

Oral Tradition, Activist Journalism and the Legacy of “Red Power”:

Indigenous Cosmopolitics in American Indian Poetry

by

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved April 2014 by the
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ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2014

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores how American Indian literature and the legacy of the Red Power movement are linked in the literary representations of what I call “Indigenous Cosmopolitics.” This occurs by way of oral tradition’s role in the movement’s Pan-Indigenous consciousness and rhetoric. By appealing to communal values and ideals such as solidarity and resistance, homeland, and land-based sovereignty, Red Power activist-writers of 1960s and 1970s mobilized oral tradition to challenge the US-Indigenous colonial relationship, speak for Native communities, and decolonize Native consciousness. The introductory chapter points to Pan-Indigenous practices that constructed a positive identity for the alienated and disempowered experience of Native Americans since Relocation. Chapter one examines the Red Power newspapers and newsletters *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*, *The Warpath*, and *Alcatraz Newsletter* among others. These periodicals served as venues for many Natives to publish their poems in collaborating with the politics of the Red Power movement. Among the poems considered is Miguel Hernandez’s “ALCATRAZ,” which supports the Native resistance and journey towards sovereignty during the Island’s occupation. Chapters two and three explore the use of oral tradition in the journalism of Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), who was then working within the collaborative contexts of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) and *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*, which represents the Indigenous cosmos and appeal to Indigenous peoples’ cosmopolitical alliance and resistance throughout the hemisphere and across the world. The final chapter turns to the work of two poets, Joy Harjo (Muskogee Creek), Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok), and a singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree), showing their appropriation of storytelling modes and topics from

within the inclusive functions of oral tradition – storyweaving, employing persona, and performing folk music. Harjo, Rose and Sainte-Marie push on the boundaries of the movement’s rhetoric as they promote solidarity between colonized women in and beyond the US. The Red Power movement’s cosmopolitics remains persistent and influential in Native nationalism, which stands as the master expression of the decolonizing process. The flexibility of oral tradition operates as a common ground for reciprocal, transformational, and inclusive interactions between tribal/national identity and Pan-Indigenous identity, developing Native nationhood’s interactions with the world.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

Indigenous Cosmopolitics: Seeking a Theoretical Model

The Red Power movement and its literature, particularly poetry, which I call “Red Power poetry,” developed Pan-Indigenous politics as an expanded nationalism, a cosmopolitics whose discourse built from relevant rhetorical expressions, oral-driven voices, and poetics. From and within Indigenous perspectives and via the primary guide of sociopolitical and sociopolitical aspects of the Red Power movement from the 1960s through the 1980s, this dissertation surveys the poetry and related essays and journalism of the Red Power movement and its aftermath in an attempt to bridge theories of nationalism, cosmopolitics, and oral tradition, focusing on so-called “Native American Renaissance” writers such as Simon Ortiz, Joy Harjo, and Wendy Rose, and one singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie, among other activist-writers.¹ “Red Power” was American Indians’ expression of their growing consciousness of Pan-Indigenous identity and politics, which they appropriated to affirm their cultural, political sovereignty based on their respective tribal heritages. That consciousness has been rooted within the collective memory of American Indians and expressed through oral tradition, a communal cultural, political tool that contributed to representing Pan-Indigenism as Indigenous-centered “cosmopolitics.” Combined and in collaboration with a written form, poetry, oral tradition helped American Indians to express their sovereign and national

¹ Kenneth Lincoln coined the term, “Native American Renaissance” to refer to new generational Native American writers, particularly those who were rising in the 1960s and the 1970s.

identity and solidarity as a whole within a broader sense of community, i.e., Pan-Indigenism.

Academic writing since about 1999 has tended to use the term “Indigenous People” with initial capitalization. Correspondingly, I use the terms, “Indigenous People” and “Indigenous Americans” as these reflect the sociopolitical aspects of “Pan-Indigenism” and of the Red Power movement. “Indigenous” broadly refers to “originating or occurring naturally in a particular place” (OED). Employing the umbrella term “Indigenous” might be problematic as it appears to “collectivize many distinct populations whose experiences under imperialism have been vastly different” (Smith *Decolonizing* 6). Yet the term, which emerged in the 1970s out of the decolonizing struggles of the Red Power activists, is a way of enabling “the collective voices of colonized people to be expressed strategically in the international arena” (ibid 7). “Indigenous” is also the term most “commonly used in international forums, such as the United Nations, to denote people who have existed and/or continue to exist under colonial rule” (Bruyneel ix). I argue that this definition reflects the Red Power movement’s strategic expansion of ethnic identity, which sought to develop regional and national “Indians” into the inclusive hemispheric and global political identity of “Indigenous People.”²

² Ethnic terminology in Native American studies is complex. Within the historiography of contact, terms such as “American Indians,” “Indigenous Americans,” “Amerindian,” “Indigenous Americans,” “Aboriginal Americans,” or just “Indians” appear among both native and non-native scholars. Broad terms such as “tribal people,” “native people” or “Indigenous people” are widely used among both native and non-native scholars and during the Red Power movement and in its literature. As this dissertation considers publications originating in the Red Power Movement in the United States, the terms “First Nation People” and “Aboriginal People” reference Indigenous groups in Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and thus appear limited to those specific uses.

“Red Power poetry” could begin with a 1988 definition that Red Power activist-writer Duane Niatum (Klallam) presents: “More than just poetry being written today, Native American poetry is the poetry of historic witness. It grows out of a past that is very much a present. . . . The Native American poet *is* his or her history, with all its ambiguities and complications. . . . The poet’s are still ‘singing for power’” (xvii). Niatum’s broad reference to “historic witness” can be narrowed to the specific time period of the Red Power movement: Native American poetry in the context of that time shows a sense of historical witness relative to shared memory and stories among American Indians in the past and the present. Niatum’s concept of history contrasts with a written, colonial history and draws from collective memory in an Indigenous practice of moving from metaphor into reality, as Neal McLeod (Cree) explains: “Old voices echo; the ancient poetic memory of our ancestors finds home in our individual lives and allows us to reshape our experience so that we can interpret the world we find ourselves in” (11). The grounded beliefs expressed in collective memory enable Indigenous People to resist colonial thinking and to open up space for the “possibility of radically re-imagining constructed social spaces” (McLeod 98). Related to such “spaces,” Wiget’s understanding of Native American poetry supports Niatum and McLeod with reference to practices of memory related to the land: Native American poets “identify strongly with particular landscapes, but their rootedness in the land is as much a consequence of a sense of shared tribal history as it is a matter of a unique personal experience” (55). Shared tribal history informs the Pan-Indigenism that is at work in Red Power poetry, as activists legitimized through the shared understanding of colonial history in the past that involves many different Indigenous People. As this dissertation observes, the movement connects

the past to the present through acts of witnessing, through the function of oral tradition that works among many different Indigenous Peoples.

With these aspects of Red Power poetry in mind, I am guided by a series of questions that highlight the salience of the poetry of the Red Power movement. I develop my concept of Indigenous cosmopolitics in response to the following research questions: (1) How did Red Power activists and writers establish, develop, and share their Pan-Indigenous politics and cosmopolitics? (2) To what extent is this cosmopolitics shared and manifest (or not) in the use of oral tradition? (3) How have tribal cultures and languages influenced Red Power activists and writers? (4) How do Indigenous American writers' publications evidence that cosmopolitics at the time of the Red Power movement? (5) What is the possible relation, and evidence of such, between cosmopolitics, the writers' decolonizing strategies, and the Red Power movement?

Understanding the use of oral tradition as a characteristic of the Red Power movement is central to answering these questions, which led, in turn, to the development of cosmopolitics as a decolonizing strategy. As an Indigenous cultural practice central to American Indians, oral tradition unifies and empowers the People as a whole. The tradition enables the ongoing, working dynamics between cosmopolitics and decolonization. Qwo-Li Driskill (Cherokee) offers an insightful definition of the decolonization of Indigenous Americans: "I see the decolonization of our bodies/minds/spirits as inseparable from sovereignty, self-determination, land redress and the healing of our landbases. If we are not including an attention to Indigenous self-determination, sovereignty and land redress in our conversations about decolonization, however, I doubt very much that we are speaking of 'decolonization' any longer" (165).

Concern for land redress, sovereignty, and self-determination are communal issues for many American Indians, as the events and writings associated with Red Power movement demonstrate.

The cosmopolitics of the Red Power movement conceptualized in this dissertation differs from cosmopolitanism(s) in contemporary academia. New cosmopolitanisms build on postcolonial studies.³ The Red Power movement and its literature show that “Pan-Indigenism” is synonymous with cosmopolitics, which this dissertation shows to be Indigenous People’s unique form and development of a cosmopolitan identity politics that is at once nationalist and global or universal with respect to the development of rights for Indigenous Peoples. While there is no clear definition of “cosmopolitics,” Merriam-Webster defines the “cosmopolitical” as “of the nature of universal polities or interests.” Another relevant term, “cosmopolitan,” refers, in the Oxford English Dictionary, to “including people from many different countries.” In this dissertation, “cosmopolitics” refers to a strategic political expression of “Indigenous People” who resist the ongoing oppression of colonial rule, which contrasts with the common term,

³ As opposed to many consciously global, postcolonial writers, the terms “cosmopolitanism” and “nationalism,” are not logically antagonistic for Indigenous writers. When Beck states that “cosmopolitanism is, of course, a contested term; there is no uniform interpretation of it in the growing literature” (2), the reference is to postcolonial, globalized writers who participate in what Perry describes as “an emergent postcolonial cosmopolitanism” (41). Appadurai is typical of the writers who regard “cosmopolitanism” as a foil of “nationalism” and who consider cosmopolitanism to be a lingering effect of colonial influence produced by modern or metropolitan culture and by the hybridity of colonizer and colonized that erases demarcation between the two different cultures: Appadurai suggests that contemporary transnational cultural flows create a “zone” where emergent global forms of cosmopolitanism conflict with “nationalist” forms of culture (14-15). Appiah’s “rooted cosmopolitan” occupies a middle ground between “nationalism” and “cosmopolitanism (618). Such a “rooted” cosmopolitan “celebrates the fact that there are different local human ways of being; humanism, by contrast, is consistent with the desire for global homogeneity. Humanism can be made compatible with cosmopolitan sentiments, but it can also live with a deadening urge to uniformity” (621). While Appiah’s model is applicable to American Indians in terms of the situation of each tribe and that of the people as a whole, “cosmopolitan patriotism” is limited by its dependence on Enlightenment tradition.

“cosmopolitanism,” which is largely void of the decolonizing reference that is a definitive aspect and legacy of the Red Power movement. As an Indigenous-centered term, “cosmopolitics” upholds Indigenous knowledge and worldview that the movement strived to revive and establish. Chapter three develops this term in greater detail in the course of explicating poems that express Indigenous attitudes towards the cosmos along with concern for many of the environmental issues that the Red Power movement and its literature engaged.

Debates regarding American Indian politics and literature often reference nationalist perspectives among native and non-native scholars. In their collaborative volume of literary criticism, *American Indian Literary Nationalism* (2006), Native scholars Craig Womack (Creek), Jace Weaver (Cherokee), and Robert Warrior (Osage) assail native and non-native scholars such as Arnold Krupat, Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe/Ojibwe), and Louis Owens (Choctaw/Cherokee), a previous generation of critics who rely on postcolonial, poststructural hybridity and ambivalence as formulated in the early 1990s.⁴ Recent scholars describe postcolonial, poststructural methodologies as “footless” and “rootless” approaches that are too theoretical to offer a salient, realistic

⁴ Krupat and Owens stress polyphonic and heterogeneous voices. Krupat applies the concept of “cosmopolitanism” to Native American studies as he places Indigenous Americans literature within “the project of a cosmopolitan literature,” which is “the projection of heterodoxy not to the level of the universal, but, rather, to the level of the ‘inter-national’” (*The Voice* 198). In this criticism of the Native American situation in the United States as “cosmopolitan,” Krupat refers to cultural hybridity between the colonizer and the colonized as he argues for the inclusion of Native American literature in the body of “cosmopolitan” canonical literature in the US, which pushes the boundaries of the concept of “canon” in “American literature.” Owen’s crosscultural or transnational concept of hybrid identity focuses on the narrative strategies of Native writers, which draw from their biological identities, be it “mixed-blood,” or “full-blood.” In more general terms, theory that stresses the trickster figure and postindian survivance, evident in Vizenor’s work, along with the concept of mixed-blood messages are influenced by Bhabha, Bakhtin, and other poststructuralist concepts of the third space, colonial/cultural hybridity, ambivalence, and mimicry leading to the deconstruction of Eurocentrism/universalism.

picture of Indigenous Americans and their situation (Weaver et al. xx). Complementing the work of Weaver et al., another native scholar, Sean Teuton (Cherokee), proposes a “tribal realist” perspective. Teuton focuses on tribal knowledge expressed through oral tradition as a “center” and as “communally conferred objectivity” rooted within tribal homelands (*Red Land* 12). For Teuton, when Vizenor and his cohort pose a postmodern “trickster” theory of discourse, this “subverts the dominant history but, inadvertently, subverts Native histories too,” so that “so-called crossblood marginal space often finds not liberty but inertia” (183). These four recent critics view theories of cultural and biological hybridity as counterproductive to considering the prime issues of Native American sovereignty and nationalism. Erasing “Native agency” is a real danger (Weaver et al. 25-6). For them, establishing Native intellectual sovereignty as built from knowledge within tribal communities, be it reservations and urban areas, matters for the development and recognition of authentic Native American literature.⁵

In drawing from the nationalist and realist concerns of Weaver, Warrior, Womack and Teuton, my dissertation minimizes engaging with the theories of Vizenor or Owens. I give primacy, as well, to concepts directly represented by the poets themselves in articulating their cultural heritages. In chapter four, for example, I deal with “halfbreed,” a poetic concept that Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok) takes on to effectively represent her mixed cultural heritages within a poetic persona that is somewhat free-floating among various Indigenous Peoples. This concept predates the postcolonial term, “crossblood.” Rose expresses her own form of nationalism or related consciousness in developing a

⁵ Criticism based on nationalism or tribalism is manifest in Warrior, *Tribal Secrets*, Weaver, *That the People Shall Live*, and Womack *Red on Red*.

term which registers a cosmopolitics that co-exists with tribal and Indigenous identities that are manifest as nationalism.

In this regard, this dissertation questions whether the highly contested term, “nationalism,” accurately applies to Native American cultural, political, and literary situations. Weaver, Warrior, and Womack employ the term to reference the literary nationalism of Indigenous Americans as a whole, particularly in emphasizing the sovereign traditions, perspectives, and concepts of Native literature that assure Indigenous agency. Their use of nationalism is very effective and useful to oppose a discursive form of postcolonial cosmopolitanism as evident in theories of cultural, biological hybridity. Yet their literary concept of nationalism does not explain the sociopolitical aspects of nationalism and sovereignty that are manifest in the Red Power movement and its activist-writers (which may be why they don’t seriously discuss the movement in their collaborative volume, *American Indian Literary Nationalism*). Within the US-Indigenous colonial relationship, “nationalism” would seem an arbitrary and ultimately confusing term with respect to the situations of Indigenous Americans.

The question of whether scholars advocate Pan-Indigenism or plural nationalisms is open-ended. Bruyneel contends that “nation” and “tribe” are “interchangeable” (ix). Nationalist scholars such as Teuton contest Krupat’s “model of intercultural analysis and conceptualization of “cosmopolitanism” (“A Question” 155). But Krupat offers a rather helpful interpretation of the “political” situation which Indigenous Americans face, as he argues that for Indigenous Americans, “nation” is “not synonymous with ‘state,’” but “with ‘tribe’” and that “Native people typically think in terms of the *nation-people* rather than the *nation-state*” (3). This argument is valid in that Indigenous Americans haven’t

yet established a postcolonial “nation-state.” Bruyneel supports this discussion in terms of “space”: “The idea of the ‘tribe as nation’ signals a postcolonial imperative of resisting the temporal and spatial impositions of American colonial rule by politicizing tribal identity, agency, and autonomy in modern time and space” (141). A postcolonial approach that focuses on the geopolitical implications of “nation” and “nation-state” helps us search for an alternative notion of Native nationalism. Thus, when referring to the US-Indigenous colonial relationship, this dissertation consciously uses the term the United States (or the US), avoiding “America,” as a highly contested concept that consistently imposes colonial historiography on Indigenous Peoples. Instead of “America,” I will use “the Americas” to refer to the Western Hemisphere and “The United States” to refer to a colonial nation-state as opposed to tribal nations.

One of the nationalists, Weaver, understands American Indian literary nationalism through the lens of geographical issues that pluralize nationalism, by employing the phrase, “nations within a nation,” which affords useful insights into the Pan-Indigenism of the Red Power movement (46). Within the geopolitical borders of the US, “nationalism” should refer to multiple nations based on multiple tribal territories. Each Native tribe could be regarded as sovereign since each had its own treaty with the US. Treaties are based on each tribe’s territory. Many of the ideas of tribal sovereignty come from Indigenous Americans’ readings and interpretations of federal law with respect to the territories on which the US-Indigenous colonial relationship is built. For instance, in *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823), Chief Justice Marshall contended that the US “preeminent sovereignty” is based on its claim on territoriality by virtue of “Doctrine of Discovery.” But American Indians interpreted that opinion as acknowledging “sovereignty as resting

with Indigenous nations rather than” with settlers and colonialists (Churchill 18). In the case of *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), Chief Justice Marshall constructed a contested colonial statement: “Indian Nations are not sovereign nations in the same sense of Foreign Nations, but are more correctly denominated as domestic dependent nations” (Johnson 15). In another case, *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832), Marshall argued that “Indian nations retained all the sovereign rights that they had prior to European discovery, unless those rights had been passed to Congress or had been taken in just war. . . ‘retained rights’ retained from time immemorial, not rights granted to Indian people by the U.S. government, these retained sovereign rights are not subject to regulation or interference by the individual states” (Johnson 16). These cases, Teuton suggests, “actually reduced Native state sovereignty” (153). It may seem, of course, treacherous that the issue of sovereignty works within the framework (treaties) that the US colonialism imposed on Native Americans. Also, of course, Native sovereignty can be regarded inherent as a precontact right.⁶

Nevertheless, it is equally important to note that the legal cases offered and still offers Indigenous Americans an opportunity to interpret the law on their own, since the US regarded Indigenous nations as “sovereign enough to engage in treaty-making” with it (Churchill 18). Here, how to appropriate this opportunity is a question of Native agency to engage in the struggle for sovereignty. The Red Power movement embraced the notion

⁶ Regarding this complicated issue, Taiaiake Alfred (Mohawk) maintains that Indigenous rights and “‘tribal sovereignty’ are in fact the benefits accrued by indigenous peoples who have agreed to abandon autonomy to enter the state’s legal and political framework,” while recognizing that the “sovereignty paradigm” has facilitated “significant legal and political gains” (39). Alfred ultimately claims that “the notion of “‘sovereignty’ is inappropriate as a political objective for indigenous peoples” (38). I view his statements as rather ideal and romantic, as I understand that Native activism, the Red Power movement in particular, does not remain outside of colonial history.

of sovereignty in order to actively engage in and negotiate with the historical particularities that the colonial agenda has constructed since colonization, as Indigenous People *are*, indeed, historical. As Russell Means (Oglala Lakota) and Ward Churchill (Cherokee), leaders of the American Indian Movement (AIM) have written in their brochure, “TREATY: A Platform for Nationhood”: “Within the understandings of International Law, it is the right of all sovereign nations and sovereign peoples to enter into treaty relationships with other sovereign nations and peoples. Conversely, *only* sovereign nations and peoples are entitled to enter into such relationships” (qtd. in Krupat 3). This contested notion of Indigenous territories in the Marshall cases above when combined with broken treaties “laid the groundwork for Indian activism,” the Red Power movement that sought sovereignty of Indigenous Americans by ensuring land redress (Johnson 16).

As Womack’s advocacy of literary “separatism” would argue, each tribe can lay claim to its own literature and culture. Yet Native American literary nationalism runs counter to tribal separatism as it deals with “Native American” literature as a whole, *per se*, not as Cherokee literature, Lakota literature, or Pueblo literature, for example. American Indians as a whole have a strong sense of territoriality as evident, for example, in the Navajo-Hopi and Cherokee-Osage territorial conflicts that date from the Indian Removal act in the nineteenth century. As far as such sense of territoriality is concerned, it would be absurd to view Native American literature as one national literature. A Pan-Indigenous approach is helpful to grasp the political aspect of Native American literature, as Taiaiake Alfred (Mohawk) speaks of “a common bond that makes it possible to speak of a ‘Native American’ political tradition” and of an Indigenous “worldview that balances

respect for autonomy with recognition of universal interdependency, and promotes peaceful coexistence among all the elements of creation” (xvi). Based on these communalities, Alfred, a strong nationalist, calls for working toward “unity” among Indigenous People and the “imperative” which is “to unify the people and work cooperatively” (xxi-xxii). In all, the native nationalists’ discourse is closer to Pan-Indigenism as an expression of a broader nationalism and to the unity of different nations or multiple nationalisms. In this regard, if one needs a single term that speaks for Indigenous Americans or Indigenous Peoples, it would be better to have “Indigenism,” as *political* terms that reference the common “ethnic” identity of the people.

Reflecting this issue, recent Trans-Indigenous Studies expand the boundaries of the “Indigenous-Indigenous” relationship by proposing a comparative literature that focuses on exploring many different literary works by Indigenous Peoples beyond their territories and borders.⁷ For example, Chadwick Allen (Chickasaw) challenges us to think beyond the national borders of contemporary (settler) nation-states and to focus on “Indigenous-to-Indigenous” relationships: “More and more frequently, conversations within Native American and Indigenous Studies are staged outside the frameworks of either orthodox or ‘transnational’ American Studies. While in the past this statement might have felt provocative—and these new venues for intellectual connection and exchange might have signified as marginal—centering the Indigenous has become a new standard, indeed, a new iteration of the ordinary” (18). This dissertation advocates a perspective like Allen’s, as an Indigenous-centered transnationalism informs the Pan-Indigenous aspect of the Red Power movement. Yet applying this perspective might be

⁷ See Allen, *Trans-Indigenous*, Huang, “Towards Transnational,” Deloria et al., “Charting Transnational,” and Teuton, “A Question.”

anachronistic: Allen's position reflects a *current* situation, and does not reference the context of the movement, although his perspective might well reflect changes that the Red Power movement developed and promoted.

Sean Teuton's combination of Indigenous-centered discourse and the context of the Red Power movement, though limited, offers insight into how my dissertation engages Indigenous cosmopolitics in Red Power poetry. In *Red Land, Red Power* (2008), Teuton interprets the Red Power movement particularly with regard to "lands" and "oral tradition" and with respect to the novel, rather than to poetry or journalism, as I do. Appreciating the flexible function of oral tradition among the tribal people, Teuton proposes that the Red Power movement engaged the body of knowledge deeply rooted within tribal lands, a knowledge that historical memory and oral tradition produced. In his essay "Cities of Refuge: Indigenous Cosmopolitan Writers and the International Imaginary," part of his forthcoming book with the same title (2012), which "seeks the intellectual roots of Red Power" (36), the Cherokee scholar engages in the history of "cosmopolitanism" among tribal people by showing an Indigenous "third space," not in the sense of postcoloniality, but in that of the precolonial or precontact era, by arguing that "Indigenous cosmopolitans are not a product of colonialism" ("City of Refuge" 36). His argument offers insight into "precontact cosmopolitan centers of southeastern North America as Echota and Coosa, communities said to be founded on a philosophy of human rights as 'peace towns' that deliberately suspended national boundaries, identities, and feuds to allow a space of free trade of goods and ideas. Here the exiled could seek asylum, imagine a different life, and even return to strengthen their nation with transnational commitments and values" (36). Within this precolonial model of the "Indigenous

cosmopolis” Teuton would “set the legal and moral precedent for Red Power” (ibid). His model is beneficial for understanding how Pan-Indigenous alliances worked among American Indians. Yet, the model registers no anti-colonial cosmopolitanism since contact, a matter of pressing concern within the Red Power movement. Unlike Teuton, Krupat in *Red Matters* proposes the notion of “anti-colonial cosmopolitanism” or “cosmopolitan techniques of anti-imperial translation” since contact (19). He takes the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois League of Six Nations as “the more cosmopolitan examples of a nation-people,” which developed unity between the Iroquoian-speaking peoples, the Senecas, the Oneidas, the Cayugas, the Onondaga, the Mohawks, and the Tuscaroras (15). But I take the case of Haudenosaunee as a rather weak model for an anti-colonial cosmopolitanism. As the Red Power movement was a powerful anti-colonial coalition among many different American Indians, one needs to find its roots in a corresponding historical context.

I argue that the Pueblo Revolt in 1680 is an archetype of such an anti-colonial Pan-Indigenous resistance. The Pueblo People endured and survived a long and uniquely complicated colonialism by successive Spanish, Mexican, and American governments, perhaps more than any other tribal people in North America. The Revolt accounts for much of the colonial history of Indigenous Americans in what’s now the US Southwest, from the period of first contact with Francisco Vásquez de Coronado in 1540 to the subsequent period of colonization. The Pueblo Revolt became the single most successful decolonization against colonizers: various tribal people united to achieve the single goal of decolonization; they actually drove the Spaniards out of the territory that is now the State of New Mexico for 12 years, until the colonizers’ return in 1692. Anthropologist

and historian Edward Dozier (Santa Clara Pueblo) refers to political barriers that the people might have had to overcome for the successful decolonization: “only a united effort in which all of the Pueblos were engaged in the overthrow of the alien population was likely to be successful. Such unity was foreign to the Pueblos; each Pueblo community was an independent political unit and no mechanisms had even been developed to unite them (55). Also, there were linguistic barriers: “Pueblo languages are highly diverse; they contain three completely unrelated languages: Zunian, Keresan, Tanoan. The three subgroups of the Tanoan: Tiwa, Tewa, and Towa, although obviously related, are mutually unintelligible; hence separate languages. There are, additionally, dialectical differences from pueblo to pueblo, within each language group” (181). As Simon Ortiz demonstrates, the participants also extended past the Pueblos of the Rio Grande Valley to include other peoples such as Athapaskan-speaking Navajo (Diné) and Apaches, the ancient enemies of the Pueblos, and even Spanish-speaking mestizos, ancestors of the Chicano people.⁸ As Dozier indicates, overcoming such linguistic, cultural, and racial boundaries with “common” concerns over the oppression of the peoples and exploitation of their lands and resources attests to the cosmopolitics that the Pueblo People performed (55).

From Termination and Relocation and Urban Experience to the Rise of the Red Power Movement

The Pueblo Revolt informs anti-colonial Pan-Indigenous alliances in the twentieth century. Tribal peoples survived and continued despite various US colonial policies, from

⁸ On the Pueblo Revolt, see Knaut, Dunbar-Ortiz, and Wilcox.

boarding schools to Termination and Relocation, which affected the politics of Indigenous Americans in new, unexpected and paradoxically productive ways. The policies designed to terminate many tribes by assimilating many Indigenous Americans into mainstream society. Although 109 tribes were terminated, the policies resulted in the resistance and resurgence of Native American politics and culture. As Stephen Cornell (Ojibwe) indicates, “Indians in cities were being integrated (not assimilated) as individuals (not tribes) into a new set of political, economic relationships. Urbanization did not bring politics into Indian lives; it brought Indians into new politics” (136). New politics, Bruyneel suggests, refer to “the opportunity to reach beyond the boundaries of their tribal identities and connect with people from other tribes” (126). American Indians empowered themselves by forming Pan-Indigenous communities in urban areas such as the San Francisco Bay Area, Albuquerque, and Minneapolis. These alliances subsequently generated national, intertribal activism that connects to past centuries of Indigenous resistance. I argue that federal policy revealed its ambivalence when it failed to fully domesticate the colonized. This “colonial ambivalence,” Bruyneel writes, is “a form of American uncertainty, which Indigenous political actors can provoke and exploit to their own ends” (10). Termination and Relocation policy reflected the uncertainty that pervaded US colonialism in dealing with Indigenous Americans. As sociologist Joane Nagel observes, “it is one of the many ironies of federal Indian policy that American Indian mobilization and ethnic renewal arose in part out of the federal programs designed to terminate the special status of Indian tribes and to absorb Indian people into mainstream society” (118). I view this colonial ambivalence somewhat ironically as “not

merely the sign of the failure of colonial discourse to make the colonial subject conform” but also as “the sign of the agency of the colonized” (Ashcroft 23).

Evidence of agency appears in the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), which was the first modern intertribal activist organization, founded in 1944. Pioneering intellectual figures like D’Arcy McNickle (Flathead, 1904-1977) and tribal elders from various tribes across the country participated, generally focused on peaceful negotiation and lobbying based on law and treaties between Indigenous Americans and the Federal government. According to Shreve, “The NCAI, indeed, believed that any kind of protest or direct action was distasteful and contrary to the Indian way” (119). This tendency is well shown by their principle; “Indians Don’t Demonstrate.” Without any confrontational protest or resistance, they tended to work within the boundary of the Federal government system, particularly in cooperating with Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). But, as Bradley Shreve points out, the Federal government and BIA couldn’t solve many Indigenous problems. They often misunderstood what was actually needed for tribal people: for example, even John Collier, a fervent advocate of “Indian policy” and rights when he served as Commissioner for BIA, “often overlooked the views of the very people he sought to help” (24). Rather, the institutions got in trouble with Indigenous Americans, often being involved with corruption.

While the politics and activism of the NCAI as an intertribal organization had much influence on the next generations of participants through training programs, workshops, and conferences, many young college-educated people questioned NCAI’s pacific lobby and negotiation. They raised the need for direct Native American activism to deal with emergent Indigenous issues. In 1961 in Gallup, New Mexico, those young

people founded the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC), the second oldest Pan-Indigenous organization since the NCAI. While a major catalyst of the movement was the Occupation of Alcatraz Island, the movement actually finds its origin in the foundation of NIYC (Shreve 3-4). The organization appealed to the empowerment of Indigenous Americans by trying to unite them: “those young people,” Shreve indicates, “started new and different . . . [t]hey laid out a militant pan-Indian ideology . . . as an evolution in intertribalism” (16). Such a Pan-Indigenous “ideology” was, as Bruyneel recapitulates, “an expressly political *new Indianness*,” mobilized for “the proper path for securing and advancing the cause of tribal sovereignty in the modern context” (128-29). At the same time, NIYC’s concerns involved real, specific issues such as the fishing and hunting rights of Native tribes in Pacific Northwest. This aspect of the organization announced a new stage and the rise of a new generational Indigenous American activism that differed from traditional negotiation-based activism. Sometimes aligned with the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the NIYC was partly inspired by the Black civil rights movement’s tactic such as “sit-ins,” when it took confrontational protest actions like “fish-ins.”⁹

Other Red Power organizations, including the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the United Indigenous Americans (UNA) subsequently formed in 1968. They focused on issues on reservations and in urban communities, such as discrimination, poverty, and unemployment. This situation eventually generated one of the most significant protests, the Occupation of Alcatraz in 1969 through 1971, by the Indians of All Tribes (IAOT), which set the tone for the Red Power movement in the 1970s. IAOT,

⁹ For the intersections between the African American Civil Rights Movement, “Black Power,” and “Red Power,” see Nagel, 130-31 and Shreve, 13, 161, 162.

though temporary, tried to stand and speak for the unity of all Indigenous Peoples on and off the reservations and in and beyond the US concerning their Indigenous rights to tribal lands and resources. After another dramatic protest at Wounded Knee in 1973 by AIM, the Red Power activists led by AIM expanded its vision to the Hemisphere and World by organizing and establishing the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC) in 1974, the first Native-initiated international NGO that was concerned with broader communities of Indigenous Peoples and with the protection of Indigenous rights, lands, and resources.¹⁰

As such, the Termination/Relocation policy and the Red Power movement transformed the worldviews of many Indigenous Americans in that they began to view themselves as belonging to broader communities within and beyond the US, that is, to the Americas within an hemispheric imagination and reality and thus to communicate with the world. The representative expression of Indigenous unity and collaboration, Pan-Indigenism, is often considered to homogenize different tribal cultures and traditions in one singular form of representation. Howard is one of many to have described Pan-Indigenism as the process by which tribes were “losing their tribal distinctiveness and in its place are developing a nontribal ‘Indian’ culture” that was “one of the final stages of progressive acculturation, just prior to complete assimilation” (71). In 1965, Robert Thomas (Cherokee) described a “Pan Indian movement which is . . . designed to achieve

¹⁰ For a detailed discussion of IITC, see Dunbar-Ortiz 32-34 and Nagel 224. As for this organization, Joane Nagel argues that Red Power’s, particularly AIM’s “shift in focus purely from national concerns to the international arena in the mid-1970s indicated its member’s skepticism about the likelihood that the U.S. government would redress their grievances” and that “there is little evident that the adoption of tribal self-determination policies the goal of Red Power activists” (226). While agreeing with this observation, I argue that, as this dissertation shows throughout, the shift reflects a growing consciousness of Indigenous identity that prefigures the current world-wide Indigenous activism that seeks to achieve the self-determination of Indigenous People on a global scale.

and improve understanding of Indianism to the dominant society” before adding that it was “the creation of a new identity, a new ethnic group, if you will, a new ‘nationality’ in America” (82).

In pursuing such Indigenous politics as a communal goal among various Indigenous Peoples with different cultures and traditions, Pan-Indigenism might totalize the particularities of various tribal cultures and identities. “Emphasis on a generalized Indianness” during the Red Power movement, however, should not be understood as a kind of “detrribalization” that blurs tribal identities (Cornell 136). In *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, a watershed book for the movement, Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux), critiques the notion of detrribalization, which suggests that “a man forget his tribal background,” as “rubbish” (246). A “new” identity created within Pan-Indigenism, Fixico indicates, should be understood as a power that united “different tribal nations” by making them “[cross] tribal barriers for unique situations or particular needs, for political reasons second, social concerns third, and then for economics as the last significant reason” (*Urban Indian* 124). Drawing from these seminal notions, I define Pan-Indigenism during the movement as an expression of retrribalization, that is, of alliances between tribal cultures as plural, which represent an effort to adapt to newly realized social and political reality in achieving decolonization.

Pan-Indigenous activities such as powwows demonstrate the power of Indigenous unity and the distinctiveness of tribal culture, which decolonizes Natives from mainstream culture. Both tribalism and Pan-Indigenism are at work in powwows: for instance, powwow dances “emulate traditional ceremonial dances,” while their spirit “revitalizes Indianism rather than tribalism since members of different tribes attend”

(Fixico *Urban Indian* 57). Powwows regularly held on the Alcatraz Island during the occupation in 1969 through 1970, exemplified such collaboration. Robert A. Rundstrom, who participated in the occupation, testifies that powwows were “the most common and distinctive means by which a social milieu was created and sustained,” accompanied by tribal dances, creating “a communal setting” maintained by and for the People on the island (195-6).¹¹ Such activities enabled Indigenous Americans to maintain and develop their tribal identity in the context of these new, rapidly changing spaces, alongside the “creation of a pan-indianism sub-culture . . . based on traditional tribal social structures and natives with alterations and adaptations made to fit the urban setting” (Fixico *Urban Indian* 57). Despite the hardship of American Indians in urban settings where they were expected to be assimilated and terminated, “Tribal traditions [were] still there, but they [were] becoming something new for urban Indians. . . . Indian people [would] never forget who they are” (ibid 60). In all, Pan-Indigenous identity, as Linda Scarangella rightly suggests, is “an expression of pride, contemporary Nativeness, and cultural continuity. Expressions of identity are simultaneously tribal, intertribal, and pan-Indian” (*Indigenous Cosmopolitans* 185).

For many Indigenous Americans, Pan-Indigenism affirms tribal self-determination and empowerment. Pan-Indigenous identity, whether American Indian or Native American, does not collide with a tribal identity, such as Cherokee, Acoma, Lakota, or Ponca: they coexist and collaborate. This is what Clyde Warrior (Ponca), one of the founders of the NIYC and of the important leaders of the Red Power movement, captured when he first adopted the term “Red Power.” Focusing on the importance of

¹¹ American Indian performances like powwows can be seen as “self-representation” of both Pan-Indigenous identity and more local, tribal identities (Ellis 19-33; Kathleen 29-69; Herle 57-83).

having “Indian pride” through tribal identity, Warrior sought to remind Indigenous Americans of the relationship between Indigenous unity and tribal identity, when he contended: “other than being called ‘American Indians,’ there really is nothing to be unified about . . . I am me, tribe warrior, a man of the world. . . . I have no questions about what I am or what I will be because I am me” (qtd. in Jones 244). In this way, the movement anticipated the development of Pan-Indigenism as a component of what developed into Indigenous cosmopolitics.

As the Red Power movement developed a strategic cosmopolitics, pursuing a third-way of decolonization, individuals within the movement communicated, interacted, and collaborated with other various political movements of ethnic minority groups—the African American Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement, the Chicano/a Movement and the Puerto Rican Movement, etc. As Smith observes, sympathetic and marginalized Anglo Americans, self-identified “Hippies,” among countercultural groups expressed interests and reverence for traditional Native cultures, and their alliance with Indigenous Americans contributed to “widespread media coverage, and, subsequently, helped create a growing national consciousness about Indians and their political concerns” (*Hippies* 114). While Red Power activists sometimes associated with other minority groups, joining in resistance as shown in the case of NIYC and SNCC, the Red Power movement’s origins and ultimate goal differed, in that the movement was characterized by its strict Indigenous viewpoints and the primacy of land-based goals. The movement, as Bruyneel proposes in a Bhabhaian phrase, was “almost the same, but not quite” third world anti-colonial nationalism, a nationalism that sought to drive out the colonizers from Indigenous territories in forming a nation-state (146). Unlike the general

civil rights movement of the 1960s, the Red Power movement did not propose integrationist ideas under the name of equality. Rather, the movement strove for “greater self-determination in modern time and space” within the settler-state through the recovery of the broken Treaties (Bruyneel 147 et seq.). For many Indigenous scholars, as Robert Porter (Seneca) urges, much of the oppression that Indigenous Americans face in the US should be understood as “national origin, rather than race discrimination” (qtd. in Biolsi 253). Of course, that “national origin” refers to treaties that recognized the people as sovereign based on their lands.

Within land-based treaties, the characteristic of the Red Power movement as being “almost the same, but not quite” third world anti-colonial nationalism opens up a possibility for understanding anti-colonial cosmopolitics as a land-based call for a broader, expanded definition of “nationhood” beyond the US (nation-state). Thomas Biolsi’s interpretive modular, “imagined Native geographies,” upholds my conceptualization. Using a current Native “newspaper” as enabling such imagination, Biolsi writes:

Thinking expansively about Native space has also, as might be expected, opened up a transnational, continental, or hemispheric perspective among many Indian people. Indian Country Today, the major national American Indian newspaper (available online at <http://www.indiancountry.com>), regularly covers, not unexpectedly, Canadian First Nations stories, but more interestingly, news from Mexico, Guatemala, Peru, and other southern countries. The International Indian Treaty Council, which was founded in 1974 and describes itself on its World Wide Web homepage as ‘an organization of Indigenous Peoples from North, Central, South America and the Pacific working for the Sovereignty and Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and protection of Indigenous Rights, Traditional Cultures and Sacred Lands,’ has as its logo a red silhouette of both New World continents, crossed by a pipe (International Indian Treaty Council n.d.a). (249)

Biolsi encourages us to understand Indigenous cosmopolitics not in terms of biological or intercultural registers between natives and non-natives but rather in terms of geographical settings that involve land-based politics. Yet Biolsi's discussion of Native newspapers should be contextualized within the specifics of the Red Power movement, since "Red Power newspapers" actually promoted American Indians to see themselves in relation to other Indigenous Peoples throughout the Americas. As early as 1969, when the Occupation of Alcatraz was gaining national and international attention, the NIYC, for instance, showed concern for peoples who were deprived of their lands and resources. Speaking of "mass murders" and the "enforced enslavement of" Indigenous Peoples by the governments of Brazil, Bolivia and Peru, an editorial in *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*, the organization's newspaper, an organizing tool, argues:

One Pueblo man in viewing a photograph out of Brazil showing an Indian woman being abused by several white men remarked with tears in his eyes that the woman looked just like his sister. But these Indians have more than a racial relation to us; they are part of our culture and the life-styles that they seek to preserve are kin to our own. If Indians are not safe in Brazil, can Indians be safe in America? Can we really trust a government that sends millions of dollars to honky Brazilian generals in order that they might continue to butcher our brothers? (2)

Various identities intersect and converge in this statement by using a collective term "Indians," which naturally involves the Pueblo man as a representative of Indigenous Americans in the US Southwest, with a woman who is representative of one of thousands of Indigenous People living in Brazil. As Indigenous People occupy and live in remote territories and nation-states greatly separated from each other, one people's safety informs another's with regard to colonial oppression, though the forms of the oppression might still vary. Their racial and cultural identifications, though not exactly the same, create a sense of brother/sisterhood among them. Significantly, a very personal emotional

appeal, “tears,” from “one Pueblo man” initiates this Pan-Indigenous sense which imagines a broader community.

The Pan-Indigenism of the Red Power movement described in this introduction is, in a sense, compatible with Spivak’s concept of “strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest” (*The Spivak Reader* 214). Pan-Indigenous resistance consciously risks a temporal essentialization of many different tribal Peoples into a homogenous entity: employing a single term, “Indians,” which characterizes and reveals colonial ideology. A challenging, tactical task is at work: while defying such ideology, there is a need to embrace it in order to appeal effectively to communal political goals among all Indigenous Peoples, addressing both Natives and non-Natives. The communal, shared values that the Red Power movement proposed and developed are evident in the revitalization and empowerment of Indigenous culture, language, and politics working towards decolonization, in an activism that concerned two primary issues: “encroachment on sovereignty and encroachment by the individual states onto Indian lands or into Indian issues” (Johnson 16). To borrow Fanon’s words, promoting the nationalist consciousness of a colonized group “is of necessity accompanied by the discovery and encouragement of universalizing values” (199). Yet this consciousness should grow to move beyond one’s nation, as Fanon affirms: “Far from keeping aloof from other nations, therefore, it is national liberation which leads the national to play its part on the stage of history. It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness lives and grows” (ibid).

This dissertation takes such a connection between national and international consciousness that is promoted by communal values as a cosmopolitics in “a variety of

actually existing practical stances that are provisional and can lead to strategic alliances and networks that cross territorial and political borders” (Cheah 491). Though nationalism originates in local, tribal issues, it is not necessarily provincial and local once it involves communal values that are shared by many other Indigenous People across the world. Indeed, as Red Power activist-writer Ward Churchill (Cherokee) asserts, the “Indigenist” or Pan-Indigenist aims to coordinate and unify the dispersed anti-colonial politics of Indigenous Peoples. By identifying himself with this temporal, temporary identity, Churchill argues that his political motivation and justification “draws upon the traditions – the bodies of knowledge and corresponding codes of value – evolved over many thousands of years by native peoples the world over” (403). Churchill sees similarly inspired Indigenous activists all over the world and throughout history, who share a “spirit of resistance” (ibid).

English, Oral Tradition, and Red Power Poetry: Indigenous Adaptation and Syncretism

The flexibility of oral tradition was fundamental to the transformation of a tribal identity into a cosmopolitical one within the context of Termination/Relocation policy and the Red Power movement. That tradition is a distinct cultural device. Teuton describes oral tradition as “the single most important site of Indigenous knowledge production and maintenance” (“City of Refuge” 43). Oral tradition then operates as a “common” ground for all Indigenous Americans to develop reciprocal, transformative and inclusive interactions between their tribal/national identities and Pan-Indigenous identity in building a broader community. By creating a sense of Pan-Indigenism among

urban communities, Fixico recapitulates, oral tradition empowered and unified otherwise dispersed Indigenous Americans:

Stories. Stories, and telling more stories are a part of being Indian. Being Indian is listening to stories and then sharing them with others as a way of keeping people together. . . . The oral tradition is a part of the people . . . providing them with continuity and certainty of identity and heritage. . . . Stories provide a spiritual bond, the energy of social communication, that makes people relate and feel related. . . . Indians living in cities, and those who have lived there, talk about their experiences of when they lived in Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, or some other place. They talk to other Indians about what happened to them, and the irony is that similar things happened to many urban Indians The external forces of the urban mainstream helped to forge an urban Indian identity shaped by urban Indians themselves. (*Urban Indians* 2-3)

Fixico's observation encourages one to see the Relocation and the Red Power movement in terms of how everyday conversations among Indigenous Peoples within oral tradition served for Indigenous cosmopolitics, enabling them to overcome tribal boundaries and US colonialism and to unite as a whole. As he explains, the constructive, productive continuation and creation of oral tradition occurred among contact zones, that is, in modern urban areas. Among Indigenous American communities, Leslie Silko (Laguna Pueblo) proposes, "traditionally everyone . . . was expected to listen and be able to recall or tell a portion of . . . a narrative account or story. Thus, the remembering and the retelling were a communal process" (31). Indigenous People from different tribes engaging in oral tradition came to share a sense of sanctity and unity for gathering, leading to the creation of another, broader community within the collective stories told and listened to, comparable to that of the "community listeners," a term from Walter Benjamin (91). In short, Indigenous oral tradition and politics come together for many American Indians in urban spaces, both to experience cultural resurgence and

transformation and to form “imagined Pan-Indigenous communities” in the sense that Benedict Anderson attaches to the “imagined community.”

Such a transformative experience in oral tradition, however, mainly comes from or takes place within the colonial language, English, among other colonial languages such as French, Spanish, and Portuguese, in the Americas. Like Termination/Relocation, the dominance of the English language produces an ambivalent result in that Indigenous Americans are more easily unified by sharing with other Indigenous Americans in a common language stories about their ordinary lives in cities. The colonial ambivalence produced by US Federal policy and its language, English, can be traced back to boarding schools in the late 1800s and early 1900s, another colonial system that sought to make the people invisible, culturally and linguistically assimilating them into the mainstream society. As the Federal government and Christian missionaries forced Indigenous children to learn how to live as “Americans,” they especially stressed the teaching of English and religion, which they regarded as the most effective ways to “civilize” all primitive “Indians.” Regarding this aspect, Hertzberg suggests, Pan-Indigenism “would have been impossible without English as a lingua franca” (303).

This issue of the domination of English is critically related to a major concern among Native scholars as to whether contemporary oral tradition is “authentic,” as it is mostly expressed through English, the “enemy’s language.” I must address this question before moving on to how oral tradition inspires and expresses the Red Power movement’s Pan-Indigenism. As Weaver, Womack, and Warrior have emphasized, Acoma Pueblo writer Simon Ortiz’s conceptualization of oral tradition in his *MELUS* essay, “Towards a National Indian Literature: Cultural Authenticity in Nationalism,”

offers an inspiring vision for a model of “nationalism” without a sense of “isolationism” (*American Indian* xvii). These three scholars focus on Ortiz’s emphasis, in the *MELUS* essay, on the “authenticity” of oral tradition, which informs the nationality of American Indian literature (xix). I completely agree with this important reference. But I shift the focus onto Pan-Indigenous politics, consonant with the overall structure and context of the essay, in capturing a greater picture that the writer implicates in terms of the historical fact that Ortiz wrote in 1981 during the latter years of the Red Power movement whose concerns were gradually on international and hemispheric levels.

Ortiz’s “Towards a National Indian Literature: Cultural Authenticity in Nationalism,” establishes a literary aesthetics and strategy that proposes ongoing alliances among varying Indigenous American groups. Ortiz does this by centering the “Acqumeh community” and a story of his Uncle Steve (Dzeerlai in Acoma Keresé). Singing and dancing on Fiesta days, Steve appropriated and shouted Catholic “saints’ names” such as “Juana” or “Pedro.” Yet, the names are used only to call “shiwana,” Pueblo rain deities who bring “rain” to the community (7). Ortiz explains that the ceremony of Uncle Steve exemplifies a “creative development” of the Spanish religion, Catholic, in the community: “this celebration speaks of the creative ability of Indian people to gather in many forms of the sociopolitical colonizing force which beset them and to make these forms meaningful in their own terms” (8). Within the relationship between the Spanish and an Acoma person, Steve, Ortiz explains how the ceremonial discourse speaks for other “Indian people” who have faced similar colonialism in the Americas since contact. He exemplifies the case to indicate that contemporary “writing by Indian authors” engages in a similar creative response to colonization, *through* oral

tradition (8). Ortiz takes this formulation further, asserting that oral tradition is an organic, evolving pattern, whose growth does not necessarily mean assimilation or termination.

About language levels, Ortiz continues:

The Indigenous peoples of the Americas have taken the languages of the colonialists and used them for their own purposes. Some would argue that this means that Indian people have succumbed or become educated into a different linguistic system and have forgotten or have been forced to forsake their native selves. This is simply not true. . . . This is a crucial item that has to be understood, that it is entirely possible for a people to retain and maintain their lives through the use of any language. There is not a question of authenticity here, rather it is the way Indian people have creatively responded to forced colonization. And this response has been one of resistance; there is no clearer word for it than resistance. (10)

Shifting the terms from “Acqumeh” to “Indian” and to “the Indigenous peoples of the Americas,” Ortiz promotes Pan-Indigenous consciousness among Indigenous People in the “hemisphere,” a term the writer actually reiterates in the essay, in terms of a communal concern, colonial languages (9). Ortiz’s main point is that like Uncle Steve, Native Americans and other Indigenous People need to continue to find a way to negotiate between the colonial and Indigenous languages. Ortiz proposes a challenging task of creatively appropriating English, while not being subsumed by and assimilated into that colonial language: in other words, Indigenous People speak and write in English, but still being “Indigenous” in expressing Indigenous worldviews, beliefs, and consciousness in oral tradition.

In the foreword to *American Indian Literary Nationalism*, the Acoma writer contends that tribal people need not return to using Indigenous languages in order to be recognized as “authentic Indians”:

We can make use of English. But we must determine for ourselves how English is to be a part of our lives, socially, culturally, and politically. . . . While English—and other colonial languages—may be the ‘enemy’s

language,' it can be helpful and useful to us just like any other languages we have the opportunity to learn. There is no reason for us not to speak-write in languages other than our own. (xiv)

Here, Ortiz sounds very flexible and negotiative, yet political, as he is balancing between nationalist as opposed to cosmopolitan ideas. Unlike the Kenyan anti-colonial nationalist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (James Ngũgĩ) whose *Decolonizing the Mind* advocates throwing away the "enemy's language" and returning to one's own Indigenous languages, such as Gikuyu and Swahili, in order to practice "authentic" African oral tradition, Ortiz's "nationalism" calls for active engagement in the colonial language. Indeed, Ortiz also strongly believes that maintaining Indigenous languages, including Acoma Keres, is fundamental for the survival of Indigenous People. But what is more imperative for the writer is the strategic alliance of Indigenous People within one language to ensure sustaining Indigenous languages, while resisting colonialist implications, as chapter two of this dissertation demonstrates. Such a negotiative aspect reflects the belief of Indigenous survivance (survival + resistance in Gerald Vizenor's coinage) that as long as Indigenous perspective and worldview is concerned, "the essence of orature remains embedded in the printed words" (Hubbard 143). Ortiz believes the power of "reinventing the enemy's language," the phrase of Joy Harjo (Creek) and of Gloria Bird (Spokane). He calls this strategy "collaboration" and "syncretism" that manifests "Indigenous continuance" in a speech that he later published as "Indigenous Continuance: *Collaboration and Syncretism*" (2008). The Acoma writer emphasizes the need to balance continuity with change:

We are presently in a dynamic circumstance of constant change that we are facing courageously with creative collaboration and syncretism. . . . as a way to struggle against loss and disempowerment. . . . We constantly have to be cognizant and cautious not only about the changes that take place in the

circumstances but also about how the changes may affect the values and principles we hold dear, that were bequeathed to us by our beloved elder generations. (293)

Ortiz believes that if one is consciously engaged in “collaboration and syncretism,” he or she would continue as an Indigenous person with Indigenous “values and principles.”

What Ortiz seeks is not a simple hybridization. Rather, it recalls Taiaiake Alfred’s notion of collaboration between Western influences and Indigenous traditions, which is “a matter . . . of separating the good from the bad and of fashioning a coherent set of ideas out of the traditional culture to guide whatever forms of political and social development—including the good elements of Western forms—are appropriate to the contemporary reality” (28). Contemporary Indigenous oral tradition seeks what Edward Said clarifies as “the opposition of separatism, and also the reverse of exclusivism” (qtd. in Ramírez 32).

In that regard, I view oral tradition as an arena where decolonizing resistance works and at the same time where Indigenous cosmopolitics grows. Teuton in *Red Land, Red Power* understands this flexibility and negotiation that oral tradition can assume in a modern “changing” world as one that is “open-ended philosophical evaluation” (24). Grounding oral tradition within “open-ended” circumstances, I argue, expands nationalistic consciousness into a more negotiable and communicable space. In this space, Indigenous People move toward the future, ever-transforming, yet still rooted within their cultures and traditions.

Red Power activists and writers fully understood the power of “reinventing the enemy’s language” within oral tradition. Their strategic use of oral tradition locates and occupies a cosmopolitical space, creating a ground for flexible negotiation between

centeredness or situatedness and free imagination, free-floating among broader communities. Oral tradition *empowers* Indigenous people and politics, since Indigenous Americans survived and continued through storytelling within oral tradition throughout the long history of colonization since Columbus. Fixico observes how oral tradition empowers the people: “when the story is told effectively, it becomes powerful, and it empowers its listeners by touching their emotions and increasing their awareness about life. . . . American Indian oral tradition and power of a story is much more than the story and the storyteller. It is an Indian reality” (*American Indian Mind* 26). Fixico’s emphasis on an “Indian reality” as closely related to talking about ordinary life demonstrates how Indigenous American oral tradition involves ordinary people and community.

Oral tradition actually enabled many urban American Indians, though physically disconnected, to maintain mental and spiritual connection to their homelands since the Termination/Relocation and Red Power movement. As oral tradition evokes specific places in tribal lands and histories, the people retained an imagination of the homelands, inspiring and engaging their decolonizing struggle to revive and continue Indigenous tradition and culture in urban areas, the heart of colonialism. During the Red Power movement, “protest activists and strategies moved through Indian communities via Indian social and kin networks and by way of the ‘powwow circuit,’ which passed information along to Indian families who traveled between the cities and the reservations” (Johnson et al. 34). Anthropologist James Clifford supports this aspect by suggesting that while many Indigenous People live in urban settings away from their ancestral homelands, they remain “grounded” in the lands, by “traveling” back and forth between cities and rural communities and maintaining active ties to their ancestral lands (207). American Indians

set in motion and expedited the flexible operation of oral tradition between remote communities. As this dissertation demonstrates throughout, shared and common feelings that land-based stories bring to Indigenous People enable them to unite on and off the reservations, which at the same time keeps them anchored in their particular lands. At the center of this circular process lies oral tradition as a decisive cultural norm that constructs and develops Indigenous Cosmos (see fig. 1).

2. Chapter Overview

To close, in brief, I include the arc of the following chapters and provide an overview of each chapter's analytic emphases. The chapter two positions the "vernacular" cosmopolitical aspect of the Red Power movement in terms of tribal peoples' contributions to the literary expressions of Pan-Indigenous communities. During the movement, many anonymous or seemingly obscure people from various tribes published their poems, verses that were based on oral tradition, in Red Power newspapers such as *ABC: Americans Before Columbus* and *Warpath*. Scholars in Native American studies haven't yet investigated this interesting yet crucial aspect of the movement. A consequence of the tendency of analysts to focus attention on major (or elite) writers' and activists' contributions to the movement has been that non-elite or beginning writers have been overlooked. The strategic alliances implied in the development of editorial policy and Pan-Indigenous politics become apparent within the focus on how voices, themes, and metaphors in those orally-influenced poems correspond to the rhetoric, politics, and concerns of the Red Power movement. These are manifest in Red Power newspapers in terms of: 1) building a broader community and calling for unity by connecting tellers-

listeners relationship and, 2) appealing to communal values such as the sense of homeland and stories in historically situated oral tradition. Throughout this first chapter, study of the publication of poetry, drawn from readers' contributions to the newspapers reveals the close correspondence between oral tradition and Indigenous cosmopolitics among Native people.

Chapter three turns to focus on a major, yet relatively understudied writer within the movement, Simon Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo), while continuing to explore the relationship between orally-based poetry and the poetry that was published in Red Power newspapers. This chapter looks into how Ortiz and his works communicated, interacted, and collaborated with the discourse of the movement. The several dimensions of downplayed aspects within the writer's life experience shed light on his emergence as a major voice in Native American literature during his active participation in the movement, directly tied to his joining NIYC as the editor of *ABC*. As with the lesser-known writers whose work appeared as readers' contributions to the newspapers, Ortiz's orally-driven poetry and journalism during the movement informs Indigenous cosmopolitics: the writers in the newspapers share the tendency to develop historically situated stories, using inclusive and sometimes intricate languages, themes, and tones. This chapter's focus on how participation in the Red Power movement impacted Ortiz's development as a poet highlights his poems and articles in *ABC* alongside his early works such as *Naked in the Wind* (1971), *Going for the Rain* (1976), and *A Good Journey* (1977) among others. The Acoma writer's strategic use of oral tradition in his literary works and journalism expresses, develops, and expands the boundaries of the politics of the Red Power movement from within the US and to the Hemisphere and beyond, so that he is

positioned as a activist-writer whose writing, editing, and speaking engagements exemplify Pan-Indigenous resistance.

Chapter four continues the focus on Simon Ortiz and his works by turning to poems from within the decades of the Red Power movement, paying particular attention to ones that represent Indigenous cosmos within tribal lands. These poems, I argue, share and develop the Red Power movement's environmental concerns. Like other Red Power writers of the time, Ortiz in his early works exemplifies communal concerns about US corporate encroachment onto Indigenous lands and the appropriation of natural resources. His verses call for Indigenous resistance to these capitalist-driven colonial impositions and exploitations. Such advocacy and expressions of resistance, which work toward Indigenous cosmopolitics, are rooted in traditional Indigenous beliefs and values in oral tradition which Red Power activists and writers recovered and developed, which constructs Indigenous cosmos distinct from the Western European one. This chapter demonstrates how Ortiz's poems in the *ABC* newspaper express such themes and how the values represented by way of relevant metaphors and references extend to other poems that feature Indigenous perspective and beliefs. I argue that Ortiz's use of oral tradition in his poetry takes up and continues the Red Power struggle to renew Indigenous perspectives on the natural environment and cosmos.

The final chapter specifies the ongoing relationship between the rhetoric and politics of the Red Power movement and the work of two poets, Joy Harjo (Muskogee Creek), Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok), and a singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree). This chapter shows that Harjo, Rose, and St. Marie offered their voices to these struggles through direct participation in and support of Red Power protests. Within their roles as

writers and performers Harjo, Rose and Sainte-Marie continued and developed the rhetoric and politics of the movement. Within the context of multiple legacies as Indigenous women writers, they uniquely appropriate storytelling modes and topics that function from within the more inclusive functions of oral tradition. Their storyweaving, employing persona, and performance of folk music are creative actions that push the boundaries of the politics of the Red Power movement. While this chapter does not develop a specifically feminist discourse to engage in a strictly *Indigenous* perspective, it nonetheless points to where the voices and visions of Harjo, Rose, and St. Marie intersect and share with Red Power issues that are specific to local, national protests and concerns, which include Relocation policy, broken treaties, tribal homelands, harsh urban landscape, and struggles with Native identity along with the storytelling that focuses on exemplary Indigenous women whose lives might otherwise be forgotten. Here, the focus is on works that they produced mostly during the Red Power movement in 1960s through the 80s—particularly from Harjo’s volumes *The Last Song* (1975) and *She Had Some Horses* (1983), among others, Rose’s volumes *Hopi Runner Dancing* (1973), *Long Division: A Tribal History* (1976), and *The Lost Copper* (1980) among others, and St. Marie’s various folk songs from “Universal Soldiers” to “Starwalker.” Through the flexible, creative use of metaphors and stories and through humanistic, yet decolonial perspective and performance, these three writers realize unique visions of Red Power movement.

This dissertation contributes to contemporary scholarship circulating around Indigenous cosmopolitanism, oral tradition, and so-called “Native American Renaissance” writers by applying a cosmopolitan approach to Red Power literature. To close this introduction and to guide the reading of the following chapters, I point out

possible risks and contradictions implicit to this (and any) analytical investigation using interdisciplinary approaches drawing from both native and non-native scholars and theorists, which is that personal choice dictates the direction that analysis takes. As a non-native scholar, third party Korean (or cosmopolitan negotiator), I am guided by interests that involve offering a conciliatory ground, that is, a communal discourse for both parties, in a nationalism that is not so strictly bounded as a concept that is always considered being at odds with cosmopolitics. I believe that Pan-Indigenism, which is interchangeable with cosmopolitics, based on geographical, territorial understandings of Indigenous nations, will neutralize a possibly counterproductive action for the continuing discourse of Indigenous sovereignty and nationalism that has grown since the Red Power movement. In building a bridge between Indigenous nationalism and cosmopolitics by underscoring the Pan-Indigenous voices of Red Power literature, a foundational purpose of this dissertation is to encourage Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars to rethink the conflict between the two contested notions. While this dissertation benefits from a wide range of creative scholarship in nationalism, cosmopolitics, and oral tradition, it claims as primary the Indigenous perspective of challenging colonial or Euroamerican conditions that structure cosmopolitics along with Indigenous historiography and orature. In that regard, this dissertation contributes to recent discourse on Red Power literature.

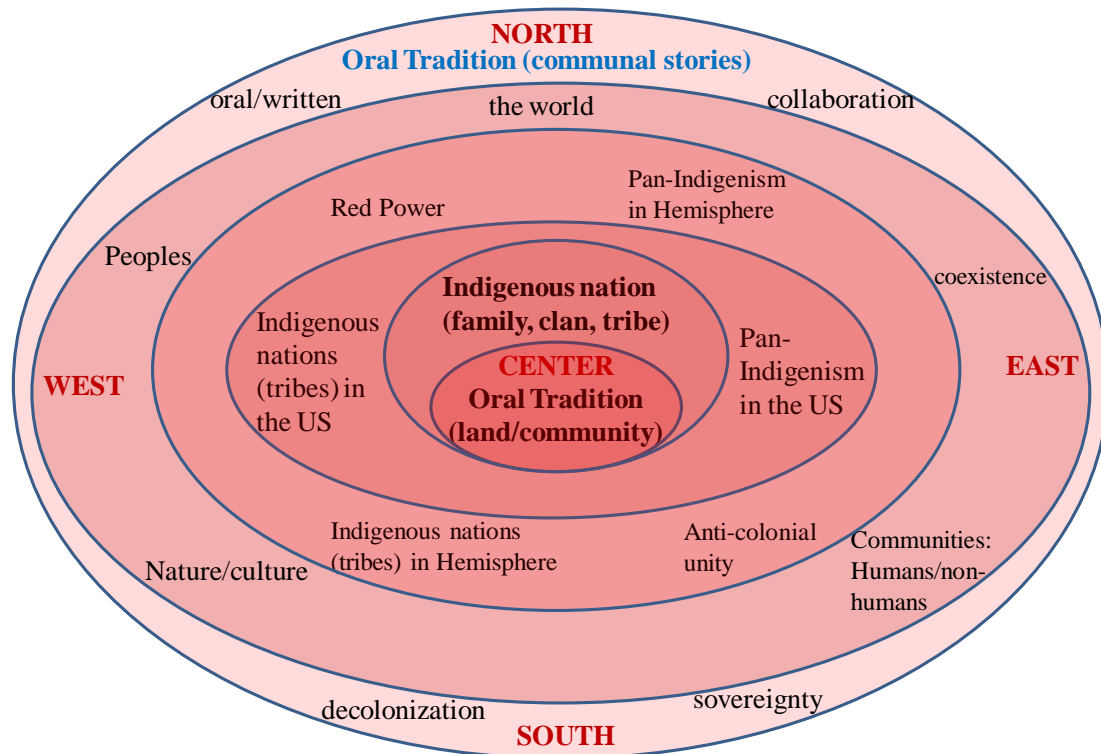


Fig. 1 Indigenous Cosmos in Oral Tradition and Cardinal Directions: Seong-Hoon Kim

Chapter 2

“We Have Always Had These Many Voices”: Red Power Newspapers, People’s Poetry, and the Voice of Pan-Indigenism as Anti-Colonial Cosmopolitics

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the relation between Native poetry and Red Power newspapers, where many anonymous, obscure tribal people published their poems. Study of that relation reveals how Indigenous cosmopolitics corresponds to oral tradition among Native people. By engaging common Native concerns within the US-Indigenous colonial relationship, the people’s poetry based on oral tradition worked to shape and share the political and cultural consciousness and rhetoric of the Red Power movement. Explosive growth in the number of Native Americans newspapers, whether tribal or intertribal, marked the era of Termination/Relocation, as the subsequent Red Power movement “served as an important catalyst” for the cultural renewal and Pan-Indigenous unity of American Indians (Nagel 6-7).¹ Those nationally distributed and circulated newspapers

¹ 31 of 48 American Indian newspapers and newsletters (65 percent) were first published in 1969 or later, and 1969 was the year that the Occupation of Alcatraz Island took place and the Red Power movement “exploded onto the national scene” (Nagel 15 n.16). But this number is the result of dependence on Klein (1986) and does not account for the broader picture of Native journalism. My 2012 research in the American Native Press Archives (ANPA) located in the Sequoyah National Research Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, found that at least 60 newspapers, newsletters, and other periodicals, whether regular or not, were published since the 1960s, from various tribes encompassing at least 23 states and various intertribal/Pan-Indigenous organizations. Dr. Daniel F. Littlefield Jr. (Cherokee), the director of the Research Center, the list is as following alphabetically: *Alcheringa*, *Alligator Times*, *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*, *The AmeriIndian: American Indian Review*, *Anishinabe-Aki*, *The Apache Scout*, *The Aroostook Indian*, *The Arrow News*, *Attan-Akamik News*, *Awthm Awahan*, *The Birney Arrow*, *Bishop Indian Education Center Monthly Newsletter*, *The Buckskin*, *Bulletin*, *California Indian Legal Services Newsletter*, *Chahta Anumpa: The Choctaw Times*, *Cherokee Nation News*, *The Cherokee One Feather*, *City Smoke Signal*, *Contemporary Indian Affairs*, *The Coyote*, *Early American*, *Flashes*, *For Apache Scout*, *For Belknap Camp Crier*, *Fort Yuma Newsletter*, *Hello*

showed a pattern of resurgent Native American politics. That political resurgence is very informative regarding how Indigenous oral tradition combined with Western traditions of journalism. Red Power subjects, by founding international/intertribal and Pan-Indigenous organizations and journalism, created and used, to borrow Bruce Robbins' terms, "transnational networks," within "an impulse to knowledge that is shared with others, a striving to transcend partiality that is itself partial" (181). Red Power journalism, especially newspapers, was not only about transnational or international intellectuals or elites, but about the participation of more obscure, sometimes anonymous, people.

Such interaction between national/international and local/tribal issues informs how the collaboration between Red Power journalism and oral poetry helped to partly (if not fully) shape the Pan-Indigenous consciousness as that process revived, retold, and continued Indigenous Peoples' (hi)stories about and in the present, the past, and the future. Indigenous oral tradition and culture collaborated with Western print media to politically articulate Indigenous voices. Oral tradition often consists of the "personal" and "emotional" expressions of an anonymous "eyewitness" of certain events (Vasina 4). Red Power newspapers provided tribal people with a significant space for expression as many otherwise obscure "writers" and "poets," ordinary Indigenous People, appeared as a united voice and discourse through a variety of written forms that bore the marks of oral traditions. In this way, Indigenous cosmopolitics with the Red Power movement emerged

Choctaw, Hopi Action News, Indian Mailman, Indian News, Indian News, Indian Times, Jicarilla Cheiftain, Menominee Prints, Native Nevadan, The Navajo News, Navajo Times, 19 Pueblo News, Northern Cheyenne News, Northwest Indian Times, Northwest Moccasin Trails, Oklahoma City Indian News, Our Heritage, Our Native Land, Oyate-Anishinabe News, Rosebud Sioux Herald, Rough Rock News, Sioux Messenger, Smoke Signals, Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho Nation News, Squol Quol, Tribal Tribune, United Tribes News, The Ute Bulletin, Wahpeton Highlights, War Drums, Warpath, Wassaja, Wontanin Wowapi, the Woyakapi, Yakama Nation Review.

from the margins, rather than from the center of global power or as members of internationalizing elites. Employing the Bhabhaian concept of “vernacular cosmopolitanism” for Indigenous situations, Maximilian Forte writes: “Indigenous cosmopolitans can be both rooted and routed, nonelite yet nonparochial, provincial without being isolated, internationalized without being de-localized” (8). Though it might sound rather idealistic, Forte’s conceptualization can inform a similar, yet sensible function of oral tradition. As Sean Teuton asserts, “flexible, open-ended nationhood finds its mechanism in the Indigenous oral tradition” (43).

While the cosmopolitan transformation of Indigenous epistemology is not a modern phenomenon – as was discussed in the introduction – this revitalized Indigenous cosmopolitics, Forte asserts, reengages indigeneity with “wider fields, finding newer ways of being established and projected, and acquiring new representational facets” (2). It should be noted that Forte’s view basically points to a very contemporary globalizing situation where Indigenous/Aboriginal people evince their mobility beyond their tribal territories, enjoying the “traveling of cultures” in the age of globalization since at least the late twentieth century. His conceptualization of Indigenous cosmopolitics is very beneficial for understanding how some of the basic principles of the Red Power movement worked in a cosmopolitan sense. Teuton’s observation of the Red Power movement adds a moving vision of Pan-Indigenous politics and cosmopolitics as he writes that “the trajectory of Red Power” describes “an evolving pattern of Indigenous social transformation: from personal to collective, from past to future, from isolation to interaction” (“City of Refuge,” 35).

Benedict Anderson's interpretation of the relationship between nationalism and "print-capitalism" is suggestive of one way that Pan-Indigenous consciousness interacted with the newspapers during the Red Power movement, in his observation that "print-capitalism," particularly the newspaper, was/is instrumental in producing a legitimate feeling for a nation – solidarity or unity. As he suggests, printed literature, especially the newspaper, and its dissemination are closely related to the rise and development of nationalism. As the nineteenth century was the era of nationalism in the United States, as elsewhere across the world, it seems accepted that cosmopolitics were not in favor of Indigenous Americans in that century: such was the case of *The Cherokee Phoenix*.² Yet within the consistent cosmopolitan tradition in Native American culture and literature, what *The Cherokee Phoenix* embodied speaks to the same sense of Indigenous "solidarity" that intellectuals such as William Apess had likewise appealed in his writings and lectures. Teuton writes that through "iconic image of rebirth" the term "Phoenix" suggests that:

Cherokees configured themselves emerging from the flames of conquest, and offered their model to other Indigenous people in the east, where Pequot minister William Apess, lecturing with Boudinot in Boston, beseeched those whom he called "people of color" to gather in solidarity to revalue their lives. This early Indigenous movement – this "Red Phoenix" – left a legacy that a later movement – called Red Power – harnessed to enact a social transformation among Indigenous people. That legacy included: (1) an

² The Cherokee nation's publication of the first issue of the world's first Indigenous language newspaper, *Cherokee Phoenix*, in 1828 in New Echota, Georgia, is regarded by many as a historically significant manifestation of Native American nationalism in the nineteenth century. When the newspaper was established, the Cherokees faced pressure from the US Federal government and the State of Georgia to surrender their tribal sovereignty and their ancestral homeland by moving to Oklahoma. The newspaper was one of several attempts to gather support and keep the members of the nation united and informed. For discussions of Cherokee Phoenix as the expression of Native American nationalism in the nineteenth century, see Malone.

adaptation of other cultural ways, (2) an appeal to a shared humanity, and (3) a legal argument to protect Indigenous livelihood and land. (33-4)³

For Teuton, the Cherokees expanded into other Native Americans. For Native Americans, the combination (or hybridity) of the newspapers and oral tradition has historically involved Pan-Indigenous networks and communities among various tribal people both on and off their “nations,” within and beyond the borders of the United States. Anderson’s “solidarity,” as Robbins notes, “is compatible with cosmopolitics in the particular or actually existing sense,” because it is “not the bounds themselves that do the producing” but “the technologies and institutions that do produce national feeling” and they now “exist massively and increasingly on a transnational scale” (6).⁴

Much as the *The Cherokee Phoenix* in the nineteenth century demonstrated Cherokee nationalism through the use of Indigenous language “as an expression of the self-consciousness of the Cherokees as a nation of Southern Indian” (Malone 163), the Red Power newspapers similarly inform Indigenous cosmopolitics. By expanding Indigenous nationalistic efforts toward an international level, *The Cherokee Phoenix* served as an “imagined community” for presenting the Cherokees as one, unified tribal nation, but representing the same plight that many nations of Indigenous Peoples were to face. Their example speaks to how Red Power newspapers would envision imagined

³ See Teuton’s “City of Refuge” on how Cherokee cosmopolitan culture and tradition became an important inspiration within the Red Power movement and on how William Apess (Pequot) and Elias Boudinot (Cherokee) inspired the Indigenous imagination of the world. Krupat writes, “in the writing of Thoreau, in that of Herman Melville, and it should be noted, in the work of the Pequot preacher William Apess on behalf of an antiracist union of Christian fellowship, a collectivist or cosmopolitan light still shines” (*Red Matters* 16).

⁴ Robbins argues that the press could point to a “collective” power to “[elicit] emotional solidarities outside the nation that are continuous with the emotions elicited in the process of national building” (6-7).

cosmopolitan communities in the twentieth century, directly speaking for multiple nations of Indigenous Peoples.

Red Power newspapers such as *ABC*, *The Warpath*, *The Indian News*, and *The Indian Voice* played significant roles in galvanizing such Indigenous cosmopolitics. They put Native journalism and oral tradition together and gave good publicity and coverage to various protests during the new, modern Indian movement, particularly such watershed events as the Fishing Rights protests in the States of Washington, Oregon, and California in 1964 through 1974, the Occupation of Alcatraz (1969-1971), the Trail of Broken Treaties (1972), and the Siege of Wounded Knee (1973), to name a few. But, like the case of *The Cherokee Phoenix*, tribal newspapers offered important voice to the movement too. Many tribal newspapers such as *Akwesasne Notes*, *Navajo Times*, *Indian Country Today*, and *19 Pueblo News* among others contributed to the specific discourses of the movement by publicizing tribal issues nationally throughout the US to complement the Pan-Indigenous discourse of the Red Power newspapers. For instance, *Akwesasne Notes*, a newsletter published by Mohawk people which grew into the largest American Indian newspaper in 1970s, covered and publicized a 1968 protest when some Mohawk protesters, led by radical militant Kahn-Tineta Horn, blockaded the Cornwall Bridge in protest of Canadian violations of the 1794 Jay Treaty, which “inspired Indians all across the United States to take a closer look at the protests” (Deloria *God is Red* 5).

ABC: Americans Before Columbus (*ABC* henceforth) published by the National Indian Youth Council and *The Warpath*, published by the United Native Americans, both in the 1960s, exemplify the dynamics between Indigenous tribalism and Pan-Indigenism

by combining journalism with poetry.⁵ As for journalism, many articles in *Warpath* reflected the attitudes of urban Indians within the San Francisco Bay Area Indian community. By contrast, those articles in *ABC* covered the issues and concerns of both tribal and urban communities. Both newspapers included a wide range of “writers” and their poems and prose, from generation to generation, from the earlier writings of now major, internationally-recognized poets such as Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo, to unknown writers and even high school students. *Warpath* is the more militant of the two, given its occasional use of strong, blatant nationalistic vocabularies, slogans, and propaganda. These give the impression that the newspaper imposes a certain position on its readers: many issues have their own, short propaganda in the form of a motto or slogan on the first page, which reminds the readers of nineteenth century Indigenous anti-colonial militant resistance, war-cries such as “Remember Crazy Horse!” “Remember Geronimo!” or “Remember Sitting Bull!” with corresponding portraits of currently well-known Indigenous leaders and chiefs. Despite this appeal to well-remembered figures, the newspaper never centralizes but rather embraces different voices, following oral tradition. Looking for any, plain Indigenous writers/contributors from various tribes, *Warpath* regularly announces that it “is constantly hunting news and human interest stories about Indian people, the Indian movement, poetry, or history. We encourage anyone who would

⁵ Significantly, *Warpath* and *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*, which were already leading mechanisms and voices for American Indian radical thought and intertribal activism, were published *before* the occupation of Alcatraz Island. *ABC*, the first Red Power newspaper, was already leading mechanism that voice American Indian radical thought and intertribal activism published in 1963 first as *American Aborigine*, a monthly newsletter, by National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). *Warpath* was published in 1968 by Lemna Brightman (Lakota), the founder and chairman of United Native Americans (UNA) in San Francisco Bay Area. UNA, an intertribal organization like NIYC, had a “pan-Indian focus” and “sought to unify all persons of Indian blood throughout the Americas and to develop itself as a democratic, grass-roots organization” (Johnson et al. *American Indian Activism* 15-16). For the detailed history of *ABC*, see Shreve’s *Red Power Rising*.

like to write an article for *Warpath* to please send it in” (11). Though gentler in tone, *ABC* takes similar action by having a regular section called “OUR MANY VOICES” or “We have always had these many voices” featuring readers’ contributions in poetry, whether anonymous or signed.⁶ The reference to “voices” printed in the newspaper matters here, as a voice within oral tradition makes for a human and social bond that is “strengthened and solidified,” through the process of creating speaker-listener relation, while the voice becomes “poetry” (Zumthor 5). *ABC*’s inclusion of such rhetoric concerns the efforts of the Red Power activists to get the unheard to be heard, to give voice to the voiceless, to those who were silenced in/by the US. A note from Tim Fields (Baxter Springs, Kansas), who contributed several poems to *ABC*, expresses this urgent issue:

I am sending more of my poetry. I have reasons for sending it, not so I can be famous. . . . I am an Indian . . . wanting to be heard. . . . I can’t get any published around here because of so stereotyped people. . . . I am about the only Indian in town – and I want to be heard, heard as an Indian. . . . I speak as my grandfather, an echo from the past. (11)

It is notable that Field introduces himself as a voice from his ancestors, an aspect of oral tradition that traverses time and space. Field’s remark reflects the imperative of the Red Power movement that oral tradition should be continued and heard in a new context, printed forms, to affirm the sovereignty of tribal people’s culture and literature. As Simon Ortiz historicizes in his essay “Towards a National Indian Literature,” oral tradition has worked to maintain tribal people sovereign: “it is the voice of countless other non-literary Indian women and men of this nation who live a daily life of struggle to achieve and

⁶ A difference between *Warpath* and *ABC* is that *ABC* primarily included and used many poems of the “Native American Renaissance” writers such as Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo (who were emerging and also were the editors of the newspaper during the Red Power movement) in its many issues.

maintain meaning which gives the most authentic character to a national Indian literature” (12).

Communal themes are notable among those voices of oral tradition in the two Red Power newspapers. Corresponding to the politics of the Red Power movement, they are recapitulated into calls for Indigenous unity, memories of Indigenous homeland(s), and representations of Indigenous cosmos. In short, Red Power newspapers manifest Indigenous cosmopolitics in their championing of the voice of the peoples as “rooted” in their local, tribal communities and culture(s), borrowing from them to shape a broader, more powerful voice in unity. Through its syncretism of the tradition of Western print media and of orality, Red Power journalism challenges us to rethink the allegedly incongruous and contradictory relation between indigene/indigeneity and cosmopolite. *ABC*’s “National Indian Youth Council Policy Statement” sums up this idea as it claims that:

NIYC dedicates itself to the restoration of ourselves as a people. Our survival as a people is the policy that guides our actions. . . . NIYC believes in tribes. . . . NIYC will make itself into an effective institution that will foster brotherhood among tribes. . . . We affirm the validity of all Indians of all ages. . . . We identify with people because they are our relatives, our friends, or our Indian brothers. . . . We will strive to foster brotherhood of all Indians. (3)

In this manifesto of the Red Power movement, a belief in tribalism is paramount. Concurrently, that belief is validated only if it bridges tribal communities and Pan-Indigenous community, securing solidarity among all “Indians,” as is shown in the subject gradually transforming from a limited entity to a broad one – NIYC to “we.” As this chapter shows in the following sections, the representation of this transformation embraces Indigenous cosmopolitics. The oral tradition is vital to this dynamic since it

weaves the Native community together and encompasses more than verbal or vocal manifestations of storytelling. In that regard, this chapter discusses poems published in *ABC*, *Warpath*, *The Indian News*, and *The Indian Voice*, and articles in a few other Native newspapers and newsletters during the climatic era of the Red Power movement between 1968 and 1974.⁷ By closely reading them, this chapter shows how journalism and poetry collaborate in the political and literary representations of Pan-Indigenism and thus contribute to the rise of Indigenous Cosmopolitics.

Ghost Dance and Indian Prayers: Indigenous Unity, Syncretism, and Cosmos in Oral Tradition and the Renewal of Common Values

The oral poems printed in the Red Power newspapers articulate an Indigenous politics that advocates the revival of Indigenous unity, evincing the collective power of Indigenous cosmopolitics. In particular, *Warpath* appeals to the idea of Indigenous unity. A collection of oral “poems,” “Songs from the Adventist (Ghost Dance) Religion,” is one example. The poem is in a section, “Indian Religion,” which defies Euroamerican colonialism that has attempted to force Christianity upon Indigenous Peoples. With its moving speech act and flexible religious syncretism, the poem reads as a move toward future and Pan-Indigenous unity through the effective reversal of and resistance against Christianity as an agent of colonialism:

My children,
When at first I like the whites
I gave them fruits,
I gave them fruits. . . .

⁷ After the climax of the Red Power movement, that is, since 1974, *ABC* has published few to no oral poems from non-professional writers: only major writers such as Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo appeared after that time, and only sporadically since 1980.

Father have pity on me,
I am crying for thirst,
All is gone,
I have nothing to eat. . . .

The father will descend,
The earth will tremble,
Everybody will arise,
Stretch out your hands. . . .

The Crow-Eh' eye!
I saw him when he flew down,
To the earth, to the earth.
He had renewed our life,
He had taken pity on us. . . .

I circle around
The boundaries of the earth,
Wearing the long wing feathers,
As I fly. . . .

I'yehe'! my children –
My children,
We have rendered them desolate.
The whites are crazy –
Ahe' yuhe'yu! . . .

We shall live again,
We shall live again. (3)

As we can see, this “poem” is a collection of songs from different tribes. Here, then, are songs from three very different language families (Southern Arapaho and Cheyenne are Algonquian languages, Kiowa is Kiowa-Tanoan, and Comanche is Uto-Aztecan) put together in English translation.⁸ In this regard, they are clearly from multiple, collective

⁸ They are all from James Mooney's *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*. The provenance of each song is as follows: the first song (stanza) is Southern Arapaho can be found on page 961; the second song is also Southern Arapaho and is found on page 977; the third song is Kiowa and is on page 1082; the fourth song is Cheyenne and is found on page 1035; the fifth song is again Southern Arapaho and is found on page 970; the sixth song is also Southern

voices, not a single “author.” As a whole, the basic pattern of the “poem,” given the editorial intention of *Warpath*, shows how a voice of an Indigenous individual is heard and expanded in and into broader communities, within a symbolic process of Pan-indigenous renewal and revival.⁹ Opening with “My children,” it strongly evokes the mechanism of oral tradition, that is, the kinship between the speaker and the listeners, that is, between ancestors (grandfathers/mothers) and descendents (grandchildren) found in many Indigenous American cultures. And this kinship-relationship, as in the case of urban Indians during the Relocation, is expanded to broader relationship through the first person plural, “we,” that finishes the poem with a soaring vision. The driving force that enables this transformative move is the evocation of the Great Spirit through “Father” as many Indigenous Americans consider the Great Spirit to be a communal, collective object of Indigenous belief among many other gods and spirits. Significantly, the poem is set next to an oration, “Redjacket’s Reply to a Missionary” known better as “Red Jacket on the Religion of the White Man and the Red,” which was made in 1805. In the oration,

Arapaho and is found on page 972; the final song is Comanche and is on page 1047. The translations are relatively faithful to what is found in Mooney.

⁹ In this sense, the juxtaposition of “A Navajo Prayer of the Night Chant” on the same page of the newspaper is notable and interesting, given that Navajos famously were resistant to the Ghost Dance movements. By and large, Navajos did not engage in the Ghost Dance and one reason they gave was that they considered the bringing back of the dead a remarkably bad idea. See W. W. Hill. But in the new context of the Red Power movement, this oral poetry inspired the motive of N. Scott Momaday’s groundbreaking novel *House Made of Dawn*. I view this juxtaposition as indicating the unity and revival of contemporary Indigenous People as a whole: this Navajo chant describes the process of healing and restoration of Indigenous People’s mental, psychological, physical wounds throughout the celebration of and prayer to the sacred place of Navajo, *Tsegihí* (the house made of dawn), the brightest area of Titan, as embodying the power of traditional Native American belief. I particularly read the ending of the poem (which is quoted in the page 165 of Momaday’s novel) as representing an important Indigenous American cosmic as it points to the cardinal directions, connecting the individual, “me,” to all things as the completion of healing. “May it be beautiful before me. / May it be beautiful behind me. / May it be beautiful below me. / May it be beautiful above me. / May it be beautiful all around me. / In beauty it is finished. / In beauty it is finished. / *'Sa'ah naaghéi, Bik'eh hózhó*” (3).

Redjacket (a chief of the Seneca nation) articulates the fact that Euroamerican religion, Christianity has been forced upon the Indian people, which resulted in violating the liberties of both people. He particularly argues that *both* people come from a *similar* “Great Spirit” by repeating the syncretic words in referring to the Native American religion in general many times throughout the speech (3).

Important aspects of Indigenous cosmopolitics – a claim of the Globe as an extended, broader community and the flexible syncretism of Indigenous religion that mimics, mocks and ultimately defies Christian doctrine – are at work when the poem goes onto describe how the Spirit renews and empowers “every” Indigenous People by coming down to the earth and by making Indigenous People “fly” around the earth, in a metaphor for Christian resurrection during the Second Coming of Christ.¹⁰ The repetitive chant of the last two verses, with a more inclusive “we” that indicates Indigenous Peoples and other oppressed minorities as well, can read as the celebration of Pan-Indigenous politics. The versions here were published by editing out the repetition it calls into relief the fact that only the last two lines are repeated. Clearly a poetic and rhetorical choice has been made here: *Warpath* seems to completely downplay the inspiration from the early anthropological written record by Mooney. Tellingly, the songs presented in *Warpath* are not faithful to Mooney’s translations in one important respect: repetition. Much repetition is cut from the versions that appear in *Warpath*. Its appropriation of Mooney’s English translations obscures the linguistic differences of these songs—readily apparent in the source language versions. It is the English language translations that cross the linguistic boundaries here, given that *Warpath* was promoting the imagined community of “pan-

¹⁰ For the detailed discussion of this syncretic aspect of the Ghost Dance movement as a metaphorical reference that empowers Native Americans, see Vizenor, *Manifest Manner*.

Indigenism” and creating an assumption that readers of the newspaper did not need the Southern Arapaho, Comanche, Cheyenne, or Kiowa versions. While reminding readers of the well-known chant of the African American civil rights movement in 1960s “We shall overcome,” the chant points to a different goal: rather than supporting the integrationist ideals under the name of equality, it references the revival and continuance of Native Americans as *Indigenous*. A characteristic action of oral tradition, the repetitive chant marks the more dramatic and powerful tone of the speaker, reinforcing its message verbatim through memory which expresses a traditional, collective consciousness that is passed on from generation to generation. In this “oral drive,” Walter Ong indicates, repetition or redundancy, “keeps both speaker and hearer surely on the track” (40). This way of transmitting Indigenous knowledge is intensified as the second “We shall overcome” is to be spoken and heard as a crescendo. At once, this vision is not without the possibility of embracing even “the whites,” as the beginning shows the Indigenous philosophy of coexistence through “fruits” given to the whites: the poem describes the whites as the people who should be saved when Indigenous Peoples resurrect, as they have been rendered “desolate” and “crazy.”

Historically, the newspaper’s arrangement of “Songs from the Adventist (Ghost Dance) Religion” seems very effective in that the poem represents the core spirits of the last Pan-Indigenous activity and resistance in the nineteenth century, the Ghost Dance movement which was both a new religious movement and a sociopolitical one.¹¹ The most important practice conducted at the movement was a traditional circle dance in reference to Indigenous peace, unity and power within a broader community. More

¹¹ For the detailed discussion of this idea, see Thornton, *We Shall Live Again*.

importantly, from its start among the Paiute in Nevada to include various tribes in the Western US, even some Anglo-Americans (mainly Mormons in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah), the movement increased the sense of cosmopolitics through their traveling to participate in a different culture to form unity among various tribal peoples. During the movement, many Native Americans – about 30 tribes – traveled “a great distance” through the desert to learn this new knowledge and to hear the “revelations” of Wovoka on Indigenous power and vision for the future, and they returned to their tribal lands to spread this movement (Johnson 20). The pattern of traveling, participating, and returning to keep practicing what has been learned indicates the fundamental principles of cosmopolitics that the Ghost Dance engaged with.¹² Thus, the movement ultimately anticipated and became the important legacy of the Red Power movement, an aspect that is still incipient to this day.¹³

Warpath's frequent inclusion of oral poetry and particularly traditional prayer songs shows how this newspaper sought to revive Indigenous tradition in contemporary circumstances by deliberately representing many Indigenous Peoples in the US. The newspaper follows the Indigenous concept of oral poetry that the fundamental trajectory and “expression” of Indigenous oral poetry is “prayer.” Simon Ortiz, who participated in the Red Power movement, conceptualizes this process where Indigenous syncretism, flexibility, and resilience are hinted in (post)modern society of the US:

¹² As Hannerz points out, in cosmopolitics, “traveling” itself is not enough. More important is “participation” of another culture one encounters, in searching for the wisdom of the culture. See Hannerz's “Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture.”

¹³ For more detailed discussion how the Ghost Dance movement and the subsequent Wounded Knee Massacre are connected to the Red Power movement, especially to the Seize of Wounded Knee by American Indian Movement (AIM) in 1973, see Johnson, *Red Power*, 18-26.

[W]hen we sing, we sing to bring about ourselves, to create ourselves. Song is not just expression, but it really is an enactment, an *act of consciousness*. Song is expression, but it's also perception in terms of the act, in terms of an act of language bringing about an awareness, not only to make ourselves distinct but to *cooperate with the forces of whatever environment we have*. So song is poetry is prayer. Poetry as language is a confirmation of our existence. Poetry is ritual language; there's a real connection to *spirituality and religious belief*. ("An Interview" 367, emphasis added)

For Ortiz, Indigenous oral poetry, as both "act" and "consciousness," should and can continue even in Western forms of expression, as in the case of *Warpath*. This "cooperation" or co-optation is less about being assimilated than about having a cosmopolitan sensibility, which affirms the regeneration of Indigenous People. This transformative process always seeks to incorporate literary traditions into the various oral thoughts and Indigenous voices. In a sense, poetry based on oral tradition, as an *act*, serves to represent Indigenous cosmopolitics that celebrates the difference of Indigenous existence as what Appiah calls "rooted cosmopolitans" or "cosmopolitan patriots."

An example of this vision of cosmopolitics is "Indian Prayer" by Richard C. Williamson (tribal affiliation unknown) in *Warpath*, a poem containing much ceremonially marked speech. Developing the contemporary version of Ghost Dance prayer with more direct and clear-cut expressions, this poem uses the reference to the "Great Spirit" as a collective ancestor, in making a connection between the teller and the listeners, among the past and future generations of all "Indians." In this way, "Indian Prayer" gradually moves toward the vision of renewal in the future, while articulating Indigenous American Cosmopolitan sensibility in terms of Red Power rhetoric:

*Great Spirit, giver of life, who created
and governs all things,
We pray,
That infinite wisdom and strength be
abundantly applied to all persons*

employing their talents for the purposes of Unity, for the preservation of our identity in a changing world,

We pray,

For greater insight, and understanding to search out hidden value within us, always realizing that you have given us a life for a valid reason,

We pray,

That all Indian people, and friends who have witnessed the evils of frustration, regression, rejection, emotional insulation, racial prejudice and social injustice, which tends to separate many of us from material achievement in our Nation of plenty, be herewith re-evaluated! Trusting the results will guide us to greater achievements of Unity, that will bring us closer to a final victory over these impediments,

We pray,

That we may jointly process with a true spirit of our heritage. May the abiding faith in you our Great Spirit, live within us that we will be afforded our right to grow stronger, and to live in peace and happiness, always to be generous to share our accomplishments, to live in harmony with others who support our cause. Let us plan for the future with greater confidence in our leaders, but foremost in one another,

Hear us Great Spirit

We pray. (11)

Notable in this prayer poem are the two seemingly incongruent visions suggested in lines 6 through 8: “*for the purposes of Unity, for the preservation of our identity in a changing world.*” Here, Indigenous “*identity*” that should point to different tribes seems subsumed into a powerful force of “*a changing world*” to remain a collective term, “*Indian(s)*,” when “*identity*” is preceded by the capitalized “*Unity*.” But, in the following verses,

Williamson never misses in pointing out the “*impediments*” that caused Indigenous Peoples to engage in this difficult task while he indicates that the “*Unity*” of “*all Indian people*” (willing to include non-native “friends” who take action together) does not stand against the distinctiveness of each tribal identity, “*Nation of plenty*.” In this poem, as the poet sings, the collective terms, “Unity” and “Indian,” serve to uphold a traditional Indigenous worldview as is underscored in the concluding stanza’s words, “*peace*” and “*harmony*.” What this poem indicates differs from an outcome of cultural hybridity, a postcolonial concept. If it is a form of hybridity, it comes from the act of linking the present to the past by summoning the old deity, Great Spirit, to the contemporary context. Such connection develops and continues anti-colonial alliances and brotherhood among the Peoples in search of “*the preservation of [Indigenous] identity*” in the “predicament” of their culture and tradition.

Alcatraz and “Indians”: Poetic Resistance and Fights for Indigenous Survival and Sovereignty

The strategic rhetoric that links the past and the present as *Warpath*’s “Indian Prayer” advocates served to empower and legitimize Red Power activism. For example, the Red Power rhetoric that traverses time and space was presented by the Indians of All Tribes (IOAT) during the Occupation of Alcatraz, who fuelled and set the tone for contemporary Native American activism especially in the early 1970s. Through their *Alcatraz Newsletter* the IOAT expressed the concept of Indigenous unity as “best expressed by the circular stamp ‘Indians of All Tribes,’ in whose infinite structure abounds with the energy to roll and keep rolling . . . Time assumes a different yet

meaningful relationship with space as harmony with nature becomes the trend once again” (2). The IOAT argued that in their actions there were always traces of ancestors. Notably, the Occupation was based on the broken Treaty of Fort Laramie, originally made in 1868 between the US government and Oglala Lakota (the Sioux) people over the Black Hills, by which the tribal homeland was to be protected. This rhetoric enabled the IOAT to summon past struggles and renew them in a new context. Crucial to this rhetoric is the issue of redress of Indigenous land. The concern is based on numerous “unfulfilled treaty promises” made between Native nations and the US government since American Independence, which, as Vine Deloria writes in “Indian Treaties” in a newspaper *19 Pueblo News*, have “haunted Indians for most of the past century” and became the context of various Red Power protests (1).

This strategic cosmopolitics in reclaiming and revitalizing traditional culture and identity is clearly represented in many poems by the subscribers of *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*, *The Indian News*, *The Indian Voice*, and *Warpath*. Miguel Hernandez’s “ALCATRAZ” in *Warpath* attempts to legitimize and spread the Red Power rhetoric with regard to the new context of Indian resistance. In this cosmological poem, a piece of land, Alcatraz, which is claimed for the US, is a synecdoche for wider aspects of Indigenous cosmos:

SYMBOL OF OPPRESSION
ROCK PRISON
OF LIBERATION
I COME TO TAKE YOU INTO MY POSSESSION
YOU POSSESSED MANY BRAVES FULL OF IN-
DIGNATION
AGAINST THE OPPRESSIVE SYSTEM

YES, I COME TO CHANGE YOU INTO A SYMBOL OF
REDEMPTION AND TO INCLUDE YOU.

ROCK-RESERVATION OF "THE MELTING POT"
IN THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION

OH, FREE TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC
YOU AT ONE TIME WERE BEAUTIFUL BUT NOW
YOU ARE COVERED WITH UGLINESS.
STAY ON THE SIDE OF THE STRUGGLE, OR
DISAPPEAR INTO THE DEEP WATER OF THE
PACIFIC, AS MY BUFFALO DISAPPEARED INTO
THE AMERICAN PLAINS.

ALCATRAZ, DEATH BUFFALO OF THE SEA, I
WANT TO REVIVE YOU THAT MY CHILDREN MAY
RIDE YOU INTO THE STAMPEDE FOR FREEDOM,
AND HOPE FOR THEIR MINDS AND BODIES.

THIS TIME, WE FIGHT NOT WITH BOWS AND
ARROWS, BUT WITH PENCILS AND BOOKS.
YES, I WANT MY CHILDREN TO BE WORTHY
OF MY GRANFATHER GERONIMO
I WANT TO TEACH THEM THAT HE DID NOT DIE
IN VAIN. (7)

By appealing to a common story that many Native Americans shared, this poem speaks in support of the Occupation of Alcatraz; it demonstrates an action of poetry by expressing *poetic* resistance against oppression and calling for reclaiming native land through symbolic alliances among the People. The Pan-Indigenous narrator, "I," speaks to Alcatraz, a personified addressee, renaming that land as "FREE TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC." The speaker expresses concerns as a representative of all Native Americans. While describing himself as one of the occupants of the Island ("I COME TO TAKE YOU"), for example, he also indicates that he is from one of the Plain tribes through "MY BUFFALO" and that his grandfather is an Apache, "GERONIMO." The narrator juxtaposes the images of buffalos and the island on the boundary between "OPPRESSION" and "LIBERATION" and between "BEAUTIFUL" and "UGLINESS." Before contact, the island, like buffalos, was among the beauty of native lands whose

existence Native Americans enjoyed. But with colonialism, its beauty as a native land is gone as the Buffalos have disappeared. Later in the nineteenth century, the Rock became the symbol of oppression as it imprisoned many Native American “BRAVES” who fought against the Western expansion. The juxtaposition becomes effective in telling the past and connecting it to the present where Alcatraz was about to be revived into “HOPE” for the future expressed through “CHILDREN.” In delivering such a message, the island itself was encoded with visible markers of a new Indian world in the form of posted signs and graffiti with messages such as “Indian Land, Indians Welcome,” “Home of the Free... Indian Land,” “This land is my land” and “Welcome, Peace and Freedom” (Rundstrom 189). And *Warpath* and other Red Power newspapers captured and covered those signs (see fig. 2 and 3). Evoking the existence of this hope, the last stanza significantly asserts that the future fight will be *poetic*, as the Occupation does: while seemingly physical and militant (as Geronimo and the occupants of the Rock represent), it is rather a poetic fight through stories within oral tradition allied with Red Power newspapers that include this poem. *Indeed*, Red Power activists engaged in such a meaningful fight based on “PENCILS AND BOOKS” to recall “broken” Treaties. Upon recolonizing Alcatraz, the occupiers of Alcatraz Island proclaimed to the press in invoking their right insured by Treaties: “We, the native Americans, reclaim the land known as Alcatraz Island in the name of all American Indians by right of discovery” (qtd. in Horan and Kim 49). With wry, biting humor and resistance, the activists exemplify poetic warriors.

The imagery of poetic fight suggested in “ALCATRAZ” resonates more radically in “An Indian Fighting for His People,” a poem by Sylvia Mirasty (tribal affiliation not

indicated) that was printed in *The Indian Voice*.¹⁴ This call to action poem is full of fighting images of an Indian warrior when it announces:

An Indian fighting for his people
Fighting alone, fighting hard,
Fighting to save a dying culture.
He tries a riot, he tries a march,
The White man grabs him, throws
Him into jail by the scuff of the neck.
Will this stop him from carrying on?
With added courage he struggles on.
This fight is long, this fight is rough,
This Indianman must be tough.
With this fearless determination
To save us all,
He will fight for his people till
Death conquers all. (3)

The poetic fighting represented in the poem, “ALCATRAZ,” does not contradict the militant, literal fights in “An Indian Fighting for His People,” as both involve “modern” Indians. In this regard, the poem operates on two different levels, both of which stress Indigenous unity. Through the dramatic words, “riot,” “march,” “jail,” and “scuff,” this poem pays homage to Red Power activists in general and to the occupants of Wounded Knee in particular, for this poem was published during the Siege of Wounded Knee by American Indian Movement (AIM) in 1973. At that time, AIM was in pursuit of the Oglala Nation’s self-determination and independence at Pine Ridge Reservation, especially from the tribal chairman Richard Wilson’s violence and terror under the aegis of the Federal government, which spoke for the similar plight most Native Americans were facing at reservations. In that regard, the poem’s representation of a militant “Indianman” corresponds to a related article, “This is no Melodrama” in *The Indian*

¹⁴ The full name of the newspaper is *The Indian Voice: for Better Communication*. It was another pan-Indigenous newspaper published by the First Nations in Vancouver, Canada. The history of this newspaper is short; it was only published from 1973 to 1980.

Voice, which argues, “American Indian Movement (AIM) leaders during the takeover of Wounded Knee were the Indian people’s chief spokesmen” (1). A more metaphorical elaboration by Carter Camp (Ponca), the chairman of AIM during the trial of Russell Means and Dennis Banks in 1974 for the violent aftermath of Wounded Knee, attests to this idea of the poem when he argues in an interview in *The Amerindian: American Indian Review*, “AIM is an advocate for the Indian people and for our spiritual rebirth. We are a new Warrior Society in the Indian meaning of that term. A Warrior dedicates everything he has to his people – he is the first to go hungry, he is always ready to sacrifice himself for the people’s good” (6). For Camp, American Indian protests during the Red Power era means the revival of Indian warriors in a modernized form, as is exemplified in the poem. “Death” and “sacrifice” are inevitable rituals for warriors to persevere in that process because they represent what is expected from the people. With its strong and stoic tone, the rhymes “rough” and “tough” impact the delivery of this idea. “Call to a Leader” by an unknown voice “observed in Keewenau Chippewa Tribal Chambers” – which was printed as in *ABC* during the later era of the Red Power – clarifies this inseparable connection between Indigenous leaders and the people:

We acknowledge the heavy burdens we have given you. . . .
Your tongue can speak only with our voice; your
responsibilities are heavy
We demand even more
Keep your vision pure and clear
Have wisdom and compassion in your thoughts
You are the servant of the people, and our love and respect will
be your reward. (8)

These lines underscore the communal action of Indigenous people by suggesting that the “tongue,” “voice” and “vision” of leaders originate from and are representative of “the people.”

Coupled with this idea of the people, the “fight” in “An Indian Fighting for His People” is understood as it moves past the idea of an homage to the “sacrifice” of some Red Power warriors, into a call for action: resistance in self-determination was an ideal that the movement sought for all American Indians to become warriors. The poem’s repetition of “people” and “all” informs this expansion in that Indian self-determination was not only about tribal reservations but about urban communities. Clyde Bellecourt, one of the leaders of AIM, in an interview with George Munroe in *Indian Voice* clarifies this concern: “We are still victim to the selfishness and greed of those who would dare look us in the face and call us friend. . . . But look further, my brothers and sisters, then you will see our people, in ugly ghettos, in flea-bag hotels, in dilapidated apartments, in welfare offices, in stinking, degrading and soul destroying jail” (1-6). In that regard, “an Indian” fighting for “his people” could refer to any American Indians – whether historical, a great figure like Crazy Horse, or a relatively ordinary, obscure Native American – who need to be self-determined. The poem implies that every Native American should fight his or her own fight since that fight is for all the people, and this starts from one’s own will to “fearless” self-“determination,” as indicated in the poem: anybody can and should be that “Indianman,” the “warrior,” for his people, since warrior society like AIM was, Deloria suggests, “the external symbolic group of which the public was made aware” (*God is Red* 245). Thus, self-determination depends on the public’s will, a point Deloria epitomizes in *Indian Voice*, using the voice of the famous warrior Crazy Horse: “When he was dying, having been bayoneted in the back at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Crazy Horse said to his father. ‘Tell the people it is no use to depend on me anymore.’ Until we can again produce people like Crazy Horse, all the money and all the help in the world

will not save us. It is up to us to write the final chapter of the Indian upon this continent”
(8).¹⁵

Regarding this modern concept of “Indian” warriors, the poem “An Indian Fighting for His People” engages a tactical cultural resistance in referring to Native American identity as “Indians.” With the emphatic repetition of the term, the poem highlights and appropriates a stoic image of Indian People in mimicry of the stereotype of the “brave” that Euroamericans have used to marginalize Indigenous Peoples in Americas since contact. This image of the Indian warrior, who still fights for “his people” till “Death Conquers all,” defies the “Manifest Destiny” of the colonizer which contends that “Indian” people would be powerless, vanishing, and finally dead soon in this fabricated image and with their “dying” culture. On the contrary, by recalling and reappropriating the warrior Indian image, an “Indian” poet enables Native cultures to be seen as living, dynamic ones that are adaptable to modern life, simultaneously offering the basic values,

¹⁵ A similar idea was made in many tribal newspapers and newsletters, though they were less known and read “nationally” across the US during the Red Power movement. An example is an editorial of the *Hopi Action News* that speaks of the Hopi nation’s need for sovereignty based on oral tradition: “It seems naïve for Indian people, especially Hopi people, to think that responsibility can be given to them by some outside force or entity when, in all their ancient wisdom, they must surely know that responsibility can only emerge from within themselves. . . . the Hopi people should be able to determine for yourselves what you want for yourselves and your children, and every effort on your part should be taken to teach your children initiative and responsibility. This all spells out ‘hard work’ to lift yourselves out of the poverty level. . . . whether we like it or not, it’s a reality; no one will do the work for you. It is YOU who will do the work to improve yourselves and your community. . . . We can no longer honestly point at the government, the white man or each other as being solely responsible for our problems. It is high time that we examine ourselves and say, ‘I am also responsible for the state of things,’ and resolve to make an effort to accept our neighbors for what they are and attempt to work and cooperate with them. It will do no good to talk about what has allegedly been imposed upon us, because there is no end to this type of discussion. This is because, whether it be government, economics, education, yes, even religion that we speak of, some Hopi somewhere feels that something foreign has been imposed upon him. We must resolve to not just give lip-service to the teachings of our fathers but sincerely try to live it. Certainly, to rationalize by finding fault with others is not one of the virtues that our ancestors taught” (5).

“courage” and “determination” that the people need to survive and resist assimilation. This process of mimicry shows, as Louis Owens states, how Native writers move beyond “ethnostalgia – most common to Euroamerican treatments of Native American Indians – toward an affirmation of a syncretic, dynamic, adaptive identity in contemporary America” (12) – an important part of what Deloria alludes to in the subtitle to his book, *We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf* (1970). As the last lines of “An Indian Fighting for His People” indicate, the revived Indian warrior would be a diehard in this call to war through oral tradition, as one of many Indigenous and supposedly “dying” cultures were renewed through written language in Red Power newspapers.

The collective identity, “Indians,” thus becomes an effective tool for Native Americans as they adopt and appropriate poetic modes with oral tradition as sites of resistance. And as Ortiz articulates a decade after this poem, the oral tradition has been at once a “creative response” and “resistance” to colonization. These point to the crucial role of oral tradition in land rights litigations, in resistance to cultural assimilation, and in affirmations of tribal sovereignty (“Towards” 10). As such, employing oral tradition offered Red Power activist-writers a tactic to engage in fighting the imposed notion of the binary between “savagery” and “civilization,” that is ingrained in literature, law, the arts, popular culture, and political discourse in the US. The concept of “civilization” as forced onto Indigenous Americans was integrally linked to a denial of Indigenous culture by multiple acts of Congress that cemented the concept of “civilization” into law. The “Civilization Fund Act” (1819), for instance, proposes “introducing among them [Indigenous Americans] the habits and arts of civilization” (Prucha 33). The act that created the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1824 charged the organization with “the

civilization of the Indians” (Prucha 38). An NIYC policy statement effectively assails the dominant historiography of a “civilized” society, the US: “Our viewpoint, based in a tribal perspective, realizes, literally that the Indian problem is the white man,” and further, that “we attempt to reverse the hierarchical structure of existing agencies such that ‘the People’ directly determine the policies” (*Indian Truth* 10). For NIYC, a Euroamerican concept of civilization that stresses a hierarchy based on “elites” does not fit into Indigenous communities that highlight ordinary peoples. As ordinary authors contribute to the Red Power newspapers, this fight aims to create and claim space for every individual who identifies an Indigenous American to continue, armed with tools from oral tradition channeled in written expression, into poetry. This aspect recalls Fanon’s call for arousing individual consciousnesses and uniting them on an international level: “we must not cultivate the spirit of the exceptional or look for the hero, another form of leader. We elevate the people, expand their minds, equip them, differentiate them, and humanize them” (137).

Alluding to such a context, “Why Do You Call Me Savage?” an oral-oriented poem by Al Doney (Chippewa) in *Warpath* embodies Indigenous struggle with “civilization” by subverting the very term, “savage,” a degrading label the settler colonizers imposed on Indigenous Americans in effectively depriving them of modern existence and history.¹⁶ In rejecting that ideology, the speaker pretends to debate with Euroamericans, as he asks a series of defensive but pointedly ironic questions:

Am I a savage because I fought
for what was mine?
Am I a savage because my skin

¹⁶ The author is one of the few contributors that reveal his or her tribal affiliation in the Red Power newspapers.

is darker than yours?
Am I a savage because I do not
believe in your God?
Am I a savage because I want to
live as Nature intended me
to? (11)

These questions echo the language underlying Western European colonialism and imperialism. In a gesture of apparently enlightening Euroamericans, freeing them from such false beliefs, the speaker imperatively commands, “Think again,” in a separated stanza with a single line. The speaker then goes on to ask other questions that critique and specify the cruelties and atrocities that US colonialism and imperialism, both domestically and internationally, has committed:

Was it I that dropped the bomb
across the sea and made
the people suffer?
Was it I that made my skin red
instead of white?
Was it I that used the teachings
of the Bible to overrun a
peaceful people?
Was it I that destroyed the beauty
of the land? (ibid.)

As the indication of “people” and “land” sounds inclusive in the stanza, the speaker notes that Indigenous Americans and the people in Vietnam and other countries similarly suffer from the US imperialism. For the speaker, if Euroamericans have been ignorant of civilized rules and “teachings” written in “the Bible,” they should be condemned by those teachings. The speaker’s declaration in the final stanza, “Savage is your word. / Nature is ours,” is such a subversion: it not only appropriates colonial ideals that are dependent on the binary between the primitive and the civilized while it accuses the colonizers, using those ideals.

Dealing with this reappropriation of collective image of American “Indians” both as a traditional and modern identity, Tim Field’s poem, “You are Indian, Of Today,” printed in *ABC*, connects the past and the present in addressing all Native Americans as the speaker contends that “I am Indian / of Today” who “must Follow the steps / of my Grandfather” and that “the Voice of the Past / and the Voice of True America.” It is as if “I” was the manifestation of the Great Spirit offering advice for survival. Central to the revival and continuation of this “Indian” identity is Indigenous land redress in the following stanzas:

It’s not Yesterday
when I the Indian
could speak
and be heard.
Though many may die
we must Fight For Ours
we must Get back the Stolen
as you took them with a treaty

It will never rot off
even when we die.

I realize This
You must realize Today
My brothers,
My sisters . . .

This is Today
this is the only way we shall
Live Again . . .

This Nation
I shall make over
with the buffalo Grazing
Around My People . . .

This Nation
Shall Multiply With prosperity
This Nation I Shall Make Over. (12)

As “the Stolen” and “treaty” here indicate, the “prosperity” of Indian “Nation” as both one nation and “multipl[e]” nations depends on the fight for Indigenous lands. Field explains that the poetic, cultural, and political struggle of Native Americans engaged during the Red Power movement directly relates to the issue of Indigenous homelands, as Indigenous Peoples believe and experience their knowledge or oral tradition and values as based in their tribal lands. In other words, because Indigenous People’s land base is crucial to oral tradition, it is essential that Native Americans recall their homelands through oral tradition in order to renew Indigenous culture and tradition – even in remote, different places such as urban areas or in group meetings with multiple tribes. As Field cries, “this is the only way we shall / Live Again,” land redress and oral tradition are inseparable for Native American survival.

“We Will Teach You How to Love the Land”: Indigenous Lands, People, and Dream of the Future

As partly seen in Miguel Hernandez’s “ALCATRAZ” in *Warpath* and Tim Field’s poem, “You are Indian, Of Today” in *ABC*, Native American sovereignty and identity as “Indian” represented in Native poetry in Red Power newspapers are inseparable from the issue of Indigenous lands. With their communal, large-scale readership, the issue has collective power and influence among Indigenous Peoples. *Warpath* and *ABC*, for instance, regularly featured articles and news reports on Indigenous homelands recovery, while the corresponding poems further underscored and supported this editorial principle. Notably, the scope of the reference to Indigenous homelands named or alluded to in the poems is not limited to a single, specific tribal land,

but rather, refers to a broader set of tribal lands that matter to all Indigenous People as a whole. This editorial stress on Indigenous lands is not the product of colonialism, a cultural hybridity as held by postcolonial cultural theorists such as Bhabha and Clifford, but a long-held tradition dating from the precontact era. Stephen J. Augustine offers insight into how oral tradition reinforce Indigenous lands and how traditional senses of tribal lands can be revitalized and re-embodied collectively through collaboration between Indigenous oral tradition and Western “written” expression:

Indigenous peoples’ knowledge or oral tradition is capable of holding information about the land more than peoples that have moved here less than five hundred years ago could do. The Indigenous knowledge can be reconfigured and inspired in talking circles conducted among a ‘homogenous’ body of a common linguistic group that have a shared experience of an area of land. (3-4)

If the phrase “‘homogenous’ body of a common linguistic group” can be interpreted as referring to written language, that is, to English in North America, this can account for the politics of the Red Power movement, which used Western print media as an important mechanism. This also indicates the importance of such strategic cosmopolitics for Indigenous Peoples.

Many poems in *Warpath*, such as “Indian Poetry,” “Long Ago,” and “The Vision,” are good examples of cosmopolitics in terms of the theme of the land. Their bitter irony and strong condemnation of US colonialism presents Indigenous lands as an inclusive center for Indigenous Americans where communal knowledge and identity is produced and shared. “Indian Poetry” by Chiron Khaushendel (unknown tribal affiliation), is one such poem, whose speaker’s message of the connection between Native Americans and homeland, who “mourn” for the lost “Land,” “past,” and “People,” suggesting that since the three entities are connected, losing them is losing oneself. Since

the land is where Indigenous people pray to their “Grandfathers,” finding one’s land is finding oneself in the connection between the past and the present, concluding in a somewhat hopeful message: “I mourned myself and found, at / last, my Land!” (11) This mourning is even more vividly dramatized in Tommy Greene’s “The Vision,” whose lyrical and pastoral tone enumerates the destruction of the traditionally maintained relationship between the land and people. A speaker compares and contrasts visions of before and after contact and contends that Indigenous people before contact were ““*Living life as it should be / As the great One Above intended, / At one with earth and sky and sunshine,*” maintaining the balance and harmony and that after contact “*All the bad things that had happened*” to the people. And what happened to all Indigenous people in the US is summarized in the metaphor for the violent destruction of Indigenous nations by colonialism, “*my Nation scattered, driven, / Like the withered leaves of Autumn, / Like the swirling swishing snowflakes/ And the puffballs of the prairies*” (12). Through these metaphors that relate the people to the nature, the speaker in the next stanzas draws a parallel between what happened to the people and what happened to the earth itself, reflecting Indigenous belief that the destruction of Indigenous lands is that of the earth and vice versa:

*I saw the earth shorn of its beauty,
All the forests cut to timber
Dirt and smoke and filthy buildings,
Stretched across the rolling grassland
The sacred earth plowed up, and piled
With refuse,
Mud and trash and rotting lumber. (ibid.)*

As the stanzas describe, modern industrialization is driven by the colonialist and capitalist exploitation of Indigenous lands, resource, and nature, which destroys

traditionally maintained Indigenous “beauty.” Moreover, colonialism has destroyed the unified organism, the land and people. It separated many Indigenous Americans from their homelands by forcing the people to relocate, as indicated in the line “*my Nation, now you see us, / Driven to the Reservations,*” where Indigenous homeland is personified as a separate entity that sees the people leaving. Given the wretched status and environment in the reservations, the speaker’s self-deriding phrase, “*filthy Redskins*” in the last lines, “*the Buffalo, he has vanished . . . Remembering us only as filthy Redskins,*” is a labeling in reference to the maltreatment of Indigenous peoples since the establishment of the reservations.

Another poem, entitled “Long Ago,” by an unknown author, contains more confrontational language and overt sarcasm in recognizing how US colonialism resulted in the separation of Indigenous Americans from the land, charging the latter with theft, brutality and murder. The speaker contends that the European settler-colonizer “stole this land from me” with “gun[s]” and “sought to erase my people from / the Earth / And take this the land of our Birth.” This is supported by a hyperbolic metaphor, “The blood ran like a mighty river,” and the synecdochical figure of “Custer,” who “come a-creeping to / knock the Red Man off,” in the next stanza. The combination underscores the degree of physical violence that US colonialism has inflicted on Indigenous Americans. As a spokesperson for all Indigenous people, the speaker asserts that US colonialism is thievery or robbery, “This is the way you now have what / is mine,” and he then attempts to unite the voices of Indigenous peoples, “And across the world I hear people / Say / GO BACK HOME YOU FILTHY WHITE SWINE” (11). Crucial to this declaration is a decolonizing action as the speaker rejects the colonial label “filthy,” which is used in the

self-scourning phrase “*filthy Redskins*” in “The Vision,” and returns it to Euroamerican colonizers as “WHITE SWINE.”

Red Power newspapers contained a strong anti-colonial message, but they also mixed in a peaceful message that continues oral tradition. *ABC* printed “Chief Seattle’s Message” in 1981 when the Red Power movement’s concern for the exploitation of tribal lands by US corporations was deepening. In this “prophetic speech to mark the transferral of ancestral Indian lands to the federal government,” Chief Seattle (Suquamish) addresses Euroamericans:

Every part of the earth is sacred to my people. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. . . . The rivers are our brothers and sisters . . . Our ways are different from your ways. . . . I am a savage and do not understand any other way. . . . The Great Spirit is the God of all, and the Great Spirit’s compassion is equal for the red and the white. The earth is precious to God. . . . The white too shall pass; perhaps sooner than all other tribes. . . . these shores and forests will still hold the spirits. For they love this earth as the newborn loves its mother’s heartbeat. So if we sell our land, love it as we’ve loved it. Care for it as we’ve cared for it. . . . And with all your strength, with all your mind, with all your heart, preserve it for your children, and love it . . . as God loves us all. One thing we know. Our God is the same god. . . . Even the white person cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers and sisters after all. We shall see” (2).

In this resounding, paradoxical message, Indigenous anti-colonialism, religious syncretism and a belief of peaceful coexistence all converge. As indicated, the speaker, indicated as “Chief Seattle” gradually moves from stressing differences between Natives and Whites to suggesting similarities between them. Here, the Chief seems to admit that the inevitable situation for Indigenous Peoples involves their selling their lands. Yet, his rhetoric insistently condemns US colonialism, as the Chief skillfully appropriates the well-known biblical verses, Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27, to teach Euroamericans how to “love” the land; the message also mocks the biblical teaching of how God loves “all” the

people, a core Christian message that the colonizers never realized or willfully ignored. In this message's pseudo-Christian rhetoric, the expression, "brothers and sisters," sounds very ironical as it shows that it is not a civilized Christian but an Indigenous "savage" who tries to embrace or "love" his "enemies," with regard to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

A poem by Carolyn Forbes Jones (Cherokee) in *Indian News* "My Own, My Native Land," delivers a similar idea. Like the previous poems in *Warpath*, "Indian Poetry," "Long Ago," and "The Vision," the poem critiques colonialism and mourns Indigenous lands as a whole. But like "Chief Seattle's Message," "My Own" envisions hope for the decolonized future of Indigenous Americans by showing a more inclusive vision with its embracing and soothing tone:

I have walked my land
I have nourished its soils
I have fought and died for its freedom
A tumbleweed knew no destin[y]
A tumbleweed knew no destination
The animals roamed unafraid and died only to fill the bellies
of my hungry brothers.

The waters flowed in streaks of blue
Green grasses blanketed my hills and valleys
The sun gods gave it warmth
The rain gods gave it drink when it thirst
The spirits guarded its boundaries
This land was our people, our culture, our refuge.

And then you came
a foreigner into a native land.

Blue waters ran with stains of blood
Your promises brought hunger to my brothers
You imprisoned the tumbleweed with your fences
Time will not erase the bitterness in our hearts
You made us crawl, but now we stand
And we will walk, and we will run, and we will win.
And we will come in peace
With neither knife nor arrow, nor shed of blood, we wills strive

to call you brother
And in time we will teach you how to love the land you call your
own
And then you will understand that we did not give our land to you
But only made room for you
Only then will we call this land your land, my land, OUR own,
OUR native land. . . (14)

Here, the individual poetic speaker, “I,” in the first stanza gradually becomes a broader subject to embrace the first plural, “we,” from the ending of the second stanza onwards. By so doing, despite the signaled tribal identity of the author, as a Cherokee, this poem’s speaker moves beyond a specific tribal land. The poem’s appeal towards a collective identity of Indigenous Peoples is premised on these lands, developing from the traditional connection between Indigenous peoples and the lands, as evident in the definitive verb “was.” In the last verse of the second stanza, “This land was our people, our culture, our refuge,” points to the connections between the land and the People as dating from precontact eras. After drawing a seemingly clear demarcation between precontact and postcontact era through the third, single-versed stanza, in the fourth, final long stanza the speaker relates how colonialism has changed everything about Indigenous lands. Those changes are culturally and ecologically manifest as “stains of blood”; they are physically experienced as “hunger” and the impact is both political (“imprisoned”) and psychological (“bitterness”). The speaker, however, describes how “boundaries” between different Indigenous nations and lands became blurred and united through the emphatic repetitions of the first person plural, “we.”

A rhetorically crucial aspect of this poem is articulated through the speaker’s moving, forgiving vision to embrace the “foreigner,” the settler, the colonizer, as “brother” in the Indigenous cosmopolitan communities as represented in the latter half of

the final stanza. The word, “brother,” connected to “we,” suggests a broader cosmopolitics that Indigenous Peoples take and will continue to take for their future in a significant extension of traditional knowledge and values. That extension, evident in the poem, is an organic manifestation of oral tradition, as Simon Ortiz explains in the preface to *Woven Stone*, in which he asserts that oral tradition “is inclusive; it is the actions, behavior, relationships, practices” as something that “evokes and expresses a belief system” and as “specific activity that confirms and conveys that belief” (7). By taking a gesture of embracing Euroamericans, this poem expresses the Indigenous ideal of coexistence as passed down through oral tradition, as indicated in the message attributed to Chief Seattle. Thus, the move from the local toward the wider collective suggested here is not about the assimilation of Native Americans into mainstream society. *Rather*, as articulated in the thirteenth verse of the final stanza, the poem indicates the symbolic integration of the whites into future Native communities, as Natives of the Americas may have actually helped colonists, settlers, and pilgrims survive during the first colonial eras by teaching them how to use the land. Corresponding to the concept of the Indigenous Peoples as having initiated such coexistence since they “made room” for Euroamericans, a move toward the future appears in the lines: “we will come in peace . . . / we will teach you how to love the land.” The very last verse refuses the binary by blurring the dichotomy between the colonized, “my,” and the colonizer, “you.” With the repetition of “OUR,” a peaceful coexistence and collaboration between Native and non-native Americans is performed and proposed within a practice of inclusive oral tradition, rather than as a result of colonialism.

Like the poems discussed, *ABC*'s distinguished section entitled "POEMS" or "OUR MANY VOICES" develops Pan-Indigenous consciousness and vision through telling the stories that connect the past to the present in terms of survival and continuance of Native Americans as a whole. Those stories have healing power as they attempt to envision the hopeful future of the people. The historically situated nature of this appeal is particularly evident in poems such as "Wounded Knee Dream," "Hasbah," and "Earth Child." Like "The Vision" in *Warpath*, a poem by an unknown author, "Wounded Knee Dream," printed in reference to the Siege of Wounded Knee in 1973, visualizes the violent experience of US colonialism. The poem's elegiac, mournful tone, opening with vivid images of the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890, relates this tragic, traumatic memory for Native Americans, recalling the past in the present:

As I rose to meet the morning,
the bodies of my people
lay scattered on the ground
like burnt seeds never allowed
to grow.
And my feet felt strange
as I walked among the dead,
the tears from my eyes
mixing with the blood
on the faces of small babies . . . (7)

Taking the first narrator, "I," the first stanza of this poem reminds us of the observation of Black Elk (Oglala Lakota), a firsthand witness to and survivor of the Wounded Knee Massacre. This brief poem's reverie arises from the visceral and visual recollection of the massacre of Native Americans; it revisits, in condensed form, the brutal history of colonialism. As the poem closes, the speaker seems to suggest that the "dream" ends in a tragic repetition and expansion of what Black Elk describes at the end of *Black Elk*

Speaks, with its dream of the Lakota, who are represented as doomed and “dead.”¹⁷ This is underscored by the metaphor for the future generation, dead “small babies.” However, an emphatic silence expressed through three dots (“ . . .”) neutralizes the tragic tone in poem’s very closing. This silence directs the listener-readers’ attention into a deep meditation on the colonial past, into an open-ended call for the continuation of stories for the future: the three dots that substitute for the definitive period or full stop offer a possibility for a counter-narrative that would question the colonialist belief that the “dream” of Native Americans ended with the Wounded Knee Massacre. Such colonialism is directly questioned by Acoma writer Simon Ortiz a decade later: “It’s almost inexplicable that Black Elk would say the dream ended; we know why now, and we know it did not and will not end” (*From Sand Creek* 40).¹⁸ In that regard, while describing an incident in the past, the poem is not past-oriented. The daydream that the speaker relates in the poem is one from which the speaker would eventually awake in order to dream for the future, a dream that will continue. The poem’s simile, “like burnt seeds never allowed / to grow” is not an affirmation of unpromising future of Native Americans since it is a gesture to remember the past in making the hopeful future.

Placed right beside the “Wounded Knee Dream,” “Hasbah” yields promising, hopeful images. While it continues the oral tradition as do the previous poems, the poem

¹⁷ At the end of the book, Black Elk is reported to have said: “I did not know then how much was ended. When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people’s dream died there. It was a beautiful dream . . . the nation’s hope is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead” (218).

¹⁸ It is well known that much part of Black Elk’s vision is interpreted by John Neihardt. Moreover, the last two paragraphs of *Black Elk Speaks* are Neihardt’s “summary,” in which Neihardt seems to render all the accounts and visions told by Black Elk as perishing with the destiny of a nation, the Lakota, and thus makes all visions of Native Americans pointless, empty, and futureless. Such rhetoric, I argue, just reflects a colonial project.

effectively neutralizes and even counteracts the images of dead “small babies” in

“Wounded Knee Dream,” in moving toward the future:

Hasbah speaks to the children before her and around her.
Her home is on the east side of the Black Mountain.
It faces the sun, the Mountain above; it shelters.
John says, “On a knoll, her home, with the valley before.”

This brown woman smiles, a large knot of her black hair
tied with white yarn swings gently at the back of her head,
this handsome woman of her people who call themselves *Dineh*.
Her voice is strong, steady, and her deep laugh,
what a beautiful laugh, canyons and mountains of laugh,
calming you as canyons and mountains do, that way.
She motions with her hands, her fingers picking up salt,
and stirs, two fingers together, into a bowl of her hands.

The children of *Dineh* watch her like young animals.
Their eyes are very bright and new.
It is possible to learn from motions, things formed
with her fingers, her hands, the lights in her eyes,
the varied sounds, and the long history of a woman. It’s possible: the whole
movement of children and woman and something called Breathing Presence:
The Mountain.

Hasbah wears a large silver ornament on her blouse.
It is a heavy silver bird with turquoise wings full spread,
suspended like her hands telling things, the movement
of the Mountain’s shape, colors, the summer clouds, rain,
the wind, voices of far places, the heroes and histories,
of a woman combing her long black hair, good happy time,
making of bread, cutting meat, serving food to grow with,
this woman, Hasbah, serves her people well. (7)

Through the third person narrator (who could represent the whole of Native Americans),
the poem tells a story about a Navajo woman, Hasbah. The story continues from the
previous poem as it moves toward a futuristic, transnational vision, refusing and defying
all pessimistic implication for all Native Americans. This contradicts a tragic rhetoric that
appears throughout the ending of *Black Elk Speaks*. On the one hand, the woman is
described as a tribal figure that resembles the spiritual beings in the creation stories of

specific tribal people, Navajo (Diné)'s Spider Woman or the Pueblos' Thought Woman. On the other hand, this immense female figure, anointed with the mountains, moves beyond a tribal territory and identity when it is suggested that her home is located on the "Black Mountain" in a reference that's both specific and general; indeed, the sacred place alludes to Black Mesa in North Arizona.¹⁹ But it might also refer to any of many sacred places among the Black Mountain in North Carolina, the Black Hills in South Dakota or Loma Prieta (Dark Hill) in California throughout Indigenous nations.

Hasbah, as a Pan-Indigenous figure, offers hope and vision for the future by healing everything with her "calming" and "laugh" as indicated in the third stanza. She is developed with more gravity and depth through the eyes of the children, which are "very bright and new" unlike those of the dead "small babies" in "Wounded Knee Dream." The Mountain moves as a "whole" as indicated in the fourth stanza. With the mountain, Hasbah informs a Pan-Indigenous function of oral tradition in the final stanza where she is described as a storyteller: through her repertoire drawing from and representing various "things," including "voices of far places, the heroes and histories," her dramatic engagement "serves her people well." As Gary Witherspoon (Navajo) has noted, in Navajo the noun stem – "má" is used for, among other things, mountains, mother, sheep, earth, and "cornfields" (92-3). Witherspoon argues that what all of these things have in

¹⁹ Many Navajos, of course, would recognize "Black Mountain" as *Dziljiin* (*dzil*- 'mountain' – *jiin* 'it is black'). There is another common way that *Dziljiin* is translated into English: Black Mesa. Given what was happening out on Black Mountain/Black Mesa/*Dziljiin* in the 1970s, one would see this as a reference to the conflicts with Peabody Coal that were ongoing at that time. Red Power organizations like AIM had their national meeting in Farmington, NM in 1975 partly as a response to the issues surrounding the extraction of coal. This dissertation discusses this issues in detail in chapter four.

common is the quality of “sustenance” (94). Mountains and mothers provide sustenance to Navajos and thus can be spoken of as the children’s mother or “*nihimá*,” that is, “our mother” (93). The linking of mothers with mountains is relatively common among Navajos. Given the linking of mothers and mountains and given that this poem appears to be about “*Dziljiin*” ‘Black Mountain,’ “Hasbah” calls out for the image of “Mother Earth” as feminine, a rhetoric that was widely circulated during among Red Power literature alongside the more “masculine” or fighting imagery found in the previous poems like “Alcatraz” and “An Indian Fighting for his People.” Here, such a metaphor for storyweaving is meaningful in terms of how oral tradition works in American Indian women: through the creative acts of braiding her hair and telling stories, she achieves a connection among different lands, diverse stories, and peoples – from the Navajos to other tribal peoples and beyond – in speaking for Native Americans as a whole who share similar histories of colonization. As the final chapter of this dissertation discusses in detail, this female image well informs how American Indian women struggled, protested, and resisted in their own ways in both urban areas and reservations during the Red Power movement. Like Wounded Knee, Black Mountain was a site for struggle over ways of being in the world. A lifeway was in jeopardy. The struggle for indigenous ways of being continues through both women and men. Hasbah, like Black Mountain, serves *her* people well.

Such Pan-Indigenous links enhance the sense of restoration and continuance that are particularly evidenced in Indigenous American gatherings, such as the powwow. Birth and life are celebrated in renewing the bonds between the people and the land and among the people, as is evident in “Earth Child,” a poem by Ann Lande (tribal identity

unknown), which visualizes this renewal of Indigenous life by focusing on a child, in a metaphor for the hopeful future:

Earth child
Dancing within
golden ambered
ribbons of the
sunfather's touch so bold

Earth child
weeping with the
moss-coated sinew's
twisted pains gone cold

Earth child, breathing hushed
seeds of a love
blessed warm
with rain untold. (7)

With a reference to a powwow outfit, “Golden ambered / ribbons,” the child’s dance evokes Pan-Indigenous consciousness. As the “earth child” forms a bond between the sky and the earth, is dancing and moving in “sunfather” with a “touch” and is just born with “moss-coated sinew,” appears as a sign of a new life from the earth.²⁰ While recalling the Sun Dance where participants pray for the flourishing future of a community, this spiritual bond between the child and “sunfather” establishes a creative process of connecting the past to the present and to the future, an important theme in powwows and in the Occupation of Alcatraz. Such linkage is reinforced by “rain,” an important metaphor and actuality for many Indigenous Americans particularly in the Southwest.

In conclusion, Indigenous cosmopolitics during the Red Power movement is uniquely represented by the publication of readers’ contributions to Red Power

²⁰ In Pueblo creation story, Sun Father as the counterpart of Earth Mother or Corn Mother is regarded the most powerful creative force in the universe, representing the most scared color, pure light. See Waters 198 and 261-62.

newspapers which use multiple conventions of oral poetry. Among these themes and politics are 1) calls for the renewal of Indigenous unity and alliance and 2) appeals to shared values such as the sense of homeland and stories in historically situated oral tradition. Strategically allied with and developing the editorial policy and Pan-Indigenous politics of Red Power newspapers such as *ABC*, the orally-influenced poems of various authors revitalize oral tradition, dreaming and putting words to the “dreams” of the Red Power movement. These dreams of the renewal and continuance of American Indian culture and tradition take place through Pan-Indigenous unity, with its call to reclaim and preserve Indigenous lands, an aspect of political and cultural dreams that many Euroamericans believed (or might want to believe) to be “dead.” Turning the focus to a major, but understudied writer within Red Power movement, the next chapter looks into how these aspects appear in the relationship between Acoma writer Simon Ortiz and *ABC*. As in the case of contributions from various, relatively unknown and anonymous writers, Ortiz’s oral poetry and journalism published in the newspaper during the Red Power movement informs Indigenous cosmopolitics by developing historically situated stories and by developing inclusive languages, themes, and tones.

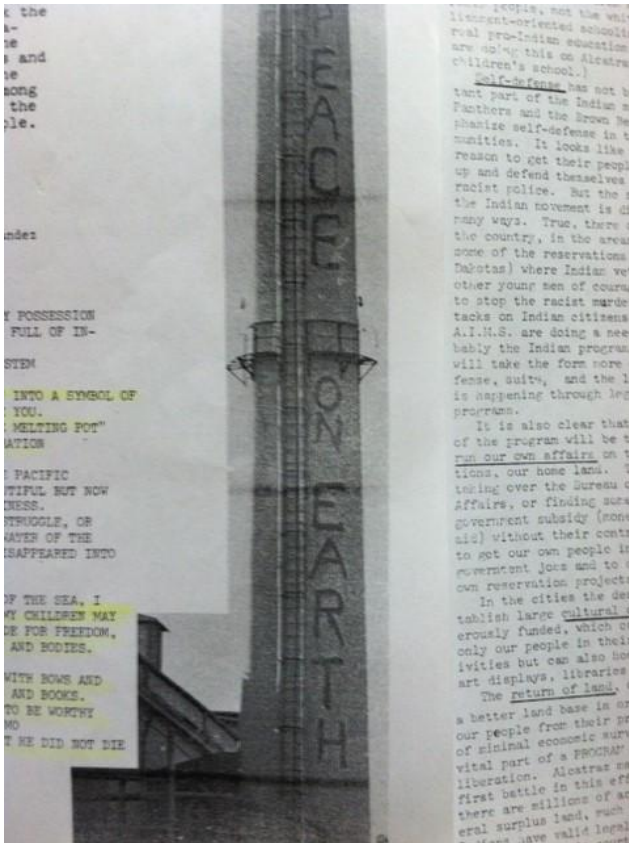


Fig. 2. Graffiti on Alcatraz Island Lighthouse; The United Native Americans (UNA); *Warpath* 2.1(Spring 1970): 7.



Fig. 3. from the main landing of Alcatraz Island; “History Is a Weapon: Alcatraz Proclamation and Letter”; Web; 2 Jan. 2014. (The graffiti words in the figures, “peace,” “earth,” “united,” and “land,” sum up the rhetoric of the Indians of All Tribes on Alcatraz that speaks for the Red Power movement and its literature.)

Chapter 3

“We are *Hanoh*”: the Discourse of the Red Power Movement, Indigenous Cosmopolitics, and Simon Ortiz’s Strategic Use of Oral Tradition

Introduction

On a freezing day in the Northern part of Arizona in the winter of 1970, when the Occupation of Alcatraz that began in November, 1969 was gaining national and international attention, Simon Ortiz, took a call from Gerald Wilkinson (Cherokee). Many then expected Wilkinson, an activist who had just become the executive director of the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC hereafter), to reorganize and develop the Red Power organization. Some change was necessary, as two most significant leaders were absent – Clyde Warrior (Ponca) had died in 1968, and Mel Thom (Paiute) resigned the presidency in the same year. It was at this point that Wilkinson asked Ortiz to come to Albuquerque, New Mexico. The goal involved working with him as the editor of *ABC*, the first Red Power newspaper. At that point, Ortiz was primarily working with Navajo (Diné) People, editing *Rough Rock News*, a tribal community and organizational newspaper, although he was also working as a regional (Arizona) editor for *ABC*. He had not yet begun to publish a literary volume, though he was writing poems and contributing them to *ABC*, and these poems would be published as a collection a couple of years later. Ortiz accepted Wilkinson’s offer and as of the June of 1970 moved to the NIYC headquarters in Albuquerque, which meant that he was now working for one of the leading Red Power organizations. Working behind the scenes as an emerging Native writer and as the editor of *ABC*, Ortiz would make significant contributions to the current

stages of the Red Power movement through his appreciation for and use of oral tradition and stories in his journalism and in the literary work that would soon be appearing in the volumes such as *Naked in the Wind* (1971), *Going for the Rain* (1976), and *A Good Journey* (1977) among others.

This chapter and the following chapter move from a focus on the previously unexplored relationship between various Red Power newspapers and their contributors, to examine the dimensions of that work for Simon Ortiz, who during these years was emerging as a major voice among so-called “Native American Renaissance” writers. Ortiz actively engaged in the Movement during its climactic era from 1970 to 1973 by joining the NIYC.¹ The time period marks the most influential and widely publicized activism among Native activists: the occupation of Alcatraz Island by the Indians of All Tribes (1969-1971) was followed by the Trail of Broken Treaties and the following occupation of the BIA (1972), which led into the Siege of Wounded Knee (1973). Either directly participating in or learning of those Pan-Indigenous protests and other local activist events, Ortiz developed his knowledge of the discourse of Red Power and thus his own aesthetics and politics out of the knowledge.

Current Native scholarship has yet to acknowledge the many-faceted and energetic role of the Acoma Pueblo writer who inspired, influenced, and responded to the Pan-Indigenous politics of the movement. An example of that omission appears in Bradley Shreve’s *Red Power Rising: the National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism* (2012). Shreve’s generally well-researched book presents a historical overview of the NIYC, but neglects the role of Simon Ortiz as the editor of *ABC*, while

¹ See Lucero’s “Simon J. Ortiz: In His Own Words” in *Simon J. Ortiz* and Harjo’s “Poetry Can Be All This.”

featuring that of Gerald Wilkinson, who worked closely with the Acoma writer. Also, from 1970 to 73, the subscription and distribution of *ABC* grew and peaked, as Shreve notes, yet he fails to mention Ortiz without observing how that might relate to the action of the newspaper's editor (185).

The historical situatedness of Native American literature is among the foremost concerns that many contemporary Native scholars engage regarding the recovery of Native historiography and relevant intellectual, literary sovereignty. Similarly, Indigenous studies have begun to situate Native American literature in relation to the Red Power movement in the 1970s, as is evident in Sean Teuton's recent and significant work, *Red Land, Red Power* (2008). In this study, Teuton argues that "Native American Renaissance" novelists such as N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa), Leslie M. Silko and James Welch (Blackfeet), impacted the politics of the radical movement by representing the recovery of Native American tradition and culture within the sense of tribal lands. He also discusses Ortiz's influential 1981 *MELUS* essay, "Toward a National Indian Literature," suggesting that its view of oral tradition as "adaptive process" is "indeed political" (25). Yet Teuton unfortunately offers no interpretations of the political aspects of oral tradition in Ortiz's poetry or fiction with regard to the Red Power movement. Other Native critics such as Laura Tohe (Diné) who focus on Simon Ortiz's work recognize Ortiz as an important "activist poet" and call his work "poetic resistance": she writes that Ortiz's "activist poetry converges with the spiritual values of his Aacqui/Acoma upbringing and his compassion" (55). While this appreciation is valid regarding Ortiz's reiterated stress on his tribal heritage and the consistency of his

passionate and resistant voice throughout his poetry and fiction the approach begs the question of further contemporary historical contexts for that “poetic resistance.”

This chapter aims to present an understanding of the realistic and historical references and allusions contained and indicated in Ortiz’s work, in the context of the Red Power movement, first by demonstrating that Simon Ortiz’s work engages the Pan-Indigenous politics of the Red Power movement, and, further, by suggesting that the Acoma writer significantly contributed to the formation of the ideas and vision that helped the movement to continue. By way of his journalism and poetry in collaboration with *ABC*, Ortiz provided the Movement’s Pan-Indigenous activism with a powerful, synthetic imagination of Native American oral tradition. Furthermore, Ortiz contributed to turning the direction of the NIYC and *ABC* from its previous primary focus on national and local Native American issues, towards concerns with *international* issues on various Indigenous groups in the Hemisphere and beyond. This pioneering search for international alliances has since become an important strategic concept of decolonization and liberation among various Indigenous Peoples across the world, as I have described as “Indigenous Cosmopolitics.”

The simple fact is that Simon Ortiz’s early, formative works published during the Red Power era actually span and cover nearly two decades from the mid 1960s to the early 1980s. Some of these were published during Ortiz’s involvement with the NIYC and *ABC*. In the meantime, the writer began to work on other manuscripts in the mid 1960s, including the materials that would appear in *Naked in the Wind*, his very first poetry collection, which was published in 1971 as a chapbook, *Going for the Rain* in 1976, while *A Good Journey* appeared in 1977, *The People Shall Continue*, his first

children's book in 1977, "Howbah Indians," his first short fiction, in 1978, *Fight Back: For the Sake of People, For the Sake of Land* in 1980, and *From Sand Creek* in 1981. In this and the following chapter, I use many poems in *Naked in the Wind* simply because the chapbook is rarely discussed in current Native academy despite its significance. This is probably because only "one hundred copies" of the chapbook were published (each with the poet's firsthand autograph), although several of these poems were reprinted in later collections. I argue that *Naked in the Wind* (alongside his writing in *ABC*) demonstrates the writer's formative aesthetics and politics.

Red Power politics offered Simon Ortiz meaningful ideals that are evident in his journalism and poetry as printed in *ABC* and in the context of articles appearing in other Red Power newspapers. Ethnography offers an important way towards appreciating how the Acoma writer's grounded knowledge in his tribal identity, culture and tradition is relayed in his written work. Ortiz's expressions of his foundation in Acoma culture and tradition are a primary aspect of the Red Power movement's concern with respect to the renewal of tribal cultures and traditions. As the chapter shows, Simon Ortiz doesn't celebrate cosmopolitics at the expense of nationalism or tribalism. Nor does he celebrate nationalism without cosmopolitical imaginations. Ortiz's works create common, shared values within oral tradition that call for a unity of American Indians, balanced between tribal, nationalistic heritages and cosmopolitical imaginations.

"Y'all Indians": Oral Tradition Calls for Land, Unity and Resistance

Simon Ortiz's presence in the NIYC combined political and literary aspects as he developed political contacts and collaborations with other activists and writers, extending

outwards from the Albuquerque-based group into the nation-wide Red Power movement. The Acoma writer also developed his ethics and aesthetics by combining his tribal heritage and Red Power political ideals that mostly depended on Indigenous values, with a stress on communal knowledge and stories derived from tribal lands and communities. In the 1973 policy statement of NIYC that Ortiz printed in *ABC*, tribalism and nationalism were identified as significant goals, which stressed the retention of tribalism, land, and natural resources: “NIYC believes in tribes. We believe that one’s basic identity should be with his tribe. . . . Survival of Indians as a people means the survival of Indians as a Community. A Community is the interdependence of Indian people from which flows our religion and our sense of well-being. . . . The wisdom of living this way for thousands of years has taught us this” (3). As the statement indicates, tribal communities are a fundamental base for the survival and continuance of Native Americans and their culture and tradition. The extension of the tribal community to a national Indian community and brotherhood was another important feature. As the NIYC’s membership consisted primarily of young Indians from reservation and rural Indian communities, its activities focused on the problems of these communities, which tended to have retained that territorial base that the NIYC regarded as the basis for tribalism. The land base implied significant elements of traditional cultures and value systems and tribal ethnic identities that would continue to be paramount within NIYC ideology, which defines “nationalism” as a “brotherhood” among all tribes of Indians: “NIYC will make itself into an effective institution that will foster brotherhood among tribes . . . brotherhood of all Indians” (ibid.). Such a philosophy is informative of Pan-Indigenism along tribal people as key to the NIYC’s strategic political alliance for resistance.

As a traditional and modern organization, NIYC asserted “moral upbringing,” with mentorship from native communities, which made it somewhat more “conservative” than AIM (Ortiz interview with Kim). As a national organization, AIM arose in the urban setting of Minneapolis, Minnesota, where it mainly sought to help Indian people overcome problems of adjustment to the city. Although NIYC was also a national organization, headquartered in Albuquerque and with many chapters and branches throughout the U.S., the NIYC emerged as a primarily locally-based organization for Native Americans in reservations and local communities. Just as the two leading organizations differed somewhat in their origins, so did they differ in terms of their focused issues and preferred tactics. Even so, they cooperated in important protests such as the Trail of Broken Treaties in 1972. In contrast to how NIYC stressed tribal lands, sovereignty, and self-determination, AIM focused more on Native people’s employment, housing condition, and living quality. Tactically, AIM mostly used confrontational takeovers and occupations sometimes with violence. NIYC preferred less or non-violent tactics that combined traditional Native American negotiation with peaceful protest actions such as sit-ins, fish-ins and lawsuits along with *ABC*’s journalism.

These differences between the two groups reflect the fact that while AIM lacked a written program, NIYC, by contrast, wrote, produced, and distributed their own newspaper, *ABC*, which voiced, circulated, and propagated their rhetoric and ideals among many Indigenous Americans and others. As Joy Harjo has testified in her tribute essay to Simon Ortiz, NIYC and Ortiz had “words” during the Red Power movement, while few Indigenous Peoples had “words” (“Poetry” 48). In agreement with this aspect, Ortiz’s early works balanced Pan-Indigenism and tribalism, combining Pan-Indigenous

alliance and resistance with practices and worldviews that built on his Indigenous knowledge and expression within oral tradition, which stresses the importance of being grounded in Indigenous lands and oral tradition.

Simon Ortiz indicates that Acoma Keres, his first language, along with the experience of oral tradition communicated through that language are elemental to his Indigenous identity and aesthetics: “This early language from birth to six years of age in the Acoma family and community was the basis and source of all I would do later in poetry, short fiction, essay and other works as a storyteller and teacher” (*Woven Stone* 6). He also indicates that his early works are equally based on his Acoma tradition: “When I was working on the manuscript that was to become *Going for the Rain* and *A Good Journey* . . . I was very aware of my formative, adolescent years” (ibid 15). Ortiz was working on the manuscript of the two collections in the early 1970s, at the same time as when he was working on *ABC*. As hinted here, both Acoma tradition and his experience in the Red Power Movement operate in his understanding of the empowerment and unity of Indigenous Americans as coming from tribal values taught and sustained in oral tradition. One of the examples is Ortiz’s emphasis on women. In many titles of poems and remarks in interviews, as we shall see here and there in this chapter, he tends to put “sisters” first when saying “sisters and brothers,” or emphasize female figures. As evident in his later poem “Hihdruutsi, In the Way of My Own Language That is My Name,” in *Out There Somewhere*, Ortiz highlights that he is from the Eagle Clan, his mother’s side, not his father’s Antelope Clan. This shows how was influenced by the Acoma tradition that stresses the importance of the role of women in shaping and maintaining their society, a common value for matrilineage that is found in many Pueblo tribes like the Hopi and

among other tribes as well. Likewise, the NIYC's appreciation of women is notable, as Shreve observes that the NIYC "followed their elders' example in that both men *and* women shaped and led the organization (4).

As such the collaboration with *ABC* developed that broader sense of Pan-Indigenism and cosmopolitics which constitutes Ortiz's later aesthetics with realistic issues and stories of Indigenous Americans as indicated in his remark, "I was always a realist" (*Simon J. Ortiz* 117). Ortiz's rhetoric combined with the philosophy of NIYC was clearly addressed throughout the pages of the newspaper as NIYC and *ABC* engaged in regional and national areas. An editorial entitled "The Death of a Sun" in *ABC* is an example of such Pan-Indigenous articulation. Writing about US corporations' encroachment onto the homeland of Cochiti Pueblos by building a dam, Simon Ortiz engages in a primary concern that Native Americans shared during Red Power: the destruction of Indigenous lands by contemporary US capitalism. In the article, Ortiz calls the Cochiti Project "a monument to the greed of white people":

Cochiti Pueblo is dying. The death cries take on the sound of bulldozers and sales pitches from Great Western Cities. . . . 15,000 years of history come to an end not in the shouts of battle but in the roar of machines. . . . The Cochiti Project goes far beyond Cochiti. In order to provide enough water for the white people's playground, water rights of the surrounding Pueblos will be taken away. Water is the blood of a Pueblo. . . . the land is the flesh of a Pueblo. . . . Tradition is the soul of a Pueblo. If Cochiti dies, it would not be an isolated event; it would affect the other Pueblos like a death in the family" (4).

Combined with factual reportage, poetic metaphors such as "blood," "flesh," and "family" effectively cultivate Pan-Indigenous consciousness, referencing a larger "nation": the lands and resources are fundamental for the people, while protecting the Cochiti land helps protect other tribal lands from US capitalism. Ortiz's tactical use of

“family” shares similar ideas with other Native American nations. For example, as Joseph Bruchac (Abenaki) indicates in his book *Roots of Survival*, in the Abenaki language, the word for “nation” is *Mizi Negewet Kamigwezoi*, meaning “families gather together” (qtd. in Brooks 229). Here, “the activity of nation-building,” Brooks explains, “is not a means of boundary-making but rather a process of gathering from within” (229). In resisting colonial force based on this crucial notion of nation, Ortiz summons the legacy of the Pueblo revolt at the end of the editorial by writing, “Indian leadership . . . always remember that one night in 1680 the Pueblo people revolted and drove the Spanish out of New Mexico. May those white people who will dwell in Cochiti City dream on that” (ibid). This call for unity and action powerfully reverberates as the Acoma writer stresses the importance of continuing the spirit of the Revolt in the new, modern context of the Red Power movement. As Ortiz ruminates in *Woven Stone*, the Revolt was the outcome of the alliance of various “dispossessed, oppressed poor led by the Pueblo Indian people” who “rose against . . . theft of land and resources, slave labor, religious persecution, and unjust tribute demands” (30). This aspect of Ortiz’s literature forms what Fanon calls “fighting literature” or “combat literature” that “calls upon a whole people to join in the struggle for the existence of the nation” (157).

The call for fighting in unity continues in “Our Children Will Not Be Afraid” in *Out There Somewhere*, in which Ortiz evokes traditional Pan-Indigenous alliance in resisting ongoing colonialism:

I am alive, you are alive, we are alive!

. . . .

Let us sing then, let us be lovingly decisive before it is late.

Let us not be consumed by despair that is not ours.

Our children will welcome the call and song into their breasts.

Their dreams will be engendered by Popee, Tecumseh, Crazy Horse,
Chief Joseph, Geronimo, and all our grandmothers and grandfathers.
And they will hear them say their lives are our lives, their hearts our
hearts.

And they will come to know it will not be the thieves, killers, liars
but our people who will have victory! (68-9)

Evoking the well-known historical figures – all of them male leaders of Indigenous Americans who resisted European colonization – is an empowering moment, as these names remind readers and listeners that Pan-Indigenous alliance is an Indigenous tradition: Native Americans “are alive” because of their ancestors’ fighting. Yet, as shown, the naming is not discursive but is in good chronological order as the poet carefully records a history of Pan-Indigenous alliance in this “written” method, poetry. So does Ortiz create a good oral tradition that links the past to the present and to the future: he represents the war leaders, who never saw each other when they were alive, as united in telling their stories to “children” and seeing their “victory” as indicated in the last lines.

Ortiz often employs a direct first person perspective along with a mixed use of the first person plural, “we” or “our,” in his writings as both his newspaper articles and poetry call for the unity of contemporary Native Americans. In “Open Letter to Indian Leaders,” Ortiz writes: “NIYC is an organization of 5,000 Indian young people nationwide. We are all from Indian communities. . . . If our tribal communities disappear, our identities as Indians and our reason for living also disappear” (7). Ortiz contributed to gathering various Native voices from various tribal communities and printing them in a section called “Our Many Voices” or “We have always had these many voices” in many issues of *ABC*. This was an attempt to continue oral tradition in a written form and to collaborate with the readers of the newspaper. In oral tradition, a responsive audience’s participation is essential to the story’s meaning and continuity, indeed to the survival of

the community of storytellers and listeners. Ortiz has articulated these convictions many times: “Without this sharing” by speaker-poet and listener-reader, “in the intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual activity, nothing much happens. . . . [T]he listener-reader has as much responsibility and commitment to poetic effect as the poet. When this effect is achieved, the compelling poetic power of language is set in motion toward vision and knowledge” (*Woven Stone* 151). His use of the first personal pronoun, “we,” is suggestive, as Ortiz retrospectively writes in the preface of *After and Before the Lightning*: “In some instances, my references were to an actual person, who was immediately present with me, and in other instances I was making general, omniscient references” (xiv).

Such a fighting voice that calls for unity within oral tradition is evident in Ortiz’s primary concern for Indigenous lands. In addressing the listeners/speakers, Ortiz in “Traditionalists Call for Unity” delivers the prophetic teaching of Tuscarora elder Mad Bear Anderson regarding sovereignty-based calls for land redress: “everywhere we see the winds of change. When they continue to disregard the treaties – their [Natives’] sacred words and spiritual foundations – the government has become corrupted and will soon collapse” (1). This call for unity expresses the need for Red Power activists’ action upon the shared ideal, to recognize all acts of occupation and protest as connected by the same root: the call for honoring the Treaties that were made between Native Americans and the US government.

Regarding such a politics of the movement, land-based sovereignty and Pan-Indigenism, “power” in the term “Red Power” is understood as “Earth power.” For many Indigenous Americans, telling the stories of tribal homelands through oral tradition are

politics and power. The “power” comes from the sense of homeland, a place that they believe empowers them. Losing the land is losing that power. Simon Ortiz’s many earlier poems reference this understanding of “Red Power.” In “That’s the Place Indians Talk About” in *Fight Back: For the Sake of the People, For the Sake of the Land* (*Fight Back* henceforth), Ortiz urges, “You have to fight / by working for the land and the People.” Significantly, in this call to struggle, the poet evokes the teachings of “elder Paiute man,” Wovoka, who inspired the Pan-Indigenous gathering of the Ghost Dance religion in the 1880s before the Wounded Knee Massacre, effectively making these gatherings into a precursor and an inheritance for the Red Power movement. Like Wovoka, Ortiz foretells what will happen to “the People” when they unite to “fight” for the land for a recovery of Indigenous lands that involves a chain reaction that begins in singing, “It will come, / the moving power of the voice, / the moving power of the earth / the moving power of the People” (329).

Another poem, “Some Indians at a Party,” in *A Good Journey* exemplifies such action in a different way, as Ortiz turns a nuanced reference to tribal lands in “That’s the Place Indians Talk About” into more direct words by specifying various Native American tribes. The poet asks the participants, “Where you from?” They answer: “Juneau / Pine ridge / Sells / Tahlequah / Salamanca / Choctaw / Red Lake / Lumbee / Boston / Wind River / Nambe / Ft. Duchesne / Tesuque / Chinle / Lame Deer / Seattle / Pit River / Brighton Res / Vancouver / Parker” (219-20). The poet’s naming various etymological and metonymical names of tribal lands before European contact and the establishment of reservations represents different American Indian nations from all directions in the US. The summoning reminds the readers that many place names in the US have Indigenous

heritage and origins, as is evident in Seattle and Vancouver, which refer to tribal homelands where many Pacific Northwest Native tribes such as the Klickitat, the Chinook, and the Spokane lived for more than a thousand years. The poet's introducing himself as an "Acoma" at the closing intensifies this aspect: "Acoma / the other side, ten miles from Snow Bird. / That's my name too. / Don't you forget it" (220). It is notable that "Acoma" is both traditional and modern as it is one of the oldest *continuously* inhabited communities in North America.

As such, Ortiz's tribal heritage and value, "Acoma," constitutes the center of the writer's working toward the sense of Pan-Indigenous unity and land. This aspect is evident in "Eagle," a character in "Howbah Indians," part of which appears as a poem, "Highways," in *A Good Journey*. Eagle is an Acoma and a Korean War veteran, probably of the eagle or antelope clan, based on the relationship with the poet's parents as described in the relevant poem "Highways." In the story, Eagle metaphorizes the unification of all Indians, as he buys a gas station after the war and puts a huge sign emblazoned "Howbah Indians":

"You could read it ten miles away:
WELCOME HOWBAH INDIANS
. . . It made us proud of Eagle You don't have to buy gas from Chevron
or Conoco or anyone else. Coming to San Fidel from the west, topping the
hill, past the Antelope Trading Store, you could see it. I mean it was
practically the whole horizon in the east:
WELCOME HOWBAH INDIANS" (5).

The "Acoma" Indian Eagle's small gas station in the very tiny town of San Fidel, New Mexico, close to Acoma, on old US 66 (contemporary interstate 40), is a metaphor for a sovereign Indian nation and land that is owned and operated by an Indian. Central to this point is the meaning of the Acoma Keres word, "Howbah," in the sign, "WELCOME

HOWBAH INDIANS.” In the prologue of the story, the narrator explains its meaning, which gives an important insight into this story’s Pan-Indigenous perspective:

*One night I jumped out of bed suddenly.
“Howbah Indians,” I said.
“What?” my wife asked.
“I just remembered.” I felt good for remembering,
and I wrote it down on a notepad.
Howbah Indians.*

*“What were you doing?” she asked later.
“I was remembering Eagle,” I said.
And then I explained.
“It means you all Indians,
like you Oklahoma folks say: y’all” (4).*

Many places, languages, peoples and traditions are meaningfully interconnected with real life figures and metaphors: an Acoma narrator (Simon Ortiz, who is from the Eagle clan), a Muskogee/Creek (ex)wife (Joy Harjo) and her cultural heritage, “y’all,” and Eagle who welcomes all Indians from the West with the Acoma Keres, “*Howbah*.” The traditional Pan-Pueblo culture affirms this formation of triangular, Eagle-Howbah-all Indians, relationship: “in all the pueblos,” Edward Dozier (Santa Clara Pueblo) writes, “eagles” are “regarded in a ritual context as essentially human” and are “revered for their swiftness, flight, endurance, and their penetration of tremendous heights. Their feathers are probably the most prized and the most ritually important” (160). Ortiz applies this worldview in a poem, “What’s Your Indian Name?” in *Going for the Rain*, where the poet describes trying to teach Raho, his son, that “the eagle is a whole person / the way it lives; / it means it has to do with paying attention to where it is” (7-8). When the narrator in “Howbah Indians” says, “It made us proud of Eagle,” this evokes traditional culture and pride in the symbol of eagle which represents “all Indians.” Indeed, the memory of such an Eagle empowers and unites many Indians, as the narrator stresses: “when the

guys talk about Eagle now, they say his name in Acoma Keres. ‘Dyaamih.’ They always spread their arms and hands full out, describing and seeing that bright red and yellow sign on the horizon! WELCOME HOWBAH INDIANS They laugh and laugh for the important memory and fact that it is!” (7)

However, Ortiz does not romanticize such unity among the Indians: he also represents a tragic moment at the end of the story, when Eagle is found brutally murdered, yet his case is uninvestigated: “the government police from the Bureau of Indian Affairs never bothered about it very much. They never did investigate what happened. It was winter that time” (7). Eagle becomes the portrait of all Native Americans who are lost and ignored in *their* lands, while the seasonal indication, “winter,” summons the memory of many massacres of Native Americans, including Sand Creek and Wounded Knee, and contemporary murders and crimes against the people, all of which were ignored. The narrator implies that the story of Eagle is no different from that of other Natives in oral tradition and in written history. Ortiz demonstrates this point in an interview: “When you talk with one person, and the person tells you his or her story, you’re not just hearing one person’s story, you’re hearing the whole story of their community, the people, the *Hano*. The Pueblo sense of identity is [that] . . . your identity is part of the whole, so any person’s story is really part of a whole” (Ortiz interview 1 with Kim).

As seen in the case of Eagle, in *Fight Back*, Ortiz stresses that in oral tradition tragic, traumatic events such as “war, crisis, and famine are spoken about” and that “the oral tradition does not ignore bad times” (55). Ortiz emphasizes how such inclusion will “impress upon those hearing that there are important lessons, values, and principles to be learned” (56). Ortiz particularly indicates the relationship between colonialism and oral

tradition in “Our Homeland: A National Sacrifice Area” by writing that Pueblo oral tradition records a time of change, “a change that was bent upon a kind of destruction that was total and undeterred and over which they seemed to have no control” (346). That change, indeed, was the coming of European and, later, US military, political, religious, and economic systems.

Ortiz was not alone, of course, in working with and drawing from oral tradition to call for unity and raise consciousness among Indigenous Peoples during the Red Power movement. As discussed in the introductory chapter and chapter 2, despite the hardship during Relocation, the tribal people empowered themselves as one people and returned with Red Power. Central to this transformation is sharing communal stories and experience within oral tradition, whether seriously or humorously. Often, this process appears in Red Power newspapers. In 1971 when Ortiz was working with *ABC, Warpath* issued an article, “Attention Indians . . . Learn the True Facts of Relocation.” With biting humor this article derides the US federal policy and its detrimental results: “WHY LIVE IN POVERTY ON YOUR RESERVATION WHEN YOU CAN LIVE IN POVERTY IN THE BIG CITY? . . . We’ll take you away from the OUTDATED CUSTOMS of your tribal homeland and drop you in an EXCITING SLUM! You’ll be ON YOUR OWN, without friends or money. . . . YES, YOU’LL LEARN THE EXCITEMENT OF LIVING IN A CITY – OVERCROWDING! POLLUTION! CRIME! . . . contact your BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS TODAY!” (3) Pretending to be a government announcement, the article vividly sums up the communal stories of and experiences in Relocation while mocking the colonial intentions behind the policy.

Like many Red Power activists, Ortiz was concerned with the effects of Relocation. Simon Ortiz's poem, "Relocation" in *ABC* (which was printed in later collections, *Naked in the Wind* and *Going for the Rain*) shows a deep understanding of the issue. Through soliloquy, the speaker dramatizes the situation of relocated Native Americans and, more broadly, of entire Indigenous Peoples in the US:

Don't talk me no words,
Don't frighten me
for I am in the blinding city,
The lights,
the car,
the deadened glares
tear my heart
and close my mind

Who questions my pain,
the tight knot of anger
in my breast?

I swallow hard and often
and taste my spit
and it does not taste good.
Who questions my mind?

I came here because I was tired,
the BIA taught me to cleanse myself,
daily to keep a careful account of my time.
Efficiency was learned in catechism;
the sisters [nuns] spelled me god in white.
And I came here to feed myself –
Corn, potatoes, chili, and mutton
did not nourish me they said.

So I agreed to move.
I see me walking in sleep
down streets, down streets gray with cement
and glaring glass and oily wind,
I cheated my children to buy.
I am ashamed.
I am tired.
I am hungry.
I speak words.

I am lonely for hills.
I am lonely for myself. (11)

By appropriating the urban poetic tradition of the flâneur, the speaker embodies communal and ordinary feelings that relocated Native Americans might have had, wandering city streets in the US. He relates those feelings to many factors, including US Federal politics, “BIA” and “nuns,” who represent different aspects of colonial degradation. In the *Naked in the Wind* version, Ortiz adds an epigraph to the poem that defines Relocation: “since the mid-fifties, it has been official Fed policy to remove Indians from their rural homelands by issuing one-way tickets under the ‘Relocation’ program” (19). He clearly indicates the malicious nature of the program as a forced assimilation that coaxes American Indians to abandon their homelands and their tradition and culture. The word “cleanse” indicates this process, along with the deceptive promise to make Native Americans better off in urban areas, which the Federal government used to hoax them into the program. The narrator’s distressed remark, “I see me walking in sleep,” is suggestive of how the Federal policy operated only to turn Native Americans into walking-dead in the cities.

In resisting Relocation, the poet seeks to awaken “Red Power” by recalling Indigenous homelands: when he articulates “hills,” it would remind Native Americans of hills in their own tribal lands. As Fixico indicates, for Indigenous Peoples, power comes from specific Indigenous “places,” where they have their physical and spiritual bond with the earth, especially their homelands, as he writes: “Stories involve place, usually homelands with deep human attachments. Homelands, especially in our minds, can never be taken away as long as the Indian mind wants to recall such places. . . . Places become significant in personal ways, and there are places with power such as sacred sites”

(*American Indian Mind* 30-1). To empower themselves, Indigenous Peoples need to recall homeland through “stories” within oral tradition, which contains the knowledge of homeland.

Ortiz similarly understands how Indigenous oral tradition within the sense of homeland works for Indigenous Peoples: connection leads to empowerment. Simon Ortiz’s remarks in the preface to *Out There Somewhere* is indicative; “while I have physically been away from my home area, I have never been away in any absolute way” and “we also continue to be absolutely connected socially and culturally to our Native identity” (not-paginated). This is in tandem with his warning in “Native Heritage: A Tradition of Participation” that without the sense of Indigenous “heritage” based on homeland there is no sense or identity of “Indians”:

Native People will fight to the death to maintain their belief in their Native culture and its traditions. . . . When the Native American past is the crucible of Native American Existence, it is the truth, no matter how much Americanism through U.S. education and culture has tried to indoctrinate and acculturate Native Americans. ‘We are Indians’ is a cry of affirmation and assertion, and it is a War cry of resistance. (94)

Ortiz’s remark on Native people’s fighting “to the death” in maintaining their identity informs the process of empowerment. For him, assimilation is a real death of Native Americans, while fighting “to the death” is a way of survival as an Indigenous person. In Ortiz’s words, the speaker desperately cries for life, resisting the walking-dead of “Relocation,” “I am lonely for hills / I am lonely for myself,” is heard as an act of recovering oneself. By intentionally speaking the “words” in the poem, the poet evokes the landscape of his homeland: he revives his *life* by connecting himself, “myself,” to the homeland, as “hills” denote one’s real/physical homeland, and a symbolic homeland

referring to Indigenous culture and identity centered in Indigenous mind. The crying resonates not as a pessimistic lament, but as a “War cry of resistance.”

As indicated in “Relocation,” which arouses the sense of homelands, Ortiz profoundly understands “the efficacy of shared stories as a potent means for individual and community integration and health, especially in light of the appalling prolongation of Indigenous marginalization and invisibility in the United States” (Ramírez 40). Many other Red Power activists shared such functions of oral tradition in written forms. The influential Sioux activist-scholar Vine Deloria, for instance, addressed the readers through a story in order to effectively invoke the communal issue of land redress. In *Custer Died for Your Sins*, Deloria relates how a white man in New York invited an old chief to his dinner at a fancy restaurant because he likes the chief. The old chief ate a steak quickly. However, the chief “still looked hungry. So the white man offered to buy him another steak. As they were waiting for the steak, the white man said. ‘Chief, I sure wish I had your appetite.’ ‘I don’t doubt it, white man,’ the chief said. ‘You took my land, you took my mountains and streams, you took my salmon and my buffalo. You took everything I had except my appetite and now you want that. Aren’t you ever going to be satisfied?’” (161). The chief’s hunger is presented as a metaphor for many Indigenous Americans’ longing for tribal lands.

Simon Ortiz explores a similar theme in “Hunger in New York City” in *Going for the Rain*. Conjuring up urban images akin to those of “Relocation,” the poet has listeners ponder a basic instinct of humans, “hunger,” in terms of Native epistemology and spirituality:

Hunger crawls into you
from somewhere out of your muscles

or the concrete or the land
or the wind pushing you.

It comes to you, asking
for food, words, wisdom, young memories
Of places you ate at, drank cold spring water,
Or held somebody's hand,
or home of the gentle, slow dances,
The songs, the strong gods, the world
you know.

That is, hunger searches you out.
It always asks you,
How are you, son? Where are you?
Have you eaten well?
Have you done what you as a person
of our people is supposed to do?

And the concrete of this city,
the oily wind, the blazing windows,
the shrieks of automation cannot,
truly cannot, answer for that hunger
although I have hungered,
truthfully and honestly, for them
to feed myself with.

So I sang to myself quietly:
I am feeding myself
with the humble presence
of all around me;
I am feeding myself
with your soul, my mother earth;
make me cool and humble.
Bless me. (48-9)

The “hunger” in this poem is mental and spiritual longing for Indigenous identity, culture, and land, rather than a certain physical status. This communal experience of Native people arises from discontent with metropolitan life and culture, as the poet affirms that they “cannot / truly cannot, answer for that hunger” in the fourth stanza. Ortiz reflects this point in “Blessings,” in *A Good Journey*, a poem that tells what happened “at a civil rights fundraising function in 1969.” In the poem, to some sympathetic non-natives who

ask questions such as “How much gas do you need for a tractor? For three tractors?” and “How much would it cost our foundation?” the poet declares: “We are not hungry for promises of money / nor for anyone to write us / carefully written proposals. / We are hungry for the good earth, / the deserts and mountains growing corn. / We are hungry for the conviction / that you are our brothers and sisters . . . / The grass of this expensive lawn / and the drinks make me feel / a stranger and my acute hunger. . . . / my son is hoping with his smile / not to be hungry tomorrow” (112). Dazzling urban industrialization and circumstances can’t satisfy an Indigenous mental, cultural, and spiritual hunger, asserts the poet, in “Hunger in New York City.”

The poet proposes that Indigenous Americans need to “feed” themselves. In suggesting one such way of self-nourishment for an Indigenous person, the poet conjures up traditional practice with a question in the third stanza: “Have you done what you as a person of our people is supposed to do?” Here, “hunger” is personified as the voice of an elder, like a grandparent, from the past and from Indigenous homelands, a voice calling out to and seeking a lost child, “son,” to return to “places you ate at,” that is, “home.” Only that spiritual return and connection to “home” could appease one’s “hunger,” as “home” and “mother earth” metaphorize the embrace of a mother and family. One can still participate in Indigenous tradition wherever he goes as long as he maintains such connection. Such an empowering moment is a prayer at the closing of the poem that asks “mother earth” to “make me cool and humble. / Bless me.” Andrew Wiget indicates that this prayer “resembles a calm and collected plea for peace and reassurance” (89).

Central to this collective prayer is the attitude of humility, a reappearing concept in many of Ortiz’ poems that refer to an Indigenous worldview in oral tradition, reflecting

a humanistic value for stories that involve a bigger community. The poet feels humble in stories because “stories are bigger than me and you” (Ortiz interview with Kim). Significantly, this humility in humanistic vision significantly differs from a colonial narrative’s working towards an all-encompassing, totalizing humanism. Resistance to such a narrative is the line, “I sang to myself quietly,” in the last stanza of “Hunger in New York City,” which evokes Walt Whitman’s singing a hundred years ago, “I celebrate myself, and sing myself,” in “Song of Myself” (1). Though both poets’ “self” refers to one of the common, collective people, Ortiz’s “self” engages in a different historiography. Whitman’s “self” informs the aspiring vision and dream of American democracy, freedom, and industrialization among generic “Americans” in the middle of nineteenth century, Ortiz’s “self” addresses dislocated and dispossessed “Native” Americans in the middle of twentieth century. In this regard, Ortiz’s “self” is *dissatisfied*, drawing a stark contrast with Whitman’s who sings, “I sing myself. . . . I am *satisfied*. . . . I see, dance, laugh, sing” (3, emphasis added).

The poet reaffirms such historiography later in *From Sand Creek* where he accuses Euroamericans and their Manifest Destiny “in sarcastic defiance” (Ortiz, email to Kim): “they came westward, / sullenly insisting / that perhaps, O Whitman, / O Whitman, he was wrong / and had misread the goal / of mankind. / And Whitman / who thought they were his own – / did he sorrow? / did he laugh? / Did he, did he?” (81) As evident, like other Red Power activists, Ortiz recognizes Relocation and forced assimilation imposed upon Native Americans as a betrayal of humanism, the very humanism that Euroamericans like Whitman were vainly praising. For Euroamericans, Western expansion meant progress and blessing and the promise of prosperity, but this ideal “ran

counter and destructively over and through Indigenous homelands, culture, and Existence” (Ortiz, “Dissertation,” email to Kim). The same “America” yields different visions, recalling what Edward Said calls “discrepant experiences” which indicate colonized subjects’ ambivalent relationship to “colonial” humanism (31-43).

“Indians are Everywhere”: An Indigenist in Motion, across the Sacred Cycle of a Poetic Journey, and Decolonization

Red Power’s efforts towards the political, cultural, and literary resurgence of Native American as a whole people appear throughout Simon Ortiz’s early poems in *Naked in the Wind*, *Going for the Rain*, and *A Good Journey*. Particularly suggestive is his self-portrayal as an “Indian” who takes off, traveling across America in search of other “Indians.” This poetic journey reflects Simon Ortiz’s life-changing travel in the late 1960s to the early 1970s (interview 1 with Kim). Meaningful transformation occurs in this poetic journey of looking for Indians: the poet witnesses specific tribal landscapes and natural environments, visits various tribal communities and meets people. Talking and listening to them, he develops a witness to their contemporary predicaments, shares their stories, and they bless each other in oral tradition. By doing so, the poet envisions the renewal and continuance of American Indians, part of the representation of poetic decolonization.

Particularly instructive is the circular pattern of the travel that Ortiz draws in *Going for the Rain*, which I read as decolonizing. The collection consists of four parts – “Preparation,” “Leaving,” “Returning,” and “The Rain Falls” – preceded by a prologue that sets the tone for the entire collection. Ortiz sings:

Let us go again, brother; let us go for the *shiwana*.
Let us make our prayer songs.
We will go now. Now we are going.
We will bring back the *shiwana*.
They are coming now. Now, they are coming.
It is flowing. The plants are growing.
Let us go again, brother; let us go for the *shiwana*. (xiii)

The song summons the Shiwana (rainmakers), who return from the other world to bring blessings to the land and the people to renew all things, in the Pueblo belief. The prologue establishes an attitude of prayer and prepares the reader to understand that this sacred journey will result in the speaker's maturation as an Indigenous person. To explain how the travel achieves that process, Ortiz writes after the prologue: "A man leaves, he encounters all manner of things. He has adventures, meets people, acquires knowledge, goes different places, he is always looking. Sometimes the traveling is hazardous; sometimes he finds meaning and sometimes he is destitute. But he continues; he must. His traveling is prayer as well, and he must keep on" (xiii). During the journey, there are many stories that establish meaningful relations with other Indigenous Peoples at significant places.

In that regard, returning home matters more to this journey, as the themes that emerge in the song center around home, around the Acoma people and their belief and worldview. Dozier observes that "the Pueblo Indian" considers his "pueblo," that is, his home, "the 'center' of the universe" as many things, including "ceremonials," evolve around "one's own pueblo" (209). Reflecting this Pueblo cosmology, Ortiz in the prologue implies that while eventually finding himself in a larger community of Indigenous Peoples, the poet must return to his home as an Acoma to serve his people and communities with the newly-obtained knowledge and stories. The poet writes: "A

man returns, and even the returning has moments of despair and tragedy. But there is a beauty and there is joy. At times he is confused, and at times he sees with utter clarity. It is all part of the traveling that is a prayer. There are things he must go through before he can bring back what he seeks, before he can return to himself” (xiii). Returning is a confirmation of one’s identity and heritage, which will bring “shiwana.” Also, it marks a new beginning, as Ortiz reaffirms in Pueblo belief: “The cycle has been traveled; life has beauty and meaning, and it will continue because life has no end” (ibid).

This circular pattern as a metaphor is at odds with dominant narratives found in most of Western literature. Though focused on novels, Teuton’s observation about this “returning” theme in Native American literature includes the insightful indication that such texts are not like European novels, which “celebrate leaving home to develop one’s character, the Native novel often relies on the opposite movement,” that is “returning.” (*Red Land* 36) Indeed, Abel in Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn*, Tayo in Silko’s *Ceremony*, and a Blackfeet character in Welch’s *Winter in the Blood* all return to their homes, tribal reservations, and stories begin there. Ortiz’s poetic speaker too returns home, yet that home is not a reservation but the relatively big city of “Albuquerque,” as is evident in “Albuquerque Back Again: 12/6/74” (79). This reflects the poet’s belief that stories must continue in urban areas, as “Coyote” exists there to guide urban American Indians too.

For Ortiz, one’s life is a part of many lives, which he shows in how he develops Indigenous stories so that they regenerate other stories in oral tradition. He explains this process in an interview with Lucero: “you have to look at people who are not part of your personal experience because we know that there are more worlds beyond the Indigenous.

Ultimately, as you go on this road, then you want to find new experiences, new peoples that you have to address as well” (*Simon J Ortiz* 159). This process of meeting “new people” and creating new stories starts from Indigenous stories and perspective.

Indigenous knowledge, particularly Pueblo expression, as Silko indicates, “resembles something like a spider’s web – with many little threads radiating from the center, crisscrossing each other” (48-49). As long as the stories empower them, Indigenous Peoples are at the center of the process like a spider-web; this Indigenous spider-web reaches beyond Indigenous territories to include others in stories. Indigenous storytelling represents a timeless process of story-making much as a spider’s web, which is flexible and discursive in moving outward and across in diverse directions, but always from a stable “spiritual” center. This is a different process from what Western European linear perspective and expression forms – the *Alpha* and the *Omega* or the beginning and the end.

In relation to the Pueblo perspective of stories, Ortiz in *Naked in the Wind*, *Going for the Rain* and *A Good Journey* attempts to reclaim the land of America, using poetry to symbolically draw all four directions of the land. Ortiz’s move echoes the politics of the Occupation of Alcatraz that sought to recolonize or decolonize America as a Native territory, a rhetorical gesture referencing broken treaties made during American Expansion. Rather than moving directly from the east to the west on the way home, the speaker moves discursively; he visits various places in the northeast, as is described in such poems as “Northern Maine,” “Ithaca, New York,” and “Upstate,” which take place in Montreal, Canada and New England, in *A Good Journey* and “Hunger in New York City” and “Traveled All the Way to New York City” in *Going for the Rain*. Then he goes

to places in Deep South such as Arkansas, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi, as is described in the series of poems in “*Travels in the South*” in *Going for the Rain*, and Texas in “A Letter to Alcatraz: Texas 1970” in *Naked in the Wind*. The poems trace and find “Indians” not only in the west but also in the North and South, giving the lie to the popular belief that American Indians are a “vanishing race” found only in some reservations in the American “West.” In “the Creek Nation East of the Mississippi” in *Going for the Rain*, Ortiz vehemently affirms this knowledge: “Once, in a story, I wrote that Indians are everywhere. Goddamn right” (35).

Informing such geographical, locational finding are the four cardinal directions that are deeply rooted within the oral tradition of all Native American tribes, including the Pueblo, Navajo (Diné), Lakota, and Cherokee among others. Tribal nations in the Southwest (including Acoma) have shared and maintained their belief in the spiritual power of the four sacred mountains with regard to the cardinal directions in the interlocking areas of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah. The directions served the people as a navigating map in a vast cosmos. Ortiz exemplifies this oral tradition in a poem, “Spreading Wings on Wind,” in the last section of *Going for the Rain*, “The Rain Falls.” Looking down on a plane “from Rough Rock to Phoenix” in the winter of 1969, the poet says, “The Hopi humanity . . . / is theirs and ours,” and sees ““Those mountains / over there, see their darkness / and strength, full of legends, / heroes, trees, the wind, Sun.”” (86). Then, he makes a meaningful connection between the four directions and the four mountains by *articulating* their names:

East, West, North, and South.
Those Directions and Mountains.
Mountain Taylor, San Francisco Peak,
Navajo Mountain, Dibentsaa. (86)

This cosmology in the cardinal directions from the four sacred mountains, works as an important metaphor for Ortiz's many travel poems. Ortiz speaks of how poetry based on oral tradition helps him navigate in the contemporary world as an Indigenous person: "When the poems came about and I wrote them . . . I felt like I was putting together a map of where I was in the cosmos" (*After and Before* xiv).

Seeking the guidance of oral tradition in modern society is evident in "POEM," a long narrative poem that he published in *ABC* in 1970. In "POEM," a speaker struggles at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, trying to locate where he wants to go by looking at a "monitor" where the information of flights, which he "can't figure them out" (6). When he asks a ticket agent, he answers "it will be announced on the monitor" (6). Then, the speaker tells himself:

I don't trust his answer
(my grandfather used to know where he was going
by looking at the stars, mountains, the wind,
but in this building he would have problems) . . .
nobody knows where anybody is,
maybe nobody knows where anybody's going (6).

Unlike many people in modern society, the poet can remain aware in a moving polis by remembering to be rooted within fundamentals – people, places, and knowledge – that refer to his Indigenous identity.

As such, Ortiz proposes that although set in motion, an Indigenous person would never be lost as long as he remembers the specifics of the cosmos that he comes from, which includes elements such as the four mountains. The poet verifies this point in "Albuquerque Back Again: 12/6/74," a poem that marks the end of his long journey of searching for Indians across the US, particularly after a stay in Ft. Lyons VAH, where he was treated for his alcoholism. Upon returning, he tells a story of home and of his

daughter, Rainy Dawn, who sleeps. This peaceful atmosphere makes him “Look to see/ the mountains, and they are there.” Confirming his location in the cardinal directions that the four mountains indicate, reminding himself of his cultural, spiritual, literary resources for the journey, he imagines that “coyote” looks at the same “mountains” and tells him ““We’ll see you again.”” All these elements make him realize “safety, strength / and the ability to see beauty” and pray for them (79).

Such renewal and empowerment by the rediscovered “beauty” of the four sacred mountains informs the decolonization of Native Americans’ consciousness in terms of colonial historiography. As Krupat suggests, this directionality involves “north-south/south-north” which works as “an ideological subversion of the hegemonic Euroamerican narrative, whose geographical imperative presumes an irresistible (“destined”) movement from East to West” (88). Krupat’s example is drawn from Silko’s *Almanac of the Dead*, a novel that exemplifies Pan-Indigenous politics as it envisions decolonization by representing the alliance and march of various minor, ethnic, Indigenous groups across the Hemisphere, from all cardinal directions that highlight North and South.

In the 1970s (long before Silko’s novel was published in 1992) Simon Ortiz had already hinted at the potentially subversive power of directionality in “Valley of the Sun.” This poem alludes to a Pan-Indigenous figure that appears in a communal oral history among *many* ancient Native Americans in the Southwest and Central America. In the poem, the poet and his family drive “from the Grand Canyon . . . / down through Prescott early in the morning / of Christmas Day . . . / [pass] by John Jacob’s farm” (104-5). The poet tries to locate a sign of “life” and hope on that Christmas Day in the

“Phoenix” area by repeatedly asking “Where’s the Sun that feels so good?” (105) Finding that “there are only lines / of lettuce converging at the far end,” the poet begins to tell his son, Raho, a story, in the hope of renewal:

There are stories about Montezuma.
He came from the south, a magnificent man,
a warrior, a saint, generous and gentle.
He carried a golden cane, they say,
and touching earth, green things would spring up,
and he led animals and people to water
he tapped out of solid stone.
There are these stories. (105)

In this conscious revival of the cultural, political, and oral figure, Montezuma, who is from the *south*, while the poet and his family are from the *north*, a meaningful alliance among many people, myths, histories, and places is made. This alliance works against the Western mythology of “Christmas Day.” In the myth of many Pueblos, including Acoma, Laguna, Taos, and Zuni among others in New Mexico, and of the Pima and Tohono O’odham (Papago) people in Arizona, Montezuma is considered a heroic god-like figure that renews the Indigenous lands. Over time he has been gradually used as an Aztec figure that is from the areas of ancient Mesoamerica and thus features politically to represent Aztlán, a legendary original homeland of Mesoamerican civilization. The Chicano movement, which parallels the Red Power movement in 1960s and 70s, advocated Aztlán to legitimize its claim for the ancient homeland of Native Americans, Chicanos, and Aztecs.² Ortiz’s inclusive performance of oral tradition thus alludes to such Pan-Indigenous resistance and decolonization.

Ortiz’s representations of Indigenous speakers exemplify the “rooted cosmopolitan” who celebrates his culture and identity as an “Indian,” while willingly

² See Bandelier 319-26; Appelgate 171-78; Gutiérrez 172-90.

communicating and interacting with others in a broader cosmos. Simon Ortiz asserts this figure in “Hihdruutsi, In the Way of My Own Language That is My Name,” in *Out There Somewhere*, a poem that celebrates Ortiz’s Acoma Keres name and heritage:

Hitdruutsi. I am of the Eagle People.
Aacqu is my home.
I am of the Acoma people.
That is the way therefore I regard myself.
I cannot be any other way or person.
You must learn this well.
That is the way therefore you will recognize me.

When you see me somewhere to the north, west, south, east,
that is the way you will recognize me.
You will say: Why that is Hihdruutsi!
I wonder where he has been traveling at?
I wonder if he has been well?

And then you will say:
How are you, Hihdruutsi!
Have you been well?

Yes, that is the way then you will recognize me. (95-96)

While Hihdruutsi moves and is seen *everywhere*, meeting and being greeted by various people in all directions, he remains an Acoma, his native identity expressed through his Acoma name, called such from the center of cosmopolitan environment where the speaker urges readers to name and recognize him and thus work toward Native self-representation and self-determination everywhere. Acoma oral tradition supports such cosmology and epistemology, as Ortiz voices in an interview: “The oral tradition is the foundation of my own identity. The fact that my name is Hihdruutsi comes from the oral tradition, the name that I was given when I was a child, after I was born when my

grandfather or my grandmother took me and presented me one early morning to the sun”
(Manly 366).³

“I like Indians!”: Oral Tradition Heals the People and Decolonizes Them from Stereotypes

During the Red Power movement in 1960s and 70s, Indian stereotypes were produced and reproduced by popular media based on and reinforcing the dominant narrative and consciousness established by US colonialism. This circumstance left Native Americans entangled in at least three images, namely: the “savage” and violent warriors; the romantic “vanishing race,” (consistently developed in Edward Curtis’s representations), and finally, if not vanished, then “drunken” and stupid. Plains Indians such as the Sioux appear as alive in “Hollywood” films where the popular understanding of them as pre-modern or “savage” prevails. Even when some contemporary films describe a new, “modern” image of American Indians, “new” stereotypes enter in, which Red Power activists and intellectuals strongly resist in various ways, for reasons that Vine Deloria indicates: “The American public feels most comfortable with the mythical Indians and stereotype-land who were always THERE. These Indians are fierce, they wear feathers and grunt. Most of us don’t fit this idealized figure since we grunt only when overeating, which is seldom. To be an Indian in modern American society is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical” (2). For Deloria, contemporary Americans Indians were in a psychological dilemma: they can’t help assuming such romanticized

³ The ritual regarding a newborn baby that Ortiz describes here is culturally significant in many Pueblo tribes, including Acoma and San Juan, as it consists of a sacred process that recognizes a baby as Indigenous. See Alfonso Ortiz, *The Tewa World*, pp. 30-31.

images in order to reveal their identity as “real” Indians, yet that action makes them recede into the past when they struggle to regenerate in “modern” society.

Corresponding to that activist-intellectual effort, Simon Ortiz engages in fighting the mainstream belief of Native Americans as “savage.” In the editorial, “A Footnote to Racism,” Ortiz critiques setting “a commemorative monument” in a plaza in Santa Fe, New Mexico, dedicated to “the American men who fought in the Union Army during the Civil War,” for “it memorializes the ‘heroes who had fallen in the various battles with the savage Indians in the territory of New Mexico.” Ortiz goes on to indicate: “It was evident that the officials could not comprehend that a certain group of people, American Indians namely, were concerned about the ‘savage Indian’ phrase. . . . There doesn’t seem to be much chance for attitudes changing and prejudices dissolving if monuments to racism continue to stand” (2). That Ortiz has profoundly understood the dilemma that contemporary American Indians faced is evident in his essay, “Flap Flops or Hollywood Plants Indian Corn” in *ABC*, in which he accuses a 1970 movie, *The Last Warrior (Flap)* of presenting stereotypical representation of contemporary drunken Indians: “The Indian movement seeking survival of our tribal communities is treated as a passing joke. . . . The Indian man is portrayed as a drunken fool who has to beg forgiveness from a white whore. The Indian man is portrayed as someone whose horse is smarter than he is” (4). For Ortiz, such an image is mobilized to confirm and maintain the Euroamerican conviction of cultural superiority to Native Americans.

Simon Ortiz’s travel poems in *Going for the Rain* further subvert the contemporary stereotype of Indians that he finds pervasive throughout the US. In a dramatic poem, “I Told You I Like Indians,” Ortiz engages such issues in humorous, but

serious ways. After opening with declaration, “You meet Indians everywhere,” affirming his purpose in the journey, the poet speaks of an encounter with an Indian that “you’d never expect” in Flagler Beach, Florida. When asked once again by an old white woman, ““You’re an Indian, aren’t you?”” the poet answers:

“Yes, ma’am.” I’m Indian alright.
Wild, ignorant, savage!
And she wants me to dance.
Well, okay, been drinking beer
all the way from Hollywood.
We dance something.

You’re Indian aren’t you?
Yeah, jeeesus Christ almighty,
I’m one of them.

I like Indians!

“There’s an Indian around here.”
What? And in walks a big Sioux.
Crissake man, how’s relocation, brother?
He shakes my hand. Glad to see you.
I thought I was somewhere else.
We play the pingpong machine, drink beer,
once in a while dance with the old lady
who likes Indians.

I like Indians!

I *told* you
You meet Indians everywhere. (107)

Two complicated, yet savvy consciousnesses of “Indians” are at work in this poem, which reflects, first of all, the popular belief that “savage” Indians like the Sioux are not expected in such towns as Flagler Beach, Florida, where one at best could encounter an Indian from the Seminole, one of the Five “Civilized” Tribes. But “Relocation” made possible the “unexpected” experience, betraying the belief of white society that “Indians” are to belong to their reservations, as Philip Deloria (Standing Rock Sioux) asserts in his

provocative *Indians in Unexpected Places*. Here, as “relocation” implies, Native Americans set in motion both the poet (Acoma) and a Sioux man in the poem, whose unity has the potential for subversion. Such a moment occurs when the poet actively appropriates the stereotype made by the *old* woman – whose view of Indians the poem bitingly mocks, as manifest in calling another Indian in the bar, “brother,” as if they were “Sioux,” which marks “feathered Indians,” and in the repetitive drunken speech, “Crissake man,” which characterizes “drunken Indians.” The recurring remark that the woman utters while dancing with the two stereotypical Indians, “I like Indians!” overlaps with the poet’s own voice, honed as a fighting tool that mocks the woman’s ignorance of the diversity of American Indians.

While stereotypes persist in mainstream society, they also reflect, in distorted and limited ways, the real life problems that many contemporary Indigenous Americans have suffered in both reservations and urban areas. Alcoholism and the subsequent family dysfunction count among the most urgent concerns. Red Power activists well understood and strived to confront this situation. For example, the Albuquerque-based NIYC was particularly concerned with alcoholism among Indians in neighboring city, Gallup, New Mexico, a city often called “Indian Capital of the World” for its location in the heart of Native American lands, close to the Navajo (Diné) and the Pueblo, where the presence of various tribal peoples and cultures that intersect and converge to form a Pan-Indigenous city. Regarding alcoholism and the relevant imprisonment of Native Americans, many articles of *ABC* criticized the mistreatment of the people by the city police. “What Indians Think of Gallup: Gallup, Indian Capitol of the World” appears in a special report series, “On Gallup, New Mexico,” which argues that such treatment is caused by the conflicts

between Natives and the dominant white society and its control of the economic system that has coaxed many Natives into many bars and subsequent alcohol abuse; one report indicates that “9,000 people a year pass through the Gallup City Jail. Most are of Indian descent” (5). To dramatize the problem, the article delivers a bundle of stories as reported by anonymous, formerly-imprisoned Natives:

The Navajo people don't know nothing. The cops haul them in without telling them their constitutional rights. The Navajos have more rights than anyone. They were in this land first. I haven't heard one cop tell an Indian has rights. . . In 48 days in jail I saw only two white men. One stayed for two days, the other three and a half hours. They get out easy. They got money. . . . The people want to say something, but they are scared. . . . they'd rather go to jail instead. . . . I wish I could do something. . . . My people are pitiful. They don't get nothing. (5-6)

Speaking feelings of anger and powerlessness that many other Native Americans were experiencing in other urban areas, and especially in slums, these stories express an urgent need for the people to take action.

Studying at the University of New Mexico and working as the editor of *Rough Rock News* at Rough Rock on the Navajo (Diné) Nation and as a regional editor of *ABC* for Arizona between 1966 and 1969, Simon Ortiz deeply understood the situation in Gallup. Responding to the newspapers are Ortiz's three “Gallup” poems: “Time to Kill in Gallup,” and “Grants to Gallup, New Mexico” in *A Good Journey*, and “For Those Sisters & Brothers in Gallup” in *Going for the Rain*. In the poems, Ortiz identifies with the anonymous “drunken Indians” who are hopeless, powerless and dispossessed. The poems express anger and bitterness regarding Indian realities in Gallup. In “Grants to Gallup, New Mexico” the poet, returning home from “California” to “New Mexico,” meets a Navajo man who goes to “Gallup” and speaks of the racist attitudes of shopkeepers and authorities in Gallup with a sarcastic tone: “Gallup, Indian Capital of the

World, / shit geesus, the heat is impossible, / the cops wear riot helmets, / 357 magnums and smirks, you better / not be Indian” (116). The strong diction in these lines highlights the violence that the dominant society inflicted on Native Americans. The poet also shows his understanding of alcoholism as the cause for the problem depicted in the last lines: “the bars are standing room only / and have bouncers who are mean, / wear white hats and are white” (ibid.). As indicated in this poem and as did other Red Power activists, Ortiz recognizes “guns” and “alcohol” as two main forces of US colonialism mobilized to “conquer” Native Americans in general. He affirms this point later in *From Sand Creek*: “*Whiskey was only one way and guns another; it was a scheme that did it: scare them, make them dependent and hopeless, sell them anything, tell them it’s for their own good*” (48).

Many Native Americans during the Red Power movement recognized the detrimental aspects of alcohol as another consequence of colonization and oppression both in urban Indian communities and on reservations. Many of them believed that the prudent handling of alcohol to be part of achieving sovereignty and decolonization among the communities. An article, “Drinking Patterns Devastating” in *19 Pueblo News* calls for action: “In order to function as **whole** communities, we need to change our attitudes towards the abnormal use of alcohol. If we as parents, will assume our responsibilities by developing good patterns of alcohol us[a]ge, hopefully our children and their children will follow our example” (7). The article suggests that taking such an attitude is for the continuance of Native Americans toward future generations, as alcoholism often results in child abuse and dysfunctional families, effects which are “devastating” to Indian societies.

Simon Ortiz was well aware of the “destructive impact” and “dangers” that drinking alcohol can cause, damaging the body and the mind: he had a traumatic memory of “the behavior of [his] father and others under the influence of alcohol” and has been a victim of alcoholism himself. As Ortiz indicates, once the damage is done by alcohol it’s impossible to control it: “I was arrogant enough to think I could control it” (*Woven Stone* 23-25). Reflecting this realization, Ortiz tried to decolonize drunken Indians, healing them by way of oral tradition. The Cherokee scholar Qwo-Li Driskill’s metaphor for Indigenous “bodies” here offers a moving vision of the relationship between healing and oral tradition: “It is both our homelands and our bodies that are violated through colonization. If colonization is a kinesthetic wounding, then decolonization is a kinesthetic healing. We carry the wounds of the past in our bodies, and it is through our bodies that we find ways to mend them and continue our lifeways. We must heal historical trauma in order to help heal our nations and homelands. It is in our bodies – and as bodies – that we tell our stories and understand what it means to be Native people enacting decolonization and continuance” (155). As healing and decolonization come from sharing stories, healing bodies is healing homelands.

Simon Ortiz’s other two Gallup poems, “Time to Kill in Gallup” and “For Those Sisters & Brothers in Gallup,” further deliver a moving vision of healing and decolonization. In “For Those Sisters & Brothers in Gallup,” Ortiz deeply identifies with the crushed, “scatter[ed]” “body” of “a dog,” that he finds on the interstate highway leading into Gallup. The scene stuns the poet: “my body and soul shud / dered, o my god. . . . / o my god” (88). The segmented word, “shud /dered,” underscores the trauma inscribed in the poet’s body, as he sees in the dog’s broken body the lacerated bodies of

Native Americans in Gallup and other places. To heal that trauma of the moment and that of other people, the poet takes a ceremonial action: “I . . . threw it / as hard / and as far as I could / away from the Interstate / and prayed and moaned for us” (88). But that ceremony in the reiterating lament, calling on “God” is not efficient, as the poet experiences in that moment a horrible hallucination of a drunken Native woman who once asked him “for a drink” in Gallup and whose body was like “a stuffed dummy” due to the damage of drinking. In desperate need to heal himself, the dog, and the women, he finally calls on Shiwana, the Pueblo rain deity:

Be kind, sister, be kind;
it shall come cleansing again.
It shall rain and your eyes
will shine and look so deeply
into me into me into me into me. (88-9)

The poet invokes Shiwana, hoping that she will renew the damaged bodies. In another poem, “Time to Kill in Gallup,” the healing moment becomes a powerful decolonization of Native Americans as a whole. The poet meets a wretched Navajo woman in a Gallup street, who “gags on wine” and “got ripped, / ripped off / at Liberty Bar” (126). He also witnesses how her “children / have cried too many times” in “pain.” When he envisions renewal among such bleak, hopeless scenes, the woman joins him in singing and finally begins to sing her own song:

Sister. Sister. . . .
I will come back
to you for keeps
after all.
I will, for your sake,
for ours.
The children will rise.
She walks on.
The streets are no longer
desperation.

The reeking vapors
become the quiet wind.
It rains at last.
 You can see
how the Chuska Mountains favor
her dreams
when she walks toward them.
Her arms and legs unlimber.
All her love is returning. . . .
 She sings then,
the water in her eyes
is clear as a child,
of rain.
It shall.
It shall.
It shall.
It shall
be
these gifts
to return
again.
 It will happen again, cleansing.
 The People will rise. (127)

The poet's calling her "sister" marks the beginning of the healing that results from his deep understanding of her pain and loneliness, in a healing that brings empowerment and decolonization. In the midst of this exchange of songs of renewal between him and the woman, the poet includes many other Native Americans by deliberately addressing them, "You," and by directing their focal point in the poem to the woman's *homeland* "the Chuska Mountains." Here, the poet urges readers/listeners to "see" what he sees: not the wretched woman figure but her "dreams" to return to her *homeland* and her "children," that is, to the future. Thus, the song between the two persons on a Gallup street turns into one among "The People" in unity. Silko in a Pueblo perspective explains such touching process that sharing stories brings: "The stories are always bringing us together, keeping this whole together, keeping this family together, keeping this clan together. 'Don't' go

away, don't isolate yourself, but come here, because we have all had these kinds of experiences" (52). This "collective" and collaborative effort will bring decolonization among Native Americans, as Driskill writes: "We can continue oral traditions and imagine new stories for a decolonized future. . . . Song by song and story by story, we suture the wounds of history" (165). In "Returning It Back, You Will Go On" in *Fight Back*, Ortiz affirms this decolonizing vision, singing: "You will go on, life will go on. / That's what the People say. . . . / Until soon, / the jail will not be enough / to hold all the nations of the People, / and they will have risen / They will have risen" (331).

Another travel poem, "*Busride Conversation*," in *Going for the Rain* that likewise touches on Gallup continues the vision of healing and empowerment in terms of sharing stories. Unlike the more prophetic, dramatic expressions of the three Gallup poems, this poem relates a common, everyday conversation within a narrative about how the poet meets an eighteen year-old girl on a bus from Albuquerque to Acoma. A vendor from Santo Domingo, she sells necklaces in the city:

We mention names
to each other,
people we know,
places we've been.

She says, "In May,
I was in Gallup jail
With a girl from Acoma."

I've been there too.

"The cook was an Apache.
He sneaked two chiliburgers
in to us.
He was sure good to us."

She giggles, and I laugh.
She gets off at Domingo Junction.

“Be good,” I say.
“You too,” she says. (39-40)

As indicated, connection is easily made between the two strangers as they share common “people” and “places” as Indigenous persons. That connection becomes stronger when they talk about the same place they have been: “Gallup jail,” a place where an Indigenous person encounters many other Indigenous Americans from “Acoma,” “Apache” and so on. As the poet conveys the overall tone of the poem to readers/listeners through the young girl, the heavy, depressing, and hopeless diction, “jail,” is neutralized: unlike the “drunken” figures in the three Gallup poems, the girl is light and cheerful: though she has already experienced Gallup jail at that age, she makes the poet “laugh” by telling her story in a delightful way.

Healing, decolonizing, and continuing are a creative process in oral tradition – a process in which a new story is made upon the previous stories, which eventually brings Shiwana. Simon Ortiz tells us that “there is always one more story” (*Woven Stone* 177). “It Doesn’t End,” a tribute poem for a fallen fellow NIYC activist, Adelle Stacy (Winnebago), which the poet printed in *ABC* in 1970 and in *Naked in the Wind* in 1971, demonstrates such process. In this resonating poem, by addressing Adelle, the poet addresses Native Americans in general:

it doesn’t end

in all growing
from all the earths
to all skies

in all touching
all things

in all soothing

the aches of all years

it doesn't end.

For Adelle by Indian 1970 (SJO)

As indicated in the healing phrase, “all soothing / the aches of all years,” stories have power to heal and to decolonize Native Americans as a whole from their horrible past of genocide. Stories of and from the past are maintained in oral tradition so that all the people may remember. Ortiz indicates this point in “A Tribeswoman,” an article in memoriam of Adelle, placed next to this poem: “She helped bring NIYC to where it is now in its effort to reach all Indian people, especially the youth of the communities, villages, and reservations. Upon hearing of her death, her friends were dismayed. They remembered her personality, her words, youth, laughter, and her efforts to work with her people” (7). Through the case of Adelle, Ortiz proposes that remembering those “all years” empowers other people remaining: it enables the people to learn from the past, to survive in the present, and to continue forward the future. It is no wonder that Ortiz placed this poem at the end of *Going for the Rain* later in 1976, re-titling it as “It Doesn't End, Of Course,” as if to affirm that the stories of Native Americans in oral tradition will continue, singing for the future.

“It's for All of Us”: Interweaving Stories, Pushing the Boundaries, and Uniting Indigenes in the Hemisphere and Beyond

Many scholars and writers such as Evelina Zuni Lucero (Isleta/San Juan Pueblo) and Brill de Ramírez have noted that Ortiz's ethics and aesthetics in oral tradition are inclusive, that they move beyond exclusive tribalism and nationalism. Lucero notes that Ortiz proposes “the way out of racism, and its byproduct, ethnocentrism or tribalism” as

that tendency “works against hemispheric unity” (24). Ramírez calls Ortiz’s perspective a “global ethic” that is rooted in Indigenous “inclusiveness” (33). Such an appreciation mostly depends on Ortiz’s powerful statement of Pan-Indigenous resistance, appearing in the introduction to *Woven Stone*: “We need to insist on Native American self-sufficiency, our heritage of cultural resistance, and advocacy for a role in international Third World decolonizing struggles, including recognizing and unifying with our Indigenous sisters and brothers in the Americas of the Western Hemisphere” (27). Indeed, Ortiz stresses the importance of going beyond one’s tribe and nation as his works in oral tradition reach out to and identify with other Indigenous Peoples and communities in the Hemisphere and across the world. The Acoma writer practices Red Power’s Pan-Indigenous politics, most recently by participating in cross-border activism, “Indigenous Alliance without Borders.”

In order to better understand Ortiz’s works with regard to specific politics and issues, we need to add Red Power contexts that scholars have overlooked. As the Red Power movement presented a time when tribal people began to recognize their colonial situation in a broader cosmos, the time marked an epistemological transformation for the political concerns of Indigenous Peoples throughout the Americas, who engaged in a realistic appraisal of their own condition in the US. An example of how Red Power activists saw among indigenous people beyond US borders to be suffering from similar predicaments appears in “Slavery, Genocide Stalk Brazil’s Indians.” Here, the United Native Americans’ *Warpath* reports on how “the Brazilian Federal Police” committed genocide against Indians who “had no legal protection” and the police sought to “make room for westward movement of white plantation owners and Service officials going into

business” (13). Native Americans would include many other minorities in their struggle: for instance, in the regular powwow gathering during the Occupation of Alcatraz Island, Native Americans included other minorities such as Chicano people. Red Power newspapers contributed to this change. “MANIFESTO,” published in the *Alcatraz Newsletter*, confirms that Pan-Indigenous unity moves beyond the US: “United Indians of All Tribes call upon our brothers and sisters all across these Americas to hear this, our call and pledge to Indian unity. . . . We will unite! . . . America has a moral obligation before the eyes of all the world to undo the many wrongs inflicted upon our Indian peoples” (2).

At this point, I find Benedict Anderson’s “Nationalism, Identity, and the World-in-Motion: On the Logics of Seriality” suggestive of how newspapers drive nationalism to meet internationalism, as newspapers have “unbound seriality” which is “open-to-the-world plurals” and “makes the United Nations a normal, wholly unparadoxical institution” (120). For Anderson, the newspaper has the potential to connect a national people to other national peoples across borders as many national newspapers report events in other countries by mixing or juxtaposing “local” and “foreign news.” Reading in a newspaper what happened to a country and to certain people might offer a crucial idea to another people, enabling them to feel beyond the nation and “[stretch] out across, and seamlessly mapping, a singular world” (120). Anderson’s idea provides insight into how Native Americans developed their Pan-Indigenous consciousness by engaging in the issues of other Indigenous Peoples in the Americas since 1960s, an aspect that Red Power newspapers reflected and pushed past old boundaries.

ABC was at the forefront of this politics of inclusion, pushing boundaries by having an international news section, for example. The newspaper often covered the urgent situation of Indigenous Peoples in the Americas, focusing on how Indigenous lands and cultures were endangered and how the peoples throughout the Americas were facing genocide. *ABC*'s special reports on these issues in the early 1970s through the early 80s indicate the scope and degree of Red Power activists' identification with other Indigenous Peoples: the newspaper deals with the Katchiquel, Ixile, Quiche, Ketchi and Mam people of Guatemala and with Indian peasants in "Guatemala: The Terror Continues" (4). The Miskito people of Nicaragua are described in "Nicaragua: Mutual Mistrust" (5). Guatemala Indians also appear in "Guatemala's new weapon: Starvation," which asserts that "In the past five years 10,000 of *our* people have been killed in Guatemala" (2, emphasis added).

With the inspiration and help of Alfonso Ortiz (San Juan Pueblo), an important Native anthropologist who taught at the University of New Mexico and belonged to the advisory committee and was a field representative for the NIYC and for *ABC*, Simon Ortiz significantly developed the overt internationalism of *ABC*. Combining poetic devices, his poetry from this time reminds readers that colonial violence has the same form everywhere: for instance, General Custer is a synecdoche in his special report on the genocide of Ache Indians where Simon Ortiz writes that "Custer is alive and deadly in Paraguay" (2).

This Red Power experience continued and developed into Ortiz's contemporary concept of "Indigenous Peoples," with the double plural suffix/consonants. In an interview with McAdams, Ortiz elaborates the concept of "Indigenous":

I purposely and intentionally use the term *Indigenous* to refer directly to Indigenous American peoples because the term is neutral; its meaning is based on Indigenous American peoples being native and/or aboriginal to the lands of their origin. Dai-sthee-stuhtah-ahtyu-shee-hanoh tsee-ehmee Indigenous stuu-tah-ah! Those of us people who are from and of here, these are the ones who are Indigenous! There is no going around this fact. (2)

But Ortiz pushes even more on linguistic, cultural, national, ethnic, and conceptual boundaries – beyond the US and even beyond Pan-Indigenism in the Hemisphere – in order to reach a larger vision in which the term “Indigenous” refers to *all* Indigenous Peoples everywhere and anywhere. Ortiz clarifies this insight in the preface to *From Sand Creek*: “the boundaries are not strictly defined and are not at all limiting. . . . I don’t want them to be” (not-paginated). Ortiz speaks of this vision:

Our struggles as Native people, as Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, always goes beyond us. . . . It’s a worldwide matter because other people have been colonized. . . . Our concerns . . . go beyond our local or regional attention so that we have a sense of what the old people would say, that we are not the only people who are oppressed. And they [the elders] even include, I think, white people, the *Mericano hanoh*, the American people in general. . . . [I]t’s important that you go beyond self-assertion and identify with other Indigenous Peoples, whether it’s in Africa, or the circumpolar areas because we have a worldwide struggle. . . . I think that we can no longer look at ourselves – when I say “we,” I mean Indigenous Peoples, Indian people – we can no longer see ourselves as isolated or exclusive communities. We are part of a larger *Hanoh*. We are the *Hanoh*, the people of this earth, responsible for the earth. . . . [W]e have to constantly remind ourselves that people have to speak for themselves in this age of globalism. (153-5)

Ortiz’s manifesto recalls Fanon’s similar call for anti-colonial Third World alliance, “we [the oppressed] must unite all together everywhere,” a motto that inspires many Black and Red Power activists (xlvii). But Ortiz’s “we” resounds with a more inclusive impact, as it is rooted in oral tradition. By summoning the teaching of the elders of Acoma, Ortiz connects Indigenous perspective to contemporary Indigenous cosmopolitics by reiterating the first person plural, “we.” Essential to this transformative process is the semantics

attached to the Acoma word, “*Hanoh*,” which denotes “peoples” in Ortiz’s combination of Acoma Keres and English. The word broadly means “사람들(들)” or “민중들(들)” with my translation into Korean. While English is troubled with the double plural consonant/suffix, “peoples,” the seemingly idiosyncratic word connotes a cosmopolitan worldview rooted in the Indigenous epistemology of co-existence that includes various “people.” As Ortiz never forgets to tell the importance of speaking for his Indigenous Peoples in terms of decolonization, he constructs the speaker’s authority in the use of Indigenous stories within oral tradition in which the larger concept of “*Hanoh*” operates in such a way.

One of Ortiz’s earliest poems, “A Letter to Alcatraz: Texas 1970,” which appears in his first chapbook, *Naked in the Wind*, alludes to the cosmopolitics of “*Hanoh*.” The poem notes how “*Hanoh*” was manifest in the takeover of Alcatraz. In the first half of the poem, the poet tells stories about *ordinary* people that he meets when visiting rural communities:

when i left the Alabama-coushatta people
it was early morning.
they had treated me kindly, given me food,
spoke me words of concern, thanked me even,
and i touched them, their hands, and promised
i would be back.

when i passed by the Huntsville, texas state pen
i told the Indian prisoners the words of people i had just left
And wished them well and luck and felt humble.
the sun was rising them.

when i got to dallas i did not want be there.
i went to see the bureau of Indian affairs
relocation office and the man behind the desk.
he told me: i don’t know how many Indians
there are in dallas, they come every day.

i talked with ray, a Navajo, he didn't have a job,
Was looking, and he was a welder.
i saw an apache woman crying for her lost life. (16)

Ortiz takes a gesture of writing a “letter” to the people, partly because, in reality, he did not participate in Alcatraz. Although he and his family (his wife and two young children) started a trip to San Francisco by driving in December 1969, he only reached the Grand Canyon and realized that their “car might not be all to make it to the Bay Area where Alcatraz is” (interview 2 with Kim). For Ortiz, telling stories about Indigenous Peoples in the Southeast and in the Texas state “pen” is equivalent to telling stories about the people on Alcatraz. By doing so, he proposes that they are *one* as Native Americans who share the hardship of “relocation” and knowledge and “concern” about their homelands as the Indians of All Tribe (IOAT) on Alcatraz Island were representing. The concrete reference to the “texas state pen” becomes a metaphor, reminding readers of the associated historical fact that Alcatraz Island was likewise a Federal penitentiary where a number of Native Americans were imprisoned from 1873 to 1895, as the epigraph of this poem mentions: “Alcatraz Island, formerly a Fed pen, was reoccupied/reclaimed by Indian people” (16). As the poet directly reminds both the occupiers of Alcatraz and the readers of the poem of the colonial situation that Natives are imprisoned in penitentiaries at much higher rates than whites, wishing “Indians” in the texas pen “well and luck” becomes a way of wishing the same to the people on Alcatraz Island and other Natives.

The latter half of “A Letter to Alcatraz: Texas 1970” shows how Ortiz’s Pan-Indigenism was already in a transitional status and would go further, moving past a limited sense of Pan-Indigenism in order to encompass non-Indigenous Peoples, as when the poet describes meeting black people at a tribal lake, caddo. Significantly, the poem

concludes with his prayer to the sun for all the people under oppression within an Acoma tradition:

When it was evening of the next day
i stopped at a lake called caddo.
i asked a park ranger, who was caddo?
and he said, oh it was some Indian tribe.
i met two black women fishing at the lake.
i sat by them, they were good to be with
they were about seventy years old and laughed,
and for the first time in my life
i cut a terrapin's head off because,
as the women said, they won't let go until sundown.

when it was after *sundown* in east texas, i prayed
for *strength* and the *caddo* and the *black women*
and *my son at home* and *dallas*
and when it would be morning, the *sun*" (16, emphasis added).

The "black women" are elders and are put in a propitious place in this poem, very like that of Indigenous tribal elders: they fish at a tribal lake, make the poet comfortable and relaxed, and they offer him knowledge. In developing this setting, the poet's list of words, "sundown," "strength," "caddo," and "the sun," refer to his imagining a Pan-Indigenous alliance against US colonialism, as the Sun Dance begins at "sundown" and continues to sunrise, and the Caddo people were among many tribes that participated in the Ghost Dance in the nineteenth century and still practice the Ghost Dance today (Thorton 8-9). These two most important intertribal gatherings, the Ghost Dance and the Sun dance, deeply inspired the spirit of the Red Power movement. When Ortiz names the Caddo People, his choice draws a map that unites east, west, south, and north: Ortiz is an Acoma Pueblo from the Southwest, Caddo People are from the Southeast: so do both the Sun Dance and Ghost Dance refer to the Plain Indians in the US mid-north and mid-south.

The growing Indigenous consciousness of the world is well represented in “Travelling,” which appears in the “Poems from the Veteran’s Hospital” section in *A Good Journey*. “Traveling” portrays an Indigenous man who tries to connect with the world, the man “in the VAH Library all day long” who looks “at the maps, the atlas, and the globe, / finding places / Acapulco, the Bay of Bengal, / Antarctica, Madagascar, Rome, Luxembourg. . . Yokohama and then the Aleutian Islands. . . . Cape Cod” (156). During this study of the world by way of maps, atlas, and the globe, this man feels content, in an emotion that comes from his imagination and as his consciousness grows and develops enough to transform into many other figures, while remaining as an Indigenous man:

a faraway glee on his face, in his eyes.
He is Gauguin, he is Coyote, he is who he is,
traveling the known and unknown places,
traveling, traveling. (156)

As in other early poems, this reflects how cosmopolitics exists simultaneously with the Indigenous identity and perspective that the poet carries everywhere he goes, as he imagines himself within the globe itself.

Indigenous cosmopolitics that Ortiz develops and represents involves anti-colonialism, as “Travelling” is a seminal work *From Sand Creek*, which reflects Ortiz’s experience in alcoholism treatment in the Veterans Administration Hospital in Colorado right after he left both the NIYC and *ABC*, between 1974 and 75. In *From Sand Creek*, Ortiz links himself to other Native Americans, Vietnamese, and other Indigenous Peoples by way of the Sand Creek Massacre, a symbol of American expansion along with the My Lai Massacre during the Vietnam War. An editorial entitled, “Genocide,” printed in 1970 in *ABC*, shows Ortiz’s understanding of the massacre, these atrocities, expressed from the

sensibility of anti-Vietnam war sentiment in the US, which the revelations accompanying the My Lai Massacre intensified. His article encourages Native Americans to identify with the Vietnamese: “Indian people were horrified but not surprised at the revelation of the My Lai Massacre in South Vietnam. Seeing the bloody mutilated bodies in *Life* magazine brought back the memory of events in the not too distant past of this country. Indians are not strangers to genocide. For without Indian genocide this country could not have been made safe for mediocracy” (2).

Ortiz also exemplifies anti-colonial interconnections among different peoples in “The Creek Nation East of the Mississippi” in *Going for the Rain*. While traveling near Atmore, Alabama, the poet hears about a Muskogee Creek “Chief Alvin McGee.” He then visits the Chief’s home and shares stories with him (35). After that, they “watch the news on TV” the “election . . . in Alabama” (36). On the following morning, hearing that George Wallace, a controversial Alabama governor who advocated the continued segregation of African Americans during the Civil Rights movement, had been reelected, the poet shares concerns about him with the Chief before he leaves:

Chief Alvin MacGee put his arms around me
and blessed me. I remembered my grandfather,
the mountains, the land from where I came,
and I thanked him for his home, “Keep together,
please don’t worry about Wallace, don’t worry”

I was on that freeway to Atlanta
when I heard about the killing at Kent State.
I pulled off the road just past a sign which read
NO STOPPING EXCEPT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
and hugged a tree. (36)

Ortiz’s words here hint at his inclusive vision, as the poet’s action of hugging the tree represents the hugging of all the peoples, from the young white students who were killed

at an anti-Vietnam war protest at Kent State University in Ohio, to African Americans who were persecuted and to Native Americans who were murdered in a genocide that is still ignored in the US, and to the Vietnamese who were massacred in the Vietnam War. This shows Ortiz's developing philosophy that any peoples under oppression can be sisters and brothers regardless of race or skin color.

Such a philosophy resonates in the closing poem of *From Sand Creek* (1981), where Ortiz clearly mentions, "This America / has been a burden of steel and mad / death," referring to what settler-colonizers driven by capitalism have done to Native Americans (9). Yet he hopefully and prophetically sings at the closing of the book:

That dream
shall have a name
after all,
and it will not be vengeful
but wealthy with love
and compassion
and knowledge.
And it will rise
in this heart
which is our America (94).

Ortiz sings of regenerative power and hope for the next generations of "Americans" in "America" as the "dream" can refer to anyone's dream in the US. The poet initiates the "dream" of peace and harmony with Indigenous "knowledge." He also expects that Indigenous Peoples would not be caught within sadness or anger (or similar feelings of victimhood) that the appalling past of white oppression has caused and would not try to exact revenge on them. The humanistic vision shows the eclecticism and flexibility of oral tradition of Native Americans, and of the Pueblos in particular. As Silko indicates, "Pueblo cultures seek to include rather than exclude. The Pueblo impulse is to accept and

incorporate what works” (6). Silko points to survivance as tactics that Native Americans develop by means of inclusive, adaptive attitudes.

But as we recall the case of “Hunger in New York City,” discussed above, Ortiz well understands that the humanistic vision suggested in the closing poem of *From Sand Creek* is no easy achievement. For Ortiz, survivance requires diplomatic skills, perseverance, and resilience in a new context of the contemporary society. One needs to see the future in the long run, which is a time-consuming, painstaking process. In order to pave the way for Natives to continue resistance, to protect their Indigenous lands, and to foster future generations, fighting often needs to be rather subtle. As Red Power activists profoundly understood this way of survivance, they grounded these primary values in the legacy of well-known chiefs and leaders who survived American expansion in the nineteenth century. For instance, in an article, “Chief Joseph – Indian Hero,” in *Warpath*, Lehman Brightman (Sioux/Creek) argues that even though Chief Joseph would never give up his land by fighting till he dies, he was not romantic: “Chief Joseph demonstrated his love for his land in words and by fighting for it when words failed. . . . Joseph was not against education for his people. He saw also that certain things must change. He was a realist. But he was determined that his people should preserve their heritage, save their lands, and live with dignity in the changing world” (“Chief Joseph” 17).

Simon Ortiz responds to Brightman’s evocation of Chief Joseph by writing a poem, “What His Mind Must Have Trembled Like When He Decided to Head for the Hills in the Midst of Winter and Fight the US.” The poem incorporates Chief Joseph’s famous surrender speech, as delivered after a long and heroic escape and resistance. This poem, which was published only in *ABC* in 1972, opens with emphatic words:

Love & belief: it's awestraking

not for victory
because it's shadows
& glory (foolish, that Coyote, he likes it that way,
but he knows the truth, too.)

but to survive.
O to survive
with all your bones and flesh,
all your true spirit,
dignity,
smiles in your children's faces.
For that and only for that.

Cold hills and snow and wind. When shall it end,
Great Spirit, and the significance of humanity,
Joseph must have thought
& trembled in awful loneliness.

And then it ended. I will fight
no more. It's over.
His soul must have been empty and full.
But it must have been painful.
It's that way. (11)

By identifying with Chief Joseph, the poet expresses what survival implies, as he realizes that surviving is “painful,” as it involves surrendering for a better outcome, as the Chief had to. Such surrender does not mean losing but, rather, adopting another “way,” another fight in continuing and surviving. For Chief Joseph, his surrender was for the “dignity” and “humanity” of his people, which comes from “love & belief,” values more important than becoming a superficial victor in a war that involves the deaths of all his children. Survivance as people in the present and future mattered more to the Chief, as the quote, “I will fight / no more,” in the last stanza refers to the Chief's chief primary concerns: “the little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills, and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are – perhaps freezing to

death. I want to have time to look for my children, and see how many of them I can find” (*Warpath* “Indian Quote” 18). Protecting the lives of “children” as a parent is essential for the future of Indigenous communities. The closing line, “It’s that way,” attempts to apply such a lesson to the contemporary context.

A later poem, “Mama’s and Daddy’s Words,” in *Fight Back* brings Chief Joseph’s teaching of survivance into expressions regarding the “dignity” and “humanity” of the people along with Red Power’s application of teaching and oral tradition. In this poem, anonymous Acoma parents urge their “young people” to “fight / by working for the land and the people” in the imperative sense that “This is the land. / It is our life, your life, / my life, life. . . / Land. Mother. Your breath, living” (329). While acknowledging that “Sure it’s hard, / sure it’s not easy,” they indicate that the fighting is “to show . . . / Compassion for all the People. / Love for all the People” and that “That’s the only way that they’ll learn. / That’s the only way” (330). Here, the words, “compassion” and “love” recall those in the poem of Chief Joseph and in the closing poem of *From Sand Creek* in reaching larger communities that embrace *Hanoh*.

As indicated in the Chief Joseph poem, “Mama’s and Daddy’s Words,” and in the closing poem of *From Sand Creek*, Ortiz has strived to pass to the next generations this perspective with regard to the past. This is evident in his first children’s book, *The People Shall Continue*, published in 1977: the year marks when the writer was living in San Francisco Bay area after he had published his first and second poetry collection, *Going for the Rain* and *A Good Journey* and when he was still publishing his poems in *ABC*, even though he left the NIYC and was no longer editing the newspaper. In *The People Shall Continue*, Ortiz relates to his readers various traditional stories and oral narratives.

He also tells the stories of how Europeans came and colonized the Americas and of how Indigenous Peoples have resisted. By giving voices to the Peoples, Ortiz invokes humanity for all the Peoples. Thus, on the book's closing page, the poet speaks to "Black People, Chicano People, Asian People, many White People and others who were kept poor by American wealth and power" (23). He tells them they all must unite as one people and fight together: "We are all one body of People. / We must struggle to share our human lives with each other. / We must fight against those forces / which will take our humanity from us. . . . / We must be responsible to that life. / which comes from our shared responsibility" (23).

Simon Ortiz's serious inclusion of non-Indigenous Peoples in his later works exemplifies reaching that broader community named as "*Hano*h." In 1960, after graduating from Grants High School in Grants, New Mexico, Simon Ortiz wanted to save some money for a college where he could learn how to be a chemist. Ortiz worked as a laborer at the Kerr-McGee uranium plant. At the plant, he met various people from other tribes and other races, of which he wrote the poems in *Fight Back: For the Sake of People, For the Sake of Land*. In these, he reiterates more inclusive Indigenous cosmopolitics. In his review of *Fight Back*, Red Power scholar Geary Hobson (Cherokee-Arkansas Quapaw) indicates: "By the very title, Ortiz exhorts not only his fellow Pueblo Indians in New Mexico to begin resisting the continuation of cultural and economic exploitation of themselves and their homeland, but for all Indians everywhere – indeed, the call is for all economically oppressed peoples everywhere – to begin the needed processes of reversal through active resistance" (364).

“To Change in a Good Way,” a poem in *Fight Back* points to how cosmopolitics employs shared stories and articulates concerns of life and death, capitalist exploitation, and conflicts between Native and non-Native people, especially whites. This long narrative poem focuses on Bill and Ida, white Okies from Oklahoma, who over time become close friends of Pete and Mary, Laguna people who work for Kerr-McGee. As their friendship deepens, Bill learns of his brother Slick’s death in Vietnam. Mary and Pete respond in the Laguna tradition they have been taught. They bring and give Laguna corn, “Kasheshi,” to Bill and Ida, urging them to take it to Oklahoma and plant it. They say, “It’s to know that life will keep on, your life will keep on. Just like Slick will be planted again. He’ll be like that, like seed planted, like corn see, the Indian corn. But you and Ida, your life will grow on. . . . It’s for Slick, for his travel from this life among us to another place of being. You and Ida are not Indian, but it doesn’t make any difference. It’s for all of us, this kind of way” (313-4). For the Laguna people, the loss of Bill’s brother is a shared loss, which means that they need to share their own way of dealing with death. But despite their close relationship, Bill “couldn’t figure it out” and “decided not to take” the corn and husk bundle and leaves it in a cupboard in his locked mobile home (314-5). But later when Bill and Ida return to New Mexico from Oklahoma, they found themselves not comforted by all the clichés that they have heard – Slick died for a democratic America, for example – Bill realizes that he and Ida are in need of the corn bundle. He takes it with him to work, stops the lift, and sticks the bundle behind a slab of rock. He prays: Slick . . . I got this here Indian thing, feathers and sticks, and at home we got the corn by your picture. . . . It’s for your travel, they said, from here to that place where you are now. And to help us from where you are at now with our life here. . . . So

you help us now, little brother Slick. We need it. All the help we can get. Even if it's just so much as holding up the roof of this mine the damn company don't put enough timbers and bolts in" (317). As Ortiz does not romanticize the interconnectedness between Natives and Non-natives in the poem, Bill and Ida may not fully understand the meaning of the blessings and prayers that the Laguna have taught. But it is notable that the process eventually makes Bill and Ida "smil[e] and then chuckl[e]" for the first time since the death of Slick (317). The mood verifies that some significant changes occur when they try to understand, accept, and recognize the Indian thing. In an interview with Kathleen Manly, Ortiz elucidates that "understanding between people of different cultures" is not "enough" (375). For him, "Acceptance and recognition . . . More respect for tribal peoples as a political entity, as an economic, cultural, social entity . . . acceptance of the real nature of people" is more significant in making a meaningful progress between natives and non-natives (ibid). Ortiz demands more than superficial understanding that might continue the oppression of Indigenous Peoples: as the writer insinuates through "nature," further progress is needed for a genuine liberation and sovereignty of the peoples.

Such cultural acceptance and respect is hinted in "Irish Poets on Saturday and an Indian" in *A Good Journey*. In this poem, Ortiz describes meeting an Irish poet in a bar with whom he talks about "poetry": "We . . . talked about Welch, / Blackfeet from Montana, good poet, / that Indian chasing lost buffalo / through words, making prayers / in literary journals. Yeah, / Strange world . . . / laughing Irish / Whiskey Indian, we laugh for the / sound of our laughter" (240). By playfully talking about the collaboration of oral tradition the Blackfeet writer James Welch applied in written forms and by teasing out

each other through stereotypes, the two poets come to accept each other's differences and erase those differences in the same "laughter." Significantly, until they share such laughter, the "Indian" poet does not talk about the real, common feelings that the contemporary Indian poets try to express in their literature: "And then, / I tell about the yet unseen translation . . . / working / in their minds, the anger and madness / will come forth in tongues and fury" (240).

In the later poems of *Out There Somewhere*, Simon Ortiz tries to develop processes of understanding, accepting, and respecting, all the while indicating that interconnection between Native Americans and Euroamericans is possible, but only on the condition that non-Natives "change" their epistemology "in a good way" by recognizing Indigenous Peoples as "People." In "What We Know," the poet delivers such an idea by challenging the imposed notion of "Indians." By juxtaposing "People" and "Indians," he defies the degraded notion of "Indians" as uncivilized people to be discriminated by civilized people, as his repetitive questions resonate: "So where were the Indians? / What did Europeans see? / Did they see anything? / What did they see? / Did they see people? / Did they see people like themselves?" (53) The poet boldly concludes that although they were different in the way they lived, there is *no* difference between them in that they are all people, deconstructing the boundaries: "(The People, Human Beings, Hanoh, etc.) . . . / Yes. They were different but they were all / the same: / The People, Human Beings, You, Me" (ibid). Another poem, "Always Just Like You Just Like Me," affirms the sense of a larger, shared existence that subverts the essential differences between the peoples. Ortiz imperatively claims: "they/we were people / they/we were/are people we/they are people . . . we/they are people just like you and just /

like me” (54). While not registering the erasure of Indigenous agency, the poet’s blurring of the demarcation between the subjects works towards mutual understanding and acceptance, a cosmopolitics that Ortiz powerfully voices in the preface of *From Sand Creek*, “we will all learn something from each other. We must. We are all with and within each other” (not-paginated).

This chapter has considered Simon Ortiz and his works with regard to Red Power’s Pan-Indigenism and cosmopolitics. Examining the writer’s collaboration between poetry and journalism and between his early works and the rhetoric of the Red Power movement, the analysis shows that the Acoma writer contributed to the development of the discourse of the Red Power movement. The following chapter continues to explore Simon Ortiz and his works by focusing on the relationship between Ortiz’s representing an Indigenous cosmos within tribal lands and related to this, how his poetry and prose shares in and develops the Red Power Movement’s environmental concerns. The Red Power issue of land redress that this chapter touched on was based primarily on political rhetoric regarding broken treaties. The following chapter specifically investigates how Ortiz’s poetry expresses the communal concerns during the Red Power movement and in oral tradition about the destruction of Indigenous lands and natural resources. As the next chapter will demonstrate, these expressions work toward Indigenous cosmopolitics and are rooted in traditional Indigenous beliefs and values that Red Power activists recovered and developed, that notably differ from romantically-founded descriptions of mainstream environmentalism.

Chapter 4

“For the Land and the People”: Simon Ortiz, Resisting the Exploitation of the Land, and Expressing the Indigenous Cosmos

Introduction

Protecting tribal lands and their natural resources has been of paramount importance to Indigenous Americans in their survival as a people since Contact. Colonial encroachment and destruction of the land and environment are deadly threats to the dignity and humanity of the tribal people. Cherokee scholar Jace Weaver comments, “[a]s Indian lands are assaulted, so are Indian People. . . . Environmental destruction is simply one manifestation of the colonialism and racism that have marked Indian/White relations since the arrival of Columbus in 1492” (3). The “manifestation” of colonialism and racism through the destruction of the environment affects oral tradition, as Silko writes with regard to oral tradition and to the “interdependencies” between humans and the land: “the landscape sits in the center of Pueblo belief and identity” (43). Traditional narratives can help individuals visualize themselves within the landscape and within broader communities as part of a social practice which involves everyone contributing to a ritual meeting of individuals who learn about their place in the world through stories. In that regard, during the dislocation and establishment of reservations in the late nineteenth century and particularly during Relocation policy in 1950s and 60s, many tribal people “were robbed of more than land . . . taken from them was a numinous landscape where every mountain and lake held meaning,” and “relocation was an assault upon Native culture, identity, and personhood” (Weaver 12). As oral tradition expresses Indigenous

knowledge and Indigenous nationhood rooted in the experience of places in tribal homelands, it came under attack as “Indigenous nations lost control over their land and when their visions for peaceful and just coexistence were ignored and undermined by the colonial powers” (Simpson 377). In short, Indigenous Peoples the Americas have suffered from and struggled with a vicious cycle of land-focused colonialism that involves displacement and the destruction of tribal lands and natural environment, and the resulting cutback of Indigenous knowledge.

Such issues about the control of the land were central to the Red Power movement’s concerns and political agenda. They gave the primacy to the land, as Fanon asserts, “for a colonized people, the most essential value . . . is first and foremost the land: the land, which must provide bread and, naturally, dignity” (9). Red Power newspapers such as *ABC* and *Warpath* appealed for the recovery of tribal homelands and the right to resources by highlighting the role of corporate capitalism within the history of US colonialism. A *Warpath* article, “Colonialism in America,” explains how understanding this aspect of local histories will empower Native Americans:

In 1871-1876 U.S. business interests subsidized the buying of hides of buffalo in order to destroy the food supply of the Indian people. The U.S. Army destroyed by burning thousands of acres of grass land in the North Central states near the Canadian border, to discourage the natural movement of buffalo. . . . This genocide by destroying the food supply continues until today with the threat to Indian fishing. . . . We cannot know the history of the struggle against oppression in our own states, if we do not know the fight that went on in each part of this land—in what coulees, by what rivers, by what fording spot on a river, with what betrayal by members of the oppressing nation. We must learn about the struggle against the Army representing the interests of the railroad companies, against the drive of the cotton growers to acquire more land, against capitalism and its drive to accumulate capital through robbing the Indians’ land and natural resources. (17)

Red Power activist-writers well understood the importance of sharing local knowledge in decolonizing struggle. As Fanon suggests, “the search for truth in local situations is the responsibility of the community” (139). The specific colonial situation is underscored with the references to “buffalos” and “fish,” which were important food resources for many local tribes of the Great Plain and the Pacific Northwest.

Contemporary local struggles involve recovering and continuing the legacy of various resistances to the colonial encroachment on tribal lands that occurred in the nineteenth century. The “Indian fishing” rights struggle that the article recognizes continues longstanding resistance in the past. The NIYC along the Pacific Northwestern coast of Washington staged fishing rights protests as an attempt to maintain, protect, and recover Indigenous traditional ways of living that previous Treaties had sought to protect.¹ The Salish people of the Puget Sound depended on fishing in the Columbia river, for instance, while Euroamericans in the region turned to the river for sporting, leisure, or monetary benefits. Shreve articulates the importance of the Columbia River to the Salish peoples: “not only were the salmon and steelhead trout their primary source of food, the fish also kept their world in balance; there was a spiritual, even symbiotic connection between the two” (Shreve 121). Protests over fishing rights, among other resources, delivered an imperative environmental message about colonial threats to Indigenous rights to use their own lands and resources, issues essential to Native American survival.

¹ NIYC engaged in fish-ins in Columbia River and Puyallup River and protests in Olympia, Washington at the same time for the fishing rights of the tribal people there. For details of the history of the Native fish-in protest in this area, see Shreve, “‘From Time Immemorial’: The Fish-in Movement and the Rise of Intertribal Activism.” Besides the direct protest on the river, NIYC primarily used its newspaper *ABC* to critique the policy of the State of Washington and the broken treaty that was to protect Native fishing rights.

Red Power activist-writers in 1970s and 80s moved further with concerns over the environment by engaging in many local protests and law suits. At the same time, writers and speakers became more explicit about articulating new, modern contexts for traditional Indigenous beliefs in “coexistence,” “balance,” and “harmony” with nature. One trigger for these developments was the Nixon administration’s fraudulent act in 1972. That act designed to facilitate US energy development and corporate encroachment as the NIYC highlighted in various articles in *ABC*, which focuses on tribal lands in Northern Arizona, such as “Orme Dam Would Destroy Culture,” which features a dam project in Yavapai land that would lead to demise of the entire “small” tribe and its culture (Reilly 7). “Ski Resort Threatens American Indian Traditions,” which argues that an imminent building of a ski resort at a San Francisco Peak in Flagstaff, Arizona would cause the damage to the “sacred” mountain (Leitzer 8). In particular, “New Uranium District Threatens Kaibab-Paiutes,” warns against the dangers of uranium corporations such as Kerr-McGee: the article argues that “[y]ears of corporation exploitation and bureaucratic inertia have brought untold bitterness and suffering to native people . . . The Kaibab reservation is situated right on the front of yet another corporate/pro-nuclear assault on native peoples, our Mother Earth, and life itself” and calls for resistance through “help” and “legal and field assistance” of Native Americans as a united “we” (3). The concerns in this article recall a definition of Red Power that Lehman Brightman, the president of United Native Americans (UNA), proposed, stressing the need for militancy with regard to protecting natural environments:

If to be called a militant means that I am eager to take any step, to take any action to RESTORE once and for all times the NATURAL WAYS OF THE PEOPLE If this is to be militant, then I ask my father, the Sun and my mother,

the earth, that they will grant me the life and strength to be the most militant of all. (“Red Power” 11)

Here, Red Power represents a radical restoration of how Indigenous People live in the natural environment, in dialogue with “Father Sun” and “Mother Earth.” As indicated in “any step” and “action,” the Red Power’s “militant means” are both literal and metaphorical with regard to the cosmos.

In the articles above, Red Power rhetoric invokes the concept of “Mother Earth,” which activist-writers developed as both Indigenous belief and rhetorical metaphor within the united struggle of Native Americans. Indigenous land as a whole is understood as “Mother Earth,” which is sacred for many Indigenous Peoples, as “the ancient Pueblo people called the earth the Mother Creator of all things in this world” (Silko 27).

Consistent with this belief, Euroamericans and the government had no right to sell and buy the “Mother Earth,” as is shown in a photo from *ABC*, which features an open road that connects the sky and the land, while the caption rhetorically comments, “Mother Earth and Father Sky: The courts decide who owns them” (4, see fig. 4). The photograph is suggestive of how much the Red Power movement’s increasing Pan-Indigenous discourse had already broadened “Mother Earth” across the Hemisphere and beyond, as evidenced in a “Manifesto” of Indians of All Tribes in *Alcatraz Newsletter*, which calls for the unity of all Indigenous Peoples in the Americas by stating, “The earth, our mother, awaits our unity” (2). Developing this rhetoric, *ABC* shows a growing awareness of Red Power activist-writers of the situation of Indigenous Peoples as subject to capitalist exploitation, which extends beyond borders of any tribe or nation: for instance, “Brazil’s Dead Indians,” an article appearing in a special report series, “The Killing of an Unwanted Race,” tells of how a “British-registered” rubber corporation’s deforestation of

the Amazon forest by modern machines; this included the “slaughter” and “enslavement” of “several thousand” Huilolo and Bororo Indians for “labor force in a pattern of colonization and capitalist exploitation” (6-7). In response to that report, *Alcatraz Newsletter* decries this situation in “Brazil: Atrocities and Genocide”: “[e]xploiting the earth’s fruits is evil enough, but to kill a people is insanity!” (16) The similarity of concerns among these publications that Red Power activists developed shows their awareness of how Native Americans and other Indigenous Peoples on “Mother Earth” experienced similar hardships as they faced the exploitation and destruction of the land and the environment.

ABC further dramatizes the rhetoric and politics of Indigenous peoples’ connections with environmental activism when it strategically printed Simon Ortiz’s poetry on the topic of environmental justice for Indigenous Peoples. Simon Ortiz was well aware of the legacy and implications of local, regional struggles during the Red Power movement, including the NIYC’s fish-ins in 1964. Ortiz had initially encountered NIYC founding members Clyde Warrior (Ponca) and Mel Thom (Paiute) at the Gallup Indian Ceremonial in Gallup, New Mexico in 1961, long before he had joined up with the group (interview 1 with Kim). Simon Ortiz’s awareness of environmental concerns was rooted within Indigenous belief, so that his ethics and aesthetics developed side by side over the span of his involvement with Red Power journalism, including his poems that the *ABC* newspaper initially printed or reprinted, and extending to other poems that he wrote and printed after he left the organization in the late of 1973. Within Simon Ortiz’s work, the poems in the collections *Naked in the Wind*, *Going for the Rain*, *A Good Journey*, and *Fight Back: For the Sake of People, For the Sake of Land* especially take up

the vital issues that concerned Red Power activists and writers, as they express Indigenous worldviews and cosmos with regard to tribal lands and natural resources. The influence of the Red Power movement is an elemental background to Simon Ortiz's concern for the environment. His early works share and develop many metaphors and expressions appearing in the Red Power publications of the time, such as "balance," "harmony" and "Mother Earth." Like other Red Power writers of the time, Ortiz's early works exemplify Indigenous resistance to capitalist-driven colonial impositions. His poetry and use of oral tradition takes up and continues the Red Power struggle to renew Indigenous perspectives on the natural environment and cosmos. In the process of demonstrating the influences on and of his poetry in relation to these concerns, this chapter points to how the representations in the indicated volumes articulate Indigenous cosmopolitics.

"My Grandfathers Used to Use This Place": Resisting Capitalism and Protecting Indigenous Lands

The representation of contested zones is an act of poetic resistance within the struggle to decolonize the land and put an end to the capitalist exploitation of Indigenous land and people. Ortiz's work is an extension of that struggle, which intensified with the advent of *the Mericano* (Americans in Acoma Keres), whose capitalist-driven expansion followed on the 1848 Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty between the US and Mexico. The Treaty accelerated the destruction of various tribal lands and natural resources in the US Southwest, as the US federal government and courts enforced law and treaties that were alien to Native Americans who followed customary law, rooted within natural

environments, a law that renders the land and environment sacred for them. Law soon became a contested notion which the federal government and court system applied in self-serving, surreptitious ways. Ortiz condemns the Mericano's use of law: "the Aacqumeh hanoh (Acoma People) had never seen thieves like the Mericano before . . . who stole unto the land, claiming it" ("Our Homeland" 347). Like other Red Power activist-writers he well understood the treachery of colonial law enforcement that only facilitates capitalist encroachment on Indigenous lands and resources that the US government largely designated as federal areas. "Indian Land Fight," an editorial published in *Warpath* in 1970, underscores this issue regarding the "federal, public domain land" which is "systematically ravaged—by giant corporations, who sign unbreakable 99 year leases with the federal government for this purpose" (17). The editorial continues, stating that "the environmental blight" in those areas is "largely a product of this corporate stronghold on the land" and that "[t]he Indians' struggle to regain some of this land is a significant blow against this monopoly domination of natural resources" (ibid).

Many of Ortiz's poems contest the use of federally designated areas such as national parks and monuments, which originally belonged to Indigenous Peoples. His writings point to the colonial quality of the federal regulations that are imposed upon the tribal peoples' continued use of these traditional lands. He mimics and mocks the official terminology in the title of a poem, "A Designated National Park," published in *A Good Journey*, in which the poet expresses legitimate anger and subsequent sadness in detailing his understanding of what the federal law represents from the perspective of native peoples. Visiting the ancient ruins that Euroamericans named "Montezuma Castle,"

located in the Verde Valley, Arizona, the poet finds that he should pay “ENTRÉE FEES / \$ I.00 FOR I DAY PERMIT . . . ‘For a glimpse into the lives / of these people who lived here” (235-36). He laments the fate of the Sinagua Indians formerly buried at this ancient site, declaring “Girl, my daughter, my mother, / softly asleep. / They have unearthed you” (236). But his lament does not spare US capitalism, which exploited the sacred site for the entertainment business, since for the poet the ancestors are not dead, but as “asleep.”

Ortiz’s critique of the pact between the US federal government and corporate enterprise becomes more confrontational and rebellious in “Grand Canyon Christmas Eve 1969,” which was first printed in *Naked in the Wind* (1971), Simon Ortiz’s first published poetry chapbook and reprinted in *A Good Journey*. This poem’s biting humor and serious condemnation sets the tone of the writing that Simon Ortiz’s subsequently published in *ABC*, speaking for and appealing to Native American rights for the environment in 1970s and 80s. Biographically, this poem reflects a real life event that occurred during the Occupation of Alcatraz Island by the Indians of All Tribes, which began in November 20, 1969. As the Occupation gained national and international attention by the year’s end, Ortiz hoped that he might participate, so he traveled from Albuquerque with his family, his little son Raho and his wife, Agnes (Diné), driving along I-40. Because of the difficulty of the long trip during the winter, they had to stop around the Grand Canyon (interview 2 with Kim). Then, as described in the opening to the poem “Grand Canyon Christmas Eve 1969,” Simon Ortiz, Agnes and Raho stayed at a camping area in Kaibab National Forest in the Canyon. The poet describes how, as he finds himself in the “rhythms and melodies” of all creatures around him in the forest made by the Colorado River, he begins to feel the wonder of the nature. He sings of the life surrounding: “time

and wind and birds / and lizards, coyote, the whole earth / spirit of all those things, / breathing the earth up / wow!” He then expands his communication with the nature into broader things when singing and praying in awe: “o the stars / o the moon / o the earth / the trees the ground / we have come to pay respect / to you, my mother earth, / who makes all things / bless me / we are humble / bless my son . . . / bless my wife . . . bless me who prays / awestruck” (5). The poet in this holistic moment demonstrates traditional Indigenous belief in “Mother Earth.” Here, the poet’s expression of his emotion in this belief is understood as a ceremonial act, as the Mohawk poet Maurice Kenny asserts about Native poetry more generally: “Indian poetry has always been basically a ceremony of thanks to the Great Spirit, to Mother Earth” (*Remembered Earth* 13).

But this sublime atmosphere, established in the poet’s ceremony and call to freedom is critically interrupted in the moment when he begins to look around the site, to locate more wood for a campfire, where the poet encounters a federal policy imposed on him:

what’s this forest called?
Kaibab National Forest
Camp Only in Camping Areas
No Wood Gathering
Go Around Other Side of
Enclosed Area & Deposit
85¢ For Wood.
This is ridiculous,
you gotta be kidding,
dammit, my grandfathers
used to use this place
with bears and wolves,
even talked with them,
before you did,
and he got his wood here,
so I get firewood anyway,
mumbling, Sue me (5-6)

The poet's spontaneous response may sound humorous and playful at first glance, yet his is a serious, rebellious gesture that corresponds to the contemporary struggles of Native Americans. By establishing the poem's context with a reference to the Occupation of Alcatraz Island, the poet seems to emulate the ironic performance and rhetoric of the occupants on the Island, when he claims his right to the free use of the natural resources in the Grand Canyon. Like Alcatraz Island, the "Kaibab National Forest" is a federally designated area where traditional Indigenous rights to use the natural resource have been oppressed, usurped by colonialists, in contrast to previous times when the poet's ancestors were "free" on the Canyon and other lands, as the poet came under the federal policies and regulations. The poet's serious, dramatic, and sarcastic stance against such situation is marked by the imperative, "Sue me," humorously invoking the law and mocking the federal court. The poet's mockery is a gesture of unity with the Indians of All Tribes on Alcatraz who similarly acted through their *Alcatraz Newsletter*, as the occupiers argued that sovereignty could not be obtained by negotiation and legal argument alone. For instance, in a long legal statement, "Is the Occupation of Alcatraz by the Indians of All Tribes Legal?" the occupiers' attorney Aubrey Grossman contends that the history of the fraudulent association of US government and federal court and the one-sided violation of treaties by US government caused and legitimizes the taking: "even if a treaty was legal, it can be voided by what happened after signing, or fraud discovered later . . . [t]he Indians have 'gone to court' in the only ways they can by occupying the Island. . . . I believe they would like to have a Court review the history of robbery and treaty-breaking and fraud of Government against the Indians (for the sole purpose of getting their land) and then whether it was legal or not legal" (4). Aubrey Grossman's

statement suggests that the insurrectional act of the Occupation responds directly to the self-serving concepts of legal action imposed by Euroamerican dispossession of Native American lands and the resources tied to those lands. In that regard, the poet's claiming the fire wood without paying in the Grand Canyon enacts civil disobedience as resistance to the enforcement of colonialist federal laws. The invocation of "my grandfathers" is a symbolical act of liberation from federal designation and law: invoking this precedent, the poet unites past and present much as the Indians of All Tribes on Alcatraz, another federally designated area, did when they justified their action by invoking what had happened to their ancestors.

In the final stanza of the poem, the speaker proposes to sing peacefully in this site. Myth, religion, culture, and nature are all mixed in the poet's appropriation of the Christian belief in which he appropriates to express a timeless native sovereignty over the place where he has settled, for the night,:

i lie down on my earth bed,
here it is possible
to believe legends,
heroes praying on mountains,
to make winter chants,
the child being born coyote
his name to be the Christ,
believing even beyond eternity. (6)

Invoking the image of the native trickster figure, "coyote," commingled with that of the "Christ," the poet's words renew the Grand Canyon as a sacred site of native culture, nature and religion. Here, "heroes" references native ancestors who walked around, communicated with, and hunted at the site. When the poet claims the site as his "earth bed" (in the course of arguing that this bed is indeed his land), he imagines himself within and beyond "eternity," an appropriation of an important Christian belief in the

course of reclaiming and recovering the Canyon as a sacred site for many Native Americans, including the (Ancient) Pueblo and Navajo, Hopi, and Havasupai peoples.

The united power of “heroes” in the past and occupiers in the present on a contested land recalls the fact that Ortiz and many of the occupiers of Alcatraz were Vietnam War veterans.² The image of “heroes” closely relates to Simon Ortiz’s poetic description of contemporary “veterans,” another contested notion, to which many Native American were entitled because of their participation in various wars, such as World Wars I and II, the Korean War, and the war in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. Many Red Power protests stemmed in part from Native veterans’ realization that while they had sacrificed to protect America, their land, in the wars, the US government had only been exploiting Indigenous labor and land. This is evident in *ABC*’s “No Matter How Small I Am, I’ll Fight All The Way To The End,” which covers the issue of the peace talks between Navajos and Hopis to settle land conflicts in terms of “Joint Use Area” that had been caused by forced relocations. In that report, *ABC* printed a statement of Charles Kelly, a Navajo elder, who had been a code-talker during World War I and II. His words summarize the teaching of many elders “I understand that I was protecting our people and our land but today I’m disappointed with the government. Relocation will not solve any problem” (5). The political presence of the old Native veteran who returned to protect traditional Indigenous land and resources parallels Ortiz’s crafted political commentary in “The Significance of a Veteran’s Day,” a poem first printed in *Naked in the Wind* and reprinted in *Going for the Rain*. In the poem, the poet states, “I am a veteran of at least 30,000 years,” alluding to the long history of Indigenous people in the Americas; he

² The Acoma writer served the US Army for three years in 1963 to 1966, which he thinks, “was a foolish thing to do” (interview 1 with Kim).

speaks of surviving “foreign disease, missionaries, / canned food, Dick and Jane textbooks, IBM cards, / Western philosophies, General Electric” (108). The poet dismisses all of these colonial impositions and capitalist productions when he asserts that their “insignificance” destroys “the roots of pines and mountains” on Indigenous lands (ibid). This fighting spirit with regard to Indigenous land is underscored when the metaphor, “veteran,” effectively combines with allusions to the Occupation of Alcatraz and to the actual celebration of Veteran’s Day, as when this poem was written, “November 11 1970,” the first Veteran’s Day after the end of the Occupation.

The poetic resistance that Ortiz achieves in these poems develops still further the image of “hero” and “veteran” in his poem, “And the Land is Just as Dry,” printed in *ABC* in 1970, during the continuing Occupation of Alcatraz, when Simon Ortiz had begun working as the editor of the newspaper; he later reprinted the poem in *A Good Journey*. The poem’s title is taken from a folk song by a Native American activist folksinger and songwriter Peter La Farge (Narragansett), which describes Ira Hayes (Pima), one of the five “heroes” of US marines that raised the US flag on Iwo Jima in the middle of the battle to reclaim the Island from Japanese invaders during the World War II. Inspired by the song, Ortiz relates the story of Ira Hayes, not as an American war “hero,” but as a “Native” “veteran” who returns to his homeland, the Gila River Indian Communities out of I-10 toward Tucson, where Ira Hayes grew up and attended schools, before volunteering for the US Marines.

Ira’s homeland stands for many other Indigenous lands in “And the Land is Just as Dry.” This emphasis on Ira Hayes’ homelands refuses the perspective of colonialism that celebrates Native soldiers and code-talkers as “US” heroes. Rather than focusing on

romanticized individual stories, the poem opens with a description of the local landscape halfway between Phoenix and Tucson, a valley where capitalist cities encroach on the stark, dry, humble landscape, with its jagged peaks and brittle plants:

The horizons are still mine
the ragged peaks
the cactus the brush the hard brittle plants
these are mine, yours
we must be humble with them

Ira Hayes' Pima homelands then appear in the evocation of the river-irrigated fields that are sandwiched between the highway and the two local native communities of "sacaton" and "bapchule":

the green fields
a few a very few
Interstate highway 10 to Tucson
sacaton, bapchule,
my home is right there
off the road to Tucson
before the junction
on the map it is yellow
and dry, very dry
breathe tough swallow
look for rain and rain

used to know ira he said
his tongue slow spit on his lips
in mesa used to chop cotton
coming into Phoenix from north
you pass by john jacobs farm
many of the people there
they live in one room shacks
they're provided for by john jacobs
pays them about \$5 per day in sun
enough for quart of wine on Friday
ira got his water alright
used to know him in mesa in the sun
my home is brown adobe
and tin roof and lots of children
broken down cars the pink ford
up on those railroad ties

still paying for it
and it's been two years since
it ran motor burned out
had to pull it back from Phoenix

gila river the sign states
at the bridge full of brush
and sand and where's the water
the water which you think about
sometimes in empty desperation
it's in those green very green fields
which are not mine

you call me a drunk Indian go ahead (6)

The poet, who “used to know ira,” speaks for all Native Americans by claiming the landscape as his own through the transition among “mines, yours, / we.” This series of pronouns links different native identities, including the listener, the poet. This is made clear through his indication that his home is “off the road to Tucson,” that is, the I-10 highway that connects Phoenix and Tucson and the two local towns. Poetic resistance arises: as opposed to the two capitalized cities, no capitalization is given to the names of the two communities that represent Indigenous homelands “on the map” of the US: along with the use of lower case for the towns, the emphatic expression, “off the road,” resists the erasure of Indigenous homelands from the US map. This resistance restores Indigenous spaces but still refuses integration into this larger cosmopolitan zone as the poem rescues Ira Hayes from his romanticized, iconized, and immortalized image as a generic “U.S.” war hero. Instead, the poem prioritizes Ira’s identity as a Native American Pima from lands along the Pima River that they have lived and farmed for many centuries.

The repetition of “dry, very dry” and “rain and rain” voices a native prayer for the revival of the named communities of “sacaton” and “bapchule,” where water is all-important element for Acoma, Ortiz’s homeland, as is for everyone living in the

Southwest. This becomes evident in the third and fourth stanzas that detail the Pima and other Native Americans on a cotton farm run by an American company, “John Jacobs.” The poem reflects Ira who, in reality, returned to his homeland as did many other Native American veterans, hoping to live a normal life only to be exploited by capitalism like the cotton farm workers. Like so many Native American veterans, Ira Hayes experienced hardship before and after the World War II, summarized in the poem’s description of the exploitation of Indigenous labor working Indigenous lands, as “the green fields” and “a few a very few” named in the opening of the second stanza and at the end of the poem. These reinforce a focal point: although “the green fields” coexist with the native landscape along the I-10, they contrast with the “yellow / and dry” lands of the communities, as they have become useless without water. Capitalist-driven US colonial policy takes water from the communities and the people suffer as a result. La Farge’s song, “the Ballad of Ira Hayes,” indicates this point regarding the history of Gila River communities: in the first verse, La Farge sings: “The water grew Ira’s peoples’ crops / ‘Till the white man stole the water rights / And the sparklin’ water stopped / Now Ira’s folks were hungry / And their land grew crops of weeds / When war came, Ira volunteered / And forgot the white man’s greed.”³ In reality, the Gila River Communities suffered from a dam constructed by the federal government, a project related to the early twentieth century acculturation and relocation policy. Because that dam stopped virtually all water in the Gila River, the people were deprived of their water rights, threatening, in turn, their way of life, which had always been based on the river, which they regarded

³ <<http://www.songofamerica.net/cgi-bin/iowa/song/990.html>> retrieved on 20 September 2013.

sacred. This led to the exploitation of their labor by the American company, “John Jacobs.”⁴

The representations in “And the Land is Just as Dry” indicate Ortiz’s deep understanding of how the contemporary capitalist exploitation effected both Indigenous Peoples and lands. His understanding of how this exploitation was still occurring during the Red Power movement is also evident from his journalism during the movement, as Simon Ortiz contributed to *ABC*’s continuing efforts to widely report local, grassroots protests against capitalist encroachments on Indigenous lands and resources, particularly in the US Southwest. In one such article, “Protest Against Gasification,” Ortiz reports a protest from downtown Albuquerque, staged against “the advent of the gasification industry in the Four Corners area of the Navajo reservation.” In this article, Ortiz reproduces the contents of a leaflet that the protesters provided, which reads “The Navajo Nation Demands Sovereignty” and delivers a resounding message:

As a nation of people we are growing tired of outside corporate powers, like . . . Tucson Gas and Electric, Utah International, Texas Transmission Corporation, Peabody Coal Company, El Paso Natural Gas . . . plundering the sacred resources of our homeland. Many federal agencies . . . are presently collaborating with these corporate powers to deprive our people and our country of our birth rights: To live in harmony with our physical and spiritual world; The freedom to make our own decision as a people and as a nation. . . . **Since we signed a treaty with your government in 1868, this is the way you have treated our people: as an oppressed and subservient nation. Your government makes decisions for us in a paternal manner that never reflects the concerned feelings of our people and that belittles our initiative and self-determination. This is the way your government treats human beings—tell us, are you Proud? (4)**

The article presents a case of how capitalism massively invades Indigenous lands in the US Southwest and of how the people use collective action to protest and thus legitimize

⁴ For detailed discussion of this history, see Dejong, “Force to Abandon Their Farms.”

their struggle to protect their land and resources. The expression, “Your government,” clearly indicates that Indigenous struggles are based on treaties made with the US government as occurring between sovereign nations. The closing question reverberates as it sarcastically condemns the inhumane attitude of the US government that ignored natural, humane ways in seeking to facilitate capitalist exploitation.

In this context, Ortiz’s “Long House Valley Poem: Black Mesa Rape,” echoes this powerful condemnation of capitalism. The poem was printed in *ABC* in the fall of 1970, when the Occupation of Alcatraz was gaining national and international attention, and later in *A Good Journey* in 1977. Interestingly in the version that appears in *A Good Journey*, the subtitle “Black Mesa Rape” is dropped from the poem, which concerns the Navajo’s sacred land, Black Mesa as it denounces, in a powerful, dramatic voice, the colonialist capitalism that destroys a significant place which is sacred to Native Americans. To dramatize US capitalist exploitation, Ortiz opens the poem with a rather bucolic image of Black Mesa. He names “sheep & woman,” an image that starkly contrasts with the heavy machines that represent twentieth century technology which exploits and ravages lands where Indigenous Peoples have raised their sheep for centuries. The contrast between the images is reinforced by a photograph Simon Ortiz intentionally placed above the poem (see fig. 5):

sheep & woman
the long brown & red land
looming unto the horizon
breathe so deeply

tsegi
a canyon
hello & goodbye
but always hello

the old rocks millions of years old

a Mohawk trailer
behind a big white Cadillac
tourists
the crusaders
missionaries

cop car flashing frenetic orange
slowwww down
can't even remember my license number

power line over the mountain
toward Phoenix toward Denver

and then the Peabody Coal Co.
the Black Mesa Mine

a yellow & black song:
Open Range
Caterpillar smoke & dust
from the wounded mountain

A PLAGUE ON ALL YOUR DAMN HORSEPOWER
AND ALL YOUR KENNECOTT COPPER BLIGHTS (7)

Combining news report and poetic representation, the poet explains in an epigraph of the poem, “the valley is in northern Arizona /near where it is proposed that one / of the largest power centers on the continent will be built.” The epigraph is co-extensive with his role as a reporter for *ABC* who uncovered and published stories not widely known; this act increases the poem’s already powerful stance of resistance. Notably, when he reprints the same poem in *A Good Journey*, this epigraph is dropped; the reprinted version also omits the closing lines, with their capitalized curse against the Kennicott Copper Corporation (237). Both version of “Long House Valley Poem” open with a first stanza that describes Black Mesa as a place where Navajos, Hopis, and Pueblos could “breathe so deeply.” This site was one of the most sacred places for adjacent tribes in

Northern Arizona before the invasion of the “crusaders / missionaries,” along with mining and power corporations. Corresponding to “woman” in the first line, Black Mesa is represented as a female raped by capitalism. That image is again dramatized in the closing stanzas where the poet depicts mining trailer company machines, “Caterpillars,” that roll over the “open range” of Black Mesa which they dig out with “smoke & dust.” The female image of Black Mesa combined with that of Mother Earth becomes representative of a colonial narrative where Indigenous lands, including the Americas, are represented as being uncultivated and thus virgin to be invaded and cultivated by European civilization. For the colonizers this metaphor justifies the act of colonizing that would bring healthy civilization to the lands. However, for Ortiz, the similar metaphor debunks and represents the colonizing act as terribly harmful and destructive as he finishes the poem with curse on “all” the capitalist machines and companies, defining the colonial power as “BLIGHTS.” Preceding and contrasting with the calm and dry tone throughout the poem, in the last two capitalized lines the poet condemns the exploitation of the air, land, and water, elements that are sacred to many Native American tribes. An article in the same issue of *ABC*, “Black Mesa,” which features photos of the tractors working on the Mesa, provides a broader context for the poem’s images:

to the Navajo and Hopi Indians [Black Mesa] has always been part of the miracle of creation. To the Hopi, it is a burial ground for their dead, a sacred center whose destruction presages the destruction of the earth. The Navajo call it the Female Mountain and, together with the Male Mountain, symbolizes the balance of nature. Today, Black Mesa is the site of one of the greatest ecological wreckages of all time. Not satisfied with the destruction which has already been caused, Peabody Coal Company is expanding its coal-mining operation to an even larger area of Black Mesa. (1982)

As indicated in the article, the destruction of the Mesa means the invasion and destruction of Native culture and religion. Ortiz’s curse and resistance at the very end of the poem is

read as a native prayer to gods that they believe in terms of nature, a prayer in which he and many Native Americans express concern for the natural environment, wishing to restore balance with nature. Black Mesa is a spiritual site, where male and female mountains rule, but the colonial act of US capitalist corporations threatens such balance. Fixico clarifies this point, writing that unlike the Indian one, the non-Indian worldview has “drifted from . . . religious belief toward a focus on economic gain” (*Invasion of Indian Country* 209). Russell Means (Oglala Lakota), an important leader in the American Indian Movement (AIM), powerfully critiques US capitalism’s resulting in “imbalance and disharmony” within the natural environment; he prophetically asserts that it “will result in a readjustment that will cut arrogant human beings down to size, give them a taste of that ultimate reality that is beyond their ability to manipulate or control, and restore balance and harmony” (*Defending Mother Earth* xii). This statement shows a belief that Indigenous religion and spirituality rooted in nature will eventually prevail.

“We Shall Survive This Way”: Survival, Reciprocity, and Collaboration between Human and Natural Environments

The fighting, decolonizing aspect of Simon Ortiz’s poetry is rooted in Indigenous belief system, specifically Acoma tradition, which attempts to land in the middle ground between nature and human culture. When the late fifteenth century Spaniards encountered Acoma People in Sky City during their expedition of the Seven Cities of Cibola in the US Southwest, they were “astonished” to see how the People had established their village on the mesa and how they had “developed irrigation methods” in harmony with the surrounding landscape (Minge 9). Like the Acoma Pueblo, Native

Americans in various regions including the Great Lakes region of the Chippewa before European contact believed “in the principle of a strong sense of balance” with the natural world (Robyn 202). They did not place humans on top of other living forms: instead, all forms of life, including rocks, mountains, and rivers, were part of the ecosystem, which is carefully balanced whole. This Indigenous epistemology of regard for the natural environment and landscape has been passed down to generation to generation through oral tradition, as part of the cosmopolitan hospitality and peace-seeking attitude of Indigenous Americans regarding the land. The holistic approach of Indigenous American epistemology fosters a cosmopolitan appreciation of difference and singularity among the biodiversity in which humans are situated as a unique, but humble species.

The ecological cosmopolitanism of this Indigenous worldview has resisted and resists the Western European overemphasis on the rationalistic at the expense of the sensory, emotional, imaginative aspects of human life and culture and the interrelations between human activities and the natural environment. The notion of a “Noble” Indian living in a “perfect” ecological harmony at home with nature has been a colonial, reductive stereotype derived from and reinforcing romantic myths that European colonialists have employed against the colonized other (Krech 27).⁵ Modern Indigenous Peoples and their ancestors are neither saints nor sinners in environmental matters as the Americas were no “Edenic paradise,” a point that Simon Ortiz underscores in *From Sand Creek* in describing the landscape in Southern Colorado where Cheyenne and Arapaho people and US militia met: “there was no paradise” (79). Like all societies, Grinde and

⁵ According to Krech, the image of the Crying Indian is a good example of this tendency as the image was “manipulated” by a mainstream environmental activist organization, Keep America Beautiful, in 1971 (15-16).

Johansen indicate, Indigenous Peoples “faced the question of how to utilize land for purposes of survival. Indians manipulated the environment to improve their material lives” (11).

The concept of “reciprocity,” which contemporary Indigenous scholars have developed since the Red Power movement, is helpful to understand the process of survival within holistic ecology. Simon Ortiz offers an insight into how the process is made:

Native Americans had a religious belief that depended upon a spiritual and material relationship with creation and the earth. People got what they needed to live from the land-earth, and they gave back, with their work, responsibility, and careful use of natural resources, what the land needed. Their creators gave them life, and they, with prayer, meditation, and ritual, gave back life; they received and gave. This belief was a system of reciprocity in every respect, and the relationship they had with creators and earth was the guiding rule which was applied to their social communal system. (*Woven Stone* 29)

Certainly, Native Americans never ignored the necessity of using natural environment and developing human culture, while not exploiting nature. After contact, Robyn indicates, “European values allowed land and environment to be viewed as commodities to be exploited, and these colonizers imposed their will upon the land with little thought of the consequences” (220).

Reciprocal concern is manifest in how Native Americans in the US Southwest recognize corn. Many tribal people have traditionally planted corn for centuries in the same region to feed themselves. Planting and eating corn are important to survive both physically and culturally. The corn functions as symbol for a sacred relationship between the earth and the Pueblos and other tribal people, as nature and culture are not separated: corn emerges from the earth, as did the Ancient Pueblo Peoples, and it is recognized as

the food on which most of the Southwestern Native peoples depend for their survival. Corn, Ortiz writes in *Woven Stone*, cannot “be regarded anything less than a sacred body and holy and respected product of creative forces of life, land, and the people’s responsibilities and relationships to each other and to the land” (346).

Indeed, in many of his poems Ortiz represents various plants, animals, and rocks in Indigenous lands not as mythic, lifeless, and inactive, but as vivid, alive, and animated: as we shall see, they communicate, interact, and collaborate with and often offer knowledge, wisdom, and guidance to human beings in realistic, contemporary times and settings, *not* in mythological ones, which that dominant narrative tries to represent as belonging in the past. His understanding of water based on the belief of the Shiwana in Indigenous land shows this orientation. In his edited volume, *Speaking for the Generations*, Ortiz states:

The water in the chunah, the land that the water nourishes and is nourished by, and all other life elements, items, features, and aspects of Creation make up what we know to be Existence. . . . as a writer this is what I try to make apparent in my writing because my own writing comes from a similar dynamic or reciprocity shared by the land, water, and human culture. And because modern-day American life has brought changed to the natural landscape such as the water in the chunah, as well as changes to human cultural landscape of Acoma, inevitably I address those matters. . . . [T]here is no way to avoid that responsibility as a member of today’s Native community. (xv)

As Ortiz stresses, Native “Existence” or identity should be assured by one’s expression of his or her relationship with knowledge in Indigenous natural, cultural landscape, which Native Americans traditionally maintained. But that knowledge should be understood and expressed in a new, modern context, in which there are many “changes,” as Native Americans are not a people who belong to the past but to “today.” These challenging tasks are what all “member[s]” of the tribal peoples share and are concerned about.

“My Father’s Song” in *Going for the Rain*, exemplifies such an understanding of reciprocity not in a mythological way but with a realistic sense. The poem sets agricultural activity in the context of portraying how a reciprocal relationship between culture and nature is sacred to survival within a mutually supportive relation, as it evokes a spring corn planting at Aacqu. Here, the poet recalls following his father’s plow: “We planted corn one Spring at Aacqu— / we planted several times” (57). The “several times” humbly alludes to his experience as a member of the *Aacqumeh hanoh*, the contemporary Acoma Pueblo people. The humble attitude toward the land and nature is shown through the reference to the “mice” that the poet’s father found and showed to him during the plowing:

My father had stopped at one point
to show me an overturned furrow;
the plowshare had unearthed
the burrow nest of a mouse
in the soft moist sand.

Very gently, he scooped tiny pink animals
into the palm of his hand
and told me to touch them.
We took them to the edge
of the field and put them in the shade
of a sand moist clod.

I remember the very softness
of cool and warm sand and tiny alive
mice and my father saying things. (57-8)

The father figure’s urging his son to “touch” the “alive mice” is crucial as an important, effective lesson of the mutual relationship among humans, animals, and land. The touching is seen as an act of identifying with the animals and as act of promising that they would not hurt them by their human activity, cultivation. The warm bodies and heart beatings of the lives that the poet felt and now “remember[s],” tell him that any lives in

this world have their own rights to continue and thus should be preserved on land, Mother Earth, where humans are not the only living species. In oral tradition, what his father says and shows—the continuation of a life within a harmonious environment in which human culture and nature coexist—is a vital knowledge that is passed down onto next generations like the poet. Ortiz writes:

It was the stories and songs which provided the knowledge that I was woven into the intricate web that was my Acoma life. In our garden and our cornfields I learned about the seasons, growth cycles of cultivated plants, what one had to think and feel about the land; and at home I became aware of how we must care for each other; all of this was encompassed in an intricate relationship which had to be maintained in order that life continue. (“The Language We Know” 189)

In that regard, oral tradition becomes and expresses a space where different things about Mother Earth are put together, and eventually come to terms with each other, although they might conflict for a while. This becomes evident in the last stanza where we see “nature and culture, earth and language mingle” (Adamson 55).

Oral tradition teaches that humans should be humble so that reciprocal communication and relationship with other beings on Mother Earth can develop. Such reciprocity between humans and nonhumans expands into other natural relations. In a poem with a provocative title, “Rain Comes Thinking,” in *Naked in the Wind*, the poet describes his father’s teaching that “it is not you” who touch the rain but “the rain that touches you”: “into my mind / rainbow feels its way / father said, / rain touches you inside the cool wind / of yourself” (8). The poet tells us that he believes what his father told him because “i love my father / who has taught me things in my boyhood / about rain, wind, little animals / digging at the earth.” At this point, the image of rain is mingled with the father figure teaching things within oral tradition, where rain is described as

“thinking,” blurring the boundary between humans and nonhuman things. The poem suggests that maintaining a balance between nature and humans, a knowledge based on oral tradition is essential for the continuance and revival of Indigenous Peoples, as rain brings life to all things. This teaching from oral tradition is evident in “Spreading Wings on Wind” in *Going for the Rain*, a poem consolidates many of the dominant themes and concerns so far shown in Ortiz’s poetry. The everyday language of the poem reiterates a vision of harmony and of integration with the natural world, as the poet declares: “I must remember / that I am only one part / among many parts, / not a singular eagle / or one mountain. I am / a transparent breathing” (121).

The knowledge articulated is communal rather than personal or individualized. “Wind Prayer,” the opening poem in Simon Ortiz’s first published volume, *Naked in the Wind*, expresses this concern through the act of praying:

windblow: north & east,
fog and cold, horn
keep away keep away only
it doesn't say it like that,
maine morning may 1970,
try to find Sun to pray
 thanks & humility,
 gods, children, kinfolk,
 it is not possible to live
 without help, the path
 is not ours, help us to walk,
 gods, i make myself humble
 asking to be made cool
 peace
 more cool
 no loud noise
 good words & love
 harmony
 & beauty
 the right path

for this morning i pray. (1)

In this prayer poem, the speaker adopts the persona of a medicine man who is praying toward the Sun. The prayer voices concern for the health and continuance of the entire Indigenous community, as did medicine men during the Sun Dance. Praying to “the sun” is one of the important motives appearing throughout Ortiz’s poetry, as the Pueblo people—like the Plain tribal people in the Sun Dance—pray to the east where “the sun” comes from, which means blessing from the Sacred. George Tinker indicates that prayers in the Sun Dance are “for the sake of the whole community’s well-being” and that “the Sun Dance is considered a ceremony in which two-leggeds participate with the Sacred in order to help maintain life, that is, to maintain the harmony and balance of the whole” (161). To achieve this purpose, the poet contrasts “the right path” with “the path,” suggesting that the right path is defined by “humility,” “peace,” “good words,” “love,” “harmony,” and “beauty.” At this point, “i” becomes another point that is opposed to plural entities, “gods, children, kinfolk.” Emphasizing community and the plural based on Indigenous worldview, the poet represents himself as a “humble” individual belonging to a larger community on Mother Earth. To be alive in this environment is a humble act because a human individual simply can’t survive and continue alone without “help,” as Ortiz affirms through the first lines of the next poem, “On and On,” in the same collection: “this circle of wind and sun and rain / nourishes life from the ground” (2). This concern for healthy Native community is related to what Silko writes about how, for the ancient Pueblo peoples, “[s]urvival depended upon harmony and cooperation not only among human beings, but among all things . . . the land, the sky, and all that is within them” (85).

“Survival This Way,” in *A Good Journey*, indicates that oral tradition and teachings handed down by elders to children is crucial to ongoing reciprocity. This is a closing poem in section, “A San Diego Poem: January—February 1973.” February 1973 marked the Siege of Wounded Knee by AIM at Pine Ridge Reservation. As the radical activists’ struggle focused on the survival and liberation of the rural reservation from capitalist exploitation and colonial violence, Ortiz turns his attention from urban landscape, which he describes during his travel from Albuquerque to L.A. and San Diego in the previous poems of the section, to rural landscape in “Survival This Way.” In this envisioning, the natural environment, oral tradition, and Indigenous People intersect in the communal diction, as the continuing prospects for “survival” concern all Native Americans:

Survival, I know how this way
This way, I know.
It rains.
Mountains and canyons and plants
grow.
We traveled this way,
gauged our distance by stories
and loved our children.
We taught them
to love their births.
We told them over and over
again.
“We shall survive this way” (28).

This seemingly simple statement reiterates the stress on the relationship between nature and culture and humans and nonhumans that recurs throughout Simon Ortiz’s poetry. The rain, which makes everything “grow,” represents the revival of Indigenous culture and nature, terms that are not separated for Indigenous Peoples. “This way” has two levels of meanings within the journey that the poet describes in this poem, which presents the

emergence and migration of the ancient Pueblo and colonialism after the contact the Pueblos have endured. To borrow Silko's term, the journey is shown in the "exterior" and "interior," as both a physical and spiritual journey, just as many stories in the Pueblo oral tradition relate to "the interior journey" the Ancient Pueblo people made during their actual migration: "a journey of awareness and imagination in which [the Peoples] emerged from being within the earth and all-included in the earth to the culture and people they became, differentiating themselves for the first time from all that had surrounded them, always aware that interior distances cannot be reckoned in physical miles or in calendar years. . . . the journey was an interior process of the imagination, a growing awareness that being human is somehow different from all other life—animal, plant, and inanimate. Yet, we are all from the same source: awareness never deteriorated into Cartesian duality, cutting off the human from the natural world" (Silko 37). In this inclusive imagination and perspective of the Pueblos, this poem shows how oral tradition is about survival and resistance, as "stories" are "interior" tools or tactics for the people to survive in this journey. Ortiz seems to suggest that the distance of the journey can be only "gauged" by "stories" that include everything on the way, whether it is long way or not, and that this distance is filled with the power of imagination represented through stories. Here, the speaker's "I" again becomes a plural "we" in the middle of the poem, which indicates the transformation of Indigenous identity throughout history, while "this way" refers to a common method of surviving shared by many Indigenous Peoples, that is, "stories" and "love." The lines "and loved our children. / We taught them / to love their births," where teaching next generation through "stories" and how to "love" mingle, indicates how Indigenous Peoples have survived in harsh environments, colonialism.

That is precisely because for Ortiz and other many Indigenous Peoples, “stories” and loving their collective *identity* as Indigenous are two primary ways to survive and continue forward to the future. The teaching of loving “their births” reflects a critical rhetorical strategy during the Red Power era, as activists, writers, and political leaders among Native Americans urged their people to take pride in being “Indian,” to be sovereign and self-determined—a “Red Pride” that Deloria expressed through a provocative title of his book, *God is Red*, which was published in 1972.

Even more broadly inclusive of the lands and people of the US Southwest, Simon Ortiz underscores the importance of ecosystemic sensibilities. The reciprocal relationship Ortiz represents in his poetry works towards cosmopolitics between Indigenous Peoples and other species in Indigenous lands. Navajo artist Carl Gorman’s description of his people’s view of ultimate deity and of the environment provides further insight into the issue:

It has been said by some researchers into Navajo religion, that we have no Supreme God, because He is not named. That is not so. The Supreme Being is not named because he is unknowable. He is simply the Unknown Power. We worship him through His Creation. . . . Nature feeds our soul’s inspiration and so we approach Him through that part of Him which is close to us and within the reach of human understanding. We believe that this great unknown power is everywhere in His creation. The various forms of creation have some of this spirit within them. . . . As every form has some of the intelligent spirit of the Creator, we cannot but reverence all parts of the creation. (70)

Similar concern with respecting “all parts of the creation” appear in Ortiz’s one of the “Four Poems for a Child Son” and in “What My Uncle Tony Told My Sister and Me,” both published in *Going for the Rain*. In the first poem, Ortiz’s uncle Tony relates respecting family and relatives to respecting other entities, including “land” and “the gods.” Relating Acoma oral tradition, he tells Ortiz that: “Respect your mother and

father. . . . / Respect your uncles and aunts. / Respect your land, the beginning. . . . /
Respect what you are named. / Respect the gods. / Respect yourself” (47). The reason for
such attitude is underscored in the closing of the poem: “everything that is around you / is
part of you” (47). Such teaching is heard among many other Native Americans. An article
“Respecting Our Elders” in *Sioux Messenger*, a newspaper by the Lakota people during
the Red Power movement, expresses such teaching:

We respect our Elders for their wisdom, their age, and the knowledge they
have accumulated for living and walking on this planet longer than we have.
Every Elder has stories to tell about life which can enrich our experience and
our understanding of people, history, and culture. . . . Respecting our Elders
is part of the respect for all living beings that we have because we are all
related, because in spirit, we are all one. (3)

Ortiz’s poem and this article share a similar pattern: respecting “everything” comes from
respecting elders, “mother and father,” terms that is interchangeable with grandfather and
grandmother or ancestors: ancestors should be respected as they interacted with all forms
of life and, as storytellers, told stories of them to their children in the sense of a whole
community. Red Power activists acted upon “indigenous political life” working “within
the moral and ethical framework established by traditional values” (Alfred 24).

As such, Red Power activists and writers recovered that knowledge of the
traditional role of a storyteller in Indigenous cosmos. That role, Teuton suggests, involves
connecting an important site in a landscape to the stories, which represent the
consciousness of the tribal people as one: “Indigenous people maintain their social world
by pointing to significant places and recalling (often word for word) the legendary and
historical events held secure in the tribal imagination. Storytellers are the elected keepers
of a group’s oral tradition, for they are especially adept at reconstructing a narrative
world where stories reduce the distance between the individual and the community, and

between the community of today and that of ancient times. . . . The storyteller fulfills her or his responsibility by realigning tribal members' interior landscapes with the geography on which they daily interact" (50). For Teuton, storytellers play a significant role in uniting the land and the related people through oral tradition, and that was the knowledge that Native Americans refreshingly developed and represented in Native literature during the Red Power movement.

Dramatizing that storyteller within the politics of Red Power appears in the poem "Canyon de Chelly," which Ortiz wrote in 1969 when he was working as the editor of *Rough Rock News* at Rough Rock on the Navajo Nation before moving to Albuquerque for *ABC*. In this poem, printed in *A Good Journey*, the poet portrays the interaction between himself, his little son (Raho), and the land, making a timeless connection among all the subjects. The choice of Canyon de Chelly as a site where oral tradition continues from generation to generation is apposite as the place is sacred and eternal, one that reflects one of the longest continuously inhabited landscapes of North America, preserving ruins of the early Indigenous tribes that lived in the area, including the Anasazi, Ancient Pueblos and Navajos. In the poem, little Raho (then a two-year-old) puts a stone in his mouth, and the poet thinks: "The taste of stone. / What is it but stone, / the earth in your mouth. / You, son, are tasting forever" (67). The act of incorporating the stone into his body links the child to eternity, to the sacred land of mythology:

My son touches the root carefully,
aware of its ancient quality.
He lays his soft, small fingers on it
and looks at me for information.
I tell him: wood, an old root,
and around it, the earth, ourselves. (68)

As his father did to him when he was young as represented in “My Father’s Song,” Ortiz, now a father, teaches his little son the same value regarding the relationship between humans and the natural environment. Kimberley Blaeser (Anishinaabe) indicates that “[d]espite living in a future-oriented American culture, Ortiz recognizes the significance of the Native mythical reality and historical past as guideposts and tools for continued survival.” (215). Ortiz in “Canyon de Chelly” summarizes up the ways that oral tradition is founded on “mythical,” yet contemporary Indigenous knowledge that is passed down by a storyteller, especially by capturing landscape and the people in different generations in “forever.”

“This Land is My People”: Personification of Nonhumans, Brother/Sisterhood between Humans and Nonhumans in Indigenous Cosmos

Indigenous Peoples often personify nonhumans within oral tradition, whose stories express intimate relationships between humans and nonhumans. Unlike Europeans, Indigenous Peoples often consider such personification sacred. The Maya, for example, believed that every animal, river, and stone has its own *nahual* (*nagual*) or “divine personification” (qtd. in Weaver 11). This complex animism expresses cosmopolitan worldview in that Indigenous Peoples set mankind in humble role within larger community that involves natural and supernatural elements. For Indigenous Americans, surviving in the world means much more than human activities. Silko explains this process, using a broader term, “human beings,” than Indigenous Peoples: “The human beings could not have emerged without the aid of antelope and badger. The human beings depended upon the aid and charity of the animals. Only through interdependence could

the human being survive. Families belonged to clans, and it was by clan that the human being joined with the animal and plant world. Life on the high, arid plateau became viable when the human beings were able to imagine themselves as sisters and brothers to the badger antelope, clay, yucca, and sun” (38). To Native Americans, being sisters and brothers to animals and plants is an important strategy for survival and continuance within the commitment to seeking a balance with nature. This realistic, urgent issue they have always faced has been more urgent since European contact.

At this point, the Indigenous cosmos is at odds with the Western European one, which is seemingly all-embracing, yet exclusive to other living beings. As George Tinker suggests, the Indian understanding of the “world” is broader than the Christian understanding that “God’s love for the world” is “love for human beings,” as “love” refers “only to the world of human beings” and as “God’s salvific act in Christ Jesus is thought of as efficacious only for human beings” (156). Indigenous cosmos is circular, in contrast to the Christian one, which is limited by virtue of its linear worldview that applies a Western perspective to the environment. Weaver indicates: “in linear, temporally oriented Christianity, humanity’s place in the creative chain is considered proof that humans are called to dominate and subdue all that came before them” (*Defending* 14). For Europeans, human domination of the environment is providence as ordained by God in Genesis: “the biblical injunction of Genesis 1:28 is for human beings to ‘be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living things that moves upon the earth’”—a theology “has been at work in the Americas from the onset of colonization” (ibid). On the contrary, places and beings matter to Indigenous circular

cosmos, as Fixico proposes “The circle has no beginning and no end. It thus is frequently used to represent life—the circle of life. The circle’s perimeter defines the edge of a Native community” (“Indian and White Values” 39). It is in this boundary where everything coexists.

Reflecting this Indigenous cosmos, Ortiz includes in his stories trickster figures, like coyote and crow, which are common personifications within Native American oral tradition. In poems such as “Telling about Coyote,” “They Come Around, The Wolves—And Coyote and Crow, Too,” and “Tow Coyote Ones” the poet describes these animals as addressing and instructing humans. But Ortiz pushes the boundaries by including other animals. This aspect is humorously, yet seriously dramatized in “Many Farms Notes” in *Going for the Rain*, a poem that describes the poet’s trip to a farm company, Many Farms, in Arizona in spring, 1973. In this poem the poet sees and talks to some animals, particularly “three goats, two sheep and a lamb” and discusses poetry with them. While the poet exhibits a wry sense of humor, as he “hears” an “elder sheep / telling the younger,” “You don’t see many Acoma poets passing through here,” he responds to the sheep’s question with utter seriousness:

“What would you say that the main theme
of your poetry is?”
“To put it as simply as possible,
I say it this way: to recognize
the relationships I share with everything.” (68)

The poet’s response is in tandem with Navajo people’s belief in the relationship between Native Americans and the natural environment. Indigenous oral tradition that includes all forms of life reflects this notion as Simon Ortiz comments, “Story is bigger than me as an individual” (interview with Kim). For Ortiz, an Indigenous individual is sustained by

stories, and the stories are made within broad cosmos that involves many nonhuman creatures.

In *Going for the Rain*, “Crossing the Georgia Border into Florida,” one of the poems in “Travels in the South,” exemplifies belief in Indigenous story and language. As discussed in chapter 3, this poem describes Simon Ortiz’s travels across the US in search of “Indians.” This poem tells us that the travel includes nonhumans in the boundary of humans:

When I got to my campsite
and lay on the ground,
a squirrel came by and looked at me.
I moved my eyes. He moved his head.
“Brother,” I said.
A red bird came, hopped.
“Brother, how are you?” I asked.
I took some bread, white, and kind of stale,
and scattered some crumbs before them.
They didn’t take the crumbs,
and I didn’t blame them.” (37)

The poem underscores the wildness of the campsite when the poet indicates that he lies directly “on the ground.” Lying on the wild site erases the demarcation between a human body, the back, and nature’s body, the ground. Also, the poem’s lively rhythm and tone underscores its spontaneous but fundamental rapport between humans and animals, such as the poet’s describing a squirrel and red bird as being similar to him. By listing the series of the basic motions of living things, moving “eyes” and “head,” which they spontaneously take, the poem blurs the boundary between the human/nonhuman. Gary Snyder, a Beat poet and deep ecologist and activist who developed a close relationship with Simon Ortiz during the Red Power era, shares a common insight into how that boundary is deconstructed. Indicating the wildness of human bodies, he writes: “Many

people . . . would like to feel they might be something better than animals. . . . But we must contemplate the shared ground of our common biological being before emphasizing the differences. Our bodies are wild. The involuntary quick turn of the head at a shout . . . the catch of the breath, the quiet moment relaxing, staring, reflecting—all universal responses of this mammal body” (17). As suggested in Snyder’s writing, the poet’s “wild” body spontaneously responds to the animals’ moves that initiate the entire actions, as the poet moves his “eyes” following the motions of the “squirrel.” Significantly, after sharing the motions, the poet addresses the animals by saying “Brother.” The utterance comes precisely from the comradeship that the poet deeply feels as he shares the same wild site and moves with the animals. This legitimate emotion leads to his hospitable remarks and sharing bread with the animals, something that many of us would likely do in the same situation. Through sharing his bread, the poet shows what Silko calls “a fundamental expression of humanity,” that is crucial for coexistence, survival, and comradeship (97).

Ortiz applies such “humanity” to the comradeship between humans and nonhumans. Thus, the rather unexpected, non-romanticized result described in the last line of the poem emphasizes the free agency of the animals and, again, the equal relationship between humans and nonhumans: in the wild, the poet doesn’t and couldn’t force them to eat what he shares unlike domesticated animals in a cage or fence. By not blaming them, the poet acknowledges their free will in the contact zone. As Cheng-Levine aptly recapitulates, “this kind of inclusiveness of the animal world in the human community . . . shows the dehomocentric and heterarchical nature of the Native civilization” (25). Similar values are also portrayed in other poems such as “Brothers and

Friends” where a narrator declares that “Magpie. / Skunk. / Owl. / All are my brothers and sisters”: a magpie makes a narrator “laugh,” by wryly telling the poet to “get a job, be a good American,” a skunk eats his “last bit of butter,” and an owl makes him think “about the wind, echoes, earth, origin and prayer wings” (164).

Ortiz’s imagination in oral tradition often links Indigenous Peoples, animals, and other humans in the contemporary US in regard to comradeship and brother/sisterhood. In the poignant “For Our Brothers: Blue Jay, Gold Finch, Flicker, Squirrel” in *A Good Journey*, Ortiz touches the twisted, crushed bodies of the road-kill casualties and speaks to them in an apologetic voice: he tells Gold Finch, “I sorrowed for you,” and tells “Flicker, my proud brother” that: “Your ochre wings were meant / for the prayer sticks” (252-53). The Acoma associate these birds’ sacred colors of blue, yellow, and red with the cardinal directions. The poet laments the loss of their intact feathers, which could have carried the people’s prayers upward to the spiritual world, up to the land of the kachinas. And the poet’s note at the opening of poem implies that the broken bodies of the animals allude to those killed in Vietnam War: “Who perished lately in this most unnecessary war, saw them lying off the side of a state road in southwest Colorado” (251). The bodies of the animals and humans become one sacred flesh and spirit in the poet’s imagination in Indigenous cosmos.

Ortiz, as a storyteller for all the Native Americans, “speaks his own tribal and ecological geography in a way that embraces diverse tribes, places and times. . . . the present and the remembered past” (Ramírez 29). In this vision, such representation of having the bodies of different species interconnected is more vivid and rich in “Watching Salmon Jump,” one of the earliest poems in *Naked in the Wind*, which was later reprinted

in *A Good Journey*. Various tribes, regions, and generations are effectively mingled in this poem by way of the metaphor, “salmon,” with which the poet opens the poem through an epigraph, “for Angelina who I knew in my childhood hunger as Frances”:

It was you:

I could have crawled
between mountains –

that is where seeds are possible –

and touched the soft significance
of roots
of birth and the smell of new-born fish

and

know how it is

leaping into rock

so that my children may survive. (11)

Combined with “hunger” in the epigraph, the reference to “salmon” traverses time and space in this poem. As shown in the case of NIYC’s fishing rights protests during the Red Power movement, “salmon” was and is a crucial resource for the survival of the Pacific Northwestern tribes. “Salmon” was also an important food source for an ancient San Juan people in Chacoan era, who were called Salmon Pueblo and who lived by San Juan River, an affluent source for trout and salmon. As it is known, the ancient Pueblos migrated from the north to the regions today as they sought to escape drought and the subsequent “hunger”: for San Juan people in particular, the drainage of San Juan River might well have resulted in the lack of “salmon.”⁶ Within this historical background combined with

⁶ For more details of this migration history, see Silko’s “Interior and Exterior Landscapes” in *Yellow Woman and Beauty of the Spirit* and Reed’s *Chaco’s Northern Prodigies*.

an implication of Red Power, “Angelina” or “Frances” who the poet knew might refer to any contemporary Acoma, San Juan, and Salish person who suffered “hunger” because of colonialism that deprived them of Indigenous rights, including fishing rights. Like the metaphor, “return of Buffalos,” in many Native American poems, the “leaping” of “salmon” in the poem refers to the physical and spiritual survival of “my children,” which broadly references the next generations of all Native Americans.

Ortiz’s imagination in oral tradition also goes beyond animal figures to include and personify other nonhuman creatures, corresponding to Silko’s statement: “[T]he ancient Pueblo vision of the world was inclusive. The impulse was to leave nothing out. Pueblo oral tradition necessarily embraced all levels of human experience. . . . stories related events from the time long ago when human beings were still able to communicate with animals and other living things. . . . the Pueblo oral tradition knew no boundaries. . . . Whatever happened, the ancient people instinctively sorted events and details into a loose narrative structure. Everything became a story” (31). Through their inclusion of the inanimate world, Ortiz’s poems exemplify this very unlimited boundary of oral tradition within the Indigenous cosmos.

“Fragment” in *A Good Journey* and “Stone” in *Naked in the Wind*, Ortiz’s earliest poems envision this broader vision. In “Fragment,” Ortiz’s imagination transforms a “stone,” a lifeless material, into an intimate, animated comrade, mediator, and deliverer. The “stone” that the poet picks up on his “way to city court / to be judged again” is represented as something that soothes his nervous mind. As he puts the stone in his “pocket” the poet states that he “feel[s] the need for deliverance” and thinks that doing “this” may bring such relief. The pocketed stone may seem a mere “fragment” of nature

that might otherwise remain an ordinary stone. As the poet sublimates this fragment to the holy status of “deliverance” he looks to replace the role of humans who can comfort and relieve him in this critical moment. The crucial connection between humans and nonhuman beings is suggested as he narrates in the final stanza:

I put the stone in my other hand
and caress it with my fingertips.
I find it is moist
and realize it is a fragment
of the earth center
and I know that it is
my redemption. (110)

The poet reaffirms that the stone is his “redemption” in his communication with “the earth center” through that inanimate material: redemption, which comes from the natural world, occurs only when humans connect with that world, not separating it from their reason and culture, because human culture and activity (as indicated in the case of “court”) often brings anxiety rather than redemption. Such a subversion of the relationship between humans and nonhumans seems to stand as a form of radical resistance to the tradition of Western humanism.⁷ Ortiz affirms this philosophy in “Stone” in the same volume writing that “I like to think about stone” because it “is many things” (15). In the poem, the stone stores memories and reminds the poet of life in the past that bridges him and stories. The stone is where culture (human stories) and nature meet, as it is the “stuff of sediment and history” that even makes a human so that it

⁷ I argue that this aspect of Ortiz’s poems even enables us to glimpse how Indigenous knowledge that seeks for a harmonious coexistence with the natural world is already indicative of posthumanism that such scholars as Donna Haraway advocates in subverting dominant Western European humanism as she refuses “to fall into the pitfall of the classical divide nature/culture,” and instead “mobilizes an enlarged sense of community, based on empathy, accountability and recognition,” extending “these prerogatives to non-human agents or subjects, such as animals, plants, cells, bacteria and the Earth as a whole” (Braidotti 201).

“could make you fall in love” and “is like a million years and someone / had carved it to fit the shape of who you are” (ibid). In short, as in Acoma oral tradition, the stone contains and evokes stories and thus plays an important role in keeping a human, especially Indigenous person, existing and continuing, as does the woven-stone of Acoma Pueblo, which is sacred to the Acoma.

The personification of nonhumans is more directly expressed in “This Land is My People,” a poem directly based on oral tradition as the poet describes how he and the land are continuous: “I come from this land. / This land is my people. . . . / The mountains blue in the distance / are in the wind, my mind / travels with it” (23). In an interview, Ortiz explains the poem’s theme: “In terms of literary theme, land is a material reality as well as a philosophical, metaphysical idea or concept; land is who we are, land is our identity, land is home place, land is sacred. The land is sacred, the land is voice” (Kathryn 365). The land is central to the formation of the familial relationship between the people and the land, as the people “[c]ome out of the ground, / . . . like the plants, / the growing of mountains, / springs, thoughts, smoke” because “there was a hole in the ground” (23). The “hole” references to the Sipapu (or Shipapu), a small hole in the floor of kivas found in various places in Southwest, in particular Mesa Verde and Chaco Canyon. The “hole” is a communal, unified center of the creation story of all Pueblos. The People believe it to be the portal where their ancestors first emerged from the Earth to the present world. Important is that this site works as the connection among all Pueblos in terms of the strong relationship between the earth and the People. Simon Ortiz’s remark is telling:

Acoma Pueblo people believe they came into Existence as a human culture and community at Shipapu, which they know is a sacred mythic place of

origin. Shipapu and a belief in Shipapu, therefore and thereafter, is the mythic source of their Existence. Coming into Existence from a source like Shipapu is indisputably an assertion of their direct relationship with the creative spirit-force-dynamic of the earth. (*Speaking for the Generations* xiii–xiv)

The Sipapu, often used as a metaphor or symbol, serves as a homeland where contemporary Pueblos' minds converge; all of the 19 Pueblos shared this value even as each Pueblo went its ways after the emergence to establish culturally separate and politically independent tribes and nations. The Sipapu makes each Pueblo unique and at the same time common.⁸ The contemporary 19 Pueblos become together as one, participating in an important event and politics, and at the same time they are all “Indians” of the greater US Southwest. Ortiz’s poem thus indicates that the people should respect the land and everything out of it, as they are one.

“For the Sake of the Land and All People”: Indigenous Ecological Aesthetics toward the Hemisphere and World

As shown in the previous sections, particularly in “Watching Salmon Jump,”

Simon Ortiz’s poetic dictions and metaphors engage in Pan-Indigenous politics,

⁸ In an interview, Petuuche Gilbert, an important elder of Acoma Pueblo and a brother of Simon Ortiz, emphasizes these two interrelated aspects regarding the difference and similarities of the Pueblos: “[Difference of oral tradition] depends on the identification of themselves over time. It is only them who talk about themselves, giving unique representation of themselves. Although there are 19 Pueblos who are similar and related to each other, sharing many things, they are different. Acoma is different, fitting themselves into a different way. It represents their relationship to nature, their spiritual relation over time; for example, migration stories that feature two sisters. Oral tradition and storytelling seem to revolve around “culture” of the people that they have developed and maintained since pre American history. But ancient storytelling begins to rely on written language since Columbus. When I hear story of how Acoma people came to be and occupy the place now Acoma from Chaco Canyon. Root storied maybe related each other, and they are still different. Mutuality is a key word. They are always talking about the origin, place of emergence, that is, “Sipapu.” For example, migration of Cherokees and others to Oklahoma when they are relocated, but from the same origin. The story of origin is sacred to us because the story is repeated and reviewed in prayer to the “North,” that is, Sipapu” (interview with Kim).

reflecting traditional Indigenous belief in cosmos, which continues a belief in literary form of ancestral, tribal, regional, and global traditions. Ortiz's writing, Ramírez indicates, is "defined by an Indigenously grounded holism that envisions community in broad environmental terms," reminding "his readers that human life is inextricably intertwined with the surrounding biotic communities" (*Simon J. Ortiz* 36). This statement indicates that like other Red Power activist-writers, Ortiz believes that concern with natural environment moves beyond one's tribal, national territory. Indicating such orientation is his *Earth Power Coming* (1983) among the earlier published collections of Native American fiction, into which Ortiz work by leading writers such as Linda Hogan (Chickasaw), Gerald Vizenor, Louise Erdrich (Anishinaabe/Chippewa), Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Crow Creek), Luci Tapahonso (Navajo/Diné), Geary Hobson among others, who strive to arouse Indigenous consciousness of land and environment. In the preface of the volume, Ortiz explains the function of Indigenous oral tradition that connects Indigenous Peoples with the land, asserting that through oral tradition "the people have found a way to continue, for life to go on" and that for Indigenous Peoples, "it has been the evolvement of a system of life which insists on one's full awareness of his relationship to all life. . . . it is possible to share this awareness with all mankind" (vii). Ortiz summons a common, but ignored knowledge that "all life" and "all mankind" share the same destiny on Mother Earth. This holistic ecological orientation emphasizes hemispheric and global realities, while maintaining ancestral and historical grounds in the cultures and lands of Acoma Pueblo and the US Southwest.

Of course, such a vision is neither romanticized nor an easy, emblematic catchphrase. Ortiz's recognition of holistic ecology is deeply rooted within his experience

of having been exploited as a mining worker in 1960 at Ambrosia Lake for the Kerr-McGee uranium corporation, which was then operating in wider Grants Uranium belt area in New Mexico. The region includes the Pueblo communities of Acoma, Laguna, and San Juan among others. At the field, Ortiz met various working-class people including whites, Okies, Chicanos, as well as other Native Americans, who were exposed to the dangerous work and who lacked any other opportunity for employment; he notes that he “identified with them” (*Woven Stone* 22). Through that experience, the Acoma writer realized that “[t]he American poor and the workers,” including whites, “must understand how they, like Indian people, are forced to serve a national interest, controlled by capitalist,” who imposes sacrifice on the people especially in “a national sacrifice area in the Southwest” (“Our Homeland” 361).

Central to Ortiz’s holistic ecology, which comes from his decolonizing ethics and resistance to capitalist exploitation is the Pueblo Revolt of 1680: the events of the Revolt establish an inspirational cultural and political background for resistance to capitalism among Indigenous peoples of the Southwest and beyond. That legacy is well expressed throughout the collection *Fight Back* in which a warrior stance against cultural exploitation and destruction of the environment reverberates across time, dating from his ancestors’ revolt against the Spaniards. “Mid-American Prayer,” the opening poem of *Fight Back*, sets the tone for this resistance, employing and developing the rhetoric of the Red Power movement in its call for unity across all generations of the Indigenous Peoples with “all life that is around us / that we are included with” and “the sun, moon, the cycle of seasons / and the earth mother which sustains us” (289). Like other Red Power activists, the poet realizes the necessity of evoking the alliance of “all things” as a

powerful force to emulate and resist capitalism. The tactics in this fighting significantly differ from the registers of colonial forces that are driven by capitalism: “we acknowledge ourselves / to be in a relationship that is responsible / and proper, that is loving and compassionate, / for the sake of the land and all people; / we ask humbly of the creative forces of life” (ibid). Unlike capitalist exploitation that proceeds from the arrogant view of the land, this fight is based on love, compassion, and creative collaboration between the land and the people, which will renew and decolonize both of them.

Within this oral tradition, Ortiz’s (and Red Power movement’s) growing consciousness of capitalist exploitation of the oppressed moved toward the hemispheric level. Such progress is manifest in “We Have Been Told Many Things But We Know This To Be True,” a poem republished in *ABC* in 1982, after being originally published in *Fight Back* in 1980. The year, 1982, was roughly nine years after Simon Ortiz left the NIYC and *ABC* and after the climactic era of the Red Power movement, 1969-1973, had come to a close. Although the movement is generally considered as having been in decline from the late 1970s, particularly after *The Longest Walk* in 1978, its environmental concerns continued to grow well into 1980s. Reflecting such tendency of the era, the poem “We Have Been” is printed on a page facing a special report on the Yanomami people entitled “Brazil: The Murdering of a People.” The report adopts an urgent, serious, critical tone in relating how this tribal people were forced to remove from their land, as “[l]arge-scale agribusiness projects, and associated highway developments, have posed the greatest threats to Indian groups. . . . All of these activities have brought disease, death, dislocation to the Yanomami. . . . Brazil provides one of the most incisive

cases of a country where the land rights of an Indigenous population are being almost completely sacrificed for the economic interests of a highly development conscious military government and number of powerful national and transnational corporations” (6). The term “sacrifices” is poignant in this statement which references a very similar situation in the US, as the imposed situation of becoming “sacrifices” is precisely what Indigenous Peoples resist in surviving and continuing as a people.

In accordance with the report, the poem “We Have Been Told Many Things But We Know This To Be True” addresses broader communities of Indigenous Peoples and powerfully reiterates the reciprocity that is part and parcel of communal relationship between the people and the land, standing in opposition to further “sacrifices.” The poem opens with simple, direct words: “The land. The People / They are in relation to each other,” and describes the reason and the way the relationship is formed and continued: “The land has worked with us / And the people have worked with it / We are not alone in our life; / we cannot expect to be. / The land has given us our life, / and we must give life back to it.” For Ortiz and many other Indigenous Peoples, this is true because:

The land has worked for us to give us life –
breathe and drink and eat from it
gratefully –
and we must work for it
to give it life.
Within this relation of family,
it is possible to generate life.
This is the work involved.
Work is creative then.
It is what makes for reliance,
relying upon the relation of land and people.
The people and the land are reliant
upon each other.
This is the kind of self-reliance
that has been –
before the liars, thieves, and killers –

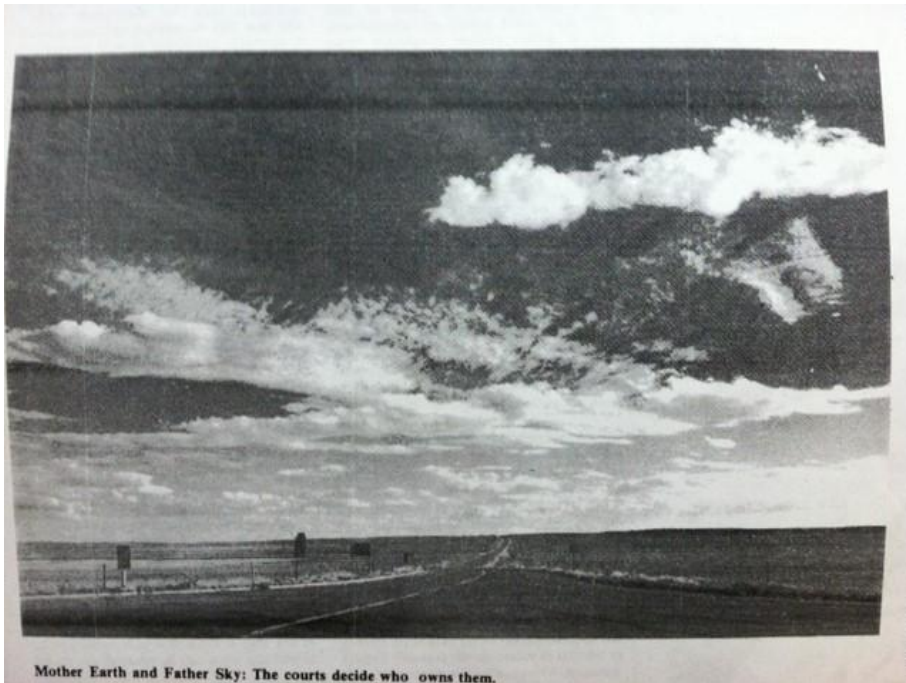
and this is what we must continue
to work for.
By working in this manner,
For the sake of the land and people
to be in vital relation
with each other,
we will have life,
and it will continue.

We have been told many things,
but we know this to be true:
the people and the land. (7)

The poet's use of the definite article, "the," sounds inclusive, referring to broader communities. "We Have Been Told" attempts to bring the people and the land together in a "family," where cooperation is essential to survival in facing the threats of "the liars, thieves, and killers." The poet asserts a familial relationship between the two entities as representing a "self-reliance" that Indigenous Peoples have traditionally maintained. Such a message stands at odds with Euroamerican capitalist ideas of "self-reliance" that seeks profits at all cost by exploiting the land and the people. Ortiz, by contrast, teaches that the connection between the land and the people is inseparable for Indigenous Peoples, as they depend on the lands where they belong. Ines Hernandez-Avila and Stephano Varese emphasize this centering as "placefulness," which has helped to define Indigenous Peoples' senses of belonging: "In the best of circumstance, Indigenous people have nurtured, sustained, and reproduced a core identity that encompasses traditional wisdom, a spiritual rootedness to the land (as cultural geocenter and as hemisphere), and the complex of expressions that comprise the oral tradition" (86). As indicated in the statement, the concept, "placefulness" speaks for the hemispheric situation and beyond. Relocation or dislocation by capitalism results in a physical, mental, spiritual death among "Indigenous Peoples" and "the land," as seen in many cases Yanomami people.

Simon Ortiz and his early works exemplify Indigenous resistance to colonial impositions driven by capitalism, which are in continuation of the Red Power movement's efforts to renew Indigenous perspective on natural environment and cosmos. The fighting, decolonizing aspect of Simon Ortiz's writing is rooted within Indigenous belief system, and Acoma tradition in particular, as a tradition which attempts to land in the middle ground between nature and human culture. The reciprocal relationship that Ortiz represents in his poetry works to articulate as a cosmopolitics the relationships between Indigenous Peoples and other species dwelling in and on Indigenous lands. By combining Red Power rhetoric with oral tradition, Ortiz's inclusive consciousness, aesthetics and writing have gradually moved toward the hemispheric level and beyond in the course of envisioning the resistant and subsequent decolonization of all people who have endured capitalist oppression.

In the next, concluding chapter, I will extend further the argument of Indigenous cosmopolitics on the hemispheric level and beyond in discussing Red Power writers, Joy Harjo (Muskogee Creek), Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok), and Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree). This next chapter specifies the relationship between their work and the rhetoric and politics of the Red Power movement, showing how their writings participate in and develop Pan-Indigenous cosmopolitics. The chapter will show how they continue and reinforce the struggles of the previous Red Power writers through the flexible, creative use of metaphors and stories and through humanistic, yet decolonial perspective and performance. These three writers realize their own unique visions of Red Power movement within an Indigenous oral tradition that connects and interweaves stories everywhere on the earth.



Mother Earth and Father Sky: The courts decide who owns them.

Fig. 4. “Mother Earth” and “Father Sky”; *ABC: Americans Before Columbus*. 11.2 (1983): 4.

an active... dancer. Edison Real Bird, chairman of the Crow Tribe, is a former NIYC Board Member.

white people who control the city... myself, I'd like people to get rid of Ike Merry. He's the most honkified man in Gallup."

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Photo courtesy of Central Clearing House, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Taken at Black Mesa, Arizona.

Long House Valley Poem: Black Mesa Rape

Fig. 5. Black Mesa; *ABC: Americans Before Columbus* 2.3 (August–December 1970): 7.

Chapter 5

“Tell It Again So We May All Live”: Storytelling among Red Power Writers Joy Harjo,

Wendy Rose, and Buffy Sainte-Marie

Introduction

Colonialists have always tried to impose certain images on Native American women. US colonialism has particularly produced such images of “meekness, docility, and subordination to males” in its “books and movies, anthropology, and political ideologues” (Jaimes 311). The well-known Hollywood image of Pocahontas is easily evoked. But the women during the Red Power movement defied such colonial images by actively participating in all protests. On the national scene, women participated in benchmark protests such as Fish-ins, the Occupation of Alcatraz and the Siege of Wounded Knee. Their role was decisive in continuing the protests and defending the community from law enforcement and related violence: at Fish-ins, women such as Jane McCloud (Tulalip) and Ramona Bennett (Puyallup) often “armed” in self-defense, led the protests. At Alcatraz, women such as Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee) and Madonna Gilbert (Oglala Lakota) did everything from fundraising and teaching for “survival schools” to serving meals. At Wounded Knee, elder women such Ellen Moves Camp (Oglala Lakota) offered the “idea” of the Occupation and armed “self-defense” while young women such as Anna Mae Aquash (Micmac) were active in hard work, including “digging a bunker.”¹ On local scenes, as Krouse and Howard assert through various research and oral records, women’s role in “grassroots” activism offered practical and constructive contributions to

¹ On women’s participation in the Red Power movement, see Jaimes, Halsey, Langston. On women in the Siege of Wounded Knee, see Johnson, *Red Power*.

various urban communities not only “through their direct participation in political and social movements, but also through their roles behind the scenes, as keepers of tradition, educators of children, and pioneers in city life” which “provided the strength and foundation for the networks and organizations” (iix).

Important female leaders and editors were active in the leading Red Power organizations and newspapers. Women cofounders of NIYC such as Shirley Hill Witt (Mohawk) and Karen Rickard (Tuscarora) made a “pivotal” contribution to the formation and continuation of the organization in 1960s, complying with traditions of Native society and previous activism that stressed equal roles from “both” sides for both women and men (Shreve 4-5). Similarly, in 1974, after the FBI and Wounded Knee trial that focused on male leaders temporarily disassembled the leadership of AIM, prominent members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) such as Janet McCloud and Lorelei DeCora Means (Oglala Lakota) established Women of All Red Nations (WARN). They continued to advocate the land redress and restoration of treaty rights and they championed the issues of Native women rights and health that the corporate encroachment of tribal lands especially threatened through uranium mining and subsequent pollution (Josephy Jr. et al. 51-52). This struggle has continued to the present, pushing Indigenous women to establish hemispheric organizations such as the Indigenous Women’s Network (IWN), “a coalition that covers tribes from Chile to Canada” (Langston 124). This Pan-Indigenous organization whose devotion to “generating a global movement that achieves sustainable change” for Indigenous communities involves

“events that facilitate the inter-generational transfer of traditional knowledge to young, Indigenous women.”²

This context provides a sense of the wide background on which this chapter draws as it focuses on poets Joy Harjo (Muskogee/Creek) and Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok), along with a singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree). Their words and performances distinctly represent the Red Power movement and its Pan-Indigenism. Their forms of storytelling are based on oral tradition and its inclusive functions as they offered their voices through direct participation in and support of protests. Harjo, Rose, St. Marie have continued and developed the rhetoric and politics of the movement. Like the writers in the previous chapters, they register issues specific to local, national protests and concerns of Relocation policy, broken treaties, tribal homelands, responses to the harsh urban landscape, and struggles with Native identity despite ongoing colonialism.

Though scholars have recognized Harjo and Rose as writers whose concerns are highly political in terms of their powerful resistant voices within their use of storytelling, they have failed to offer political, historical backgrounds to their political resistance. For instance, Janice Gould (Maidu) conceptualizes, in a general way, the “strategies of rage and hope” in the interaction with the long history of colonialism appears in the poetry of American Indian women that expresses “tribal memory, a memory that is at once personal and collective” (798). In relation to “tribal memory,” in his influential book *Red on Red*, Craig Womack (Creek/Cherokee) offers an insightful reading of Joy Harjo’s poetry by focusing on “the power of pan-tribal vision when the writer is rooted in a solid national center,” a center that refers to Harjo’s Creek heritage (223). In the same manner,

² <http://Indigenouswomen.org/> retrieved on December 14, 2013.

Nancy Lang rightly suggests that Indigenous women writers such as Harjo, Rose, and Linda Hogan often register the “continuum” between their memories of tribal lands and their “pan-tribal experiences and the assimilationist, Anglo-dominated world of much” contemporary Native American “urban life” (41). Yet, unfortunately, they all overlook the specific contexts in which the Red Power movement matters to the connection between tribalism and Pan-Indigenism. Buffy Sainte-Marie belongs in this dissertation along with Harjo and Rose because all three writers’ creative resistance through oral tradition regularly draws on poetry’s roots in song and chant. Despite St. Marie’s international renown as a gifted protest singer-songwriter, surprisingly few critics have considered how her folk music operates within and continues oral tradition, as is evident in Red Power’s development of Pan-Indigenism.

Attention to the female writers’ participation in the Red Power Movement suggests a specifiable period of formation of the “continuum” between the “personal and collective.” The linkage between the texts of Harjo, Rose, and St. Marie as activist-writers is evident from attention to the specifics of the Red Power contexts and politics. This context matters to equally recognizing them as *women* writers whose poetry and songs often either assume women’s voice and persona or present women-centered themes as a priority, locating women at the center of the survivance of Indigenous Peoples, as many women activists demonstrated during the Red Power movement. Evident cases include Harjo’s and St. Marie’s common allusions to the life and legacy of Micmac activist Anna Mae Aquash and to Rose’s female persona speaking for Indigenous women in and beyond the US.

While dealing with such women-centered themes, this chapter recognizes them only *within* the politics of the Red Power movement in complementing the lacuna of the study of the movement and its literature where female activists and writers are less visible. Teuton's *Red Land, Red Power*, for example, speaks of no women writers that this chapter deals with except for the brief mention of Buffy Sainte-Marie in one sentence (34). As Devon Mihesuah (Choctaw) describes, an otherwise well-regarded history of the movement, *Like a Hurricane: The Indian Movement from Alcatraz to Wounded Knee*, by Warrior and Smith is "one-sided" and "male-oriented" as it mentions "only a few women in passing" (12). The invisibility of women activist-writers informs representations of the movement in the mainstream media that zero in on the public images of male activists – such as Richard Oak and John Trudell of Indians of All Tribes at Alcatraz, as well as Russell Means, Denis Banks, Leonard Peltier of AIM, who were all at Wounded Knee – which "simply repeated" the federal government's "historical pattern" (Jaimes 328).

While Indigenous women activists and writers understood the concept of "feminism" and interacted with it during the Red Power movement, they considered mainstream "feminism" to be too contested and problematic to apply to the situation of American Indian women. Janet McCloud powerfully articulated this issue in 1970s: "Many Anglo women try, I expect in all in sincerity, to tell us that our most pressing problem is make supremacy. To this, I have to say, with all due respect, *bullshit*. Our problems are what they've been for the past several hundred years: white supremacy and colonialism. And that's a supremacy and a colonialism of which white feminists

are still very much a part” (qtd. in Jaimes 332).³ The Indigenous female activists and writers were concerned with “more than just female marginalization,” choosing to “fight for fishing, land, water, and treaty rights” and finding their “feminist” legitimization within the tradition of Native American land-based survival and decolonial struggle (Mihesuah 162). “Mother Earth,” a female image prevalent throughout seemingly male-dominant rhetoric of the Red Power movement attests to the common concern. The unity of Indigenous Americans in appealing to such concern is urgent, as DeCora Means, a cofounder of WARN, indicates in describing the Pan-Indigenous attitudes of Red Power women activists:

We are American Indian women, in that order. We are oppressed, first and foremost, as American Indians, as peoples colonized by the United States of America, not as women. As Indians, we can never forget that. Our survival, the survival of every one of us—man, woman, child—as Indians depends on it. Decolonization is the agenda, the whole agenda, and until it is accomplished, it is the only agenda that counts for American Indians. It will take every one of us—every single one of us—to get the job done. (qtd. in Jaimes 314)

This statement indicates that there is no division between male and female or men and women in the liberation struggle of Native peoples. The message is simple: both women and men were victims of colonial repression. For Red Power women activist-writers, dissensions among Indigenous Peoples could meet a colonial domination that may neutralize and disempower the unity of Indigenous Peoples. Likewise, Harjo redefines “warriors” within the legacy of the Red Power movement: “I believe those so-called “womanly” traits are traits of the warrior. . . . The word, warrior, it applies to women just

³ This statement evokes what the black “feminist” writer Audre Lorde powerfully voiced in her controversial essay “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House.” She contends that white women were also “agents of oppression,” while minority women do share historic oppression. Spivak warns, “one must nevertheless insist that the colonized subaltern *subject* is irretrievably heterogeneous” (79).

as well. I don't see it as exclusive to a male society" (Jaskoski 11). Her statement references the tradition of many Native tribes, including her own Creek heritage, where women have been highly regarded, which the female activists and writers during the movement sought to revive.⁴

In this regard, this chapter explores where the voices and visions of Harjo, Rose, and St. Marie intersect within the legacy of the Red Power movement, focusing on their works produced during the movement in 1960s through 80s. These particularly include Harjo's poems in works such as *The Last Song*, *She Had Some Horses*, and *In Made Love and War*. Rose's poems in such works as *The Lost Copper* and *The Halfbreed Chronicle* are similarly significant, as are St. Marie's wide-range of folk songs, from "Universal Soldiers" to "Starwalker." This chapter divides into three sections. In each section the relationship between the Red Power movement and each writer's early career is highlighted. This chapter points to how their works are within the common American Indian worldview that stresses the interaction between "personal and collective" *within* oral tradition. The writers expand the boundaries of their stories that contain both tribal and Pan-Indigenous perspectives.

From NIYC to Estelí: Joy Harjo's Storyweaving and Community-Building among Dispossessed People

⁴ In renewing and highlighting such traditions, scholars such as Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo), Laura Tohe (Navajo/Diné), and Annette Jaimes (Yaqui) radically assert that male dominance in traditional tribal societies is a colonial myth. See Gunn Allen's *The Sacred Hoop* and Tohe's "There is No Word for Feminism in My Language." Jaimes contends that Native women were politically powerful, and "many of the largest and most important Indian peoples were matrilineal . . . Among these were . . . the Iroquois . . . the Mohegan . . . the Creek, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Seminole . . . the Navajo . . . Hopi, Laguna, Acoma, and Zuni" (318).

Joy Harjo's experience of the Red Power movement and its Pan-Indigenous politics in the early 1970s inspired and formed much of her early works. The Creek writer engaged in local college student protests in Gallup and Albuquerque by participating in the Kiva Club, an Indian rights group in the University of New Mexico in 1971, while pursuing her studies in premed and dance: "the Kiva Club . . . was my community, my center of gravity. We were dedicated to defining, securing, defending, and protecting Native rights. We didn't just talk; we acted. . . . we did everything passionately, hard" ("Poetry Can Be All This" 183). Later, she was involved with the National Indian Youth Council by editing *ABC: Americans Before Columbus* with the director Gerald Wilkinson after Simon Ortiz left the organization and the position of editor in 1974. Harjo quit the job within the year as she felt she was not "a journalist by nature," although she "did some reporting" (email to Kim). But she did publish some of her early poems in *ABC* during and after editing the newspaper.

The 1973 death of Larry Casuse, the president of the Kiva club at UNM, which is untold in major history, was a decisive incident that awakened Harjo's consciousness. Around 1973, many Natives criticized Emmet Garcia, the Mayor of Gallup, whose policy associated with the federal government the mistreatment of Natives in the city increased, as did the already high rates of incarceration and alcohol abuse. Two days after the American Indian Movement (AIM) took over Wounded Knee, Casuse, who abducted the Mayor as a hostage in a sporting goods store, demanding changes in Indian policy, was killed at the end of the standoff in a hail of gunshot by the Gallup police. The incident, which was tragic and traumatic to many Natives around Gallup immediately led to a large-scale demonstration by the people in Gallup. On hearing the news, Joy Harjo

“cried” a lot for Casuse. The incident “changed” Harjo (Ortiz, interview 2 with Kim). Interestingly, Harjo pointed out that “I do not have any of the issues in my papers” in an email response, yet it is clear that these experiences influenced the formation of her early writing in the late 1970s and early 80s, as she, in retrospect, affirmed that “my poetry writing occurred as a response to the struggle for Indigenous rights” (ibid).

The context of the Red Power movement matters in understanding Joy Harjo’s aesthetics in her poetry. Many of her poems reflect the activism’s rhetoric in terms of Indigenous rights and Pan-Indigenous politics. She broadly indicates this in an interview: “I’ve been especially involved in the struggles of my Indian peoples to maintain a place and culture in this precarious age. My poetry has everything to do with this. I came into writing at a poignant historical moment” (Smith 24). Reflecting her recognition of the historical era, early poems such as “San Juan Pueblo and South Dakota are 800 Miles Away on a Map” in Harjo’s first chapbook, *The Last Song* (reprinted in *How We Became Human*, 2002) expand on the situation of the Pan-Indigenous gathering and the theme of homelands. These topics develop into poems that endeavor to speak across multiple Native American tribes. This is particularly the case in poems that draw from the geography of what is currently the US. For example, as the title suggests, in “San Juan Pueblo and South Dakota are 800 Miles Away on a Map,” Harjo links Indians from Pine Ridge in South Lakota to San Juan Pueblo in New Mexico. A Sioux man and woman represent the North Plains tribes. A San Juan Pueblo speaker (or Creek) represents the Southwest tribes. They meet at a party and claim “we are drunk.” The poem closes with an image of the woman Sun “dancing” at Pine Ridge (5).

“He Told Me His Name Was Sitting Bull” similarly centers on Pan-Indigenous gatherings, as the Cherokee speaker in “Tahlequa,” the original capital of Cherokee Nation, contends that she meets “the great-grandson of the old chief,” Sitting Bull. He asks ““where you from”” and tells her ““I’ve been looking for you for six / hundred miles”” (6). An interesting twist and switch of the direction of Native lands appears as the speaker argues that “he is from southwest oklahoma” and “i am from the northeast part.” The readers would expect that the great-grand son of Sitting Bull is from the north as a Sioux and the speaker is from the south as a Cherokee, which indicates an outcome of Relocation in 1950s and 60s in which many Native Americans were dislocated and found in unexpected places. Also, such directionality (like Simon Ortiz’s travel poems in *Going for the Rain*) is opposed to colonialist directionality found in Manifest Destiny that asserts East-West. Harjo closes the poem with a reference to resistance to US colonial policy in the image of Sitting Bull: “but he never surrenders / his name / will follow me on the interstate / all the way into the center of Oklahoma” (7) This suggests that Sitting Bull would still resist anywhere and anytime, while he would be found in an unexpected place in the Relocation era.

In the poem “3 A.M.,” Harjo blends together the different realities, contemporary American life and Native American tribal lands. The poem opens by indicating several locations recognizable within a common Native American homeland:

in the Albuquerque airport
trying to find a flight
to old Oraibi, Third Mesa
TWA
is the only desk open
bright lights outline New York
Chicago
and the attendant doesn’t know

that Third Mesa
is a part of the center
of the world
and who are we
just two indians
at three in the morning
trying to find a way back

and then I remembered
that time Simon
took a yellow cab
out to Acoma from Albuquerque
a twenty-five dollar ride
to the center of himself

3 A.M. is not too late
to find the way back

With the time, “3 A.M.” and the setting, the American Southwest, this poem offers metaphors for the dual environments that Native American experienced in to Relocation: the specific time, “3 A.M.,” before the dawn represents the darkest hour in one’s life, and many urban areas in the Southwest such as Albuquerque, Dallas, Denver, and Phoenix are symbols for Native American Relocation in 1950s through 70s. The region of the Southwest is home for many tribes at the same time. The first-person speaker claims “old Oraibi, Third Mesa,” home for the Hopi in the Southwest, as her “center,” which is further extended to the tribal land of “Acoma,” which like old Oraibi counts among the oldest continuously inhabited communities in North America. The location of Native American homeland as “center” presents an effective way to speak for many contemporary Natives who would identify themselves with “two Indians” in this poem. Consonant with the multiplicity of oral tradition, the opening of this poem, “trying to find a flight to Old Oraibi,” is absurd and ironic. Readers or listeners would know that the airline was/is not available, because modern airlines do not fly to these ancient, relatively

remote locations. At this point, modern America and its technology are seemingly at odds with the tribal reality. As Scarry proposes, “The Albuquerque airport is both modern America’s technology and moral nature—and both clearly have failed. Together they cannot get these Indians to their destination, a failure that stretches from our earliest history to the sleek desks of our most up-to-date airline offices” (287). Modern American technology, represented by “the Albuquerque airport” and “TWA,” is of no use. “The attendants” on a “desk,” and the shining modern urban culture—such as New York and Chicago —can’t direct “the two Indians,” a point recalling Simon Ortiz’s similar take in “POEM.”

The Red Power message is that Natives must find “a way back” in a self-determined way. That “way back” involves remembering, an important function of oral tradition that is timeless: we hear the poet alluding to a lesson learned from Simon Ortiz as the speaker, likely based on the poet’s relationship to him. The image of this determined figure, “Simon,” who goes off to his “center,” not looking back, reverberates in the poet’s mind and memory as representative of the search for significant guidelines and directions for Native Americans . As the poet wants to transmit this knowledge or wisdom, the poem suggests that when Native Americans seek out, recall, return to their homelands, keeping them in mind and memory, and doing what’s necessary to return, physically, mentally, and culturally, they will never be lost. They will remain “Indians” in any situation and at any place, as the people named in the concluding observation, “3 A.M. is not too late / to find the way back.” Here, that “Simon / took a yellow cab” to return to the “center” references notable common knowledge for Native Americans, showing cultural adaptation but not assimilation. As the “yellow cab indicates, Natives in

urban areas can and should, whatever technological means available in contemporary modern America, flexibly adapting to the alien mainstream culture while maintaining the homeland, “center,” the mind-map, be ready to be able to go back at any time like “Simon.” This message matters to the decolonial struggle of the Red Power movement which sought to recover and continue Indigenous tradition and culture in modern society.

Such themes of Indigenous knowledge and homeland resonates in “Eagle Poem,” a poem that was first printed in *The Last Song* in 1975 and later reprinted in *ABC*, in 1982 a few years later Joy Harjo left the job of the editor of the newspaper. This poem similarly seeks to transmit Indigenous knowledge in drawing from oral tradition, this time by speaking for all Native American communities as a whole:

To pray you open your whole self
To sky, to earth, to sun, to moon
To one whole voice that is you.
And know there is more
That you can't see, can't hear;
Can't know except in moments
Steadily growing, and in languages
That aren't always sound but other
Circles of motion.
Like eagle that Sunday morning
Over Salt River. Circled in blue sky
In wind, swept our hearts clean
With sacred wings.
We see you, see ourselves and know
That we must take the utmost care
And kindness in all things.
Breathe in, knowing we are made of
All this, and breathe, knowing
We are truly blessed because we
Were born, and die soon within a
True circle of motion,
Like eagle rounding out the morning
Inside us.
We pray that it will be done
In beauty.
In beauty. (2)

The poem opens with a prayer that tells the story of how for every prayer, an eagle circles inside the speaker, who moves from using “you,” addressed to the audience, to a first person plural that’s made possible by having created, first, the audience. Visually evocative and spiritually stimulating, in ceremonial rhythm, the prayer builds and develops from various forms of communication. The eagle is presented as a sacred entity that carries prayers joining humans with the sacred things in a process that reconstructs Indigenous knowledge. The repetitive diction “know” or “knowing” indicates interconnectedness, a primary and recurring theme, not just in this poet’s work, but for many Indigenous writers.⁵

The eagle and the “circle” that this soaring eagle creates symbolizes a community in which humans, nature, and other things coexist in the harmony that this poem demonstrates in recalling and returning to the moment of a knowledge that is definitive of how the poet articulates and enacts the gathering together of the “you” of the audience and the inclusive “we” of Native Americans. Through the opening of the poem, the eagle, the sacred bird, soaring in the wind, through the sky bisects the natural environment, soaring over the Salt River in the Southwest, home to many Native tribes. This worldview comes more clearly into focus as the poem closes with “In beauty,” invoking the Navajo (Diné) night chant in a prayer for the restoration of communities, one that’s shared among many Native tribes. This invocation of the Night Chant becomes a generalized benediction during the Red Power movement in newspapers such as *Warpath*

⁵ The theme of interconnectedness might reflect a standard aspect of much politically conscious women’s poetry of the 1970s. But as shown later in this chapter, Harjo’s theme of interconnectedness is throughout his work that reflects Indigenous belief expressed through oral tradition. Harjo speaks not only for generic women’s movement but for a Pan-Indigenous consciousness.

and in Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*. As Teuton explains, the concept of "beauty that the Momaday novel develops attempts to answer some of the needs of members of urban Native American communities, communities that bear "all the marks of social dysfunction; alcoholism and depression, alienation and self-hatred, can make daily living unbearable without the support of other survivors" (71). The chant is part of the "circle" of "support" that aims towards Native survival and continuance.

The attempt to situate Native community as a whole by way of inclusive oral traditions develops in poems that span a range of tribal traditions, including Navajo and Kiowa, while retaining the referential specificity of the poet's call to common experience, as is evident in the poem "For Alva Benson, and For Those Who Have Learned to Speak," which appears in both Harjo's first chapbook *The Last Song* in 1975 and in her later signature volume, *She Had Some Horses*. Harjo wrote this poem in 1973, the year when AIM and Oglala activists took over Wounded Knee, and when a brief armed takeover of the Gallup Indian Medical Center office in Gallup in March or April of that year occurred in protest of the mistreatment of Native Americans in the city. Alva Benson was "a younger sister of Michael Benson, a young activist Navajo man," and "they were from the Navajo community of Shiprock, New Mexico in northwest New Mexico, an area of their homeland near the Four Corners Area or Region. . . . Alva Benson was only one young woman, probably in the teens, maybe 15 or 16 years old as I recall; she was 3 or 4 years younger than her brother Michael who was a leader in a number of the resistance actions and protests going on at the time" (Ortiz, email to Kim). Harjo chose her for her poem because "as a young Navajo woman she was

representative of the Indigenous spirit of resistance and protest that was going on in the 1970s” (ibid).

In this context, the poem’s insistence on naming and recounting the experiences of a known individual woman, Alva Benson, appears in the way that she and her tribe and the hospital in which she gives birth are named. This act of naming matters since it is part of claiming Benson as a historical agent, as opposed to someone who is acted upon. The poem recounts the life of this specific Navajo woman from the specifics of her birthplace and mother tongue, with the Navajo language as response to the earth’s language: “And the ground spoke when she was born / Her mother heard it. In Navajo she answered / as she squatted down against the earth (8).” The poem then moves on to this same child giving birth in turn, but as this takes place in the “Indian Hospital in Gallup (8),” the laboring woman has been restrained by the medical establishment, so that during this powerful experience her energies do not respond to the “ground” or involve speaking or squatting. Rather, her force is met by counterforce, as “she strained against the metal stirrups / and they tied her hands down” (9).

While the first half of the title locates the subject in geopolitical time and space, the second half of the title forecasts a function of this poem as incitement and dedication, as it is directed to and for “all who have learned to speak.” Here, land, the source of life, along with listening to and answering the land in a dialogue that “goes on talking” shows women who are fully able to speak not just for themselves but for the land base that forms part of common experience: “She learned to speak for the ground” (8). This larger reference encompasses all who listen to the experience going on around them, inside and out, in which survival through giving birth and watching has women as the central

historical mode, as the last stanza indicates: "And we go on, keep giving birth and watch / ourselves die, over and over" (9).

In Harjo's poems, the concern with community-building so far shown in "3 A.M." and "Eagle Poem" moves to empower the dispossessed by way of a hopeful message. Although the women represented in "Alva Benson" move from giving birth outside, physically close to the ground, listening and speaking to it, to a shackled labor with a cold, sterile, concrete and metal hospital, they can still hear and actively listen to the earth. Such a strategic juxtaposition of despair and hope is generated through a project of honoring and naming specific native speakers, situating them in geopolitical time and space as energetically resisting ongoing attempts at colonial oppression. Particularly resonating is "The Woman Hanging from The Thirteen Floor Window" in *She Had Some Horses*. Two more works that develop from the mode of naming and honoring those who resist are "For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash, Whose Spirit Is Present Here and in the Dappled Stars," along with "Strange Fruit," which are both originally published *In Mad Love and War* in 1990. These texts interweave the story and voice of a specific dispossessed woman with those of other women whose experience of oppression is represented through her use of vivid images and metaphors such as "winter," "fruits," and "trees." This act of universalizing from one representative woman, employing that situation in the course of speaking for the experience of "the Subaltern" resounds with a point that Harjo makes in a poem "A Postcolonial Tale" in *The Woman Who Fell from the Sky*: "we emerge from dense unspeakable material" (18). Here, "unspeakable material" specifically refers to the subjects of her poems, the dead Indigenous women, showing the poet's deep recognition of the fact that until Native poets such as Harjo

propose to speak for them, “the subaltern” like the women “cannot speak” (Spivak “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 104).

The prose poem, “The Woman Hanging from The Thirteenth Floor Window,” shows a broad interweaving and multiple layering of restored voices and stories. These appear in a woman represented as being on the verge of suicide, halted by a moment of “indecision” (Harjo 14). Many scholars such as Lang interpret the poem as being reflective of the poet’s experience in Chicago: “Told in the flat, seemingly unemotional voice of a dispassionate observer, this highly rhythmic prose poem tells the story of a young Native American mother caught in the trap of her life and trying to find some way, any way, out of her nightmare” (44). While such analysis is valid, reference to “a young Native American mother” is limited because Harjo’s reference to the experience in Chicago is understood more inclusively. Indeed, the fifth stanza’s reference to Relocation suggests that the poem is a Native American or a First Nation member from the US or Canada : “When she was young she ate wild rice on scraped down / plates in warm wood rooms. It was in the farther / north and she was the baby then” (13). The poem expresses the subject’s longing, in describing why she is about to jump off from the thirteenth floor; “She thinks she be set free” (12), The narrative then steps back to explain, in terms of the subject’s body and appearance, what this suicidal woman experienced over the course of her life in Chicago: “Her belly is soft from / her children’s births, her worn levis swing down below / her waist, and then her feet, and then her heart,” and her desperation; “She is dangling” (13).

The title contains an important but often missed metaphor, naming and numbering the location of the woman’s desperate act. The thirteenth floor, which is “often omitted

on the elevator console,” made invisible much as many “underrepresented groups” have been (Andrews 96). This metaphor shows Harjo’s deep understanding of how “between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the ‘third-world woman’ caught between tradition and modernization” (Spivak “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 102). But the speaker’s extended vision of the “hanging” woman allows us to see such action as at once an expression of dejection and agency of that woman and of other Indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. As Spivak asserts, “[t]o claim agency in the emerging dominant is to *recognize* agency in others, not simply to comprehend otherness” (“Teaching for the Times” 182). So does the speaker suggest that the woman, despite her sufferings, recognize herself as joined in a struggle for survival that other individuals, including women, share: “She sees other / buildings just like hers. She sees other / women hanging from many-floored windows” (Harjo 12).

The moment of suspension is when the connection appears, moving from the individual to the collective. So does the metaphor of “dangling” stand for the situation of any dispossessed and dislocated individuals in urban areas, whose location is further specified in the lines, first “on the east side of Chicago,” in the opening and later, in stanza six, “on the Indian side of town.” Chicago’s east side is a ghetto where Native Americans live alongside Mexicans and African Americans, as the opening of the second stanza indicates, where the poet describes how the woman is “hanging” with many people “watching” her:

She is a woman, of the baby, Carlos,
and of Margaret, and of Jimmy who is the oldest.

She is her mother's daughter and her father's son.
She is several pieces between the two husbands
she has had. She is all the women of the apartment
building who stand watching her, watching themselves. (13)

Notable in the crowd of onlookers gathered in this stanza is that men are named and included, even as the poem's visual and emotional center is focused the dangling woman understood and defined by her relationship to her parents. The offspring of her parents, her status transcends the limitations of gender: "She is her mother's daughter and her father's son," corresponds to lines in the tenth stanza, "She thinks of all the women she has been, of all / the men." Likewise, listeners actually hear the extension of the community, "women," to a broader one in the eighth stanza:

And the woman hanging from the 13th floor window
hears other voices. Some of them scream out from below
for her to jump, they would push her over. Others cry softly
from the sidewalks, pull their children up like flowers and gather
them into their arms. They would help her, like themselves.

In contrast to the poem's mood of anxiety and crisis, this stanza's "Children," representing next generations, and including both genders and all the people to come, engenders hope for the future. The simile between "children" and "flowers," which Wendy Rose employs in many of her poems such as "For My People," and the act of "gather[ing] them into their arms" point to the collective struggle and unity of the peoples that "help" one another survive in urban areas. At this point, the speaker tells us that the woman "would speak" (14) and cry "for the lost beauty of her own life," speaking for silenced, oppressed voices. A call for survival resonates in the reoccurring image of "beauty," as in "Eagle Poem" discussed above and others in Red Power literature, since "beauty" makes the woman think of climbing "back up to claim herself again" at the closing of the poem.

“For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash, Whose Spirit Is Present Here and in the Dappled Stars” references a specific time and space. As a tribute to the legacy of Anna Mae Pictou Aquash (Míkmaq/Micmac), this poem attests to Harjo’s admiration of the “warrior spirit” that she “ha[s] seen in ordinary people. Like Jacqueline Peters, like Anna Mae Pictou Aquash” (Jaskoski 11). The mysterious and tragic murder of the young woman activist and AIM member, which took place in Pine Ridge Reservation in December, 1975, caused a lot of controversy in both Native and non-Native societies and in the tense relation between AIM and FBI. Harjo’s explanatory footnote to the poem details the still-unsolved murder of Anna Mae Aquash: “In February 1976, an unidentified body of a young woman was found on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The official autopsy attributed death to exposure. . . . When Anna Mae Aquash, a young Micmac woman who was an active American Indian Movement member, was discovered missing by her friends and relatives, a second autopsy was demanded. It was then discovered she had been killed by a bullet fired at close range to the back of her head. Her killer or killers have yet to be identified” (7). When Harjo wrote this poem, 1986, the killer(s) were not yet identified. In the early 2000s, the FBI identified the involvement of two fellow Native Americans on the reservation, and the murder remains controversial.⁶

As Harjo tells us the purpose of the poem in a parenthetical sort of subtitle, “(For we remember the story and must tell it again so we may all live),” the poem tells how the story of Native people revives and continues through an image of a flower with transformative power in the cycle of life. “For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash” opens with a

⁶ On Anna Mae Aquash’s short life and murder, see Brand, and Lindfleisch.

speaker who stands in awe of the finding of a flower in a winter morning “blurred with mist and wind”:

I am amazed as I watch the violet
heads of crocuses erupt from the stiff earth
after dying for a season,
as I have watched my own dark head
appear each morning after entering
the next world
to come back to this one,
amazed.
It is the way in the natural world to understand the place
the ghost dancers named
after the heart-breaking destruction. (7)

The specific weather and time of a winter “morning,” and the place, “stiff earth,” which evoke a particular time and place that alludes to the Wounded Knee Massacre and to the murder of Anna Mae, are metaphors for overwhelming harsh realities and oppression that Native Americans continued to undergo since European contact. Here, “the next world” along with the image of “the violet heads of crocuses,” a flower blooming in the winter, underscores the cultural and political revival of Native Americans as a whole entity. As the speaker indicates, Native people are not overwhelmed by the reality as they enter “the next world” after the “destruction,” death. Like the flowers, Native Americans will bloom again even in the winter, even “when” they were “were warned to be silent” and killed like Anna Mae and the ghost dancers (7). This sense of hope resonates when the speaker claims Anna Mae “found her voice” and envisions Anna Mae’s “spirit” as “present” everywhere “in the dappled stars” and “the streets of . . . steely cities” (7). Then, the speaker describes a situation that the story is revived, continued, and “heard” in various places, from the east, “Oklahoma,” to the east, “New Mexico,” during the Red Power era, telling:

how the wind howled and pulled everything down
 in righteous anger.
 (It was the women who told me) and we understood wordlessly
 the ripe meaning of your murder.
 As I understand ten years later after the slow changing
 of the seasons
 that we have just begun to touch
 the dazzling whirlwind of our anger,
 we have just begun to perceive the amazed world the ghost dancers
 entered
 crazily, beautifully. (8)

Here, Harjo achieves a poetic community-building in a “circle” that likewise appeared in her “Eagle Poem” and Rose’s “For My People.” The expressions, “righteous anger,” “have just begun to touch,” and “have just begun to perceive” indicate the spread of the awakening of the people from “the women” to the generic Native people through the continuation of stories. It is stories that make changes to “the seasons,” though the procedure is “slow” as suggested by “ten years later.” The union among different entities in a different time and space, “I,” “crocuses,” “Anna Mae,” “the women,” “the ghost dancers,” and “we,” as a whole, is that transformative process of entering “the next world” and “com[ing] back to” (7) the contemporary world, like the cycle of “the seasons.” The “amazed world” that the ghost dancers hoped and prayed for is a decolonized world that Paiute visionary Wovoka prophesied in which industrialized America recedes, the buffalo revive on the Plains, and Native people return to their ancestral homelands. This vision is underscored by the last word, “beautifully,” the recurring concept of “beauty” as meaning the restoration of Native world. As seen in “For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash,” Harjo performs stories “to sustain the lives of real, physical, earthly people, giving them the supernatural, spiritual power of immortality” (Leen 11).

Harjo's "Strange Fruit" from the collection *In Mad Love and War*, takes its title from a Billie Holiday blues and early protest song, referring to lynching. Harjo's "Strange Fruit" similarly pushes the boundary to engage the story of an African American activist, Jacqueline Peters, thereby reviving the silenced voice of other minorities in the US. As Harjo indicated in an explanatory note under the poem, it is "For Jacqueline Peters, a vital writer, activist in her early thirties, who was lynched in Lafayette, California, in June 1986. She had been working to start a local NAACP, in response to the lynching of a twenty-three-year-old black man, Timothy Lee, in November 1985, chapter when she was hanged in an olive tree by the Ku Klux Klan" (12). Harjo speaks of this poem in an interview: "People don't know about Jacqueline Peters, unless someone tells her story. I feel that part of what I do as a writer, part of my responsibility, is to be one of those who help people remember. I feel I have a responsibility to keep these stories alive" (Jaskoski 12). Jacqueline Peters thus becomes immortal in this poem, as the poet performs the murdered activist and describes a story of how she was abducted and murdered: "I was out in the early evening, taking a walk in the field . . . / quickly I smelled evil, then saw the hooded sheet ride . . . / in the dust behind / my tracks. Last night there were crosses burning in my dreams . . . / I never woke up" (11). Interestingly, in the midst of the story, the speaker's lover interrupts her voice: "*Shush, we have too many stories to carry on our backs like houses, we have / struggled too long to let the monsters steal our sleep, sleep, go to sleep*" (11). This remark is ironical because it betrays her need to continue the story as Native American storyteller and because it is true that colonialism and racism in the US marginalized not only Native Americans but African Americans. The speaker needs to resist the oppression of her

voice, so she continues to tell her story even after being hanged in a tree: “I need a / song. I need a cigarette. I want to squeeze my baby’s legs, see her turn into / a woman just like me. I want to dance under the full moon, or in the early / morning on my lover’s lap” (ibid). The poem interestingly closes with a ceremonial act that includes African American in the community of Native Americans, unifying and intensifying the resistance, as the speaker cries that “Please. Go away, hooded ghosts from hell on earth. I only want heaven / in my baby’s arms, my baby’s arms” and claims that though her feet “betray” her, she would “dance anyway from this killing tree” (12). Dancing “under the full moon,” in the hope for the optimistic future of her baby, references a Sun Dance ceremony that takes place at the time of the full moon to pray for the survival and continuation of a community and next generation.

Harjo’s concern about other oppressed people in “Strange Fruit” develops in her later poems written in the early and mid 1980s and particularly in the poems from the collection *In Mad Love and War*. This orientation draws from Harjo’s interest in multiculturalism as indicated in an interview: “I was lucky to be a part of a major multicultural movement with other writers” (Smith 24). Here, “other writers” refers to “the larger community of Black, Asian, Chicano people” who had an influence on her work (Jaskoski 8). This point offers an insight into understanding her perspective on the “survival” of all Indigenous Peoples through oral tradition, as Harjo asserts:

I feel strongly that I have a responsibility to all the sources that I am: to all past and future ancestors, to my home country, to all places that I touch down on and that are myself, to all voices, all women, all of my tribe, all people, all earth, and beyond that to all beginnings and endings. In a strange kind of sense [writing] frees me to believe in myself, to be able to speak, to have voice, because I have to; it is my survival. (qtd. in Hussain 29)

The reiterated “all” indicates where Harjo’s writing moves in that aspect of the spirit of the Red Power movement that stresses the alliance among broader communities that cross time and space. The poet does this both in an inclusive way in poems such as “City of Fire” and “We Must Call a Meeting” and with more referential specifics in poems such as “Resurrection.”

In “City of Fire,” a rather cosmopolitan metaphor, “a city,” where there are “many houses” with “many rooms,” well describes this act of building an inclusive, broader community (40). In this poem, Harjo’s takes more inclusive action as the poet maintains in this “city” and “house,” “There is no end” (a recurring theme in Ortiz’s poem “It doesn’t End” printed in *ABC*) and “Each room is a street to the next world” (41). In a sense, this poetic “act of linking,” as Azfar Hussain suggests, seems to reflect her “will-to-connection, repeated spelled out as it is in her interviews, poems, and essays,” a poetic desire that demonstrates her growing concern of the linkage between the local and the global in the postcolonial era (30). But more crucially, this aspect in her later poetry is an outcome of her interaction with the Red Power movement’s concerns of and identification with other Indigenous Peoples in and beyond the Americas during its later era in 1980s. It is evident in her interview with Coltelli: “We are dealing with a world consciousness, and have begun to see unity, first with many tribes in the United States and North America with the Pan-Indian movement, and now with the tribal people in the rest of the world, Central and South America, Africa, Australian Aborigines, and so on. We are not isolated” (61). In that regard, in those poems, Harjo demonstrates the continuation of stories as an act of connecting within the oral tradition that underscores the survival together with other communities. In “We Must Call a Meeting,” for instance,

atmosphere experienced and felt in the exchange of stories during the visit to Estelí and similar towns, Harjo links Native Americans and Nicaraguans:

We all felt the energy-after the trading of stories, and hearing the stories—the power of those stories. Many of them included torture, destruction, torture, destruction, over and over. And stories of survival. Those who had come back after being tortured, those who were able to escape or survive, said their torturers spoke American English. I was reminded of our people here in North America, another version of the same story. . . . They forget that Nicaragua is families, people who look like Marcella Sandoval’s grandmother, people who are their own relatives. I saw my brothers and sisters several times over, husbands, aunts and uncles of friends of mine. (Jaskoski 9-10)

For Harjo, sharing stories empowers Natives, serving as an act of survival and continuance as it moves beyond space and time in making the people “families” or brothers and sisters within Indigenous belief. For many American Indian women writers, Horan and Kim maintain, storyweaving “seeks to replace the damaging falsehoods of colonialism by representing an alternative, showing how traditional forms of knowledge are available in the present day” (28). This function of storyweaving is confirmed in the last lines of “Resurrection” through the word, “change,” a transformative one that is a statement of both poetics and politics. Oral Tradition, as Leen indicates regarding Harjo’s prose poems, “does not provide a time and space in which to build a product, but provides spaces that grow and change, spaces that are unfamiliar and require improvisation and spontaneity to survive” (14). Harjo’s seeking to connect to and speak for other dispossessed people in oral tradition evokes a point that Womack articulates in *Red on Red*: “Native artistry is not pure aesthetics, or art for art’s sake. . . . The idea behind the ceremonial chant is that language, spoken in the appropriate ritual contexts, will actually cause a change in the physical universe” (16-17). Hope for “change” in the future is evident at the closing of the poem where the speaker, “I,” once an individual, but

now turned into the first person plural, “we,” after the storyweaving, declares: “We all watch for fire / for all the fallen dead to return / and teach us a language so terrible / it could resurrect us all” (18). With rich prophetic dictions, Harjo dreams of the Ghost Dance vision that the Red Power movement revived and strived to achieve.

In oral tradition, Harjo confirms that when people continue the story resurrection and revival come. This observation resonates in “The Real Revolution Is Love,” another poem of Nicaragua revolution, where a speaker argues that her own way to revolution is to “awake in a story told by my ancestors” (25). Unlike Alonzo, who is incapable of staying connected to “a country / he no longer belongs to,” the speaker declares that “This is not a foreign country, but the land of our dreams” (25). As the title suggests, the continuation of stories is made possible through “love,” a concept that all humans might share. Yet, “love” here, as Hussain observes, is not the romanticized or universalized all-embracing love “nourished by the European Enlightenment project,” which “still alive under the global tutelage of territorially colonialist capital—urge[s] the oppressed to love even their oppressors and enemies” (43). Harjo’s “love” is continuing stories that connect under colonial oppression so that Nicaragua, which has suffered repeated military invasions, can be the land of dreams as its people seek to revolutionize and decolonize. The Creek writer thus voices the anti-colonial or anti-imperial cosmopolitics that is a major legacy of the Red Power movement.

From AIM to Cambodia, from Persona to Resistance: Wendy Rose’s “Halfbreed”

Retellings

Much of Wendy Rose's poetic aesthetics spring from her Pan-Indigenous cultural background in urban communities that fostered her consciousness as an "Indigenous" writer. Identifying as a Hopi and Miwok descendent, Rose writes, in her latest poetry collection *Bone Dance* (1994) of how she came to engage in writing: "I began to write about what I was learning in my urban Indian community in Oakland and San Francisco. I began to identify so thoroughly and personally with whoever was facing injustice in Indian Country, that I felt Kinzua Dam drown me, and Termination invalidate my identity, and two hundred-year-old treaties break across my bones" (xiii). Her identification with these Indigenous issues is confirmed by her defining her cultural identity: "culturally I would have to say I'm pretty urbanized: an urban, Pan-Indian kind of person. I grew up with Indian people from all over the country, all different tribes" (Coltelli 121). This cultural recognition of "all" tribes led to her deep and long involvement in American Indian Movement during the Red Power movement. Rose exemplifies an activist-writer as she participated in "almost all of the events" of AIM and offered her "voice to the Movement," that is, "the only thing" she has to offer (*Bone* xvii). In that regard, there are many intersections where the articulation of her personal voice through a persona powerfully corresponds with the rhetoric of the Movement. Such aspect is clearly represented in *Going to War with All My Relations* (1993), where the poet alludes to various protests in which she actively participated with AIM, as is evident in "Mount Rushmore," a poem about the occupation of Mt. Rushmore in 1971 that evoked the broken treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868 for the Lakota nation (81).

Wendy Rose, however, does not remain in the apparent representations of such national protests of the Red Power movement. The Hopi/Miwok writer develops the

consciousness and experience of the Red Power movement into the consciousness and aesthetic of broader communities that involve other Indigenous Peoples around the world. She defines this process as “a worldwide perspective,” which identifies with “the struggle of Indigenous people the world over” in an interview with Joseph Bruchac, underscoring that “all of these destroyed or damaged villages in Europe, America, Viet Nam, and so on . . . is all one village, our village. My work has become larger than Hopi or even Indian, too” (85). Like other Red Power writers, Rose writes poetry that aims at broader communities to envision the decolonial struggle that is engaged in worldwide. She intends to stand with the “Peoples,” as she emphatically asks, “What force could be more powerful than people moving together with a single voice?” (*Bone* xvii)

Like other Red Power writers, Rose recognizes the importance of maintaining tribalism: when asked if (Native American) literature develops “a sense of Pan-Indianness” in an interview, she underscores that “to be Pan-Indian is not to become less tribal. To be tribal and to be Pan-Indian exist side by side, and in fact Pan-Indianism is intended to protect those tribal identities, not to replace them” (Coltelli 132). For Rose, as for other Red Power writers, Pan-Indigenism and tribalism are in collaborative relationship for the sole goal, decolonization. This collaboration eventually points to a function of oral tradition that is communal to all Native Americans. In oral tradition, Rose’s poetic method aims at accessibility and attempts to encourage the “listener to be in the same place, to see what I see” in order to elicit their own response of emotion and irony, she invites readers from all kinds of social locations to identify with her imaginatively, even as she identifies with others (*Bone* xv).

Her reference to the difference of oral tradition that is at odds with European literature upholds such orientation: in her influential essay “The Great Pre-tenders: Further Reflections on White-Shamanism,” Rose maintains that poetry and poetics in the Western traditions are always already the privilege and prerogative of a “special elite” who are “non-utilitarian, self-expressive, solitary, ego-identified, self-validating” while, as Rose further maintains, poetry or art in the Native American traditions must be “community-oriented. . . . it must be useful, beautiful, and functional at the same time” (411-2). As indicated, for Rose, Pan-Indigenous consciousness is derived from Native worldview expressed through oral tradition that intends to be communal.

In that regard, Rose envisions the center of Indigenous Peoples, while achieving in a more subtle and metaphorical way under the generic theme of the unity of Native Americans: this reflects the recognition of her complicated cultural identity that involves complex relations between Native Americans, the Hopi and the Miwok, and Europeans, Scottish and Irish. Like Joy Harjo, many of Rose’s poems lay claim to the lands of America and call for the restoration of Native community. For Rose, Indigenous center Harjo represents in “3 A.M.” would be more about psychological process in their mind: estranged from tribal acculturation, she grew up in urban areas as a mixed-blood, a daughter of a Hopi father and a Miwok mother, a status that reflects the plight of many other Native Americans relocated in urban areas. Accordingly, many of Rose’s poems focus on the landscape of urban areas in representing contemporary urban Indians who find themselves in painful realities.

Yet, like Harjo, Rose articulates a hopeful vision, the revival of the people as seeking to live in balance and harmony, concepts that are important to Hopi oral tradition

that become generalized among many Native Americans during the apogee of the Red Power Movement. For the poet, Saucerman observes, “is in an urban matrix yet mentally recreating, bring particulars to the common spiritual source” (28). That “spiritual source” is oral tradition as evident in the poem “The Urban Child Listens,” where the storyteller, modern and urban, feels the need to preserve the culture through oral tales: in the absence of images of “corn-tassels,” “sheep-fat candles,” “silver spider web,” and “thunderhead,” she must pass on the stories to the children even in the midst of traffic noise and city buildings because “Coyote speeds through our lives anyway” (9). For Rose, as Coyote is still alive in urban areas, there is hope for the revival of the people and future generation. What Weibel-Orlando is suggestive of this process of cultural revival: “Urban space . . . has been and continues to be the sociopolitical terrain in which cultural innovation can occur and in which engendered community actions and roles can be challenged and reassigned” (501-2).

“Vanishing Point: Urban Indian” in *Long Division: A Tribal History* (later reprinted in *Bone Dance*), a poem written around 1975, portrays such vision of restoration of community through the continuation of oral tradition that enables a speaker to keep a balance in chaotic reality. In the first half of the poem, a speaker, “I,” describes herself vanishing “in the cities” and leaning “underbalanced / into nothing” (10). Alluding to the Relocation era, the speaker persists in this depressed, pessimistic tone, saying that “without learning” and “song” she “dies & cries the death-time,” blowing “from place to place,” and “dying over & over” (10). But this tone dramatically shifts to a positive one in the latter half of the poem:

. . . let tears dissolve in dry caves
where women’s ghosts roll *piki*

& insects move to keep this world alive.

It is I who hold the generous bowl
that flows over with shell & stone
& buries its future in blood, places its shape

within rock wall carvings. It is I who die
bearing cracked turquoise & making noise
so as to protect your fragile immortality,

O medicine ones. (*Bone* 10)

The optimistic diction in this part, such as “world alive,” “future,” and “medicine ones,” is generated by the image of women working for the community, by rolling *piki* (rolled-up corn wafers according to Rose’s note in the poem). This is an important food for the Hopi and other Natives in the Southwest. This signals a significant change as the “I” is not in the cities any longer, but is with her ancestors, working with them to make the future. This is further suggested by a stable and enduring image of “rock wall carving,” in contrast to the situation of being “underbalanced” in the first part of the poem.

Connecting the past and the present, the speaker turns into a protector of urban Indians as a medicine woman, which reflects women’s playing a crucial role in restoring “balance” and “harmony” among tribal people and between the people and nature in many tribal societies such as Hopi and Navajo.⁷

Such a portrait of urban Indians in “Vanishing Point” further develops in Rose’s later collection of poems, *What Happened When the Hopi Hit New York* (1982), in which the poet, recalling Simon Ortiz’s travel poems in *Going for the Rain*, takes up travelling across America as the starting point of the manifestation of Pan-Indigenism. As Rose indicates, her widening travels enabled her to engage “more of the world and its people”

⁷ See Gunn Allen, *Grandmothers*, xiv, 9, 15, 80, 170.

and eventually to feel “a sense of being linked not only to Native American issues, but to related concerns on a global level” (*Bone* xv). In this collection, (which reflects Rose’s real research trip across the US as an anthropologist) a speaker travels through various cities and states from the north to the mid-west and to the east in search of Native identity and culture. This is manifest in a poem “Searching for Indians in New Orleans,” where the speaker imagines “a Drum Dance” as “a thousand Native throats” and in Fairbanks, Alaska: writing in “Alaskan Fragments” (13), the poet realizes a general “Indian invisibility,” while in “Literary Luncheon: Iowa City” (16), the poet listens to “Ojibwa songs / from . . . the jukebox in “Chicago” (24), finds “the genuine earth” among “ancestors” in “Cemetery: Stratford, Connecticut” (26), and looks for “songs” on “familiar . . . tracks left by ancient tongues” and then in “My Red Antenna Receiving: Vermont,” while the white tells her that ““*We have no Indians here*”” (27). At this point, this travel confirms the speaker’s survival as an Indian as she claims that “My hands are still Hopi” in “Corn-Grinding Song To Send Me Home: New Hampshire” (28). In “Subway Graffiti: An Anthropologist’s Impressions,” the realization of her unchanged root and identity is expanded to the consciousness of survival of Native people as a whole in New York City: in the subway, the speaker’s imagination connects modern graffiti, “Day-glo signs of survival” (35) and Native American ancient words, “hieroglyphic” (37), declaring “This is who we are; / we are the words” (38), a concept that recalls N. Scott Momaday’s well-known statement, “we are all made of words,” from a lecture in 1971 (*Remembered Earth* 162).

Two Wounded Knee poems, “I Expected My Skin and My Blood to Ripen” in *Lost Copper*, and “December” in *Going to War with All My Relations* exemplify a similar

attempt to speak for the community and sing a hopeful song with the vision of survival and empowerment of Native people. The poems connect the past to the present, interweaving the symbol of annihilation, Wounded Knee Massacre, with that of rebirth, the Red Power movement. In these poems—longer and detailed versions of another Wounded Knee poem, “Wounded Knee Dream,” published in the newspaper *ABC* by an anonymous author discussed in chapter 2—Rose brings the victims at Wounded Knee back to life. Importantly, these poems are accompanied by a quotation from written records of Wounded Knee Massacre and its aftermath, directly representing the brutal genocide of US colonialism by way of the images of the “burial” of the bodies in a ditch and of their items and possessions being stripped and sold off as art, robbing them of dignity: so were the victims of Wounded Knee dehumanized and dishonored. In “I Expected My Skin and My Blood to Ripen,” the resentment of Euroamericans valuing items over the lives of Native Americans—as “Three Thousand Dollar Death Song” in the same collection reacts to the idea of Indian skeletons for cash—is powerfully infused in the narration of the dead, “I,” speaking for other victims:

I expected my skin and my blood
to ripen, not be ripped from my bones;
like fallen fruit I am peeled, tasted,
discarded. My seeds open
and have no future. (*Lost* 14)

The alliteration of “ripen,” “ripped,” “fallen,” and “fruit,” describes the image of death, along with the image of the abortive, as opposed to “ripen,” birth of “seeds” that have no future. Within this description of extinction the speaker is literally stripped of her clothing and figuratively stripped of her culture. In writing “my own body gave up the beads,” the speaker asserts that “Now there has been no past.” Here, like *ABC*’s

“Wounded Knee Dream” poem discussed in chapter 2 and in her own “December,” the speaker visualizes “babies in the snow” (*Bone* 82). This poem more specifically describes atrocities done to the “babies”: “babies . . . / to be strung on bayonets / to be counted one by one / like rosary stones and then / tossed to the side of life / as if the pain of their birthing / had never been” (*Lost* 14). In these lines, which take the readers’/listeners’ breaths through the play of the repetitive “s” sounds —such as in “tossed” -- while describing how the US soldiers, as agents and culprits of the inhumanity of colonialism mishandled the dead.. Significantly, this imagery of premature death linked with the “seeds” in the opening lines makes the particular Plain Indians (Lakota Sioux) murdered at Wounded Knee illuminate a generic sense of hopelessness of all Native Americans in the US who share the similar history, thereby heading to inclusion and mixture of other traumatic stories in a continuing description of being dispossessed:

My feet were frozen to the leather,
pried apart, left behind—bits of flesh
on the moccasins, bits of paper deerhide
on the bones. My back was stripped
of its cover, its quilling intact,
was torn, was taken away.
My leggings were taken like in a rape
and shriveled to the size
of stick figures
like they had never felt the push
of my strong woman’s body
walking in the hills. (14)

The image of the “frozen” “feet” recalls the victims at Wounded Knee, including the graphic picture of the frozen body chief “Big Foot,” Spotted Elk. It also recalls the Trail of Tears—a long journey where the so-called “Five Civilized” Southeastern tribes, Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole, are pulled “apart,” and some were “left behind,” as many of the people, like the speaker in this poem, died during the long

“walk.”⁸ The relatively static “leggings” and “stick figures” contrast with the more powerful kinetic “walking” in the past, which articulates the powerlessness that Native people experienced in the synecdoche of “feet” forced to march during relocation, along with the “shrinking” of the Native population during the systematic, US-government-directed oppression of the nineteenth century. As the poem’s closing lines move dramatically toward Red Power, the pessimism that dominates most of the poem is neutralized, so that the speaker’s energy coalesces, full force, in calling for revival and Native empowerment, as in “For My People.” The speaker recalls how she would have protected her baby:

It was my baby
whose cradleboard I held—
would’ve put her in my mouth like a snake
if I could, would’ve turned her into a bush
or rock if there’d been magic enough
to work such changes. Not enough magic
to stop the bullets, nor enough magic
to stop the scientists, not enough magic
to stop the money. Now *our* ghosts dance
a new dance, pushing from their hearts
a new song (15, emphasis added)

Unlike the babies in the previous lines, the “baby” here indicates the potential for rebirth. “Magic,” associated with “ghosts dance” at the end, functions as a metaphor for the way to survive and revive: the word is repeated in evoking the impervious “ghost shirts” that the participants of the Ghost Dance wore in belief that it would protect them and Indian warriors from the bullets of the US soldiers (Johnson *Red Power* 21). Through these allusions, Rose’s poem transforms the regretful “if I could” into a pluralized voice of

⁸ History says, though it may vary, at least 2000-6000 of relocation Cherokee along with many of other tribes died. And in the picture of the dead body of the Lakota chief, Spotted Elk, one can literally see his frozen bare hands and his foot in the “leather” shoes, what this poem alludes to.

renewal which suggests that an individual's magic is less sufficient or potent than communal sorcery. Like the first person plural employed in "For My People," the singular "I" becomes a unified "we" who "now" rejoins a group of Ghost Dancers. Only in this union can a "new" song of survival resonate in the plural chorus of the poem's concluding lines, whose message of hope recalls the active and armed resistance taking place at Wounded Knee in 1973: "We have learned / to barricade the village / and have our weapons / closer at hand" (83).

Wounded Knee is a touchstone for Rose's representation of community consciousness, a synecdoche for the long history of US colonial oppression. Significantly, such vision is found as early as in her first poem in her life, "For My People," written in 1965 when she was only seventeen and printed in *Hopi Roadrunner Dancing* (1973), Rose's first collection of poetry, published in the same year as when the Siege of Wounded Knee took place. "People" in the title of this poem has a broader reference, illustrating Rose's emergent consciousness of other people under oppression, especially African Americans: the poem is an outcome of her response in Berkeley to the news about the 16th Street Baptist Church Bombing in Birmingham, making a linkage between the two of the most important cities for Civil Rights movement in general. The tragic event, she writes, made her begin to "feel connected to 'a People' for the first time in spite of having grown up in the Bay Area" (*Bone* xiii). Reflecting that sentiment, Rose's bold exclamation, "For My People," in *Bone Dance* envisions restoring the unity and community of "People" as a way of surviving with brilliant imageries. The poem opens with the speaker, "I," who is represented as fragmented:

I was myself blown
two leafs apart

seeing the ground swim within
sliding and slipping together
and apart (3)

The distance between the separated “leafs” after being “blown” is highlighted through the repetitive diction, “apart,” as if the speaker was off-balance, drifting, though trying to go “together” and fly high or fully bloom. This metaphor’s multi-layered references represents the dead bodies of the four African American girls as ripped “apart” in the bombing before they’d fully bloomed: it describes the minds of the speaker and others on hearing the news and it illustrates the situation Native Americans were facing in urban areas—drifting away and struggling with their identity and culture, a consequence of Relocation—while generally symbolizing the plight of the ethnic minorities in the US. The metaphor thus makes the sense of tragedy more vivid, effectively resonating with the historical contexts.

However, like other poems discussed, this sense of desperate tragedy gradually becomes hope in the next stanza’s suggestion that the “People” will be restored in a balance and unity. By referring the image of a bud of a flower to Natives and Blacks, the poem envisages a beautiful outcome for the unity of the “People”:

growing closer
biting at our shadows
loving on our feet
dying in our souls
losing one another
losing ourselves

finding (3)

The repetitive collective, “our” or “ourselves,” effectively replaces the individual “I,” achieves a hopeful vision as the “I” is embraced in a community built by “losing ourselves.” Indeed, as the repetitive progressive verb, “losing,” indicates, life’s ongoing

negative aspects. Yet the final progressive, “finding,” definitely affirms that the lost lives of the girls will eventually revive or rebloom in the “People” who would build a stronger community by overcoming the hardship *together*. In a Native worldview, and perhaps the Hopi in particular, this poem recalls Harjo’s “Eagle Poem” in exemplifying the “beauty” of the restored community as a whole, though not directly referencing the Diné concept.

Wendy Rose in 1980s further pushes the conceptual boundary of “People” and the poetic action of connecting as an expression of her concept. Being a “Halfbreed” or “Halfbreedness,” is at the center of the process and empowers her to link Native Americans with other Indigenous Peoples around the world. “Halfbreed,” a strategic conceptual tool for articulating her voice, demonstrates her identification with and speaking for them. Rose finds this action in other Native poets too, such as Simon Ortiz, as she explains in an interview with Coltelli:

By “Halfbreed,” I’m meaning something that transcends genetics. It’s a condition of history, of society, of something larger than any individual. I’m not the only one doing this, though we apparently all started individually at the same time unaware of each other. Simon Ortiz typifies what I’m talking about in *From Sand Creek*, where he bounces his experiences in a VA hospital as a Viet Nam veteran off the Sand Creek Massacre and views the forces of white greed in both instances. We are experiencing a kind of enlightenment, I think, about the interconnectedness of these different struggles. We are realizing that it’s not just Indian versus whiteman, but is humanity against some gigantic monster that can be identified, perhaps, in political and economic terms” (86).

Well recognizant of how differently Indigenous people engage “different struggles” depending on their contexts, her vision is more conscious of the communal story that reflects Native Americans’ growing interaction with the world during the Red Power Movement. In the latest poetry collection, *Bone Dance*, Rose defines “halfbreedness” as “a condition of history, a result of experience, of dislocations and reunions, and of

choices made for better or worse” as she believes that all the people in that condition of history “were colonized souls” (xvi). “History,” she claims, “and circumstance have made halfbreeds of all of us” (qtd. in Bruchac 87). The vision of another short poem, “The Long Root,” connects the Vietnam War and invasion of Cambodia to Wounded Knee, written, as the poet indicates “on the day the United States began its air attacks on Cambodia” (*Bone* xiii). Adopting the persona of a victim dying at Wounded Knee, the poem speaks of the will to survive, “I will not be left here to die,” and of the will to connect, “no matter how I try / there is no way to shake / Cambodia from my Wounded Knee” (ibid 4). Again, will-to-survive is expressed in will-to-connection in forming a broader community.

Concern for other peoples’ experience of and resistance to colonial oppression begins with but extends well beyond the present borders of the US. The volume *The Halfbreed Chronicles* uses indigenously marked persona to develop the stance of historical witness to significant moments in the struggle to resist colonization. While persona is a way of becoming and transforming as a free-floating individual expression in Western tradition, Rose’s use of persona combines with her concept of “Halfbreed” to effectively speak for other Indigenous Peoples. A starting point appears in “The Day They Cleaned Up the Border,” a poem that is devoted to the Civil Wars in El Salvador, focusing on the 1981 event known as El Mozote Massacre, which like Wounded Knee Massacre occurred in December. Like “December” and “I Expected My Skin and My Blood to Ripen,” the poem denounce the tragedy and injustice perpetrated by federal troops that turned on civilians, by opening with the accusation of an unnamed survivor crying aloud: “*Government soldiers killed my children. I saw it. Then I saw the head of a*

baby floating in the water” (61). Here is a narrative of a mother mourning the loss of her children; it verges on the unspeakable. She finds a degree of calm in the flow of “water” and the “soothing whisper / of the reeds” (61). Returning to that traumatic moment, she is drawn to the water where she prays to return to her past. What is “comforting” in the return emerges in the final stanza, where memory and imagination revive her children’s long-past infancy:

But look—that little melon rind
or round gourd, brown and white
in the water where I
could pluck it out
and use it dry, slipping
past me in the ripples
and turning
till its tiny mouth
still suckling
points at me. (62)

Through this poignant recollection, the poet offers a bit of hope, signaled in the imperative, “But look.” In the opening poem of *From Sand Creek* Simon Ortiz similarly promises a sliver of hope amid the remembered tragedy of the Massacre.⁹

Like the elegy for Anna Mae Aquash in Joy Harjo’s poem, Wendy Rose demonstrates her concern with substantially recovering the lost, silenced, and violated voices of Indigenous women from the past, historical figures whom she names, in contrast to the unnamed speaker of “The Day they Cleaned up the Border.” Rose’s project draws from her intellectual background in anthropology and archaeology in 1970s. These materials also reflect the Red Power Movement’s growing concern with various Indigenous groups across and beyond the Western Hemisphere in the same decade. In

⁹ Ortiz writes, “This America / has been a burden / of steel and mad / death, But, look now, / there are flowers / and new grass / and a spring wind / rising / from Sand Creek” (9).

1974, Rose enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley. While attending the university in 1976 she earned her B.A. in anthropology. Two years later she got her M.A. in 1978 and enrolled in the doctoral program. During this period of her life, Rose published five volumes of poetry and completed her Ph.D. in anthropology. She has since identified herself as a “spy” in the academy, crossing borders and maintaining allegiances elsewhere (Coltelli 124). Rose’s poems in *The Halfbreed Chronicles*, a collection published in 1985 reflect the knowledge coming to the fore at that time, particularly in how they shift and unsettle the social and scientific approach that was standard at the time, regarding the “discovery” of Indigenous cultures as a “remnant” and of women as non-speaking, mute, timeless and intuitive figures from the past. By contrast, the poet looks to the future when she exhorts the space explorers to recognize women’s agency, in “To the Vision Seekers, Remember This”: “it is women, / all women, where you come from, / Earth the one to remember” (*Going to War* 32). A proposal to “call home the scientists,” challenges readers to temper and apply those methods and that knowledge within a context that recognizes human relatedness to all creation.

Ideals for honoring the past and for celebrating and naming historical women whose lives made a difference for Indigenous Peoples structure the poems “Truganinny” and “Julia,” which both appear in *The Halfbreed Chronicles*. These represent two Indigenous women’s lives, depicting their responses as broadly representative of the modes of survivance that Indigenous Peoples all over the world have developed. The first poem honors Truganinny (1812-1876), generally regarded as the last of her Tasmanian tribe in Oceania, while the second poem considers Julia Pastrana (1832-1860), an Indigenous Mexican woman who worked as a circus performer. Much as Harjo speaks

for women dead before their time as a consequence of the violent conditions governing their lives as Indigenous women and men, both “Julia” and “Truganinny” open with reports of how genocide and colonialist exploitation destroyed the lives and led to the deaths of the women named in each poem’s title. Each performs an act of witness to otherwise suppressed historical moments. “Truganinny” and of “Julia” combine factual contexts with fictive dramatization. Rose writes in the epigraph of “Julia”: “Julia Pastrana, 1832-60, a singer and dancer was billed in the circus as ‘The Ugliest Woman in the World’ or ‘Lion Lady.’ A Mexican Indian, Pastrana was born with a deformed facial bone structure hair growing from her entire body. In an attempt to maintain control over her professional life, her manager married her. On the morning of her wedding she reportedly said, ‘I know he loves me for my own sake.’ When she gave birth to her son, she saw that he had inherited her own deformities plus some lethal gene that killed him at the age of six hours. In less than a week, Julia had also died. As her husband was unwilling to abandon his financial investment, he had Julia and her infant son stuffed and mounted in a wood and glass case. As recently as 1975 they were exhibited at locations in the United States and Europe” (69). A similar situation operates in “Truganinny,” when Rose writes in an epigraph: “Truganinny, the last of the Tasmanians, who had seen the stuffed and mounted body of her husband. Her dying wish was to be buried in the outback or at sea so that her body would not be subjected to similar indignities. Upon her death, she was, nevertheless, stuffed and mounted and put on display for over eighty years. — Paul Coe, Australian Aborigine activist, 1972” (56).

The imagined narration of “Julia” continues after the speaker’s death, presenting a fuller account of her life. She relates how many European men tricked and exploited

Indigenous women within marriages founded on broken promises, malice and greed.

Disillusioned, she aches to retreat from reality: “Tell me it was just a dream / my husband, a clever trick / . . . his claim / that our marriage is made / of malice and money” (69). The alliteration that links “marriage” with “malice and money” underscores the husband’s greed-driven colonialism, which makes a “map” of Julia’s body as a property that he would possess (69). Alliteration in the fourth stanza employs the hard, almost staccato “c”:

cruel as the children
and cold as the coins that glitter
in your pink fist.
And another magic
in the cold
of that small room:
in my arms or standing
next to me on a tall table
by my right side
a tiny doll
that looked
like me. (71)

While evoking the harshness and deception of dominant history, the alliteration, “cold,” “cruel,” “and “coins,” is especially provocative, associated with “a tiny doll” and a “child / lioness / with cub” The final stanza alludes to a situation of ultimate domestication to which Rose alludes in the volume’s prologue: the title figure’s surviving husband “had Julia and her infant son stuffed and mounted in a wood and glass case” following their deaths (69). The powerlessness of a woman without autonomy, who is not seen as anything but a reflection, dominates the poem as Julia divulges her solitary knowledge: “I know myself to be in the dark / above the confusion / . . . I was there in the mirror” (70). Nevertheless, the final stanzas offer her the agency of insisting that “tell me again . . . / tell me, husband, / how you love me / for my self” (71).

“Truganinny” links the situations of Native Americans to that of Tasmanian Aborigines as peoples who resoundingly resisted the settler colonialism of Europeans. Both peoples faced massacres and forcible removal from their traditional homelands. That process grew especially acute in the nineteenth century. By imaginatively recreating previously silenced and historically disregarded individual voices, such as that of Truganinny, the speaker imagines being present at Truganinny’s deathbed, where Julia charges her to further develop their speaker-listener relationship:

You need
to come closer
for little is left
of this tongue
and what I am saying
is important. (56)

The dying Truganinny employs the words, “need” and “important,” to insist that her story survive her. An isolated couplet announcing her extinction punctuates the poem’s urgency: “I am / the last one” (56). This historical reference, which predicts the impending annihilation of the entire Tasmanian people, was dramatized in the third stanza’s vision of dead daughters. They are past recovery: “so many / daughters dead / their mouths empty and round / their breathing stopped / their eyes gone gray.” In contrast to that overwhelming vision of silent loss and voiceless death are the later stanzas where Truganinny recounts a “dream” of “grass gold / of earth” (56). That dream shows that the will to survive is closely related to the face-to-face situation of singing and storytelling, which offers connection and community:

Do not leave me
for I would speak,
I would sing
one more song.

Your song. (57)

The speaker, Truganinny moves from the individual “I” to tell the listeners, “You” that their survival depends on hearing her out, patiently, although “We old ones / take such / a long time” (57). Her tribulations refer to a shared, common rather than uniquely individual experience. In the course of urging them to listen to her story, she calls on them to resist together the impending colonial force that overtook her, as is represented in “They will take me / Already they come / . . . they are waiting for me / to finish my dying” (ibid). Establishing an alliance against the colonial threat is part of a larger rhetorical stance of insisting that her listeners identify with her and take action on behalf of her and her people by fulfilling her last wish, which she reveals in concluding lines:

Please
take my body
to the source of night,
to the great black desert
where Dreaming was born. . . .

Put me where
they will not
find me. (57)

In contrast to the husband who had her “stuffed and mounted and put on display for over eighty years” (56), the poem presents an alternative history of Julia Truganinny, one that insists on the integrity of the body and its inviolate belonging to the “great black desert,” to the “Dreaming” which represents the great achievement of the aboriginal peoples who lived continuously in Tasmania for tens of thousands of years. Understanding and sharing and speaking aloud this history is part of how Indigenous peoples have become engaged in active, collective, decolonial struggle. So does the Hopi/Miwok writer, like Joy Harjo,

voice anti-colonial and anti-imperial cosmopolitics that spring in part from the continuing and developing legacy of the Red Power movement.

From Kinzua Dam to the “Universal Soldiers”: Buffy Sainte-Marie’s Singing as Retelling, Resisting, and Speaking for Communities

The near-universal kinship between poetry, song, and oral tradition of singing and telling stories are evident throughout epic oral poetry singers in more recent times provide alternative unwritten histories that breach the gaps which generic historians leave. Music counts as an effective “mnemonic device” in oral tradition for exploring and reconstructing otherwise lost, repressed or heavily veiled histories (46). The musical elements that appear throughout and among Native American traditional singers and storytellers underscore and reinforce the ritual and ceremonial importance of songs and chants, which are as important as prayers in oral tradition as they forge spiritual harmony and potentially connect the members of differing generations. Folksongs predate literacy or methodical practices of record keeping. Meant to be heard rather than read, the very combination of music with oral storytelling proves effective for the listeners. Oral tradition, Bohlman observes, “is also a measure of a community’s sense of itself, its boundaries, and the shared values drawing it together. Folk music can be a repository for these values and a voice for their expressions” (14).

The widespread revival of folksongs and traditional music throughout the 1960s forms an important background to the work of the Cree singer-songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie. Communal experiences of singing, individually and in chorus, were critical to the spread of the Civil Rights movement in 1960s and 70s. Music spread the political

perspectives of the activists, aroused consciousness, and provided a conduit for people to promote and express support for collective struggles and ideals. Folksongs combined with American Indian oral tradition while developing and reproducing larger ongoing patterns and evidence of cultural revival among contemporary Indigenous Peoples in North America. Musical connections between generations created a background of support for the cause of the Red Power movement peoples. Part of that cause involved the recovery and retelling of otherwise silenced histories, developing the perspectives of Indigenous peoples as active, speaking historical subjects who continuously engaged in affirming the rights of native peoples.

Sainte-Marie's status is less that of an activist than a supporter and sponsor as evident in the Occupation of Alcatraz Island and the founding of the Native American Center for Living Arts in New York.¹⁰ The Red Power movement in 1960s was decisive for the formation of her early career: referring to NIYC and AIM, she recalls that "the student movement was extremely important. It's not happening right now, but it was then and it was a small window through which people like myself came into show business" (interview with Norrell).¹¹ For St. Marie, as her "platform" and center, the movement was foremost, effectively enabling her career as an activist-singer-songwriter (ibid).

St. Marie's contributed to the cause of the Red Power movement by way of songs that she performed and recorded in halls and music studios, distributed in records, and played over the radio. Her achievement in mainstream business involved the singer-songwriter in a struggle between her public image that fit into white fantasies of a singing

¹⁰ St. Marie's participation in these events was, like many other folksingers at that time, that of a performer. During the Occupation of Alcatraz, for example, she visited and gave benefit concerts and donated fresh water. See Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz*, 25, 27, 28 & 235.

¹¹ <http://bsnorrell.tripod.com/id99.html> retrieved on Oct. 14 2013.

Indian princess and her concerns with Native Americans: while she fully realized that “People were more in love with the Pocahontas-with-a-guitar image,” St. Marie has “always refused to be categorized” within such a stereotypical image. Rather, St. Marie was more concerned with her people than her “fortune and fame” (interview with Norrell). In *The Buffy Sainte-Marie Songbook 1971*, the first book that she designed and illustrated herself, she writes that “It seems like 90% of my life is spent in court or with the press, trying to explain and remedy the dire problems which cause the Indian suicide rate to be highest in the country, infant mortality, unemployment, and poverty to be ten and twenty times anybody else’s. I am one of many who are in this to the death” (155). In relation to such communal concerns, she indicates in the book her Pan-Indigenous consciousness, as she develops in recalling a powwow gathering: “We are of many tribes; we stay up all night and travel far to be together in times of trouble. We are never ashamed of our birth” (154).

St. Marie’s Pan-Indigenous consciousness develops from her experience of having grown up in urban areas. Many of her songs attest to the Pan-Indigenism that is one aspect or result of such an experience. Also because of that urban experience, she is comfortable as a “modern” or “modernized” artist and singer within the entertainment business. Her work combines traditional music with modernized musical instruments, styles and contexts. Her protest folksongs especially combine Native and modernized forms. While St. Marie does not deny the importance of using contemporary musical instruments, she actively resists assimilation, as she evidenced through the use of powwow drums in her album *Up Where We Belong* (1996). Such drums are an important tool in calling for Indigenous unity during powwow gatherings. The singer-songwriter is

a “model” of revitalized powwow music that manifests Pan-Indigenous unity, incorporating the Indigenous beat from powwow drums into modernized sound (Diamond 416). This aspect is crucial to protest songs: “it is fitting for a new song genre such as a protest song to be couched in the style of songs now identified with the Powwow” (McAllester 435). St. Marie’s song lyrics similarly draw on the Pan-Indigenist values that come out of the Red Power Movement. A good example of the Pan-Indigenist poetic value of her song lyrics is her song “Universal Soldiers” which is regarded as one of the most important First Nation literary works (Gooderham 89).

In her many songs that engage Native American themes, Buffy Sainte-Marie employs oral tradition to articulate Native land claims, reveal the silenced stories of Indigenous Peoples, and to valorize Indigenous perspectives through acts of lyric storytelling. The singer-songwriter addresses listeners as if she were an elder who tells a story that teaches certain knowledge and lesson through singing. Repeated chants and choruses throughout the songs, which mostly deliver key messages, reinforce the instructive intentions and actions. In an interview published in the Red Power newspaper *Warpath*, she reveals that she has conceived of founding a Native American Centre for the Arts in New York “in the interest of accurately portraying our own history, developing our Native American artists, and presenting our arts and artists to the rest of the world” (11).

Among St. Marie’s earliest songs, “Now That the Buffalo’s Gone” is the first song in her debut album *It’s My Way* (1964), while “My Country ‘Tis of Thy People You’re Dying,” appear in the third album *Little Wheel Spin and Spin* (1966). Both are good examples of how storytelling can sum up the issues that concerned the Red Power

movement, especially the US colonialist encroachment of Native lands. Like Peter La Farge's song, "As Long As the Grass Shall Grow," St. Marie relates a then unknown story of the Seneca People who faced a forced relocation in the early 1960s due to the impending building of the Kinzua Dam.¹²

"Now That the Buffalo's Gone" opens with an address to Euroamerican listeners: "Can you remember the times . . . / And told all your friends of your Indian claim / Proud good lady and proud good man / Some great great grandfather from Indian blood came / And you feel in your heart for these ones" (156). The verse that follow the opening mentions Native Americans as the subjects of stories told "written in books and in song" that represent Natives as "mistreated and wronged." The singer develops the continuing impact of those stories as she represents herself as a listener who is now taking the time and opportunity to respond:

Well over and over I hear those same words,
From you, good lady, and you good man,
Well listen to me if you care where we stand,
And you feel you're a part of these ones. (157)

The imperative, "listen to me," in the fifth line shows St. Marie's will to relate the story of colonization and oppression imposed on Native Americans from the perspective of the latter, rather than from that of Euroamericans or whites. In doing so, she implicitly calls on Whites to recognize their complicity in that colonialist history. The calm of the lines, "And you feel you're a part of these ones" radically indicts Euroamericans' responsibility while asking, point-blank, "what have you done to these ones?" (157)

¹² For detailed documentary on the issues of the Seneca People and the Kinzua Dam, see Bilharz, *The Allegany Senecas and Kinzua Dam*. According to Bilharz, construction of the dam began in 1960 and ended in 1965. Therefore, St. Marie's songs were very timely in the way they referred to an even that was current at the time. Bilharz briefly mentions in this book the relevance of the St. Marie's songs to the issue.

St. Marie directly attacks the US government in relating the experience of the Seneca People with respect to the Kinzua Dam, asking “are you still taking our lands?” Her liner notes relate how the Seneca homelands were taken through a broken treaty that had promised to protect the land from the colonial exploitation, “granting recognition that the Seneca reservation belonged to the Senecas now and forever more” (154):

A treaty forever your senators sign
They do dear lady, they do dear man
And the treaties are broken again and again
And what will you do for these ones. (157)

As the present tense in this verse suggests, broken treaties lead to and stand for the false, duplicitous and unlawful taking of Native American homelands, in a process that was still ongoing at the time when this song was released. A postcolonial state has not yet come for Natives in the US, which the future tense, “will,” of the last line registers the singer’s sense that given this history, colonial exploitation in the US will not cease, not even in the near future. St. Marie underscores her historical sensibility in the concluding lines, speaking of and for Indigenous Peoples’ experiences of living with oppression and the threat of forced relocation:

Oh it’s all in the past you can say
But it’s still going on here today
The governments now want the Navaho land
That of the Inuit and the Cheyenne
It’s here and it’s now you can help us dear man
Now that the buffalo’s gone

The mixture of the past and the present, characteristic of oral tradition, moves into dramatic description as the catalog relates to the forced relocations of the Navajo People, the Cheyenne, along with the related Sand Creek Massacre of the 1860s. The same issue that confronts the Inuit in 1950s is presently troubling the Seneca People. Cataloging the

effects of genocide among Indigenous People at the hands of Euroamericans over centuries, she relates the conditions of these tribal peoples to the herds of buffalo, named in the present perfect “now that the buffalo’s gone.” Coupled with the present perfect tense, the repetitive dictions, “here” and “now,” deliver the sense of urgency to the broader community of humans across the world, albeit in a diplomatic way, ensuring that the scope of the addressed and listeners to which St. Marie sings and tells is significantly expanded. The “you” in this verse sounds more inclusive than the “you” which is directed primarily towards Euroamericans in the previous verses.

By using the storytelling modes of address and other techniques of popular folksong, St. Marie’s lyrics present a colonial history of Native Americans in the United States that resounds past the nation’s current borders. Maidu writer Janice Gould’s general explanation of the role of Native American women writers indicates that this developmental process reflects the inclusive function of oral tradition:

many Indian women writers write (as I do) seeing our memories and psyches as composed of, and somehow witness to, the memories and psyches of others living and dead, and perhaps those yet to come. . . . Our imperative is to resurrect, sometimes hundreds of years after the fact, a history that has been buried, lost, or ignored. That history is one that has been silenced because it is the story of the people whose lives have been conquered and displaced, a story written to serve the needs of the colonizer. For American Indian women, a resurrection of history through writing means more than offering in the place of a master narrative an account of the dispossessed. This writing, I would say, amounts almost to an act of exhumation. (799)

As Gould’s statement indicates, recovering the histories of Indigenous Peoples through the act of witnessing and remembering is crucial to native resistance to previously dominant colonialist histories. St. Marie’s “My Country ‘Tis of Thy People You’re Dying,” engages this “resurrection of history through writing” by recognizing the issue of Kinzua Dam as standing for all Native Americans. Her words point to how popular media

and educational systems have appropriated and distorted the history and image of Native Americans in what is currently the United States. In a liner note, St. Marie expands on her intention with respect to inclusive history in this song:

the American people haven't been given a fair share at learning the true history of the American Indian. They know neither the state of poverty that the Indians are in now nor how it got to be that way. I try to tell the side of the story that's left out of the history books, that can only be found in the documents, the archives and in the memories of the Indians themselves.¹³

What the writer calls “the memories of the Indians themselves” underscore the importance of oral tradition in recounting histories that differ from what settler-colonizers or Euroamericans have told and taught. “My Country ‘Tis of Thy People You’re Dying” addresses the gaps that the general history books have left and corrects their distorted stories and points, in particular, to what has been silenced. The song opens with a line which asserts that the story related in the previous song, “Now that the buffalo’s gone,” should continue as part of ensuring survival, including the survival of oral tradition. Following the first line’s establishing the song’s concern with the present and the future, in “Now that your big eyes have finally opened,” the initial “now that” recurs throughout the song (164). In aiming to critique the contemporary situation of the US society and education, exposing the falsity of storytelling with regard to Native Americans, the song proposes to open the eyes of the listeners, an audience that includes Natives. In lyrics that compare popular images of Native Americans in the US with the reality of their lives, she urges listeners to recognize the unreality of the Natives in “America’s movie screens,” a people whom Euroamericans have “chased” and “called colorful, noble and proud” (164).

¹³ <http://www.folkarchive.de/mycount.html> retrieved on Nov. 24 2013. In another liner note in her *Songbook*, she argues that “this song is true” (163).

For the Red Power activist-writers and performers, engaging in the stories of the hardships that American Indians faced in urban areas and reservations was imperative. So St. Marie goes on to ask “They starve in their splendor?” and she then answers herself, “My country ‘tis of thy people you’re dying.” And this independent line, “My country ‘tis of thy people you’re dying” is repeated between every verse to highlight a simple fact that Americans should know, but don’t. In the following verse, St. Marie tells us how the genocide of Native Americans continued through boarding or resident schools in the late nineteenth to the mid twentieth centuries and how those schools attempted to brainwash Native Americans by injecting their false history of America and by suppressing Indigenous languages: “You force us to send our toddlers away / To your schools where they’re taught to despise their traditions. / You forbid them their languages, then further say / That American history really began / When Columbus set sail out of Europe” (165).

The song then goes on to address and mock the mythology underlying white privilege that hold that the ancestors of Euroamericans received rights that they merited. Mocking the assertion that that the Euroamericans who “conquered this land / Are the biggest and bravest and boldest and best,” the next lines counter that mythology, describing the would-be conquerors a “nation of leeches,” and metaphorizing as bloodsucking their treatment of Natives (ibid). The next lines point to the falsity of a national mythology based on genocide as practiced or tolerated among religious figures who lie and a legal system that has not delivered on its promises: “where in your history books is the tale / Of the genocide basic to this country’s birth, / Of the preachers who lied, how the Bill of Rights failed.” As in “Now that the buffalo’s gone,” the lines detail the real-life consequences of broken treaties, taken from the perspective of the

vanquished, as in the Kinzua Dam case, where the land speaks its resistance, ringing:
“with a thud / O’er Kinzua mud” (ibid).

The subsequent verses continue to describe the genocide of Native Americans:
“And the tribes were wiped out and the history books censored, / A hundred years of your
statesmen have felt it’s better this way” (166). At the same time, St. Marie also sings how
Native Americans survived despite the genocide: “And yet a few of the conquered have
somehow survived, / Their blood runs the redder though genes have paled. / From the
Grand Canyon’s caverns to craven sad hills” (ibid). The counter to colonialist history that
arises from oral tradition empowers Native Americans across the US to unite under the
common stories of being oppressed and colonized: “The wounded, the losers, the robbed
sing their tale. / From Los Angeles County to upstate New York / The white nation
fattens while others grow lean; / Oh the tricked and evicted they know what I mean”
(ibid). After making a connection between her, the teller, and “they,” Native Americans,
St. Marie calls for grassroots change at the song’s end, in the lines ““Ah what can I do?”
say a powerless few” (ibid). This closing question’s steady meter and precise rhyme
continue ringing for her listeners.

Among the times and the places where the Red Power voice is most clearly
manifest in St. Marie’s songbook are works from the album *Moonshot* (1972). Like
Simon Ortiz’s “Some Indians at a Party,” “Native North-American Child” in the album
strives to assert the Pan-Indigenous unity of Native Americans, articulating and
advocating collaboration across multiple tribal identities by naming them, in an unusually
comprehensive catalog: “Seminole, Apache, Ute, Paiute and Shoshone, / Navaho,
Comanche, Hopi, Eskimo, Cree, / Tuskarora, Yaqui, Pima, Porca, Oneida, . . . / Cherokee,

Muskogee, Fox, and Passamaquoddy, / Winnebago, Haida, Mohawk, Saulteaux and Souix, / Chicksaw, Ojibwe, Cheyenne, Micmac and Mandan.” Announcing that they are all Native North Americans, “O-o-h, Native North American You!” a refrain that includes “Native North American Child” at the end of each verse, St. Marie champions the concept of Native North Americans as one people, whose distinct tribal nations exist in connection to and interaction with another and with nature, as indicated by way of the common, shared worldview of Native Americans proposed in the call-and-response of “Who’s got good credit yet with ol’ Mother Nature? . . . Who’s got the rhythm of the Universe inside her?”

Native unity is likewise a salient concern of “Starwalker: for the American Indian Movement” (*Sweat America*, 1976). “Starwalker” praises the spirit of sacrifice that enables the organization of Native Americans to move forward, as has been the case since its foundation and was particularly evident in the Siege of Wounded Knee. St. Marie has described this song one of her *“favourite songs, not only because it’s a gas to sing it, but also because it’s about the incredible energy of our contemporary Indian people. Because of what our ancestors went through for us. I sing it for all for generations past, and all our generations yet to come.”*¹⁴ Terming participants in the Red Power Movement to be “soldiers,” in the Native sense of “warriors” who belong to an “army” rather than to the smaller units of bands or tribes, St. Marie sings of activist figures who have made “history.” The term singles out for praise not just male but female figures as participating in the struggle. Unlike the Sylvia Mirasty poem, “An Indian Fighting for His People,” published in *The Indian Voice* newspaper, discussed in chapter

¹⁴ http://buffysainte-marie.com/?page_id=690 retrieved on Oct. 15 2013.

2, the song underscores the active engagement of female figures, despite the efforts among male activists of AIM at Wounded Knee—such as Russell Means and Dennis Banks—to present Red Power as a prototypically male form of militancy. To remind listeners of the active engagement of female activists, the second stanza of “Starwalker” asserts the agency of women:

Wolf Rider she’s a friend of yours
You’ve seen her opening doors
She’s a history turner
She’s a sweet grass burner
And a dog soldier
ay hey way hey way heya

After this appeal to unity in “a friend of yours,” along with assertive action in “opening doors,” and importance in the collective memory as “a history turner,” the stanza points to the “Wolf Rider” as a woman who takes an active role in ceremonies as “a sweet grass burner” and in waging guerilla warfare, as “a dog soldier.” These latter two roles propel her forward in the fourth stanza’s injunction to “guard the night” and “pray,” engaging in healing through the embracing the truth as a “straight dealer.”

Holy light guard the night
Pray up your medicine song
Straight dealer
You’re a Spirit Healer
Keep going on
ay hey way hey way heya

Lightning Woman Thunderchild
Star soldiers one and all oh
Sisters, Brothers all together
Aim straight Stand tall

In recognizing the women who have been actively participating in AIM and in other Red Power actions, including protests such as at Wounded Knee, St. Marie equates female “soldiers” healers, a leadership role in tribal community. Like Rose and Harjo, her work

celebrates the historical leadership roles of women in the Red Power Movement. The bond and harmony among “Sisters, Brothers, and all together” is rooted in the symbolic figures of the “Wolf Rider” and the “Lightning Woman,” encouraging the human beings involved in the activist organization to “Aim straight, Stand tall.”

“Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee” in *Coincidence and Likely Stories* (1992) addresses the legacy of Anna Mae Aquash. The song calls on listeners to remember the murdered activist as much as Leonard Peltier (Chippewa/Lakota), the imprisoned male activist (who allegedly murdered two FBI agents at Pine Ridge Reservation), is remembered. In contrast to the soothing tone of Harjo’s poem, “For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash,” the title of St. Marie’s song points to the critiques contained in Dee Brown’s best-selling historical analysis, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (1971). With ironical and sarcastic tones, her song blames the colonialism of the US Federal Governmental policy towards Native Americans for its part in the death of this female activist, whose murderer remains unsolved decades later. In the first and second verses, the speaker/singer indicates that Federal policies only benefit “corporate bank” “energy companies” that want to “get rich quick” by encroaching Native lands and rendering “Mother Earth” polluted, while brainwashing Natives through “churches” or “send[ing] in federal tanks” at the reservations to stamp out possible resistance as in the case of Wounded Knee in 1973. In that regard, “lies” is repeated throughout “Bury My Heart,” especially in chorus where the speaker sarcastically demands that “Bury my heart at Wounded Knee . . . / cover me with pretty lies.” And in the third and fourth verses, the repetition also serves to support public belief among Native Americans in 1980s that Leonard Peltier and Anna Mae are victims of the

conspiracy of the FBIs in an attempt to silence the radical voice of Natives like AIM under the COINTELPRO in the late 1960s through the late 1970s: “We got the federal marshals / We got the covert spies / We got the liars by the fire / We got the FBIs / They lie in court and get nailed / and still Peltier goes off to jail.” At this point when the voice of “I” turns into “we” in the repetitive chant, “Peltier” becomes a synecdoche to represent the whole Native Americans. The poetic device alludes to the ongoing situation where Natives such as Peltier will be unfairly prosecuted and sentenced to jail. The sense of unfairness, though not so depressing, gets tense in the fourth verse where the voice of the speaker turns into a male’s as if St. Marie was now hearing the testimony of an eyewitness to reveal the blatant “lie” of the FBIs: “My girlfriend Annie Mae talked about uranium / Her head was filled with bullets and her body dumped / The FBI cut off her hands and told us she’d died of exposure / Loo loo loo loo loo.”

The rhetoric of the Red Power movement reappears in “Soldier Blue,” which alludes to a specific historical event during Western Expansion in the nineteenth century. As the eponymous title song to the movie *Soldier Blue* (1970) directed by Ralph Nelson, “Soldier Blue” relates to the Sand Creek Massacre. *Soldier Blue* as a revisionist western movie represents the Sand Creek Massacre in a realistic way through vivid, graphic portrayal of atrocities that Colonel Chivington and his Cavalry (soldiers in blue shirts) committed against the Cheyenne and Arapaho at the Massacre, which also alludes to similar atrocities at the My Lai Massacre during Vietnam War. Though still through the eyes of whites, the movie thus exposes the veiled history of “America,” which consists of the genocide of Indigenous Peoples.

In this context, by providing a Native perspective, St. Marie's song "Soldier Blue" intensifies the condemnation of the violence that Euroamericans employed in the name of patriotism that only destroys the land and its people. A true patriotism, St. Marie asserts in her liner notes, begins from within and moves outward from the love of land, encompassing the heart and sky: "Native American patriotism starts from within the earth, within the heart, within the sky" (95). In this song, the speaker, "I," is interchangeable with "we," representative of all Native Americans, as she affirmatively repeats, "This is, this is my country" in praise of "America," as an Indigenous land. Through this nationalistic chant, the speaker indicates that contrary to the mainstream history that injects the myth of Columbus that began "America," "America" has always been existent because there already were Indigenous Peoples.

The speaker, "I", representing Native Americans, addresses the listeners, "solider blue," that is, Euroamericans that the way she tells stories in this song is different: "Tell you a story, and it's a true one / And I'll tell it like you'll understand / And I ain't gonna talk like some history man." She seems to indicate that the song is based on oral tradition distinct from dominant histories, and by arguing that her story is "true," she refutes the Western belief that oral tradition is something that is less true or factual than "written" history. The speaker connects past and present, asserting that "America" is not old and mythic. The land—not the nation—has been always there like a new nation:

I look out and I see a land,
Young and lovely, hard and strong.
For fifty thousand years we've danced her praises
Prayed our thanks and we've just begun.

This is, this is my country,
Young and growing, and free and flowing, sea to sea.

Yes, this is my country,
Ripe and bearing miracles in ev'ry pond and tree. (96-97)

The speaker claims America as Native land, which confirms the rhetoric of the Red Power movement regarding the renewal of broken treaties and of tribal lands in a new, modern context. This claim is holistic as the speaker describes the interrelatedness between the land and Native Americans: "I can stand upon a hill at dawn, / look all around me, feel her surround me. . . . It's beating in inside us, telling us she's here to guide us" (98).

Ooh, soldier blue, soldier blue.
Can't you see that there's another way to love her?

This is my country.
And I sprang from her and I'm learnin' how to count upon her
Tall trees and the corn is high country
Yes, I love her and I'm learnin' how to take care of her

Whenever the news stories get me down
I, I take a drink of freedom to think of
North America from toe to crown.
It's never long before I know just why I belong here. (98-99)

Through the word, "her," which refers to Native "America" as "my country," the speaker evokes the Pan-Indigenous image of "Mother Earth" during the Red Power movement. Particularly, the image of "corn" alludes to the important female image prevalent in many tribal societies such as the Pueblos. Those registers alongside the familiar "American" diction "freedom" are at odds with "The Star-Spangled Banner," the national anthem of the United States, which repeats, "O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave": the national anthem did not register the "freedom" of Native Americans in "a nation"

which is “Blest with vict’ry and peace” and “the Heav’n rescued land,” whereas St. Marie’s song points to the liberation of the people in the same land.¹⁵

Such condemnation of US colonial violence is more strategic in St. Marie’s best known, earlier song, “The Universal Soldier” (*It’s My Way!* 1964), which she wrote in 1963 the early time when US was involved with Vietnam War. This song develops the topic of protesting the Vietnam War into a wider condemnation of how human greed engenders war, war that cannot bring peace and wastes lives. The song thus reaches out to both native and non-native listeners who would agree with such communal concern. Though the message is simple, the way the singer-songwriter delivers the message is a quite complex. The opening of “The Universal Soldier” is deliberately vague in developing its unnamed subject as a kind of “everyman”: “He’s five foot two and he’s six feet four . . . / He’s all of thirty-one and he’s only seventeen” (22). For St. Marie, this unnamed subject could be anybody, as “he” is a victim of human greed that produces violence for as long as the history of mankind: “Been a soldier for a thousand years.” And this everyman is everywhere regardless of religions, countries, politics, and ideologies: “He’s a Catholic, a Hindu, an Atheist, a Jain / A Buddhist and a Baptist and a Jew / And he knows he shouldn’t kill and he knows he always will / Kill you for me my friend and me for you / And he’s fighting for Canada / He’s fighting for France, he’s fighting for the U.S.A. . . . / And he thinks we’ll put an end to war this way / And he’s fighting for Democracy, he’s fighting for the Reds / He says “It’s for the peace of all”

¹⁵ Perhaps, the dynamics between the lyrics of the two songs can be understood in terms of the origin of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Many of the anthem’s lyrics were derived from a poem “Defense of Fort M’Henry” in the context of War of 1812, a war where “Indians” were defeated, being deprived of their freedom in the procedure of Western Expansion.

(22). Meanwhile, this “he” produced such dictators as “Hitler,” which results in more wastes of lives.

At the end of the song, the singer-songwriter names him “the Universal Soldier” and concludes that “he really is to blame.” After making this reference, St. Marie dramatically transforms the subjects, “he,” into “you” and “me” at the end of the song in directly addressing intended audience:

His orders come from far away no more
They come from here and there and you and me
And brothers can't you see
This is not the way we put an end to war (22-23).

Seemingly, St. Marie suggests that in reality we are all to blame for condoning war and making it an accepted reality in our world. But such rhetoric is tactical because in the end it is designed to arouse the consciousness of Vietnam War in many people. St. Marie final aim is at the wry condemnation of those who caused wars and ordered “soldiers” to “kill.” St. Maries indicates “here” and “there,” as if she was referring to “US” and “Vietnam.” And she clearly addresses “brothers” as if she was talking to the President Lyndon Johnson and the male Senators of the US who were responsible for the involvement with Vietnam War but tried to hide the fact from the public. St. Marie’s intention becomes clear at the end of the song, as indicated in an interview: “I wrote ‘Universal Soldier’ in the basement of The Purple Onion coffee house in Toronto in the early sixties. It’s about individual responsibility for war and how the old feudal thinking kills us all” (Democracy Now).¹⁶ Here, it would be absurd to understand “individual” as referring to ordinary people. Rather, it references individual law makers

¹⁶ <http://rpm.fm/news/buffy-sainte-marie-interviews-on-democracy-now-and-cbc-radio/> retrieved on Nov. 10 2013.

and administrators armed with “the old feudal thinking,” a thinking that alludes to the ideology of Red Fear that was rampant among US politicians during the Cold War era, especially in 1950s as in the case of McCarthyism.

The significance of “Universal Soldier” as the critique of the government is manifest in St. Marie’s being blacklisted by FBI after the song’s release. She understood this repressive measure as an oppression of Native Americans: “Indian people were put out of business . . . because they were succeeding in the broader community. She and others were a threat to the moneymakers of concert halls, uranium and oil” (interview with Norrell). The “broader community” that St. Marie mentions is understood as the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples who managed to appeal to many other people as did the various protests and rhetoric of the Red Power movement. This point become evident in St. Marie’s placing herself in the group of Red Power activists who were similarly oppressed by the federal government: “I was just one person put out of business. John Trudell is just another person whose life was put out of business. Anna Mae Aquash and Leonard Peltier were put out of the living business—we were made ineffective” (ibid). Again, it is notable that she intentionally uses the first plural, “we,” to include all of her people in this statement. Thus, like Joy Harjo and Wendy Rose, the Cree singer-songwriter thus achieves anti-colonial or anti-imperial cosmopolitics by continuing and developing the legacy of the Red Power movement.

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