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Norby, Patricia Marroquin

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The Red Sweater: Family, Intimacy, and Visual Self-Representations

Patricia Marroquin Norby

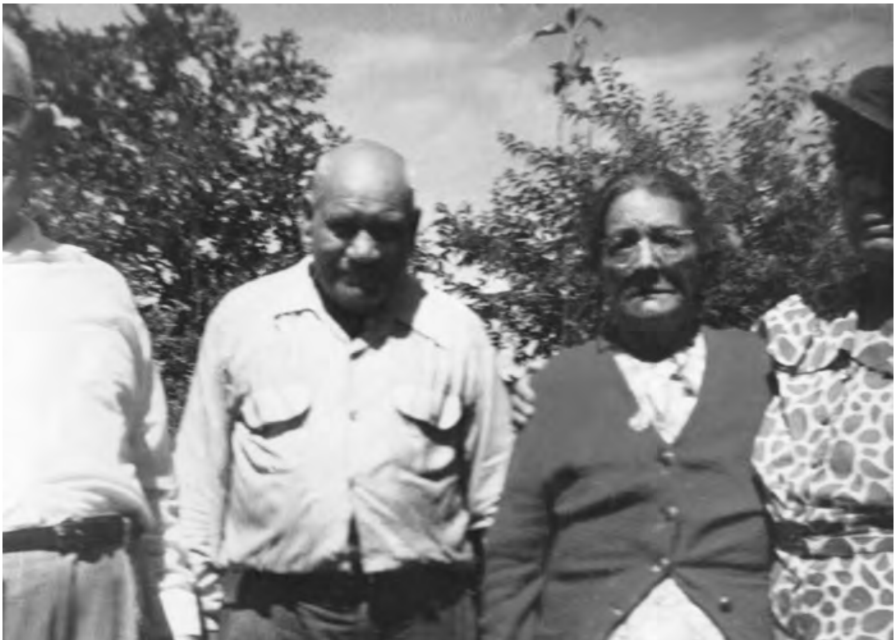

Figure 1. *Refugio and Jesus Maria Torres, Aurora, Illinois.*

Patricia Marroquin Norby (Purépecha/Chicana) is director of the D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies at the Newberry Library in Chicago, Illinois. An award-winning scholar of American Indian art and visual culture, she earned her PhD in American Studies from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and her MFA degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

In this image, the woman to the right of center is wearing a red sweater. She is Jesus Maria Torres, my great-grandmother, a Purépecha, or Tarascan Indian, born in the early 1900s in a pueblo community outside Patzcuaro, Mexico, in the state of Michoacán (fig. 1). Like many people of indigenous cultures, Jesus Maria was raised in a matrilocal community where women are central to family and community life. Purépecha women have always held prominent positions within their immediate and extended families. Within individual families, property is inherited and passed down from the eldest woman to the next eldest woman. In Purépecha creation stories, female deities and their images are associated with life renewal, restoration of balance, and agriculture.

Jesus Maria had little formal education. However, she did have a great deal of personal conviction. In the 1930s, she, along with her husband Refugio Torres and their infant son, participated in a large migration of Michoacán residents, which included a number of Purépecha Indians, to the United States. On foot and by train, Jesus Maria and her family traveled more than two thousand miles. After what was a very arduous and even dangerous journey, the couple set up home in Aurora, Illinois, where they had five more children. The Torreses' children all attended the local Catholic school where they were castigated by other Mexican-American and Latino children for being "too Indian." In Aurora, other Mexican migrant families easily recognized the particularities that set apart the Torres family, such as hairstyles, clothing, and language. The Torreses' third eldest daughter Petra, my grandmother, shared with me that she often sat alone on the school bus or at lunch because her "skirts were too long and her skin was too dark."[1] These important distinctions isolated my grandmother and the rest of her family socially and culturally from other Mexican immigrant families, the very people with whom they might have shared the most in terms of their geographical origins and national roots. Contrarily, white American Midwesterners either did not recognize or simply overlooked the family's Purépecha identity, which they tended to subsume into larger categories of "Spanish" or simply "Mexican." For the Torres family, living in a rural Midwestern community during the Depression Era, the pressures of daily life, work, childrearing, and social isolation eventually would all take their toll.

Also pictured in the photograph is my great-grandfather, Refujio Torres, whose background is much more obscure than my great-grandmother's. What we do know about him is that he was orphaned at a very young age. While still a small child in Michoacán, Mexico, Refugio lived and worked as a *criado*, or servant, for a family with the last name Torres, a name with which he eventually identified. As a child servant to an unrelated family, Refugio suffered physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. As an adult, my great-grandfather earned his living by working long hours at menial labor and odd jobs, mainly because of his illiteracy. My mother shared with me her childhood experiences of watching her grandfather carry refrigerators that were strapped to his back: my great-grandfather, a one-man moving company. Other family stories about Refugio speculate about an extremely large number of unsigned, uncashed checks found among his personal belongings after his death. The most common conjectures include hoarding, greediness, and also the suggestion that Refugio may not have known how to endorse his own paychecks, or was incapable of doing so. While living in the Midwest, over the years Refugio grew increasingly isolated and controlling. As his personal world became more insular, he grew increasingly abusive toward his wife. As he did so, Jesus Maria responded with her own strategy of self-preservation: she turned her back on assimilating into Midwestern American culture and adamantly asserted her Purépecha identity.

Steadfastly refusing to speak English, Jesus Maria would come to refer to it as "*lenguaje de los perros*," or the language of the dogs. Her children, and later her grandchildren, translated newspapers and books for her both in Purépecha and in Spanish. My great-grandmother also ignored the short bobbed hair fashions of the day and kept her daughters' and her own hair straight, long, and braided and regularly wore a woven *rebozo* around her shoulders. Jesus Maria also had an extensive garden where she grew fruits, vegetables, flowers, and medicinal plants. Cultivating foods and plants was not only a family endeavor that provided sustenance; over time this nurturing activity eventually took on strong personal and political meaning. Jesus Maria's small plot of earth came to represent what was a long and painful marital standoff. For years, as her marriage disintegrated, her garden flourished—even though her husband repeatedly denied Jesus Maria access to fresh water. Anyone who has experienced the traumatizing effects of the Great Depression, poverty, or drought, or has relatives who have had such experiences, can understand the lingering anxieties associated with scarcity of precious resources such as water, food, money, or shelter. Whether Refugio's hypervigilance about water was due to his own trauma—he had similar anxieties about electricity—or was simply an attempt to control his wife, no one in my family knows for certain. And so, in order to maintain her bountiful garden, Jesus Maria, together with her grandchildren, hauled water pails in secrecy while her husband was away working odd jobs during the day or at night. A practicing *curandera*, or healer, Jesus Maria's work with plant medicine was standard in her home, and she once healed my mother, her oldest granddaughter, when she was severely ill. My mother told me: "I had been sick for days with a fever and terrible body pain. I remember that I could barely move or speak. My mother took me to my grandmother and she began massaging animal fat all over my body. She then placed leaves and herbs on my chest and then bound me in a blanket. I stayed that way, like a cocoon for a long time. Soon I was better."[2] This story, and the visualization of my mother as a small child, bound cocoon-like in a warm blanket with animal fat and herbs pressed onto her body, was both a powerful and comforting image during my own childhood. Sharing personal and family histories, for many peoples, indigenous or not, offers warmth against often-cold realities, as well as reference points for understanding and negotiating the world at large, a world that consistently refuses indigenous perspectives.

The figure 1 photo above was taken sometime during the 1960s. The story behind the image goes like this: At a family reunion, when she was asked to stand next to her husband for the picture, my great-grandmother silently paused. She then walked over to her seat at a picnic table and placed a well-worn bright red sweater over her faded pale-colored housedress. It was then that she stood for the portrait, a portrait with my great-grandfather, a man with whom she had barely spoken for years due to their strained relationship. In this image, I understand Jesus Maria's intentional placement of the more richly colored garment upon her body as an act of conscious self-representation and an affirmation of her presence. The brightly colored layer of protection not only highlights Jesus Maria visually, calling attention to her individuality, but also balances the smallness of her body with that of her larger, taller husband. I interpret this gesture as a visual cue, an assertion of my great-grandmother's bodily and spiritual presence within the geography of the image: Jesus Maria's brightly colored armor against invisibility; her bold refusal to disappear.

Jesus Maria's red sweater and her unflinching stare into the camera do seem to visually overpower her physically larger husband. And it is also true that by the time this image was taken, my great-grandfather had also faced his own challenges while living in the Midwest.

One particular story involves a rather heated dispute that occurred between my great-grandfather and his next-door neighbor, whom I will call Mr. Wilson. Their argument was over a rather fruitful apple tree. Supposedly, this tree, rooted in Refugio's yard, had branches that hung over the designated property line and seasonally dropped apples onto Mr. Wilson's garage roof and driveway. The apples from this tree were used by my great-grandmother and other women in the family to bake pies, and by the children and grandchildren as weapons when playing war and dodgeball—or, in this case, dodge-apple.

Every year, after weeks of ripened apples falling and attracting buzzing bees, Mr. Wilson would angrily insist that Refugio clean up the fallen apples from his land. To this demand my great-grandfather said nothing. Perhaps it was fear, or the hostile way that he was approached, or stubborn pride, or perhaps my great-grandfather was just too fatigued to respond in a timely fashion to Mr. Wilson's orders. Whatever his reasons, Refugio went about his daily business, the apples fell, and Mr. Wilson's patience wore thin.

One year, Mr. Wilson approached my great-grandfather demanding that the apples be picked up or he would chop down the branches that extended onto his property. The standoff became so entrenched that Mr. Wilson finally called a land surveyor to their rural properties to precisely measure where he could begin cutting. After careful measuring the surveyor delivered rather interesting news: the disputed tree not only did *not* reach onto Mr. Wilson's land, but Mr. Wilson's garage also sat halfway on my great-grandfather's property. Perhaps the political scholar and social activist Audre Lorde was only mostly right when she stated, "With the master's tools, you will never dismantle the master's house,"[3] because, in this case at least, you may own half of his garage.

I love this second family story as well. Yes, it's a story about land, ownership, and property rights. It's also about personal dignity and restraint. This second family narrative conjures ideas of boundaries, borders, and limits—where they begin, where they end, and where they catch all those rotten apples. These are two family stories that represent very different strategies of active survival. If my great-grandmother's red sweater story is perhaps about boldly stepping up and standing out, then we might read my great-grandfather's apple tree story as being about quietly getting by. This quiet complicity with non-Indian desires simultaneously demanded my great-grandfather's, and so many other Indian peoples,' participation *and silence*, and has allowed the Mr. and Mrs. Wilsons of the world to assume a sense of their own superiority.

My great-grandmother's red sweater story is visual and we have the tangible evidence of a family photograph that demonstrates this. Although there remains no visual documentation of my great-grandfather's apple tree story, it is impossible to relate to his personal experience without engaging specific visual elements when reading or listening to his story. A mental picture is easily formed of my great-grandfather, Mr. Wilson, the apple tree, the garage, and perhaps a few apples on the ground. But what about the land surveyor or the property line; would they be included? Or how about the women baking pies and the children throwing the apples; where might they fit in? You can see how this visual selection process draws upon the story elements, while telling the story relies upon visualization. Interdependent, they benefit from one another and help us to better understand the particular types of struggles that two Purépecha Indians faced while living in the Midwest.

Today, many scholars of indigenous art and aesthetics employ a biographical, culturally specific approach that acknowledges indigenous perspectives and diverse experiences as moments for affirming presence, negotiating change, and articulating distinct cultural values. The effectiveness of this scholarship balances theoretical frameworks grounded in decolonial thought with the challenges in the daily lives of indigenous people. This approach affirms that theoretical power is rooted in personal experience and is present in indigenous aesthetic expressions. Indigenous art and visual culture have broadened methodological approaches of diverse academic fields and are now presented in conversation with theoretical frameworks that challenge dominant historical narratives. In the academic fields of art history, history, law, and literature, decolonialist discourses inclusive of indigenous art and aesthetics very naturally incite larger discussions of self-representation, sovereignty, and global indigeneity. In this way, complex analyses become accessible through individual accounts and creative acts that provide intellectual and communal sustenance. These intellectual exercises are exciting. They foreground endless possibilities for decolonizing practices that draw upon collective indigenous histories, family stories, and aesthetic expressions. These are relevant conversations that have a definite appeal and a valid purpose for contemporary indigenous communities, specifically ongoing exposure of institutionalized settler-colonial ideologies, which include imposition of non-indigenous aesthetic valuations, and exploitation of indigenous bodies for art labor.[4]

Doña Francisca's Oven

In 2002, I had the opportunity to visit Michoacán, Mexico, the home of *mis bisabuelos* (my great-grandparents). Outside the city of Patzcuaro, in the village of Erongaricuaro, I was a guest at the home of Doña Francisca, who invited me into her kitchen to share a meal, together with a mutual friend who acted as translator. Doña Francisca spoke only Purépecha and I some Spanish. As we entered her home and passed through her garden, I noticed that just outside her kitchen door were half a dozen shiny, brand-new stoves or oven ranges that were still in their original cardboard and plastic wrappings. Lined up in a row, the ovens were very obviously untouched and looked out of place in the doña's garden. For a moment, I thought perhaps that she had her own small business selling kitchen appliances. As we entered her tiny kitchen, a small free-standing adobe building which stood in the center of her garden, Doña Francisca began to prepare a meal of homemade tortillas and beans. I watched as she patted and flattened the soft white dough with her hands. She then placed each doughy tortilla on the smooth flat top of an adobe clay oven that burned hot with a wood fire inside (figs. 2 and 3). As she cooked, the doña and I chatted in a warm and friendly manner through our translator.

Eventually, I felt comfortable and curious enough to ask about the multiple oven ranges standing in her garden. For a moment there was an awkward silence. What followed seemed to be a concerned conversation between my host and our friend. Soon, my friend turned to me and said awkwardly: "Well, you see, they are gifts, from, well um, the gringos. You see, they feel very sorry for the doña." I paused for a moment. "They feel sorry for her?" I asked. "Why?" "Yes, at different times when the white people have visited her, they have felt sorry for her after seeing this kitchen." He gestured with his arms around the cozy adobe room. "So later they shipped to her a brand new oven. But you see the doña does not want those ovens—she wants *this oven*." He gestured to the adobe oven on which the doña was cooking tortillas. "You see, she built this oven all by herself." These comments were followed by another lengthy exchange between my two hosts. After a while I was told:

> In Doña Francisca's family the property, the house and the land, all belong to the oldest woman in the family. Right now all this belongs to Doña Francisca. This is *her home*. Her children, their spouses, and her grandchildren, all come to live *with her*. This is *her* kitchen.
>
> For her, it is an honor to cook for and nourish her entire family from this oven, which she built with her own hands. When Doña Francisca dies her entire kitchen will be destroyed. Her oven will be shattered. Smashing her oven must be done in order to release her spirit from this world and to make way for the next eldest woman to become the center of the family. The next eldest woman will then build her own kitchen and her own clay oven, a hand-built adobe oven that she will use to feed her entire family.

After listening the doña's oven story I sat between my two hosts, quietly stunned. I was moved by the beauty of the story, the personal significance of her clay oven, and also shocked by my own ignorance. After a while I looked at the doña and she looked back at me, smiling, still patting her tortillas.

Aesthetics and Decolonial Theory: Art by and of Indigenous Bodies

My great-grandparents and Doña Francisca did not have the privilege of immersing themselves in scholarly discourse on a daily basis, nor did they have access to academic circles and theoretical discussions about settler colonialism, decolonization, or sovereignty. In the face of domestic, racial, economic, and cultural violence, they were simply being themselves, Purépecha people, and therein lies the power of their actions.

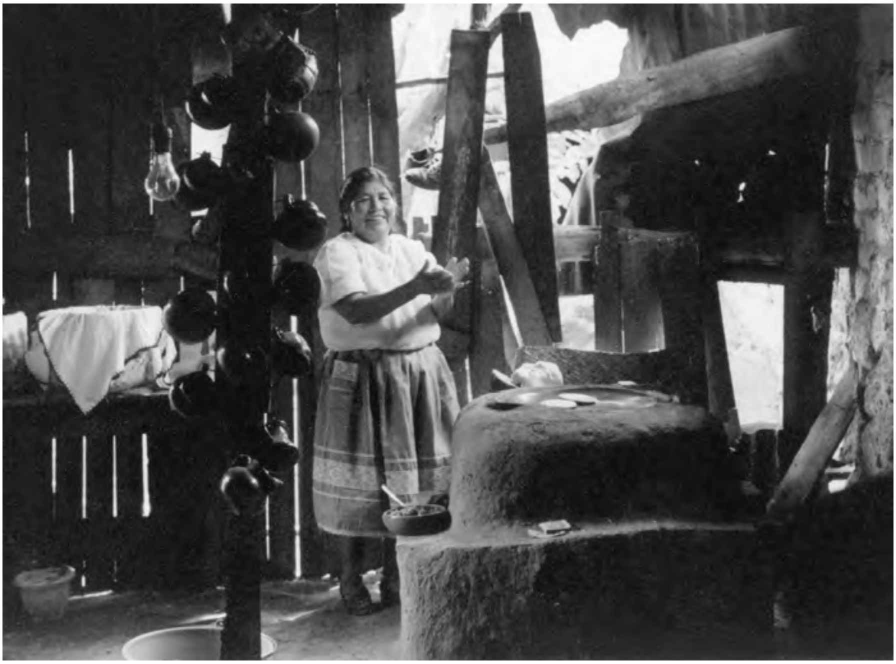

Figure 2. *Doña Francisca, Erongaricuaro, Mexico, 2001.*

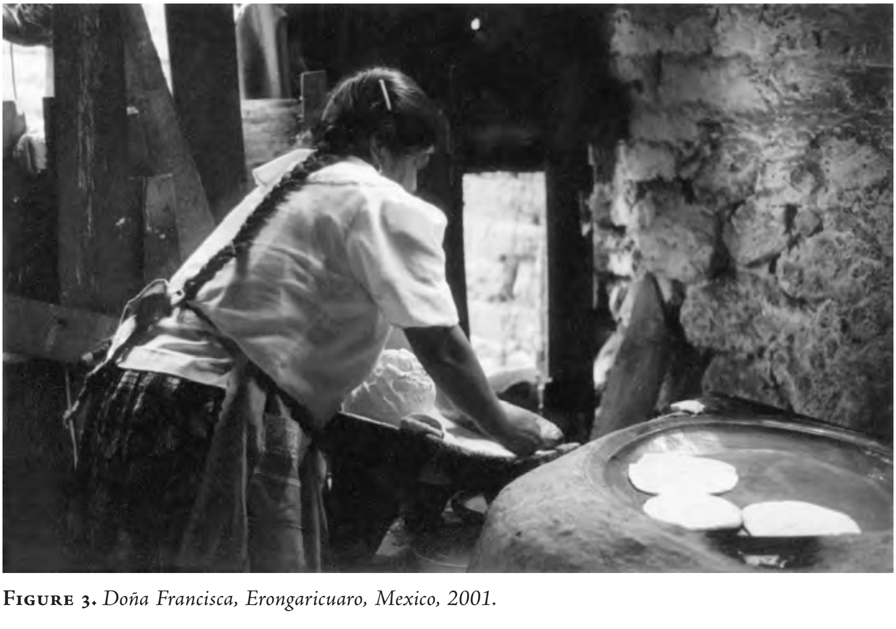

Figure 3. *Doña Francisca, Erongaricuaro, Mexico, 2001.*

Although Jesus Maria's red sweater, Refugio's apple tree, and Doña Francisca's adobe oven were not *intended* as artworks or aesthetic interventions, I prefer to think about them in that context because each was a resourceful creative act; a tangible moment that embodied both indigenous aesthetics and decolonial sensibilities.

Consider, for instance, that all three stories include very conscious aesthetic decisions, first about color (a red sweater), and then about space (a photo, a yard, a kitchen). My great-grandparents and Doña Francisca all engaged their materials (clothing, an apple tree, hand-shaped adobe clay). The cultural specificities, location, and time all add a level of richness to each particular situation. In addition, the use of their individual bodies—their backs, their shoulders, and their hands, body parts that are typically associated with labor—were used as their most immediate and most self-expressive mediums.

I realize that I risk romanticizing my own family stories. I am not suggesting that indigenous artistic and aesthetic expressions are a cure-all for all the economic, environmental, legal, and social struggles that indigenous communities face. During the early-twentieth century, art production as a panacea for resolving tensions between Indians and non-Indians was promoted by non-Indian art benefactors, who pressured indigenous communities, particularly those in the southwestern United States, to abandon subsistence agriculture in favor of integration into the capitalist economy. We are only now beginning to understand the physical, environmental, and legal ramifications of what was a major economic shift.[5] We must be mindful that making art is work. It can be backbreaking, exhausting labor. To produce art we use our minds, eyes, hands, arms, shoulders, backs, legs, and feet. Art is of the body. There is no way around this. Simultaneously, making art can also be physically and psychologically pleasurable: the feeling of damp soft clay in between your fingers, the rich oily smell of paints, the scratchy texture and thickness of fine paper, the visual energy of rich colors and light. Completing an individual art piece or project is one of the most rewarding experiences of the creative process. The critical thinking, problem solving, and technological challenges of the creative process are incredibly empowering.

Moreover, art materials themselves have their own complex narratives. Pencils, papers, paint, ceramics, beads, metal, wood, natural fibers, photo papers, video, and computers all tap into race, gender, economic, and social class privilege, as well as innumerable environmental and physical health issues. A single art piece can be a vignette into the lives of individual artists and their communities of origin. Individual artworks can visually and materially document economic shifts, political upheavals, environmental changes, and technological advances and failures. Art and aesthetics can provide some of the most powerful moments of human communication; to produce a tangible, a visual, material, sound, gesture, or cue of human connection when verbal language falls short, is not accessible, or is simply too dangerous to utter.[6]

For years before writing and lecturing about art, I made art full time, for a living. After twenty-five years in this profession, spent both in independent art studios and traditional academic institutions, I still strongly believe that artistic and aesthetic representations are vital to sustaining indigenous communities and the continuity of distinct cultural values, knowledge, and communal accountability. Creative acts can and do incite indigenous political, geographical, and cultural authority. In the deliberation of consciously chosen aesthetic elements, in both private and public realms, we can read strategic interventions and cultural epistemes. The cultivation of medicinal plants, the donning of a red sweater, and the building of an adobe oven are all intentional creative moments that open up more complex understandings about the long-term histories and contemporary experiences of indigenous people.[7]

COMING HOME: INDIGENOUS MEMORY, SPACE, AND PLACE

My great-grandmother's colorfully bold demarcation of her physical presence, a self-determined geography within the image environment, visually defines her personal boundaries within the picture plane.[8] Her decision to simultaneously highlight and cover up her body reminds us of what we are permitted to look and *not* look at, and to consider *how* we are looking, from whose perspective. Furthermore, Jesus Maria's placement of the red sweater over her body materially and visually invokes the Purépecha practice of wearing traditional *rebozos*, shawls, and wraps with distinctly woven colors and patterns that identify community affiliation. I want to believe that her ability and her choice to tap into her Purépecha roots gave my great-grandmother the assurance to endure what had been an arduous migration experience, the openness to experience the world on a global scale, and the strength to ground her own sense of place and self in what became, for her, a socially and culturally isolated life.[9] These cultural and personal particularities are regularly overlooked in dominant historical narratives, which routinely dispossess indigenous women of their individual identities and distinct roles within their communities. Likewise, Doña Francisca's oven story reminds us that matrilineal and matrilocal indigenous communities are not about possessing control or authority over men, but rather regenerating the spirits and bodies of our individual families and our larger communities in a powerful exercise of connection to cultural memory, family, place, and land.[10] My great-grandfather's apple tree demonstrates the common assumptions that are made about the intellectual and social inferiority of indigenous men and the innumerable legal challenges to indigenous people's property rights, both on and off tribal lands.

As a scholar of American Indian and indigenous studies, it is impossible for me not to think about the migration experiences of my great-grandparents in relation to the ongoing murders of thousands of women, children, and men in Mexican-US border towns—families and individuals who are also from indigenous communities. The recent detainment of thousands of migrant children from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador in US detention facilities; the mass kidnapping and disappearance of forty-three young male Mexican college students in the city of Iguala; and the 2015 "gender alert" declared by the Mexican federal government because of the rampant murder and disappearance of thousands Mexican women and girls, are all current atrocities that, in my opinion, have not received the attention they deserve from American Indian and other indigenous scholars, activists, and organizations from the United States and Canada. Chicana art scholar Laura Perez, however, recognizes such silences and attributes them to a fear of Latin indigenous communities and what she describes as our simultaneous desire either to detain them or make them disappear. Perez describes these migrant groups as "invisible labor." They are the unseen "ghostly bodies" that carry out the hands-on work behind the scenes in agricultural fields, and also as cheap laborers in factories, restaurants, and other service industries—where they become visible only when they are criminalized or dead.[11]

In my own journey to fully appreciate indigenous art and aesthetics as decolonial strategy, I have struggled with the legalized segregation of federally recognized indigenous communities versus those that are not. Some view this highly problematic binary as a "colonial trap" that devalues indigenous peoples of tenuous tribal affiliation in the United States and Canada, citizens and descendants of Latin American indigenous communities, and indigenous peoples who reside outside the boundaries of reservation communities (such as indigenous women who reside in urban communities).[12] At a time when indigenous bodies are so blatantly undervalued, unappreciated, and targeted by institutional, as well as random, violence—a violent epidemic that includes children, women, men, and queer indigenous peoples—refocusing on indigenous art and aesthetics that can be valued both as personal and as decolonial strategy is necessary.

On that trip to Mexico in 2001, I took hundreds of photographs. Making images was my way to personally connect with, and also to revel in, the home of my great-grandparents and the Purépecha community. For days before my trip I had been dreaming of going to the Yácata pyramids still standing above Lake Patzcuaro. I traveled alone by plane, bus, car, and on foot, with a backpack and an old 35mm Pentax K1000 whose leaky back let in light that created eerie shadows across the negatives. Many of those original negatives and photo prints were either lost or accidentally destroyed over the years in various moves from college campuses to temporary or permanent homes. One image that did survive was a self-portrait taken on the roof of a crumbling hotel in Patzcuaro (fig. 4). In it, I have carefully adorned myself in traditional Purépecha style: my hair is braided, I am wearing intricate hand-worked silver earrings, and a woven striped rebozo is draped around my shoulders. I still remember setting up the shot and checking all the specifics: light, distance, subject matter, focus. I had asked a hotel acquaintance, a woman I had become friendly with because we could both speak English and had traveled great distances alone, to act as a stand-in for me as I dealt with the technical details of the shot. At the very last second I stepped into the frame, stared directly into the lens, released the shutter, and visually answered my ancestors.

NOTES

1. Personal interview with author's grandmother.

2. Personal interview with author's mother.

3. Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press, 2007 [1984]), 110–14.

4. Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith, introduction to *Theorizing Native Studies*, ed. Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014) 8–39; Mishuana Goeman, "Disrupting a Settler-Colonial Grammar of Place: The Visual Memoir of Hulleah Tsinhnajinnie," in *Theorizing Native Studies*, 262–87.

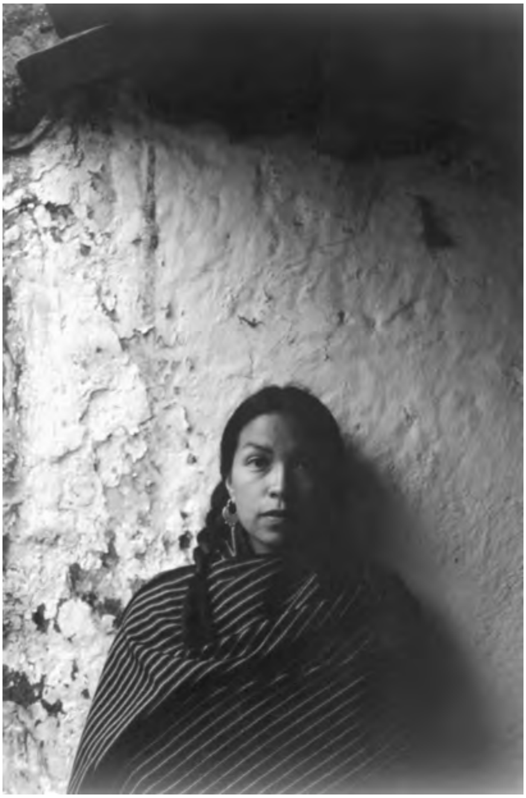

Figure 4. *Author self-portrait, Patzcuaro, Mexico, 2001.*

5. Patricia Marroquin Norby, "Visual Violence in the Land of Enchantment" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2013).

6. Theoretical analysis is just one approach of intellectual inquiry that has its own value and appeal. However, some argue it is an analytical method limited by language and location within scholarly institutions that are classified according to race, class, and privilege. See Ivo Mesquita, "A Latin American Perspective," in *Vision, Space, Desire: Global Perspectives and Cultural Hybridity* (Washington, DC: National Museum of the American Indian, 2006), 76–82; Kency Cornejo, "Indigeneity and Decolonial Seeing in Contemporary Art of Guatemala," *Fuse Magazine*, November 1, 2013: 36, http://fusemagazine.org/2013/11/36-4_cornejo; Amy Fung, "Indigenous Aesthetics & The Remaking of Art History," *Fuse Magazine*, September 30, 2012, 35, http://fusemagazine.org/2012/09/35-4_fung.

7. Julianna Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 1–15, 119–96. Barr's analysis of the "inseparability of gender and power" cites specific moments of bodily ornamentation, dress, and physical gestures as methods of intercultural communication regarding the political authority and social status of women throughout the eighteenth century. I interpret Barr's reading of such nonverbal cues, specifically bodily ornamentation and the affirmation of physical presence, within contemporary aesthetic contexts.

8. Roberto Tejada, "Expelled from the Center of the World: Translated Spaces in the Photographic Meaning of History" (symposium paper presented at Atlantic Worlds: Art and Globalization from Columbus to NAFTA (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, April 25, 2008).

9. Lucy Lippard, "Landing," in *Mixed Blessings: New Art in a Multicultural America* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1990), 105–50. As Lippard states, the significance of place is not only experienced in its presence, but also in its absence. Contrary to popularized perspectives, immigration is not always motivated by powerful desires for United States citizenship or even a want to belong to American society and culture. People immigrate for diverse personal, political, economic, or pleasurable reasons. Throughout her time in the midwestern United States, my great-grandmother repeatedly shared with her grandchildren her longing for Mexico and specific places, which she reminisced about using their Purépecha names. It is my belief that she intended to return home to her pueblo community outside Patzcuaro.

10. Jolene Rickard, "Cew Ete Haw I Tih: The Bird That Carries Language Back to Another," in *Partial Recall: Photographs of Native North Americans*, ed. Lucy Lippard (New York: The New Press, 1992), 105–11; Paul Chaat Smith, "Every Picture Tells a Story," in *Partial Recall*, 94–99. In these photo essays Rickard and Smith both demonstrate the resourcefulness of personal creative acts and the potential for images to incite complex family narratives and histories. Within my own family, the "red sweater" image is one that has been duplicated multiple times and shared among extended family members. Each discussion of the image uncovers forgotten details and opens up tangential family stories.

11. Laura Perez, *Chicana Art: The Politics of Spiritual and Aesthetic Alterities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 50–90. Since October 2013, over 52,000 unaccompanied migrant children from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador crossed into the United States. Even more migrants, who include over 60,000 "family units" of women and children, have been held in US detention centers and other facilities in California, Texas, Pennsylvania, and New Mexico. See Sonia Nazrio, *Enrique's Journey* (New York: Random House, 2014), and Wil S. Hylton, "The Shame of America's Family Detention Camps," *The New York Times Magazine*, February 4, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/08/magazine/the-shame-of-americas-family-detention-camps.html. The mass kidnapping and disappearance of forty-three young male Mexican college students in the city of Iguala has ignited investigations and international protests; see Francisco Goldman, "Mexico's Missing Forty-Three: One Year, Many Lies, and a Theory that Might Make Sense," *The New Yorker*, September 30, 2015, http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/mexicos-missing-forty-three-one-year-many-lies-and-a-theory-that-might-make-sense. In July 2015, a "gender alert" was declared by the Mexican federal government due to the extensive murder and disappearance of thousands of Mexican women and girls. See Nina Lakhani, "The Women Vanishing without a Trace," *BBC News Magazine*, September 14, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34172733.

12. Simpson and Smith, introduction to *Theorizing Native Studies*, 8–39.