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Journal of Transnational American Studies

Title

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Journal

Journal of Transnational American Studies, 4(1)

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Publication Date

2012

DOI

10.5070/T841007101

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“¡Todos Somos Indios!” Revolutionary Imagination, Alternative Modernity, and Transnational Organizing in the Work of Silko, Tamez, and Anzaldúa

JONI ADAMSON

Once again hundreds of thousands of Mexicans took to the streets denouncing the government’s military actions and demanding a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Chiapas. It was during this series of demonstrations . . . that demonstrators coined the chants “¡Todos somos indios!” (We are all Indians!) and “¡Todos somos Marcos!” (We are all Marcos!).

—María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*

Leslie Marmon Silko’s celebrated novel *Ceremony* helped shape the expectations that readers bring to literary works by Native American authors. Like the protagonists of earlier groundbreaking Native American novels such as D’Arcy McNickle’s *The Surrounded* and N. Scott Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn*, the main protagonist, Tayo, must somehow resist oppressive practices both on and off the reservation and find his way back to home and healing. Silko’s highly anticipated second novel, however, challenged the expectations her earlier novel had helped to create. The novel focuses on an Army of Retribution and Justice marching from Mexico toward the US and its loose alliances with other groups of ecowarriors, Yaqui resistance fighters, homeless army veterans, and computer hackers. Popular press reviewers of

Almanac of the Dead admitted their disappointment at finding the novel so different from her previous work. They assailed the novel because it lacked the “authentic” focus on Native American storytelling and healing practices found in *Storyteller* and *Ceremony* and, instead, focused on the radical and—in their judgment—frightening idea of an army marching north toward the southern US border.¹

Despite early negative reviews, in the nearly twenty years since its publication, *Almanac* has garnered increasing respect among readers and scholars. As Shari Huhndorf recently wrote, the novel has “significant implications for the questions that define Native American studies and its relation to American studies.”² These implications begin with the clear connections between Silko’s fictional army and the real-world transnational indigenous peoples’ movement emerging in the Americas since the 1980s. This movement has raised questions and provoked debates about the reassertion and reproduction of colonialist racial discourses and polarizing biologically based concepts of indigenous authenticity that can characterize academic institutionalized forms of Native Studies.

My purpose in this essay will not be to critique academically based Native American Studies but, instead, to focus on the social, political, and environmental issues embedded in Silko’s representation of global indigenous organizing and to examine its broader focus and relevance beyond disciplinary orthodoxies. Many critics have specifically linked *Almanac* with the “Zapatistas,” an indigenous alliance working in Chiapas, Mexico, that burst out of the Lacandon rainforest on January 1, 1994, the day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect. Silko has acknowledged the influence of the Zapatistas, or Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), in her work and expressed her “profound gratitude” for the uprising she sees as part of the unfolding of an old story. The Maya Zapatistas, Silko observes, “know very well the story, the history that they are living as they rise up against the genocidal policies of the Mexican government, tool of the greedy profiteers who violate Mother Earth and poison her children.”³ By anticipating the Zapatista rebellion in *Almanac*, Silko employs the imaginative possibilities of literature, Huhndorf argues, to narrate a restorative future and envision the political implications of “tribal internationalism” for the future of the Americas.⁴

In what follows, then, I would like to set Silko’s international army into the context of María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo’s analysis of how the Zapatistas’ organizing activities since 1994 have reshaped the “revolutionary imagination of the Americas” and helped to construct an “alternative modernity” that disrupts the empty signifier of “authentic” Indian identity.⁵ I will juxtapose Silko’s novel with the work of emerging Lipan-Jumano Apache poet and scholar Margo Tamez whose work will be the central focus of my analysis. There are two reasons for this focus on Tamez. First, Tamez is currently co-leading, with her mother, an effort to retribalize and recenter Lipan-Jumano Apache anticolonial alliances across the Texas–New Mexico–Arizona–Mexico terrain of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. I will explore how her work as an actively engaged poet, scholar, and activist embodies the argument of

this essay that indigenous women writers are not only imagining a revolutionary future but building coalitional capacity among transnational indigenous groups. These include groups who self-identify as “native” even though they may not be formally recognized by a nation-state and nonnative groups whose interests in social justice and environmental protection overlap. I will argue that examination of Tamez’s poetry, scholarship, and real-world organizing shifts the analysis of global indigenous literature away from debates about biologically based concepts of indigenous authenticity and toward alternatives to identity politics that favor coalition politics.

Second, my focus on Tamez’s poetry will allow me to explore the rich possibilities for rereading/rethinking Gloria Anzaldúa’s most famous work, *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Both Anzaldúa and Tamez write about the experiences of persons of indigenous descent living in communities that fall outside the category of “nation” that are suffering from the impacts of border militarization and rising levels of toxicity connected to agribusiness and mining. I will examine how Anzaldúa’s metaphor for the border, “*herida abierta*” or “open wound,” and her own struggles with illness resonate with Tamez’s focus on toxins, sexual violence, community health, and resistance to state power and violence. These connections open new avenues not only for reading *against* Anzaldúa’s advocacy of biologized notions of *mestizaje* but also for interpreting her notion of a “new tribalism,” a concept that, I will argue, strongly supports the “alternative modernity” advocated by Silko and Tamez.

***Almanac of the Dead* and Multiethnic Transhemispheric Organizing**

Shari Huhndorf reads *Almanac of the Dead*, which centers on the US–Mexico border region, as an attempt “to negotiate a collective revolutionary identity based on histories shared by Native peoples across cultural and national boundaries.”⁶ Huhndorf focuses on how Silko’s fictional depiction of “tribal internationalism” reflects “the emergence of the transnational indigenous peoples’ movement in the 1980s” (359). This still-emerging movement, argues Ronald Niezen, created a “new global identity” and even the concept of “indigenous peoples” itself, as it facilitated “new strategies of resistance to the centralizing tendencies of nation-states.”⁷ Huhndorf argues that *Almanac*’s depiction of indigenous transnationalism intervenes in scholarly conversations in American and Native American Studies that cohere “around convictions that indigenous perspectives and Native politics . . . must shape Native studies.”⁸ Concepts of tribal sovereignty, or treaty paradigms, argues Huhndorf, “reinforce colonial national boundaries and, at the same time, they disregard the many indigenous communities that fall outside the category of ‘nation’—those without treaties, or those such as urban communities whose histories render restoration and political autonomy less relevant” (365). The pan-tribal alliances depicted in *Almanac*—in contrast—highlight the ways in which

indigenous cultural production “began to complicate nationalist tendencies of Native culture and politics and to foreground the shared colonial situation of global indigenous communities” (362–63). Huhndorf concludes that *Almanac*’s “tribal internationalism” illustrates that Silko was already revising nationalist cultural paradigms even before the questions that currently define Native American Studies began to be expanded.

Huhndorf refers to a “dramatic increase in the number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) associated with the United Nations” as evidence of the growing importance of transnational tribal organizing but does not go into detail about the specific forms this organizing has taken either in the Americas or in the novel itself (379n20). To more clearly understand how indigenous hemispheric organizing is reshaping the “revolutionary imagination in the Americas” and challenging native literary nationalism, it is illuminating to examine the political significance, goals, and outcomes of EZLN organizing and the literary significance of Silko’s fictional anticipation of the rebellion. As María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo has observed, the Zapatistas surprised the world as a guerilla uprising yet very quickly made it clear that their primary goal was not violence but having a voice in Mexican governance, “most immediately through electoral reform and democratic transition.”⁹ The group also took a stand on NAFTA that threatened “the triumph of neoliberalism and globalization . . . by demanding control over economic resources for indigenous people” (12).

In my own earlier work on the literary significance of *Almanac*, I argued that Zapatista demands for a voice in decision-making and protection of lands and natural resources from neoliberal abuses connected hemispheric indigenous organizing to the environmental justice movement. These links are clearly reflected in Silko’s novel. Indeed the founding documents of the environmental justice movement—a movement that encompasses indigenous, labor, and environmental groups—read like a summary of *Almanac*’s larger themes. Like the seventeen Principles of Environmental Justice, the novel affirms the interdependence of all species, asserts the right of people to be free from ecological destruction, and calls for universal protection from toxic wastes that threaten fundamental human rights to clean air, land, water, and food.¹⁰ I also examined how the communiqués written by the Zapatistas’ nonindigenous leader, Subcomandante Marcos, provided a rich context for understanding Silko’s indigenous leaders and their alliances with nonindigenous individuals and groups of ecowarriors and homeless army veterans.¹¹ Angelita, the Mayan leader of the Army of Resistance and Retribution, and Lecha and Zeta, Yaqui arms dealers and the designated “keepers of the almanac,” collect ancient fragments of the Mayan codices and study them together with modern political and ecological texts, like Marx’s *Das Kapital*, American farmers’ almanacs, and newspaper articles from around the world.¹² Together, these documents prepare Angelita, Lecha, and Zeta to understand the philosophical and cultural roots of colonialism and environmental degradation and to defend their peoples from the effects of state-

and corporate-sponsored violence. Their activities can be associated with the goals of the environmental justice movement because they put people at the center of their fight for the environment. They understand why people around the world are mobilizing to save threatened rainforests and disappearing species, but they defy common stereotypes about “authentic” Indians who are “closer to nature.” Any program to “save nature” must be based on “social justice—an end to murder, rape, discrimination, illegal appropriation of lands, and unethical exploitation of . . . natural resources.”¹³

Saldaña-Portillo’s reading of Subcomandante Marcos’s communiqués offers further insight into the reasons indigenous movements must reject biologically based notions of indigenous authenticity if they hope to gain a voice in local, national, and international decision-making. In early negotiations with the Mexican government, writes Saldaña-Portillo, the famously masked Zapatistas refused to call their movement “indigenous.” They “repeatedly expanded the scope of the negotiations to include the rest of the nation.”¹⁴ They were pointing not simply to the oppression of the indigenous or the poor; they were arguing that the problem in Mexico was a “lack of democracy” (230). By refusing to have their struggle reduced to an ethnicity, race, or set of economic indicators, the Zapatistas wrested an “alternative modernity” out of long-held, ubiquitous notions of “Indian difference,” mestizaje, and Mexico’s revolutionary past. In the process, the Zapatistas summoned not only indigenous peoples but all “citizens of the nation to the project of remaking it” (247).

To better understand the significance of this move to form pan-national alliances with nonindigenous others, Saldaña-Portillo’s discussion of Zapatista deployment of “Indian particularity” and rejection of notions of “authenticity” or “mestizaje” is worth quoting at length:

Mexican revolutionary elites . . . invok[ed] the native—the forsaken “folk” nation—as the legitimation for their revolution, and it is through the discourse of mestizaje that the folk became assessable as pure Indian difference, as what gives Mexican national identity its uniqueness. Once the revolution came to pass, however, a European paradigm of nation emerged from behind the mask of Indian difference, as the Spanish variable in the equation of mestizaje was ultimately more valued than its Indian counterpart. From behind the mask of Indian difference emerged the developmentalist paradigm of the revolutionary metizo, a mestizo who must supersede his glorious Indian past if he is to have access to the promises of modernity in his future. The mask of Indian difference functioned as the quintessential empty signifier within the discourse of revolutionary mestizo nationalism, for while it

politically galvanized national identity as the common origin among the population—temporarily providing a mythical fullness of community—it was itself devoid of all particularity. (253)

Seizing the mask of Indian difference, the Zapatistas attempted to fill its “empty” content with Indian specificity, a specificity that is “neither pre-Hispanic or postmodern but offers Mexican citizens an alternative modernity” (254), that calls attention to the fact that economic modernization and development, facilitated by global institutions such as NAFTA, would not be a problem for Indians alone but for the “workers, peasants, [and] the popular front” as well (233). The Zapatistas successfully made it evident that neoliberal reforms favoring large-scale corporations and agribusiness at the expense of small-scale farmers and businesses “had turned the entire country into Indians” (255). “Thus, when Mexican workers, peasants, and popular forces all over the country took to the streets in defense of the Zapatistas,” chanting, “¡Todos somos indios!” (233), they were recognizing that the struggle against neoliberal development must be energized by all citizens of the nation, not just the Zapatistas, and not just indigenous peoples.

Silko’s novel anticipates this kind of multi-issue, multiethnic alliance building. The alliances in *Almanac* are indigenous-led, but Angelita, Lecha, and Zeta invite people of all races to join them. In fact, Silko is at pains to expand definitions of “indigeneity” into a different kind of collective label. To be inducted into this “army,” men and women need only “to walk with the people and let go of all the greed and the selfishness in one’s heart.” The “reward would be peace and harmony with all living things. All they had to do was return to Mother Earth.”¹⁵ Lecha asks her Anglo-American assistant, Seese, to type and save the eclectic documents that comprise the almanac onto a computer so that they will be safe and increasingly useful to their growing transnational, multiethnic alliance. Thus Silko’s “army” offers insight into eighty years of dedicated work by both indigenous and nonindigenous groups from all around the world who wrote and organized the campaign for adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which calls for recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain, control, protect, and develop their cultural heritages, languages, knowledges, lands, and natural resources.¹⁶

References to “Mother Earth” also anticipate the recent World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, held in 2010 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Cochabamba delegates pointed not simply to the ways in which “economic models promoted and forced by industrialized countries” often put human rights at risk and place disproportionate environmental burdens on the indigenous or the poor, but also to the ways in which large-scale development and climate change is affecting all the “sons and daughters of Mother Earth.”¹⁷ The world’s people had demanded “fair treatment” at the Copenhagen climate talks but

the “states responsible for the climate crisis” were able to evade signing onto any binding agreement. Just as indigenous peoples had been systematically excluded from negotiations with colonial or neocolonial powers, the people of the world were also systematically excluded from representation at Copenhagen. Delegates called on nation-states to cease participating in “megaprojects” or agribusiness monocultural practices that “aggravate the degradation of jungles, forests and soils, contributing to the increase in global warming.” Here, delegates fill the “empty mask” of indigenous “traditional ecological knowledge” (TEK) with a specificity that is neither premodern nor postmodern but offers an “alternative modernity,” which calls on all the world’s people to turn away from an “irrational logic” that threatens all life on Earth.

Tracing the history of organizing that preceded the UNDRIP and the Cochabamba Declaration, historian Marc Becker describes how indigenous American peoples and nationalities of “Abya Yala,” or the “continent of life,” have moved from “resistance to power.”¹⁸ In the 1960s, these efforts began to gain momentum when the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (which grew out of a 1968 meeting of anthropologists in Stuttgart, Germany) met to condemn the abuses they were seeing in their field work in South America. Their goal, they emphasized, was to build capacity and “enable indigenous peoples themselves to put forward their case” (88). A May 1990 meeting in Peru was significant for illustrating how indigenous hemispheric organizing was energized by alliance building with environmental groups that rejected “debt-for-nature” swap schemes that excluded indigenous participation in favor of “debt-for-Indian stewardship swaps”; at the meeting, environmental groups and NGOs from the Americas and Europe signed the Iquitos Declaration, which represented a “dramatic step forward for both pan-indigenous organizing as well as building links with outside allies.”¹⁹ Seventeen years later, the indigenous-led Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala represented decades of struggle for self-determination, self-representation, and capacity building. This summit was significant, writes Becker, for “merging . . . issues that had previously divided indigenous organizations, including disagreements over whether to follow an ethnic ‘Indianist’ [identity-based] or a leftist ‘Popular’ [economic and environmental] line” (85). The merging of both Indianist and Popular concerns was evident, as indigenous peoples now seemed to be leading a movement to bring attention to the ways in which the neoliberal economic policies of nation-states and international lending agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank disregard collective rights to land, and work to change legislation to allow privatization, corporate alliances, and individual appropriation that often leads to social breakdown and environmental degradation (95). In the face of these policies, there was a growing recognition that neoliberalism would affect many working-class or economically disadvantaged and minoritized groups, not just the indigenous or poor.

Leading up to the Continental Summit, strong and coordinated indigenous participation in the World Social Forum, and its related regional meetings, the Americas Social Forum and the Border Social Forum, strengthened resolve to form alliances that would build capacity among groups committed to the struggle against neoliberal economic reforms and for environmental protection.²⁰ At the 2005 World Social Forum, for example, indigenous activists turned out in force for a “Puxirum of Indigenous Arts and Knowledge,” which ended with a declaration that “another world is possible, and we are part of that world.”²¹ Convened by social justice and environmental groups connected to the alter-globalization movement, the World Social Forum coordinates world campaigns, shares and refines organizing strategies, and informs other groups about movements from around the world and their issues.²² Organizers draw global media attention to the deleterious social and environmental effects of unregulated multinational corporate power, expanding international trade agreements, and deregulated financial markets. These broader meetings of civil society, Becker concludes, “facilitated the re-emergence of a strong continental indigenous movement.”²³

The conclusion of *Almanac of the Dead* clearly indicates Silko’s awareness of real-world organizing taking place during the decades before she published her novel, and she reflects these activities in the pages of her book. The Army of Retribution and Justice is marching from Mexico toward the US border and, at the same time, a transnational, multiethnic network of groups is meeting at a Holistic Healers Convention in Tucson, Arizona. Both the Army and the Convention indicate that Silko is not just calling attention to a growing “tribal internationalism” but also to the ways in which indigenous groups are working for an “alternative modernity” by entering into alliances with nonindigenous groups that facilitate equitable democratic participation of indigenous, working-class, minoritized, and economically disadvantaged peoples in regional, national, and global societies.

Margo Tamez, Native Border Writing, and Lipan Apache Women Defense

In *Border Fictions*, Claudia Sadowski-Smith defines “native border writing” as native-authored writing that explores indigenous perspectives on hemispheric borders and centers tribes located at the edges or on both sides of nation-states as paradigmatic figures for rethinking border studies and Native American Studies. As illustration, Sadowski-Smith analyzes *Almanac of the Dead*’s focus on transnational links between the Yaqui, other US tribes, and Mexican descendants of the Maya. She argues that Silko is moving beyond the identity-based discourses that still dominate the reception of contemporary US literature and Native American literature.²⁴ Instead *Almanac* allows for “participation from individuals and groups of other ethnic and national communities” (15) and shifts the “pan-tribal impetus of Native American civil rights struggles to the hemispheric level” (74).

Although Margo Tamez (Lipan-Jumano Apache) does not belong to a federally recognized indigenous group, her poetry and prose fit comfortably into the genre of native border writing.²⁵ Like Silko's *Almanac*, they call on critics to explore hemispheric and global frameworks for literary analysis that are open to paradigms that acknowledge the political resistance of indigenous communities whose identities do not fit neatly into racial categories defined by settler states. Tamez's two collections of poetry, *Naked Wanting* and *Raven Eye*, lyrically map the uprising of multiethnic indigenous and borderland women battling forces of racism, toxicity, and sexual and state violence. In 2006, the visibility of her poetry rose dramatically after the passage of the Secure Fence Act authorized the construction of 700 miles (1,100 kilometers) of double-reinforced steel and concrete wall along the US–Mexico border in South Texas.²⁶ Tamez's Ndé Lipan Apache mother, Eloisa Garcia Tamez, was served notice that her land, which straddles the border, would be condemned and appropriated for construction of the wall. What followed, writes Margo Tamez, has been “an intensely fought battle for self-determination and autonomy of indigenous women's societies and the renewal of a long historical pattern of Ndé women facing down an empire on the grounds of indigenous rights.”²⁷ Together, mother and daughter cofounded Lipan Apache Women Defense and brought suit against the US Department of Homeland Security, US Customs and Border Patrol, and the US Army.²⁸ Lipan Apache Women Defense has since grown into an international alliance of federally recognized and nonrecognized indigenous groups, university working groups, and human rights groups across the length of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona that literally embodies the “revolutionary imagination of the Americas.”²⁹

Like Silko, Tamez sees her poetry emerging from a still-unfolding story of centuries-long struggle for recognition, self-determination, and human rights for people whose aboriginal title to ancestral lands has never been recognized as legal by colonizing nation-states. Her Ndé Lipan-Jumano Apache parents began teaching their daughter about her cultural traditions when she was very young and never let her forget the stories of her family's continual struggle to retain their lands.³⁰ Tamez learned that her mother and foremothers (like Lecha and Zeta, Silko's fictional “keepers of the almanac”) had, for centuries, kept an extensive, and secret, family archive. Included was a collection of records documenting title to land, marriages, wills, testimonies, court documents, photographs, newspaper articles, and maps that spanned the years from 1546 to 1919. In 2005, with tensions rising dramatically in her family's borderland community over the possible construction of a border wall in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York, Tamez decided to make these records the subject of her doctoral study.³¹ She was urged by her mother to become the “keeper” of Lipan-Jumano Apache history and to research and make public the documents that had been hidden for generations by women who were continually fighting off efforts by Spain, Mexico, and later the US, to exterminate communities that were often referred to in newspaper accounts as the “enemy Apache.” Within these archives, Tamez found documentation that, in the late 1600s,

El Calaboz Ranchería, a small land grant in what was then the northern territories of New Spain, had been given by the Spanish Viceroy as payment for loyalty and protection from the French, and later the British, to the indigenous Tlaxcalteca and Nahua peoples whose lineal heirs intermarried into Ndé Apache clan systems along the Lower Rio Grande between 1821 and 1830. This explains how the Tamez family came to hold title to land in El Calaboz.

When the poems of *Naked Wanting* are set into the context of Tamez's groundbreaking research on her family's archive, the tribal interrelations of the "mixed" Ndé, Tlaxcalteca, and Nahua peoples and the ecologies of place begin filtering up through the palimpsest of history. The poems introduce Tamez's readers to the fields in El Calaboz where her grandfather taught her to care for the land and to pay attention to everything, from the growing plants down to the soil that nurtured them. He "taught me / to put a small clump of soil in my mouth, / and to swallow it. I watched him. / Then I did."³² This is also the place she learns to appreciate the delicacy of cicadas and see spiderwebs as "a hundred needle-thin tubes / of blown glass" (45).

But having title to the land, and keeping the land, is a continual, even dangerous, struggle. Tamez's grandfather inherited his small *ranchería*, which (today) straddles the international boundary line between Cameron County, Texas, and Tamaulipas, Mexico, from his Lipan Apache great-grandmother who taught him that the land had, for centuries, been "Tama ho' lipam," meaning the "place where the Lipan pray."³³ In the way he lived his life, he taught his granddaughter about her Lipan ancestors and how they farmed along the Rio Grande despite being continually subjected (along with other tribes in the region) to brutally anti-indigenous policies and practices from the late 1600s through the early twentieth century. In an interview with Lisa Alvarado, Tamez states that her poetry emerges from her pride that her family still survives: "I am proud that I came from rebellious indigenous people on both sides of my family, and that we are still on the International Boundary, fighting both nation-states . . . who . . . have used, abused, exploited and abandoned us as the indigenous people of this hyper-militarized part of the North American continent."³⁴

In a forthcoming publication, Tamez contextualizes the story of her mother, Eloisa Garcia Tamez, a major figure in *Naked Wanting* and the woman chosen to carry the matrilineal traditions of her family. Eloisa Garcia Tamez is of the "Ndé gowq goshjaa," or Lightning People, who married into the Tlaxcalteca and Nahua families living along the Rio Grande in the early 1800s.³⁵ The history of the Tamez family, then, is the story of the cross-border, cross-river alliances of indigenous peoples who were constantly living under the threat of dispossession by powerful nation-states or powerful natural forces like the winds of the hurricanes that have been a part of Apache life in the Lower Rio Grande Valley for hundreds of years.

These forces were at work in the 1930s when Eloisa Tamez's Ndé grandmother took her out into the raging winds of a hurricane and raised a butcher

knife to the sky, made the sign of the cross in the four directions upwards to the sky, and then in the direction of the darkest of clouds. She told her granddaughter to repeat the sign of the cross and pray. This ceremony would break the force of the wind and keep the family safe and this was the day that Eloisa Tamez became a “daughter of lightning.” Later, Eloisa Tamez, after training to be an RN in the 1960s, earning a doctorate degree focusing on diabetes and consent-focused, consultative, and participatory research methods in indigenous communities of South Texas in the 1980s, and serving honorably in the Army Nurse Corps, returned home to El Calaboz and took a job as Director of the Masters of Science in Nursing program at the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College. Here, she began practicing her own brand of homeland security: she began using her life savings to buy up several of her ancestors’ allotments, thus adding to the small holdings she had inherited. Margo Tamez writes that her mother was “re-fashioning her own reclamation ideology of Indigenous self-determination.”³⁶ Later, Margo, the third daughter of Eloisa, is the child her mother chooses to become the next “daughter of lightning” and to “give back to the Indigenous past, present, and future, . . . back to the songs, back to the suppressed rituals made invisible in Calaboz, an Indigenous village subjected to invisibility by nation after nation after nation of conquerors” (15). Tamez’s poetry and scholarship, then, work to restore the visibility of her Lipan Apache foremothers as they reclaim their positions “as key decision makers and as stewards” over the water, minerals, and agricultural lands of their people and create new forms of self-determination that link their efforts to the human, civil, and environmental rights being claimed by indigenous peoples around the world.³⁷

While early reviews (and the back cover) of *Naked Wanting* emphasize Tamez as a new “voice for nature” who shows readers that “the earth is an erotic current linking all beings,” the poetry itself clearly and powerfully shows Tamez to be a new voice for social and environmental justice for indigenous peoples struggling to keep their cultures alive and defend their land rights. In “My Mother Returns to Calaboz,” Tamez explores the effects of militarization on indigenous and mixed-race peoples living in the US–Mexico border region. After serving many years at the US VA hospital in San Antonio, Tamez’s mother returns home to Calaboz, which has become even more rigorously policed by agents of the US Border Patrol than it was when she was a girl. While jogging along the river on the US side of the Rio Grande, she is followed by “*la migra*,” a Spanish slang term for the agents who assume she is an “alien” trying to slip into the United States: “They think she runs away from them, / that she is an illegal, / trespassing from Mexico.”³⁸ She stops, turns around, and in loud Spanish (even though she speaks perfect English) challenges the validity and legality of the border. She asks them, “how exactly do [you] know / if [I] came from here, or there. / *I am an indigenous woman, / born in El Calaboz, you understand?*” (61). Here Margo Tamez illustrates how the militarization of the region creates a disorienting space where so-called “natives” clash with “illegal aliens.” Her mother’s proud statement challenges the categorization of the Lipan as “aliens,” while the Border

Patrol agents take the position of “natives.” Her words raise questions about what it means to be “native” or “indigenous” and thus interrogate the identity-based discourses that dominate legal and policy discourses focused on borders and migration and the academic reception of literature written by persons of indigenous descent.

Tamez is also well aware of the ways in which global caretaking institutions such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have contributed to the militarization and industrialization of the region and restrict movement not only for her mother but for displaced indigenous peoples throughout the hemisphere. As Timothy Dunn writes in *The Militarization of the U.S.–Mexico Border*, the militarization of the border seems, at first glance, counterintuitive to NAFTA, which promises to open the borders between the US and Mexico and to the free flow of capital. However, economic integration and border militarization are not necessarily mutually exclusive developments. Dunn notes a positive correlation during the 1980s and 1990s between an expansion of the multinational maquiladora factories, wealth extracted from Mexico, and the militarization of the border. Since women constitute the majority of the workers employed in multinational corporate factories on the border, the militarization of the border has the effect of both promoting industrialization and encouraging women to remain on the south side of the border, where wages are low (at least on a global scale), general labor rights are restricted, and they are subject to increased violence.³⁹ When Tamez’s mother loudly claims her indigeneity, she invokes the history of the Lipan in these lands and challenges the most evident manifestation of globalization—the militarized border. She is taking a stand against the ways in which the border negatively impacts the daily lives of indigenous women on both sides of the fence.

In “Witness of Birds,” Tamez juxtaposes her awareness of her own increasing privileges as an educated indigenous woman with her knowledge of how global economic forces draw displaced indigenous migrants north. In the poem, a rogue cowbird lands on the poet’s head, “messes” with her hair, and claws at her satchel of books. “Across the road, / undocumented Mexicans wait, hopeful, on a corner. / They are exposed dangerously, risk / family, hunger, assault / out in the open, / hawking their backs, hands, experience.” Seeing the spectacle, the workers laugh, pointing toward the flailing poet, “the one inside the pretty dress.”⁴⁰ Written during the period when Tamez was living in Phoenix, Arizona, this poem conveys a sense that the poet is aware that her books—her education—have afforded her a level of agency and activism still unavailable to the workers. She is aware that these men are risking their lives daily, seeking what many consider ordinary human rights—food, water, shelter, and dignity. In these urban spaces, they become part of large transnational indigenous communities that the poet sees standing on the “other side of the road.” Because this poem works to make the presence of displaced indigenous peoples visible, Tamez calls on readers and critics to analyze indigeneity and social justice issues from a more inclusive hemispheric perspective.

Naked Wanting also clearly foregrounds the worldwide contamination of water, air, and food that is leading to cancers, miscarriages, birth defects, and endocrine disruption of human health. In “Oasis,” a poem that begins with an epigraph from Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* that refers to the transformation of “beneficial rain” into “the evil power of the poison introduced into their world,” Tamez writes about one of the several miscarriages she has suffered: “We buried our miscarried child. / My stomach a bag, / sagging its dread / for want of something to carry” (69). She links these miscarriages to childhood exposure to the chemical DDT. In the sugarcane fields of El Calaboz, she remembers helping her grandfather irrigate his crops. She remembers pressing her feet into the soupy bog along the levee holding back the water of the Rio Grande. Her hands glide in the water, while the air is “heavy with heat and damp, / but smells like diesel and herbicides” (69). Years later, living with her husband on a farm in Phoenix, Arizona, she again smells the air, “heavy in herbicides,” and links her miscarriages to “mutations” and to “species, children, mothers / decimated everywhere.” She weighs “the wreckage” and concludes that it is time to “admit the peril” (69).

In her second collection, *Raven Eye*, Tamez reinforces, again, the significance of what critic Stacey Alaimo has called the “traffic in toxins” and outlines the reasons why it has now become impossible to imagine, to use Alaimo’s words, that we can protect “nature” by “merely creating separate, distinct areas in which ‘it’ is preserved.”⁴¹ In an epic poem titled “Addiction to the Dead,” Tamez links the murder and rape of “Lipan slaves Spanish peasants Jumano refugees” to the “invasive spray” seeping into bodies and flowing into bloodstreams “through decades.”⁴² Linking historically documented genocide in the Tamaulipas region to the growing evidence of toxins in the bodies of all living species on the planet, Tamez connects past to future. Her growing knowledge of the “traffic in toxins” leads her, in the 1990s, while she was writing both *Naked Wanting* and *Raven Eye*, to enter an alliance with Lori Thomas Riddle (Akimel O’odham), leader of Gila River Alliance for a Clean Environment (GRACE), which was fighting for the closure of a toxic waste incinerator on the Akimel O’odham Nation in central Arizona. Riddle suffers from diabetes and other endocrine-related illnesses she links to early exposure to toxins dumped illegally on her grandfather’s farm by a neighboring, nonindigenous farmer.⁴³ Drawn together by health conditions they both attributed to chemicals, Tamez and Riddle came to exemplify the most important contribution of the early environmental justice movement to the contemporary alter-globalization movement. Together, they created an innovative form of coalition politics that networked GRACE with other activist organizations around the world. In this way, GRACE was transforming the possibilities for fundamental social and environmental change on the Akimel O’odham Nation.⁴⁴ As Alaimo observes, the “traffic in toxins,” and activism around it, has revealed the points of interconnections among various movements and forged alliances among various groups working in “environmental health, occupational health, labor movements, environmental justice, environmentalism, ecological

medicine, disability rights, green living, anti-globalization, consumer rights, and child welfare.”⁴⁵

In their fight against the US government and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Lipan Apache Women Defense learned many lessons from Tamez’s coalitional work with Riddle. Tamez and her mother have dedicated themselves to working with regional, national, and transnational indigenous groups and nonindigenous others who are committed to anticolonial, antiviolence praxis. They have taken their struggle into the courts of the United States where they have called for recognition of their civil, constitutional, and statutory rights as Native American indigenous peoples. They base their claims on the historical documents and legal instruments found in the Tamez family archive. In the arena of the United Nations they have called for full recognition of their human rights as indigenous people protected by international law and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This is a “growth process,” Tamez observes, as “we criss-cross communities that work with us and for us toward the expressed needs, desires, and outcomes of *Ndé isdzáné* elder women and women decision makers.”⁴⁶ The goal, writes Tamez in a poem titled “Bringing Back the Birds,” which alludes to Rachel Carson’s lament for species disappearing into a toxic fog, is ultimately the creation of a “possible earth. / One that we love. / Where we are liable / for the damages / freighted on her.”⁴⁷ In pursuit of this goal—and conscious of the *Ndé* Lipan Apache’s relationship to sky, winds, and lightning, the Tamez women are also entering into pan-tribal and pan-global alliances working for climate justice. In the aftermath of Hurricane Dolly, which blew into the Lower Rio Grande Valley in July of 2008 and caused massive flooding and displacement of some of the poorest indigenous peoples in the hemisphere, Tamez and her mother signed “The Anchorage Declaration,” which was drawn up at the Indigenous Peoples’ Global Summit on Climate Change in April 2009.⁴⁸ Like the delegates to the World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, Tamez and her mother are illustrating how indigenous peoples are leading efforts to find solutions to global issues that affect everyone. Like the Zapatistas, they are claiming their indigeneity but from a distinctly “alternative modernity” that positions them as “radically other: as coterminously national citizen and Indian.”⁴⁹ They see their work as the “construction of indigenous-focused civic engagement models which actively interrogate the artifacts of modernity such as borders, boundaries, walls, and normative sovereignty that divide indigenous peoples along federally recognized and non-recognized lines to the detriment of indigenous communities.”⁵⁰ These new models of organization work from a more inclusive perspective that decenters divisive colonial paradigms.

Despite all their efforts to protect lands held by family members since the 1600s, on April 21, 2009, the US government, evoking the right to eminent domain, began construction of the border wall across Tamez property. Nevertheless, writes Tamez, by “the will of Indigenous Peoples and our global partners,” there is a growing confidence in the power of alliances to “strengthen, empower and . . .

reclaim the long-term spiritual, physical, and emotional bonds between humans and Mother Earth for the life of our future generations.”⁵¹

Rethinking/Rereading Gloria Anzaldúa and *Borderlands/La Frontera*

Analyzing the limitations for literary studies of theories that biologize identity formation, Claudia Sadowski-Smith observes that, since the publication in 1987 of Gloria Anzaldúa’s groundbreaking *Borderlands/La Frontera*, border literature has become associated with an almost clichéd notion of “mestiza” culture that comprises white, Mexican, and Indian elements. María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo also observes that biologized concepts of mestizaje often fail to recognize the racial ideology from which these tropes are borrowed. We must take seriously, Saldaña-Portillo writes, Zapatista critique of the ways concepts of mestizaje meld the mestizo and the Indian into a singular racial ideology that is always “recuperating the Indian as an ancestral past rather than recognizing contemporary Indians as coinhabitants not only of this continent abstractedly conceived but of the neighborhoods and streets of hundreds of U.S. cities and towns.”⁵² As noted by Sadowski-Smith, Saldaña-Portillo, and others, the problem with these kinds of mythical notions is that they erase the historical record of indigenous tribes who have been harassed, killed, converted to Catholicism, forced into slavery, dispossessed of their tribal lands, and forcibly inducted into European or Mexican systems of socialization. For many groups, the border itself has suppressed identity formation by impeding free passage back and forth in traditional homelands. In order to survive, members of these groups often faded into agricultural fields or mining camps where they became “undocumented” migrant labor, often exposed to racial profiling in border communities and toxic chemicals in agricultural fields or heavy metals in mines. It is here that the connections between the work of Margo Tamez and Gloria Anzaldúa become visible and where new avenues of interpretation for *Borderlands/La Frontera* are revealed.

From a hemispheric perspective, Tamez’s poetry and scholarship, like Silko’s *Almanac*, work to interrogate overly simplified notions of the “mestiza”—understood as a mixture between Native American and Mexican/Mexican American identities—and associated with a variety of minoritized peoples in the US. In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Anzaldúa appeals to elements of Chicanismo supposedly rooted in biological ties to Aztec and Mayan cultures. This mythos has been eloquently and exhaustively critiqued by feminist, poststructuralist, queer, and borderlands scholars, and I will not summarize those arguments here.⁵³ However, set within the context of Tamez’s poetry, Anzaldúa’s work might also be read as foregrounding detribalized identities that nevertheless can make affiliations or identify with the position of “native.” In an interview with Inés Hernández-Avila and Domino Perez in a special issue of *SAIL* foregrounding the indigenous intersections manifested in Chicana/o and Native American literatures, Anzaldúa herself addresses

both her claims to indigeneity and the criticism of the links she makes between contemporary Chicana/os and Aztecan myths. She states that she first came to recognize similarities between her own dark skin and demeanor when she looked into “the faces of the braceros that worked for [her] father. Los braceros were mostly indios from central Mexico who came to work the fields in south Texas.”⁵⁴ Even though her heritage made her “three-quarters Indian,” she had grown up in Texas, a state where “every Indian group including the Mexican indigenous” had been “decimated.” Having lost the specifics of her bloodlines and recognizing the complexity surrounding the subject of indigenous identity in the US academy, she “fear[ed] violating Indian cultural boundaries” and did not want to “contribute to the misappropriation of Native cultures.” Her heritage, she observed, could be traced to the Mexican indigenous peoples rather than to “indigenous people of norte ámerica” and so she did not claim an indigenous identity because she did not descend from “US tribes” (12). She faulted the Chicana/o civil rights movement “Raza for ignoring the underlying Indian aspect of mestizo identity” and was aware that claiming indigenous identity while “ignor[ing] what’s happening to indigenas in Mexico and in the US” was tantamount to ignoring colonization and imperialism (13).

In the 1980s, Anzaldúa’s definition of “Indian” or “indigenous” may have been bounded by US borders and by the nationalistic conversations taking place in the academy, but she did recognize that the struggles of specific indigenous cultures in the Lower Rio Grande Valley cohered around agriculture and labor. She understood that her family, descendants of displaced indigenous peoples, survived genocide and displacement by fading into the flow of “migrants” working for Anglo-American farmers and ranchers. She was aware, to use the words of Robert McKee Irwin, that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Mexican government was seeking to “destroy peculiar Indian institutions, especially the agrarian ones” and “to put down numerous indigenous revolts.”⁵⁵ This violence displaced many indigenous peoples from their formerly communally held lands throughout Tamaulipas, a region that would later become South Texas. In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Anzaldúa recognizes that, from the late 1800s through the early 1900s, many people of indigenous descent were harassed by “Gringos” who were “locked into the fiction of white superiority” and who “seized complete political power, stripping Indians and Mexicans of their land.”⁵⁶ After generations of this harassment, specific cultural information about the tribal groups of her region faded.

Like Tamez, when Anzaldúa is describing her own family’s experiences near Brownsville, Texas, she writes about her own labor in the agricultural fields beside other family members. She recalls that her father survived by sharecropping for one of the Anglo-owned agribusiness corporations that began buying up land in the valley in the 1930s. Because he died at the young age of thirty-nine, she was all too aware of the ways that some of the same developmentalist rhetoric that would later be used in support of NAFTA and the militarization of the border region in the 1990s was used to cheat Mexican Americans or those of Mexican descent of their land and how this

took a human toll. Years later, looking out over her brother's farm, Anzaldúa sees the human and environmental costs. She thinks about how all the indigenous species have been scraped off the land to make way for the corporate farms and writes, "These lands have survived possession and ill-use by five countries: Spain, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the U.S., the Confederacy, and the U.S. again. It has survived Anglo-Mexican blood feuds, lynchings, burnings, rapes, pillage" (90). Her brother tells her of the many farmers of the region who are going bankrupt because they cannot compete with the large corporate farms. She empathizes with these struggling farmers, especially when she remembers working in the fields as a young girl, and writes, "This land was Mexican once / was Indian always / and is. / And will be again" (91).

When we examine *Borderlands/La Frontera* in the context of Margo Tamez's research on the groups indigenous to Cameron and Presidio Counties in Texas and Tamaulipas in Mexico, some of the possible specifics of Anzaldúa's genealogy begin to emerge. The faces of the agricultural workers that Anzaldúa recognizes in herself are almost certainly the faces of the Tlaxcaltecas, Carrizos, Nahuas, Lipans, and Jumanos documented in Tamez's research. Both Anzaldúa and Tamez write about the human costs of diaspora and detribalization in terms of sexual and gender violence and literal contact with toxins. Tamez analyzes the toxic connections between communal and social breakdown and the ideologies that lead to the abuse of indigenous women who, because of economic need or loss of community connections, have been displaced. In taking up these controversial issues, both Anzaldúa and Tamez have had to confront accusations of "inauthenticity" similar to those that Leslie Marmon Silko and other mixed-ethnicity writers of indigenous descent have weathered when they write about subjects deemed by popular-press journalists and reviewers as "inauthentic."

Tamez takes the position that the term "Indian writer," even "ethnic writer," is too frequently associated with stereotypical images associated with ritual and ceremony, whereas contemporary indigenous and mixed-indigenous writers must necessarily raise questions about the troubling aspects of their histories, cultures, identities, and experiences. She has little patience for critics who dismiss her work as "not Indian enough" because she writes about racism, sexism, rape, miscarriage, and toxins. In an interview with Lisa Alvarado, she notes that she aims to move discussions of literature and history beyond notions of indigenous "authenticity" and toward more discussion of the indigenous groups who "are regrouping, reorganizing, retribalizing, and staging resistance to those forces (of dominant culture, of blocs and regimes) that want to border off only specific 'types' of 'authentic' 'natives' in service to colonialism and racism."⁵⁷

In a sense, Tamez's poems provide a "medicine" for the "*herida abierta*" or "open wound" that Anzaldúa so poignantly describes in *Borderlands/La Frontera* because they allow readers to see more clearly exactly what Anzaldúa was describing when she articulated this metaphor.⁵⁸ The concept of "medicine" is touched on in

Tamez's poems with a frequency that indicates thematic emphasis. In a fierce, unflinching poem titled "Take This Medicine" in *Raven Eye*, Tamez links the complicated issues of sexual violence in displaced communities to environmental toxins and human health. She sees this linkage metaphorically as the "poisoning of our medicine foods." In the poem, a Lipan-Jumano mother migrates north and finds work in an agricultural community where "Factory-farmed cows / Rot and antibiotics and growth hormones, / Seeping into the ground flowing underground northerly / Up through the aquifer's / Veins into the wells through everyone's bodies."⁵⁹ The speaker thinks she has found shelter and safety with a native man who practices traditional ceremonies, but she and her children end up the target of sexual violence while, at the same time, invisible toxins are finding their way into their bodies. Her son "Raven" is beaten by his father, while Raven's sister, "Corn Girl," is raped. The mother knows that to deliver her children from this violence and toxicity, she must "make a medicine." She must understand what it means when the corn/food/medicine is contaminated and women's bodies become "laced" with "DDT lynching / Toxaphene apartheid radiation blood violence" (22). Praying, "may the way / Be in peace / I ask you great motherbeauty hear me," she makes a stew of corn, beef, and blood, so that all who eat may find the "way to end this war end wars" (65). The poem concludes, "May justice quicken her pace" (66).

The mention of antibiotics and hormones in meat, DDT and toxaphene, and the prayer for justice remind readers that, when it comes to the threats to life and planet presented by toxins and toxic ideologies, "¡Todos somos indios!" Additionally, these poems open new avenues of interpretation into Anzaldúa's work if we link the contamination of the Lower Rio Grande by herbicides and pesticides from farming and heavy metals and arsenic from mining to the health of women and children. Anzaldúa, who grew up in the same region as Tamez and her mother, suffered her entire life from diabetes and other endocrine conditions that have been linked to hormonal disruptions associated with DDT and arsenic.

In the fifteen years after the publication of *Borderlands/La Frontera*, writes Suzanne Bost, Anzaldúa's illness, pain, blood tests, and insulin injections challenged her to imagine a coalition politics that was not exactly "post-identity" but that was "no longer invested in the boundaries of identity."⁶⁰ Anzaldúa began to see how identity politics often protects boundaries by not analyzing interiors. Just as diabetes changes the external and internal workings of a body, it also changes one's place in society, the nature of one's relationships, and the routes of one's movements. Diabetes, writes Bost, revealed to Anzaldúa "the myopic tendency to see identity only in terms of existing sociopolitical categories, especially race and sex," and the language of illness and wounds taught her "new ways of thinking about identity and new foundations for forming coalitions (like physical needs or shared environments) that are not race- or sex-specific" (340-41).

In her last essay, "now let us shift . . . the path of *conocimiento* . . . inner work, public acts," published in *This Bridge We Call Home*, Anzaldúa proposed what she

called “a new tribalism” as an alternative to identity politics.⁶¹ She begins the essay with a familiar image of the roots of an *árbol de la vida* but these roots are not metaphors for racial identity. This is a proposal to “rethink yourself in more global-spiritual terms instead of conventional categories of color, class, career,” which consistently, Bost argues, brings Anzaldúa’s politics “back to bodily matter” with the material language of “pores” and “cracks” that turn the reader’s attention “to the actual places where ‘worlds’ and ‘bodies’ meet and the actual occasions that break the tissues of our boundaries.”⁶² Thus this tribe, this tree, this metaphor, Bost argues, is rooted in the illnesses that allowed Anzaldúa to envision a politics that was “based on particular wounds and connections rather than universalizing identities” (353).

Neither Tamez nor Anzaldúa abandon race, sex, or class as material realities that determine day-to-day existence, but their experiences with illness and miscarriage and their exposure to toxins lead them to recognize, as Bost articulates it, that race, sex, and class are “not internally consistent, and are not always accurate markers of difference” (362). Thus the routes/roots between bodies and matter/toxins reveal the points of interconnections between various revolutionary movements and make new possibilities for alliance visible.

Another World Is Possible

Read together, the work of Silko, Tamez, and Anzaldúa disrupts the fiction of biological and indigenous “purity” and reveals how the forces of colonialism and globalization have worked to erase the identities of indigenous groups. Each of these writers uses the imaginative possibilities of poetry and fiction to suggest a coalition politics that is not exactly “post-identity” but that is “no longer invested in the boundaries of identity.” By filling the empty signifier of “Indian authenticity” with a specificity that pays attention to particular groups with diverse histories of organization and resistance, like the Maya, the Yaqui, the Lipan, and the Nahua, these writers shift academic debates surrounding nationalist cultural paradigms toward broader discussions of revolutionary consciousness that account for hemispheric and global perspectives. Also, by focusing on the “traffic in toxins,” these writers powerfully illustrate that “nature” or “Mother Earth” cannot be protected by walling off particular reserves or parks. Toxins and toxic ideologies do not need a passport to cross the border nor do they need documentation to pass freely into our bodies and social systems where they threaten the ability of all species to survive. To work for a restorative future, we will have to imagine new forms of “tribalism” or points of interconnection between various social, civil, environmental, health, labor, disability, consumer, and international movements. “Another world is possible,” but achieving this goal, Silko, Tamez, and Anzaldúa remind us, will require alliance-making and capacity-building to strengthen local, regional, and global abilities to meet the challenge.

Notes

This essay was originally presented at the 2007 International Symposium on Diaspora and Ethnic Studies held at National Sun Yat-sen University in Taiwan. I wish to thank Hsinya Huang for organizing this event, which proved to be a wonderfully creative and productive forum for these ideas. I would also like to thank Claudia Sadowski-Smith, Marta E. Sánchez, and two anonymous *JTAS* reviewers for excellent suggestions that sharpened the focus of the essay. Finally, I thank Margo Tamez for giving me free, prior, and informed consent for the use of her poetry and scholarship in this essay, and for carefully and thoughtfully correcting important details in the argument that revealed more clearly the relationship between her creative, scholarly, and organizational work.

¹ See, for example, Alan Ryan, “An Inept *Almanac of the Dead*,” review of *Almanac of the Dead*, by Leslie Marmon Silko, *USA Today*, January 21, 1992, 6.

² Shari M. Huhndorf, “Picture Revolution: Transnationalism, American Studies, and the Politics of Contemporary Native Culture,” *American Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2009): 362.

³ Leslie Marmon Silko, “An Expression of Profound Gratitude to the Maya Zapatistas, January 1, 1994,” in *Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit: Essays on Native American Life Today*, by Leslie Marmon Silko (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 153–54.

⁴ Huhndorf, “Picture Revolution,” 360.

⁵ María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 256.

⁶ Huhndorf, “Picture Revolution,” 360.

⁷ Ronald Niezen, *The Origins of Indigenism: Human Rights and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), xvi. The phrase “tribal internationalism” is Silko’s, while “indigenous transnationalism” is Huhndorf’s. Silko does not use the word “transnational” in *Almanac*.

⁸ Huhndorf, “Picture Revolution,” 364.

⁹ Saldaña-Portillo, *Revolutionary Imagination*, 198.

¹⁰ See “Principles of Environmental Justice,” principles 1 and 4, found on the Environmental Justice Resource Center website, Clark Atlanta University, <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/princej.html> (accessed September 16, 2009).

¹¹ For an in-depth discussion of Silko’s fictional army’s affinities with the Zapatistas, or EZLN, and Angelita, Lecha, and Zeta’s affinities with Rigoberta Menchú and Subcomandante Marcos, see Joni Adamson, *American Indian Literature, Environmental*

Justice, and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 131–36, 145.

¹² Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 570.

¹³ Adamson, *American Indian Literature*, 158.

¹⁴ Saldaña-Portillo, *Revolutionary Imagination*, 223.

¹⁵ Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*, 710.

¹⁶ The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on September 13, 2007. See the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” United Nations, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html> (accessed August 11, 2009).

¹⁷ All quotes are taken from the “Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth,” drafted at the World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, available online at Global Research, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=18931> (accessed September 17, 2010).

¹⁸ Marc Becker, “Third Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala: From Resistance to Power,” *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2008): 85.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 91. Other nonindigenous groups, including Cultural Survival of Harvard, Survival International in England, and the World Council of Churches, led letter-writing campaigns, organized protests, published reports, and facilitated encounters of native peoples and ethnic minorities with industrial society.

²⁰ In opposition to the World Economic Forum (WEF), which meets annually in Davos, Switzerland, and provides a platform for the world’s most powerful multinational corporations, the World Social Forum (WSF) promotes alternative answers to world economic problems.

²¹ Becker, “Third Continental Summit,” 96. “Puxirum” means “a joining of efforts for a common goal” (96).

²² The World Social Forum is “an open meeting place for . . . groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neoliberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building . . . fruitful relationships” between “Humankind . . . and the Earth.” See principle 1, World Social Forum Organizing Committee, “World Social Forum Charter of Principles,” World Social Forum, http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.php?id_menu=4&cd_language=2 (accessed February 28, 2010).

²³ Becker, "Third Continental Summit," 96.

²⁴ Claudia Sadowski-Smith, *Border Fictions: Globalization, Empire, and Writing at the Boundaries of the United States*, New World Studies (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), 76.

²⁵ In a personal email to me, dated October 18, 2010, Margo Tamez emphasized that the US Lipan are "a heavy-weight in terms of treaties, Crown land grants, and formalized agreements made directly between her lineal ancestors and Spain, Mexico, Texas. They are the lineal heirs to over a million acres spanning Texas-Mexico lands and have over 12 legal mechanisms with four European and Euro-American nations." See the Tamez family archive and Margo Tamez's dissertation, "Nádasí'né' nde' isdzáné begoz'aahi' shimaa shini' gokal gowa goshjaa ha'ána'idíí texas-nakaiyé godesdzog" [Returning Lipan Apache Women's Laws, Lands, and Power in El Calaboz Ranchería, Texas-Mexico Border] (PhD diss., Washington State University, 2010).

²⁶ Not all parts of the wall are as heavily reinforced as the section that runs through South Texas. See *Secure Fence Act of 2006*, Public Law 109-367, 109th Cong., 2d sess. (October 26, 2006), <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d109:HR06061:@@@L&summ2=m&TOM:/bss/d109query.html> (accessed February 16, 2010).

²⁷ Margo Tamez, "Restoring Lipan Apache Women's Laws, Lands, and Strength in El Calaboz Ranchería at the Texas-Mexico Border," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 35, no. 3 (2010): 559.

²⁸ For more information on the case *Dr. Eloisa García Tamez v. U.S. Secretary Michael Chertoff, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Border Patrol, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (US Federal Court), see Margo Tamez, Human Rights blog, <http://lipanapachewomendefensehumanrights.blogspot.com/> (accessed February 17, 2010); and Margo Tamez, "Space, Position and Imperialism in South Texas," *Chicana/Latina Studies* 7, no. 2 (2008): 112–21, <http://www.journal.malcs.net/files/users/downloading.php?id=235> (accessed April 27, 2012).

²⁹ In order to gain support for their work, Margo Tamez traveled to several hemispheric and world organizing events, including the 2006 Border Social Forum and the 2007 Global Indigenous Women's Forum held at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. She has also worked closely with other coalitional groups such as the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ) and the Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP), which bring together indigenous, environmental, and labor groups in support of immigration rights and environmental protection and to plan response to climate change.

³⁰ Eloisa Garcia Tamez (Lipan Apache and Spanish Land Grant, Calaboz, Texas) married Luis Carrasco Tamez, Jr. (Jumano Apache, Spanish, Redford, Texas). Both were born and raised in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

³¹ Tamez completed and successfully defended her dissertation, entitled “NÁDASI’NÉ’ NDÉ’ ISDZÁNÉ BEGOZ’AAHÍ’ SHIMAA SHINÍ’ GOKAL GOWAŶ GOSHJAA HA’ÁNÁ’IDŁÍ TEXAS-NAKAIYÉ GODESDZOG” [Returning Lipan Apache Women’s Laws, Lands, and Power in El Calaboz Ranchería, Texas-Mexico Border], at Washington State University in April 2010.

³² Margo Tamez, *Naked Wanting* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003), 62.

³³ Margo Tamez, “Where the Lipan Pray,” *Orion* 24, no. 4 (2005): 7.

³⁴ Lisa Alvarado, “Conspiring with Margo Tamez,” La Bloga, <http://labloga.blogspot.com/2007/04/conspiring-with-margo-tamez.html> (accessed May 5, 2007).

³⁵ The people are named after their dwellings. The highlighted phrase means, in the Ndé Apache language, “Peoples’ shelters/homes in a village.”

³⁶ This and the following quote are from an unpublished manuscript, cited with permission from the author: Margo Tamez, “Daughter of Lightning” (Word document, written 2004–2006, currently in revision), 17. For a published excerpt from this manuscript, see Margo Tamez, “The Daughter of Lightning,” *Yellow Medicine Review: A Journal of Indigenous Literature, Art and Thought* (Winter 2007).

³⁷ Tamez, “Restoring Lipan Apache Women’s Laws,” 560.

³⁸ Tamez, *Naked Wanting*, 61.

³⁹ Timothy J. Dunn, *The Militarization of the U.S.–Mexico Border, 1978–1992* (Austin, TX: CMAS Books, 1996), 159.

⁴⁰ Tamez, *Naked Wanting*, 29–30.

⁴¹ Stacy Alaimo, “Trans-Corporeal Feminisms and the Ethical Space of Nature,” in *Material Feminisms*, ed. Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 260.

⁴² Margo Tamez, *Raven Eye* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 11, 29.

⁴³ Personal conversation with Lori Riddle during a field trip to her grandfather’s farm on the Akimel O’odham Nation, near Casa Grande, Arizona, June 2003. Tamez joined GRACE during the time she was earning her MFA at Arizona State University.

⁴⁴ Working under the umbrella of Greenaction, a San Francisco-based environmental justice network, Riddle won her battle for closure of the incinerator in September of 2007. See “Victories! Communities & Greenaction Force Toxic Polluter Romic to Shut

Hazardous Waste Facilities on Gila River Indian Community and in East Palo Alto, CA,” Greenaction, <http://www.greenaction.org/indigenouslands/gilariver/index.shtml> (accessed October 7, 2008).

⁴⁵ Alaimo, “Trans-Corporeal Feminisms,” 260.

⁴⁶ Tamez, “Restoring Lipan Apache Women’s Laws,” 566.

⁴⁷ Tamez, *Naked Wanting*, 43.

⁴⁸ Indigenous Peoples’ Global Summit on Climate Change, “The Anchorage Declaration,” United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/smsn/ngo/168.pdf> (accessed April 27, 2012).

⁴⁹ Saldaña-Portillo, *Revolutionary Imagination*, 287.

⁵⁰ Margo Tamez, email message to author, October 18, 2010.

⁵¹ “Apaches’ Intervention at 8th Session, U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,” Lipan Apache Women Defense, <http://lipanapachecommunitydefense.blogspot.com/2009/05/apaches-intervention-at-8th-session-un.html> (accessed February 18, 2010).

⁵² Saldaña-Portillo, *Revolutionary Imagination*, 279.

⁵³ See *ibid.*, 278–90; and Sadowski-Smith, *Border Fictions*, 21–45.

⁵⁴ Inés Hernández-Avila and Domino Perez, “Speaking Across the Divide,” *SAIL: Studies in American Indian Literatures* 15, no. 3–4 (2003–2004): 8.

⁵⁵ Robert McKee Irwin, “Ramona and Postnationalist American Studies: On ‘Our America’ and the Mexican Borderlands,” *American Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2003): 550.

⁵⁶ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1987), 7.

⁵⁷ Alvarado, “Conspiring with Margo Tamez.”

⁵⁸ Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 3.

⁵⁹ Tamez, *Raven Eye*, 56.

⁶⁰ Suzanne Bost, “From Race/Sex/Etc. to Glucose, Feeding Tube, and Mourning: The Shifting Matter of Chicana Feminism,” in Alaimo and Hekman, *Material Feminisms*, 342.

⁶¹ Gloria Anzaldúa’s last essay, “now let us shift . . . the path of conocimiento . . . inner work, public acts,” was originally published in *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation*, ed. Gloria E. Anzaldúa and AnaLouise Keating (New York: Routledge, 2002), 540–78. All quotes from this essay are taken from Bost’s admirable chapter.

⁶² Bost, “From Race/Sex/Etc.,” 352–53.

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