians reflect a significant and subaltern iteration of mestizaje localized in New Mexico. Read through this lens, Indo-Hispano significantly operates as a

cultural production of “Indian-aligned mestizos”<sup>51</sup> that “became a new people and culture born of colonialism...[who] inherited Pueblo communalism.”<sup>52</sup> From this perspective, the legal derivation of Indo-Hispano’s claim of inalienable property and cultural rights is about the seizure of Spanish law for the paradoxical construction of a logic of land tenure that casts Indigeneity into coalitional terms and is discrete from the temporality of US private property and the racial logic of “Indians” and citizens in the US and Mexican states. This conception of the “Pueblo” enables a strategy for inalienable cultural and property rights through a hybrid discourse crafting an indigenous conception of land tenure that counters the commodification of land and the nationalized discourses of Indian and citizen subjects in the US and Mexican states.

Precisely due to its status as a subaltern discourse, Indo-Hispano is embedded in the very structures and discourses it dismantles. The flyers and pamphlets analyzed here are scripted in English even as they refuse US regimes of racialized territoriality inscribed in English. The writing marshaled within Indo-Hispano representational domains therefore reflect strategic seizures and improvisational assemblages of colonial law, social science, oral history, religious iconography, historiography, militant force, multi-media journalism, and cartography. Indo-Hispano, then, is an aporetic strategy to reappropriate and resignify the forces of Euroamerican law, history, race, and geography for a project of territorial and cultural sovereignty that refuses the commodification of land into private property and casts Indigeneity into coalitional terms and transnational cartographies. Situated in this way, the writing of Indo-Hispano becomes one instance of the cultural politics of indigenous protest and decolonization in the Americas that seizes a subaltern legacy of *mestizaje* localized in New Mexico

The convergence of *genízaro* Indians, Indo-Hispano, and Zapatismo reveals important connections between the colonial production of “Indian” subjects, the appropriation of tribal

territories by colonial powers, the role of discourse and history as state projects of counterinsurgency, and the coeval practices of indigenous presence and resistance embedded within the representational domains and social formations of Euroamerican modernity.<sup>53</sup> Naming this temporal continuum is not a project of superficial comparison. Nor am I seeking to render a one-to-one analogy. I use the term “convergence” here in an attempt to situate Indo-Hispano within a non-linear continuum and circularity of indigenous temporalities that confound stringently empirical notions of historical causality, geographic space, and calendrical time. This is rather about naming a continuum with shifting and heterogeneous foundations, languages, symbols, and positions by which the past constitutes the possibility for life without private property in the present. It is about making a claim for the future without a teleological or master narrative. And it means thinking about uncanny temporalities materialized and cross-woven through narrative. As a result, this convergence opens up the possibility for indigenous land reclamation through a refusal of state sponsored discourses of Indian and citizen-subjects as defined by the US and Mexico. What does it mean to advocate for indigenous land reclamation and give up speaking as Indian or citizen? This refusal surfaces the impossible as a predicament of signification and representation under the rituals of Euroamerican colonial dominance, one that comprehends the production of the Indian as a colonial strategy of institutional, political, and cultural containment and erasure of nonmodern indigenous temporalities and territorialities. Coupling the Zapatista defense of Mexican national sovereignty with the legacies of *genízaro* territoriality inscribed within Indo-Hispano, the impossible is a predicament of comprehending that language is the constitutive vehicle for concepts of emancipation while speaking the colonizer’s tongue. Yet as a practice of the *coyote*, a strategy for clandestine signification of nonmodern identities, territorialities, and temporalities that inhere within the decimating logic of

Euroamerican historical discourse, Indo-Hispano is an important moment in which colonial languages and the discourse of history become levers for the reindigenization of the Americas. From this vantage point, the convergence between Zapatismo and Indo-Hispano reveals a radical theory of culture as a site where the temporality of colonial modernity in the Americas can be contested and sabotaged.

Excavating the subdued inscriptions of *genízaro mestizaje* within the writing of Indo-Hispano has prompted me to name a nonlinear continuum of revolutionary nonmodern indigenous temporality seized by the movements and discourses of Zapatismo in our contemporary moment. This convergence enables the conception of a politics of Indigeneity as an opening for the possibility of the dispensation of private property and the self-evidence of the nation form in the present. As I've attempted to demonstrate, this possibility involves dwelling in a number of working paradoxes: a claim of cultural and territorial rights *and* a refusal of the apparatus of the state as their final determinant; the cohabitation of discourses of reform *and* revolution; the radical deprivation of universality from Euroamerican law *in spite of* remaining a target of the law's mechanisms of dispossession and punishment.

### Figure Captions:

Fig 1. “The Great Land Robbery” (1970) by La Alianza Federal de Pueblos Libres.

Fig 2. Map of “The Great Land Robbery.”

Fig 3. “U.S.A. is Trespassing in NM” (1966) by La Alianza Federal de Mercedes. This flyer was one of many circulated during the Echo Amphitheater occupation in Oct. 1966.

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1. Alianza Federal, “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined,” 1966. Reies Tijerina Papers, Box 2 Folder 8, University of New Mexico Center for Southwest Research.

2. “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined,” 2.

3. *Ibid.*, 14.

4. After publishing “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined,” La Alianza mobilized a symbolic mass occupation of the Echo Amphitheater in Kit Carson National Forest, land formerly part of the San Joaquín land grant. La Alianza staged the event less as a mere claim of the existence of the San Joaquín land grant and more as the declaration of *La Republica de San Joaquín del Río del Chama*. In doing so, the group served eviction notices to Southwest regional forester, William Hurst, which were administered at the behest of a newly established Pueblo-council for the republic that included deputies, a sheriff, and a mayor. At Pueblo-council orders, Alianza members commenced a “citizens arrest” of two Forest Service Rangers, impounded their vehicles, and erected signs that read “*Pueblo Republica de San Joaquín del Río Chama*” and “Down with Federal Anarchy.” This collective occupation is equally notable as a tactic of forcing the land grant issue into federal courts through a willful submission to “deliberate exposure to mass arrest” for trespassing on federal lands. This reflected a dissatisfaction with the formal channels of petition undertaken by La Alianza to initiate investigations into the legal status of the San Joaquín land grant and the incursions made into the territory by the National Forest service. The following year, La Alianza’s frustration with the state’s response to its land grant claims and the escalating tension between the movement and local and federal law enforcement would materialize in the armed raid of the Tierra Amarilla courthouse in the attempted citizen’s arrest of New Mexico D.A. Alfonso Sánchez.

5. My grandparents, Ventura and Cruzita Chávez, were active aliancistas from the mid-’60s to the early ’70s. My grandmother ran for Lieutenant Governor the 1968 Governor Elections for the People’s Constitutional Party, La Alianza’s attempt to mobilize formal electoral politics. My grandfather was a part of the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raiding party. See Reies López Tijerina,

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*They Called Me 'King Tiger': My Struggle for the Land and Our Rights* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2000), 81.

6. One year after the official incorporation of La Alianza, Tijerina visited the National Archives in Mexico where he became acquainted with colonial documents outlining the parameters of ownership of the New Mexican land grants. While there, he also met with Mexican governmental officials over the dispossession of New Mexican land grants and engaged with interviews with Mexican media outlets. In these travels to Mexico, Tijerina planned the eventually thwarted caravan from Albuquerque to Mexico City in an attempt to publicize land grant loss on both sides of the border. Two years later, in the early part of 1966, Tijerina and his brother Cristobál traveled to Spain to undertake further research on the legal history of the land grants. While there, Tijerina engaged similarly with the Spanish press and national archives in Madrid and Sevilla. During this trip, Tijerina obtained a copy of the four-volume Spanish colonial legal codes called *Las Siete Partidas* and searched in vain to purchase a copy of *La Recopilacion de las Leyes de las Indias* (Laws of the Indies). As these documents figure centrally in La Alianza's analysis of land grant loss, it appears that these trips provide a key animus for the production of the "Spanish Land Grant Question Examined." For an extended account of Tijerina's engagement with the Mexican press, see Frances L. Swadesh, "The Alianza Movement of New Mexico: The Interplay of Social Change and Public Commentary," in *Minorities and Politics*, eds. Henry J. Tobias and Charles E. Woodhouse (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 53-84. See also, *They Called Me 'King Tiger'*, '60-62.

7. This version was also reprinted eight years later in a collection of land grant historiography, *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants*, ed. Carlos E. Cortés (New York: Arno Press, 1974).

8. George Mariscal writes that "It is important to note that Tijerina's 'nationalism' was not so much a 'Chicano nationalism' as it was an Indo-Hispano nationalism founded on the cultural particularities of New Mexican culture and history." Yet he also states that "Tijerina and the Alianza, far from the major urban centers, promoted an Indo-Hispano identity that coincided with and indirectly contributed to an emergent Chicana/o militancy in the cities." See, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 187.

9. As I detail in Chapter Two, Rafael Pérez Torrez, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, and Alicia Arrizón make important historical and theoretical contributions to the differential histories of Chicana and Chicano mestizaje in the Americas. Yet each scholar situates Chicana/o mestizaje in the lineage of Mexican national discourse, either omitting or reducing Indo-Hispano to a footnote. See, Alicia Arrizón, *Queering Mestizaje: Transculturation and Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006). Rafael Pérez-Torres, *Mestizaje: Critical Uses of Race in Chicano Culture*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

10. Lee Bebout, "Hero Making in El Movimiento: Reies López Tijerina and the Chicano Nationalist Imaginary" *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies* (32:2) Fall 2007, 113.

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11. For the four Tijerina's biographies, see Michael Jenkinson, *Tijerina: Land Grant Conflict in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: Paisano Press, 1968); Richard Gardner, ¡Grito! *Reies Tijerina and the New Mexico Land Grant War of 1967* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1970); Peter Nabokov, *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969); Patricia Bell Blawis, *Tijerina and the Land Grants: Mexican Americans in Struggle for Their Heritage* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

12. In Busto's words, the "Four Horseman" perspective "organized and united four distinct and only tenuously related movements" under the banner of a unified Chicana/o civil rights struggle: Chávez' United Farm Workers project of labor organizing in California; Gonzáles' Crusade for Justice organization in Denver; Gutiérrez' La Raza Unida political party in Texas; and Tijerina's land grant movement in New Mexico. Busto further argues that "each of the four movements (there were others) represented by the horsemen spoke to particular issues and to specific Mexican descent populations. It was only when they were viewed in relationship to one another through a nationalist frame that the power of the horseman ideal (and so the power of the Chicano movement) could be fully articulated." See Rudy V. Busto, *King Tiger: The Religious Vision of Reies López Tijerina* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005). See also, Lee Bebout, "Hero Making in El Movimiento."

13. Phillip B. Gonzalez, "Struggle for Survival: The Hispanic Land Grants in New Mexico, 1848-2001" *Agricultural History*, Vol. 77, No. 2, *Minority Land and Community Security*. (Spring, 2003), pp. 293-324.

14. Lorena Oropeza, "The Heart of Chicano History: Reies López Tijerina as a Memory Entrepreneur" *The Sixties* 1:1. 49 (2008), 50.

15. *Ibid.*, 59.

16. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 36.

17. See, Ramón Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 190.

18. Rubén Cobos lists the translation of genízaro (*Jenízaro*) as "a person of mixed blood; an Indian captive ransomed by the Spanish authorities from his Apache, Comanche, Navajo, or Ute masters and used by his rescuers as a domestic or soldier; also a descendant of these ransomed Indians; *adj.*, dark-skinned." See, Rúben Cobos, *A Dictionary of New Mexico Southern Colorado Spanish* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2003), 129. For accounts on the functions and histories of *Genízaro* Indians and territories, see: Malcolm Ebright and Rick Hendricks, *The Witches of Abiquíu: The Governor, The Priest, The Genízaro Indians, and the Devil*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), Ch. 2; Laura E. Gómez *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race*, (New York: NYU Press, 2007), 56, 119;

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Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 57-8, 67-8; Curtis Marez, "Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans: Indian Captivity and the History of Chicana/o Popular Performance" *American Quarterly* Vol. 53 (2) (2001). See also, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance*; Ramón Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away*.

19. "Signifying Spain," 273.

20. *Ibid.*, 269.

21. "Signifying Spain," 269.

22. *Roots of Resistance*, 35.

23. *Ibid.*, 47.

24. *Ibid.*, 46.

25. *Ibid.*, 53.

26. *Manifest Destinies*, 120.

27. *Ibid.*, 122. See also, Placido Gómez, "The History and Adjudication of the Common Lands of Spanish and Mexican Land Grants," *Natural Resources Journal* 25 (1985), 1039-80. Dunbar-Ortiz writes that "Mexican land-tenure patterns in New Mexico, then, were derived from a mixture of Iberian village customs and Mexican indigenous customs and Spanish colonial policies and practices were most fundamentally influenced by the indigenous Pueblos. The land-tenure customs of the northern frontier villages were a synthesis of cultural influences controlled institutionally by Spanish colonial regulations and policies and by the realities of the frontier." *Roots of Resistance*, 7.

28. For the historiography of Spanish and Mexican land grant dispossession in New Mexico, see the following: Charles L. Briggs and John R. Van Ness. *Land, Water, and Culture: New Perspectives on Hispanic Land Grants*. New Mexico Land Grant Series. 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987); Malcolm Ebricht. *Land Grants and Lawsuits in Northern New Mexico*. New Mexico Land Grant Series. 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994); Phillip B. Gonzalez, "Struggle for Survival: The Hispanic Land Grants in New Mexico, 1848-2001" *Agricultural History*, Vol. 77, No. 2, Minority Land and Community Security. (Spring, 2003); María E. Montoya, *Translating Property: The Maxwell Land Grant and the Conflict over Land in the American West, 1840-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

29. *Roots of Resistance*, 106-7.

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30. See John Nieto-Phillips, *The Language of Blood: The Making of Spanish American Identity in New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004); Pablo Mitchell, *Coyote Nation: Sexuality, Race, and Conquest in Modernizing New Mexico, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2005); Charles H Montgomery, *The Spanish Redemption : Heritage, Power, and Loss on New Mexico's Upper Rio Grande*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002)

31. I understand Latin American subaltern studies to be, in the words of Ileana Rodríguez, a project with a “commitment to comparative studies between different post- (neo) colonial situations” forged in a number of conjunctural moments. Founded as a decolonial exchange with the radical historiography of the South Asian Subaltern studies collective, the field reflects a rumination on the political disorganizations wrought to Leftist politics marked by the fall of the Soviet Union and the defeat of the Sandinista government the early 1990s. In this regard, the field also acts as an attempt to think a radical decolonial politics of institutionalized knowledge production against the ascendance of neoliberal political and economic reforms. See Ileana Rodríguez, “Reading Subalterns Across Texts, Disciplines, and Theories: From Representation to Recognition,” in *The Latin American Subaltern Studies Reader*, ed. Ileana Rodríguez, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 9.

32. José Rabasa, *Without History: Subaltern Studies, The Zapatista Insurgency, and the Specter of History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010), 15.

33. The name change to Pueblos Libres occurs on May 24, 1967, in response to the court order filed by D.A. Alfonso Sanchez for a list of all Alianza members. In response to the request, Tijerina resigned as Alianza president, disbanded the organization, and renamed the group with the *Pueblos Libres* affix.

34. The Center for Southwest Research in the University of New Mexico contains an abundance of unpublished written material produced by La Alianza. In spite of revealing a wealth of insight into La Alianza’s legacy and the history of land grant tenure and loss in New Mexico, much of this material remains absent in existing scholarship on the movement. Other texts housed in these archives with similar historiographical narratives as “The Great Land Robbery” include: “Aztlán: Porque?” (preliminary draft): 1969, Reies Tijerina Papers. Box 2, Folder 2; “The Alianza: What Where and Why”: 1968, Reies Tijerina Papers Box 1, Folder 1; “News Release by Reies López Tijerina”: 1967, Reies Tijerina Papers. Box 1, Folder 1; “Demands of the Indo-Hispano to the Federal Government”: 1967 Reies Tijerina Papers. Box 1, Folder 1. There are countless other documents awaiting contemporary readership.

35. George Mariscal notes that one of the novelties brought by Tijerina’s insertion into land-grant politics was inter-racial and transnational coalition building. Witnessing the gains made by the Southern Christian Leadership Coalition (SCLC) under the tenure of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Tijerina made frequent use of their tactics of civil disobedience and repeated reference to the commonalities between African-American and Indo-Hispano struggles. In addition to Tijerina’s border crossings to and from Mexico, his ascendance to Southwestern regional president for the 1968 Poor People’s March and Campaign enabled multiple ties with the American Indian

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Movement (AIM), movements for Puerto Rican independence, and allowed La Alianza to send members to Cuba. See, *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

36. “The Great Land Robbery” states that “The Laws of the Recompilación clearly prohibited the sale of any of the common lands of the pueblos.”

37. “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined,” 2.

38. *King Tiger*, 151.

39. *Ibid.*

40. “The Spanish Land Grant Question Examined,” 19.

41. *Without History*, 2.

42. On January 1, 1994, the inaugural day of the North American Free Trade Agreement, an indigenous army of predominantly Mayan men and women declaring themselves the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* seized a number of hamlets in Chiapas, Mexico with their faces covered in ski masks and bandanas and armed with weapons ranging from wooden rifles to automatic machine guns. “Invoking Article 39 of Mexico’s 1917 Constitution, which invests national sovereignty and the right to modify government in the people of Mexico,” George Collier writes, “they called on other Mexicans to help them depose of the ‘illegal dictatorship’ of President Carlos Salinas de Gotari’s government... They declared war on the Mexican armed forces and called on international organizations and the Red Cross to monitor under the Geneva Conventions of War” (2). The movement endures to our contemporary moment, and subsequent scholarship on the emergence, tactics, and discourses of the EZLN is voluminous. For English language introductions, see George A. Collier, *Basta! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*, (Oakland: Food First Books, 1994); Neil Harvey, *The Chiapas Rebellion: The Struggle for Land and Democracy*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998). For collections of Subcomandante Marcos’ writings, see: Subcomandante Marcos, *Shadows of Tender Fury: The Letters and Communiqués of Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation*. Translated by Frank Bardacke, Leslie López, and the Watsonville, California, Human Rights Committee (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995); Subcomandante Marcos, *Our Word is Our Weapon: Selected Writings*. Edited by Juana Ponce de León (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001); Subcomandante Marcos, *¡Ya Basta! Ten Years of the Zapatista Uprising*. Edited by Žiga Vodovnik (Oakland: AK Press, 2004).

43. Subcomandante Marcos, “The Fourth World War Has Begun,” *Nepantla: Views from the South* 2 (3) (2001), 567.

44. *Ibid.*, 569.

45. “Who’s the Indian in Aztlán?,” 409.

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46. *Ibid.*, 412.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Without History*, 5.

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Without History*, 39.

51. "Signifying Spain," 269.

52. *Roots of Resistance*, 171.

53. The political economy of ejido land grant formations underwrites the convergence between Indo-Hispano and the Zapatista insurgency. See María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo (2001), "The agrarian reform statute in the 1917 Mexican Constitution, Article 27, extended land rights on the basis of separate *ejidos* and communal farms. While thousands of farm titles were granted under Article 27, Indianist activists such as Araceli Burgette and Margarito Ruiz...believe the article was actually a hindrance to indigenous rights broadly conceived. Article 27 granted separate and discrete farms to clan-based structures, but recipients have limited economic rights and no political rights over these parcels. Specifically, they have no rights *as tribes* over their historical domains." "Who's the Indian in Aztlán?," 408-9.

## Chapter Four

“Remember the Times When It was the Woman Who Did the Building:” *El Grito del Norte, So Far From God*, and the Defeudalizing Indigeneity of Indo-Hispano Mestizaje

In many respects, New Mexico has never emerged from colonial status.

—Frances Leon Swadesh

Now there was no mother to honor, no father to respect, no ‘jitas to sacrifice for, no rancho to maintain, and no land left to work.

—Ana Castillo, *So Far from God*

I wish to begin this chapter by telling two stories of what Maylei Blackwell calls “hidden gender insurgencies” of Chicana feminist writing.<sup>1</sup>

## I

The first story begins in the early summer of 1968 when Elizabeth “Betita” Martínez and Beverly Axelrod travel to New Mexico in the midst of La Alianza’s struggle for land grant reclamation. Martínez, a graduate from Swarthmore College and former editor for Simon and Schuster in New York, was completing her time as a full-time staffer with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and had just finished a book on the Cuban revolution entitled *The Youngest Revolution*. Axelrod, a prominent civil rights and Black Power attorney, had agreed to offer legal advice to Reies López Tijerina for his upcoming trial stemming from the Tierra Amarilla courthouse raid the previous year.

As Martínez and Axelrod tour northern New Mexico, they dialogue with numerous Alianza members and allies about starting a local newspaper. They meet courthouse raid participants José Madril, Juan Valdez, Tobias Leyba, and Baltazar Martínez. And they begin to

collaborate with women such as María Varela, Enriqueta Vasquez, Valentina Valdez, Rini Templeton, Cleofas Vigil, and Fernanda Martínez. Elizabeth Martínez recalls that after “arriving in 1968, I soon learned to respect names like Las Gorras Blancas (White Caps) a longstanding underground resistance group, and La Mano Negra (Black Hand), reputed to be headed by a woman at that time. Resistance nourished by historical cultural or religious tradition was also strong. Examples could be found in the Penitentes (a semisecret religious organization), dances and plays performed on certain holidays reenacting key moments in the area’s colonial history, the *curanderos* who cured with herbs not usually known to outsiders, along with other expressions of a long isolated, necessarily self-sufficient society—from building with adobe bricks, to cultivating a unique variety of chilies for cooking. A spirit of collectivity and interdependence ran strong in all this.”<sup>2</sup>

Through these encounters, the independent newspaper, *El Grito del Norte* (A Cry from the North), is founded in collaboration with Alianza members and sympathizers as a “vehicle to support the Alianza.”<sup>3</sup> With Martínez and Axelrod as co-editors, the paper sets up its office in Española, NM, and publishes its first issue in August 1968. “Its purpose” as stated in this issue “is to advance the cause of justice for poor people and to help preserve the rich cultural heritage of La Raza in the area. It is being published because there is no other newspaper in northern New Mexico which does these things...*El Grito del Norte* will be a newspaper of the people, publishing news from your communities, writing about your complaints and problems...*El Grito* believes that this kind of paper can help the poor people of the north find ways to win justice and a better way of life. Sharing problems, knowledge, and opinions is the first step in working together against the oppressors.”<sup>4</sup>

*El Grito*'s mission of "sharing problems, knowledge, and opinions" to "advance the cause of justice for the poor people" and to "preserve the rich cultural heritage of La Raza in the area" makes the paper a formally hybrid scene of writing. Poems, recipes, and children stories appear alongside historical essays on land grants, news articles on local electoral politics, reports on the Viet-Nam war, announcements for local agricultural and health care cooperatives, and communiqués from revolutionary movements in Mexico and Latin America. The founding of *El Grito* converges with the advent of the Chicano Press Association (CPA), a coalition of independent Chicano newspapers "that are dedicated to the Mexican American people, and to the struggle against discrimination and injustice. The CPA serves La Raza and in turn needs its help. Members exchange articles, cartoons, and photos."<sup>5</sup>

Even as *El Grito* exchanges writing with several CPA publications such as *La Raza*, *El Gallo*, *La Voz Mexicana*, and *El Popo*, among many others, *El Grito* gains distinction from a number of Chicana/o movement and civil rights newspapers. Not only does it become, in the words of Lorena Oropeza, a publication "whose day-to-day operations fell largely to women staff members," it also consistently articulates New Mexico's land grant struggles within feminist, cultural nationalist, socialist, and internationalist registers.<sup>6</sup> Alicia Schmidt Camacho argues that *El Grito* links "the local struggle [of land reclamation] to Chicana/o mobilizations in other parts of the United States, as well as to indigenous rights, black liberation, labor campaigns, and prisoner-rights movements."<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Martínez recalls that the "combination of what could be called liberatory or revolutionary nationalism with internationalism made *El Grito* very unusual among the dozens of more nationalist Chicano movement newspapers that covered the Southwest and inspired activists."<sup>8</sup>

In the span of *El Grito*'s roughly five-year existence, its "pro-socialist" inflection prompts its reporters to visit Cuba, Vietnam, and China. The paper regularly publicizes the renowned land struggles of the Taos Pueblo in its successful attempt in reclaiming the Blue Lake, the Pueblo's sacred point of emergence, from the US state. Even as *El Grito* consistently documents the developments in La Alianza's campaign of land grant recovery and Tijerina's persecution by the US state, it also publicizes the anti-police brutality mobilizations of the Black Berets, as well as a number of local agricultural, healthcare, and educational cooperatives.

These ties to an international array of socialist and decolonial struggles do not go unnoticed by the counterinsurgent forces of the US state. Columnist Enriqueta Vasquez notes "near constant police surveillance" and "assumed...unmarked police cars following her wherever she drove."<sup>9</sup> In the midst of the multiple firebombings that target La Alianza's Albuquerque's headquarters, *El Grito* reporter and Black Beret member, Antonio Córdova, is shot and killed alongside Rito Canales by Albuquerque Police in January 1972. The increasing level of state sanctioned violence surrounding the paper, in addition to the mounting costs and energy of publishing consistent monthly issues, prompt the staff to relocate *El Grito* from Española to Las Vegas, NM. Seeking to reinvigorate the tactics of the paper and the Chicana/o movement, Martínez and other *El Grito* staff members move to Albuquerque and launch the Chicano Communications Center (CCC). As a result, *El Grito* ceases publication in August 1973 with a closing announcement that states "To our enemies, we say: don't celebrate. The spirit that El Grito voices will never die."<sup>10</sup>

## II

The second story begins with Ana Castillo, roughly 25 years later. Sometime in the early 1990s, after having been invited by Rodolfo Anaya to deliver a series of lectures at the University of New Mexico, Castillo moves to Albuquerque and plans to write a novel that takes place in her hometown of Chicago.<sup>11</sup> Castillo had just earned her Doctorate in American Studies from the University of Bremen in Germany after completing her Masters in Latin American and Caribbean studies at the University of Chicago. By the time she arrives in Albuquerque, she is already known for her poetic work such as *Otro Canto* (1977) and *Women Are Not Roses* (1984), as well as two novels that playfully engage with absurdist and Latin American literary forms and histories: *The Mixquiahuala Letters* (1986) and *Sapogonia: An anti-romance in 3/8 meter* (1990).

As she works on her novel, she runs graduate workshops on creative writing with Tony Hillerman at UNM and teaches other courses as an adjunct. Yet as she works on her novel that was supposed to be about her “own history...[and] travels, Chicago,” she recalls “that place, New Mexico, hits you like a ton of bricks.”<sup>12</sup> Six months later, Castillo completes the first draft of her third novel, *So Far from God*, which is subsequently published in 1993. Employing a mix of absurdist, magical realist, and realist techniques, *So Far From God* takes place in the land grant village of Tomé and depicts the lives of a New Mexican mestiza named Sofi and her four daughters: Fe, Caridad, Esperanza, La Loca. As a Tomé land grant heir, Sofi is a single mother who is estranged from her husband Domingo and single-handedly runs the local butcher shop, *Carne Buena Carnicería*. Over the course of the novel, Sofi endures the devastating deaths, and occasional miraculous resurrections, of her four daughters.

Sofi's eldest daughter, Esperanza, received her B.A. in Chicano studies and her M.A. in Communications at UNM and intermittently dates her college boyfriend, Rubén. While becoming jaded with Rubén's patriarchal embodiment of Chicanismo, Esperanza takes on a job as an anchor on a local TV station. Her success lands her an assignment in Saudi Arabia covering the first Gulf War. While there, she disappears and dies. Yet even as her body is never found, she makes occasional "ectoplasmic" visits to her sisters Caridad and Loca.

Caridad, "the sister of the porcelain complexion, not meaning white, but as smooth as glazed clay," drops out of college after a year and marries Memo, her high school boyfriend. After realizing that Memo never stopped seeing his ex-girlfriend, Caridad miscarries their daughter and begins "loving anyone she met at the bars who vaguely resembled Memo."<sup>13</sup> One night she returns home terribly mutilated, covered in blood from being "branded like cattle," stabbed in the throat, and having her nipples bitten off. While being nursed by Sofi and Loca, Caridad is inexplicably restored to her previous self, moves out to a local trailer park and becomes a *Curandera*. During her training, she falls in love with Esmeralda, a woman from Acoma Pueblo who she meets at the Santuario de Chimayo. Her encounter with Esmeralda prompts Caridad into self-imposed exile in a mountain cave where she becomes an object of local saintly devotion. When she returns from her reclusive stint in the mountains, she reunites with Esmeralda and together they visit Acoma Pueblo and hear the call of *Tsichtinako*, the Pueblo spirit deity also known as Thought Woman. Upon hearing this call, they together leap off the cliffs of Acoma and disappear "down, deep within the soft, moist dark earth."<sup>14</sup>

Fe's death "is hard to talk about."<sup>15</sup> Believing her mother and sisters to be "self-defeating....[and] unambitious," Fe works at a local bank and is engaged to Tom.<sup>16</sup> When Tom calls off their marriage, Fe becomes devastated and incessantly screams for months until her

voice is permanently damaged. When she finally stops screaming, she marries Casmiro, a northern New Mexican sheepherder, and begins working at Acme International, a weapons and chemical manufacturing plant. After months of inhaling toxic chemical fumes, Fe's body becomes pockmarked with cancerous tumors and she dies and remains "just plain dead."<sup>17</sup>

La Loca unexpectedly dies at the age of three and comes back to life and levitates to the roof of the church at her funeral to the amazement of the inhabitants of Tomé. Once resurrected, La Loca develops a lifelong phobia of people and devotes her life to tending to her family's farm animals and acting as a healer for her three sisters. After witnessing the demise and uneven re-embodiment of her sisters, Loca develops cancer, mysteriously contracts AIDS, and dies after participating in a Good Friday procession through Tomé that protests the deaths brought to the people of New Mexico from exposure to toxic chemicals.

All while caring for and ultimately losing all of her daughters, Sofi runs for mayor of Tomé and starts "a sheep-grazing wool-weaving enterprise 'Los Ganados y Lana Cooperative,' modeled after the one started by the group of the north that had also saved its community from destitution."<sup>18</sup> Not without its challenges, the co-op begins to sustain the livelihood of "more than two dozen women" and allows them to use their work to attain college credit.<sup>19</sup> It also develops into a food co-op where families are able to raise hormone free meat and organic produce. Prompted by the final cruelty of La Loca's death, as well as the "hundreds of petitions she received in the mail everyday" Sofi also "became the founder and first presidenta of what would later be known worldwide as...M.O.M.A.S., Mothers of Martyrs and Saints."<sup>20</sup>

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I open with the two stories presented above to incite a rumination on the distinct articulation of Indo-Hispano mestizaje found in *El Grito del Norte* and its complex textual

relation with Ana Castillo's novel, *So Far From God*. In the preceding chapters of my dissertation, I have explored the role of writing, archival research, and memory in La Alianza's Indo-Hispano cultural politics. Through this exploration, I have situated Indo-Hispano as a discourse of mestizaje born out of the intersection of Reies López Tijerina's research in Spanish, Mexican, and New Mexican legal archives and the subjugated memories of genízaro Indian land grant tenure and loss provided by Alianza members. This move was made in an attempt to decenter Tijerina's pivotal role in La Alianza's movement and open up a space for a more heterogeneous and collective discovery of Indo-Hispano that is tied to the mestizo/a legacies of New Mexican land heirs. As I detail in my third chapter, genízaro Indians refer to a caste of detribalized Plains and Pueblo Indian captives who were forcibly resettled into land grants as a buffer to protect the Spanish colonial interior in New Mexico from Plains Indian raids during the 17th and 18th centuries. Given the high number of women and children captives taken from Pueblo and Plains tribes, I situate the political economy of genízaro land grant tenure and loss in New Mexico as a subaltern legacy of mestizaje constituted through a transcultural "traffic in women" which bound together male honor, slave holding, and hybridized colonial and tribal territorialities. New Mexico historiography notes that many of the land grants which came to be occupied by genízaro Indians are the very settlements subsequently targeted for dispossession with the imposition of the regimes of race, law, and private property under US national sovereignty. By analyzing texts such as Tijerina's testimonio, *Mi lucha por la tierra*, and La Alianza's public flyers and pamphlets, I argue that the subjugated memories of genízaro mestizaje, combined with Tijerina's archival research, allow a conception of Indo-Hispano as a subaltern historiography that refused the racial, territorial, and historiographical imposition of US law and private property in New Mexico. By refusing the institutionalized forgetting of

Native and Mexican land grant loss under US national sovereignty, La Alianza's textual production reveals Indo-Hispano to operate as a discourse of coalitional indigeneity, a transnational strategy of inalienable territorial and cultural rights, and a theory of US state violence. These operations enable a conception of Indo-Hispano as a discourse of Indian-aligned mestizaje that converges with the temporalities of transnational indigenous movements of our contemporary moment.

The stakes of this argument and its relevance to *El Grito* and *So Far From God* are more apparent when we consider the dominant narratives of La Alianza within and beyond Chicana/o studies. Often remembered as a regional variant of the Chicana/o movement, La Alianza is frequently cited for its armed raid of the Tierra Amarilla courthouse and the eccentricities of Tijerina's leadership as one of the "four horsemen" of the Chicano movement. Not only do these narratives rely on heteropatriarchal frames of racial representation that valorize men as the revolutionary subjects of La Alianza's movement, they have also disallowed an engagement with Indo-Hispano its own terms as a distinct iteration of mestizaje that draws from localized memories of genízaro land grant tenure and loss. By emphasizing the mestiza/o legacies of the land grants and decentering Tijerina as the implied author of La Alianza's textual production, it becomes apparent how *El Grito* and *So Far From God* exist as texts produced through the encounters of formally educated feminist writers with the subjugated legacies of race and gender tied to land grant territoriality localized in New Mexico. For this reason, even as both texts remain significant and distinct sites of Chicana feminist critique, the purpose of this chapter is to explore their shared and uncanny articulation of La Alianza's discourse of Indo-Hispano mestizaje.

Given *El Grito*'s cooperative conditions of emergence, its staff of predominantly women writers, artists, and editors, and its articulation of New Mexican Native and land grant territorial struggles through an emergent feminist internationalism, I will explore how the paper elaborates the aforementioned operations of Indo-Hispano into a radicalism that diverged from the masculinist strictures of La Alianza's organizational structure as well as the heteropatriarchal imperatives of Chicano cultural nationalism that together "promoted a heterosexual model of race as family, suppressing sexual difference in favor of an ideology of separate, complimentary fronts of masculine and feminine social action."<sup>21</sup> As Wahneema Lubiano points out in her incisive critique of Black nationalism, the discourse of family values, or what Schmidt Camacho terms "race as family," allows oppositional nationalism to replicate the operations of US state power by prescribing gender roles along a heterosexual axis of kinship that "seeks to enforce a definition of 'family' as only a household of people headed by two members of opposite sexes living with progeny produced by one of them—usually the female—and whose finances and decision making power are largely centered on the male person."<sup>22</sup> Lubiano argues that any "narrative that insists that *responsible reproductive* black masculinity is the central signifier and affirmer of black maleness is a policing of black male sexual desire. It is a means by which black nationalist accounts of and prescriptions for the black family—something historically and aesthetically appealing as resistance to racist demonization of black people—becomes available also for appropriation by the U.S. state for erecting a political disciplinary apparatus in moral terms." In this narrative, "black patriarchs...will be the means by which the black family is saved...[while the] family is perceived (and represented) as 'weakened' by black female deviance (sexual and economic)." Under these constraints, even as black nationalism works to promote a critical consciousness of the US state as a racial state and US national culture as a

farce for white culture, the centrality of the family as the preferred metaphor of oppositional racial collectivity also works as “a means of policing the exercise largely (but not solely) of female desire, as well as a way to establish that state’s moral right to influence and even direct the private sphere.”<sup>23</sup>

In the specific context of Chicano nationalism and Chicana feminist interventions, Norma Alarcón reminds us that the politics of *mestizaje* occupies a central role in regulating imaginations of gendered revolutionary subjectivity along familial tropes. “It is worthwhile to remember,” she argues, “that the historical founding moment of the construction of *mestiza(o)* subjectivity entails the rejection and denial of the dark Indian Mother as Indian which have compelled women to often collude in silence against themselves, and to actually deny the Indian position even as that position is visually stylized and represented in the making of the fatherland. Within these blatant contradictions the overvaluation of Europeanness is constantly at work.”<sup>24</sup> Alarcón’s comments point to the ways that Chicano cultural nationalism’s appropriation of post-revolutionary Mexican nationalist discourse provides a narrative of Chicano racialization in the United States that relies on metaphors of gender that inscribe women within the binary of Guadalupe (that is, the silent and pure “good” woman charged with the reproduction of the *mestizo* nation) and Malintzín (the translating, copulating, and therefore speech producing “bad” Indian woman charged with betraying national unity). Alarcón adds that given

the extensive ideological sedimentation of the (Silent) Good Woman and the (Speech-producing) Bad Woman that enabled the formations of the cultural nationalist 'communal modes of power', Chicana feminists have an enormous mandate to make 'sense' of it all as Anzaldúa desires. It requires no less than the deconstruction of paternalistic 'communal modes of power', which is politically perilous since often it appears to be the 'only' model

of empowerment that the oppressed have, although it has ceased to function for many women as development and post-industrial social research indicates. Also, it requires the thematization and construction of new models of political agency for women of color who are always already positioned cross-culturally and within contradictory discourses.<sup>25</sup>

In many ways, *El Grito*'s collective conditions of publication, its publicity of co-operative projects of local agricultural subsistence and community healthcare, and its incongruent relation to Chicano nationalism's overvaluation of the heterosexual family as the preferred mode of oppositional collectivity aligns with the "thematization and construction of new models of political agency for women of color" called for by Alarcón and Anzaldúa. Yet rather than historicizing *El Grito*'s articulation of Chicana mestizaje as a mere appropriation of post-revolutionary Mexican national discourse, I want to explore how *El Grito*'s articulation of Indo-Hispano evokes what I call a non-paternalistic "cooperative mode of power" that draws from the subjugated memories of race, gender, and territory tied to genízara mestizaje and ejido land grants.

Maylei Blackwell's analysis of Chicana print communities reminds us that *El Grito*'s articulation of a "cooperative" mode of power that negotiated the familial trappings of cultural nationalism cannot be separated from the politics of writing. She notes that the *El Grito* challenged the "realist conventions of political journalism" by embracing a "mixed-genre format [that] would form the basis of...a coalitional strategy among women of color" reflected in "the profusion of women of color anthologizing in the 1970s and early 1980s embodied by collaborative projects such as the 1981 publication of *This Bridge Called my Back*."<sup>26</sup> As both an incipient site for the formation of women of color critique and a textual rearticulation of a localized legacy of genízaro mestizaje, part of my argument about *El Grito*'s co-operative mode

of publication and uneven relation to Chicano cultural nationalism relies on investigating its complex textual affinity with Castillo's decidedly post-nationalist Chicana feminist novel, *So Far from God*. By juxtaposing *El Grito* and *So Far From God*, I want to produce an interpretive framework for Indo-Hispano mestizaje that neither positions social movement writing as a site where "real" conditions of struggle are distilled nor situates fiction writing as a site of mere "imagination." Rather, this juxtaposition enables a more complex account of the politics of indigenous coalition tied to the localized memories of genízaro mestizaje in New Mexico that are differentially condensed in the two respective texts. In this way, by interweaving my analysis of *El Grito*'s formal hybridity with the parodic and magical realist formal deployments of *So Far From God*, we are able to name the ways that *So Far From God* ironically counter-remembers the very patriarchal legacies of New Mexican land grant formations and Chicano cultural nationalism that *El Grito* negotiated during its five year press run. As such, I position *El Grito* and *So Far From God* as contiguous textual sites that articulate a "cooperative mode of power" which differentially draws from the legacies of gendered violence tied to genízara land grant mestizaje and refuses the gendered, racial, and territorial regimes of state sanctioned and oppositional nationalist power in the Americas.

### **Chicana Feminism, *Ejido* Land Grants, and the Long Project of Defeudalizing Power in the Americas**

In her analysis of Elizabeth Martínez's role in forming *El Grito*, Alicia Schmidt Camacho offers a trenchant critique of the patriarchal imperatives of Chicano cultural nationalism. She argues that "the ascendancy of ethnic nationalism over other ideologies of communal self-defense... signaled a marked remasculinization of the liberation struggle. The historical dispossession of Mexicans from their lands gave rise to expressions of ethnic unity that, in the words of Cynthia Enloe, 'typically sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized

humiliation, and masculinized hope' for restitution....Ethnic nationalism in its purest form denied the legitimacy of Chicana militancy beyond a limited sphere of female service and domesticity."<sup>27</sup> For these reasons, she maintains that Chicana feminist projects like *El Grito* reflect perhaps "*El Movimiento's* greatest challenge to liberal racism in all its gender and class dimensions...because they insisted on moving sex and gender out of the private realm...They also held a longer historical memory, one that predated 1848 and the nation form."<sup>28</sup> In these terms, Chicano nationalism's valorization of masculinized memory and collectivity, its gendered and sexual division of radical agency, and its tie to the ongoing legacy of Mexican and Native territorial dispossession under US national sovereignty all point to the cohabitation of "feudal" and "liberal" modes of power constituting the racialization of mestizo/a and Native formations in the United States.

In a particularly apt account of the feudal mode of power, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak draws from subaltern historian Partha Chatterjee's typology of three modes of power at play in the ascendancy of capitalist modes of production in the social relations of India's countryside: the communal, the feudal, and the bourgeois. Spivak quotes Chatterjee at length for a description of the feudal mode of power, which is transcribed as follows.

The *feudal* mode of power is characterized fundamentally by sheer superiority of physical force, i.e. a relationship of domination. It is founded on *conquest or some other means of physical subordination* of a subject population. In our conception, it denotes not just the state formation which accompanies the feudal mode of production, but may in fact serve to describe political institutions corresponding to a whole range of forms of organization or production based on direct physical control over the life-processes of the producers.<sup>29</sup>

Chaterjee's assessment of the feudal mode of power usefully demarcates it from a feudal mode of production. This typology of power in this regard is neither liberal nor Marxist but a Foucaultian account of the global imposition of capitalist modes of production under Euro-American colonization. Under Spivak's gloss, Chaterjee's typology of power illuminates the cohabitation of a multiplicity of "political institutions" that rely on "physical force," and "relationships of domination" that circulate unevenly in capitalist modernity in the Americas. Within the epoch of late capitalist modernity which Spivak writes, she notes that "unlike the case of European social relations under the feudal mode of production, it is the *woman* who confronts this structure doubly: at home and at work." In this "new feudalization under electronic capitalism" there is no need for the "elaborate constitution of the subject" that attends the ascendancy of bourgeois modes of power. "No legal structure need be laid down for the army of 'permanent casuals,' only the circumventing of rudimentary labor and safety regulations is on the agenda." In this context, the bourgeois mode of power in which "upward class mobility may mean woman's access to individualism" is foreclosed. And unlike the communal mode of power where women are inscribed in the social order through consanguineous notions of kinship, tribe, and clan, the non-synchronicity of feudal modes of power and production in post-industrial capitalism ensures that the "men are set against the women." Under these conditions, Spivak minces little words: "the woman is worst off under the feudal mode of power."<sup>30</sup>

In unpacking the significance of "feudal modes of power" within Chicano nationalism and Chicana feminist interventions, Grace Hong cites Norma Alarcón's incisive and provocative characterization of Chicano cultural nationalism as a project of "defeudalizing" power.

Norma Alarcón notes that Mexican nationalism and Chicano nationalism (like European bourgeois nationalisms) emerged against 'feudal mode[s] of power,' both 'the Hispanic

New World ‘feudal mode of power’ (which in Mexico gave way to the construction of mestizo nationalism)’ and ‘an Anglo-American ‘feudal mode of power’ in the isolation of migrant worker camps and exchange labor (which in the United States gave rise to Chicano nationalism of the 1960s).’ If, as Alarcón notes, Chicano nationalism is a mode of ‘defeudalization’ and the feudal modes of power over Chicano/a communities not only continue to exist but are exacerbated by global processes of hyperexploitation and concomitant state violence, then we must conclude that this process of defeudalization is still ongoing.<sup>31</sup>

By evoking the non-synchronous simultaneity of feudal and liberal modes of power under Euroamerican capitalist modernity, Hong, Chatterjee, Spivak, and Alarcón open a language for naming the ways in which patriarchy enables the transmission of feudal modes of power within modern regimes of race, knowledge, and territory. In these terms, an emphasis on the continuity of feudal modes of power as a force of gendering and racialization under modern nationalism counters a developmentalist narrative of modern colonial power in the Americas as that which displaces both “feudal” and “tribal” modes of power with the rationality of private property, civic egalitarianism, and social scientific regimes of empirical and historical verification. Rather, by situating nationalism’s overvaluation of the heterosexual family as an extension of feudal modes of power, Hong notes that “the process of defeudalization that inspired anticolonial nationalisms has not concluded.”<sup>32</sup> As a project of decolonial nationalism, Blackwell emphasizes that Chicano nationalism’s “circulation of print media in the form of student and community newspapers, political pamphlets, and movement magazines played a formative role.” With this point, we can see how the replication and contestation of feudal modes of power reside within

the “imperative to create alternative knowledge, parallel institutions, and cultural formations” in the context of what Blackwell terms “Chicana and Chicano print communities.”<sup>33</sup>

For the purpose of my investigation on *El Grito* as a collaborative project of feminist textual defeudalization, the localized political economy of Spanish and Mexican land grant tenure and dispossession under US regimes of private property must be engaged. As I detail in the previous chapter, an overwhelming number of La Alianza’s land grant heirs were descendants of *genízaro* Indians who acquired tenure on ejido land grants which were formed as a buffer between Plains Indian territories and New Mexico’s Spanish colonial interior. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortíz argues that *genízaro* Indians, as subsistent agricultural producers,

were distinguished by two major characteristics. First, their racial and cultural heritage was primarily indigenous; which they were detached from their indigenous communities and mixed with other races, they became a new people and culture born of colonialism and a struggle to survive. Second, though they were agricultural producers, they were neither peasants in the classic sense nor farmers of the ‘yeoman’ farmer, the entrepreneurial Anglo-American farmer on the frontier....Culturally, they inherited Pueblo communalism. The common pasture lands were not owned by a landlord who granted his tenants the right to use them. The commons were part of each community grant, and the community controlled their use.<sup>34</sup>

Given the ways that *genízaro* Indians reflect a subaltern iteration of *mestizaje* localized in New Mexico, their formation signifies the complexities of captivity, subjection, and emancipation in the making of the cultures of colonial dominance in New Mexico and the Americas more broadly. Positioned in between multiple and antagonistic colonial and tribal social orders, *genízaros* also reflect the quandaries of subalternity under Euroamerican colonialism: they are

formed from generations of indigenous people being *spoken for* by being forced to *speak as* *genízaro*. In this sense, they also ask us to situate our conception of subaltern agency, gender violence, and racialization in New Mexico within the context of a transcultural economy of patriarchy and territoriality that relied on the captivity of women, the appropriation of Pueblo lands and culture, and colonial warfare against Plains Indians. These components allow *genízaro* Indians to be seen as an important instance of what Curtis Marez calls the making of “Indian-aligned mestizos”<sup>35</sup> who “inherited Pueblo communalism.”

Even as ejido land grants reflect territorial formations occupied by a polyglot assortment of indigenous and mestiza/o peoples that enacted indigenous customs of communal land ownership and subsistence within colonial legal and territorial strictures, their inextricable tie to a transcultural economy of gendered captivity also constitutes them as important sites for the transmission of feudal modes of power. This hybridization of indigenous and feudal modes of power concentrated in ejido land grants would play out in tragic, ironic, and unpredictable ways under US annexation. David Correia’s investigation of the tactics of land grant dispossession under US law usefully illuminates this tension. Correia’s analysis moves against standard interpretations of ejido land grant dispossession that account for the loss of communal holdings as an effect of the incommensurability between Spanish/Mexican and Anglo legal frameworks. Instead, he argues that land grant dispossession was facilitated by the *overlap* of these two distinct legal frameworks. Characterizing the dispossession of Spanish and Mexican land grants under US law as a “colonial process,” Correia argues that the “colonial infrastructure” of the land grants “accommodated the interests of commercial speculators” from the US. In this way, speculators “claimed community grants were private grants and pursued deed purchases from the heirs of these named settlers. This tactic was plausible by virtue of the practice common in grant

making to name only representatives of the community in the grant documents.”<sup>36</sup> Correia’s analysis allows us to conceptualize the two senses of representation (as proxy and portrait) so crucial to the production of *genízaro* subalternity. Not only does Spanish law constitute its authority through feudal modes of patriarchal representation of community (men as proxy for community), but it inscribes a mode of textualization and legality that allows a re-presentation of men as the solely legible figures for the ownership of communal holdings as private property under US law. In this way, the distinct yet overlaid feudal modes of patriarchal power constitutive of Spanish and US property law provide a powerful site of colonial coalition in New Mexico. This account of patriarchy offers an added territorial dimension to what Curtis Marez calls the “Spanish-Anglo” coalition constituting the overlaid modes of white supremacy within New Mexican racial politics.<sup>37</sup> Correia extends this point by claiming that the “conflict over the adjudication of land grants was not merely a collision of conflicting legal theories and constructs for land, but rather a struggle over the social relations of production and the property relations that serve as the foundation of economic arrangements.” As such, Correia argues that histories “of the legal entanglements must specify what was happening on the ground in these struggles or risk missing the actual events that produced dispossession.”<sup>38</sup>

Indeed, Correia’s analysis of the legal and social mechanisms that produce *ejido* dispossession and *genízaro* subalternity offers a useful rubric for naming the cohabitation of indigenous and feudal modes of power transmitted through New Mexican land grant formations. However, his call for “histories...[that] specify what was happening on the ground in these struggles” requires elaboration. Here is where the politics of writing constituting *El Grito* and *So Far From God* achieve particular relevance. That is, rather than approaching the gendered and racial modes of feudal violences that attend land grant formation and dispossession as questions

that can be addressed through a more rigorously empirical and historiographical method, *El Grito* and *So Far From God* demand that we direct our focus on subaltern modes of journalistic and literary writing that remain subjugated by dominant historiographical paradigms of recording the past that overvalue empiricism and the professional rituals of academic knowledge production. This means that we cannot approach these two scenes of subaltern mestiza writing in order to discern for a more “accurate” depiction of the violent legacies of land grant formation and dispossession. Rather, *El Grito* and *So Far From God* remind us of the volatile and powerful role that memory and writing play in contesting nationalist and bourgeois historiographies that sanction ignorance of Native and Mexican land loss under US national sovereignty. In this way, both texts point to the ways that Indo-Hispano’s seizure of genízaro memory, like the genízaro caste itself, remains a project differentiated by the epistemologies of race, gender, and territory. Under these conditions, the politics of memory embodied by both texts is less concerned with offering definitive records of New Mexico’s overlaid colonial pasts and presents. Rather, they together offer us a detour from the will to historical definitiveness and suggest an imperative to keep the past open as a site of perpetual interpretation, telling, and writing without the promise of closure.

### **“We don’t need machos”: *El Grito del Norte* and the Defeudalizing Historiography of Indo-Hispano Print Journalism**

Let us turn to the first issue of *El Grito del Norte* to detail the critical approaches to Indo-Hispano outlined above. The first page is remarkable for a number of reasons. The masthead contains an icon of Emiliano Zapata. The lead article, “El Nuevo Partido Nomina Tijerina” (“The New Party Nominates Tijerina”), is a bilingual announcement of the formation of the People’s Constitutional Party (P.C.P.) and its nomination of Tijerina as its Gubernatorial candidate of New Mexico. It is accompanied by a photograph of Tijerina towering over the camera with

raised fist. Below the fold is a note, “To Our Readers,” that explains the rationale for the paper’s emergence and purpose, which I mention above. All of these details point to the newspaper’s cohabitation of textual and iconographic modes of representation, and a refusal of state sanctioned English monolingualism. At the same time, the icon of Zapata and photograph of Tijerina in many ways permits the paper to codify an imagination of militancy through masculine icons and tropes. The accompanying article below the fold, “For Machos Only,” would appear to affirm this observation. But the text quickly dismantles this observation. Here is the article in its entirety.

Listen, man, you from Bernalillo or Chama or Taos or wherever you are. Listen, you think you’re so macho because you fight with your blood brother—because you get drunk—because you treat women like things. You think you’re so macho, but I tell you that you’re a jerk, because all those things are just what the Anglo enemy wants you to do. He wants you to fight with your own brothers so that you’ll be divided and not fight against him, he wants you to get blind drunk so that you won’t know what you’re doing and then he can do anything he wants with you, he wants you to beat up women so that they’ll hate you and hang you up. And you think you’re so macho! If you really were some kind of man, you would be fighting to pull up your people, you would be fighting for your people, you would be forming groups like the Brown Berets in Albuquerque or like the Comancheros in Rio Arriba. We don’t need machos. We need guys with fresh blood and fresh ideas who can go all the way in the struggle and by any means necessary. You don’t know how? That’s no excuse. Here is something to show you what other guys like you are doing.

## LOS COMANCHEROS

### A Declaration

#### The Purpose of Los Comancheros is:

TO SERVE: To serve the Indo-Hispano people (sometimes called Mexican-Americans or Spanish-Americans or La Raza) of New Mexico by telling them about their rights and protecting them by all means necessary.

TO OBSERVE: To keep a watchful eye on all federal, state, city and private agencies and prevent them from taking advantage of the Indo-Hispano people.

TO EDUCATE: To open the eyes of the Indo-Hispano people because they have been blinded to the truth of the Anglo people, by the politicians, by the law enforcement agencies, and by the educational system.

TO UNITE: To unite our people regardless of age, income, or political philosophy.

#### The meaning of the name, Los Comancheros

Los Comancheros is a youth organization which takes its name from the original Comancheros of the Southwest, who were the militant vanguard of the New Breed. The original Comancheros were of Indo-Hispanic blood, despised by both the pure Indians and the pure Spaniards. They were outcasts in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Spain and later the United States (Texas Rangers) tried to wipe them out; the Comancheros retaliated. Many of them were descendants of land holders, and they fought to get back the lands taken—just as the Alianza Federal de los Pueblos is today fighting to get back stolen lands. Thus the Comancheros represented a high point in the history of the New Breed—

the Indo-Hispano people of the Southwest. With the same militant spirit as that of the original Comancheros, the new Comancheros will move to help people where the law fails to protect them.

The Program of Los Comancheros

1. We demand an educational system which gives our people a thorough knowledge of the Spanish language and which teaches the true history of the Indo-Hispano people.
2. We demand that all police officers in Indo-Hispano communities live in the community and speak Spanish.
3. We demand a decent standard of living for the Indo-Hispano people, and especially the return of our lands with compensation for the loss of income during the many years when we were deprived of our lands.
4. We demand an end to the preferential hiring of out-of-town and out-of-state labor. Jobs must be given first to people in our communities, and only afterward to outsiders.
5. We affirm the right to keep and bear arms to defend our homes and communities against racist police, as guaranteed under the Second Amendment of the Constitution.<sup>39</sup>

As an article announcing the formation of “Los Comancheros,” a youth organization that draws its name from a band of subaltern mestiza/o traders under Spanish colonization, the headline “For Machos Only” assumes a sardonic mode of interpellation. The “machos” that seem so crucial to the coherency of Indo-Hispano and Chicanismo are at once called to attention and called into question. The call to “Listen, man, you from Bernalillo or Chama or Taos or wherever you are” is a call to identify and disidentify with masculinist modes of social movement agency. In this way, “For Machos Only” opens with the discovery between the violence of masculinity and state violence: the “machos” who beat and “treat women like things” are also doing what

“the Anglo enemy wants you to do.” Disidentifying with a patriarchal logic of Chicano cultural nationalism that labeled feminist insurgency as divisive to movement coherency, “For Machos Only” suggests that the replication of Anglo patriarchy at the heart of “machismo” is itself a state strategy of counterinsurgency. For these reasons, “We don’t need machos.”

Yet as a disidentificatory expression of masculine social movement practices, there is simultaneous investment in a form of masculine militancy. The call for “Los Comancheros” is also a call for “some kind of man,” “guys with fresh blood and ideas” who fight to “pull up” his “people.” In this way, “machismo” is characterized as a type of ignorance sanctioned by the violence of the US state. Whence the question, “You don’t know how?” It is worthwhile to observe that the corrective to machismo’s performed ignorance does not come in a call for family values. The antidote to machismo violence is not to become a better husband or father. The corrective, rather, is to disabuse masculinity of “machismo” ignorance with a collective mode of social movement power that draws from subjugated legacies of land grant mestizaje. This allows the militant strategy of “any means necessary” to be disarticulated from machismo and morph into a question of historical consciousness of land grant mestizaje. That is, “Los Comancheros is a youth organization which takes its name from the...original Comancheros [who] were of Indo-Hispanic blood, despised by both the pure Indians and the pure Spaniards. They were outcasts in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.” In tandem with its demands for education, employment, communal self-defense, Los Comancheros is a call for an alternative politics of memory, gender, and knowledge production that will “show you what other guys like you are doing.”

Just two years prior to the appearance of this article, Frances Leon Swadesh completes her dissertation that would eventually become the book, *Los Primeros Pobladores: Hispanic*

*Americans of the Ute Frontier*. In this study, Swadesh notes that Los Comancheros of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were the effect of a “decentralization of the settler population” through land grants on frontier territory that provided the colonial interior a buffer from Plains Indian raids and offered refuge for exiled Pueblo Indians, and “those detribalized Indian communities called *Genízaro*.” Swadesh argues that decentralization “was a stimulant to extralegal activity which greatly benefitted the settlers who practiced it,” activity which included “unauthorized trading expeditions” with the Ute, Comanche, Apache and multiple Pueblo tribes.<sup>40</sup> The content of the trade varied from horses and livestock to “dressed hides or captive women and children” and produced a climate where “relations of peace and trade alternated with periods of intensive raiding and counter-raiding.” In this context and under a Spanish colonial policy that encouraged inter-tribal warfare between Plains Indians, Los Comancheros were parties of traders and buffalo hunters who “traveled out on the buffalo plains to trade with Comanches and other nomadic tribes. After New Mexico was incorporated into the United States, Texas Rangers and vigilante groups sent raiders and lynching parties deep into New Mexico on the claim that the Comancheros were dealing in stolen cattle they had obtained from the Comanches.”<sup>41</sup>

Swadesh’s account points to the ways in which *genízaro* status was importantly differentiated by epistemologies of gender. While male *genízaros* were often enlisted as travelling mercenary forces for Spanish colonists, their marginal status also enabled a number of clandestine trading networks between *ejido* communities and Plains and Pueblo tribes. Those inscribed as female *genízaras* encountered a distinct set of patriarchal constraints under Spanish colonization. Picking up on Swadesh’s work, James Brooks notes that “*genízaras* also were perilously suspended between the exploitative designs of their masters and the legally mandated guardianship of the secular and religious representatives.”<sup>42</sup> I reference the historiographical

accounts of Swadesh and Brooks alongside “For Machos Only” not in order to verify the article’s memory of genízaro mestizaje, but rather to observe how La Alianza engendered a multiplicity of historiographic inquiries into the subjugated mestiza/o legacies of New Mexican land grant tenure and loss. In this regard, *El Grito del Norte* operates as a scene of subaltern historiography that sought to defeudalize masculine frames of racial representation under US sovereignty through a practice of textualizing memories of mestizo/a and tribal coalition and the mediating struggles over gender, race, and territory tied to land grant mestizaje and dispossession. Given these reasons, “For Machos Only” embodies an overall attempt to challenge the masculinist metaphors that regulated Indo-Hispano and Chicano militancy even as it remains bound to a progressive temporality and a biological account of race and culture, one that constitutes Los Comancheros as the “militant vanguard of the New Breed...of Indo-Hispanic blood... [who] represented a high point in the history of the New Breed—the Indo-Hispano people of the Southwest.” In this light, the uneven investment in vanguardist temporality alongside the “demand [for] an educational system which gives our people a thorough knowledge of the Spanish language and which teaches the true history of the Indo-Hispano people” reveals an epistemic tension that permeates much of the writing of *El Grito*. On one hand, the gendered, historiographic, and legal critiques emerging from “For Machos Only” reflect a potent challenge to the feudal modes of power preserved within liberal regimes of race, property, and knowledge production under US national sovereignty. In Blackwell’s terms, this reveals how “how the early Chicana print community worked in tandem with community-based struggles, serving both as a form of community pedagogy and as a Chicana feminist politics of knowledge production, debate, and distribution.”<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, the reliance on realist narrative forms and the call for historiographic practices that capture the “truth” of land grant

mestizaje evoke Grace Hong's observation that "Chicana feminism cannot be organized around a quest for a lost wholeness and authority if it is to undermine the epistemes of nationalism, either oppositional nationalism or state nationalism."<sup>44</sup>

**"Viva La Cooperativa!": *El Grito del Norte* and the Cooperative Mode of Power**

By analyzing the gendered logic of "For Machos Only," I have situated *El Grito* as a scene of Indo-Hispano's subaltern historiography that retains an ambivalent relation to the masculinist organization of La Alianza and the gendered and racial epistemes of state and oppositional nationalism that enact feudal modes of violence. In this section, I would like to extend this rumination by considering *El Grito*'s publicity of a number of New Mexican cooperative projects of healthcare and pastoral and agricultural production. These projects include *La Cooperativa Agrícola de Tierra Amarilla* and *La Clínica del Pueblo Río Arriba*. By working on roughly 600 acres of land grant land in Tierra Amarilla, Enseñada, and Placita Blanca, the members of the La Cooperativa engendered projects of collective farming of pinto beans, potatoes, and sweet peas alongside practices of sheep grazing. These cooperative projects of subsistent farming summoned not only the health clinic, La Clínica del Pueblo Río Arriba, but also impelled the creation of a law office, employment center, and shoe store.<sup>45</sup>

In order to detail the gendered and racial logic of *El Grito*'s cooperative mode of writing and subsistence, I want to turn to the writings of Enriqueta Vasquez, renowned *El Grito* columnist and contributor. Dionne Espinoza characterizes Vasquez' writings as challenging "the reinscription of women's subordination under the sign of a male-dominant family within cultural nationalism. She made the case for redefining *la familia* as a more inclusive and more egalitarian—albeit generally, heterosexual—formation available for *raza* mobilization."<sup>46</sup> While the challenge to and complicity with Chicano nationalist familial imaginaries is a general theme

in Vasquez' writing, I want to linger on the article "La Chicana: Let's Build a New Life" to illuminate these concerns in the context of the cooperative mode of power articulated through *El Grito*.<sup>47</sup>

Bueno, Comadres, here we go again on the woman thing. The other day I was listening to a group of young people talking about how the Southwest is a homeland for the Chicano wherever he may be. They were saying this is an area where the Chicano can identify with the land, and how the culture is rooted here, and how it would be good to have our families move onto the land and raise our children here in OUR homeland of Aztlan.

After listening to this talk for some time I sat back smiling and said, "there is only one group of Chicanos that I think would really be able to do what you are talking about."

And guess who that is, "The CHICANA."

Here we see Vasquez negotiating the familial trappings of Chicano nationalist articulations of *Aztlán*. Working with a masculinist narrative of Chicano history that positions Aztlán as the "homeland" for "Chicano" subjects, "wherever *he* may be," Vasquez repeats the Chicano nationalist and Indo-Hispano imperatives to tie "land" and "culture" together through the metaphor of the family. Yet rather than accepting the narrative that she happens to encounter from "a group of young people," Vasquez refuses the gendered division of radical agency that is constitutive of nationalist articulations of Aztlán: that "one group of Chicanos" who have the capacity to manifest Aztlán's alternative regime of land, culture, and memory is actually not the Chicano at all. It is "The CHICANA." Vasquez continues:

Having lived in housing projects in the city, I know many of the women there that were from small cities and farms and would love to go back to live in the country, Many of these women have anywhere from 2 to 6 children, live on AID to Dependent Children,

do not own homes, own very few belongings, have no jobs and truly have very little to tie them down to the city. Not only this, but in the city the problems of raising children are multiplied many times over and some of these Chicanos would welcome the chance to leave the city with their families.

Then what would they do? Well, let's say that a co-op of about six such families would buy about ten acres of land. In a summer they could do their home repairs and building. For the Chicana, building is no problem. I have talked to many Chicanos in the area and they still remember the times when it was the woman who did the building.

They did the home repairs and mudding of the walls, etc. Many of the old-timers say that the woman is every bit as capable as the man when it comes to building.

Addressing the ongoing gendered legacy of land grant dispossession under US private property that displaces Native and mestiza peoples into the feudal violence of wage labor, state welfare programs, and urban landless destitution, Vasquez asks, "what would they do?" Her rejoinder to the disaster of US private property accumulation pivots between an affirmation of a nationalist tradition of familial collectivity *and* a speculation about how the family can move outside the constraints of private property with a cooperative mode of power: "*let's say* that a co-op of about six such families would buy about ten acres of land." This speculative move for a cooperative articulation of the family also works as a seizure of memory deployed to upend the normative division of gendered labor under the sign of the Chicano nationalist family. That is, under the sign of the co-op, the "home" loses its ability to cohere a clear division of domestic labor and instead becomes a reference point for Chicanas and Chicanos to "remember the times when it was the woman who did the building."

This seizure of an alternative memory of mestiza labor releases a possibility for a cooperative mode of subsistent production that also opens onto a distinct politics of knowledge production: “Once these families get themselves built-in, they could begin to think about planning and growing crops to help feed themselves and learn from the land. And this is the beauty of the whole thing, in that they would be cultivating themselves and also be teaching the young ones how to relate to the earth.” It is difficult to distinguish the utopian impulse for a cooperative mode of familial life without the constraints of private property from a very familiar nationalist metaphor of women as the reproductive vessels for progeny and collective cultural values. She continues that “women could actually build a satisfying home life for themselves and their families. They could work and play together with the children and they could study together and learn about nature, crops, and life in general. There would be a deep spiritual relationship and bond there.” Perhaps the inability to clearly distinguish between the epistemes of the nationalist family and the epistemes of the cooperative mode of power is actually part of the critically fecund nature of Vasquez’ writing. It reflects less an investment in a singularly coherent and uniform strategy of mestiza feminist defeudalization of power and instead offers a prelude to what Chéla Sandoval would theorize decades later as “*La Consciencia de Mestiza*” that acts as a “*metaform* of consciousness that insists upon polymodal forms of poetics, ethics, identities, and politics not only for Chicanas/os but for any constituency resisting the old and new hierarchies of the coming millennium.”<sup>48</sup> In this regard, the non-aligned overlay of nationalist metaphors of family and the outlines of a cooperative mode of power acts as a strategy of critical mobility between discourses of reform and tradition and the discourses of revolution and radicalism that are still in the process of being coined. This is more apparent as Vasquez argues that not “only could the children grow all strong and beautiful, Raza, but the

woman could also lead full, fruitful lives. For example, I know of a woman who lives in the projects, who enjoys fixing cars. She can't do this in the city, but she does fool around fixing radios and electrical appliances. She really enjoys this kind of work. In a community such as this of which we speak, each woman could find the things that she really enjoys and they could all learn to do these things and do them as a contribution to the community. These women could teach and learn together, relate to each other and read and study together." Vasquez' vision of the cooperative mode of power resides in the tension between the Chicano nationalist imperative to frame women as the mothers and caregivers for the inhabitants of Aztlán and a vision of feminine coalition, labor, and knowledge production that is in excess of such demands. The latter cooperative vision of women who "could lead full, fruitful lives...and teach and learn together, relate to each other and read and study together...as a contribution to the community" is important to situate within a notion of collectivity that refuses determination through private property. This is not a nuclear family that seeks a private plot of alienable land that is legible, fungible, and enshrined through the "legal" violence of the US state. Rather, as Vasquez concludes, this "would be a community that would be giving itself to the people. It would be a community of children that belong to everyone, and the mothers would form the solid foundation of the strong spirit needed from which to draw strength for all Chicanos. This could be the rebirth of a truly tribal community and an example from which would come expansion and more communities like these."

Espinoza characterizes Vasquez' embrace of a "truly tribal community" as occurring when "movimiento discourses of *indigenismo* began to surface more explicitly as a model of communal life."<sup>49</sup> And given that Vasquez uses Aztlán as a prompt for her rumination on Chicana cooperative modes of power, the appropriation of Mexican mestizo nationalist discourse

in her writing cannot be denied. Yet by only characterizing Vasquez' vision of tribal cooperativity as an *indigenismo* of the past, we lose an ability to articulate the role of ejido land grants and *genízaro* mestizaje as a significant source of memory influencing Vasquez' vision of "tribal community." In this regard, the women who Vasquez cites as "forced to move from rural areas to the cities to make a living" must also be acknowledged as the possible descendants of captive *genízara* subjects who were forcibly resettled onto land grants and who inherited, in the words of Dunbar-Ortiz, "Pueblo communalism." Whence Vasquez' declaration that "We don't need a new way of life, we have a good way of life already. We know the land well. It is ours. We should be raising our children here, on the land. We should be teaching them to relate to the earth and to other humans. This is part of our culture." As such, the cooperative mode of power expressed in this "La Chicana" is neither purely communal, bourgeois, nor feudal. It is rather a mode of cooperativity that draws from memories of coalitional indigeneity of land grant territoriality and shuttles between the communal, feudal, and bourgeois in order to escape from the depredations of regimes of private property and its imposition through feudal modes of violence.

**"As her memory came back to her:" Land Grant Mestizaje and the Cooperative Mode of Power in *So Far from God***

Thus far, I have attempted to situate *El Grito del Norte* as a critical text of Indo-Hispano mestizaje that sought to defeudalize metaphors of the heterosexual family that regulate the epistemes of historiographical and racial representation differentially shared by Chicano, Mexican, and US state nationalism. As a project of textual defeudalization, I situated both *El Grito*'s writing and conditions of publication as generating a vision of what I term as a "cooperative mode of power" that shuttles between the gendered metaphors of feudal,

communal, and bourgeois regimes of power and draws from the subaltern legacies of genízara land grant tenure and loss. In this section, I situate Ana Castillo's novel, *So Far from God* (1993) as a text that offers a distinct rearticulation of land grant mestizaje that provides a contiguous articulation of the "cooperative mode of power" found in *El Grito*. In this way, I illuminate how both texts diverge from the patriarchal strictures of Chicano cultural nationalism without a complete abandonment of Chicana/o nationalist accounts of racialization.

Often cast as a canonical Chicana feminist text that subverts a number of Catholic, literary, and indigenous practices and imaginaries, the scholarly criticism of *So Far from God* reflects a preoccupation with its visions of Chicana/mestiza resistance to the overlay of patriarchy, nationalism, ecological devastation, and colonialism expressed in the relations between Sofi and her four daughters. With this focus, critics have noted the ways the novel celebrates Chicana mestizaje as means by which unequal and violent social hierarchies can be overcome and offers a "subjectivity that equalizes power between all groups."<sup>50</sup> Others have examined the role of magical realism in the novel's depiction of collective mestiza dissent.<sup>51</sup> Theresa Delgadillo analyzes the novel's vision of hybrid spirituality as a form of Chicana resistance to colonial and patriarchal domination, while Grace Hong investigates the novel's ironic rendering of racialized and gendered death as a parodic engagement with the memories of Chicana/o cultural nationalism and US state nationalism.<sup>52</sup>

Reflected in the critical attention paid to the novel is the simultaneous engagement with the politics of mestizaje and a general neglect on the localized racial, gendered, and territorial politics of New Mexico. That is, even as Chicana feminist readings of the novel critique the normative repertoire of racial terms and territorial significations of Chicano, Mexican, and US nationalism, we see a repetition of nationalist logics of territory and sovereignty in the way that

criticism of *So Far from God* historicizes mestizaje as an (often celebratory) appropriation of Mexican national discourse. As such, much of the criticism of *So Far from God* reflects the same overvaluation of Mexican mestizo national discourse that I identified in my second chapter as being one of the central modes of forgetting and containment of La Alianza's Indo-Hispano mestizaje.

With my analysis of *El Grito* as a prelude, what I hope to illuminate is the way that *So Far from God* at once draws from the subaltern legacies of genízaro mestizaje tied to the Tome land grant and refuses the familial metaphors of racial collectivity and masculine modes of social movement insurrection tied to Chicano nationalism and Indo-Hispano. At the same time, *So Far from God* employs a multitude of fantastic, magico-realist, absurdist, and parodic narrative techniques that at once elaborates and undermines the subaltern land grant historiography articulated in *El Grito*'s hybrid form of journalistic writing. One of the central ways that *So Far from God* continues with and diverges from the formal constraints of *El Grito* is through its narrative voice. In an analysis of the novel's use of absurdist narrative techniques, B.J. Manriquez argues that Castillo's use of parody reveals the

absurdity of the characters' lives through the narrative commentary of a *mitotera*....In Chicana culture, a *mitotera* will expose people's experiences in order to ridicule and shame, feigning a sympathetic attitude while belittling the person's action and personality in private to her *comadre* who in this case is the reader. With ironic evaluation of the characters' personalities and motives, the *mitotera* continues to remind readers of the paradox between appearances and "reality." Castillo's *mitotera* provokes reader alienation and disorientation by using ungrammatical double negatives and idiomatic expressions in Spanish, mimicking the language spoken in Tome while on other occasions, she uses the

vocabulary and diction of an acculturated Chicana. The assumed, ungrammatical, "accented" English, the inconsistency of diction, and the irritating double negatives configure a type of American caló that produces a condescending tone. The condescending attitude of the mitotera toward the misfortunes of the characters identifies an intrusive, unreliable narrator, and at the same time engenders in readers a dislike and distrust of the narrative voice, a distrust that naturally extends to distrust of the author, since many readers unconsciously ascribe the narrative voice to the author. This is especially true in *So Far From God* because Castillo often intrudes as both author and narrator...In absurdist fashion, Castillo's *mitotera* narrates the women's stories by combining burlesque and black humor in theatrical incidents.<sup>53</sup>

Castillo's use of a mitotera narrative voice plays with the customary voice of newsprint journalism found in *El Grito*. *So Far from God's* mitotera narrator in this regard acts as a vessel for the expression of community knowledge and land grant memory, yet diverges from the tie to realist and empiricist modes of subaltern historiographic narrative marking Indo-Hispano. Grounded in the territorial and linguistic locality of the Tome land grant, the mitotera is notoriously unreliable, traffics in gossip, and revels in scandal. At the same time, the use of la mitotera as narrator disrupts the gendered division of information, memory, and agency under nationalism's feudal mode of power. At once private and public, sympathetic and derisive, undependable and yet the primary source of knowledge, Castillo's use of mitotera narrative voice plays a central role in the novel's articulation of a cooperative mode of power.

It is with these thoughts on the novel's mitotera narrative voice that I now turn to the text. In particular, I will offer some thoughts on the collection of scenes that depict Sofi's decision to run for Mayor of Tome and her ideas for a local sheep-grazing co-op.

It was exactly two days after her fifty-third birthday, while Sofi was putting another load into the washer out in the enclosed back porch, shooing away the moscas and saying to herself things like, “If that Domingo doesn’t fix the screen door this week, *I’m* gonna have to do it myself; then I’ll throw his butt out for sure; what do I want him for then anyhow?” and things like that, just before the old wringer went out with a big shake and clank (not too surprising considering its age) and she said aloud, “God damn...!”, quickly pulling out her scapular from inside her white blouse and kissing it to heaven, that she was going to run for la mayor of Tome and make some changes around there....<sup>54</sup>

Notice the resonances with Enriqueta Vasquez’ “La Chicana: Let’s Build a New Life.” Here we encounter Sofi performing mundane “house work” under the banner of the ostensibly heterosexual organization of the home. Yet unlike the model of the heterosexual family that provides the basis for the cooperative mode of power expressed by Vasquez, we see Sofi lamenting the obsolescence of Domingo, her estranged husband and exclaiming that “I’m gonna have to do it myself; then I’ll throw his butt out for sure...” Sofi’s lament over Domingo’s absence and parasitical relation to the family sheds light on the absence of any competent male protagonism within the novel. The *mitotera* narrator interjects with commentary on the broken washer, which gives way to Sofi’s declaration that “she was going to run for la mayor of Tome and make some changes around here.” Invigorated by her newfound initiative that centers in the home and refuses the gendered division of protagonism and privacy cohered by the (cultural) nationalist family, Sofi relays the news to her unnamed comadre and fellow inhabitant of Tome.

“Here’s my idea,” Sofi said, sitting down, with a hand on her comadre’s arm, certain that her plan was going to excite her friend as much as it did her. “I have decided to run for mayor...!”

La comadre stared at Sofi, not comprehending. “Mayor?” She blinked.

Sofi nodded enthusiastically. “Yes, comadre, mayor of Tome!”

Now the comadre really didn’t get it. She especially didn’t get it because Tome never had no mayor. She didn’t know much about those kinds of government things (the one and only time she had gone out to vote in fact was for Kennedy in 1960), but could one just decide to become a mayor of an area? After all, Tome wasn’t even an incorporated village like Los Lunas or Belen. *That* much she knew!

Then why stop at mayor? Why not elect herself la juez de paz or la comandante of Tome as they had done in the old days? Why not be Queen of Tome for that matter! Who would care as long as she didn’t try to tell no one what to do...

...*You’re* the one who’s always...”

“Always what?” Sofi asked.

“Always had a lot of ...imagination,” the comadre answered timidly, looking back into her cup.

“Imagination? I don’t know what that means, but I can tell you this. I have been living in Tome all my life and I have only seen it get worse and worse off and it’s about time somebody goes out and tries to do something about it! And maybe I don’t know nothing about those kinds of things, but I’m sure willing to work for community improvement!...

“It’s not ‘imagination’ that I’ve always had, comadre, it’s *faith!* Faith has kept me going,” Sofi said, truly exasperated with the fact that la comadre had not taken to her idea as she had anticipated.<sup>55</sup>

Here the mitotera voice of the narrator collides with the mitotera voice of Sofi's "comadre." The grandiosity of Sofi's plan to run for la mayor of Tome is swiftly undermined and lampooned by her comadre/the narrator. Confronting the liminal and abandoned status of Tome, the narrator speaks for/as Sofi's comadre, asking "why stop at mayor? Why not elect herself la juez de paz or la comandante of Tome as they had done in the old days? Why not be Queen of Tome for that matter! Who would care as long as she didn't try to tell no one what to do..." Diverging from a vision of facile feminist coalition, la mitotera narrator simultaneously leaves Sofi "truly exasperated with the fact that la comadre had not taken to her idea as she had anticipated" and interjects sarcasm as a key condition of mestiza feminist debate and exchange tied to the novel's cooperative mode of power. Yet the narrator's use of sarcasm never acts as the sole affective mode of exchange, and la mitotera acknowledges earnestly, if timidly, that Sofi has always had "a lot of imagination." Sofi's response is an ambivalent embrace of the work of imagination. She at once doesn't "know what that means," but recognizes three interrelated and undeniable points of enunciation: she has "been living in Tome all her life," has "only seen it get worse and worse off" and is "sure willing to work for community improvement!" By asserting her indigenous position within her decimated homeland of Tome, she claims that it is not "imagination" but rather "faith" that has "kept her going" and reproaches her comadre as a "conformist... That's what my 'jita la Esperanza used to call people who just didn't give a damn about nothing! And that's why, she said, we all go on living so poor and forgotten!" Sofi's comadre retorts:

"Well, what ARE we supposed to do, comadre? All we have ever known is this life, living off our land, that just gets más smaller y smaller. You know that my familia once had three hundred acres to farm and now all I got left of my father's hard work—and

his father's and his father's is casi nada, just a measly ten acres now, nomás, comadre! Barely enough for my family to live on!"

"And I have even less," Sofi said, sad to remember that even the tiny bit she had inherited had been sold out of Domingo's recklessness.

"And now we have los gringos coming here and breeding peacocks..." la comadre complained. "Now, I ask you, what can you do with peacocks? Do these New Yorkers eat them, like in fancy restaurants or something?"

There was really only one person in the vicinity who was breeding peacocks, but the point for the comadre was that he did not have to earn his living from raising the birds, much less use them for food. He was an outsider and there were a lot of outsiders moving in, buying up land that had belonged to original families, who were being forced to give it up because they just couldn't live off of it no more, and the taxes were too high, and the children went off to Albuquerque or even farther away to work, or out of state to college, or out of the country with the Army, instead of staying home to work on the rancherías. The truth was that most people had not been able to live off their land for the better part of the last fifty years. Outsiders in the past had overused the land so that in some cases it was no good for raising crops or grazing livestock no more.<sup>56</sup>

In many ways, Sofi's dialogue with her comadre reflects a critical historical account, engendered by Indo-Hispano and articulated in *El Grito*, of the racialized and gendered legacies of land grant dispossession. There is a lament of the systematic dismantling of land grant modes of communal subsistence through the ascendance of private property that imposed a tax system and the commodification of land. There is consciousness of the de-indigenization of land grant communities through the racialized redistribution of ejido land to Anglo settlers and

corporations that works to displace land grant descendants “to Albuquerque or even farther away to work, or out of state to college, or out of the country with the Army instead of staying home to work on the rancherías.” And there is even the ironic recognition of the ascendance of a privileged class of Anglo landowners who, due to the patriarchal imposition of private property, can live out their fantasies of pastoral and farming life on dispossessed land.

At the same time, the dialogue between Sofi and her comadre also points to the overlaid modes of feudal power facilitating land grant dispossession. Sofi’s comadre laments that “my familia once had three hundred acres to farm and now all I got left of my father’s hard work—and his father’s and his father’s is *casi nada*, just a measly ten acres now, *nomás*, comadre! Barely enough for my family to live on!” Sofi claims that she has “even less,” sadly remembering “that even the tiny bit she had inherited had been sold out of Domingo’s recklessness.” To which her comadre rejoins, “now we have *los gringos* coming here and breeding peacocks.” Recalling, Corriea’s analysis of land grant dispossession, Sofi and her comadre come to the subtle discovery that land grant loss is both facilitated and compounded by the patriarchal regimes of territoriality *shared* by Spanish and US law. La comadre’s narration of “her familia” and the patriarchal mode of descent (“and his father’s and his father’s”) that should have prevented the gradual decimation of her land is shown to be ineffectual in preserving land grant communalism. Sofi’s reflection about Domingo’s “recklessness” only amplifies the feudal depredations to land grant communalism. As her land is already decimated by the logic of patriarchal inheritance shared by Spanish and US law, we find that the feudal constraints of marriage and family enable Domingo to exacerbate the process of dispossession. Because of this coalition of feudal regimes of property, “most people had not been able to live

off their land for the better part of the last fifty years. Outsiders in the past had overused the land so that in some cases it was no good for raising crops or grazing livestock no more.”

Facing the bankruptcy of the family as the preferred collectivity for countering the overlaid feudal modes of power, la comadre asks: “But what would you as mayor suggest for us to do?”

“Well, I hadn’t thought that far yet,” Sofi answered. “I was hoping that as my campaign manager and as a member of one of the original land grant families around here, you might help me with some ideas, comadre!”

Yes, the comadre was starting to like the thought of being able to engender some new spirit back into Tome, land of her ancestors. They were both sitting quietly lost in their imaginations about what they could or could do for their vecinos with Sofi as la mayor....<sup>57</sup>

Sofia said solemnly, “our ‘jita, Esperanza, always tried to tell me about how we needed to go out and fight for our rights. She always talked about things like working to change the ‘system.’ I never paid no attention to her then, always worried about the carnicería, the house, the girls...But now I see her point for the first time. I don’t really know how to explain myself right yet, but I see that the only way things are going to get better around here, is if *we*, all of us together, try to do something about it...”<sup>58</sup>

Unevenly analyzed in New Mexican land grant historiography, the Tome land grant was established as a village on July 30, 1739 after a collection of outcast genízaro families petitioned Juan Gonzales Bas, Albuquerque’s chief alcalde, to establish their own settlement.<sup>59</sup> Generally recognized as one of the first genízaro grants, Tome is more recently known for the long and divisive battle in the twentieth century between its heirs over its property status. While

the long and complex court battles that attended the adjudication of Tome's property status is outside of the purview of this chapter, much of the recent legal strife pivoted around attempts in the 1950s to verify heirship and familial descent in order to facilitate the conversion of the community grant into the Tome Land and Improvement corporation, which proposed the repositioning of heirs as shareholders.<sup>60</sup> Even as *So Far from God* is set in the locality of Tome there is practically no reference to Tome's genízaro past aside from Sofi and her comadre being members "of one of the original land grant families around here" and needing to "engender some new spirit back into Tome, land of her ancestors." I raise this point not to critique the novel for a lack of historical rigor or accuracy, but to connect the novel's politics of historical representation to its rejection of the family as the primary metaphor for articulating communalism. That is, given the novel's use of multiple narrative strategies that unsettle realist and empiricist modes of telling the past, I understand the novel's oblique reference to Tome's local history as a mode of defeudalizing the frames of reference by which we historicize the genízaro pasts and presents of land grants. As a subjugated mode of historical representation, Castillo's novel is in the words of Grace Hong, "not a project of representation or visibility but one that critiques and undermines such projects."<sup>61</sup> In this regard, Sofi and her comadre do not become preoccupied with seeking to remember how it really was in the past, but they draw from memories of land grant tenure in order to get "lost in their imaginations about what they could or could do for their vecinos." At the same time, Sofi conceits the relevance of legacies of Chicana/o activism and struggles for rights and representation studied and practiced by her missing daughter, Esperanza. In doing so, she sees the need to change the "system" and fight for community "rights" yet eschews articulating the urgency of her struggles through a canonized history of Chicana/o militancy. It is at this intersection of land grant memory, Chicana/o

radicalism, and imagination engendered through a dialogue with multiple narrative and affective registers that Sofi begins to coin a language for summoning the cooperative mode of power. “I don’t really know how to explain myself right yet,” she says “but I see that the only way things are going to get better around here, is if *we*, all of us together, try to do something about it...”

At this point, La mitotera narrator reasserts her voice in detailing the novel’s cooperative mode of power. Not unlike the travels of Elizabeth Martínez and Beverly Axelrod that formed *El Grito*, Sofi and her comadre, “started their campaign by going around for months talking to neighbors, to fellow parishoners, people at the schools, at the local Y, and other such places to get ideas and help.” Soon, “people began to respond to Sofi’s ‘campaign,’ which they did not see as a mayoral one so much as one to rescue Tome.” Sofi’s campaign for La Mayor of Tome at once appropriates liberal rituals of community empowerment and dispenses with the bourgeois individualism that underwrites modes of collective representation under liberal politics. By dwelling in this tension, the narrator relays news of “many community-based meetings in which debates as to what ideas would lend themselves best toward some form of economic self-sufficiency for their area before some people came up with a plan that eventually mobilized everyone into action.” La mitotera continues to relay that it “would take YEARS of diligence and determination beyond this telling to meet their goals but Sofi’s vecinos finally embarked on an ambitious project, which was to start a sheep-grazing wool-weaving enterprise, ‘Los Ganados y Lana Cooperative’ modeled after the one started by the group up north that had also saved its community from destitution.” Born out of the need to establish some form of “economic self-sufficiency,” “Los Ganados y Lana Cooperative” bears the traces of *La Cooperativa Agrícola de Tierra Amarilla* as a model for Tome’s cooperative project. Yet la mitotera is either unable or unwilling to name the “group up north.” In line with the unreliable

and partial narrative voice of La mitotera, Castillo's implicit reference to La Alianza's experiments in cooperative subsistence reflects a specific representational politics that at once relies on a memory of Indo-Hispano's legacy of struggle and insurrection yet abandons an empiricist and realist lexicon for seizing that memory in the present.

The Cooperative's seizure of Indo-Hispano memory is intimately tied to "changing everyone's minds about why not to do it but also changing their whole way of thinking so that they *could* do it." This transformation of historical consciousness is linked to the divestment of the US state in financing Tome's life chances, since "the government had no money to lend them...[and] unemployment had been at an all-time high in the first years of the enterprise...so they were on their own." Faced with state abandonment, inspired by memories of local land grant insurrection, and negotiated through "a debate of either everyone doing it all together or nobody doing anything at all," the cooperative mode of power offers a complex and distinct political economy of non-capitalist land tenure, localized subsistence, and knowledge production. In this way, the cooperative mode of power decenters money as the primary mode of exchange, as "neighbors who had inherited land from homesteading ancestors that was no longer farmed or used for nothing, mostly due to poverty, were persuaded to sell or barter it off for services in shares to those skilled neighbors who hadn't. By bartering, people were able to get their run-down farm equipment, homes, home appliances, cars, and trucks fixed." Extending upon this cooperative mode of bartering, "many began working in some way for the cooperative—by learning and aspect of the business of sheep grazing, wool scouring, weaving, administration, and selling the wool products." As a result "after the start of the sheep-grazing enterprise a core group of twelve women began the wool-weaving cooperative. Eventually, the business created and sustained the livelihoods of more than two dozen women. As cooperative

owners of their wool-weaving business they had paying jobs they could count on and were proud of and the mothers among them didn't worry so much about their babies and childcare because they could bring their 'jitos to work.' The reliance on shepherding and grazing engendered by Tome's cooperative mode of power rearticulates local modes of community subsistence into a network that refuses a normative gendered division of labor. The space between "work" and "home" is blurred and gives rise to a distinct politics of knowledge funded through cooperative means of exchange and production: "the wide range of skills they learned from running their own business, those who were interested could work for college credit and potentially earn an associate's degree in business or in fine arts. And no years of cleaning the houses of los ricos or serving tables in restaurants could ever get them that!" This uneven cohabitation of monetary and bartering economies exists alongside the possibility for a feminist politics of subsistence and knowledge production that also opens onto a project of environmental justice and critical food politics. "What the Ganados sheep-grazing part of the business also found out was that there was a growing demand for their hormone free meat...In this way, most people had inexpensive access to pesticide-free food, not to mention just having vegetables to can for their familias... In this way, too, the less fortunate neighbors and even the not so unfortunate neighbors, like el Mr. Charles Peacock who took over the management of the food co-op, could live on more substantial diets than what they had previously relied on from the overpriced and sprayed produce of the huge supermarket down at Los Lunas Shopping Center."<sup>62</sup>

The territorial politics of land grant mestizaje permeate the cooperative's innovations and refusals of the economic, political, gendered, and epistemological impositions of US private property. In a later passage describing the challenges of the cooperative, La mitotera explains

Sofia's dry and thirsty land by its very nature was a land of ingenious undertakings; and while its early Spanish transplants learned irrigation methods from the indigenous residents to sustain crops and graze animals, and how to make do with raw materials, talk with the sky, and honor mountains and streams, and despite all their relentless faith together, the sheer daily toil, the centuries going by, the world changing around them, it never got no easier.<sup>63</sup>

In an important move, this passage articulates the sexual and gendered legacies of *genízaro* *mestizaje* into the problematics of inalienable land tenure, hybrid spiritualities, and the politics of subsistence. In this way, the novel contributes to and draws from Indo-Hispano's politics of coalitional indigeneity grounded in land grant territoriality that absolutely cannot dispense with Pueblo communalism. In other words, this is a vision of *mestizaje* that does not pivot upon the disappearance of Native lives, spiritualities, and epistemologies. It is rather a vision of *mestizaje* that acknowledges the need for modes of indigenous knowledge and worship for survival even as "it never got no easier."

At the same time, the patriarchal feudal mode of power condensed in land grant territoriality and affirmed by US private property is depicted as the undeniable harbinger of disaster to the coalitional indigeneity remembered under the cooperative mode of power. Even as the "sheep-raising wool-weaving co-op was doing well for the unofficial village of Tome...and Sofia...experienced a brief period of economic balance for the first time in her adult life...this, unfortunately, did not last too long." We learn that, once again, Domingo loses the house and Sofi's land to gambling debts. Rendered again as a dispossessed subject due to the feudal imperatives of patriarchy, Sofi turns to the power of memory.

All of a sudden, like a palo hitting her over the head, she remembered—oh so clearly! “Like if it was only yesterday, comadre!” she said aloud.

As her memory came back to her, Sofi la Mayor now relayed the whole story to her comadre, doña Rita de Belen, one morning at the food co-op, how back in those early days Domingo was little by little betting away the land she had inherited from her father, and finally she couldn’t take no more and gave him his walking papers. Just like that, she said, “Go, hombre, before you leave us all out on the street!” Yes! It had been Sofia who had made Domingo leave.

Believe it or not, comadre.

But for twenty years, everyone (starting with Sofia herself) had forgotten that one little detail, calling her la “Pobre Sofi” y la “Abandonada,” and that was pretty bad because there was almost nothing more pitiful to her than to be called an abandoned woman.

And what brought her to send Domingo out of her life once again was the day she realized he had given up the deed to the house. He couldn’t give up the butcher shop (which he probably would have, given the chance) because she had sold it already in shares to the community and it no longer belonged just to Sofi.

But the house, that home of mud and straw and stucco and in some places brick—which had been her mother’s and father’s and her grandparents’, for that matter, and in which she and her sister had been born and raised—that house had belonged to *her*. The law, however, based on “community property,” stated that the house also belonged to her legal husband who remained, even after twenty years of being la Abandonada, Domingo.

One day, that very same woman, who, not just a few vecinos whispered should never have let that so-and-so and such-and-such come back to begin with, was notified by the bank that her home, along with one measly acre next to her property which she had not given up to the Tome collective so as to keep Loca's horses, was being transferred over to a certain Judge *Julano*.<sup>64</sup>

Notice the coalition of patriarchal colonial orders that facilitates the dispossession of Sofi's land grant holdings. Sofi's efforts to preserve and render collective "that home of mud and straw and stucco and in some places brick—which had been her mother's and father's and her grandparents', for that matter, and in which she and her sister had been born and raised" is dispensed of its cooperative mode of power. The agent of dispossession, "the law," based on "community property," stated that the house also "belonged to her legal husband who remained, even after twenty years of being la Abandonada, Domingo." The law here is figured as a fraudulent apparatus of feudal violence that preserves patriarchal modes ownership and representation by figuring the heterosexual family as the preferred metaphor for "community property." As a result, even after calling Judge Julano out on his hypocritical role as servant and parasite of the people, Sofi is forced to disengage with the cooperative mode of economic production and submit to the gendered constraints of private property. Because of this, in order to "continue to reside in her own home," Sofi "agreed to pay him a modest rent, something no one in that house had ever done before since her grandparents had built it with their own hands."<sup>65</sup>

This abysmal and petty network of thievery once dismantles Sofi's indigenous legacy of land tenure: "What do you think?" she asked her comadre. "No more land and to top it all off, I

am renting property built by my own abuelos!” Sofi’s comadre, la Rita de Belen, collaborates in lamenting the long and violent legacy of de-indigenizing the land grants.

“I know what you mean, comadre” empathized la Rita of Belen. “Me too. You know that my great-great-grandparents were the direct grantees of a land grant from King Felipe II, the very land *I* grew up on as a child. Except that what I grew up on was barely enough to plant a little corn, some Calabasas, chiles, nomás, and graze a few goats and sheep to keep us alive.

“First the gringos took most of our land away when they took over the territory from Mexico—right after Mexico had taken it from Spain and like my vis-abuelo used to say, ‘Ni no’ habiamo’ dado cuenta.’ it all happened so fast! Then, little by little, my familia had to give it up ‘cause they couldn’t afford it no more, losing business on their churros and cattle.

“Now all I have is my casita, too. Now that my kids are grown and had to leave the ranchería to find work elsewhere, I don’t worry so much. It’s just me and my husband, you know. And we manage on the little we get from our pension, I guess.”<sup>66</sup>

The historical memory of land grant tenure seized by Sofi and her comadre indirectly points to the enduring role of feudal modes of power in facilitating land grant loss. That is, the feudal origins of land grants as territories bestowed to her “familia” as “direct grantees of a land grant from King Felipe II” loses its ability to counter the land thievery of the “gringos” and “Mexico.” Instead, as Sofi realizes, it is the unit of the “familia” that has rendered her dispossessed. “This is why “Sofia didn’t want to remind her comadre that when it came to retirement time for herself, that she would die in her own home. And that really was the final straw for her.” This realization prompts Sofi to divorce Domingo and let go of the gendered roles of community and radicalism

cohered under the sign of the (cultural) nationalist family. “Sofi had devoted her life to being a good daughter, a good wife, and a good mother, or at least had given it all a hell of a good try, and now she asked herself—“¿Y pa’ qué? ¡Chingao!” She said this aloud and then crossed herself. Now there was no mother to honor, no father to respect, no ‘jitas to sacrifice for, no rancho to maintain, and no land left to work.”<sup>67</sup>

The relinquishment of the sign of the (cultural) nationalist family as either the framework for community empowerment or the vessel for strategies of land reclamation ostensibly appears as a lament over the totality of private property and familial collectivity. I read it instead as a stringent critique of the feudal modes of power that circulate within oppositional and state nationalisms that delimit imaginations of collective radicalism and indigenous land tenure along the axis of the heterosexual family. Yet, in line with the novel’s strategic appropriation of multiple narrative modes, this rejection is never absolute and its mobility through several registers of collectivity signals its cooperative dimension. In many ways, this prompts the simultaneous rejection of the family and embrace of cooperative motherhood expressed in the novel’s concluding section that centers around Sofi’s founding of M.O.M.A.S.: “Mothers of Martyrs and Saints.” As an organization that makes explicit the connection between gendered violence, regimes of private property, and ongoing practices of ecological destruction, M.O.M.A.S. finds controversy because of claims of reverse discrimination against men. Yet rather than making a liberal egalitarian move that would claim the organization is open to everyone, we learn that the organization’s “crucial criteria that the martyr or saint up for consideration would have to have transcended this life already, the form of ‘death’ itself sometimes being the all-telling proof of qualification.” By implicitly acknowledging that death is a condition differentiated by race and gender, M.O.M.A.S. signifies the cooperative power of

motherhood without the conditions of documentation or verification yielded by the heterosexual family. In other words, “If you applied as a mother and were accepted, your word of having given birth was honored.”<sup>68</sup>

As a provisional conclusion, I have argued that *El Grito del Norte* and *So Far from God* represent distinct and cognate articulations of what I have attempted to term as the “cooperative mode of power” tied to Indo-Hispano mestizaje. When interpreted through the register of Indo-Hispano, I have demonstrated the ways that these two distinct scenes of writing differentially draw from the subaltern legacies of genízaro land grant mestizaje in order to render a vision of cooperativity that’s in excess of the feudal constraints of familial collectivity tied to Chicano nationalism, La Alianza’s masculinist organizational structure, and Mexican and US national power. As a result, I have explored the way that both texts outline a theory of writing memories of land grant mestizaje into narratives that cast indigeneity into coalitional terms and refuse the gendered and racial constraints of private property. From this standpoint, this chapter’s title gains relevance for the productive ambiguity attached to the feminist labor of “building”: the labor of building movements is a cooperative labor that relies on estranging gendered divisions of labor from familial collectivity.

The last word comes from Alarcón.

“In this instance 'family' may be a misnaming in lieu of a search for a more apt name for communitarian solidarity.”<sup>69</sup>

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  2. Elizabeth (Betita) Martínez, “A View from New Mexico: Recollections of the Movimiento Left.” *Monthly Review* 54 (3) 2002. <http://monthlyreview.org/2002/07/01/a-view-from-new-mexico>.
  3. *Ibid.*
  4. “To Our Readers,” *El Grito del Norte* (Española, NM), August 24, 1968.
  5. “The Chicano Press Association,” *El Grito del Norte* (Española, NM), November 27, 1968.
  6. Lorena Oropeza and Dionne Espinoza, eds. *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement: Writings from El Grito del Norte* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2006), xxxiv.
  7. Alicia Schmidt Camacho, *Migrant Imaginaries: Latino Cultural Politics in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 156.
  8. “A View from New Mexico.”
  9. *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement*, xli.
  10. *Ibid.*, xliii.
  11. Ana Castillo, “‘Taking the Fifth With Daniel Libman’: An interview with Ana Castillo.” By Daniel Libman. *Fifth Wednesday Journal* no. 10 (Spring 2012).
  12. *Ibid.*
  13. Ana Castillo, *So Far from God* (New York: Plume, 1994) 26, 27.
  14. *Ibid.*, 211.
  15. *Ibid.*, 186 .
  16. *Ibid.*, 28.
  17. *Ibid.*, 186.
  18. *Ibid.*, 146.
  19. *Ibid.*, 147.
  20. *Ibid.*, 247.

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21. *Migrant Imaginaries*, 168.
  22. Wahneema Lubiano, "Black Nationalism and Commonsense: Policing Ourselves and Others" in *The House that Race Built*, ed. Wahneema Lubiano (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 246.
  23. *Ibid.*, 246.
  24. Norma Alarcón, "Chicana Feminism: In the Tracks of 'The' Native Woman." *Cultural Studies* 4 (3) (1990): 252.
  25. *Ibid.*, 254.
  26. *¡Chicana Power!*, 155.
  27. *Migrant Imaginaries*, 166.
  28. *Ibid.*, 157.
  29. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Political Economy of Women as Seen by a Literary Critic," in *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics*, ed. Elizabeth Weed (London: Routledge, 1989), 226. Italics provided by Spivak.
  30. *Ibid.*, 226-27.
  31. Grace Kyungwon Hong, "Fun with Death and Dismemberment: Irony, Farce, and the Limits of Nationalism in Oscar Zeta Acosta's *Revolt of the Cockroach People* and Ana Castillo's *So Far from God*," in *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*, eds. Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 247.
  32. *Ibid.*, 251.
  33. *¡Chicana Power!*, 137.
  34. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Roots of Resistance: A History of Land Tenure in New Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 171.
  35. Curtis Marez. "Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans: Indian Captivity and the History of Chicana/o Popular Performance." *American Quarterly* 53 (2) (2001), 269.
  36. David Correia, "Land Grant Speculation in New Mexico During the Territorial Period." *Natural Resources Journal* 48 (4) (2008), 928-29.
  37. "Signifying Spain," 291.

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38. "Land Grant Speculation in New Mexico During the Territorial Period," 930.
39. "For Machos Only," *El Grito del Norte* (Española, NM), August 24, 1968.
40. Frances Leon Swadesh, *Los Primeros Pobladores: Hispanic Americans of the Ute Frontier* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), 22, 23.
41. *Ibid.*, xvii.
42. James, F. Brooks, *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 135.
43. *¡Chicana Power!*, 149.
44. "Fun With Death and Dismemberment," 250.
45. Gregorita Aguilar, "First Anniversary of Co-op," *El Grito del Norte*, (Española, NM), April 13, 1970. John Curl, *For all the People: Uncovering Hidden History of Cooperation, Cooperative Movements, and Communalism in America*, 205.
46. *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement*, 211-12.
47. Enriqueta Vasquez, "La Chicana: Let's Build a New Life" *El Grito del Norte* (Española, NM), November 15, 1969. Subsequent citations of Vasquez in this section refer to this text.
48. Chéla Sandoval, "Mestizaje as Method: Feminists-of-Color Challenge the Canon" in *Living Chicana Theory*, ed. Carla Trujillo (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1998), 352.
49. *Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement*, 214.
50. Laura Gillman, and Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas, "Con un pie a cada lado/With a Foot in Each Place: Mestizaje as Transnational Feminisms in Ana Castillo's *So Far from God*," *Meridians* 2 (1) (2001), 172.
51. See Marta Caminero-Santangelo, "'The Pleas of the Desperate': Collective Agency versus Magical Realism in Ana Castillo's *So Far from God*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 24 (1) (Spring 2005), 81-103.
52. See Hong, "Fun With Death and Dismemberment," and Theresa Delgadillo, "Forms of Chicana Feminist Resistance: Hybrid Spiritualities in Ana Castillo's *So Far from God*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 44 (4) (1998), 888-916.
53. B.J Manríquez, "Ana Castillo's *So Far from God*: Imitations of the Absurd," *College Literature* 29 (2) (Spring 2002), 40.

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54. *So Far from God*, 130.

55. *Ibid.*, 138-39.

56. *Ibid.*, 136-141.

57. *Ibid.*

58. *Ibid.*, 142. The following passages from the novel are taken from pages 135-144.

59. This history is taken from the website of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish of Tome: <http://www.icchurchtome.org/History.html>.

60. The history of the ensuing legal battles over Tome's status is a long, tangled, and tragic story of legal violence, dispossession, and the entrenchment of feudal modes of power. For a schematic history of legal proceedings, see: [http://wetherillfamily.com/tome\\_new\\_mexico.html](http://wetherillfamily.com/tome_new_mexico.html).

61. "Fun with Death and Dismemberment," 250.

62. All quotes from this paragraph are from *So Far from God*, 146-47.

63. *So Far from God*, 214.

64. *Ibid.*, 214-15.

65. *Ibid.*, 216.

66. *Ibid.*, 217.

67. *Ibid.*, 218.

68. *Ibid.*, 247.

69. "Chicana Feminism in the Tracks of 'The' Native Woman," 253.

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