

MACHISMO AND GEOGRAPHIES OF HOPE

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN AMERICAN STUDIES

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Program in American Studies

August 2006

To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to begin by thanking my children. They were, first and foremost, the impetus behind this project. Their experiences provided me the opportunity to use this project as a source for change. Their lives have not been the lives dreams are made of. Their pain forced me to reconsider what it meant to be a father. It is my hope for this project and my hope for my children. Two of my grandchildren, Kayleen and Isaiah, were so instrumental in creating stability in my life. Their time living with me allowed me to see that, indeed, men can change. It was their simple smile, or their joyful giggle, or their tender hug that allowed me to understand the ability for hope to allow for new and creative futures.

I want to thank my committee for their patience and support. They often challenged me to raise my expectations of myself. They provided valuable feedback without which this project could never have been finished. I especially want to thank Carol Siegel, my chair, for everything she has done to encourage me to seek out my hope for new and creative futures. She has been amazing in allowing me to explore alternative discursive strategies. Without this, I couldn't have moved into the geographies of hope I explore in my Dissertation. Carol, I will never forget what you've done for me and I am grateful that we had this opportunity to work so closely together. You are more than a chair or a mentor; you are a valued friend.

I thank my friends for their support and encouragement; you know who you are. They stood by me when times were rough and there seemed no end in sight. They scolded me when I procrastinated, praised me when I completed anything having to do with this project and celebrated with me anything worth celebrating.

I also want to thank my students for allowing me to see that I might have something

worthwhile to say. They have been the most consistent critics of my ideas and have propelled me to seek out those spaces where lived experiences counter what is considered normal. They forced me to constantly seek clarity and allowed me to feel as though they are as much a part of this project as any one individual.

I want to thank my mother, Corina, for all she's done. Nothing could mean more to me than your approval over the changes I undertook for the creation of a healthier life. When it seemed like hopelessness would overtake me, you provided me with the light that shines so brightly from your soul. You listen to me even when you didn't understand what I was trying to say. You took my late night or early morning calls when I needed to vent. Your faith in me allowed me to hope for the first times in my life that something might happen to me that would be extraordinary.

# MACHISMO AND GEOGRAPHIES OF HOPE

## Abstract

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WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

August 2006

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My dissertation deals with the concept called hope. Hope is seen as a mechanism that supports us as we strive to seek something the individual or collective deems worthwhile. Hope's universal understanding positions hope in such a way as to argue that we all hope and, therefore, we all hope in the same way. In this dissertation, I attempt to deconstruct this universal understanding of hope.

I argue that hope has three key characteristics: imagination, realization, and actualization. Imagination draws off an individual or collective's creative expression and is limited by ideologies, hegemony, and lived experiences. Realization is where the necessary means are developed to gain access to the available resources needed to achieve something worthwhile and is determined by the individual or collective's access to power.

Actualization occurs when what is hoped for is actualized by the individual or collective and is momentary because anything hoped for is never permanent.

I apply my theory to Chicanos' discourse on their masculinity called machismo. I explore Chicanos' involvement in my three geographies. I show how their imagination is limited by ideologies, hegemony, and lived experiences. I explore how they develop the necessary means to access the available resources, and what it is they should hope to actualize if they want to meet with Chicanas in the development of new and creative futures,

My last chapter deals with the concept of Aztlán. I explore how Chicanos construct Aztlán as a patriarchal domain and address how Chicanas construct an Aztlán that has the possibilities to move beyond patriarchy and European colonization. I bring in silence as enabler, which allows for listening to become a liberatory act and creates a meeting place from where to begin to decolonize mind and body.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	v
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. LA VIRGEN /LA MALINCHE .....	15
3. GEOGRAPHIES OF HOPE.....	18
4. GEOGRAPHIES OF IMAGINATION.....	31
5. GEOGRAPHIES OF REALIZATION.....	74
6. GEOGRAPHIES OF ACTUALIZATION.....	102
7. GEOGRAPHIES OF AZTLÁN.....	126
8. TIMELESS ILLUMINATION.....	165
9. MACHISMO LITERATURE REVIEW.....	173
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	195

## **INTRODUCTION:**

To mention machismo and hope in the same sentence conjure up images of extreme contradictions. The ways in which machismo constructs hegemonic structures for the acquisition and maintenance of male power leaves little room to connect this oppressive and unearned power to geographies of hope. Likewise, geographies of hope reflect the possibilities of constructing power structures meant for cooperation rather than for domination and seem as distant from the materiality of machismo as to suggest that hope resides in a different landscape than machismo. Recently, Chicanos have begun to undertake the journey towards the geographies of hope. After only four of decades of critical Chicana feminist thought, many Chicanos have finally begun to listen to the ways in which Chicanas have demonstrated how their realities are influenced by the oppressive nature of machismo. Some Chicanos have begun to question what it means to be Chicano and how they are related to machismo. In doing so, they attempt to move towards the geographies of hope imbedded in this undertaking.

Machismo is a complicated concept developing various definitions over time. Throughout this project I bring in examples of machismo to express the ways in which male power plays out in society. Machismo is generally understood as Latino and Chicano masculinity. Its roots are generally traced back to Spanish, Amerindian, and Anglo influences. Machismo reflects the values of masculinity in certain times and particular contexts of any given Latino or Chicano community. It is often associated, by writers like Rudolfo Anaya and Gloria Anzaldúa with either good machismo, which is providing for and protecting the family and community or as bad machismo, which is acting against the good of the family or community. Machismo has been, at first, attributed to biological determination or, more recently, a social



construction. It is generally heterosexual in nature and provides a distinction between heterosexual and homosexual men: the former machismo and the latter something other than machismo. It involves issues of honor and dishonor and sets up the dynamics of individual and group interaction. In addition, the discussion on defining machismo includes Anglo variations. The most common variation is aggressiveness and womanizing. These negative attributes are constructed to validate Anglo masculinity while simultaneously invalidating Chicano masculinity. Anglos have positioned white masculinity and fatherhood as the epitome of a decent and good man. Chicano machismo, according to Anglo constructions, characterizes all that is negative in a man. Machismo also displays the heterosexual tendencies of the exotic "Latin Lover" developed out of the colonial project. The Latin lover adds a spice to sex, straight or gay, not found in Anglo men. This exotic view of machismo limits machismo to the romance and the sexual act. In bell hooks' discussion on the ways in which white supremacist's fascination with the exotic other is embedded in US society she states that "the hope is that desires for the 'primitive' or fantasies about the Other can be continually exploited, and that such exploitation will occur in a manner that reinscribes and maintains the *status quo*" (black looks 22). Machismo has also been associated with a reaction to a subordinate position Mestizos and Indios dealt with because of Spanish and Anglo conquest and colonization. This resulted in the emasculation of the mestizo vis-à-vis the strength and vigor of the Anglo male.

I define machismo as a term used to describe patriarchy without having to position machismo within the construction of patriarchy. Machismo involves constructions of masculinity and the term masculinity is often used in place of the term patriarchy. Masculinity derives out of patriarchy and patriarchy derives out of masculinity. The two are inherently the same. One cannot distinguish a difference unless it is to relegate one as positive and the other as

negative. Because of this connection between patriarchy and masculinity, I define patriarchy as the rhetorical, ideological, hegemonic, physical, and emotional domination of women by men. As such, patriarchy is associated with the acquisition and maintenance of male power and is involved in all aspects of society. Not all men exercise patriarchy in the same way. The popular conception of the term is that men have power over women. However, patriarchy is also a social system grounded in kinship in which certain senior men have privileges and authority over other male members. In relation to machismo, patriarchy is associated with dominant and aggressive men, while the more neutral term masculinity associates with the gentle and compassionate man. Patriarchy becomes the term used as identifying discursive strategies involved in the construction of masculinity, its integration of machismo, and their relationship to power.

My methodology in this project attempts to incorporate what writers like David Harvey and Emma Pérez define as a mapping process. The mapping process I am most concerned with in this project is the mapping of engagement. I choose the term engagement because, as “scholars,” that is what we do. We engage with the material and offer our ideas based on the engagement. Each person or collective of people engage within numerous and simultaneously occurring discourses, social structures, and lived experiences. The hegemonic structures at work partially position the individual or collective within a framework of multiple agreeable and conflicting ideologies. Thus, the reactions of the individuals or collectives to the overriding hegemonic structures as well as the reaction of individuals or collectives to a specific cultural hegemony are the two other fundamental aspects to consider when mapping engagement.

The mapping process becomes a valuable tool to use because “the history of map projections (including those of a topographical variety) indicates an infinity of possible mapping systems making it possible to transform left into right or both into nowhere, depending on the

particular projection chosen” (Harvey 5). Mapping allows me to construct a 3-D image of the positioning of an individual or collective within any given discursive power relationships involved in the development of a given socioeconomic space within a particular time. Like a computer-generated model, mapping allows me to twist and turn the subject in an infinite number of positions to seek those cracks in the hegemonic structures. Mapping allows me to freeze the subject under investigation within its particular context, stretch it across multiple definitions of time, add overlays to understand its historical development, feel its form in my hand, listen intently to its voice, and experience the weight of its materiality. This type of mapping process allows me to explore hope and machismo outside of traditional academic frameworks. This may be disconcerting to some, but I *hope* the reader has the patience and desire to explore along with me the geographies of hope that can lead us to new and creative futures.

The mapping of engagement allows for this approach to occur. The 3-D images include the writers presented in this project, my interactions with people, and my engagement with myself. As with any engagement, there is no set framework or structuring to follow. It is a more fluid movement as I attempt to engage with only a few of the infinite number of possibilities and explanations. I engage on my level of understanding and my abilities to understand others. At times, this may seem disorderly, and I ask the reader to be patient, as we all must do with someone who is attempting to engage. I offer no concrete anything. To engage is to eliminate anything sense of concreteness because engagement opens itself up to infinite patterns of engagement. So bear with me, and as student/teacher and teacher/student, we engage in this project together.

## OVERVIEW

Through this mapping approach, I explore the nature of hope. The mapping process allows me to move beyond the general understanding of hope and provide an exposition of the function of hope and how hope functions. Today. With all the assaults on personal and social liberties, the dominance of an economic system that can be seen as premised upon profit over people and the environment, and the increasingly violent world that has desensitize people to the horror of violence, there seems to be a need to explore the function of hope and how hope functions. People have hoped for solutions without effective results. I argue that one of the reasons why we struggle to achieve what it is we hope for is that we have an incomplete understanding of hope.

As I attempted to engage with the function of hope and how hope functions, I acquired a habit of asking people to define hope. In almost every case, their immediate response was a hesitant uncertainty. For me, this uncertainty confirms the universalization of hope and suggests how hope is a product of hegemonic dominance. Hope is involved with us on a daily basis, yet we struggle to define this precious element in our lives. The fact that few of us can define hope demonstrates that hope is not merely a mechanism that supports us as we strive to seek something the individual or collective deems worthwhile. This (mis)understanding of hope, as a universal trait common to all people in the same way, suggests that hope is an ideology that through hegemony, hope is seen a natural aspect of the human condition. The universal ideology of hope masks the ways in which hope is manipulated to serves the needs of hegemonic orders. We hope for a better life but are manipulated into believing the “better” life serves our interests, instead we often serve the interests of the dominant groups. This is seen in discussions on male-identified women and Chicano Nationalism. The universal distorts the function of hope and how

hope functions. Much of what I attempt in this project is to disrupt any sense of a universal hope.

Hope's involvement in hegemony inherently relates to hope's involvement with power. The general understanding, from the people I have spoken with, seems to be how the power of hope acts as a mechanism needed to sustain the individual or collective until that something deemed worthwhile is achieved. The power of hope is, *itself*, something seen as worthwhile because it relates to the improvement of life. However, the power of hope does not exist in a vacuum. Power acts upon hope. The individual or collective involved with hope are also involved in power relationships. An individual or collective's positioning within various power structures and relationships define and determine the power of hope.

My project begins with describing the ways in which hope has become a universal given. The common denominator is that we all hope for something we deem worthwhile or has significant importance in our lives. Yet, as in all aspects of life, there is no universal understanding of the different variables that constitute life. In order to avoid falling into the trap of describing hope as a universal and neutral aspect of social living or the so-called human "condition." To avoid this problem, I describe hope as consisting of three key geographies: imagination, realization, and actualization. Imagination is part of a creative endeavor that allows an individual or a collective to envision something worthwhile or significant. Realization involves the development of the necessary means needed to access available resources. This process allows for what the imagination envisioned to move towards that something worthwhile or significant. Actualization occurs when what the imagination envisioned and how means were developed and what resources were accessed in order to achieve that which was hoped for. Each element of hope maintains a position within its particular geography, however, while each has its

own distinct geography, they are symbiotically interconnected. The individuals or collectives involved in hope never leave one geography behind as they venture into another. The three geographies are made up of elements from the other two, are in constant interaction with one another, and are all dialectically interconnected. The loss or manipulation of any one geography affects the other two.

It is important to add that hope is grounded in the material world, and because of this, it is inherently grounded in the power formations and relations found in the material world. The issue of power disrupts any attempt to see hope as a universal. In short, Access to the power to construct and transmit ideologies that affect lived experiences in a substantial way determines the limits on the imagination. Control of power grants some—while inhibiting or denying others—the ability to develop the necessary means. Hierarchies of power control the allocation of the available resources. The need to acquire and maintain power determines the ability to actualize what the imagination envisioned. I argue hope is never neutral; it is a site of conflict as the individual or collective struggle to comprehend how to personally or collectively utilize hope. The conflictual nature of hope also stems from the individual or collectives' involvement in social struggles over acquiring and maintaining power.

The first geography, imagination, refers to the site where the individual or collective employs the creative processes involved in the construction or creation of a desired future “goal” or material object. I explore the complexities of imagination through the specificity of Chicanos and Chicanas voices and perspectives. I argue that imagination, in its relationship to hope, is not a free-flowing and unhindered creative process. Instead, it is limited by the lived experiences of the individual or collective and is always grounded in the limitations of the material world. Imagination is also restricted by the various ideologies and hegemonic structures that influence a

person's worldview. Fantasy can be described as that creative process that moves beyond and outside of the material world; imagination works within the limits of the material world. Hope and fantasy are at odds with each other. To fantasize for something outside out the material world is to hope for something unobtainable. Fantasy misdirects hope's movement through the other two geographies, while imagination acts to direct hope more effectively through the other two geographies.

To explain how imagination is limited to lived experiences and its involvement with power, I explore the novel/biography of lawyer/activist Oscar Zeta Acosta: *The Revolt of the Cockroach People*. In my exploration, I include Alfred Arteaga and Rafael Pérez-Torres' critiques of Acosta's biographies and explain how Acosta employed what I call *Chicano politics*. I define Chicano politics as a process of reclamation in hopes of restoration and builds off Ignacio García's "Chicano Ethos." In this form of politics, Chicanos attempt to reclaim their indigenous past in order to restore themselves to the top of the patriarchal pyramid. I demonstrate how Arteaga and Pérez-Torres struggle to see the ways in which Acosta forsakes hope because of his involvement in patriarchy and his reclamation/restoration process.

Realization becomes the second geography I enter into. While much of the discourse on hope use realization and actualization interchangeably, I see them as separate. Realization is that element of hope where the individual or collective develops the necessary means needed to acquire the available resources necessary to achieve whatever it is the imagination envisioned. I describe how means and resources are allocated and manipulated to serve hegemonic dominance. In doing so, I explain how power is involved in the development of the necessary means for the acquisition of the available resources.

From this framework I begin to develop a discussion on honor. Honor plays a key role in

how machismo is located within masculinity and patriarchy. Honor becomes that element of masculinity used to define good and honorable machismo and bad and dishonorable machismo. What realization allows me to do is to place honor within locations of power. Power determines the issue of honor. Honor is more than a community agreed upon set of positive qualities and dishonor is more than that same community's agreed upon negative qualities. Honor involves power in ways that determine who has control over the construction of the qualities determining good/bad machismo. From the involvement of power, I explore the agencies involved in the acquisition of honor. I break down agencies into strategic binaries of active and passive. Active is that agency that allows for an individual or collective to become involved in the construction of honor. Passive is that agency that develops from the lack of power to construct and acquire power. While this binary is problematic, honor works within this binary and my use of the binary is meant to uncover how honor works within the binary.

The next geography is actualization. Actualization is the achievement of what it is the imagination envisioned. I argue that actualizing something is always temporary in nature. There is no true permanent actualization of anything hoped for. Hope is epistemological and, as such, actualization is as well. The epistemological nature of actualization occurs in the act of becoming. Each individual and collective develop new techniques and strategies in order to cope with existing circumstances. These strategies and techniques are part of the process involved in the act of becoming and are related to the individual or collective's construction of new and creative futures. Each new and creative future exists as a horizon towards another future. Imagination begins anew and is affected by the old mixing with new lived experiences.

I also place epistemological in the act of acquiring and is related to the acquisition of a material commodity. All material commodities have a finite value or a finite life span. In this



way, the actualizing of any commodity inherently begins the process of hope that leads towards another commodity. An individual hopes for a new house, yet when the new house has fallen in disarray or the need to sell, either for profit or due to economic necessity, occurs, the individual employs hope to move towards the next acquisition. In this way, the individual or collective is always involved in the act of becoming, for each new acquisition of a material object the individual or collective becomes something different from what they were prior to the acquisition of the material object.

In addition to the geographies of hope, I also explore three geographies of silence. Silence among Chicanos began to intrigue me as I read *Muy Macho: Latino Men Confront Their Manhood* edited by Ray Gonzalez and the discussion on the cult or code of silence that exists between many Chicano fathers and sons. The silence they spoke about involves a felling of loss or a sense of lacking something important in their development into a man. Through their discussions, they sought to bring life to silence by exposing the nature of this silence and how it affected them. Yet, I noticed how these Chicanos exposed just one of many geographies of silence. There is such thing as silence per se; silence involves many levels and geographies. The silence they spoke about is only one of many forms of silence and serves only one of many functions of silence. My inclusion of silence into the discourse on hope attempts to explain the ways in which silence informs our understanding of hope and how silence is position within each of hope's geographies.

I break down silence into three distinct geographies: silence as inhibitor, silence as protector, and silence as enabler. Each serves a purpose related to power. Silence has no true absence but involves subjectivity and unnoticed voices. It doesn't only serve to eliminate alternative voices, but exposes these voices when listening is involved in silence.

I connect silence as inhibitor to the geography of imagination to show how the cult of silence acts to limit the imagination of Chicanos' attempts at bringing life to silence. Their lived experiences distance Chicanos from themselves and from others. Whatever Chicanos seek as a way outside of this silence might ultimately fall back into old habits developed from this cult of silence.

I incorporate silence as protector into the geography of realization to show how this protective nature of silence acts as a way to maintain Chicanos' patriarchal power. Our ability to remain silent as the son grows into puberty is just one example that speaks to Chicanos' hegemonic dominance. Silence protects our domination by never exposing the cracks in our hegemonic structures from the inside out. It eliminates any risk taking and places the responsibility of change onto those with the least access to power needed to create change—.

Silence as enabler is the silence that offers the most potential in developing a discourse with Chicanas in the creation of new and dynamic futures. I incorporate silence as enabler into the geography of actualization. I argue that this is what Chicanos should hope for. Silence as enabler is a liberatory form of silence. It's active state results from Chicanos' ability to listen effectively and critically to what Chicanas are saying about their positions in the social order and the possibilities Chicanas offer for a new and creative future.

I focus on the elements of listening. The first, relates to Rudolfo Anaya's call for Chicanos to listen to their feminine inside. Anaya believes that somewhere inside of every Chicano reside elements of the feminine. I explore what this means and how, if Chicanos have elements defined as feminine, this feminine is distorted because of patriarchy. I argue that in this attempt at locating the feminine inside, Chicanos distort the nature of hope because they struggle to understand how the feminine has been constructed by and for Chicanos acquisition of power.

I then look at the call by many Chicanos to begin listening to Chicanas' creative and often subversive feminist theories. This idea of listening to what Chicanas have to say has been something many Chicanos investigate not so much as to understand the multiple locations Chicanas reside within but all too often to pacify any attempt to dislodge Chicanos access to power. In doing so, I express my views on what is needed in order for Chicanos to listen as a liberating activity. I look at silence as enabler and connect the liberating aspect of the silence involved in listening to Chicanas' discourse on machismo.

I turn to Aztlán, as my momentarily final chapter, to find a site where silence as enabler can be employed by Chicanos to create a cohesive and symbolic meeting ground to critically connect with Chicanas in the construction of an Aztlán free from the colonial patriarchal borders within the cultural nationalist creation. I address the construction of Aztlán as a meeting ground, symbolically and materially, where attempts are made at dissolving the borders represents a fluid geography that acts upon and is acted upon.

Aztlán holds a particular significance for me. Growing up involved a staunch assimilation process controlled by my grandmother and mother. I was disconnected from my immediate family because I was Garcia while my siblings were Adams. At the time I felt there was something missing in my life. I found it in the writings of Chicanas and Chicanos who inhabit Aztlán. This is where my grandfather and grandmother's family resided for hundreds of years. Listening to Chicanos and Chicanas voices allowed the possibility of believing that Aztlán was also my homeland.

My awareness of Aztlán began through the voices and theories of Chicanas. Gloria Anzaldúa was the first of a long line of Chicanas that directed my reclamation process. It was not until much later that I was introduced to the male dominated cultural nationalism construction

of the collective and their homeland of Aztlán. I began to develop silence as enabler in order to break free of the colonial disconnection process and begin the reconnection process to those with whom I had so much yet so little in common with. I chose Aztlán as a way to demonstrate how silence as enabler works because it became personal. This chapter is as much about me as it is about hope.

I explore the construction of Aztlán through the works of Rudolfo Anaya and Cherríe Moraga. I examine the ways in which Anaya develops his concept of a borderless Aztlán. I include Moraga's conception of a "Queer Aztlán." Her work allows me to expose the borders Anaya's conception struggled to erase. I situate her work within Emma Pérez's discourse on finding un sitio y lengua (a site and language.) I express my ideas on how silence as enabler can be used by Chicanos in a way that allows for Chicanas to develop the site from which to speak from and the language which to speak with and what we might learn by employing silence as enabler. I include Gloria Anzaldúa's ideas on selective memory and connect this to how it relates to silence as enabler. I end with discussing the possibilities and approaches to the creation of a decolonized Aztlán by bringing in Emma Pérez's development of the "Decolonial Imaginary," and Ana Castillo's "Resurrection of the Dreamers." Their work provides the approaches directing silence as enabler's liberating nature toward the geographies of hope embedded in Chicanos and Chicanas' discursive strategies in the construction of new and creative futures.

I write this dissertation not as an absolute theory on hope but as a possibility in encouraging a critical discussion about hope. Maybe by understanding a critical approach to hope, Chicanos can begin to see if their thoughts, words, and actions relate to hope or relate to distorted forms of hope. In the last several decades, the discourse on machismo has made

significant inroads into understanding this element of Chicano and Chicana collectives. In each additional discussion contextualizes the nature of machismo, hope is involved. Yet, it seems to me that we still struggle to make sense of it all and what it means in terms of our futures. My idea is that we struggle because we have not taken the time to define the function of hope and how hope functions in our thoughts, words, and actions. By having a clearer definition of hope, we can then apply our thoughts, words, and actions to our understanding of hope and if there is a rupture between hope and ourselves, then we can make the changes needed to adhere to the function of hope and how hope functions. It is hope that will sustain the Chicano and Chicana collectives as they begin to work in conjunction towards new and creative futures. Let's not employ hope as a universal; let's employ hope in a way that allows for transformation. Let us try together.

## La Virgen/La Malinche

Saint, Sinner, Caretaker, Whore are just a few names given, by men, to women such as you . Names meant to place each one of You, Her, She, Mother in a dual role. La Virgen/La Malinche are names given to you in my homeland of Aztlán. You find yourself restricted by the images of a/the, man/men. La Virgen worshiped above La Malinche but both assigned below me. The former on a pedestal, objectified caretaker, saintly mother of life. The latter beneath the moon, beneath the covers, beneath the man-- my weight pressing down on You. You're one or the other, yet, you're one and the same, depending on the man, the moment, the need.

La Virgen/ La Madre my first image of a woman, I never outgrew You. You took your preordained place on the pedestal, closer to heaven, while I was still in your womb. I'm born with the silver spoon in my mouth. You're born with a gag in yours. My need to be dependent grew from within as my body grew from without. From the golden mornings in the East till the dying embers in the West, She caters to my every whim. Her Caretaker's life is filled with doing what I deem too unimportant for me. The saint in You gratifies my need for nurturing; without all this, I'm lost.

A growing erection for La Malinche. A growing lust only each You, Her, She fulfills. A reputation that precedes You. Whispered to me in my youth that She belongs to my desires. A picture in a magazine draped with silk and lace for me to fantasize our carnality. Younger is better. Lighter is better yet. In the darkness of the night I'm alone, under the sheets, and it's Her hand I imagine, not mine, stroking me past the brink. You with my lust glistening over your body. I smell Her submission like sweet perfume. I know She wants it, loves it-- my way. You with my false desire, Her wetness is for me, She submits to me

alone.

One image for one reason. And tell me I'm the best ever.

Since the beginning of time, my nature is the hunt, Predator versus Prey. I devour flesh to sustain my life. I drink the blood of my victims to quench my thirst for power. Stand alone on a street corner and I'll circle from above. Gather in a pack and I'll pick out the weakest. Leave the young susceptible and I'll pounce without mercy with the promise of never again-- till the next time. It's my illusionary natural order-- You lose, She's withering away, Her death, an unmarked grave.

My nature is never to accept the blame, to never see my weaknesses. I see the brief moments of equality, compassion, justice as enough to justify my behavior. It's God's fault. Not the asexual God, the true God, but the male God. He institutionalized my learning. He allowed, condoned my actions and so did his Son, both turning a blind eye. They must have known about the images' destructive nature, and who's the sinner now?

I force my control, my limits. A dull knife and tribal tradition to cut away the pleasure from your body. My guarantee to your fidelity. A sterile knife and a diploma gives me the power to deny Mother, without knowledge, any future children. My contribution to the welfare of society. I turn Her monthly life giving cycle into a curse to further Her subservience to me. I set forth the laws to deny you any recourse against me and hold myself to a higher morality.

Saint/Sinner, reject the latter and another will embrace the former-- makes no difference to me. You're one and the same, a collective. Always Mother is expected to sacrifice for the good of all. The individual is reserved for me. I sit with arrogance upon my throne. Sacrifices are set before me: a Wife's blood on drunken Friday nights when I feel destructive, a daughter-child virgin when I feel ignored, inferior.

Oh, but don't reject both images. Reject one, and You'll become the other. Reject both

and become the rejected-- from society, from women, especially from men. Reject both and anger masking hurt is the result. Anger has its consequences: guilt for You, rape for Her, abuse for She, denial for Mother. Submission or isolation, take your pick, the choice is yours

alone.

My game, my rules. Reject both in public and I'll laugh, when Your back is turned, standing in the shadows with other men-- our cigarettes glowing red, our eyes to match. Other men desire You as I. Reject me now and become Bitch. Other women desire You as I. Reject me then and become worse than rejected. Rejected would mean I still recognize your presence. Love her, not me and become Invisible. My love is bared open to You. I kneel before Her, a golden ring in my hand. Before the altar, I utter "Till death us do part." Reject my heart for another's and You, Her, She becomes "Cunt!"

So tread lightly on my needs, my images, my desires and live happily ever after. Don't wander from the path worn down from centuries of (Ab)use. Feel no sorrow, cry no more. Let the tears, staining cheeks, dry-- along with dreams. A place in heaven awaits-- Vaya Con Dios. So stay separate and don't unify. Listen to me and sleep at night and dream of a life controlled by You, Her, She, Mother and awake to Your isolated reality of my power. After all, a life lived in submission can't be worse than a life lived in rejection, now can it?



## **GEOGRAPHIES OF HOPE:**

In order to locate Chicanos' discourse on machismo within the terrains of hope, a discussion about the concept of hope needs to occur. Rarely is hope discussed, defined and deconstructed in order to understand this key process when attempting critical investigations and change. Hope has become a universal given, as has its counterpart hopelessness. This universal is constructed, *purposely*, by ideology and through hegemony in order to control and manipulate the nature and content of hope. What I mean by purposely is that ideology and hegemony has a purpose to serve and serve particular purposes. To suggest otherwise would position ideologies and hegemonies as neutral. The ideology of a universal has a purpose to serve and that is to eliminate the differences involved in the ability to hope. On the other hand, the universal serves to protect and maintain the power hierarchies involved with hegemony. We see hope as universal and, therefore, never question its nature and its ability to provide the energy needed to move towards new and imaginative futures—this is its purpose. This acceptance of hope as a universal erases the complexities of hope and provides the means for ideology and hegemony to maintain their control over our thoughts and actions—this is the purpose the universal serves.

For example, the construction of a cultural nationalist approach during the Chicano Movimiento, during the 1960s and 1970s involved a high degree of hope. The cultural nationalism's perspective was presented to the Chicano and Chicana collectives as the hope for a better tomorrow. Yet, as the scholarship on the Movimiento demonstrates, this cultural nationalist perspective developed not from unlimited imagination but from a limited Chicano imagination. It allow for a development of a limited set of means and provided limited access to resources. The actualization of the promise of new and creative futures, which cultural nationalism promoted, never occurred. This is because the hope embedded in the national

culturalist's agenda was a hope involved with hegemony. The cultural nationalism of the Movimiento mistook hope as a universal. Those involved in the construction of a Chicano cultural nationalism believed their ideas provided hope for all Chicanos and Chicanas. They failed to see how they limited hope to heterosexual Chicanos while dismissing the hope of all those "others." They believed their ideas were the ways in which hope would be allowed to flourish for the Chicano/a collectives. As I discuss, cultural nationalism was premised on a distorted form of hope because of the ways in which the function of hope and how hope functions centered around the heterosexual Chicano. In the end, the cultural nationalism of the Movimiento lost much of its promise because it mistook the nature of hope.

In order to map the geographies of hope, critically, I premise this discussion upon the idea that hope is an intrinsic element in the construction(s) of imagined possibilities, as Ewert H. Cousins states, "Without the 'art of the possible,' 'the art of hope' becomes the opium of the people. A political theory of hope must thus join its vision of the future with the research into what is possible today and relate both to human beings for whose hope it wants to be accountable" (92). For Chicanos to explore their masculinity without an understanding of the hope involved in this endeavor inhibits their attempts in understanding machismo. More importantly, this lack of understanding ultimately distorts any attempts Chicanos might imagine with their desire to build new and imaginative futures along side Chicanas, and, therefore, distorts the hope embedded in this undertaking.

A critical discourse on hope provides a way to eliminate the universalization of hope and opens up my connection between geographies of hope and machismo. We all hope or have hope. Even within constructions of polar opposites such as life and death hope provides a commonality. One can hope to live or hope to die. To live or to die remain linked through the

ability to hope for one or the other. While it may be difficult to see life or death as having any connection to each other, hoping for one or the other allows us to understand the motivation for the actualization of life or death. Even though we struggle to understand why someone might want to live or, even more so, why someone would want to die, we can understand the universalization of hope embedded in actualizing either goal. What we have in common becomes a universal given. We all have something in common, and, therefore, the commonality becomes universal in its relationship to all peoples. This universalization, while seemingly suggesting vastness, frames hope within a reductionist approach. Hope is reduced to a commonality all people experience in the same way. The common becomes the universal in that we all have hope and, therefore, this relates to a universal aspect of living. Yet, in this universalization the complexities involved in hope remain hidden through the construction of commonality's link to universalization.

To distinguish hope as contextual and not universal involves developing various geographies of hope. Hope is more than a universal common sense of aspiration of what it takes to reach towards new and creative futures. Hope functions in the life of any individual or collective not in some sense of universal commonality but within a complex arrangement among the individual, the collective, and society. Patrick Shade breaks down the idea of hope as a universal given and presents the function of hope and how hope functions: “hope functions in the *life* of human beings—that is, of a complex mode of interaction biological organisms engaged in constant interaction with equally complex environments, be they natural or social” (14) (emphasis his). In doing so, hope not only resides within the aspirations an individual might have towards any definable ends but also as a common thread whereby the aspirations of an individual must interrelate with society. Without hope, the interrelationships among those within

the collective become difficult to maintain in a healthy way. For if the hope of the one interferes with the hope of the collective, hope is stifled from the beginning because “*Hope functions as a means to improving interaction*, especially by enabling humans to transform their environments under the guidance of practically defined ends” (Shade, 10 emphasis his). This function of hope provides the necessary element for the aspirations of Chicanos’ attempts to connect effectively with Chicanas without the dominating oppressions of patriarchy. Patriarchy, in its necessity to dominate, cannot exist alongside hope for patriarchy limits the access to hope that allows for all the people within the collective to effectively connect with the dialectical production of new and creative futures.

The way hope functions develop from a complex set of hopes, hoping, and achieving. Because of the universalization of hope, the complexities of hope get reduced to an overarching belief that denies the ability to understand the contextual nature of hope. Shade defines this contextuality as “the view that everything, whether an object or activity, is embedded in a context. The context of a thing is that network of relations and conditions relative to which it has the identity, meaning, and value that it possesses” (12). Just as all new and imaginative futures are contextual, so are the ways hope is invoked and acted upon. The three geographies of hope— imagination, realization, and actualization—must always be grounded within the context of time, space, social structures, environment, and, most importantly, power arrangements.

However, the universalization of hope commits the individual or collective to a consensual relationship. The individual or collective consents to the ideas that hope lacks any relationship to power. We can all hope and in that *all*, we position power outside of any sense of stratification or somehow distant from any sort of hierarchies. Chela Sandoval describes this leveling of power in her insightful text *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Sandoval critiques power

arrangements by asserting that power is perceived “as doing something other than situating in a vertical, up-and-down, and pyramidal position, with white, male, heterosexual, capitalist realities on a hierarchically top levels. Instead, global postmodern power is increasingly figured as a force that circulates horizontally, on a lateral and flattened plane, even if many-sided, with deviations occurring at every turn” (73). Thus, the construction of hope moves from recognition that those on the top have greater access to imagine, realize and actualize hope to relocating of hope along a horizontal axis where everyone has the same access to imagination, realization, and actualization as everyone else. In doing so, this leveling of power disguises the ways in which geographies of hope reside among varying displacements of power.

In addition, the lack of understanding the hierarchal nature of power serves to underestimate the disconnection, within Chicanos’ discourse on machismo, works on multiple levels, from the ways in which Chicanos feel disconnected from their emotions and fathers to a disconnection from Chicanos’ ability to meet with Chicanas within geographies of hope. Shade states how “Disconnection is most extreme, however, when it severs us from our horizon of meaning, for then all goods are drained of their power to attract and move us. Even if we could achieve them, their goodness would be insignificant to us” (146). Unless a transformative discourse occurs in regards to machismo, even if we achieve the hope of meeting with Chicanas in order to work with them in the creation of new and imaginative futures, the possibilities found in that meeting remain cloaked within shadows of despair.

The disconnection occurs because we imagine a future we believe as something tangible and positive without realizing our imagined future is premised upon distorted concepts of hope. The ideological constructions of hope, and what it is to hope seems to act as a process whereby hope becomes co-opted through hegemonic structures. We give our consent to the hegemonic

allocation of hope, even when the nature of hope has been distorted to serve the interests of hegemonic structures. I can address the ways in which I attempt to deinvest myself of my male privileges. I can speak in complicated terms and intricate patterns, but if, in the end, I do not allow myself the opportunity to critically self-reflect on what I think, say, or do, then I end up distorting the hopes of women by allocating to them just enough hope to quiet them for the moment, in hope that they will direct their attention elsewhere or allow themselves to consent to their oppression.

The persistence needed to maintain one's agency in face of, at times, overwhelming adversity is located within Fromm's "busyness." Energy is diverted and then subsumed by the illusion of "busyness," and the persistence needed to actualize the awaiting ends that hope intends to achieve dwindles into the shadows of despair, and we are immobilized. Unless we have a discussion of what hope is, what it is to hope and how hope is imagined, realized, and actualized, hope becomes a device used within hegemonic structures in such a way as to distort its meaning. For, as Shade suggests, "Hope is expansive in nature, and so we must not limit it unnecessarily" (6). This expansiveness opens up possibilities into terrains existing of new horizons of what we see as possible.

In moving beyond the distorted universalization of hope I turn to Shade's *Habits of Hope: A Pragmatic Theory*. He states that rather than being a universal given, "hope functions as a complex mode of interaction, involving creative integration of desires, habits, and intelligence, whereby humans pursue remote ends not promoted by the current environments" (14). To accept this universalization prevents the ability of any individual to achieve the imagined ends. To accept universalization inhibits the pursuit of transformation, as Shade states, "This pursuit can itself transform the environment, making it more conducive to a rich human life" (14). To accept

hope's universalization distorts its meaning and masks the complexity of hope in such a way as to allow people to think that "they are very active are not aware of the fact that they are intensely passive in spite of their 'busyness'" (Fromm, 12). In identifying this mistaken sense of activeness, Fromm displays the contradictory nature of hope. The universalization of hope suggests that hopes act as a way to solve contradictions rather than the force that initializes the production of contradictions.

The move beyond the universalization of hope begins with the way hope is located within time. Hope is future tensed: one only hopes for a creative future; one never hopes for a different past. One can wish things were different or wish for a different way of reacting to a situation in the past, but one never hopes for a different past. One can say, "I wish things were different" but never states "I hope things were different." Hope, thus, becomes associated with the present and moves to the future while wishing, in its association to hoping, can be located in the past, the present, and the future. This distinction is important in understanding how the concept of hope has become distorted.

The ability to move from the present into a new and creative future relies on the historical relationship the past has with an individual or collective. Yet, unlike wishing, hope does not seek to change the past in order to affect the present to somehow change the possibilities for a different path into the future. Instead, hope works within a present that is based on a relationship to the past, incorporates that relationship to influence the imagination, realization, and actualization processes. The dehistoricization of the past by relating hope's locations within time as only from the present forward serves as another disconnection from the geographies of hope. In order to hope actively one must incorporate into hoping a relationship to time based on the movement from the present through the past and into the future.

## Hope and Geographies of Time:

Rosura Sánchez in her excellent exploration of the Californios in her book, *Telling Identities: The Californio Testimonies*, provides a way of understanding the ways in which hope is rooted in historical praxis. The ability to hope relies on historical praxis in order to locate the geographies of hope available in the present as well as the geographies of possibilities involved in the actualization of any new and creative future. As Sanchez states,

This is a study of discourses of the subaltern, the Californios, who, acutely aware of their displacement, felt compelled to speak, to engage in cultural struggle, not as an end in itself, but as a strategy toward repositioning themselves collectively. Unlike Edward Bellamy, who looked forward into the past, we argue that only by looking back into the future do we become aware of the need to measure our own present in terms of the past. The subaltern can speak and do in these texts have a voice that needs to be heard. (xiii)

In this way, hope's ability to remain connected to the three geographies, as I discuss later, must incorporate a direction that negotiates the past in order to discover the influence of historical praxis on the present and, therefore, on the future. The displacement of the Californios from the elite to the subaltern influences the present discourse on machismo. The inability to identify with the construction of a white male masculinity not only disenfranchised the Californios but also acted as an emasculation process. It can be said that much of the discourse on machismo maintains involvement with the inferiority complex explaining the ways in which machismo developed post 1848. To accept hope as an endeavor positioned within the present and moving towards a future ignores and disconnects historical praxis as the Californios attempted to regain their position at the top of the patriarchal pyramid by maintaining a sense of honor and duty vis-



à-vis Anglo masculinity. They saw themselves as superior to the Anglos because they perceived themselves as more honorable men, while the Anglos often acted in dishonorable ways.

This relationship between time and hope begins to form the construction of hope as a historical series of events. Within these events the systems, institutions and individuals, at any particular time and place, proceed to construct the elements contained in any given historical praxis. As Cousins, in his anthology, *Hope and the Future of Man*, states, “We need a more vivid vision of the possibilities of historical existence. Such a vision can and should include political and economic elements, but ultimately the locus of reality and value is in the individual entities” (10). Cousins presents the need to include the systems and institutions into the inherent relationship hope has with individuals, as well as hope’s relationship to elements of time and place. Cousins shows that without reconnecting hope to these elements of time, place, systems, institutions, and individuals the universalization of hope maintains its domination over the geographies of imagination, realization, and actualization. He states that “Unless we can envision a human existence free from the alienation, emptiness, and mutual suspicion that so deeply characterize our own, a crucial dimension of hope is undercut” (10), and the ability for Chicanos and Chicanas to subvert the hegemonic universalization of hope evolves into various abilities of consent to universalization. Hope, or rather the allotment of hope, provides hegemony with one of its most valuable structures. Consent, in and of itself, maintains a relationship to hope.

Hegemony relentlessly disguises consent by linking consent through the hegemonic allotment of hope. The shifts within the hegemonic structures provide the illusion of the actualization of hope. The illusory access by the subaltern to positions within hegemony provides the myth of the obtainment of the resources and means involved during realization. The

imagination lacks the ability to construct the imagery of creative futures. Historical influences become disconnected from the geographies of hope, and allows the universalization of hope to maintain its dark cloud of dominance over the individual and collectives' relationship to hope.

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Historically, hope's relationship to the symbolism of time and future is framed around two different geographies: the utopian and the eschatological. Cousins explains the difference between the two forms of consciousness when he states that "The utopian future is projected as another time in history; the eschatological future deals with the final fulfillment end *of* history" (43 emphasis his). The distinctions between the two forms of consciousness is that the utopian relies upon various ways in which hope is embedded in the near future—a future that can be incrementally seen from the present. Utopian hope, therefore, builds upon previous hopes that allow for movement towards the desire utopia while eschatological hope awaits the desired utopia. The "Utopian is located within the future *in* history" (Cousins 45) (emphasis his) and from this location the utopian approach seeks to subvert those conditions and structures that distort or deny the desired future. On the other hand, the eschatological relies upon various ways in which hope is embedded into the distant future—a future that can be imagined but not seen from the present. The "eschatology is located in the future *of* history" (Cousins 45) (emphasis

his) in such a way as to allow the individual or community to endure the struggles of the present because of a belief in a better future at the end of life.

The actualization of a utopian or eschatological consciousness relies, in part, upon an individual or collective's "vivid vision of the possibilities of historical existence" (Cousins 10). Hope lacks agency without this connection to history. The ability of hope to inspire the imagination is relegated to the domains of imagination or floats around endlessly in a postmodern illusion. Therefore, the agency needed to see beyond the illusions constructed by various hegemonies must derive from the various locations found within the present. As Cousins describes, these various locations "should include political and economic elements" as well as realizing that "ultimately the locus of reality and value is in the individual entities" (10). Thus, the involvement of the individual and the collective in the making of history is enacted through the geographies of hope. The key to hope's ability to act as an agent for change depends on the individual or collective's ability to become, as Freire argues, subjects of history not just objects within history and that Ignacio Garcia reiterates in his discussion on Chicanos' repositioning of themselves within history. He states, "So they [Chicanos] set out to uncover facts long forgotten or ignored and to debunk the Anglo-American version of their history. To do so required more than a different retelling, it meant framing the discovered history within a new interpretation that challenged the traditional literature. This interpretation presented Chicanos as active participants in 'their' history" (Chicanismo, 45). Historical time and historical present connect through the development of an agency meant to bring to life the subject lost in the historical object.

Hope, therefore, not only coalesces time but also an individual or a collective's agency. This inclusion of and connection to history allows for different agencies to merge into one in such a way as to allow for agency to remain connected to the local from whence it derived.

Unless agencies coalesce with history, it becomes impossible to “envision a human existence free from the alienation, emptiness, and mutual suspicion that so deeply characterize our own,” and, in doing so, “a crucial dimension of hope is undercut” (Cousins 10). Therefore, an individual or collective’s agency develops into a passive form of hope without historical praxis. The ability to merge different voices and to enact foundational change is prohibited. The future remains an illusion constructed to maintain hegemonic structures and to relegate individuals or collectives to realms of hopelessness. In order for hope to build connections among various moments in time and among various agencies, the ability of the individual or collective to accept hope as a state of being must develop. A state whose epistemology derives from the understanding that “The root of revolutionary hope lies in the soil of imagination which can nourish the dreams of a better world to come” (Cousins 44) must be allowed to flourish.

Recently, Chicanos, such as myself, have begun to undertake an epistemological journey towards the geographies of hope in our discussions about our masculinity. After only a couple of decades of critical Chicana feminist thought, Chicanos have finally begun to listen to the ways in which Chicanas have demonstrated how their realities are influenced by the oppressive nature of machismo. Chicanos have begun to question what it means to be macho and in doing so attempt to remap the geographies of hope embedded in this undertaking. In this act of communication Chicanos attempt to enter into a dialogue with Chicanas as some have come to realize, on some levels at least, the importance of Paulo Freire’s connection between hope and dialogue: “Nor...can dialogue exist without hope. Hope is rooted in men’s [or women’s] incompleteness, from which they move out in constant search—a search which can be carried out only in communication with others. Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it” (Hope 72). In their attempts to come to a fuller understanding of machismo, Chicanos

move away from the idea that hope resides within an ontological state. Thus, they accept Gloria Anzaldúa's invitation in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* to meet her at the crossroads in the development of a new consciousness. By incorporating Chicana theoretical perspectives into discussions about machismo, a meeting ground is created whereby Chicanos can join with Chicanas to begin a critical dialogue about the mapping process employed when attempting to make the critical connections between machismo and geographies of hope.

## **GEOGRAPHIES OF IMAGINATION:**

Hope begins with the geography of imagination. Without imagination the images of new and creative futures remain hidden and lost due to the individual and collective's disconnection from the ability to imagine. Hope acts to propel the imagination beyond the borders of our understanding and existence. The geographies of imagination function through hope's ability to inspire the individual or collective towards and beyond multi-layered and multi-relational horizons of new and creative futures. Imagination allows for exploration of something more meaningful than simply acting upon creative thought as when a child, with a coloring book, uses green to color in the sky and blue to color in the landscape. Imagination, in its relationship to hope, allows for creativity to become a material reality. What we imagine develops possibilities that can transcend the various limits imposed upon us by social constructions and ourselves. As Anzaldúa so beautifully expresses, "Imagination, a function of the soul, has the capacity to extend us beyond the confines of our skin, situation, and condition so we can choose our responses. It enables us to reimagine our lives, rewrite the self, and create guiding myths for our times" (Home 5). For Anzaldúa, the mind's ability to imagine acts as a bridge from the soul residing within the geography of imagination towards the process of realization and its material influence. Yet in her description the extension beyond confines is an extension beyond restrictions. As we attempt to move beyond the confines of our existence, we endeavor to employ creative thought to break down the restrictions set forth through hegemony.

One cannot imagine by thoughts alone. The ability to imagine takes into account all that we are, not just who we think we are. In her discussion of "Conocimiento" Anzaldúa argues that the soul works in conjunction with the mind and the body, and takes into account the idea of imagining, the active aspect of imagination in any attempt to engage in the creative process:

Those carrying conocimiento refuse to accept spirituality as a devalued form of

knowledge, and instead elevate it to the same level occupied by science and rationality. A form of spiritual inquiry, *conocimiento* is reached via creative acts—writing, art-making, dancing, healing, teaching, meditation, and spiritual activism—both mental and somatic (the body, too is a form as well as a site of creativity (Home 542).

In this way imagination, and its companion creativity, turn out to be aspects of our spiritual nature, the material aspects of our body and our lived experiences. They interconnect in ways that expose the restrictions of hegemony, which constantly seek to disguise our interconnection with our mind, body, soul, and lived experiences. Yet, to begin the incorporation of Anzaldúa’s ideas and insights, one must acknowledge Patrick Shade’s warning that “those who pursue hope play a dangerous game, for hope is unpredictable and typically prodigal in nature” (4). The unpredictability, as well as the universalization of hope, allows for hegemony to work its distorted wonders of cooptation. According to Anzaldúa, the interrelationship of mind, body, soul, and lived experiences unpredictability results from the ambiguity inherent in the very interrelationship operating among those sites.

What is, at least partially, predictable, however, is how hegemony will always seek to subvert imagination through imposing restrictions and relegating the creativity of an individual or collective into the living death called consent—even though the processes and structures involved in hegemony are often unpredictable. Imagination cannot transcend hegemonic structures since it is the hegemonic structures that determine not only what we experience but how we experience. Raymond Williams, in his text *Marxism and Literature*, argues that in regards to hegemony “What is decisive is not only the conscious system of ideas and beliefs, but the whole lived social process as practically organized by specific and dominant meanings and values” (109). Hegemony is pervasive in that we often fail to see its control over our imagination. We want to believe in the myth of individual choice, not realizing that any individual choice reflects the dominant meanings and values or act in opposition to domination. No

mater which aspect imagination derives from there is still a relationship to hegemony. Williams goes on to say, “Hegemony is then not the articulate upper level ‘ideology,’ nor are its forms of control only those ordinarily seen as ‘manipulation’ or ‘indoctrination’. It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our sense and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world” (110).

Imagination becomes a tool of hegemony if the individual or collective neglect the lived experiences of those people who fall into the hegemonic cracks. Hegemony shifts effectively to absorb any attempts to counter it. Williams describes this as lived hegemony, which is “a process that does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not all its own” (112). This “lived” element of hegemony plays a key role in how Chicanos develop their imagination over time. Their imagination can reflect dominant patriarchy ideologies or act to disrupt patriarchy when it acts to limit their access to power. We see this in the ways in which Chicanos resist Anglo patriarchy in favor of a Spanish patriarchal order or, if the European is realized as the root of male problems, their need to reclaim a Meso-American warrior patriarchal image. The ability for hegemony to remain a constant controlling aspect of our existence is its ability to live among us, grow as we grow, and adjust to the shifting cultural articulations and rearticulations.

Even within this dialectical relationship, among the processes and structures of hegemony and the individual or collective influence on the continuing development of hegemony, imagination, like language, results not from unbounded freedoms but from imposed restrictions. Imagination is not some creative process of unrestricted dreams but a creative process born out of restrictions and conflicts involved in the lived experiences of the individuals or collectives.

In order to stretch beyond the known horizons, there must first be horizons to transcend. Within



geographies of hope, horizons are in one sense constructed limitations. They work to prevent envisioning the possibilities that lie beyond the horizons. Within the dialectical framework of hegemony, horizons may shift yet rarely allow the individual or the collective to venture into new territories. They act as a line drawn in the sand that maintains a static and rigid influence on imagination. Those with access to the power to construct rigid horizons do so to maintain their dominance. They stand at the top of each horizon with the posture that nothing exists outside of their constructed horizon.

In another sense, new and creative futures lie beyond each new horizon and are constructed as each limiting horizon is surpassed and exposes the next distant horizon. Within this geography of hope, horizons themselves act as liberating moments not as limiting barriers. Imagination becomes the ability to move beyond the limiting horizons constructed through hegemony. Imagination becomes an epistemological creative process. Imagination itself remains positioned within the act of becoming: an act dependent upon the influences of hegemony and lived experiences. As Beatriz M. Pesquera and Adela de la Torre state, in their introduction to *Building With Our Hands: New Directions in Chicana Studies*, "We hope that our collective voices will make known the impulses that inspire Chicana scholars, as well as the power relationships--in both the academy and our communities at large--that influence our scholarly production"(1). In order to reach a new horizon the previous horizon must be critically examined to find those elements that inspire imaginative thought and expose those power relationships used to maintain dominance over the imaginative process.

Pesquera and de la Torre present insight into both the limiting and liberating topographies of known or yet-to-be-known horizons when they state, "Although we [Chicana scholars] were all trained in *traditional* disciplines, our intellectual enterprise compels us to stretch our disciplinary boundaries, discover new methodologies, and formulate new directions in theory building, in order to comprehend

our complex position in a society stratified along lines of class, race/ethnicity, gender, and sexuality" (2) (emphasis mine). In this statement the *traditional* acts to limit horizons, it is constructed to eliminate Chicanas' involvement, by rendering their voices inaudible and invisible, in the development of new and creative futures as well as functioning as a means to control Chicanas' imagination to fit into the constraints of the *traditional*.

In addition, the two demonstrate how the horizons involved in moments of liberation are developed. With each stretch of disciplinary boundaries, each discovery of new methodologies, each formulation of new directions, horizons become moments of liberation. Those Chicana scholars involved in these moments of liberation recognize the need to understand the complexities of horizons: sadly, however, not all Chicana scholars are involved in these moments of liberation but, instead, some consent to the limiting structures of their own oppression. They attempt to eradicate themselves from the stratified horizons involved in the oppression of their imagination, the suppression of their scholarship, and the limitation of their attempts towards moments of liberation are involved in the imaginative act of becoming.

As Pesquera and de la Torre further state, "Chicana academics work 'many sides of the street,' a situation imposed by the need to maintain our presence in our own disciplines, our historical roots in Chicano studies, our political interest in women's studies and feminist theory, and our own 'protected' space" (2). These multiple locations demonstrate how movement affects imagination and how this movement from the horizons created from the limiting framework supporting the *traditional* position, leads to alternative and fluid horizons as liberating moments that can result in the creation of a new consciousness such as Anzaldúa's new mestiza consciousness: "By attempting to work out a synthesis, the self has added a third element which is greater than the sum of its severed parts. That third element is a new consciousness a mestiza consciousness and though it is a source of inner pain, its energy comes

from the continual creative motion that keeps breaking down the unitary aspect of each new paradigm” (La Frontera 80). With the development of the mestiza consciousness, a development always in the act of becoming, fluid horizons, though approached with caution and anticipation, become visible through the dense haze of a limited imagination.

The consciousness developing from an imagination acting to subvert hegemony allows an individual or a collective to be open in accepting hope as a gift to not only cherish but, as Gustavo Gutierrez states, to provide the possibilities of a more inclusionary creative process: "To hope does not mean to know the future, but rather to be open, in an attitude of spiritual childhood, to accepting it as a gift" (125). This gift is not the type of gift an individual or a collective manipulates for the benefit of a few nor does it selfishly control its access to others. To accept this gift of hope as an agent of manipulation or to selfishly horde the gift distorts the imagination that propels hope by the ways in which manipulation and selfishness destroy the inclusive nature of hope needed to move towards the next horizon. To accept hope as a gift free from the need to maintain old and construct new limiting horizons is to acknowledge the ways in which “hope fulfills a mobilizing and liberating function in history. Its function is not very obvious, but it is real and deep” (Gutierrez 125).

Ana Castillo, in her work on the dreamers of our world, breaks down the role of the dreamers in their attempts to imagine new and creative futures. She reminds us of the ways in which the dreamers, in their attempts to imagine new and creative futures, work within the dialectic relationship between the imagination and the material world. She explores not only the limitations imposed upon the dreamers of the world but also the consequences of dreaming. If the dreamers seek moments of liberation in order to subvert those with greater access to power, then their possibilities for subversion are reduced by those centered within hegemony’s frameworks who regulate the imagination and its effects on the realization and actualization processes. Imagination while centered within the dreamer always acts to influence to

relationship between the dreamer and the material world. If the dreamer imagines a future that acts to subvert hegemony, then, as Castillo states,

The dreamer, the poet, the visionary is banished at the point when her/his society becomes based on the denigration of life and the annihilation of the spirit for the sake of phallocratic aggrandizement and the accumulation of wealth by a militant elite. This is accompanied by a fierce sense of nationalism and 'ethnic pride.' This was the case of the 'Massacre of the Dreamers' in the Mexica Empire and is happening again throughout the globe (Dreamers, 16).

This is not to say that science and rationality do not include the ability to imagine. It is to say that imagination, itself, draws upon all aspects and locations involved in the human creative process.

The rational development, as Castillo suggests, moved from the ability of the intuitive to influence the imagination to the point where the intuitive is given little if any value in a world determined by the rational and, therefore, restrictive imagination. Now that Castillo's dreamers struggle for survival in a rational world, Rodolfo Acuña addresses the dominance of the rational inhibiting the dreamers within the academy in his insightful book, *Sometimes There Is No Other Side: Chicanos and the Myth of Equality*. Acuña names the dominance of the rational in today's society "The American Paradigm." This paradigm, "Which is formed by neoliberal (positivist) theory" (viii)," determines the ability to imagine outside of the Paradigm. He states, "one of the chief characteristics is its defense of Western civilization and institutions. Its authority supposedly rests on science and legitimacy of Western rationality" (83). The defense of Western culture must maintain its colonial involvement in the extinction of anything non-Western, including the extinction of the dreamers. Imagination and its construction through restrictions rather than through unbounded freedoms remain an inherent aspect of culture. As Acuña states, "Culture is a collective endeavor that rewards members for believing and

acting like others in the culture and sanctions them when they don't. It is more emotional than rational" (83).

The imagination in question remains restrictive because of the ways in which the rewards provided by cultural institutions determine the extent and the development of imagination: "In short, culture is historically based and unique to the historical experience of a specific group. It comprises and defines the group's ideas and practices" (Acuña, 83). When limited by "The American Paradigm" and its dominance over society, the power acquired through science and rationality, imagination lacks inclusion and, therefore, lacks the ability to deconstruct all the baggage of a previous horizon. Imagination becomes yet another aspect of the individual or collective consent to serve the needs of the dominant group while forsaking the needs of the subordinate groups. Shade mentions how "the imagination is a mode of our ability to abstract, to go beyond what is presently available to us and to play amid possible relations not yet realized in fact" (32). He demonstrates this by including the abstract, which includes our soul, body, and spirituality, relationship to the material world of scientific empirical facts and rational explanations of facts. He understands limiting the inclusive nature of imagination because of the ways in which value is bestowed upon science and rational thought to the point where our society has been involved in the "Massacre of the Dreamers." This empirical value limits imagination because the imagination allowed by the hegemonic culture lacks the creativity to move beyond the constructed restraints imposed upon it by rational limitations.

To undertake the act of subversion needed to move beyond the rational and work to free the imagination from its restraints, there must be an awareness and reevaluation of Castillo's dreamers: "But we, the silenced dreamers rendered harmless, see these patterns. After extricating our imaginations from the tight reins of patriarchal imperialism, our next step is to bring others into the fold" (Dreamers, 16). To undertake the imaginative process involved in this geography of hope, the individual or collective

moves outside of the value patriarchal and imperialist hegemony assigns to the empirical and the rational and beyond their reliance on radical individualism: an individualism where the needs of the individual are considered more important than the needs of the collective and which is enhanced by the desire for immediate gratification. By moving beyond limitations, imagination becomes a process that acts to subvert patriarchy while embracing a process founded on the experiences of Castillo's "conscientized U.S. mestizas" that is "relevant to anyone trying to understand the world he or she lives in" (Dreamers, 17).

Shade further addresses this creative process embraced by the dreamers of the world. He states, "It is the imagination which explores and attends to possibilities, considering them in adequate detail to anticipate their value or meaning to us in resolving the problematic situation and also contributing to larger activities and meanings of our lives" (32). In this way attempts at new and creative futures are kept from being actualized. The creative process remains disconnected and incomplete unless the process includes all aspects of the soul, mind, and body. The process by which the imagination connects to actualization through the realization phase in the attempt to achieve the imagined ends have no meaning to us or to our relations to the material world. Shade explains that "Imaginative operations do not simply peruse possibilities that are neutral; they explore *meaningful possibilities*" (32) (emphasis his) and, therefore, must have relevance to the processes that move towards the achievement of possibilities enriching the individual or collective. To be meaningful the imagination must reflect our need to discover for ourselves what is meaningful and what merit we assigned to each meaning. It allies itself with energy created out of imaginative processes that circulates back into the imaginative processes already involved as well as the invention of new forms of creativity. Shade states that the "Imaginative exploration considers and creates possibilities that are meaningful, that are continuous with the larger horizon of meaning. Imagination is *rearrangement* of possibilities in *thought* in *meaningful*

ways. It contributes to the discovery and pairing of means and ends and so assists in reconstructing habits and rechanneling unleashed energy (33) (emphasis his). This rechanneling occurs within all aspects of the creative processes and without constant vigilance over the rechanneling and dedication to meaning. The rechanneling of energy often leads towards the meaningful exploration of geographies not for the sake of new and creative futures but for the sake of the goals of ideological domination and self-investment.

The personal aspect of the imaginative process needs to be addressed if imagination envisions new and creative futures. Victor Villanueva Jr., in his book *Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color*, expresses his thoughts on individualism. Through liberalism Villanueva feels a radical individualism arose: “Liberalism as an ideology, more than a political affiliation, is pervasive and extreme. It has taken a radical dimension, a point in which collectives of any sort must perforce become secondary, the needs of the one surpassing the needs of any other one” (121). Imagination becomes centered on the needs of the individual at the cost of the collective. The rechanneling of unleashed energy becomes directed towards the distortion of the superiority of the individual. It directs imagination in such a way that “It allows for ascribing certain written conventions with an inherent, universal superiority” (121). The radical individual supplants him or herself in a position above the collective. In doing so, the radical individual disconnects from the material world since the radical individual encompasses all that can be considered the material found in the lived experiences of the collective. Hope’s involvement with imagination provides a link between the needs of the individual and the collective. If that link acts to create a hierarchy, then the link serves the hegemony. Villanueva explains how the link provides a possibility of disrupting the hierarchy found in radical individualism: “Individuals do need encouragement, but that encouragement needs to be balanced by a recognition of, and a change in, the condition that effects us all” (121). The geographies of imagination obtain

substance when the balance sought between the individual and collective find its equilibrium.

This equilibrium was something Chicanos sought in their discussions on cultural nationalism. Ramón Guitérrez states “Chicanos face...social emasculation and cultural negation—by seeking strength and inspiration in a heroic Aztec past. The Aztec past they chose emphasized the virility of warriors and the exercise of brute force. Young Chicano men, a largely powerless group, invested themselves with images of power—a symbolic inversion commonly found in fantasies of powerless men worldwide, a gendered vision that rarely extends to women” (Dreams, 45-46). Chicanos need to acquire the power loss due to their social emasculation and cultural negation led them to believe they were exercising the kind of “*Chicanismo* meant identifying with *la raza* (the race of people), and collectively promoting the interests of *carnales* (brothers) with whom they shared a common language, culture, religion, and Aztec heritage” (Dreams, 46). Even though, as Guitérrez states, “The idea and theory of internal colonization flowed quite logically from this spatial concept of community” (Dreams, 46), Chicanos maintained a disequilibrium by locating themselves as a warrior or a chief. The needs of the individual, in this case, overrode the needs of the collective by the hierarchy involved in any warrior or chief status. The community of excluded women and children were denied the possibilities of interpreting the role of Chicanos within a cultural nationalist perspective. Their exclusion was located as a group status, while the young Chicano became an individual within the group of other individual Chicanos. The individual’s lived experiences limit the individual’s imagination unless the individual’s lived experiences are located within the lived experiences of anyone in the collective and the combined lived experiences of the entire collective.

The construction of radical individualism positions imagination within the locus of the individual in such a way as to disconnect imagination from the communal and material environment. It constructs imagination in such a way as to allow for the belief that through fantasy imagination is



boundless and transcends the lived experiences of the individual or collective, as Shade maintains,

Unfortunately, we often think of the imaginative process as a primarily private affair. Its sometimes common association with fantasy (especially in the minds of ‘practical’ people who value truth) tempts us to locate it wholly within isolated minds seeking a reprieve from the challenges of reality—even though such cases are themselves hedged by the social and environmental conditions which make ends attractive and meaningful to us (97).

Shade further explains the ways in which meaning is produced as imagination moves towards realization. Imagination, according to Shade, differentiates from fantasy because

Imaginative exploration is not some random, dispassionate, unstructured exercise of our mental capacities, though it does, of course, have an element of play about it. Being able to imagine means being able to abstract from present conditions and relations in our minds [bodies, and soul] to create new connections and so possible new realities (33).

The geographies of imagination maintain a connection to the material world while fantasy, at times relating to the material world, more often relates to abstract images and worlds. Fantasy ability to construct possibilities beyond the material world forsakes materiality. Yet, when developed in concert with imagination’s connection to the material world, both fantasy and imagination provide the ability to discover the momentary liberating horizons available outside of hegemonic structures.

Another difference between imagination and fantasy is the ways in which imagination develops through a process of experimentation and revision while fantasy can often occur without those elements of imagination. Shade discusses another value found in the imagination and creative process, “A special value of the imagination is exploring and testing possibilities in thought without suffering their actual consequences” (Shade 66). These consequences are experienced during the realization process. By

testing possibilities in our mind prior to engagement with the realization process, we are better prepared to adjust our reactions to consequences during the realization phase, even though some consequences surprise us in ways we cannot imagine.

In addition, the value of imagination's ability to test the possibilities and locate the needed means during the realization phase is a complex process whereby experimentation becomes an integral part of imagination: "Before they are connected in act, means and ends are related in imaginative experimentation. The imagination generates possible matrixes of ends, painting horizons of meaningful alternatives. Sometimes this means sketching ends that are simply alternatives to one another" (Shade 97). It is imagination's inherent connection to the material world that ensures the need for experimentation and revision.

The connections among the various aspects of the mind, the body, and the soul draw from the influential experiences that assail us from within and from without. Radical individualism acutely adheres to the self as a form as solid as bedrock with the idea that the self is the foundation from which any and everything arises. This does not discount the possibility of change within the foundation. It does, however, measure these changes along geological time: there is change like how water eventually changes rock, but the change is so gradual that the individual or collective's self-reflection today will basically be the same self-reflection in the future. Radical individualism demonstrates the ways in which we consent to the transmission of ideologies through the various hegemonic structures and processes. We, therefore, believe that the individual supercedes ideology and hegemony and thus transcends the institutions affecting the imagination process. We consent to our own disconnections and use radical individualism as a device in which we assure ourselves of our own materiality.

Imagination has its risks. Imagination's relation to fantasy provides the ability to discount imagination as a process as deeply intricate and real as any of the processes involved in scientific

empiricism and rational thought. While fantasy can operate outside of the social systems and institutions, imagination does not. While located within the individual or collective, imagination is involved in numerous ways in the structures surrounding the creative process, as are the individual or collective. The institutions, systems, and structures act to regulate the dreamer's vision, to regulate the influence the dreamer's visions have on others, and to regulate the paths leading towards the geographies of realization.

Castillo locates the dreamer's ability to imagine within two primary geographies: the rational and the intuitive, as Castillo puts forth: "Throughout Western history two schools of thought have rivaled each other to help society make meaning: the rational and the intuitive" (Dreamers 206). The rational thought relies on an objective and linear imagination through a distant third-person perspective. In doing so the rational "relies on the premise that an individual can be detached from his subject and can make empirical conclusions based on measures, qualification, and linear deductions. The subject is therefore objectified—must be objectified—and the investigator maintains the position of being detached" (Dreamers 206). Thus, the rational is imagination constricted at its most severe. To imagine from the perspective of a distant self erases the subjectivity of those affected by this imaginative process and opens the doors for a distorted utilization of the imagination. The imagination therefore needs to maintain a relationship between what is imagined and the people affected by whatever it is that has been imagined.

The intuitive works from a deeper connection to Anzaldúa's ideas about the soul within the individual or collective. The soul never maintains a singular relationship to the individual. The soul connects to regions outside of the individual and in doing so, allows for the work of the individual's soul to interconnect with and, thereby, enhance the collective's soul. The relationship of the soul to the material reality of the individual or collective remains a devalued form of imagination. As Castillo

states, “Intuitive thought (the realm of the poet) is associated with mysticism and is devalued by Western culture” (Dreamers 206). Western culture fears the ambiguity of the intuitive and so imposes on it a lack of credibility. Perhaps this is because of the ways in which fantasy maintains a relationship to imagination. The ambiguity of fantasy acts to devalue Castillo’s intuitive: “Intuition in scientific and academic research is often referred to as a ‘hunch’ but is only valid when qualified by external measurements” (Dreamers 206). This intuitive imagination attempts to break free of the restraints found within empiricism and rational thought and with the influence of fantasy, attempts to move beyond those geographies of hope that serve power and provide pathways towards those altitudes of hope that construct a redefinition of power.

This violent validation rivalry between the rational and the intuitive demonstrates the contextual/confrontational relationship any individual or collective has with imagination. Imagination, like language, develops not out of merely unrestricted freedoms but out of imposed restrictions. Imagination envisions possibilities within the various restrictions imposed upon the dreamer through and by various hegemonic influences. While this seems to suggest that imagination cannot move outside of imposed restrictions, I suggest that any possibility imagined always already resides within restrictions. There are those possibilities that act to move beyond restrictions, but in doing so those possibilities confront the restrictions in order to move beyond. The restrictions must be recognized and confronted in order for the possibility to begin a new and creative future; otherwise the dreamer can never be sure that the new and creative future holds the promise of allowing the dreamer to access the means and resources discovered in the geography of realization and what becomes material in the geography of actualization. By ignoring the restrictions on imagination, the individual or some members of a collective fall into the trap of accessing only those means and resources that serve the purposes of hegemonic dominance.

While the intuitive allows for the promise of new and creative futures, one must not ignore the

ways in which the intuitive is also influenced by restrictions. The colonized body and mind develops out of the constraints imposed upon each aspect of a person in ways that seek to disconnect the individual or the collective from the mind and the body. As Ilan Stavans suggests the Latin phallic penetrates into the colonized consciousness. In doing so, it robs the colonized mind and body of their relationship to one another. Stavans believes “The phallus, as well as gunpowder, was a crucial weapon used to subdue. Machismo as a cultural style endlessly rehearses this humiliating episode in the history of the Americas, imitating the violent swagger of the Spanish conquerors” (Latin Phallic, 146). Chingar has no passive form. The violence of the conquest was not merely a contextual act of domination perpetrated by a single individual but evolved into a consciousness pervasive in Chicanos’ conception of self and the self’s relationship to society. It is our most stubborn colonial legacy. It survived the wars and revolutions for independence. It withstood the changes in the economic systems. It defended itself against Anglo domination.

Stavans defines the active element of the penetrating Latin phallic as chingar. For Stavans, “*Chingar* signifies the ambiguous excess of macho sexuality” (Latin Phallic, 151). This act of penetration provides the foundation from where Chicanos’ imagination develops. Chingar influences our imagination in a way that any new and creative future we imagine stems from the act of penetration. It is our past that we travel through as we move into the future. While I agree with Stavans’ positioning of chingar within the field of excess, I believe its ambiguity allows chingar to find its way into all aspects of Chicano masculinity. Chingar develops the hideous binary that acts to keep the imagination in check. Our imagination envisions a new and creative future that allows for physical and hegemonic penetration. Hope becomes inherently involved in this penetration. Through chingar, hope develops a hierarchal nature. It distributes hope to those willing to accept, without challenge, involvement in colonial hierarchies and social binaries. The phallus forms a binary that acts along a vertical plane.

There is the penetrator top and the penetrated bottom. This vertical plane can be seen in Stavans' definition of the penetrative element of the Latin phallus: "The active form means to rape, subdue, control, dominate. Chingar is what a macho does to women, what the Iberian soldiers did to the native Indian population, what corrupt politicians do to their electorate. And the irreplaceable weapon in the art of chingar, the key to Hispanic worldview, is *el pito*, the phallus" (Latin Phallic, 151). In each of Stavans' examples, the binary exist on this vertical plane. Unlike the binary of center and margin or self and other, which suggests a horizontal relationship like being outside of arms reach, chingar includes a vertical through the penetrator positioning above the penetrated. It is this vertical plane that complicates the notion of the binary. In the dissolution of the binary of masculine and feminine, this vertical needs to be addressed. To deconstruct the binary, only along its horizontal plane, means that there still exists the vertical aspect of the binary. Chicanos accept Chicanas' inclusion in the construction of new and creative futures as long as one or the other binary exists. Chicanos struggle to allow for Chicanas' inclusion if the binaries are disrupted. Without either a vertical or horizontal binary, Chicanos have little with which to frame their power.

Stavans ends his exploration by stating "The phallus is an unmerciful dictator, the totemic figure of our longing" (Latin Phallic, 164). If Stavans and I are right about the pervasive nature of the Latin Phallic, then our longing for a site where we connect with Chicanas in the construction of new and creative futures begins from a distorted imagination influenced by both horizontal and vertical binaries. There may be moments, like when the sun breaks through the gaps in the clouds, when Chicanos actually traverse the geographies of hope effectively and visions of a decolonized society momentarily appear on the horizon. However, the hegemonic shifting clouds ultimately cast their shadow over the horizon.

In order to relate to Anzaldúa's creative and imaginative consciousness, Chicanos need to

address the implications of our relationship to our colonized bodies before our movement through the geographies of imagination leads towards terrains of dominance. Without this, Chicanos risk centering the geographies of imagination's possibilities within the penetrations of the Latin Phallic.

In order for Chicanos to disconnect themselves from the colonial penetrating mastery over the mestizo body, we must negotiate the pain often denied as residing within us. As Shade states, "Though pain is something about which we are passionate to avoid, the imagination helps us see how doses of it can play a role in the larger context of recovery" (Shade, 97). The pain arises from the acknowledgment of the ways in which the mestizo body is located within the dialectic of the colonizer/colonized. If we are to seek out those geographies of hope from whence to build a coalition with Chicanas in the constructions of new and imaginative futures, Chicanos must admit to themselves and to the collective of our involvement in the colonial dialectic.

Anzaldúa explains how pain and imagination led her towards recovery of the value of life as she dealt with the possibility of death. She discusses her reactions on her battle with diabetes. She states "You're furious with your body for limiting your artistic activities, for its slow crawl toward the grave. You're infuriated with yourself for not living up to your expectations, not, living your life fully. You realize that you use the whip of your ideals to flagellate yourself, and the masochist in you gets pleasure from your suffering" (Bridge, 550). Her reaction brings to light the barriers of self-imposition and self-antagonism that one must work through in order to move beyond anger and dejection. Imagination is not simply born out of the pleasantries of life; imagination works from the depths of the darkness inside each of us. In doing so, the difficulty imagination faces involves a process that "Though you try to thank the universe for your illness, emotional trauma, and habits that interfere with living fully, you still can't accept these, may never be fully present with the pain, never fully embrace the parts the parts of self you ousted from consciousness, may never forgive the unconscious for turning hostile" (Bridge,

554). We seek to disown the deeper recesses of our body and soul but unable to we find ourselves trapped in a battle we often refuse to acknowledge. Anzaldúa states “In the deep fecund cave of gestation lies not only the source of your woundedness and your passion, but also the promise of inner knowledge, healing, and spiritual rebirth (the hidden treasures), waiting for you to bear them to the surface (Bridge, 554). The ability to reach down deep into the vast landscape of the hidden regions of the mind, the body, and the soul not only provides access to the pain but also provides possibilities for renewal: “You want to heal; you want to be transformed. You begin the slow ascent, as you rise feel as though you’re passing through the birth canal, the threshold nepantla” (Bridge, 554). The movement from the inner regions to the outer spaces develops from the ability to address the pain in order to begin the movement towards recovery. Yet, as Anzaldúa suggests, if Chicanos move to the outer spaces while remaining fixed within her subject/object duality, Chicanos ultimately fail in nurturing the imagination needed to come to terms with our positioning within the destructive dichotomy between the colonized and the colonizer.



## **Geographies of the Brown Buffalo:**

I turn to Oscar Zeta Acosta as only one example of the ways in which imagination is restricted because of the colonizing effects on the body and the pain he dealt with as well as the pain he inflicted upon others, mainly women. Acosta's biographies allow me the opportunity to demonstrate how imagination is limited by the influence of machismo. His involvement in the Movimiento certainly needs to be applauded, but we must refrain from a standing ovation. He attempts to decolonize his mind and body as he enters into the terrains of Aztlán. Yet, as I argue, he fails in this decolonization process because his imagination is limited by his relationship to patriarchy. I bring in Alfred Arteaga and Rafael Pérez-Torres investigation of Acosta's relationship to his colonized body and how he seeks to decolonize his mind, his body, and his soul. They become useful in my critique of Acosta because they show how Acosta enacts a decolonization process through his growing acceptance of his brown body. They open up possibilities of how their critique and their imagination in the development of their critique was also limited by their relationship to patriarchal discourse.

Arteaga, in his investigation of Oscar Zeta Acosta's relationship to the colonized brown body, states that Acosta's novel *The Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo* "begins with a narration of the body, but it and narration itself are rendered problematic, for the body is uncontrollable and representation is suspect" and "continues in a narration that tries to make sense of the body, that tries to make sense through narration, an endeavor whose ability to represent reality is suspect" (119). Acosta's reality becomes suspect because as Pérez-Torres states, "His mestizo body is a source of torment and disgust, a site of disdain and emotional torture" (Mestizo Voice, 164-165). Acosta's pain over his disgust with his mestizo body taps into the ways in which pain acts in the geographies of imagination.

His pain and the need to confront it in order to imagine a self beyond colonial constructions plays an instrumental role in the geographies of imagination. Shade states "Though pain is something about

which we are passionate to avoid, the imagination helps us see how doses of it can play a role in the larger context of recovery” (97). Acosta seeks to disown those reminders of his fear but unable to he finds himself trapped in a battle he often refused to acknowledge. In order to make sense of his psychological torment and of his disgust and shame over the representation of his body, Acosta begins a reclaiming process. As he moves back from El Paso to Los Angeles and into the worlds of Chicanismo, he seeks to reclaim his body from the colonial project through narration– a narration constructed as an act of resistance.

Acosta’s acts of resistance seek liberation by acknowledging the lost of language due to the colonial project. The Latin and Anglocentric phallic penetrated the indigenous languages, and, in doing so, restricted Chicanos and Chicanas’ imagination. Acosta addresses the dual nature of the colonial presence in his relationship to his father. Unlike so many Chicanos and Chicanas, Acosta realizes that any act of resistance against the imposition of the colonizer’s language must confront both English and Spanish. At this moment in his narration, Acosta acknowledges how his Indian father is lost through the imposition of colonial discourse and language: "My father is an Indian from the mountains of Durango. Although I cannot speak his language... you see, Spanish is the language of our conquerors. English is the language of our conquerors..."(198). Acosta recognizes the colonial disconnection and displacement from his father. The loss of his father’s language relates to the loss of his relationship to his body beyond that of colonial constructions and devaluations. Located outside of his father, he elaborates on conquest and colonization by transferring the narration from his father to him: “No one asked me or my brother if we wanted to be American citizens” (198). The restrictions that result in his disconnection and the resulting imposition of Anglo colonization stem from the creation of the void and the ways in which the Anglo replenished the void: “We are citizens by default. They stole our lands and made us half-slaves. They destroyed our gods and made us bow down to a dead man who’s been strung

up for 2000 years” (198). The loss of his grandfather created a void occupied by the Anglo. Acosta’s resistance stems from his attempt at eliminating the colonial influence and, thus, creating a void controlled by him. Acosta employs imagination rather than fantasy by replenishing the void he attempts to create with a connection to the material world.

Seeing the limiting horizons available to him as he attempts to replenish his constructed void and knowing there is no going back to his grandfather, Acosta seeks out, through imagination, alternative horizons beginning with the naming process: “Now what we need is, first to give ourselves a name. We need a new identity. A name and language all our own....” (198). Acosta’s call for a naming process exposes the ways in which imagination acts to subvert imposed limitations, works within the individual’s mind and soul, and works towards creation of new horizons in the public spaces. Those spaces where a consciousness is developed through “an act of kneading, of uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings” (La Frontera, Anzaldúa 81). In this moment of liberation Acosta provides the image of a new and creative future that begins with his imaginative “new name” a name that relates to the positioning of Chicanos and Chicanas as a people who seek— indeed who are compelled to seek—alternative horizons as acts of momentary liberations. “I propose we call ourselves the Brown Buffalo people.... No, it’s not an Indian name, for Christ sake... don’t you get it? The buffalo, see? Yes, the animal that everyone slaughtered. Sure, both the cowboys and the Indian are out to get him... and, because we do have roots in our Mexican past, our Aztec ancestry, that’s where we get the brown from” (198). He reacts to the limiting horizons presented to him as lines in the sand. He states, “Any idiot that sees only the obvious is blind. For God’s sake, I have never seen and I have never felt inferior to any man or beast. My single mistake has been to seek identity with any one person or nation or with any part of history. What is clear to me after this sojourn

is that I am neither a Mexican nor an American. I am neither a Catholic nor a Protestant. I am a Chicano by ancestry and a Brown Buffalo by choice” (199). Acosta connects with his individual self yet refuses to remain within the internal self. His movement towards horizons of liberation includes anyone able and willing to join him as he ventures towards his alternative horizon: “That unless we band together, we brown buffalos will become extinct. And I do not want to live in a world without brown buffalos” (199).

On the other hand, Acosta, even when attempting to empower him and others, struggles to move beyond the inferior status he is relegated to by Anglo masculinity. This inferiority resides not in any man or beast but rests against Anglo constructions of white masculinity and femininity as the epitome of each. Whiteness becomes the assailant attacking Acosta’s relationship to his body. Though he feels able to stand up against the material representation of white masculinity, his struggle resides within hegemony. Acosta describes the source of his physical struggle while gazing at himself in a mirror: “I put my hands to the hips, sandbaked elbows out like wings, and turn profiled to the full-length reflection. I tighten, suck at the air and recall that Charles Atlas was a ninety-nine pound weakling when the beach bully kicked sand in his girl friend’s pretty face” (11). Unable to fit into the image of Charles Atlas as both the epitome of strength and the epitome of a protector of white woman, Acosta seeks to distinguish the effects of a colonial presence. Pérez-Torres states that for Acosta “The mestizo body signifies all that embarrasses the young Acosta and diminishes him before the American girls he imagines as the source of a pervasive scopic power. Desire for the (white/colonizing/female) other leads to an identification in which his own (mestizo/colonized/male) body becomes wholly Other” (Mestizo Voice 165). Acosta demonstrates how restrictions influencing imagination rests not only within language or not only within social structures but, more importantly, within himself.

While Arteaga attempts to present Acosta’s narrations as acts of resistance in hopes of liberation,

the liberation Acosta seeks remains an ongoing process restricting his ability to imagine horizons of liberation. The restrictions acting upon Acosta's imagination misdirect the liberation he seeks. The reclaiming of the ownership over the construction of an alternative sense of self diverges from the possibilities of liberation towards a restrictive war waged against himself: "Acosta's desire demarcates a colonized subject experiencing desire *against* his devalued self rather than *for* another" (Mestizo Voice 165) (emphasis his). Acosta's misdirected reclamation process provides the ability to understand how Acosta, through imagination, employs the Chicano reclamation-in-hopes-of-restoration process. Pérez-Torres moves to show how Acosta's involvement with three young Chicanas during a demonstration involves a "reclamation of the mestizo (more significantly, *mestiza*) body [that] initiates a simultaneous process of liberation and containment" (Mestizo Voice, 165) (Emphasis his).

In regards to Pérez-Torres' process of liberation, Acosta seeks a new and creative future horizon built upon a history that includes the torment of the violence directed towards those peoples under attack from various colonial constructive hegemonies. In fact, Acosta's body finds its liberation in his new nation. He doesn't seek a nation controlled by him but by those far more suited to deal with the implications of a new nation. For Arteaga, Acosta's movement towards making sense of or maybe making peace with his colonized body focuses on "The matter of finding meaning [that] is moved from the story of home to the story of revolution" (121). This movement involved in the imagination, for Acosta, seeks the disruption of language, nation states, and subject positions all of which are forms of oppressive limitations that work to disconnect Acosta from his relationships to his body. As he attempts to liberate his body from colonial constructions through a reclamation process, he seeks a new body deriving from a location where both the colonized Indian and the colonizing European sought his destruction. As Arteaga mentions "The difference between the two novels in this matter of control over the body is one of orientation: In *Brown Buffalo* control was a problem for the individual; in *Cockroach*

*People*, control is exercised, or not, among others” (121). Arteaga’s issues of control ranging from the individual to the collective open up the ability to see how Acosta’s reclamation process moves not towards liberation of the self and collective but towards the restoration of the mestizo to the top of the patriarchal pyramid with its sun-baked beauty and its resilient strength.

This restoration process begins innocently enough when Acosta, in his role as a guru during a sit-in, hears: “Hey Buffalo.... Do you have any more blankets?” (84). As he looks up the first description of what would become his *adelitas*: “The tall dark-haired one is Rosalie. Veronica is the shortest, sixteen years old with red hair and a soft chest. Madeline has hornrimmed glasses and a cute little ass” (Acosta 85). At this point in the narrative, there is only a hint at the fulfillment of his desire and his reclamation process; these three young Chicanas ultimately become the imagined material bodies needed to satisfy his neglected sexual self. He continues his “appreciation” of the consensual submissive positioning accepted by the young Chicanas: “Son of a bitch! Look at this! I am in a pup tent with three gorgeous broads. Three tender Chicano babes who have never been with even one without payment” (86). Perhaps it is their relationship to prostitution that allows Acosta to accept his objectification of their *mestiza* bodies, although it’s never quite clear that they were indeed prostitutes at any time.

The hope of his desires for communing with his newly found focus, his *adelitas*, reduces his ability to imagine a site where he and the Chicanas connect to construct a new and creative *Aztlán*. His reclamation process takes on a direction constructed and controlled by Acosta, and is guided by his inability to realize and actualize his sexual needs and desires. The Chicanas become Acosta’s objectified *adelitas* and turns his act of becoming into an act of acquiring. He mistakes hope, as an act of becoming, because he acts to acquire control over the Chicanas’ agencies. By doing so, he attempts to restrict their imagination to serving the Chicano phallic. This relegates the Chicanas’ agency to a passive involvement in the development of the necessary means needed to access the available

resources. His desire becomes the means by which he gains access to the resources found in his objects of desire: his *adelitas*. Acosta describes how his imagination controls the means needed to gain access to the resources found within the objectified brown female bodies when he candidly states, “For two years now I’ve sniffed around the courthouse, I’ve stood around *La Voz* waiting for one of these sun children to come down on me, to open up to my huge arms and big teeth. And yet I’ve not scored once. How many times have my pants been hard? How many times have I gone to bed wet? Alone? How many times have I shouted ‘Viva La Raza!’ waiting for a score? And how many times have I desired to taste of that same warmth that is Lady Feathers, my mother, my sister, my aunts and my cousins?” (86).

All women reside within the same topography of Acosta’s imagination: the topography of acquiring. No longer is he reluctant to express his desire for the *mestiza* body because it seems he now sees the *mestiza* as a new device used to obtain the cultural value of not only the *mestiza*’s body but the cultural value found in his newfound acceptance of his *mestizo* body. This objectification of the women in his narrative demonstrates how the act of becoming distorts into the act of acquiring. His description turns to the ways in which he begins to act upon his desire for the brown female body. He states, “I caress a leg and it holds still, waiting for my hand. It is firm and soft and warm. I reach for an arm. It comes into mine easily. There is no hesitation. And then a moist lip to my ear. Zingo! I laugh” (87). Acosta relishes in his reclamation of the *mestiza* body as a site of his desire. There is a sense of pride that masks the sense of patriarchal domination and objectification of the *mestiza* body.

As the sexual action intensifies under the blanket hiding Acosta and the young *Chicanas*, Acosta seems amazed that his involvement in what he thinks are revolutionary imagination and praxis: “Jesus this can’t be. This can’t be happening. I reach for a breast. It is small. Wonderfully small and firm. It fits into the palm of my hand. God Almighty! This is the revolution” (87). Acosta’s “revolution” demonstrates the restrictive geographies of his imagination. He maintains a control over their sexuality

and desire through his narration. We see his *adelitas* as willing to perform their supporting roles: “for that night I am filled with the youth of three *cholas* who want me to take care of them all. Can they stay with me after the fast? Are they welcome at my house?” (88). Beyond their consent to fulfill his desire, Acosta asks the key questions for any *adelita* during the *movimiento*: “Can you guys cook? Will you keep the house clean?” (88). They become his servants and, as such, fulfill their limited role within the *movimiento* even when they attempt to play a deeper and more significant role in the course of the *movimiento*.

His limitations continue as Acosta takes the *Chicanas* back to his place now that they have consented to all their responsibilities required from their gender. The only mention of force is found when Acosta forces the young women to call their grandmother to seek her permission for them to stay with Acosta. Based upon the lie he conjures up, they were working for him, the grandmother consents and adds “Do whatever he tells you” (Acosta 88). As Acosta is unable to imagine himself as Charles Atlas and the protector of white women due to his inferior position in relation to either white men or white women, through the *adelitas*, then, he installs himself as the brown Carlos Atlas. The *Chicanas* not only exist to serve his sexual and material needs but also exist to serve his male ego. His imaginative process allows for a liberation of the mestizo self but is constrained by his relationship to Chicano patriarchal hegemony. Acosta develops into the protector and epitome of strength validated by *Chicanismo*.

For me the struggle with appreciating Acosta’s attempts at revolutionary imagination stems not only from his dominance over his *adelitas* but also from the age of the three young women. Acosta repeatedly recognizes that there is a problem with age: he being in his thirties while they are still young teenagers. Though Acosta momentarily breaks away from what I see as his pedophilic attraction to his young *Chicanas* through his desire for Lady Fingers and his sexual encounter with the juror Jean Fisher,



he neither fully acknowledges nor, more importantly, does he ever attempt to critically address his pedophile inclinations. Neither Arteaga nor Pérez-Torres addresses this issue. Age subsumes gender.

Pérez-Torres, however, raises the question of Acosta's involvement in patriarchal structures. "The mestiza body returns not as a site of repugnance but of longing. At the same time, the reclamation of the mestiza body enacts simple objectification. The narrative highlights the dissembled body parts that are Acosta's objects of desire: a leg, an arm, a lip, a breast" (Mestizo Voice, 156). This objectification Pérez-Torres's focus, as he dwells on Acosta's reclamation process:

In Chicano cultural production, the mestizo body stands as a text, a site of ideological contestation. There is often an easy elision of the body with culture, with political practice, or with the affirmation of alterity and resistance. As Acosta's narratives reveal, the affirmation of mestizo bodies too easily becomes the whole of the revolution, a revolution where long-rehearsed and repressive social scripts return, unexamined (Mestizo, 166).

The lack of critical engagement by Acosta in his attempts at reclaiming his mestizo body from the colonially imposed restrictions invites the acceptance of a subsumed age difference between Acosta and the Chicanas. Acosta's lack of critical engagement with his pedophile attraction to the young Chicanas is echoed by Arteaga and Pérez-Torres lack of exposing this aspect of Acosta's attraction to the young women.

The young Chicanas become the focus of his imagination that relegates the Chicanas to a background prop whereby Acosta defines the limits of his imagination, limits that suggests an imagination based on the restoration of Acosta to the top of the patriarchal hierarchy. The Chicanas imagination remains restricted to serving the needs of Acosta and the movimiento. Their ability to creatively position themselves as the worthy members of the movimiento only allows them to imagine

their worth by their relationship to the Latin phallic. Acosta's limited imagination works to construct the lines in the sand for Chicanas. His "othered" body, because of his desire for the (white/colonizing/female), seeks to liberate itself from the colonizer and as he does so he contains the *adelitas* through his need for restoration. His involvement in the Chicano politics of reclamation in hopes of restoration determines the limits of his imagination. The *adelitas* remain disconnected from Chicana politics that acts to provide the possibilities outside of the Latin Phallic. Imagination remains structured to serve the specific needs of the dominant individual or collective. The geographies of hope implode into a limited terrain of new and creative futures. Hope becomes distorted within the geographies of imagination, and as the individual or collective moves into the geographies of realization and actualization, the distorted hope developed by restrictive imaginative processes moves the individual or collective towards the hope that serves hegemony, not the hope that acts as a counter-hegemonic practice.

Another example of this reclamation aspect and limits imposed upon the imagination can be seen in the work of Ignacio M. Garcia. His text *Chicanismo: The Forging of a Militant Ethos Among Mexican-Americans* provides what he terms a synthesis of works dealing with the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. In his chapter "Chicanismo: An Affirmation of Race and Class," he states *Indigenismo* represented a part of the new heritage that Chicanos were trying to develop" (71) (emphasis his). The need for this reclamation stemmed out of the desire to reconnect with the process (*mestizaje*) that involves the mixture, at this time, of Spanish and indigenous aspects of this cultural and racial identity *mestizo*. In reclaiming this aspect of their identity, "Chicanos were, for the most part, *mestizo*, and in order to find themselves they had to come to terms with that" (71) (emphasis his). For Garcia, this attempt of reclaiming the *indio* presence was not something new because he states that many other pre and post Mexican

Revolution writers explored this indigenous connection.<sup>1</sup> The ways in which Chicanos embraced their indigenous past reacted to the progression from the positive aspects of indios, seen in Martí and Vasconcelos, to blaming the Indio for “Mexican fatalism, alcoholism, *machismo*, and criminality. To promote pride and reclaiming a place in history “Chicano activists... continued to view their *mestizaje* (mixed bloodlines) in a revolutionary light” (70) (emphasis his).

In keeping with the indigenous connection Garcia states, “The ‘Indian half’ represented nobility, civilization, and courage. It had been the barbarism of the Spaniard and later that of the landed class that had destroyed and subjugated the progress of the Mexican native” (70) (emphasis his). Linking *mestizaje* to the indigenous elements of that synthesis of the European and Amerindian, provided Chicanos with a space from where to develop an effective reclamation process. No longer compelled to accept the Spanish and Anglo overlords, Chicanos reached back into their history and found, in this gender-neutral description, a way to restore pride in themselves and their culture.

This form of reclamation in hopes of restoration ignores the reality of the truer reclamation/restoration process. While Ignacio believes that “*La gente* represented the vanguard of the Movimiento” and “They provided the stimulus to all that we as students or professionals did” (79) (emphasis his). Out of this connection to the people, Garcia believes that “Our role as activists was not to lead or even to push to hard but rather to march along, learn, facilitate, and teach the skills the community needed. *La Gente*, when empowered, had the progressive instincts to solve many of its problems” (79) (emphasis his).

However, this type of reclamation/restoration project distorted the ways in which patriarchy was deeply embedded in this undertaking. The restoration to the top of the patriarchal

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<sup>1</sup> For more on this, look at Jose Martí and Jose Vasconcelos.

pyramid, I argue, was at the heart of the liberation ideologies promoted during the Movimiento.

Gracia tries to deflect my ideas when he states,

Initially, the Movement's interpretation of women centered on their relationships to the family. At the Chicano Youth Liberation Conference, Chicanas, anxious to be seen as part of a united front, voted to declare that they did not want to be 'liberated.' But the Movement, notwithstanding the chauvinism of some of its leaders, could not help but challenge patriarchy through its liberation rhetoric and through the opportunity it gave women to become involved in protest activities. Women, through their clerical skills, their willingness to do tedious jobs, and their ability to follow through on assignments, became the organizational backbone of the Movement (64).

This statement by Garcia provides an example of how the patriarchal restoration process limits his imagination and ability to understand that it was not La Gente that provided the stimulus for liberation, but a patriarchal structure and set of ideologies' involvement in hegemony that was the stimulus for liberation. He limits "chauvinism" to a small group of leaders and, in doing so, limits patriarchy to the individual not a structure of domination. In addition, he denies the subordination of Chicanas' involvement in the Movimiento as substantial. It is Chicanas' ability to perform those jobs requiring greater organizational skills and greater motivational and self-sacrificing personality traits not leadership skills that he sidesteps in his exploration. He implies that once confronted with Chicana feminists, most Chicanos realized the need to move towards total liberation. This is a patriarchal fabrication of the resistance to total gender liberation. Chicanos dealt with questioning patriarchal power, something they have been involved with in their own lives but resisted Chicanas' attempts to challenge machismo, especially if that challenge seeks to disrupt patriarchal power. This aspect of Chicanos' ability to deal

with questioning can be easily ignored by Chicanos' reclamation/restoration process. They are able to mask their reclamation/restoration process with the rhetoric of community building by addressing racism as a common oppression. They, at times, adamantly resist attempts at challenging because to engage with the challenge, means Chicanos would have to reevaluate the hierarchy of the patriarchal pyramid. Garcia is unable to see this in his work because his imagination is hindered by the rhetoric of community building. His inclusion of the moderate or loyalist Chicanas displays this willingness to deal with questioning and his reduction of Chicana feminist thought shows his unwillingness to engage with challenging.

## Silence as Inhibitor

*How do we forgive our fathers? Maybe in a dream. Do we forgive our fathers for leaving us too often or forever when we were little? Maybe for scaring us with unexpected rage or making us nervous because there never seemed to be any rage at all? Do we forgive our fathers for marrying or not marrying our mothers, for divorcing or not divorcing our mothers? And shall we forgive them for the excesses of warmth and coldness? Shall we forgive them for pushing or leaning, for shutting doors or speaking through walls or never speaking or never being silent? Do we forgive our fathers in our age or in theirs, or in their deaths saying it to them or not saying? If we forgive our fathers, what is left?*

*Thomas Builds-a-Fire*

*Smoke Signals*

*Shall we forgive them even if they don't ask for forgiveness?*

*Carlos Adams*

*1999 Family Reunion*

For many Chicanos, we battle with these questions all of our lives. We imagine what life would be like if there wasn't any need for forgiveness. If we could spend most of our time praising not forgiving or regretting our fathers, what could we imagine? And if there is so much to forgive, where do we begin. In the anthology *Muy Macho: Latino Men Confront Their Manhood*, some Chicanos address their relationship with their fathers. A relationship often built from silence. They address what is called the cult or code of silence. Within the geographies of imagination, silence acts as an inhibitor. Once our imagination is inhibited our attempts to enter into geographies of hope become inhibited.

The writers in the anthology confront their positions within the larger Mexicano/Anglo social/economic geographies as well as confront their positions within the smaller geographies of community and family. At the end of his introduction, Ray González provides a description of the positions Chicanos have found themselves located within as well as the ways in which the writer's attempt to reposition themselves in relationship to machismo: "By admitting there are spiritual and emotional places to go beyond gang brotherhood, or the stereotype of the Latin lover, these writers have enlarged the personal environment in which men like themselves can thrive in, as well as a new perspective on the state of American manhood (xx).

To break away from their perceptions of the suffocating atmospheres imposed upon them by generations of developing patriarchal hegemonic structures, the writers position themselves as teachers of a “new” machismo. This positioning of the writers allows for the act of teaching to become an act of unveiling. In this way the writers in the text set themselves up as teachers in ways that their fathers did not. They hope that through confronting this “cult of silence” they can provide ways in which learners view machismo with a greater understanding. Yet, as it is with much of oppressive hegemonic dis/orders, silence can be perceived as acceptance as well as participation to a binary perspective of machismo by abetting the divide and conquer elements of oppressive hegemony. Silence disguises as well as inhibits.

The writers presented in the text provide a possible break with "The Code of Silence" that Ray González describes as process "where many Latino fathers are silent as they leave parenting to the mother..." (xiv). According to González this silence results in "a deep and wounding silence that gives life to the relationships among men like my self, George, Phil, and our fathers" (179).

I saw this code of silence within Abuelito's family. I knew there was something between my uncles and my grandfather; some distance that prevented either of them to acknowledge their relationship— a distance that seemed narrower, with me, his oldest grandchild. It wasn't until my grandfather's funeral that I heard of the hurt and isolation my uncles held towards their father. Their pain derived from this "code of silence" and gave life to their anger towards and alienation from their father. During Abuelitos' life, my uncles remained somewhat silent as Ray González states: "As sons, we are used to having fathers that don't want to be near us.... We accept that part of the code. The code feeds its own circle. Our families will go on somehow" (180). In this way, hegemony maintains its ideological control over the men in the family as it does with the men in many families. As it is with much of oppressive hegemonic dis/orders, silences comply with the divide and conquer elements of

oppressive hegemony. According to Foucault,

Silence... is less the absolute limit of discourse than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them... We must try to determine the different ways of saying... how those who can and cannot speak... are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized, or which form of discretion is required... there is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourse (27)

Thus, there is no such thing as silence per se. At least not the type of silence that suggests a lack or a void, as suggested by the writers in the anthology. The code of silence, therefore, contains substance. A distinction needs to occur among the various silences, the substances filling the apparent void or lack, and how silence relates to the act of silencing. The cult of silence, therefore, exists in conjunction with the act of silencing. In this way the cult of silence moves from static subject to active verb: the action within silencing.

This action within the “cult of silence” creates a man who becomes what Octavio Paz states is a “dissembler” because, “Our [Mexicano] mechanisms of defense and self-preservation are not enough, and therefore we must make use of dissimulation, which is almost habitual with us” (40). Through the use of dissimulation, silence is not passive but active as “The dissembler pretends to be someone he is not. His role requires constant improvisation, a steady forward progress across shifting sands. Every moment he must remake, re-create, modify the personage he is playing, until at the last moment arrives when reality and appearance, the lie and the truth, are one” (40).

This protection of the self is not the only way to address Paz’s remoteness. This remoteness also acts as a way to protect the machos power. By maintaining silence, power goes unchallenged. This contradicts what so many Chicanas describe the ways they have been silenced by men and male



structures in their lives. The silence imposed on Chicanas often acts as a way to disempower them, while the silence that affects Chicanos acts as a way to empower themselves. This “cult of silence” is not always imposed on Chicanos and Latinos but is a choice they take advantage of. The silences also maintain their presence by the ways men acquire and maintain their power. If we remove our masks, do we see the times we are smiling when silence works to our advantage? We not only teach our sons to be silent and distant, to keep the open wound festering, and to deny emotions, we also teach our sons how maintain silence when patriarchal power is being threaten.

An example of this type of silence occurs in the *Muy Macho* anthology. The anthology attempts to freeze individual moments in time in order to uncover the lies and truths about machismo. In other words, the anthology attempts to distinguish the differences between the lie (bad machismo) and the truth (good machismo) in a manner similar to Vicente T Mendoza’s understanding of “authentic” and “false” machismo. According to Américo Paredes’, Mendoza defined “authentic” machismo as “characterized by true courage, presence of mind, generosity, stoicism, heroism, bravery” and false machismo as “the other nothing but a front, false at bottom, hiding cowardice and fear covered up by exclamations, shouts, presumptuous boasts, bravado, double-talk, bombast.... Supermanliness that conceals an inferiority complex” (216).

Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition: The Power of a People*, work on the Latin phallic offers another glimpse into the action within silence. He looks at the patriarch of la familia and finds that the silence between father and son filled with issues of power. He states that

The *pap* symbolizes abstract power. A *dues absconditus*, silent and noncommittal, he dictates his wishes from afar. His frequent absence, his inadequacy, is linked to the Iberian conquistadors’ arrival as bachelors or estranged husbands, knights who were more than ready to abuse and rape Indian women, leaving them alone and pregnant

(134).”

Stavans overlooks, in his discussion on the absence of the man from the family unit as a conquistador legacy, the issue of hegemony. The absence is more than an attribute developed during the conquest and colonial periods; it is, in fact, an example of the ways men are secured in their power that they can leave the child raising to the mother.

The writers included in the anthology confront their positions within the larger Mexicano/Anglo societies as well as their positions within the smaller social geographies of community and family. Within their discussions, the elements of hope become apparent and provide an opportunity to see if the writer’s are active or passive in their connections between machismo and geographies of hope.

At the end of his introduction González provides a description of the movement the writers in the anthology hope to initiate in their exploration of machismo:

By admitting there are spiritual and emotional places to go beyond gang brotherhood, or the stereotype of the Latin lover, these writers have enlarged the personal environment in which men like themselves can thrive in, as well as a new perspective on the state of American manhood.” (xx)

To break away from the suffocating atmosphere imposed upon them by generations of patriarchal hegemonic structures, the writers position themselves as teachers of a “new” machismo. In doing so, they confront various issues surrounding machismo, such as the definitions of honor that formulate their relationships, the silences that envelope them, and the voices inside that resist the incorporation of the feminine.

In his introduction, editor Ray González states that "*Muy Macho*... is the first book by

Latino male writers to address how they see themselves as men within the concept of what it means to be 'macho'" (xiii). In this statement González positions the text as a beginning, a departure point from where multiple paths of exploration of machismo can occur and adheres to Homi Bhabha's idea of the text, as Bhabha explains, "the performative structure of the text reveals a temporality of discourse that I believe is significant. It opens up a narrative strategy for the emergence and negotiation of those agencies of the marginal, minority, subaltern, or diasporic that incite us to think through-- and beyond-- theory" (181). González's performative aspect of the text posits the writers as teachers of a "new" machismo and thus challenges the historical materiality of machismo where "the essence of what maleness means remains largely unchanged across time" (Anaya 59).

As teachers of a "new" machismo, the writers contribute to one of the text's performative structure(s) by considering the essence of what it means to be macho. The essence often raised in the anthology is located in what González states is undiscovered territory for Chicanos. He states that "for the first time, Latino men go beyond more dramatic and familiar testimonies of ex-gang members and pintos (ex-cons), or the success stories of 'having escaped the barrio for a better life,' to make statements about self-identity" (xvi). The narratives and essays in the anthology attempt to define this "natural" essence in order to bring about the change they say is needed to deconstruct the ways machismo operates. Thus, the performative structure(s) within the anthology contain elements of hope as "we [Chicanos and Latinos] take critical ownership of the information of ourselves," and when we come to understand how this information has "socially and gradually, over time, become active and conscious, speaking, reading, and writing..." (Oppressed, Freire 24), then we will begin to produce those ideologies that maintain, as much as any ideology can, elements of the hope needed for concrete change. The

performative structure(s) of the text should not only contain the hope embedded in the intended goals of breaking the “cult of silence” and the processes needed in obtaining those goals but should also contain a critical approach that attempts to disrupt and transform historical materiality.

The text’s offer of hope for a new paradigm, a new set of processes used by the teachers/learners to expose the ways machismo’s power relationships are produced and reproduced must understand, as Henry Giroux suggests,

What is at stake here is forging a notion of power that does not collapse into a form of domination, but is critical and emancipatory, which allows students to both locate themselves in history and to critically, not slavishly, appropriate the cultural and political codes of their own and other traditions. (138)

In order to prevent their writings from “collaps[ing] into a form of domination” the writers need to consider the impact of the production and reproduction of machismo. This consideration allows the reader to position him or herself within the historical while simultaneously infusing a critical position that allows the writer/ reader to form a dialectical relationship of mutual and critical investigation. This positioning of the writers, the text, and the reader acts either to begin transmissions of the ways to position Chicanos and Latinos as agents of social change or to regress into reproducing agents of a traditional patriarchal hierarchy. As agents of active hope or passive hopelessness.

As teachers of a "new" machismo, the text's performative state can be seen as a way to consider that "Young men acting contrary to the good of their community have not yet learned the real essence of maleness" (Anaya 59). Implicit in this statement is the relationship honor has to what is defined as good for the community. Any action that benefits the community is seen as

honorable, while any action acting against the good of the community is seen as dishonorable. In either case, the rhetorical construction of what is good and what is bad maintains an element of rhetoric control by men. Honor, as I discuss later, has roots in the rewards a man received through battle. It becomes a display of power not evident in Anaya's statement.

An example of the type of reactions to *Muy Macho*... performative act took place when teaching an upper division course on contemporary Chicano and Chicana Literature. The students and I explored machismo using Ray González's anthology. As we investigated *Muy Macho*, the Chicanas in the class reacted to every essay or narrative with some anger, with intense critique, and with volumes of criticisms on the ways the Chicano writers narrated their experiences and investigated aspects of machismo. The Chicanas saw the anthology addressing machismo in the same way someone would address a stranger—hesitant and cautious. On the one hand, not wanting to offend the stranger by not acknowledging his presence yet, on the other hand, not wanting to range too far from one's comfort zone in addressing the stranger. In the end, what the stories seem to represent to many of the Chicanas was a masking of male privilege and a validation of macho bravado.

Maybe the writers in the anthology or maybe any Chicano attempting to write about machismo mask our male privilege and validate our bravado, yet the Chicanos investigating what it is to be macho seek to locate their work within the geography of hope in contrast to the geography of hopelessness because "Hope, as it happens, is so important for our existence, individual and social, that we must take every care not to experience it in a mistaken form, and thereby allow it to slip toward hopelessness and despair" (Hope, Freire 9). This tentative relationship among the various forms of hope, mistaken or not, is one of the keys to developing the processes needed to obtain the goal of changing the ideological structures of machismo.

Therefore, it is imperative to me that we Chicanos address the ways in which our investigations into machismo reside within the multiplicities of hope. How, in our writings, do we critically challenge our perceptions of machismo? Do we, as Chicanos, understand the nature of critical investigation when it comes to gender issues? Have we developed a critical as well as a criticizing approach that allows us to move into those cracks of hegemonic patriarchal structures from our “side of the fence” so to speak? Is our work insightful enough to provide for the possibility of hope? Do the writers in the anthology critically challenge "machismo" and move beyond hegemonic patriarchal structures to provide for new geographies of hope? These questions and a list of many more lie at the heart of my hope for this project. I map and analyze how the writers featured in the anthology locate themselves in relationship to geographies of hope. I argue that more often than not these writers reinscribe machismo and, therefore, they are co-opted by their own patriarchal ideologies. In doing so they prevent themselves from effectively mapping geographies of hope and often map mistaken forms of hope.

The geographies of hope embedded in the text demand more than locating the investigations into machismo in relationship to hope but must move towards praxis in order to subvert the hegemonic structures of machismo. It is no longer enough to speak of a “new” machismo; Chicanos must also understand the need to provide ways in which the reader can incorporate a new understanding of machismo into their daily activities. Freire states that "Hope is an ontological need" (Hope, 8) and "as an ontological need, hope needs practice in order to become historical concreteness" (Hope, 9). This process of identifying what hope is and how hope can be an agent for change allows for a re-mapping of the different geographies Chicanos inhabit so those paths leading towards the spaces where hopelessness resides can be identified and warning signs posted that read hopelessness "paralyzes us, immobilizes us. We succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for a

fierce struggle that will re-create the world" (Freire 8). The struggle that awaits Chicanos— *has always awaited them*— is how to address machismo in ways that produce foundational and structural change: the change that prevents power from collapsing into domination, that prohibits addressing machismo in its totality, and that constrains any attempt at forming coalitions with women in order to dismantle machismo.

In attempting to break away from this “cult of silence” and expose the *lies* and *truths*, the writers’ hope is that, through voice, expression becomes empowering acts of resistance to the “cult of silence.” The writers demonstrate ways in which the writers attempt to empower themselves in order to bring about change. As Anaya states, “It is time to call that behavior that is good, good. And that which is negative to the self and the community, not good” (64). No longer content to be dissemblers, the writers attempt to bring to the surface those structures that produced the material conditions of machismo in order to understand its influence on them and their communities.

However, it seems that the Chicanas in the class understood what the writers did not: “that it is no longer enough to begin stories of resistance with stories of so-called power. From this perspective, resistance becomes a mode through which the symptoms of different power relations are diagnosed and ways are sought to get round them, or live through them, or to change them” (Pile 3). Pile’s warning of the dangers when breaking through silence provides a framework to begin to look at ways the writers discuss their conceptions of machismo to see if the writers are aware of the pitfalls involved in their attempts at unveiling machismo.

This positioning of the writers allows for the act of teaching to become an act of unveiling. In this way the writers in the text set themselves up as teachers in ways that their fathers did not. They hope that through confronting this “cult of silence” they can provide ways in which writers/learners view machismo in its totality. Their expressive voice opens up to possibilities that allow Chicanos to

diagnose different power relations involved in the construction of machismo. This allows us to seek out those ways men have moved around the power relations, allows to see how men have live through them, allows to see how relations have changed over the years, and allows to see multiple ways of addressing machismo that can truly dismantle the power relationships. Breaking away from the “cult of silence” through the expressive voice demands that we must also unveil the ways in which silence maintains machismo. Critical approaches demand that Chicanos and Latinos move beyond basic acknowledgment of silence, otherwise, we fall into the trap that Pile warns against by looking for ways round our inherited power, or by finding ways to live through that power, or by changing power in ways that re-inscribe machismo.

This protection of the self is not the only way to address Paz’s remoteness. This remoteness also acts as a way to protect the machos’ power. By maintaining silence, power goes unchallenged. This contradicts what so many Chicanas describe the ways they have been silenced by men and male structures in their lives. The silence imposed on Chicanas often acts as a way to disempower them, while the silence that affects Chicanos acts as a limited form of empowerment. This “cult of silence” is not always necessarily imposed on Chicanos and Latinos but, is a choice they take advantage of. The silence also maintains its presence by the ways men acquire and maintain their power. If we remove our masks, do we see the times we are smiling when silence works to our advantage. We not only teach our sons to be silent and distant, to keep the open wound festering, and to deny emotions, we also teach our sons how maintain silence when patriarchal power is being threaten.



## **GEOGRAPHIES OF REALIZATION:**

In the second geography of hope, realization, the new and creative futures arising from the geographies of imagination begin the involvement with the actualization of desired ends. While the ambiguity of imagination often seems disconnected from anything material, it is within the material world where the geographies of realization exist. Hope relates to more than an emotional frame of mind; hope pertains to the material world and, as such, one does not hope for something outside of his or her understanding of the world. As such, imagination's relationship to hope also remains anchored within the material world. Hope resides in the individual or collective's relationship to the inner and outer terrains of the mind, the body, the soul, and their relationships to ideological internalization and lived experiences. These relationships to something tangible something we can feel, touch, or sense move hope from the often ambiguous realms of imagination into the material geographies of realization. The complex territories involved in accessing the various means and resources available dictate the need to search out their materiality. These complex territories also dictate the development of the various skills and agencies involved in developing to the means and accessing the resources. Within the geographies of realization, the individual or collective seek out and develop the necessary means needed to obtain the available resources needed to achieve the possibilities of actualizing what the imagination envisioned.

This exploration of the geographies of realization involves the dynamics of developing the means necessary to access the available resources. Means are those skills and avenues the individual or collective develops in order to begin the turn what the imagination envisioned into an actualized reality. They involve the development of physical and rhetorical skills. The act of speaking is a physical skill; the use of language is a rhetorical skill. The combination of

speaking skills and rhetorical strategies allow the individual to develop the avenues needed to assign value or authority to what is spoken and how it is spoken. Language becomes the resource both speaking and rhetoric draw upon. Without the first two, language has little meaning— at least to the listening subject. In the construction of hegemony, the individual or collective employs the skills of speaking and rhetoric and accesses language to actualize their consent of or opposition to hegemony. Hegemony involves the acquisition and maintenance of power. The complexities of power demand the development of complex skills and insist on accessing various resources.

In order to understand the complexities of realization, and there are certainly more than I can imagine, certain topographies arise that provide the beginnings of the venturing into the geographies of realization. I begin with developing a topography of the ways in which the individual or collective develop what Shade calls “Habits of Hope.” These habits are internalized and provide the impetus to develop a pattern by which hope becomes attached to the process of developing the means necessary to acquire the available resources. In addition, topographies within realization are the active and passive agencies involved in developing the means and accessing the resources found within realization. The agencies exist within two key aspects: active and passive. The differences between the two agencies revolve around the ways in which restrictions influence the ability of the individual or collective to seek out and obtain the necessary means and resources. I examine the issue of honor and how this quality is related to the active or passive agency. Honor is important in the understanding the ways in which means and developed and resources made available within a patriarchal structure. To understand how honor is involved in the realization geography, I explore, strategically, the binary of active and passive agencies. Binaries can act to disguise the complexities of any given social arrangement

and fall into a reductionist or essentialist trajectory. I fix these two agencies within the construction of honor because honor often resides within a binary. One is honorable or dishonorable. The actions and deeds needed to achieve honor maintain this binary construction. While there exists mobility between honor and dishonor, there seems to be no middle ground. Honor becomes that quality a man hopes to achieve. In doing so, the discourse about honor develops into a discourse of good and bad machismo. This duality distinguishes the divisions between what Chicanos describe as masculinity (good machismo) and patriarchy (bad machismo).

As with any strategic use of binaries, I intend to expose the ways in which honor/dishonor binaries act to distort the nature of hope. The good macho conforms to a masculinity that acts for the good of the family or community. In most of the descriptions of the honorable man, the term machismo is replaced with the more neutral term masculinity. The bad macho acts against the family or community and dominates, whenever possible and within various contexts, the social landscape. The man becomes macho through his need to dominate and displays an exaggerated or hyper-masculinity. The good macho's masculinity is seen as a positive and outside the realm of patriarchy while the bad macho is seen as a negative and epitomizes the terrible oppressive nature of patriarchy. The good macho is described as nurturing while the bad macho is described as demeaning. By maintaining the binary, I felt I could expose how this binary ignores one important aspect of machismo: patriarchy's involvement in good/bad machismo. The dynamics of power, the hideous nature of hegemony, and the systems, institutions, and individuals acting in collusion with hegemony and distortions of power determine the ways in which restrictions develop the individual and collective's abilities to develop the necessary means and acquire the available resources.

Within the geography of realization we develop Shade's "habits of hope," which allows hope to move from the abstract of the imagination to the material aspect of actualization. Hope doesn't necessarily occur spontaneously. The time when hope's spontaneity envelops us exists only for a moment, and when the immediate moment passes, the spontaneity of hope subsides. It seems that these spontaneous moments occur when individuals or a collective remains passive observers rather than active participants. For the active participant, the three geographies of hope inherently reside within any attempt to actualize the desired ends. However, as a passive observer, the individual or collective views the moment, views the participant(s) engaged with hope, and relates through the emotional aspect of hope. The passive observer remains dislocated from the geographies of hope involved in the moment and in the active participant(s). The passive observer, however, connects to the emotional usually associated with hope but not the actual involvement in the geographies of hope. In addition, the passive observer connects to the active participant(s) through his, her, or their past experiences in their own geographies of hope. In those moments when the passive observer moves in to the geographies of hope along with the active participant(s), the spontaneous nature of hope allows for a pathway between the active and passive through both the emotional and experiential involvements with hope. When the passive connects with the active in the process of acquiring the desired ends, at this moment they merge into the various geographies of hope each now inhabits together. They leave the topography of spontaneity to traverse the geographies of realization. This merging doesn't necessarily result in a cohesive, well-developed mapping but often occurs in opposition, depending on each participant or observer's location within power.

The ability to understand hope's relationship to realization needs to be based on taking into account what Shade calls "habits of hope." Habits of hope are necessary means developed

to effectively locate and employ the available resources. These habits help connect the means to the resources by negotiating the realms of what are random acts of accessing the means and the resources and the “certainty” that presents itself through the development of habits of hope. In order to traverse the geographies of realization, random acts of accessing means and resources may at times enable some movement towards the actualization of the desired ends, yet because of their ambiguous nature, random acts can rarely be counted on with any certainty. Certainty, if it exists, stems from the ability to understand that

Habits thus map out paths of meaningful action we can travel. They spread out *horizons of meaning*, rich matrixes of goods and actions defined by our abilities and projects and so contoured by the means and ends we have successfully pursued. To the extent that they do not require conscious attention or effort, habits become especially efficient means of engagement with the environment; once we rely upon them, we direct our effort and attention elsewhere (Shade 27) (emphasis his).

Without developing effective habits, the individual or collective is limited to the hegemonic development of routine and unquestioned habits Shade defines as “mere habits.” Mere habits are involved within passive agencies and can relegate the individual or collective to a consensual acceptance of the limited ends afforded to them by and through hegemony. The given consent to hegemony is a mere habit because hegemony’s normality involves the use of the same habitual acceptance generation after generation. Mere habits are the ways in which Chicanos give their consent to the oppressive nature of patriarchy. We see our position within patriarchy as part of nature’s gender relationships in ways that are biologically determined by nature. What we imagine, the means and resources developed and acquired, and the actualization of this seemingly normal social structure requires developing a set of habits that manifest themselves

unconsciously. The habits of hope stemming from how “Courage, persistence, and resourcefulness provide the general framework of habits from hoping. They [habits of hope] function as the primary means by which we pursue and realize our hopes” (Shade 127) and are located within active agencies. Habits of hope not only allow for the effective channeling of energy but also develop the additional energy needed to sustain the individual or collective through the geographies of realization. Thus “Habits of hope” are those habits by which we pursue—that is, seek and nurture—the realization of hope’s ends<sup>1</sup>. They are vital and integral dynamics in developing hope, particularly in maintaining our commitment to its ends” (Shade 77). In this way, the development of habits of hope is vital to achieving creative futures. Habits help channel the energy needed to remain committed to confront the often-overwhelming barriers structured through hegemony. Habits of hope would be those habits Chicanos develop in order to dismantle hegemonic patriarchy from the center.

As with any process involved with the act of becoming, a familiarization with the topographies involved develops into unconscious modes of seeing and becoming in the world. One of these topographies consists of the ways in which the realization’s access to the means and resources stems from habits formed throughout the life span of any individual or collective. As Shade observes:

Most generally, habits are patterns or ways of dealing with external forces and organizing internal energies in our interplay with the environment. We develop habits *through* our interaction with the environment, engagement with the environment shapes and structures human plasticity into powerful, purposive modes of activity (26) (emphasis his).

Thus, it is the environment contained within realization where habits are formed through

reactions to the limitations imposed by that environment characterized by rigid hierarchal structures of power. These hierarchies affect the ability to develop those habits that act positively in propelling an individual or a collective through the geographies of realization. In order to negotiate the various terrains residing within the horizons of realization, habits become necessary in order to make sense of and negotiate realization by reducing the amount of effort needed to develop ways an individual or a collective can seek to access the means and resources found within the geographies of realization.

I stand before the students and ask them if what they have learned about the complexities and subtleties of power and oppression is liberating or a burden now that they can see for themselves examples of these complexities and subtleties in their lived experiences. Their hesitant and uncertain responses tell me that they haven't develop habits of hope. Habits of hope are, in relationship to hope, liberatory. Like Peggy MacIntosh's description of unpacking the invisible knapsack of white privilege, habits of hope, in this case, lead towards the disruption, even if momentarily, of hegemony. Uncertain of how to develop effective and habits of hope, the students seek shelter within their mere habits of silence.

Shades presents habits of hope as an active participant rather than a passive consensual being: "Habits prepare us to act, indicating modes of interaction that have worked in the past and so can be relied upon in the future. They signify those strands of past experience that have generated patterns of response which prepare the organism to act" (27). In this way habits of hope relate to time and how any movement forward travels through the past into the future.

In addition, the experiences constituting habits of hope never occur outside of our interactions with others and the environment. The interplay between habits of hope and our experiences takes into account those experiences, which are not solely individual but are

involved in our interactions with others. Thus, it is experience that shapes who we are and our relationship to others. As Shade states, we learn habits by modeling the behavior of others; our horizons of meaning are thus fueled by their experience as well as our own” (27). Experiences dissolve any possibilities that we are simply sovereign or purely autonomous subjects. Shade further observes, “Clearly, hopes are among the various ends to ideals we seek to realize. As such, they arise in particular situations and so meet specific needs. Realizing them requires drawing on social and individual habits already possessed, as well as reconstructing and developing others” (42). Experiences are inherent in the evolution of an individual or a collective’s acts of becoming. All experiences affect the present and the future in all sorts of significant ways. Experiences take place and even evolve in dialectical and dialogical relationships among individuals and collectives. We are influenced by the experiences of others and also influence the experiences of those we interact with. In this way experiences are communal in nature. Although communal in nature, experiences involve a certain amount of antagonism as well as a certain amount of harmony.

The differences between antagonism and harmony are often manifested in the relationship between power and experiences. To allow for experiences to effectively propel us through our involvement in realization, this dialectic provides us with the possibilities of developing a communal approach that acts to eliminate possible antagonistic elements and build towards a more harmonious relationship with the communal, as Shade comments, “Since hope is tied with habits, the seat of human agency, we bear great responsibility for the success of the life of hope” (10). Our responsibility is to the dialectic between others and ourselves. While being responsible for our own actions, we must always take into account how our actions affect those around us. The difficulties involved in accessing resources need to be confronted through a



combine effort of the individual and the collective.

Habits of hope are fundamental to any attempt to negotiate the terrains of realization. They develop through a collective utilization of the dialectics involved in any human endeavor. Avoiding waste and misdirection, they channel our energies toward involvement in an active, not passive, attempt to develop the means necessary to access the available resources. The notion of active or passive agency allows for the understanding of the ways in which habits of hope work to allow for greater access or reduced options within geographies of realization.

In this geography, agency is developed and then is acted upon. It is also in this space where hope's agency works upon us. Hope develops into two different and distinct agencies: passive or active. The later is characterized as an agency whereby "To hope is a state of being. It is an inner readiness, that of intense but not-yet-spent activeness" (Fromm 12). On the other hand, "Passive hope is antilife" (Huntschneker 17), its agency relegated to a slow and permanent death. The way an individual or a collective internalizes and then employs either agency combines the inner self, imagination, the external self, realization, and the resulting effect of the two, actualization. In its active state, each element needs to be vigorously attended to, constantly scrutinized, and open to critique. In its passive state, hope's agency becomes subverted and misleading. It requires little or no attention, resists scrutiny, and silences critiques. While the imagination always involves the active, the geographies of realization determine whether or not the activity embedded in the imagination remains active or is reduced to a passive acceptance of the unequal distribution of resources determining the ability to actualize the desired ends.

While active hope allows for growth and possibilities, "it is non-hope if it has the quality of passiveness, and 'waiting for'—until the hope becomes, in fact, a cover for resignation, a mere ideology" (Fromm 6)." This is not to say that passive hope is the same as hopelessness. It

is to say that passive hope ultimately leads towards hopelessness and the loss of any concrete realizations of the imagined future. The ability of passive hope to actualize the imagined future becomes subverted by its mistaken belief in its own misguided ideologies, which is the hegemonic produced normality. For instance, Fromm notes that “While passive waiting is a disguised form of hopelessness and impotence, there is another form of hopelessness and despair which takes the exactly opposite disguise—the disguise of phase making and adventurism, of disregard for reality, and of forcing what cannot be forced (8). Ideology, in its misguided forms, renders imagination impotent and leads to “the existence of people who waste their life by conducting an unconscious guerilla war against themselves, against those to whom they feel close, or against a world they consider a strange and hostile place” (Fromm 17). The future, as possibilities, is rendered invisible. Illusion replaces realization. The imagined and desired future becomes a creation of the hegemonic structures at work in the development of passive hope. The agency of passive hope is manipulated to serve the needs of the dominant collective. Hope becomes disconnected from the individual or the collective who otherwise need hope the most. And once the agency of hope becomes passive, so does the agency of the individual or the collective.

In addition, hope, in its active form, relates to a desired life not a desired object. As Fromm wonders, “Is it to hope if hope’s object is not a thing but a fuller life, a greater state of aliveness, a liberation from external boredom; or, to use a theological term, for salvation; or, a political term, for revolution? Indeed, this kind of expectation could be hope” (6). In this way hope cannot reside in an object but within the dynamics of living. Hope is no longer a static and often rigid noun but becomes a dynamic verb, an action that requires energy on the part of an individual or a collective in order for their hope to be actualized. For as Huntschneker tells us

*“Active hope is an inner mental force that triggers the human into action. It mobilizes an individual’s vast energies in order to overcome obstacles that block his or her way toward a chosen goal”* (16) (emphasis his). One cannot hope in an active sense without understanding and incorporating this key element. Active hope allows for the energies to coalesce into one dynamic force that actively seeks out the desired future.

An object is something seemingly concrete. The new car, the new television, or the new house addresses concrete and tangible material needs. Yet, these goods, in their materiality, are impermanent. Each has a distinct life expectancy. What was once new becomes old. The object hoped for is replaced by another object. The process of hope involved in the acquisition of a particular object remains epistemological because of the impermanence of any material object. Epistemological becomes not an act of becoming but an act of acquiring. In this act of the acquiring, the nature of the desired ends is controlled by the capitalist economy. This control serves to sever some from acquisition while allowing others to acquire an obscenely massive amount of objects. The process of hope becomes a process of commodification, and hope itself becomes a commodity. Further, this acquisition process is masked by the idea of meritocracy. Meritocracy is the buzzword for hope under capitalism. Its definition is another substitution for hope; this substitution acts as a lie and distorts the nature of hope. To hope for an object is to hope in vain. For the object never completely satisfies the hunger for something and results in an obtainable goal since the hunger controlled by a capitalist system is always about the increasing need for profit. And profit is never satisfied; it only seeks more profit. This never-ending quest for profit distorts hope because of the need to centralize and concentrate profit within fewer and fewer hands. The ways in which the means are employed to gain access to the resources are denied to those whose lives are daily acts of survival. For these exploited masses the object

hoped for is not necessarily a new car or any unnecessary material object; it becomes hope for life itself. Their hope seeks the act of becoming, not the act of acquiring. Freire states that “Indeed the interests of the oppressors lie in ‘changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation that oppresses them; for the more the oppressed can be led to adapt to that situation, the more easily they can be dominated” (Oppressed, 55). In the need for profit the object desired through the act of acquiring becomes the central focus of production. The oppressed accept their role in the production of profit; they give their consent to the myth of meritocracy in hopes of someday to gain a greater share of the profit, even, in far too many cases, it means the accepting the exploitation of another person or collective. To subvert this act of acquiring into the act of becoming, “The solution is not to ‘integrate’ them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become ‘beings for themselves’ (Oppressed, 55). In this way the oppressed find themselves in the act of becoming by attempting to end the structures of oppression that affect the majority of the world’s population. Life is that movement from the object seen as expendable to the subject seen as invaluable. It is inherently that act of becoming.

Freire describes what occurs within the individual or collective when either enters the terrains of passive or active hope: “Hope, however, does not consist in crossing one’s arms and waiting. As long as I fight, I am moved by hope; and if I fight with hope, then I can wait. As the encounter of women and men seeking to be more fully human, dialogue cannot be carried on in a climate of hopelessness (Oppressed, 72-73). Therefore, according to Freire, the dialogue needed to allow for active hope to incorporate the imagination, the actualization, and the realization of a desire future occurs only when arms are uncrossed. The defensive posture crossed arms initiate loses its potency and, in doing so, loses its control over the dialogue occurring among different individuals and collectives.

An example of what can occur when one uncrosses arms and enters into the dialogue that develops from this open posture can be seen in Hector Carbajal's call to his joto brothers to break their silence. In his essay, "Nacido en un Puente/Born on a Bridge," Carbajal reacts to the significance that *This Bridge Called My back: Radical Writings by Women of Color*, which, as he states, "is the locale of self-identification, self-discovery, and the inspiration for a new consciousness," and he believes that "this book speaks to anyone seeking liberation. As a Latino queer, I side with the women of this book in voicing anger, frustration, and activism. I side with anyone seeking the same" (51). With this introduction of his relationship to those seeking liberation, he locates himself within geographies of hope and discusses the beginning paths from where to maneuver around in these geographies: "First, we need to examine ourselves and develop a language. Then, we can return home and talk to our families" (52). In this way Carbajal not only addresses his joto brothers but all Chicanos. This examination of "ourselves" in order to develop a new language before returning home is the direction to a development of a good macho constructed beyond the colonially imposed construction of good machismo. In this way our paths towards geographies of hope must move away in order to return home. Hope becomes a crucial ingredient needed to sustain Chicanos as they venture away from the geographies of hopelessness found in their discussions about machismo. Hope is no longer an abstraction to be manipulated, but it develops its own materiality in such a way as to resist manipulation. In the uncrossing of one's arms, hope can only be an ingredient if and only when the uncrossing of arms is done in order to stretch out towards, and connect with, other arms. The uncrossing of arms is not done in order to flail them about wildly through the air, nor is it done to push others down, nor is it meant to grab on to old oppressive patterns. The uncrossing of arms is done to move beyond imposed/imposing silence to reach out because, as Carbajal states,

“when we touch and run through one another, we are saved and born on and through bridges”  
(53).

The imagination is always already an active involvement. Even when the imagination is distorted and controlled through hegemony, there is still the active: an active relating to Fromm’s busyness; nonetheless, it is still active. To imagine is to become active. The passive mind does not imagine; it only involves subordination, as when the mind and the body are engaged in routine habits and activities. And such habits and activities become even natural, no longer involve imagination. As with Freire’s “Banking Concept of Education” the mind is controlled and manipulated to accept regurgitation as normal<sup>2</sup>. Regurgitation is passive because there is no engagement with imagination. The mind and the body become mechanized forms of existence and place themselves on that assembly line constructed by and through hegemony. Passivity is our consent.

The imagined ends, as Shade points out, are a culmination rather than an absolute finalization; they involve elements of the active yet those active elements keep changing because of the achievement of an actualized materiality. In one sense there is this need to rest, and on the other hand, the energy once concentrated to the actualization of an end is re-channeled towards the actualization of another end. The active, then, assumes a period of rest in order to re-energize the mind and the soul or moves towards other priorities. In either case, the active involved in the achievement of one set of ends changes its make-up and focus. The active I speak of, in the realization phase, is the active that occurs before the actualization phase, and is concentrated on the achievement of the desired ends but has not moved towards re-energizing or becomes focused on another set of ends.

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<sup>2</sup> For more on this idea, look into chapter two in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

The dynamics of active and passive agencies, within geographies of realization and pertaining to machismo, can be seen through the constructions of honor. Honor is often the key determining factor when it comes to determining how the active/passive paradigms negotiate, through the individual or the collective, the various topographies of machismo. The construction of honor maintains a key actualization of a Chicano's hope for status within the collective. Personal, as opposed to that granted by the community, honor, for Chicanos, sustains an active approach to the discovery of the means and resources needed to actualize a position of honor within the community. The position and status of honor reside within the public spaces and are bestowed upon an individual through a collective voice delivered by men while also supported by women, often through Chicanas' acceptance obtained by patriarchal hegemonic consent.

In their attempts to actualize the status found in honor, Chicanos find themselves adhering to *hombrote* as described by Rudolfo Anaya. In his essay, "'I'm the King:' The Macho Image" Anaya provides the ways in which *hombrote* relates to the active involvement needed to achieve the status assigned to what is honorable:

In the villages and barrios of New Mexico when I was growing up, being manly (*hombrote*) meant having a sense of honor. The intangible of the macho image is that sense of honor. A man must be honorable, for himself and for his family. There is honor on the family name. *Hombrote* also means providing for the family. Men of honor were able to work with the other men in communal enterprises. They took care of the politics of the village, law and order, the church, the *acequia*, and the old people (The Macho King 67).

Anaya's definition of honor maintains traditional roles within the family such as the ways women have been relegated to the private, or as Sonia Saldívar-Hull describes it, as captive,

spaces within the home while the man maintains the dominant access to the public arena. While this intangible is located within contextual ambiguities of social constructions, the material location of *hombrote* remains within Anaya's communal enterprises. The men of Anaya's community find themselves honorable when, and seemingly only when, the activity needed in any communal enterprise positions men outside of the domestic spaces. Honor becomes what hope intends to actualize; yet this actualization occurs in the public domains, which are the domains of the men in Anaya's village.

The passive found in men pertains to the ways in which they often allow the woman or women of the house to be seen as having an active involvement in the construction and control of the family within the home. This passivity of men acts to mask the nature of power inside and outside of the home. It acts to present the allusion of power's contextuality whereby women are seen as having power similar to men's because there is little discussion by Chicanos of the accesses to power involved in either the public or private domains. It also shows that the influential power developed in the public spaces doesn't end at the front door; power seeps through the cracks to disguise. The honorable man exhibits the qualities needed to have honor bestowed upon him by traversing the dynamics involved in the active/public and passive/private regimens involved in habits of hope.

Gloria Anzaldúa, in *La Frontera*, also raises this issue of honor and devotion to family when she states that to her "The modern meaning of the word 'machismo,' as well as the concept, is actually an Anglo invention. For men like my father, being 'macho' meant being strong enough to protect and support my mother and us, yet being able to show love. Today's macho has doubts about his ability to feed and protect his family" (83). Here she contributes to Anaya's ideas of honor by locating honor within the dynamics of protector and supporter. In



doing so she aligns herself with Anaya to provide a counter construction of machismo vis-à-vis Anglo constructions. The man is set up as protector, supporter and, more importantly, active participant, even while submitting to the power of Anglo patriarchy.

This honor can be seen as the way false hope becomes the sign for a truer form of hope with Anzaldúa's continued description of her father:

My Father insisted we go to school. He wanted me to go to college. Nobody else did. They didn't even know what college was, but my father was different—probably because of this aristocracy (it's really weird, very poor aristocracy but aristocracy anyway) on my father's side and a sense of superiority, that the Anzaldúas were always different. (La Frontera 89)

Thus, the active involvement of honor construct the attributes found in the positive aspects of machismo within family structures. The Anzaldúas' difference means little within the isolation of the family unless it becomes public through Anzaldúa's status as an educated sub-altern. In order to actualize honor, Anzaldúa's father promotes division between the family and the community and adheres to Ana Castillo's thoughts on the subject: "Machismo has divided society in half. It divides the world into the haves and the have-nots, those with material power and those rendered powerless" (82). The family now aligns with honor through the law of the father. The active allows for the father to maintain an honorable status over all others. He transmits this division to his family by connecting the "passive" influence over the meaning of honor and the active involvement in the actualization of honor in the public domains. In order to feel as though he has the ability to be Anaya and Anzaldúa's honorable man, he must not only take the active perceived as passive involvement in the support and protection of the family and the public spaces but he must also call into question the construction and control over the public

domains. This negotiation between public and private demonstrates his support of family by encouraging Anzaldúa's education but also the family's support of his honor through his encouragement and her achievement of her educational goals.

The performative structure of the discourse about honor represents an attempt to connect to the essence of machismo found in the type of men described by Anaya and Anzaldúa. The active performative within their writings explores alternative means and resources needed to actualize a counter machismo. They recover this essence of the honorable Chicano by providing a counter-narrative to Anglo descriptions of machismo. While they assume an active involvement in the recovery process, the two often mistake their alternative for what is the colonial traditional. The active performative aspect of the narratives should not only contain the means and resources invaluable in actualizing the recovery, as Anaya and Anzaldúa provide, but also contain a critical approach that attempts to disrupt and transform historical materiality.

For Anzaldúa's father and Anaya's men of the community, the hope offered-up in the actualization of honor distorts the way honor subverts the truer meaning of hope thereby presenting a form of distorted hope by constructing power relationships that act against the good of the family and the community:

In one sense, power is the power to have control over space, to occupy it and guarantee that hegemonic ideas about that space coincides with those which maintain power's authority.... In another sense, power can be mobilized through the reterritorialisation—the resymbolisation— of space, and this can be as oppressive as it can be subversive (Pile 30).

The honor presented by both Anaya and Anzaldúa can be seen in terms of how it functions as a form of hope for change, acts as subversive to Anglo patriarchy, yet inhibits hope's influence to

create the changes needed in the family structure. Their sense of honor suggests the displacement of oppressive power inherent in Chicano patriarchy. The honorable man uses the power associated with honor for the good of the family or community not for domination.

To discover how honor can distort the presentation of communal power, it seems important to explore how honor determines the ways in which social structures are constructed, by whom, and for what reasons. Honor invests itself into a series of ideologies designed to predetermine a person or collective's location or locations within social structures. Most importantly, honor is relegated to the public transmission of power in the form of the group's recognition of one's adherence to the attributes associated with honor.

Leonard Harris provides a general definition of honor from where to begin mapping its relationship to geographies of hope. Harris defines honor around several key elements: attitudes towards a person, the public spaces honor resides within, the attributes associated with honor, and the transmission of the attitudes from one party to another. For Harris, honor is

A form of reverence, esteem, exhausted regard, and deference an individual receives from others. Honor is accorded individuals that represent 'certain archetypal patterns of behavior.' Honor is therefore a social good. That is, honor is a good that individuals can receive from others if they represent envious traits and behaviors (275).

These elements of honor define the ways in which a person or collective interacts with others as well as with the institutions that develop the social rewards associated with honorable acts or accomplishments. Yet, "Persons can be honored if they have no accomplishments, such as a person of noble birth, and honor can be bestowed on epic heroes as well as the dead" (Harris 276). In either case, honor maintains the existence of a material condition that directly affects the

integration of people into society.

The ways honor is associated with an individual whose “patterns of behavior,” that develop particular habits of hope, reflect the ways in which the attributes of honor are internalized by an individual, as Harris states, “Honor is a good often accorded because of virtues and meritorious traits are assumed to be embodied by an agent. Honor reflects discrete and explicit social rankings and boundaries between agents” (276). Thus honor, in one sense, adheres to Anaya’s and Anzaldúa’s descriptions of honor as a positive that acts as a social good in order to negate those elements deemed socially bad. In this way honor connects to elements of hope, except for the ways honor is bestowed upon a person simply because of birthright. Honor, in this limited sense, adheres to hope in its active form. Honor allows for the distinctions between hope and distorted hope to be publicly displayed. Honor draws upon the imagination of the person(s) involved in accordance with socially defined imaginative statuses. Yet, it is the ways in which honor “reflects discrete and explicit social rankings and boundaries between agents” that deviates honor from geographies of hope.

Ramón Gutiérrez, in his book *When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away*, describes a different picture of honor and calls into question the ways honor relegates individuals or collectives to concepts of active and passive hope. Gutiérrez, in his exploration of honor in Colonial New Mexico, breaks down honor into the various elements that make up the whole. From his work, we see honor developed from its Iberian roots to the colonial structures of New Mexico. What is important for this discussion about Gutiérrez’s work is its relationship to Anaya’s in that both locate their ideas of honor within the northern frontier of Mexico, in particular New Mexico. Thus, Gutiérrez provides a way to demonstrate the way honor was constructed in the region, which Anaya locates his discussion within.

Gutiérrez states that in Colonial New Mexico “Honor was a complex measure of social status based on one’s religion, ethnicity, race, occupation, ancestry, and authority over land” (206). The complex measures developed by Spaniards were constructed in ways that separated good machismo from bad machismo. Gutiérrez continues to show that “Spaniards reveled in their honor only because they lived among genizaros who were dishonored by their enslavement, and among the Pueblo Indians who had been vanquished in defeat” (206). The result for Gutiérrez was that “much of what it meant to honorable was a projection of what it meant to be free, landholding citizen of white legitimate ancestry, and by contrast what it meant not to be a slave, an outcast, or an Indian” (206). Honor becomes centralized within the power of the elite classes. Instead of the liberation suggested in some definitions, honor, in fact, develops along lines of oppression.

Submission to power becomes a key element in the division between definitions of honorable and dishonorable. When used effectively, submission positions individuals and their relationship to honor along vertical or horizontal lines within society. Gutiérrez effectively argues, “Honor ultimately depended on brute force” (177). Stemming from the Reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, honor is bestowed on an individual through victory in battle. Honor becomes associated with violence in the name of the Crown and the Church. As has been proven by scholars, the Spaniards who conquered and colonized Meso-America brought with them the lessons learned during the Reconquest.

Honors, as well as the concept of honor as a moral code, were elements of a feudal patriarchal ideology employed by the state to bolster its own power, to legitimate the rewards it granted persons for service to the monarchy, and to sanctify the reality of unequal power relationships in society. Conquest,

domination, and protection were marks of human excellence; they were qualities that maintained the patrimony and perpetrated an honored image of the self over time. (226)

The violence inherent in the Spanish conquest and colonization of Meso-America determined the development of honor. Honor limited its relationship to the social good for the elite, perhaps it always did. As Gutiérrez indicates, “The honor of the men so ennobled, particularly after the Reconquest, was based on their power and might, on their lands and wealth, on their ancestry and gentle births, on their religion and Christian names, and on their personal elegance and pomp” (178). Honor justified the exploitation of those deemed inherently dishonorable. Honor, therefore, acted as a series of ideologies designed to resist or co-opt any attempts to change the reality of oppression: “Such honor, socially validated as fame and glory, existed in Spanish New Mexican society only because of the presence of Indians who were dishonored and infamous” (178). Honor was defined and granted by and through someone in power and bestowed upon someone who supports the structures of oppression not to those acting to subvert those structures.

The use of force in the construction of honor located individuals along vertical or horizontal social lines. In one sense honor connection to status creates a vertical social construction:

In the Spanish body politic, first of all was the honor of God. The honor of the king was next, for his sanction to temporal power was divinely imbued. The honor of the corporate Church followed, then that of religious orders, the aristocracy, the landed peasantry, on down the line to those persons who had no honor, Indians and *genazaro* (Gutiérrez 178).

This hierarchy provided the foundation of social relations in Colonial New Mexico. Honor, whether granted to a person because of a birthright or achieved through actions that supported the oppression needed by the elites to maintain their status and power, denied the oppressed access to honor.

On a different level, honor's connection to virtue developed along a horizontal terrain, as Guitiérrez argues, "Honor-virtue divided society horizontally by status groups, and within each group it determined the pecking order of persons in the status hierarchy according to reputation, that is, their reproduction of ideals of proper social conduct" (208). This horizontal terrain develops a sense of competition among the members within each group, no matter their positions along the vertical scale, to connect themselves to governing bodies constructing Harris' elements of honor.

These vertical and horizontal geographies that position one in relation to the conquest and colonization influence the dynamics of the good machismo/bad machismo binary. Though the overt and physical violence is less apparent today, honor is only good because of its relationship to bad. Only the dishonorable man exercises oppressive power in order to displace the honorable man. The honorable man employs power that coincides with the attributes associated with what is honorable. His use of the oppressive nature of power is disguised because of its connection to the ideologies, constructed by and for the dominant elite, which determine what is public good.

In this construction of honor and dishonor, hope is associated with honor while hopelessness remains within dishonor. Yet, because of the way honor is relegated to the public space, the connection of honor to geographies of hope remains incomplete. It is in the public spaces where hope becomes actualized. Honor, as Guitiérrez's demonstrates, resides within the public and, therefore, male domain.

Honor-virtue prescribed gender-specific rules of proper social comportment.

Honor (honor) was strictly a male attribute while shame (vergüenza) was intrinsic to females. Infractions of behavioral norms by males were dishonoring, in females they were a sign of shamelessness. The shamelessness of a woman of a female reflected on the male head of household and dishonored him and the family as a group. Honor and shame were synonymous at certain levels of definition. Men were honorable if they esteemed honesty and loyalty and were concern for their reputation and that of their family. Women embodied the sentiment of shame and were considered honorable if they cherished these same values.” (209)

Honor and hope are intimately connected in this sense because both reside within the public spaces. In Anaya’s description, the men of his community controlled the public spaces and institutions and, because of this, retained their exclusive relationship with honor and active forms of hope.

Chicanas' relegation to the private and domestic spaces denied them but also contributed to their own subordination as brown men’s access to male conceptions of honor. Chicanos' definitions of honor developed from an ideology that supported “the belief that God’s earthy and natural design made men dominant over women and that therefore females should submit to male authority” (Gutiérrez 226). As Gutiérrez demonstrates, Chicanas are dislocated from honor at the same time they are located in shame. This type of (dis)location not only positions Chicanas within shame and dishonor and locates them, because of the inherent status of their (dis)locations, outside of the geographies of active hope, not necessarily within realms of hopelessness but not fully within terrains of hope. Hope in its active form manifests itself in the public spaces in the same way honor is manifested in the public spaces. Chicanas’ positioning



within the private and domestic space and within shame prohibits them from engaging in the rituals that determine the honorable or dishonorable in the ways Chicanos have become accustomed to.

Chicanos control over the public spaces often occurs without a proclamation. Hegemony works in a way that its control works most effectively through its silence. It is the silence, like the silence of air, which permeates society. The common sense or natural state hegemony relies upon to maintain its domination often occurs in the silent. To break their silence, Chicanos expose their dominance, as is seen in the critiques about the Movimiento.

Silence protects as well as inhibits.

The “cult of silence” may inhibit the writers/teachers ability to open up to their emotions, but it also protects their power and defines the barriers to the development of the means necessary to access available resources. Thus, silence becomes the ideology of culture unspoken, becomes a naturalized given. Anzaldúa explains this naturalized given when she states that “Culture forms our beliefs. We perceive the version of reality that it communicates” (La Frontera 16). But what is the reality that has been communicated? According to Althusser, the reality the Chicanos see within the ideological constructions of a good and bad machismo is “not the system of real relations, but the imaginary relations of those individuals to the real relations in which they live” (52). This is the dilemma of the writer who is involved with *Muy Macho*: the influence of ideology is such that it is difficult to know when the lie ends and the truth begin and how means and resources are developed. As silence is broken, then, there must be a way of determining the ending/beginning of the ideology that constructs Chicanos and Latinos' understanding of machismo.

In addition, silence also informs the ways machismo is transmitted. In her investigation

of the ways culture is constructed Anzaldúa explains how “Dominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through culture. Culture is made by those in power—men. Males make the rules and laws; women transmit them” (La Frontera 16). Our assurance in our construction of those laws that go unchallenged and unquestioned formulates parts of the foundations of and for our silence. As long as we allow women to be the transmitters of culture and as long as the ideologies transmitted maintain our power, then, we will use silence as a protective cloak that we wrap around ourselves to protect us from understanding that silence maintains a symbiotic relationship with ideology. One cannot exist without the other.

These influences of the “cult of silence,” as protector and inhibitor, raise questions of the processes undertaken by Latinos and Chicanos as they seek to abolish the “cult” by giving form to the “cult.” In giving form to silence we need to ask ourselves if men, such as the writers and myself, are seeking a process whereby we can employ what Sonia Saldívar-Hull explains as “Refusing the O”? For Saldívar-Hull refusing the O meant “It was time to go beyond the roles of dutiful daughter, sister, and wife, the ‘mujer sin nombre’ of the past” (29). She draws on the writings of various Chicanas, to make clear that to her refusing the O means refusing the subordinate roles dictated by men and the Catholic Church in order to break down the walls preventing Chicanas from constructing their own geographies of hope. Refusing the O is “a move that exploded the stereotype of the passively religious Chicana advocated both by Anglo-American culture and by the domineering Chicano men who profit from having passive women around them to promote their own personal agendas” (31). By refusing the O and embracing the A, she advocates for inclusion of social dynamics, such as gender and sexuality, into the discussion about the complexities surrounding Chicanas and Chicanos in order for Chicanos to

transcend the borders that keep us from forming coalitions with Chicanas. She opens up new and creative means to allow access to new and creative resources.

Chicanos need to address what it means to refuse the O. Embracing the O maintains our hegemony that continues to build walls around geographies of hope and limit Chicanas' ability to develop the means particular to them and dismantle those resources developed by and for Chicanos. It prevents Chicanos from beginning a reclamation process where, as Luis J. Rodríguez's suggests, "The issue... is not to assimilate, but to get rooted again, to honor our ancestors, our rituals, our men and women. To get to know our real names. Our real languages. To celebrate our diverse histories, stories, tongues, faces, and songs" (197). In order to activate this process Chicanos must incorporate a critical approach that, as its premise, de-invests us of our male power and uncovers those aspects of our power hidden within the cult of silence. Mapping the geographies of realization demands the infusion of a critical approach in order to locate those places where we can celebrate our diverse histories. However, the writers in *Muy Macho*, through their involvement in the performative structure(s) of the text, often offer up mistaken forms of hope because of their inability to approach the hope that lies within the subversion of the cult of silence through a critical lens.

Henry Giroux explores this critical nature of hope in his border pedagogy concept. Giroux defines his idea of "border pedagogy" as pedagogy that

presupposes not merely an acknowledgment of the shifting borders that both undermine and reterritorialize dominant configurations of power and knowledge. It also links the notion of pedagogy with the creation of a society in which there is available a multiplicity of democratic practices, values, and social relations for students to take up within different learning situations." (134)

For hope to be present in their unveiling of the “cult of silence,” the writers needed to address the multiple ways silence acts upon a person. By limiting their discussion to how the silence inhibits them from exposing their feelings and entering into a state of vulnerability as well as not addressing the ways they have benefited from their silence, they reduce the terrains that geographies of realization’s relationship to hope can reside within.

## **GEOGRAPHIES OF ACTUALIZATION:**

I now enter into my next geography of hope—actualization. Actualization becomes the moment when what had been imagined cultivates into something material and has utilized the means and resources effectively to achieve what was hoped for. Actualization does not inherently mean an end, in the sense that the end is static, but more so, a moment. This moment occurs when what is imagined becomes an actual aspect of our lives. Once this moment passes, and, within the moment, there's no distinct measurement of time, hope leads into alternative horizons or diverts energy towards additional imagined futures. There is no true permanent end to what is hoped for. Anything hoped for always maintains an impermanent relationship to actualization. In the act of becoming, active agency changes through various times and various and contextual accesses to power. Or if what is hoped for involves something material and develops within the act of acquiring, the material item remains impermanent. Whatever material item a person acquires has a finite life span. Ultimately the material item outlives its usefulness, its value, or its importance. Therefore, whether hope is involved in the act of acquiring or the act of becoming, impermanence resides within each desired end. In this way, actualization maintains its relationship to a moment: even if that moment remains in the forefront of the act of becoming, whether it be as quick as a flash of light or exists for an extended period of time; even if the moments relate to the material object(s), and their limited life span, desired for with the act of acquiring.

As I turn once again to Patrick Shade's pragmatic theory on hope, it is important to, first, define a difference between Shade's rhetorical strategy and mine. Shade employs realization as serving a dual role. It is at once a realization of the means necessary to achieve the realization of a particular end, as he does in his means-ends continuum. I locate realization to its own

geography and employ actualization within its own separate yet not separated geography. For me, actualization has a greater materiality than does realization. Actualization speaks to something tangible in ways realization does not. While realization maintains a sense of ambiguity stemming from the subjectivity of the individual or the collective that relates to the moments of actualization, actualization, while not completely removed from ambiguity, suggests the achievement of something material, something tangible, something we can touch, feel, or sense.

Shade feels that ends are always in relation to the means. Ends themselves don't necessarily entail termination because, as Shade states, "An end does not simply follow its antecedents in the series; it completes or fulfills what proceeds it. Insofar as what has preceded is constitutive of or contributes to the realization of that end, it functions as a means to that end. As such, the end is not the termination of a process but its culmination" (15). In this way, ends do not exist merely as an end to the processes involved as an individual or collective traverse the geographies of hope, but, also, ends intertwine themselves with the complexities involved in any act of becoming or act of acquiring. Culmination, therefore, only speaks to a moment in the geographies of actualization not the permanent static conclusion of the moment. Ends maintain a sense of fluidity within the material while always influencing that materiality. Shade explains this dynamic: "To say an end is *only* an end, never a means, indicates *not* that it has *special* value, but rather that it has *limited* value in the wider context of life. Though no end is final, some ends command our attention in virtue of their expansiveness as are valued more than proximate, limited ends" (17) (emphasis his). Ends reside within multiple locations and actualization of any end stems from the multiple locations within power.

Power influences actualization by the ways in which it grants access to particular ends-in-

view by granting certain unearned advantages for the person associated with power. As Allen G. Johnson states, “unearned advantages give dominant groups a competitive edge they are reluctant to acknowledge, much less give up” (25). Access to the ways power creates unearned advantages provide an individual or collective with a certain amount of control over what ends-in-view are legitimated and as such are deemed in need of protection. Power transcends the momentary nature of actualization by remaining a permanent force in the actualization processes. Power attempts, though never entirely effective, to develop a solid foundation from where any attempts at actualization must traverse the foundation of power. Ends-in-view are located within the foundations of power and are subverted only if Chicanos move beyond our reluctance to acknowledge our patriarchal power and begin, through the creation of our own long list of venditos, to de-invest ourselves of our unearned advantages.

The unearned advantages Johnson speaks to provide access to a certain amount of privilege for Chicanos. While white patriarchy maintains a dominant position in US society and, as such, is afforded predetermined unearned advantages. These unearned advantages grant privileges to white males in ways Chicanos are often excluded from, there are still, at least within the Chicana/o collective, access to unearned advantages and the resulting privileges. As Johnson states,

Privilege generally allows people to assume a certain level of acceptance, inclusion, and respect in the world, to operate within a relatively wide comfort zone. Privilege increases the odds of having things your own way, of being able to set the agenda in a social situation and determine the rules and standards and how they’re applied. Privilege grants the cultural authority to make judgments about others and make those judgments stick. It allows people to define reality and to have prevailing definitions of reality fit their

experience. Privilege means being able to decide who gets taken seriously, who receives attention, who is accountable to whom and for what. And it grants a presumption of superiority and social permission to act on that presumption without having to worry about being challenge (33-34).

Johnson provides a succinct explanation of the various ways in which ends-in-view are located, constructed, and dispensed. Ends-in-view become conditional depending on the access to privilege the individual or collective is afforded. It provides a view of the multiple contextualities and multilayered structures of power that demonstrates the impossibility of positioning ends-in-view outside of power arrangements.

This momentary impermanence of actualization connects with the ends-in-view dialectical nature of actualization and allows Chicanos to construct alternative mapping processes in their discussions on machismo. Actualization lies not in assenting upwards towards those horizons constructed through patriarchal hegemony where the horizon acts as a barrier to the geographies Chicanas reside within. Actualization lies in locating, from within the centers, the cracks in hegemony's dominance, confronting the silence that protects patriarchal power and disguises the cracks, and moving through the confrontation in order to begin negotiating those horizons arising from within the margins. Shade states that "Ends-in-view... function as principles of selection relative to which things become means, what does not promote realization of the end is not a means and so is not selected" (15). The actualization of the end includes the chosen means employed to connect to the moments each actualization occurs. Both means and ends are contextual in nature. They exist or become visible to the individual or collective through the disruption of hegemonic controls. Hegemony constructs commonsense means and ends to fit its purposes. Patriarchy then employs these commonsense means and ends to acquire



and maintain dominance through its access to unearned advantages and privileges.

In addition, Shade explains the function of ends-in-view. The dialectical nature of actualization develops through certain functions controlled by power. Shade states that “Ends-in-view do not function in activity simply as ends, they also function as means to the end that is fact realized. Consequently, ends-in-view are functionally means as well as ends” (15). The functionality of ends-in-view adheres to the functionality of hegemonic structures. The conflict arises from those ends-in-view developed by and for hegemony and those ends-in-view developed to produce a counter-hegemonic action. The ends-in-view developed by and for hegemony locates the individual or collective in a passive agency as demonstrated by our consent to only those ends-in-view deemed appropriate by those in control over the production of knowledge. The (ab)use of power seeks to control the nature of the ends-in-view and as such deflect Chicanos from the ends-in-view constructed by Chicanas. By adhering to patriarchal divisions between good and bad machismo, by neglecting the connection between masculinity and patriarchy, and by forsaking the possibilities of alternative ends-in-view, Chicanos can never find a common space to begin construction of new and creative futures along side Chicanas.

To map the geographies of actualization within the construction of machismo, I explore the geography of silence as enabler. As mentioned earlier, silence resides in the geography of inhibitor and the geography of protector. Silence not only acts as inhibitor or protector but also as enabler. Silence becomes a strategic devise for Chicanos to incorporate into the process of mapping the geographies of machismo. Silence as enabler acts as a means to the ends-in-view that enables Chicanos to locate themselves within those spaces where the act of listening is positioned within libratory domains. Freire states in his book, *Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach*, that “Listening to all that comes to us, regardless of their

intellectual level, is a human duty and reveals an identification with democracy and not with elitism” (39). Silence becomes an ally in mapping the geographies of hope by enabling Chicanos to listen to the voices produced from the institutional spaces and provides possibilities of negotiating the conflicting voices amidst the inner and outer terrains of a Chicano’s existence. Silence as enabler allows for the possibilities of new ways to develop the means and resources available that leads towards the actualization of new and creative futures.

## **LISTENING TO THE FEMININE INSIDE:**

Anaya recognizes silence's ability to form a connection to listening, which will enable Chicanos to produce a libratory mapping process. Anaya addresses two ways silence can act as enabler in his call to listen to the feminine within the man and next, his call to listen to Chicanas feminist thought.

His call to Chicanos moves from the external voices to an internal voice: "The old dictates of the fathers have to be transformed to create a new macho, and for that we need to listen to the feminine sensibility. To listen within" (73). By listening within, Chicanos redirect the mapping process by distributing the focus of emancipation from the oppressive hegemonic structures Chicanos confront and/or maintain in the public spaces as well as the ways in which they have internalized patriarchal hegemonies. In doing so they attempt to incorporate forms of resistance that confront the traditions dictated by our fathers and grandfathers in order to build alliances with our Chicana mothers, sisters, daughters, and aunts.

Anaya's call to listen to the feminine inside provides possibilities of envisioning new ways through which Chicanos can locate themselves within active elements of hope. In this silence, derive from the act of listening, Chicanos allow for possibilities outside of hegemonic constructions of good and bad machismo. Movement becomes active as Chicanos seek-out voices laid buried by centuries of machismo. No longer willing to sit passively by, Chicanos move to meet Chicanas in those spaces where a critical dialogue about the ideological and material constraints inhibiting a stronger connection among Chicanas and Chicanos.

Silence's relationship to listening positions the departure point located by Anzaldúa whereby the explorations beyond the imposition of machismo towards the geographies of hope begin:

The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in the outer terrains. Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the 'real' world unless it first happens in the images in our heads (La Frontera, 87).

Thus, Anaya and Anzaldúa call for a re-mapping of the outer social spaces to include geographies of hope. Their new and imaginative futures begin only when a connection between the inner self and the material conditions existing in the outer terrains remains constant and forms a dialectic through which individual subjectivity and social materiality combine to create possibilities that neither is able to envision on their own.

Pile provides a way to understand the importance of Anzaldúa's departure point: "Resistance, then, cannot simply address itself to changing external physical space, but must also engage the colonized spaces of people's inner worlds.... Indeed, it could be argued that the production of 'inner spaces' marks out the real break point of political struggle...maybe" (17). Pile makes the connection between the acts of listening inside to an act of resistance. Our history of colonization worked upon our imagination until we felt that we had none left, whether by theft, violence, co-optation, marginalization etc., colonization worked to disconnect ourselves from our imagination in order to reconnect to a colonial imposed imagination. However, It is Pile's "maybe" that demonstrates the difficulty Chicanos face when attempting to listen to their inner terrains. A colonialized imagination distorts the creativity needed to approach Chicanas' voices without demeaning and devaluing what they have to say in order to devour their creativity in hopes that theirs would supplant ours.

Anaya's call positions his process within machismo's geographies of domination by maintaining a separatist structure in which the feminine and the masculine reside within different

and opposing geographies— masculinity on the surface and femininity buried deep inside. In doing so he distorts the mapping of geographies of hope by distorting the feminine principle.

Ana Castillo explains the distorted feminine Anaya actually hears:

The feminine principle is not the opposite of machismo. The ‘feminine’ principle may be generally termed as the *absence* of machismo—all the qualities that have been negated, denied, denigrated, and made to be essentially valueless by our society. Machismo has served to distort our perceptions of humanity, which includes the feminine. (82)

To listen to the feminine inside requires recognition of machismo in ways that Chicanos have yet to take complete ownership to the power associated in how they come to know machismo.

Stephan Heath agrees with Castillo by stating “Perhaps it is almost that ‘feminine’ and ‘femininity’ should be scrapped, their use abandoned; they come too loaded with the image, the construction, the monolithic male definition of the qualities’ of women-woman. But not ‘masculine’ and ‘masculinity.’ Which *can* be used each time to name the elements of a system that assures male domination (15).” If the feminine, as Castillo effectively argues, is not the opposite but the absence of machismo, then Anaya’s call to listen to the feminine, at this point, oversimplifies the ways in which machismo dominates the construction of the feminine within Chicanos. The elimination of the masculine, as Anaya demonstrates, is a daunting proposition. Yet, the ability of silence, as enabler, provides a way for Chicanos to employ listening as a device whereby they can begin to attempt the construction of a mapping process that employs as its foundation a masculine principle that eliminates the ability to recenter the Latin phallus.

Until Chicanos realize the conflicts involved when attempting to listen to the feminine inside that “For a man the negotiation is blocked, doubly contradictory: his experience is her

oppression, and at the end of whatever negotiation he might make he can only always also confront the fact that feminism starts from there (Heath 2),” the ability to listen to the feminine inside or to the voices of Chicanas is as distant as Sandra Cisneros’ balloon at the end of her short story “Eleven”: “far way like a runaway balloon, like a tiny *o* in the sky, so tiny-tiny you have to close your eyes to see it”(9) (emphasis hers).

The site of contestation lies within us. In order to listen to the feminine inside we must also seek that contestation site that lies within the slash. The slash becomes the open wound we fear to inhabit. The further entrenched we become in either territories of good or bad machismo the more difficult it becomes to attempt a healing process. The wound/slash festers into a form of geography foreign to our senses and capabilities that we may become unable to negotiate the terrains that might lead us towards the feminine inside.

It speaks to the issue of vulnerability. In my discussions with Chicana artist Cecilia Alvarez, she mentions the need to move into the vulnerable state. In this state she believes is when foundational and transformative change occurs. She redefines vulnerability from something weak and passive to actually the most powerful state we can reside within. Alvarez’ reconfiguration of vulnerability involves two primary elements. The first is imposed on a person and connects to weakness; the second is chosen by a person and connects to strength. The first element employs power in order to maintain dominance, materially and ideologically, over the colonized communities; the second attempts to subvert power by redefining power from one of domination to one of cooperation. It is the fear of the vulnerable associated with the feminine that inhibits Chicanos from listening to the feminine inside.

Both good and bad machismo struggle with vulnerability. For the “bad” macho, vulnerability signifies weakness because of the need for the bad macho to maintain a sense of

dominance over women, society and each other. For the “good” macho, vulnerability signifies a lack of honor. Honor, historically, has meant achieving the absence of vulnerability because of honor’s relationship to achieving dominance through military or social dominance. The weakness associated with vulnerability invades all the discussions on good machismo and honor. Through attributes of honor are often similar to feminine attributes honor displays a sense of courage not found in the feminine attributes. The courage needed to be granted honor within the public spaces is seen as a strength of character, yet in Alvarez’ this courage found in aspects of honor can be considered a weakness because this type courage prevents Chicanos from entering their vulnerable state.

Vulnerability is more than just emotional; it is also intellectual by allowing for new ideas to find those cracks in hegemony to view new ideas in such a way as to allow for the unlearning of old ideas. Our vulnerable state allows us to lower our defenses in a way that openings are created whereby those voices deriving from the margins can not only be heard but can be understood. Those who speak from the margins are vulnerable to attack from the defenses we constructed through our self-investment in the hegemonic power. In order to begin to listen effectively to these voices Chicanos need to allow for similar vulnerabilities. We must remain open to attack, be able to accept criticism, and be willing to not just accept movement towards geographies of hope but to expect movement towards those geographies.

When Anaya suggests that Chicanos listen to the feminine inside, he fails to realize that in order to listen to a voice that has historically been denied expression, the recognition of the damage done to that voice needs to be addressed. To do otherwise is to seek a mapping process that begins with denial, lacks accountability, and devalues Anzaldúa’s departure point. With their acknowledgment of the damage done, Chicanos accept the condition that “To assess the

damage is a dangerous act” (Moraga 57). To employ silence, as enabler, within the act of listening is dangerous because of the way in which what is heard disrupts the hegemonies that have historically empowered the Chicano and holds *all* Chicanos accountable. Castillo adds that it is not only dangerous to assess the damage done, but “It is of utmost importance to understand the damage that machismo has done and continues to do to humankind in the name of tradition and in the name of much that we hold sacred through institutionalized religion” (Castillo 82). Ignoring the damage machismo has inflicted upon people denies the ways in which that damage has benefited Chicanos, disguises the extent of that damage, and maintains the dictates of our fathers. Castillo eloquently expresses the types of damage done and the responses to that damage:

When we profess a vision of a world where a woman is not raped somewhere in the United States every three minutes, where one of every three female children do *not* experience sexual molestation, where the Mexican female is *not* the lowest paid worker in the United States—we are not male bashing or hating whites because overall they live a healthier life than we do, we are trying to change the facts of *our* conditions (225).

Thus, we see how Anaya’s feminine is distorted because of a lack of accountability. His presentation of the feminine as something unaffected by machismo denies his implication in the damage done. If Chicanos do not assess the damage done in the name of their phallic, then what they hear is a distorted feminine—distorted because of the inability for Chicanos to move beyond the Latin phallus towards a greater understanding of the material conditions that affect the feminine voice.

Consequently, Chicanos need to also address other inhibitors, such as fear; in their



attempts to map their inner terrains, and assess the damage machismo has caused in order to make the connection to silence as enabler. In assessing the relationship between the damage done and the way fear inhibits Chicanos ability to address that damage Saldívar-Hull states that

When Chicana feminist writers begin to examine Chicano ‘tradition’ and criticize wife battering, child abuse, ‘drunk husbands,’ the misogyny that is embedded in the culture, they are branded ‘vendidas,’ sellouts, who betray their people and contribute to the damaging stereotypes of Mexicans and Mexican Americans that the anglo already believes (83-84).

Is this what Chicanos fear as they attempt to move outside of patriarchy domination when attempting to listen within? Do we fear to be labeled “vendidos” or sell-outs to our own masculinity? Is this why we remain within the constructs of a binary of good/bad machismo in order to reinscribe a new form of patriarchy that allows us to elude dealing with our fears by creating that always open door?

In dealing with our fear, Chicanos need to understand the ways in which fear affects our ability to effectively map the various terrains of our existence. Moraga provides some answers to how fear inhibits

But it is not really difference the oppressor fears so much as similarity. He fears he will discover in himself the same aches, the same longings as those people he has shitted on. He fears the immobilization threatened by his own incipient guilt. He fears he will have to change his life once he has seen himself in the bodies of the people he has called different. He fears the hatred, anger, and vengeance of those he has hurt (56-57).

Like the feminine residing within constructions of the joto, Chicanos fear the feminine residing

within Chicanas because of the threat the power of the feminine represent has develop into a materiality that has gained the weight to confront machismo.

### **Listening to feminist outside:**

Anaya's second call to Chicanos deals with the need to listen to what Chicanas are expressing about their lived experiences and the theories that derive from their imagination based upon their lived experiences. Anaya identifies Denise Chávez and Ana Castillo as two, of among many Chicanas, that provide "an excellent, uninhibited view of the woman's influence on the life of the male" as well as how much Chicanas have to "tell us of the history of the macho image" (The Macho King 68). He concludes that Chicanos "need to listen to the ideas of such writers as the role of the macho is transformed. By us, by them" (68). In addition to Anaya, Chicanos, such as Armendo B. Rendon, in 1973, and Ramon Gutiérrez, in 1993, realized the importance and value of incorporating Chicana feminist thought into discussions about machismo. The inclusion of Chicana feminist thought provides a possibility for Chicanos to recognize alternative pathways leading towards geographies of hope in their explorations of machismo. Rendon recognizes the ways in which Chicanas, in the seventies, were able to expose the oppression Chicanos faced at a time when most Chicanos were unable to recognize the oppression of Chicanas. Rendon states that "Perhaps it is true, as some Chicanas say, that the Chicano passes on to his woman the frustrations and mierda that befall him during the day" (360). Anna Nieto Gomez provides an example of one of the ways Chicanas were able to recognize the "frustrations and mierda" Rendon speaks of. She states, in her 1976 essay "Sexism in the Movimiento," that "Colonized men of color are considered as inferior as women since colonized men do not have the power or authority to rule, provide economically and protect the family" (98). Chicanas were able to realize the difficulties Chicanos faced at a time when many Chicanos were lost in a national cultural discourse that asked or, more often than not, demanded of Chicanas to "Support your man, maintain traditional roles, and preserve the culture" (99).

Rendon not only acknowledges what Nieto Gomez argues, he takes an additional step in expressing how the Chicano is located in this oppression as well as the effect this treatment has on the Chicana: “But even more disturbing is the subordination of our women into the most menial tasks, even in the movement. We don’t throw her away, but we abuse her spirit and belittle her worth” (361). In order to preserve his spirit, the Chicano has worked to murder the Chicana’s spirit. His use of the term abuse reflects the violence embedded in Chicano cultural nationalist discourses. Rendon, thus, situates Chicanos within the destructive nature of violence in ways that demonstrate how Chicano cultural nationalist discourse distorted the imagination, realization, and actualization of hope.

Rendon continues on by presenting that when Chicanos’ masculinity is challenged, his self-involvement in maintaining his sense of manliness deflects from the importance found when incorporating Chicanas into the discourses: “And when he becomes involved with a cause that encourages, insists upon, and challenges his manhood and pride in *la raza*, he tends to forget that bountiful cup of *la raza* is the Chicana and that the love and spirit of our people is perpetuated by her love and her spirit” (360) (emphasis his). This romanticized view of what Chicanas bring to the discussion limits Chicanas involvement to their traditional nurturing role. Yet, as Rendon continues, he begins to move away from the Chicana as nurturer because he has listened to the ways in which “For many Chicanas it is apparent that the traditional role of ‘radiant mother’ is no longer enough to fulfill her womanhood. Nor does the idea of merely being a helpmate appeal any more to some Chicanas who wish to be liberated from the home” (360). In the end, he realizes that relegation to the role of nurturer within the limiting private or domestic spaces is no longer acceptable for Chicanas and, implicitly, should be no longer acceptable for Chicanos. Rather than blame white feminism for the ways Chicanas seek to move beyond the submissive

roles imposed upon them by Chicanos, Rendon places the problems directly on the shoulders of Chicanos while promoting the idea that Chicanas decided for themselves the changes needed to improve their lives. He understands it was not white feminism that was at the core of Chicanas' expression of equality; instead, he realizes that it was a combination of forces that affected Chicanas.

What does inspire [Chicanas] is the challenge of working for *la causa* side by side with the men, of being appreciated for their ideas and their spirit, of being entrusted with important duties besides handling registrations or taking minutes. *La mujer Chicana* is asking that the men experience a cultural shock—the fact that Chicanas themselves will no longer be docile. Chicanas want to improve themselves, to continue their education into college, to break from the strict family bounds that have suppressed their own aspirations for generations (360-361) (emphasis his).

Even though Rendon lacked the understanding of how he positioned Chicanas as connected to Chicanos, in the same way Anaya has done, he does offer an example of a Chicano willing to move beyond a male-centered perspective at a time when in doing risked his privileged status within the Movimiento.

Ramon Gutiérrez offers up another example of a Chicano willing to undertake the call set forth by Anaya. Gutierrez acknowledges the complexities and connections Chicanas developed around issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality. He recognizes the movement within Chicana feminist discourse from the time of Rendon. The movement by Chicanas in their discourse, rather than split these important issues into fragmented and disassociated elements, actually consolidated these issues by demonstrating the interconnectedness each has with all of the

others: “what did change in feminist-inspired Chicana cultural production, even when it examined traditional topics, was the centrality that the intersection of race, gender, and class assumed” (Dreams 54). In addition, Gutierrez points out the value of Chicanas’ contributions in regards to issue surrounding sexuality, “Unlike Chicanos who took their sex/gender privileges for granted, Chicanas, as victims of those privileges, realized that an essential part of their literary birthing had to include an exploration of their sexuality” (Dreams 55). The addition of Chicana sexuality into the discourse provides avenues from where Chicanos can begin to explore their own sexuality in critical and meaningful ways. Chicanas shattered the “sex/gender privileges” Chicanos enjoyed and, through this process, unmasked the depths of oppression Chicanas dealt with.

In his discussion of the value of Chicana feminist scholarship, Gutiérrez discusses Cherríe Moraga’s ideas on her relationship with her mother and her lesbian sexuality, in what he says is “Perhaps the most intense discussion of the mother/daughter relationship yet written” (Dreams 58). Gutiérrez continues to state “Moraga is unique in that she focuses not on Malinche, but on Malinche’s mother” (Dreams 59). This unique perspective derives from the connection Moraga makes by positioning her mother as Malinche’s mother and herself as another Malinche. In the way Malinche’s mother betrayed Malinche by selling her off into slavery in order to secure her brother’s inheritance, Gutiérrez argues that Moraga sees a similar betrayal by her mother in the ways her mother privilege the men of the family over the women, thereby securing the inheritance of patriarchy for her brothers. Though he states that Moraga position herself as another Malinche begotten from a long line of *vendidas*, Moraga breaks free from Malinche and Malinche’s mother by choosing to ‘embrace no white man.’ She is finally united with the race of her mother through Chicana lesbianism, by loving other women. By

refusing to give her sexual loyalty to Chicano men, by refusing to live as a heterosexual, Moraga realizes that, in the eyes of the *movimiento* men, she has become a ‘malinchista,’ a traitor” (60).

What Gutiérrez’s analysis of Moraga and other Chicanas’ work allow for Chicanos is the attempt to follow Moraga’s example of “proudly” accepting her place within a long line of *vendidas*. Chicanos can begin to secure a new inheritance, a new legacy: one in which they can step back and “proudly” begin their own long line of *vendidos*.

Just as the writers in *Muy Macho* attempt to confront the code of silence, and, in doing so, end the way silence acts as inhibitor. They must also confront the way fear prevents them from realizing the potential of developing an epistemology that incorporates critical ways of listening and thereby achieving the ability to allow silence to act as enabler. Moraga, in her discussion on racism, explains the opportunity that arises when Chicanos address their fear.

Similarly, in a white-dominated world, there is little getting around racism and our own internalization of it. It’s always there, embodied in someone we least expect to rub up against. When we do rub up against this person, *there* then is the challenge. *There* then is the opportunity to look at the nightmare within us. But we usually shrink from such a challenge. (57)

Anaya’s proposition does just this; it shrinks away from the challenge of listening. By not recognizing how he positions machismo on the surface while simultaneously providing the necessary ingredient for mapping, he allows fear to inhibit his ability to listen effectively. In doing so he commits the error of believing that he is producing an emancipatory map, yet in reality he is producing ways in which to step around machismo, to avoid direct confrontation with his power, and to ask the rest of us to believe that his approach leads us to meet in that geography of hope. Moraga provides a way to begin to address the fear inside of Chicanos when

she states that

If fear is this, these things  
then I am neither alone, nor crazy  
but a child, for fear of doom, driven  
to look into the darkest  
part  
of the eye—

the part of the eye  
that is not eye at all  
but hole. (Moraga 33)

This passage by Moraga sums up, for me, what silence as enabler confronts. The act of listening lacks passivity and actively seeks out those voices that reside in that deepest part of the eye that hole called interstitial where Chicanas rise to meet us halfway. Chicanos believe they are seeing through their eyes; they lack the insight to understand that it is not the eye we see through but the hole that machismo dwells in. In this hole we will see that fear and hopelessness coexist in the same geographies. Both immobilize Chicanos from moving towards geographies of hope. Both exist because Chicanos allowed them to exist.

Anaya's call to listen to the experiences and ideas from and about Chicanas raises questions that unless answered inhibits, if not denies, Chicanos ability to hear this feminine—buried as deep as it is under the weight of patriarchy—nor to be able to listen to the advice and guidance offer-up by Chicanas. In the anthology, *Men in Feminism*, a discussion occurs on the relationship between man and feminist theory, Stephan Heath explains that

“Men have a necessary relation to feminism—the point after all is that it should change them too, that it involves learning new ways of being women *and men* against and as an end to the reality of women's oppression—And that relationship



is also necessarily one of a certain exclusion—the point after is that this is a matter *for women*, that it is their voices and actions that must determine the change and redefinition (1).

Amando Rendon spoke to this issue of Chicana agency in his essay “Chicano Culture in a Gabacho World.” Rendon recognized the importance of understanding the roles in which Chicanas were relegated to in the Movimiento. He mentioned how “For many Chicanas it is apparent that the traditional role of “radiant mother” is no longer enough to fulfill her womanhood. Nor does the idea of merely being a helpmate appeal any more to some Chicanas who wish to be liberated from the home” (360). In addition Rendon touched upon Heath’s ideas on female self-determinism by drawing attention to the inspiration Chicanas drew upon in their movement towards equality. He stated that “What does inspire [Chicanas] is the challenge of working for *la causa* side by side with the men, of being appreciated for their ideas and their spirit, of being entrusted with important duties besides handling registrations or taking minutes” (360-361). In this way Rendon connects the inner self to the material conditions Chicanas found themselves involved in during the Movimiento. Rendon recognized Chicana oppression existing on both the inner and outer terrains: “But even more disturbing is the subordination of our women into the most menial tasks, even in the movement. We don’t throw her away, but we abuse her spirit and belittle her worth” (361). By Chicanas relegation to menial tasks and realizing the dismissal of invigorating ideas Chicanas spoke out against Chicanos’ patriarchal hegemony, Rendon acknowledged the oppression as well as the strength of *La mujer Chicana* yet without understanding how he also maintain a connection to patriarchy through his belief that Chicanas wanted to stand along side Chicanos not lead Chicanos.

Rendon also mentioned what he thought Chicanos could expect when attempting to

connect with the issues surrounding Chicanas. Rendon felt that “*La mujer Chicana* is asking that the men experience a cultural shock—the fact that Chicanas themselves will no longer be docile. Chicanas want to improve themselves, to continue their education into college, to break from the strict family bounds that have suppressed their own aspirations for generations” (360-361). This culture shock was more than realizing that Chicanas would no longer be docile, as if Chicanas ever were. This simple act of maintaining a dominance over Chicanas by erasing their contributions to the development and survival of the Chicano and Chicana community well before the Movimiento fails to realize that, as Stevan Heath states “Men are the objects, part of the analysis, agents of the structure to be transformed, representatives in, carriers of the patriarchal mode; and my desire to be a subject there too in feminism—to be feminist—is then only the last fiend in the long history of *their* colonization (1).

Key to this idea is the term patriarchy. Chicanos avoid the term as if to confront it would place them within the role of colonizer and the construction of chingar. Chicanos’ writings consistently move around the idea of patriarchy, instead opting for the less incriminating term: masculinity. Heath demonstrates that one is the other. To avoid this inherent connection between masculinity and patriarchy serves only to reinforce male power and domination. Chicanos ability to be creative is negated by this division. I am always amazed by the number of times I speak with other Chicanos who stubbornly resist any attempts at connecting the two. To continue this resistance only leads Chicanos away from the geographies of hope that lie beyond machismo/patriarchy.

Heath continues by stating that “To refuse the confrontation, to ignore, repress, forget, slide over, project onto ‘other men’ that fact, is for a man to refuse feminism, not to listen to what it says to him as a man, imagining to his satisfaction a possible relation instead of the

difficult, contradictory, self-critical, painful, impossible one that men must, for now, really live (2). With this the barriers imposed upon men by men need to be addressed before Chicanos can begin the process of reconciliation. The influence of patriarchy is such that Chicanos fear the idea that they are involved in the most intimate ways as objects of Chicanas oppression. It is not necessarily Rendon's culture shock that trouble Chicanos but the fear that maybe Chicanos realize but will not acknowledge: the fear that maybe their experiences located within masculinity's connections to good machismo are, in fact, aspects of patriarchy and, therefore, connected to bad machismo. In Chicanos discussions on good/bad machismo, the writers work from a framework whereby they see bad machismo "as an indicator of men's wider control over women as a group and an index of the systematic nature of patriarchy" and how this framework "enables us to recognize the process whereby sexism comes to feel 'natural' or dominant within a culture, it does not allow us any real sense of how it would be possible to intervene and change that process (Mills 44). Maybe what prevents Chicanos from understanding the need to connect their ideas on masculinity to the structures of patriarchy is the idea that Chicanos' experiences are Chicanas' oppression. Maybe Chicanos fear the possibility that Chicanos are, in fact, oppressors on every level of Chicanas' experiences. This could explain the need for so many Chicanos to distance themselves from patriarchy assigned to bad machismo and connect themselves to masculinity assigned to the constructions of good machismo.

This disconnection from patriarchy in attempting to heed Anaya's call plays within elements of denial or maybe even a delusional attempt by Chicanos as to the extent of their relationship to patriarchy. Heath explains that

What is difficult for men aware of feminism is not to imagine equality for women but to realize the inequality of their own position: the first is abstract and does not

take me out of my position (naturally women should be equal with me); the second is concrete and comes down to the fact that my equality is the masking term for their oppression (women are not equal with me and the struggle is not for *that* equality (25) (emphasis his).

In Heath's explanation the inner self deludes Chicanos into believing a false sense of the reality through their inability to connect good machismo to patriarchy.

Sarah Mills addresses ways to understand the structures of the discourse employed by Chicanos as they attempt to construct the pathways to the feminine inside. In drawing off Diane MacDonnell's work on discourse, Mills concludes, "A discourse is not a disembodied collection of statements, but groupings of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence" (11). The social context at issue here is not whether or not there is a good versus a bad machismo as if the two are locked in battle that rages inside Chicanos, but the social context is how the structures developing the discourse on machismo connect to patriarchy because, as Mills states, "discourses do not exist in isolation, but are the object and site of struggle. Discourses are thus not fixed but are the site of constant contestation of meaning" (16). Thus the two discourses of good/bad machismo can never be separated in the binaric ways in which many Chicanos attempt to achieve.

In order to provide a mapping of the geographies of hope located within the constructions of machismo, Chicanos must realize the importance of listening to the voices of Chicanas in such a way as to validate the uniqueness of Chicanas' voices.

## **GEOGRAPHIES OF AZTLÁN:**

Throughout my exploration of the geographies of hope, my discourse remains somewhat ambiguous as to the space where Chicanos can meet with Chicanas. I can think of no better meeting site than Aztlán. While Aztlán remains impossible to remove from the landscape of ambiguity, its historical positioning of a site that, simultaneously, is grounded in a material landscape and as a symbolic representation of the possibilities of community building addresses both material cohesiveness and ambiguity. Roman Gutiérrez expresses his feelings about Aztlán this way: “Aztlán, the legendary homeland of the Aztecas, was advanced as the territory Chicanos hoped to repossess someday. Despite the fuzziness of the concept, its imprecise geographic limits, and the previous claims to the territory that American Indians could justly claim, the dream of Aztlán sank deep roots” (46). His statement provides an opportunity to understand the significance of Aztlán in regards to geographies of hope. For him, Aztlán represents hope for Chicanos and Chicanas. The dream of Aztlán derives from imagination, the writings by Chicanas and Chicanos represent the means and resources, and reclaiming the territory of Aztlán relates to actualization. The borders erected by the cultural nationalist movement and the borders erased through the symbolic representation of mestizaje stemming from cultural nationalism demonstrate the connection to material cohesiveness and ideological ambiguity.

Silence as enabler allows Chicanos to engage in the libratory emancipation from the destructive nature of machismo as they seek a meeting ground. It becomes our moment of actualization. At this point in time, I believe this is all Chicanos can and should hope for. To hope for something beyond the actualization of silence in its libratory form, is to distort hope. Our imagination remains part of our lived experiences at the top at the hegemonic structures

within Chicano and Chicana collectives. Aztlán, because of its location within patriarchal discourse, remains a distant region far away from the geographies of hope that allow for the construction of an Aztlán as a site of liberation. In order to discover the geographies of an alternative Aztlán, silence as enabler allows Chicanos to listen as Chicanas provide a description of Aztlán, the discursive paths needed to locate Aztlán, and the imaginative consciousness needed to negotiate Aztlán's terrains. Chicanas ability to use their positioning within patriarchy to uncover new terrains and new understandings directs Chicanos towards the new and creative futures they often desire in their discourse on the "Re-formation" of the Chicano and Chicana tribe. I begin by examining Rudolfo Anaya's ideas on a borderless Aztlán. I then turn to Cherríe Moraga as she describes her framework of the symbolic and material representations of a "Queer Aztlán." Next I employ Emma Pérez's "Decolonial Imaginary" and Ana Castillo's "Resurrection of the Dreamers" as they develop some possible pathways leading to the alternative and decolonized Aztlán.

The possibilities of negotiating the geographies of hope rely on the creation of belonging to something greater than the self. The act of becoming inherently connects with something outside of self because hope resides within the materiality of mind, body, soul, and environment. I argue that something greater is best located within the discourse of Chicanas' and Chicanos' symbolic homeland of Aztlán. Aztlán becomes that symbolic space needed to meet with Chicanas in the creation and discovery of geographies that allow for the imagination to flourish, the realization to manifest the means and resources, and for the actualization moments to seek the act of becoming as its focus. Aztlán has, since the Chicano and Chicana reclaiming project that began in the 1960s, been a rallying point for the counter hegemonic moves necessary to move beyond those horizons that act as barriers to the act of becoming.

My family originates from within the territories of Aztlán. They were the ones that stayed behind after the illegal war waged against Mexico by the US. They were the ones, for whatever reasons, believing the myth of constitutional equality or the investment of time, energy, and blood that it took to carve out their place on earth, decided to accept the US “invitation.” Mi abuelo was Indio, and because of the flexibility that sometimes occurred in the Spanish racial caste system, his family was privileged to acquire a large Spanish land grant. For over 200 years, the family resided in Aztlán. My generation, the first generation disconnected, the “Last Generation,” moved away from the possibilities of the new and creative futures found within the terrains of Aztlán. It was within Aztlán that I found myself connected to something greater than myself, something remarkable working on my imagination, something remarkable by realizing alternative means and available resources, something remarkable in those moments of actualization.

Time became my enemy and ally simultaneously as I grew older. I was running out of time to reclaim my heritage yet still had the time left to attempt a reclamation project. I found that avenue to reclaiming by listening to the voices of Chicanas. I saw their process as one of reclamation in hopes of transformation. I didn’t want to reclaim in hopes of restoration. By this time, I had enough of patriarchy’s influential dominance and my willingness to act as a tool for its domination of everything important in my life. I experienced silence as inhibitor, and used silence as protector. Now silence as enabler allows for the possibilities unknown to me prior to my understanding of this key aspect of silence.

Like Gloria Anzaldúa in her “La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness”, I returned. A journey towards the decolonized soul. The family property fragmented through the years by various economic and political reasons represented the

fragmentation within me. I needed to find something greater than myself in order to seek out new geographies of my existence. Trapped in a continuous move from one home to another, I needed something, even if symbolic, to ground myself in. My connection to my grandfather is more than simply an assertion of family but physical as well. I am my grandfather yet am disconnected from him. He is me—reincarnated.

Family dinner at six  
and I was alone at the dinner table  
Garcia brown  
amidst  
the cloudy whiteness of Adams  
and this wasn't my home  
For I was always more Garcia than Adams  
the echoed image of *mi mestizo abuelo*,  
and what would you say *Abuelito* if you knew  
I was called  
“nigger”  
by my siblings,  
and  
I was alone at the dinner table

As mi tío Juan has said to me, “You were always more Garcia than Adams.”

In her work “Queer Aztlán: The Re-formation of Chicano Tribe,” Cherríe Moraga provides a symbolic and material social landscape that describes the possible geographies where Chicanos can meet with Chicanas in our quest for a “Re-formed” Chicano tribe. Her development of an alternative Aztlán, one where “there would be no freaks, no ‘others’ to point one’s finger at” (Lost Generation, 164) provides a horizon presently unseen by most Chicanos. Sonia Saldívar-Hull reaffirms my feelings on the importance of Moraga’s contribution. She states that until Moraga’s “Queer Aztlán” was there “a clear articulation of an inclusive nation



where feminist, lesbian and heterosexual, together with gay and heterosexual men, can transform Chicano nationalism into what is actually Chicana feminism in its most transformative possibility” (Fem on the Border, 130). The importance of Aztlán is how it provides the ability to name the regions where imagination is allowed to flourish, where realization grants equitable, and without reservation, access to the means necessary to access available resources, and where actualization maintains its momentary nature and is devoid, as much as possible, from the unearned advantages and privileges that distort the actualization processes. As Rudolfo Anaya explains,

The naming ceremony, or of self-definition, is one of the most important acts a community performs. To particularize the group with a name is a fundamental step of awareness in the evolution of tribes as well as nations. The naming coalesces the history and values of the group, provides an identification necessary for its relationship to other groups or nations, and most important, the naming ceremony restores pride and infuses renewed energy which manifests itself in creative ways (Aztlán 230).

Anaya provides me a starting point from where to begin a journey towards and into Aztlán. He feels that the Chicanos “turned to its history” either through the Mexican revolutionary heroes or through the exploration of “the deeper stratum of Mexican history, myth and legend,” found the “myth of Aztlán” (Aztlán 231). The importance of this discursive project cannot be underestimated. Hope was deeply embedded in this creation of new areas of residence, new vistas of imagination, new developments of necessary means and available resources, and new moments of actualization. Because Chicanos understood hope’s relationship to time, they found Aztlán by traveling back and into the future.

Fundamental to this naming process, according to Anaya, were “two crucial decisions...

of momentous, historical significance” (Aztlán 232). The first provided a name for the community of Chicanos. “Somos Chicanos.” This name connects the individual to the collective across various social, economic, cultural and geographical terrains. Throughout the history of the southwest, divisions existed. Geography created the divisions that limited a collective’s mobility and inhibited interactions with other collectives. The social constructions of tribal membership created the divisions among various collectives. Spanish and Anglo colonial imposed hierarchies validated their domination of the people, the land, the body, and the soul through the right of conquest. As with any colonial project, an imposed and closely regulated disconnection/reconnection process occurred. The colonizer, inherently, must employ power in such a way as to force the colonized to disconnect from their sense of self, from the familial collective, from their sacred land, and from the significance of their culture, physically, ideologically, and spiritually, in order to reconnect with the colonial design. As I mentioned in my discussion about honor, the reconnection process was never meant for integration but for subordination. It was meant to reconnect to the design, not the society.

“Somos Chicanos.” A bond now existed joining the Chicano community in ways previously unknown because of the disconnection process. Somos Chicanos constructed an identity that, as Anaya states, provided this collective “with a name which had archaic roots. By using this term the Chicano community consciously and publicly acknowledged its Native American Heritage” (Aztlán 232). Not only did this term create a bond among Chicanos, it also allows Chicanos new access to the geographies of imagination. Anaya realized that the term also “opened new avenues of exploration by which we could more clearly define the mestizo who is the synthesis of European and Indian ancestry” (Aztlán 232). While Anaya limits mestizaje to a Vasconcelos framework by omitting the Moorish and Black slave influence and neglecting the

violence of the conquest and colonization of Mexico, he does demonstrate the importance naming has to imagination. “Somos Chicanos” provided the foundation for imagination to maintain its relationship to hope’s materiality.

The second declaration was Aztlán is our homeland. This declaration provided the site whereby Chicanos could assert their formation of a nationalist discourse. Drawing from hope’s relationship to time, this discourse locates hope within the present, that moment of actualization, where the possibilities hope provides propelled Chicanos towards new and creative futures. For Anaya, this moment of actualization, “created a Chicano spiritual awareness that reverberated throughout the Southwest” (Aztlán 232). Anaya saw how Aztlán created the cohesion necessary for the formation of a community. He signifies this importance as a counter to “the absorption of the Chicano into the mainstream American culture [that] was occurring so quickly” (Aztlán 236). Aztlán positioned hope in the material world. Aztlán became a site of opposition to the assimilation future that awaited Chicanos: “unless we re-established the covenants of our ancestors our culture was threatened with extinction” (Aztlán 236). The re-establishment with our ancestors’ covenants involved a relationship to hope.

Anaya ends by joining the three geographies of hope involved in his descriptions of Aztlán as well as a challenge for the future of the Chicano collective. Anaya relates to imagination because of its creative resourcefulness to enhance Chicanos’ ability to “move beyond the limitations of ethnicity to create a world without borders” (Aztlán 241). Realization occurred as Chicanos sought out the necessary means and available resources: “Our nature moves us forward, groping for illumination, yearning for a truer knowledge of our spiritual and human relationships” (Aztlán 241). Finally, actualization appears as a moment “When we know within that we can create a more fulfilling and harmonious future. For me, this is the promise of

Aztlán” (Aztlán 241). This promise can be seen as a synonym for hope. Anaya’s challenge alerts us to a need for hope in any attempt at forming a Chicano tribe, which seeks new and creative futures:

We have not yet moved to a new consciousness where the Earth truly becomes the homeland of everyone. Perhaps that is our next step in our evolution, and perhaps there are already signs that this is happening. Do we as heirs and inhabitants of Aztlán dare to take the next step and consider our homeland without boundaries? Do we dare to reach out and encompass the true spiritual relationship inherent in homeland with every group who dreams of homeland” (Aztlán 239).

Hope allows us to dare if we’re willing to define hope as an act of becoming the promise of a borderless Aztlán, not simply an act of acquiring a homeland constructed through Chicanos’ acts of restoration.

Anaya applauds how the naming ceremony was “reenacted wherever Chicanos met to discuss their common destiny” (Aztlán 232). Yet, within this Chicano cultural nationalist discourse and its involvement in the act of reclamation in hopes of restoration, those horizons, that could propel Chicanos away from restoration towards Chicanas’ transformation remain(ed) hidden by reclamation/restoration’s distorted view. My restoration project moved away from the focus on my grandfather and towards the reclamation in hopes of transformation found in Chicanas’ voices and discursive practices. The history and culture often denied me, as I grew into an adult, began my reclamation process through the voices of Chicanas. It was Chicanas that I first began reading. My legacy to violence against anyone I deemed my subordinate dictated a new direction. I found this in the voices of Chicanas.

As with many Chicanas and Chicanos, our collective histories are related to our family

history. However, we lacked the privilege of Anglo's ability to link their family history to that of Anglo history. For the Anglos I knew, that moment of actualization of the link between family and Anglo history occurred when they could no longer trace their family history. The family was now positioned within Anglo history. They were connected throughout the formation of the US. They had way to connect to hope's relationship with time in ways I did not. My history stopped with my grandfather.

My history is one of assimilation. My grandmother was deeply entrenched in what I call a Hispanic political agenda. Unlike Chicanos' reclamation in hopes of restoration or Chicanas' restoration in hopes of transformation, Hispanic politics can best be described as accommodation in hopes of assimilation. She never wanted her offspring to suffer from the racism she suffered from. Like many who remained post 1848, she believed in the hegemonic myth of Anglo equality. I sat with her one night when the anger surfaced in her voice: "I was in high school when they desegregated the schools. Everyday, when I walked home from school, I had to fight the Gringas. I didn't want this for my family." "Gringas" the word echoes in my head. She used the word to describe something vile, not seemingly neutral as when she would substitute it for Anglo. Maybe it was the last fight with the gringas or maybe it was the hopelessness she felt when she saw the extent of the fight, whatever the reason, her offspring would, "if I have anything to do with it," not face what she faced. In those moments of actualizations, her hope was directed towards accommodating the structures of whiteness in hopes of her offspring's actualizing their assimilation into whiteness. Spanish was rarely spoken in her house again, her attempt to drown out the accent. She disconnected the family from the elements of time occurring within geographies of hope. Our future stemmed from the present into the future. The past was too painful to acknowledge for her. Due to the dispossession of her status, she always

maintain a sense of elitism much like that of Anzaldúa's father, which closed off any possibilities of reclaiming anything other than that which accelerated the reconnection into the colonial design. The family consisted, at the time, of at least two last generations— her children and grandchildren— and one bewildered generation— herself and her husband.

If Chicanos rarely dared to take the next step because of the instability caused by their displacement from the powers within Anglo patriarchy, then we can turn to those who have dared: Chicanas.

Chicanas provided the roadmap I needed to traverse the geographies of hope I so desperately felt lost in.

Cherríe Moraga dares to speak to both the possibilities created through Aztlán and the distortion that occurred because of Chicanos' reclamation/restoration project. Imagination began from her politicalization process, which began with confronting her lesbianism as a pathway into "the radical re-structuring of everything I thought I held sacred" (Queer Aztlán 146). The formation of her "Queer Aztlán," since she says it took over three years to formulate, demonstrates the patience and dedication needed to effectively traverse the geographies of imagination.

Moraga mentions, in a conversation with poet Ricardo Bracho, the limitations involved in any imaginative act. In Anaya's description of Aztlán, he speaks to the need to create an Aztlán without borders. Maybe it's his privileged position within the structures of patriarchy that allows him to simplify the meaning of borders: knowing, as he should, that any attempt to create an Aztlán free from patriarchal constructed borders is a daunting task and one that men have the option of choosing the level of their involvement in. As a lesbian, Moraga has no such luxury. Moraga speaks from a location within structures of multiple and complex oppressions. Her

entrance into the geographies of “la Chicanada” located her in a site where “It is not always a safe place, but it is unequivocally the original familial place from which I am compelled to write, which I reach toward in my audiences, and which serves as my source of inspiration, voice, and lucha” (Queer Aztlán 147). Her locations in the social structures, from where her imagination stems from, details the ways in which imagination is grounded in lived experiences, either through the individual self or the collectives.

Emma Pérez speaks of the difficulties facing Chicanas as they attempt to envision a new and creative future free, as much as possible, from the constraints imposed through patriarchy. She explores the need to find *el sitio*, a site from which to speak from *y lengua*, a language from which to speak with. In her exploration of a site and a language, she connects to Aztlán. If Aztlán became a site whereby Chicanos produced a subversive project and discursive practice, then their ability to fulfill the hope embedded in their undertaking needed to include what they were unable or unwilling to see: the borders they developed that divided the collective along trajectories of gender, and sexuality.

While Anaya may assert the time is right to develop an Aztlán without borders, he fails to see what lies within the geographies without borders. Borders are protection: the dominant’s protection of hegemony or the subordinate’s protection of cultural survival. As Aztlán shifts from protecting cultural survival, as it arguably was in its formation, it occupies a site where protection comes from the collective nature of borderlessness. Yet, to allow for the protection found in the collective, Pérez erodes away the constraints imbedded in discourse that allow for Aztlán to become the geographies where the possibilities of new and creative futures stem from the attempt and ability to develop a discourse that allows all to speak within the terrains of Aztlán

Silence as enabler becomes the key skill Chicanos need to develop in order to meet with Chicanas in Aztlán. Our own return home occurs when we allow Chicanas the space needed to locate the site they search for. Our return home involves our displacement of our phallic so that Chicanas can develop a language that acts to subvert both Anglo and Chicano patriarchy.

Silence as protector and its protective cloak maintain its ideological domination. According to Pérez, it's when Chicanos speak that we lift the cloak and expose our connection to patriarchal language and bare open our involvement in a male discourse. She reacts by describing the silence imposed on Chicanas as well as a description of the site from which to speak:

Ultimately, when women of color break the silence, our words are rejected. I wish to point out that our works emerge from un sitio y una lengua (a space and language) that rejects colonial ideology, and the by-products of colonialism and capitalist patriarchy—sexism, racism, homophobia, etc. The space and language is rooted in both the words and silence of Third-World-identified-Third-World-Women who create a place apart from white men and women and from men of color, if only for a weekend now and again (Chicana Lesbians 161-162)

The key to silence as enabler is how it can allow Chicanos to enter into Pérez's site without corrupting the space with our language. As Anzaldúa explains: "Language is a male discourse" (La Frontera 54). This reaction stems from the lack of a feminine "nosotras." She states that "The first time I heard two women, a Puerto Rican and a Cuban, say the word "*nosotras*" I was shocked. I had known the word existed. Chicanas use *nosotros* whether we're male or female. We are robbed of our female being by the masculine plural" (La Frontera 54).

It was my second M.E.Ch.A. Regional Conference. For the first time, separate breakout



sessions were created for Chicanos and Chicanas. The discussion in the Chicanos' break-out session focused on one basic emotion, anger, and on two key points: first, the critique of the lack of the plural feminine, and second, the gall of Chicanas to create their own space freed from the presence of Chicanos. The discussion around these two points grew in intensity as some tried to understand the need for Chicanas to develop a site where they could develop a language and those Chicanos forcibly arguing the need for unity. As one of those embracing the breakout sessions, I grew frustrated with the Chicanos reverting to previous cultural nationalist arguments of unity. The session ended without a single word spoken about Chicanos' need to critically engage in machismo.

We need also to remain outside of Pérez's site so that our physical presence doesn't overshadow silence as enabler and its abilities to disrupt the power associated with silence as protector. The active and liberatory elements of silence as enabler wage a battle against the active and dominant elements policing silence as protector. To enter into Aztlán with the assurance of our male power developed through silence as protector ultimately distorts any hope Chicanos have in the development of new and creative futures. The protective cloak acts as a barrier to geographies of hope by stunting our ability to create the revolution needed to shatter the barriers limiting Aztlán from becoming a site of collective/protective power. Unless Chicanos access the liberatory function of silence as enabler, we lose the battle against silence as protector "For it is men who dictate that the penis must be present, armed and ready, to penetrate, and it must penetrate before male laws can consider that harm was done" (Chicana Lesbians, Pérez 171).

Pérez accuses Chicanos of the source of Chicanas' subordination within Aztlán. Chicanos become the dictators of a distorted Aztlán. Chicanas attempt to no longer relegate themselves to serving the male desires but to seek liberation from established structures of

domination: “Not until victims resist the perpetrator and have the courage to abandon the pattern, not until women and men stop assigning the perpetrator power, can women and men finally abandon phallogentric law and order” (Chicana Lesbians 173). For within capitalist patriarchal ideology, there is no place for the sensitive human being who is willing to transform the world. ‘If I am the world, and I heal myself, then I heal the world.’ These are personal, private revolutions, each member of the collective taking responsibility for her/his contradictions within the collective, willing to grapple with the question, ‘Who am I exploiting?’” (Chicana Lesbians 173). If the call to rise above or maybe beyond capitalist patriarchy is directed by Chicanas, then through the act of listening Chicanos can begin to disconnect themselves from the established patriarchal laws, even if that call is a whisper that Chicanos hear in moments of silent self-reflection.

Pérez continues to explore alternative possibilities by the individual or collective’s desire to seek avenues of hope that dismantle power and release us all from the suffocating atmosphere of distorted hope:

To answer my question at the beginning of this essay, how are we ever to achieve a successful revolution/movement, given the strength and persistence of the patriarchy? At a certain level, the answer lies within this addictive pattern. Perhaps we must begin by modifying our behavior to change the destructive patterns today, immediately, with the hope of raising children who do not have to appropriate society’s addiction in order to survive. The individual is responsible to the collective, after all. To heal oneself within the collective heals the collective. But it is only one small integral step. There is much more to do (Chicana Lesbians 173-174).

This is where I feel understanding the ways in which Geographies of hope are constructed and

lived in provides the possibilities of actualizing Pérez's hope for our children and their aspirations. Aspirations arise from out of their imagination, develop through their geographies of realization, and the momentary becomes actualized as they envision the next series of horizons.

Pérez raises the question that needs to be addressed when attempting to rid ourselves of our protective cloak: "The question is, how are we going to achieve such a revolution given the strength and persistence of the patriarchy" (Chicana Lesbians 160). The M.E.Ch.A. Conference shows how persistent the desire is for Chicanos to dictate the movement towards a revolutionary collective. In the Chicanos attempt to create a site and language that acted as a subversive discourse to Anglo domination, they ultimately attempted to "re-insert" the power of the phallic through their obvious reclamation/restoration agenda. By employing silence as enabler, Chicanos are able to listen to the problems associated with their attempts to reclaim their position at the top of the patriarchal pyramid. Pérez warns Chicanos of what occurs when we enter into a distorted Aztlán, a distortion cause by Chicanos' need to maintain control over sites and languages:

Chicanos who absorb the white-colonizer father's ways hierarchically impose those laws on Chicanas. Those Chicanos become a caricature of the white-colonizer father. One has only to look an any institution where Chicanos have been integrated to see how much many of them emulate the white father and exclude women" (Chicana Lesbians 168).

A decolonial Aztlán exists only when the colonial influence is left at the gates to Aztlán. Until Chicanos are able to accomplish this feat, we will forever maintain a stratified bordered Aztlán.

It was my first chance to teach my first upper division Chicano studies course.<sup>2</sup> I met the veterano, he has taught at this University for over twenty five years and is considered by most to

be an honorable man, shopping one day and asked him what he did in his classes. He mentioned some key aspects of history, and I replied that I also bring in some of his ideas but also bring in Chicana feminist thought. He replied that he didn't bring in Chicanas' experiences because it would mean he'd have to immerse himself in Chicana writings. As an honorable man, he is a role model on campus. This veterano demonstrates his assimilation into valuing the male, especially the white male, at the cost of Chicanas. Chicanas remain a secondary consideration, an afterthought to his pedagogical approaches. His hope to educate his students falls short and does a disservice not only to the students but more so to Chicanas. How can he ever conceive of the possibility to cohabit Aztlán with Chicanas if he refuses to employ silence as enabler in a way that disconnects him from being that white father caricature that reenacts the silencing of Chicanos within the Anglo society by silencing Chicanas?

I sat with my mentor from my undergrad years and another Chicano. As we talked about our approaches in the classroom, my mentor explained that he brings in Ana Castillo as the voice of Chicanas. He, in his wisdom, fails to see that Chicanas are not asking for token inclusion in their call to Chicanos; Chicanas are asking for an entire Re-formation of Chicano consciousness. It is not enough to simply include a book or a few chapters written by Chicanas, it is enough to begin to include a Chicana feminist critique and pedagogical approach. Actualization becomes possible because all available means are embraced as equally important and significant. Tokenism becomes another act of silencing by its demeaning expression of Chicanas' importance and significance.

These two examples demonstrate Chicanos' inability to invoke silence as enabler. The first denies any possibility that such an approach is necessary. The second, while more willing to include Chicanas' experiences, can't bring himself to listen effectively and renders Chicanas to a

token position in his understanding of Aztlán. Both act to maintain their dominance over the production and visibility of knowledge. They're connected to the European father, saw him as a role model, and emulated his ability to acquire power through the act of silencing.

Their actualization moment never quite occurred. Though they were aware of the presence of Chicanas, they misunderstood and misdirected actualization's momentary nature through the actualization of their relationship to their European father. Pérez accurately describes the geography of actualization's momentary nature: "For women need a moment, a specific moment of consciousness when they separate from the law of the father into their own sitio y lengua" (Chicana Lesbians 171). Actualization of this moment resides as another horizon from where to locate another sitio and the development of an alternative and decolonized lengua. The need for Chicanas to actualize that moment of safety from patriarchal order needed to create a language outside of patriarchal hegemony dictates the absence of Chicanos.

In her response to a white lesbian feminist who was offended by Pérez's use of the term *gringa*, Moraga also speaks to why Chicanos need to incorporate silence as enabler but distancing themselves from Chicanas at those moments when they need the space to use imagination, develop realization, and achieve actualization. As Moraga seeks *el sitio y lengua*, her Aztlán is "a nation strong enough to embrace a full range of racial diversities, human sexualities, and expressions of gender" (Queer Aztlán 164). Within her geographies of Aztlán, Cherríe Moraga provides a possible development of a culture "that can allow for the natural expression of our femaleness and maleness and our love without prejudice or punishment" (Queer Aztlán 164). These are her fields of hope.

Moraga agrees with Anaya on the importance of rearticulating the social and physical landscapes Chicanos and Chicanas inhabited. "What was right about Chicano nationalism was

its commitment to preserving the integrity of the Chicano people” (Queer Aztlán 148). The forces of assimilation and exploitation sought to eliminate whatever bonds once held the collective together, if, indeed, the bonds ever truly existed in the first place. However tenuous the bonds were prior to the declaration of Aztlán as the Chicanos’ homeland, the threat from Anglo domination sought to sever the bonds completely. In this moment of crisis Chicanos reacted in hopes that “The group may acquire cohesion and a feeling of nationhood in the times of threat, whether the threat be physical (war or exploitation) or a perceived loss of tribal unity (Anaya 231). Aztlán became that geographical and symbolic cohesive rallying space.

For Moraga it was not only the call for self-determination that was important but also the attitude and discourse both instigating and accompanying the call for nationhood. The discourse and attitude of cultural nationalism presented alternatives to the status quo she found admirable. Moraga states, “What I admired about each was its righteous radicalism, its unabashed anti-assimilation, and its rebeldía” (Queer Aztlán 149). The rearticulation of Chicanos’ positioning in the capitalist stratification Aztlán’s oppositional articulation represented could have not been accomplished without the attitude described by Moraga as she seeks to create a space beyond capitalism. Hope is no longer relegated to passive acceptance but positioned within the active domains of self-determination. Moraga adds, “Chicano nationalism meant the right to control our own resources, language, and cultural traditions....”(Queer Aztlán 151). This self-determination became the crux for the formation of Aztlán. Aztlán became the common ground from where to begin the liberatory movement towards geographies of hope. Hope encompassed the collective with the energy to propel the Chicano collective towards a new and creative future outside of Anglo domination. Chicanos become the liberators. They dictated the nature of hope. And for a few vibrant years, they coalesce the energies and dreams of an entire collective. As

Anaya states, “So it was for *la raza*, the Mexican-American community of this country in the 1960s. This cultural group underwent an important change in their awareness of self and that change brought about the need for self-definition. The naming ceremony not only helped to bond the group, it created a new vision of the group’s potential” (Aztlán 231) (emphasis his). The dreams that arose from Chicanos’ newly formed and articulated potentials infused their imagination with the creative force as they attempted to rescue hope from the domains of passivity and invoke the activity inherent in any liberatory movement.

While Moraga connects with the positive aspects arising from the Chicano Movement, she doesn’t misplace her admiration by passively accepting the righteousness of the Movimiento. The Chicano liberators failed to see, in their urgency to contest Anglo hegemony, their involvement in the distortion of the hope ingrained in their call to action and development of a homeland. The distortion of hope resulted because “What was wrong about Chicano nationalism were its institutionalized heterosexism, its inbred machismo, and its lack of a cohesive national political strategy” (Queer Aztlán , Moraga 148-149). With her critique of heterosexual patriarchy, we see how hope is distorted because of Chicanas’ exclusion from the geographies of hope. In the act of becoming hope is distorted any time an individual or collective is excluded from the three geographies or is granted, by the dominant group, limited access to the geographies of hope. Institutional heterosexism and inbred machismo limited Chicanos’ imagination and in doing so limited their understanding of and involvement within geographies of hope.

The lack of a cohesive national political strategy stems from the two frameworks Chicano nationalism employed at the time. Moraga discusses the two frameworks hope derived from during the Movimiento. The Movimiento, on the one hand, “At its most radical, Chicano

nationalism expressed itself in militant action” (Queer Aztlán 151). And, on the other hand, “To most, however, El Movimiento, practically applied, simply meant fair and equal representation on the city council, in the union halls, and on the school board” (Queer Aztlán 152). This dual approach allows for mistaken forms of hope to appear as natural: the hope of cultural determination through separation from the Anglo majority or the hope of integration into the very Anglo systems of our oppression. Separation or integration occurred on various levels and to various degrees, and on each level; geographies of hope were distributed according to the needs and desires pertaining to each approach.

The struggle to define and implement a cohesive national strategy opened up the pathways for Anglo domination and capitalist’s patriarchy to divide the already tenuous bonds holding the two approaches together. Moraga offers her reasons for why the Movimiento faltered:

El Movimiento did not die out in the seventies, as most critics claim, it was only deformed by the machismo and homophobia of that era and coopted by ‘hispanicization’ of the eighties. In reaction against Anglo-American emasculation of Chicano men, the male-dominated Chicano Movement embraced the most patriarchal aspects of its Mexican heritage. For a generation, nationalist leaders used a kind of ‘selective memory,’ drawing exclusively from those aspects of Mexican and Native cultures that served the interests of male heterosexuals. At times, they took the worse of Mexican machismo and Aztec warrior bravado, combined it with some of the most oppressive male-contrived idealizations of ‘traditional’ Mexican womanhood and called that cultural integrity (Queer Aztlán 156-157).

Moraga accurately describes the ways in which machismo deformed the Chicano Movimiento,



which was arguably the moment when hope, as an act of becoming, was at its height, traversing new horizons and manifesting itself throughout the Chicano and Chicana collective. The self-imposed limits Chicanos accepted, often without question, denied any attempt to connect effectively with Chicanas in the Re-formation of the Chicano and Chicana tribe. Their rearticulation of an Aztlán created borders within borders. Chicanas were allowed to reside within Aztlán yet relegated to the locations between the borders separating Aztlán from Anglo society and the borders within Aztlán that encircled the centering of Chicanos' patriarchal prowess.

While Moraga offers amazing insight into the construction of the geographies of Aztlán, she lacks the elements of hope and its ability to determine the effectiveness of any rearticulation process. Hope has the ability to not only direct and support an individual or collective's actualization of desired futures and goals, but can also serve to determine whether or not what Chicanos imagined, how they developed means and accessed the resources, and their actualization of desired futures actually pertain to hope or distort the nature of hope inherent in their thoughts, words, and actions.

In addition, as Moraga develops a more detailed and accurate picture of the Movimiento and the naming process, the connection to hope is omitted from her discourse. I argue that, in addition to what Moraga discusses, mistaken and distorted forms of hope were some other reasons why the Movimiento faltered. The distortion of hope resulted from Chicanos, good or bad and sometimes undying, dedication to their reclamation in hopes of restoration process. Their acceptance of this process mistakenly constructed an Aztlán where hope as a commodity dealt out by men to whomever they deemed worthy of hope, and not available to everyone in the same way was available to everyone in the same way. The commodification of hope develops,

in part, from the use of a selective memory influenced by the selective nature of reclamation in hopes of restoration.

Anaya's ideas on Aztlán provide an example of this selective memory. The myths attributed to the naming process centered on the heterosexual man. The naming process was distorted and, as such, inherently distorted hope. His belief was that in the naming process Chicanos looked back into their future and found the heroes of the Mexican Revolution or even further back to the Aztecs. Selectivity was limited to men such as Emiliano Zapata or the Aztec warrior image. Gloria Anzaldúa describes the selective memory process in her introduction to *Making Face, Making Soul Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminist of Color*. In her introduction, she describes a class she taught about women-of-color and the racism exhibited by the white students. While looking for a way to connect with women-of-color, many of the white women failed to listen effectively to what was expressed by women-of-color. In many cases the white women deflected the conversation from the expressions of women-of-color back onto them as the center of the discursive elements, either in the text or in the classroom. She states, "I wanted to call attention to the dynamic of avoidance among us, of not acknowledging each other—an act of dehumanizing people like ourselves" (*Making Face*, xix). This lack of engagement and visibility clearly shows the difficulties of crossing borders. It shows the ways in which those centered in any aspect of society lack the ability or resist the opportunity to find the hegemonic cracks from the inside. It shows, also, how tedious it is for women-of-color to find a site from where to speak and a language with which to speak and how difficult it is to employ silence as enabler.

For Anzaldúa, the struggles in her class, as a micro representation of the world outside of the classroom, stems, in part, from our inability to relocate alternative geographies of hope. As

she states, “Failure to emphasize with (empathy may open the door to understanding) another’s experiences due, in part, to what I call ‘selective reality,’ the narrow spectrum of reality that human beings select to choose to perceive and/or what their culture ‘selects’ for them to ‘see’” (Making Face, xxi). This “selective reality” results in what she calls “blank-outness..” She describes this as “That which is outside of the range of consensus perception is ‘blanked out’” (Making Face, xxi). In the similar way, “Whites not naming themselves white presume their universality; an unmarked race is a sign of Racism unaware of itself, a ‘blank-out’ Racism” (Making Face, xxi), Chicanos not naming themselves patriarchs results in a “blank-out” sexism. The selective memory is more than what is chosen and what is omitted in the construction of our perception of who we are and our perception of the world, it also functions as a device to limit our imagination, to render means useless and to bury resources and to prevent actualization.

As selective reality disables Chicanos’ ability, the hope of Re-forming the Chicano and Chicana tribe becomes selective. Those selected for the ability to hope as well as the selective qualities of hope remain within the center of hegemonic structures. Like all centers, these don’t expand horizontally to include those in the margins, nor do they expand vertically to build upon various perceptions and alternative voices, they ultimately solidify the center itself. This solidification process, and I think it’s adapting faster and becoming more effective today, prevents the possibility of developing alternative perceptions. Whether through our silence as protector or through breaking that silence, Chicanos often participate in this process. By actualizing the hope of silence as enabler, Chicanos can participate in the creation of a decolonized Aztlán.

Silence as enabler occupies a space outside of Chicanos’ selective memory. It is only recently has the liberatory nature of silence as enabler been employed by Chicanos. Chicanas’

geographies of hope, if Chicanos are willing to enter, can shatter our combined selective memory. At its most liberatory moments, silence as enabler acts to disrupt silence as protector's unspoken ideologies. This disruption provides the possibilities of seeing the hegemonic cracks from the inside out. The ability for Chicanos to find those pathways to geographies of hope stems from our ability to find those cracks in the patriarchal order, confront them, and then move beyond them. Once outside, the imagination flourishes. Our perception changes along with our lived experiences simultaneously.

To locate an Aztlán unencumbered by patriarchy's dominance of colonial developed borders within borders, we need to know a decolonized Aztlán waits over the horizon far beyond the Aztlán constructed during the Movimiento, "But it is historically evident that the female body, like the Chicano people, has been colonized. And any attempt to decolonize them must be culturally and sexually specific" (Moraga 149). Aztlán provides that cultural specificity—although the type of specificity designed by the selective memory of Chicanos. As liberators, Chicanos accepted their position of spokesmen for the Movimiento. In doing so, they often constructed Aztlán within the structures of colonialism. The ability to construct an Aztlán that detests colonialism, that resents colonial discourse, and that resists colonial patriarchy struggles to be actualized by Chicanos because they rarely detest, resent, and resist the power associated with the colonial.

Moraga describes the ideologies and social formations constructed for the settling of a decolonized Aztlán: one that subverts the borders defining cultural citizenship and deconstructs the multiple borders within borders. They include alternative social/economic structures, new forms of community building, a move to a socialism free of patriarchal, both native and European, stratifications, a return to the protection of Mother Earth, a definition and use of

power that moves away from power for competition to power used for cooperation, violence against women and children are no longer kept secret, violators are held accountable, familia is no longer depended on a male dominant or heterosexual coupling, our elders are respected, and women's leadership fostered not feared. The elements of social structures in her description allows for the transgressions of borders until the borders no longer exist. These formulations of a decolonized Aztlán provide the framework from where to begin to negotiate the various geographies of hope imbedded in the nation of Aztlán. Out of her description of an alternative Aztlán, Moraga seeks "The nationalism ... that decolonizes the brown and female body as it decolonizes the brown and female earth. It is a new nationalism in which la Chicana Indígena stands at the center, and heterosexism and homophobia are no longer the cultural order of the day" (Queer Aztlán, 150). The social structures, while seemingly impossible to actualize, affect the lived experiences of everyone inhabiting or attempting to enter Aztlán. The centers Chicanos find themselves inhabiting, comfortably or uncomfortably, dissolve into the borderless Aztlán desired by Anaya.

My search led me to the discourse engaged with the development of alterative decolonial discourses. I didn't seek the libratory notions of nationhood designed by Chicanos, I sought and still seek an alternative discourse stemming from Chicanas' attempts to envision an Aztlán freed from the external borders of colonial design and from the borders within borders constructed by Chicanos' restoration process.

Emma Pérez, as a lesbiana herstorian, seeks to provide the change in perception needed to dismantle selective memory by providing possibilities that could exist within a decolonial paradigm. Her decolonial theory is neither the only perception nor only the alternative perception; it is both residing in the interstitial spaces of time: "I believe that the time lag

between the colonial and postcolonial can be conceptualized as the decolonial imaginary” (Decolonial 6). In addition, she also feels that the time lag constitutes “that interstitial space where different politics and social dilemmas are negotiated” (Decolonial 6). In order to effectively invoke the negotiation process, it’s important to understand that Anzaldúa’s selective memory develops out of and supports the power of the colonial imaginary and relies on a colonial historiography. In order to free Aztlán from its colonial imaginary, and in doing free ourselves, the historic constrictions must be addressed. Pérez describes elements of the constrictions involved in historiography:

To learn history, we categorize time linearly and map regions geographically. Historians assign names to epochs and regions that reflect spatio-temporal characteristics: the Trans-Mississippi West, the frontier, the Renaissance, the Progressive Era, the Great Depression, the sixties. Within these categoric spaces, we continue to conceptualize history without challenging how such discursive sites have been assigned and by whom. One fundamental result of such traditional approaches to history is that these spatio-temporal models enforce a type of colonialist historiography (Decolonial 4).

This is Anaya’s approach to Aztlán. He plays into categorizing the spatio-temporal characteristics of Aztlán and the Movimiento without effectively questioning the Construction of Aztlán. His ideas on a borderless Aztlán can only reinscribe this unquestioning of the spatio-temporal locations of Aztlán because he remains tied to the colonial protection of unquestioned patriarchy.

Anaya, himself, is not necessarily the problem, though he is complicit and implicated in the problems, he is only the instrument of the colonial imaginary in material form and presence. Like all Chicanos, he struggles to find the hegemonic cracks from the inside and, that once

outside of the safety of the center, silence as enabler allows Chicanos to find the illusive decolonial imaginary: “The decolonial imaginary is intangible to many because it acts much like a shadow in the dark. It survives as a faint outline gliding against a wall or an object. The shadow is the figure between the subject and the object on which it is cast, moving and breathing through the in-between space” (Decolonial 6). The intangible nature of the decolonial imaginary creates confusion because of our uncertainty when dealing with the shadows in our life. Pérez’s offers a description of her imaginary:

For my purpose, the imaginary is the mirrored identity where the coloniality overshadows the image in the mirror. Ever-present, it is that which is between the subject and object being reflected, splintering the object in a shattered mirror, where kaleidoscope identities are burst open and where the colonial self and the colonized other both become elements of multiple, mobile categoric identities. The oppressed as colonial other becomes the liminal identity, partially seen yet unspoken, vibrant and in motion, overshadowed by the construction of coloniality, where the decolonial imaginary moves and lives. One is not simply oppressed or victimized; nor is one only oppressor or victimizer. Rather, one negotiates within the imaginary to a decolonizing otherness where all identities are at work in one way or another (Decolonial 6-7).

The imaginary takes place not within binaries of self/other but within a dialectical relationship. The slash is eliminated and self/other combined into fragmented aspects of self. The essentialism involved in binaries is disrupted, and a new view of machismo becomes apparent. Pérez states that “By fusing the words ‘decolonial’ and ‘imaginary,’ each term riddled with meaning, I locate the decolonial within that which is intangible. Here the imaginary conjures fragmented identities, fragmented realities, that are ‘real,’ but a real that is in question”

(Decolonial 6). This real-in-question develops an understanding of the process involved in good/bad machismo. Good/bad machismo exists in the framework of either/or. Important to this framework is the need to position good or bad within essentialist terms. They become polar opposites of each other and are seen as mutually exclusive and, while at odds with one another, the binary suggests that one has little affect over the other except as a dividing line from where to define one or the other. By understanding the real-in-question, we see how the good/bad binary masks the nature of machismo: fragmented realities. To seek a way out of the essentialist natures of binaries, Chicanos must do what is perhaps the most difficult undertaking in the movement towards geographies of hope: the movement from essential to intangible. To accept the dialectical nature of machismo, we must accept the dialectical nature of actualization. Actualization moments interact with complementary and competing actualizations. The moments of actualization influence other moments in a continuous cycle of cause and effect. Good machismo doesn't exist without bad machismo, nor do they ward off the effects each has on the other by framing machismo around essentialist frameworks. They are fragments of our reality that often collide in destructive ways. To avoid the collisions, Chicanos reverted back to a colonial historiography that constructed good/bad machismo along linear and hierarchal plains. To embrace the collisions is to embrace the decolonial and when this occurs new pathways into geographies of hope appear. For example, by maintaining a strict oppositional binary of good/bad machismo, Chicanos are unable to see the ways in which good/bad eliminates the slash in-between. This maintains the Anglo versions of machismo as the dominant presentation of Chicanos' masculinity. We become who they say we are. We mimic Anglo constructions and place our machismo in the colonial hierarchies that have prevented Chicanos from developing a machismo free from borders.



For Anzaldúa, what awaits Chicanos, if they venture towards the Decolonial shadows in the dark, is their Shadow-Beast. The Shadow-Beast is that material and symbolic presence of the conformity “to the values of the culture” (La Frontera 20) that stems from our involvement in the colonial imaginary’s construction of cultural values. She adds, “The Shadow-Beast consists of those unacceptable parts of ourselves that we push into the shadows” (La Frontera, Anzaldúa 20). Men fear the Shadow-Beast because the Shadow-Beast is that presence of a woman but a woman unknown: “Woman is the stranger, the other. She is man’s recognized nightmarish pieces, his Shadow-Beast” (La Frontera Anzaldúa 17). Our Shadow-Beast is that shadow within the Decolonial shadow in the dark. It works to prevent Chicanos from entering into the terrains of hope. It confronts our sensibilities and shatters our complacency, and “The sight of her sends him into a frenzy of anger and fear” (La Frontera Anzaldúa 17). We react with the only tool we know: colonial developed rhetorical, cultural, and physical violence. Our Shadow-Beast acts to expose Chicanos to the ways in which we have harmed the women in our lives. We struggle to understand why we hurt those we say we love the most, love in its most distorted form. The cloak of silence as protector acts as a defense against our Shadow-Beast. It acts as a security blanket shielding Chicanos from the possibilities that arise from any attempt to displace our patriarchal power.

We accept the passive role constructed for Chicanas as a natural “common sense.” When that passivity is rejected, Chicanos find themselves confronting the Shadow-Beast within women like Anzaldúa: “There is a rebel in me—the Shadow-Beast. It is a part of me that refuses to take orders from outside authorities. It refuses to take orders from my conscious will, it threatens the sovereignty of my rulership. It is that part of me that hates constraints of any kind, even those self-imposed. At the least hint of limitations on my time or space by others, it kicks out with

both feet. Bolts” (La Frontera Anzaldúa 16). The passive I speak of is the passive of imposed limitations and the acceptance of those limitations as a natural part of gender relationships. Anzaldúa’s Shadow-Beast explodes from her rebellious identity. She seeks disruption of the status quo where men maintain dominance in society. Her Shadow-Beast confronts the limitations imposed upon her, while Chicanos’ Shadow-Beast acts to instill the fear in us because of what we’ve done to Chicanas. The fear stems from the nagging existence of what we know to be true. As Moraga states in her essay “La Güera,” “But it is not really difference the oppressor fears so much as similarity. He fears he will discover in himself the same aches, the same longings as those people he has shitted on. He fears the immobilization threaten by his own incipient guilt. He fears he will have to change his life once he has seen himself in the bodies of the people he has called different. He fears the hatred, anger, and vengeance of those he has hurt” (56-57). Chicanos are guilty of so many crimes against women and we fear the consequences of our actions. Anzaldúa’s Shadow-Beast exposes these crimes not for retaliation, nor for reparation, but for the possibilities of transformation.

Yet, it is more than just the rebellious nature of the female Shadow-Beast that Chicanos react to; it is also the Shadow-Beast’s physical representation of our own mortality within the natural world. It is the ability to give birth that reminds Chicanos of supernatural forces beyond our ability to dominate effectively. This supernatural is found in the material embodiment of the woman: “The female, by virtue of creating entities of flesh and blood in her stomach (she bleeds every month but does not die), by virtue of being in tuned with nature’s cycles, is feared” (La Frontera, Anzaldúa 17). It is through the Shadow-Beast when our most intimate fears are exposed, and we react by using our power to control religion and culture; we relegate women to a “carnal animal, and closer to the undivine, she must be protected” (La Frontera, Anzaldúa 17).

To protect her, we push her to the side, hidden away in the decolonial shadows. The Aztlán without borders exists when Chicanos realize that our Shadow-Beast rejects our protection, demands accountability for our actions, and hear the Chicanas' cry that "I will not glorify those aspects of my culture which have injured me in the name of protecting me" (La Frontera, Anzaldúa 22). Through silence as enabler, Chicanos can listen to Chicanas as they disclose what is needed before we can meet them:

Though we 'understand' the root causes of male hatred and fear, and the subsequent wounding of women, we do not excuse, we do not condone, and we will no longer put up with it. From the men of our race, we demand the admission/ acknowledgment/ disclosure/ testimony that they wound us, violate us, are afraid of us and our power. We need them to say they will begin to eliminate their hurtful put-downs ways. But more than words, we demand acts. We say to them: We will develop equal power with you and those who have shamed us (La Frontera, Anzaldúa, 84).

In this announcement of what men must do before entering into the geographies of hope where Chicanas reside, Anzaldúa provides Chicanos with the awareness of our entrenched patriarchal power. The geographies of hope are devastated by male power. Geographies of hope exist only in those sites where power is subverted through a transformation to something unknown in this world. Silence as enabler provides the means necessary to acquire the resources needed to develop an Aztlán where everyone has access to actualizing their desired hopes. Power is subverted through the enabling aspect. Chicanas and Chicanos now are actively involved in the construction of the geographies of hope, power shifts back and forth from active listening and active female participation. The movement found in active listening/participation disrupts the foundations power needs to entrenched itself in a place where it can seek another victim.

To move into the Aztlán constructed through the “Decolonial Imaginary” we must confront our Shadow-Beast, yet we must be careful in that confrontation. The Shadow-Beast is the part of the decolonial imaginary that leaps out and destabilizes Chicanos as those unacceptable parts of ourselves become evident, for nothing pushed aside remains hidden or forgotten forever. It can also entice Chicanos to “stare at the sexual lust and lust for power and destruction we see on its face, discern among its features the undershadow that the reigning order of heterosexual males project on our beast” (La Frontera, Anzaldúa 20). Confronting the Shadow-Beast, demands that Chicanos resist the impulse to revert back to the forms of power we inherited from our misogynist history. If Chicanos can resist their impulse to revert back into colonial power, then we can begin to move beyond the Shadow-Beast and into the heart of Pérez’s decolonial imaginary.

Anzaldúa expresses the resistance to confront the Shadow-Beast and its colonial reflection and what can occur if we do.

Yet still others of us take it another step [beyond staring at its destructive profile: we try to awaken the shadow-beast inside us. Not many jump at the chance to confront the shadow-beast in the mirror without flinching at her lidless serpent eyes, her cold clammy moist hand dragging us underground, fangs bared and hissing. How does one put feathers on this particular serpent? But a few of us have been lucky—on the face of the Shadow-Beast we have seen not lust but tenderness; on its face we have uncovered the lie (La Frontera, 20).

The lie is our imaginary benevolence, seen in the honorable man, which disguises Chicanos’ dominance of women. The lie is the belief that Chicanos can actualize their hopes, without employing silence as enabler, to connect effectively with Chicanas in the creation of something

marvelous: a world where dominance is the great exception not the general framework of a society. Chicanos need to address their fear of the Shadow-Beast before they can move beyond it and travel towards healthier horizons where Chicanas await our reunion to hopefully Re-form our tribal collective.

In her work on “Resurrecting the Dreamers,” Ana Castillo provides the formation of the individual traits needed to move towards the decolonial intangible. As a new subjectivity develops, she describes certain elements of the ways in which the dreamers become our visionary self. She begins by naming the new visionary. The dreamers move from being Chicana feminist to Xicanistas: “Therefore as Xicanistas... we must simultaneously be archaeologists and visionaries of our culture. Our mestiza conscientización contains within itself the elements for an unthreaten planet; we can contribute that collective toward the development of an alternative social system” (Dreamers 220). The term Xicanisma’s basic premise is “On a pragmatic level, the basic premise of Xicanisma is to reconsider behavior long seen as inherent in the Mexic Amerindian woman’s character, such as, patience, perseverance, industriousness, loyalty to one’s clan, and commitment to our children” (Dreamers, 40). In this way, she connects her approach to the Mexic Amerindians, not to romanticize the Mexic Amerindian woman, nor to reject these attributes, but to call in question the meanings and material effects of these attributes. It’s her way of connecting past, present, and future.

Castillo addresses the hierarchy resulting from years of male dominance in a way that exposes the possibilities of the ways in which Chicanas can internalize the definitions and uses of male power. She understands that unless Chicanas remain alert to the lure of the Shadow-beast lust for power, Chicanas become caricatures of Chicanos in ways similar to those through which Chicanos become caricatures of Anglo men. She states, “However, as long as we adhere

to any kind of hierarchal ideology, our Xicanisma will wane. Our woman's consciousness should not be so superficial as to be used as a genital right to wave like a banner against men in that same 'old boys' club fashion as has been done to us" (Dreamers 224). This conditional aspect of Chicanas' ability to imagined alternative social systems presents a struggle for Chicanos. Do we listen to what Saldívar-Hull defines as a male-defined woman: that woman who maintains her association to patriarchy? It allows for Chicanos to believe that they have entered into the geographies of hope through the pathways of the Chicana that accommodates him. She may question but never challenge his power. We enter not into geographies of possibilities but into geographies of false actualization.

False actualization misdirects the individual or collective to be attentive to the needs involved in the acquisition and maintenance of abusive power. In doing so, the individual or collective is lost in a world of confusion over the impulse to obtain abusive power and the hesitant movement towards liberation and the decolonial transformation of power. Castillo directs us towards a new attentiveness by stating that "*Mas han de saber* that we must keep attentive to the needs of our bodies, minds, and spirits. Our bodies provide a vehicle for us throughout this life and we must be attentive to their needs. Our minds must be equally nourished. The life we live is a brief one; each of our spirits has a bigger plan, but while in this incarnation, for each of us to fulfill our purpose here we must be as fit as warriors (Dreamers 224). Castillo presents a warrior image not to incite aggression but to incite strength, but not the strength found in the ways in which power, derived from patriarchal strength, is used for domination. It allows for hope to remain within the active agencies of hope. The mind, body, and soul connect in intricate and mysterious ways. Xicanisma remains open to the mystery of life in the individual as well as embrace the mysteries that both connect and divide the collective

from the individual. “Xicanisma, therefore, includes an ongoing awareness of our responsibility to ourselves, to those in our personal lives, to those we make alliances with, and to the environment (with all that the word implies)” (Dreamers 224). Xicanisma provides the backdrop for geographies of hope. It connects hope from among individual and the collective. It develops into a discourse where the central focus is to allow each individual or collective the ability and atmosphere to imagine, realize, and actualize their hopes without the need for hegemonic limiting devices. Castillo presents an attitude and approach that actualizes the possible end of the conflicts over who has greater ability to determine the geographies of hope, who has access to the geographies, and the ways in which access is granted or denied. As Castillo states, “*Our* vision as Xicanistas expects peace. Again, our vision is seen as a threat because most people believe fervently in a socialreligious philosophy based on dualisms that make our society a complex system of irreconcilable opposites that are inherent in each other, i.e., the notion that we must ‘fight for peace.’ But peace is not the opposite of war, peace is the achievement of balance” (Dreamers 225). The peace residing within Aztlán need not be limited to a war men wage against other men, though this is a certainty if Aztlán is to exist. Peace can only be achieved by laying down the weapons we’ve used in our war against Chicanas and by opening up possibilities of a newly obtained sense of balance found in Chicanos’ collective urgency to meet with Chicanas to create new and wondrous futures. In this way, hope is at its most effective state of being when attempting to achieve balance. Imagination, realization, and actualization coexist in an unbalanced geography. The peaks and valleys are easily traversed by those using the backs of the subordinates as stepping-stones towards the actualization of patriarchal distorted hope.

Xicanisma develops from particular sites and circumstances. It’s located within various

elements of time that meet at various crossroads where, historically, Chicanos attempted to disconnect Chicanas from their sense of self. This disconnection acts to deform their consciousness by robbing Chicanas of agency. She believes the foundation of Xicanisma is formed “in the acknowledgment of the historical crossroad where the creative power of women became deliberately appropriated by male society. And women, thereafter, were subordinated. It is our task as Xicanistas, to not only reclaim our indigenismo—but also to reinsert the forsaken feminine into our consciousness” (Dreamers 12). Castillo points to the direction where the dreamer became lost to Chicanos through the massacre and found through the resurrection. Yet she doesn’t exclude the possibilities of Chicanos to be dismissed as a useless burden to the possibilities of decolonizing mind and body. Like Pérez, she turns away from patriarchy because of its addiction to domination. Her dreamers ask Chicanos to listen to Chicanas imaginative futures and, through listening, address the ways in which our ability to listen to Anaya’s feminine inside: “Men are not our opposites, our opponents, our ‘other.’ Many of us are alienated from our true ‘feminine’ spirit as men are, and men are just as vulnerable to the phallic mechanism of this society as we are—except for the barebone fact, of course, that as women, we do experience more subjugation than most men” (Dreamers 226). The ability to listen to our feminine inside begins by solving our involvement in a society determined to disconnect us from ourselves.

As this connection occurs, Chicanos must heed the last lines of Castillo’s idea. Our disconnection was never fully complete as we sought to reconnect to Anglo supported capitalist patriarchal power. Through the emasculation of Chicanos by Anglo colonization, we have sought to restore ourselves to the top of the patriarchal pyramid as seen in Oscar Zeta Acosta’s reclamation/restoration process. When we forsook silence as enabler, we trapped ourselves into



the belief that it is those with power whose voices are validated. Maybe we saw this as our only way to protect our community. But if this was the case, we distorted this hope by directing the protection towards the acquisition and maintenance of European patriarchy. In doing so, we dismissed Chicanas' voices because they sought a different world than was offered up by Europeans.

The need to regain a sense of hope propels Chicanas beyond simply reclaiming hope towards a transformative hope. Castillo states, "Our vision inherently includes a better quality of life for all. But if we live in a stratified society it seems inescapable, even natural, that society must operate like the animal world's food chain. And there is always justification—if not some 'sound reason'—found for why some people suffer more than others" (Dreamers 226). The material aspects of suffering go unnoticed within distorted geographies of hope. The limitations imposed upon the imagination relegate the imagination to align itself with the dominant collectives, individuals, and structures of society. The subordinate employs imagination not for liberation but for cooptation. They seek integration into the very structures of their oppression. They've seen the ways in which power provides certain attainable rewards found in a dualistic world. Therefore, dualisms restrict imagination, develop, unfairly, the necessary means, allot certain resources to selected and elite individuals and collectives, and dismantle the moments of actualization. This allows for patriarchy to construct a foundation of power seemingly normal in the ability to call upon the energizing elements of hope. Xicanisma offers an alternative: "Xicanisma is an ever present consciousness of our interdependency specifically rooted in our culture and history. It is yielding, never resistant to change, one based on wholeness not dualisms" (Dreamers 226). For the Xicanista, this positioning of the decolonial revolution resides within the possibilities found in transformation. As long as Chicanos adhere to the male

phallic, as constructed through colonization, we remain within the geographies of dualisms, remain within the geographies of distorted definitions and (ab)uses of power, and remain outside of the geographies of hope.

This disconnection from the geographies of hope described in my exploration must be healed from the severing elements of a distorted patriarchal hope. Healing is only effective when it aligns with the libratory aspects of hope. Castillo ends her discussion on Xicanisma with an announcement of the libratory aspects of the hope found through Xicanisma: “If women’s bodies and those of men and women who transgress their gender roles have been historically regarded as territories to be conquered, they are also territories to be liberated” (Dreamers 150). This displays the hope involved in the resurrection of the dreamers and what Chicanos can learn from and through the libratory acts of listening. This is Chicanos’ actualization moment. This is the moment when all we have imagined, all the means have been developed, all the resources accessed become actualized. In that moment, clarity of vision occurs and allows Chicanos to locate over which horizons Chicanas await and into which they interpellate us to listen. This moment remains to goal of our actualization, the goal of our hopes to connect with Chicanas. Our liberation ultimately and inherently remains connected to the collective. The collective awaits a healthier macho, one that adheres to a new definition and acquisition of honor. Our actualization of silence as enabler allows for a healing process that could heal the scars of our colonizing and colonized history. Like any open wound the healing process will take time. The scars will remain long after the soul has healed. The scar reminds us of the hideous nature of colonial patriarchal power. Over time, even the scar will be less noticeable, sometimes only noticeable to touch. The actualization of what awaits in these new territories of exploration, at this time, needs to remain part of the geography of imagination. As we stop to listen, we move

beyond the limitations that now hold our creativity hostage.

Si se puerde!

## **Timeless Illumination**

A world of linear time,  
of only beginnings to endings  
separates us.

You as near to dawn  
as I to dusk,  
and I'm reluctant to express  
the ways you have captivated me.

Your voice as soft as your curves,  
as sultry as a humid midsummer night  
echoes Coatlicue's visions  
of the plurality of a woman.  
She yields her ego  
to stand along side you  
together as one,  
and I'm lured into a world  
filled with the eclipsed secrets  
of your desires.

You sacrifice yourself to me.  
I sacrifice myself to you  
as we lie together atop Tepayec.  
In the shadow of Tonantzin  
our bodies merge into  
the best of the past,  
the honesty of the present,  
the future is ours to determine  
if we have the courage  
to forsake limitations.

You renounce  
roses growing in the snow  
as an image too limited

for the breath of your vastness.  
You envision a life  
not of righteous suffering  
but of forging brilliant horizons,  
and when most men hide  
their eyes in shame,  
I open mine  
to behold the glories de la mujer  
embodied in everything you are.

Your body glistens from  
the heat of the day  
enhancing the color of  
your smooth sienna skin.  
From a distance I noticed how  
tender brush strokes design your beauty,  
exposing the depth of your dimensions,  
as your hair with a managed unruliness  
and as thick as history  
streams along your face.

I draw nearer  
to see you stand  
as a contradiction  
to the unsettling  
oppression of man.  
I look into your eyes  
and wander around  
floating gardens  
and ageless pyramids  
to see a priestess  
chanting songs in celebration  
about a life of unrestricted dreams.

I trace your sensuality  
with an ice cube  
down along your neck.  
Muscles tightening-- relaxing.  
The water rushes ahead  
impatient to find  
the hollow of your throat.  
Liquid weaves a path around  
tiny hairs that rise and fall  
to the songs of your voice  
and leaves in its wake  
a single silver strand necklace  
grasping a diamond pendant.

Encircling your nipple.  
I watch as your flesh hardens  
from the cold and excitement.  
The ice cube releases  
glistening drops that  
find the easiest path  
down your breast  
to settle  
into a pool  
I wade through  
with my tongue,  
briefly tasting your delicacy.

Slowly and evenly  
I move the ice down  
past your heart.  
No need to rip out your essence  
acting out the ceremony  
of our ancestors.  
For it is not the ending

of the heartbeat that awakes  
the sun from its rest  
but the beating of your heart  
that revives the sun  
for future generations.

I give up my need to subdue.  
You give up your need to protect,  
as the water moves  
to the beat of your heart  
with gentle waves of silence.  
Each drop becomes an ocean  
dotting the landscape of your beauty.

Our lungs fill with the aroma  
of our mutual hunger for intimacy.  
We move through time  
unaware of its passage.  
We focused on bodily rhythms  
swaying to the age del sexto sol.

The ice moves down your stomach as  
my tongue paves a waterway through  
your tangled forest of hair.  
I smell your scent  
as it lingers in the air  
with the richness of life.

I hold the ice cube inches  
above your skin.  
A drop falls and  
your body responds  
with a sensual shutter.  
Heighten by

the gentle flicking  
of my tongue,  
ice, tongue  
immersing, teasing  
your anticipation, your willingness  
and our bodies rise and fall  
with each new droplet.

I rub the ice along  
the ridges of the enveloping skin  
of your most hidden recess.  
Your legs draw further apart  
to invite me in.  
Your wetness is  
like a taste  
of an ageless wine  
intoxicating the two of us.

Inhibitions give way  
to the affirmation of our union.

I enter you fearful of the  
vastness of your inner being.  
Each movement in tune with  
the timeless rhythms of love.  
Each rise a new day.  
Each set a new night,  
and countless millenniums rush through us.  
You move your body up  
to meet mine in the middle of someplace  
where we transcend the limits of the world.

We embrace as if to let go  
would lose ourselves,



rise, set.  
I feel myself sinking  
deeper and deeper.  
To the deaths of your being I touch  
lightly, gently  
like a shadow.

We move to the ever quickening  
torrent of indigenous drumbeats.  
Sacrifice to sacrifice.  
Our hearts in a joyous symphony.  
We sing an opera without words  
that inhibit the messages of our bodies.  
We become instruments without form,  
rise, set.  
We embrace skin against skin.  
Your wetness smolders  
and flows between our legs.

We rise to feel the fusion  
of penetration and envelopment.  
Frozen statuettes.  
You lower yourself down.  
Your back arches like a bridge  
spanning our intimacies,  
as our spirits rise up  
towards the heavens  
of our existence.  
Our brown bodies  
become like dancers  
forever locked into a duet.  
Sweat pours from us  
escaping from  
the blaze of our intensity.

The drums beat  
faster, faster.  
In unison, we  
rise, set.

Your legs wrap around me  
our ankles entwine.  
faster, faster  
Our fingers interlock with  
a white knuckle grip.  
Our breaths become shallower  
unable to take in  
all that resides  
in the moment.  
Out of control,  
we merge  
our bodies into one,  
control, out of  
control,  
our movement  
become like swiftly  
flowing rapids  
out of control,  
set, rise,  
our backs arch  
like two waterfalls.

We freeze.  
No breaths, sound, movement.  
An eternity passes between us  
as our fluids mix  
and flow into an  
ever widening river.  
Our lungs suck in

the cool air  
and force the air back out  
hot with our scents  
drying our lips, our tongue.

We collapse  
into one another  
ankles locked,  
fingers frozen.  
Bodies melt into  
a form unrecognisable  
to anyone but ourselves.

Beyond existence we travel.  
Ours is not simply  
a fulfillment of lust,  
but of a new era  
void of outside  
constructions and judgments.  
Filled with feelings  
that justify our unity.

The smoke from our cigarettes  
struggles to filter through the passion  
hovering in the air,  
and for a moment,  
yours is not the dawn,  
and mine is not the dusk,  
but together,  
we are the timeless illumination of day.

## **MACHISMO LITERATURE REVIEW:**

This review focuses on the development of the discourse concerning machismo from a Mexicano and Mexicana and Chicano and Chicana perspectives. I bring in works from the fields of history, sociology, cultural and feminist theory, and literature. Each has its own significance and connects to each other in such a way as to produce an understanding of the development of Chicana and Chicano writings on machismo. I break down the review into several different areas. The first area introduces the writings of Jose Vasconcelos and Jose Martí at the end of the 19th and beginning 20th centuries and their ideas on the mestizo and the natural man. The second frames machismo around the works of Samuel Ramos and Octavio Paz and their views based on a inferiority complex. The third explores the time during the Chicano Movimiento (The Chicano Movement) and the ways in which cultural nationalism influenced the construction and understanding of machismo. In this section, I address the divergent voices arising from this time period that struggle for recognition and/or domination. I touch upon the racist social sciences studies and the reaction by Chicano and Chicana social scientists. The next deals with the inclusion of Chicana Feminist thought and, next, look at the rise in Chicana Lesbian feminist thought. I move into the recent development on Gay Chicano analysis and end with the recent work on borderland studies, rhetoric, and the attempts at understanding how to decolonized mind and body.

To begin, Jose Martí's "Our America" (1891) and Jose Vasconcelos' *La Raza Cosmica* (1925) are influenced by the rise of Indigenismo. Reacting to the positivist movement and the rise in the eugenics' movement, these two men explore a masculinity related to the Amerindian. In his work, Jose Martí describes as "the natural man." The "natural man is that man connected to the Pre-Columbian Americas. Martí sees this man as natural and determines this is who

society should look to govern the Americas because governing should derive from the geographic locations and natural environments of the Americas. He doesn't necessarily denounce the Spanish influence but feels that a man whose local history and cultural adaptation derived from the Americas should govern the Americas. Jose Vasconcelos also emphasizes the need to incorporate indigenismo. While not specifically addressing machismo, he does present a kind of masculinity that derives from the upper classes and presents a sort of benign type of machismo. There is no mention of the violence of the conquest and colonial period of Mexico. Unlike Martí, Vasconcelos believed that the "natural" man, if you will, was a part of the natural evolution of the Americas. He would blend, through the process of mestizaje, into a Cosmic Race, which would lead the world into an utopian society built on reason and beauty. Martí's work confronts European colonization more so than Vasconcelos by positing the idea that a society should be governed by those indigenous to the geographic region. Vasconcelos still plays into validating the crillo perspective, yet he, more so than Martí, does present a framework for the construction of mestizaje that influenced the 1960s wave of cultural nationalist writers and feminist writers as instrumental as Gloria Anzaldúa.

The next area I pursue deals with the writings of Samuel Ramos's *Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico* (1962) and Octavio Paz's *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1961). For the most part, the complex discussions on machismo can be seen as beginning with these two men. Unlike Martí and Vasconcelos, they specifically address machismo. Ramos through his description of the pelado and Paz and his hijos de la chigada. These two images display the characteristics of an inferiority complex due to the racial, cultural, and economic oppression and exploitation embedded in the conquest and colonization. They set the framework by which much of the later explorations of machismo stem from or react to. Their focus on the inferiority

complex develops a non-sympatric view of the Mexican. Both employ a sense of an inherent, biological or social, character in the Mexican. An example of this is seen in Ramos' discussion on the pelado. In the section "Psychoanalysis of the Mexican" Ramos explores the pelado. The man becomes an aspect of the colonial conquest and colonization of Mexico. Unlike Martí and Vasconcelos, who see value in the subordinate indio, Ramos and Paz attempt to distinguish the Mexican male as a reaction to this subordinate status. Ramos states that "The best model for study is the Mexican pelado, for he constitutes the most elemental and clearly defined expression of national character (240). The pelado becomes the excuse for machismo's domination of men and women. His subjectivity results from a need to reclaim the power lost in the conquest and colonization. According to Ramos the pelado reacts to his subordinate position and needs to exert his masculinity in an attempt to lay claim to power. This need develops because, as Ramos states, "The pelado belongs to a most vile category of social fauna; he is a form of human rubbish from the great city. He is less than a proletarian in the economic hierarchy, and a primitive man in the intellectual one" (240). In addition, the pelado fights between his real self and his illusionary image of self. As Ramos suggests, "He would like to become one who, by dint of his valor and strength, lords it over others. He is artificially exalted by the suggestion of this image, and persuaded to work in harmony with it until such time as he actually believes in the reality of the phantom which he has fashioned out of himself (245)." The pelado becomes the embodiment of exaggerated machismo. His subordinate position in the social order compels him to act in extreme ways. The pelado becomes the precursor to the type of machismo later waves of exploration attempt to subvert in order to develop the complexities of machismo

The next wave of machismo studies comes out of the Chicano Movimiento. Writers like Rodolfo Anaya in his work like "Aztlán", Rodolfo Acuña in his work on internal colonization

in his groundbreaking *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos* (1972), Rodolpho “Corky” Gonzalez in his epic poem “Yo Soy Joaquin” (1972), and Oscar Zeta Acosta in his biography *The Revolt of the Cockroach People* (1973) construct machismo from a cultural nationalist perspective. It is also the time when divergent voices fought for recognition and/or domination. These divergent voices included Chicano cultural nationalist, Chicana feminist thought, social science studies, and media stereotypes, such as *The Frito Bandito*.

The need to react to Anglo colonial domination provided much of the impetus for the rise in cultural nationalism and set the stage for a machismo that incorporates class. Machismo, within a cultural nationalist perspective, develops a sense of pride not found in Ramos or Paz, as Ignacio Garcia states, “For the Chicano activist, the pre-Columbian people represented the real birth of the Chicano nation. Chicanos chose to view the indio at the height of his or her power and culture. They bypassed the remnants, which had all but succumbed to the conquest and which were the subject of writers like Octavio Paz and Samuel Ramos, who wrote about the negative characteristics of the Mexican” (71). The term Chicano designates a position of resistance that acts to subvert the images of Chicanos by social scientists. Key to these constructions are the ways in which machismo is connected to traditional gender roles, as man as the head of the household and organization, and as the chief or warrior as head and protector of society. The Chicanos of the time sought to break free from not only Paz and Ramos negative views, they also sought to break free of racist and sexist stereotypes. Though I think it was more the racist than the sexist stereotype that they addressed. I still find many Chicanos who complain about the Latin romantic lover or dangerous criminal lover yet still use either image to their advantage. What I mean by this is I often hear Chicanos discuss in class about the oppressive nature of these stereotypes, yet, when I see them at a club, they portray either stereotypes

because they think this is what will attract women, especially white women.

Chicanos were also reacting to the racist social science studies and media stereotypes that constructed a violent, womanizing, unintelligent, lazy, Mexican who is prone to criminality. Much of these studies explain machismo along biological determinism or social Darwinist perspectives, in order to validate Anglo masculinity and society or turn Chicanos' masculinity into a commodity for profit. The attempts to subvert these descriptions and images employed an interdisciplinary approach, often seen as a cultural renaissance. These Chicanos brought pride back into machismo and as the last lines of "Yo Soy Joaquin" expresses, "I have endured, I will endure."

This was also a time when Chicanas became involved in the Movimiento, which gave rise to their feminism, and their involvement in greater numbers to the halls of academia provided a site where their studies could become public and begin a broader discussion on machismo and gender relationships. No more was the discourse on machismo limited to the invalidation or validation of machismo through the male perspective; machismo becomes vulnerable to Chicana scholars and activists. This inclusion of Chicanas develops from their appeals and demands for inclusion and validation within the Movimiento.

Though this time period gives rise to Chicana scholarship, feminist writings and feminist activism, it must be noted that feminist writings can be seen as early as Sor Juana de la Cruz (1651-1695). Her work "Respuesta a sor Filotea" (1691) was more than a critique of men but seen by the Church as an attack on men. In this writing Sor Juana exposes how men set themselves up as the only legitimate authority at the sake of women. In this response, she employs the term men and connects individual actions to a larger systemic problem. Her work has later been critiqued and embraced by Chicana lesbians because of the belief that Sor



Juana was a lesbian. Sor Juana becomes the predecessor not only to Chicana feminism but to Chicana lesbians as someone who provides a historical basis for feminist and sexuality discourse.

Much of the early critiques of machismo can be found in Alma Garcia's anthology *Chicana Feminist Thought: The Basic Historical Writings* (1997). In this collection are found numerous essays, article, and poems describing machismo from a feminist perspective. The writers in the anthology maintain a position of centering gender within the discourse on race prevalent during the 1960s and 1970s. The writings reflect the growing discontent among many Chicanas not defined as loyalists. Chicana Loyalist have been defined as those Chicanas adhering to the male direction for the Movimiento. These early writings are more of a reaction to machismo rather than a proactive approach meant to subvert machismo.

Alma Garcia in her excellent rendition of the development of "Chicana Feminist Thought from 1970 to 1980," develops an alternative explanation of Chicanas' role and influence in the Movimiento that counters most Chicano scholars. Her essay "The Development of Chicana feminist Discourse, 1970-1980" (1989) assesses the historical development of Chicana feminist thought. She draws connections to Chicanas roles in the Movimiento as well as Chicanas attempts to connect outside of Chicano and Chicana communities. She also highlights the attempts by Chicanas to represent "a struggle that was both nationalist and feminist" (220). She recounts the struggles Chicanas endured with who she calls the Chicana loyalists, who sided with the men that race and class as the central tenets needed to be addressed and the Chicana feminist centering of gender. Chicana feminist adopted an analysis that began with race as a critical variable in interpreting the experiences of Chicano communities in the United States. They expanded this analysis by identifying gender as a variable interconnected with race in analyzing the specific daily life circumstances of Chicanas as women in the Chicano community

(230). Gender becomes one the early attempts to dislodge machismo's control over the activism and productions of knowledge. She continues this development by addressing the issues of sexuality. The discussion on sexuality is a taboo in Chicano and Chicana communities. Even today, many Chicanos and Chicanas resist attempts to talk about sexuality. I see this every time I bring in Chicanas' discussions on sexuality in my classes, especially when it comes to lesbian sexuality. More than a few times have heterosexual Chicanas stopped coming to class when we were looking at issues of lesbian sexuality. The need to bring in this development of Chicana lesbian feminist thought exposes the hidden agenda and overt antagonism towards everything not considered heterosexual or that challenges the Church's dominance. Garcia states, Chicana feminist lesbians experienced even stronger attacks from those who viewed feminism as a divisive ideology. In a political climate that already viewed feminist ideology with suspicion, lesbianism as a sexual lifestyle and political ideology came under even more attack. Clearly, a cultural nationalism ideology that perpetrated such stereotypical images of Chicanas as 'good wives and good mothers' found it difficult to accept a Chicana feminist lesbian movement (226). This difficulty stems from the fear of the displacement of heterosexual power. This fear is so pronounced that Carla Trujillo, in her anthology *Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About*, argues that "Chicana lesbians are perceived as a greater threat to the Chicano community because their existence disrupts the established order of male dominance, and raises the consciousness of many Chicana women regarding their own independence and control" (186). This "threat" is real for many Chicanos and Chicanas who maintain a need to assert heterosexual privilege. Garcia's addition of the importance of Chicana lesbian thought becomes a key inclusion in her development of Chicana feminist thought because of Chicana lesbians' dramatic critiques and cultural expressions that challenges patriarchy as it moves us towards new

and creative futures free from patriarchal and colonial discourse.

The 80s and early 90s signaled a rise in Chicana scholarship as well the inclusion of Chicana lesbians. The inclusion of Chicanos and Chicanas and their allies into the halls of academia brought forth a number of studies that disputed the claims of earlier racist studies. Sociologists Maxine Baca Zinn, Alfredo Mirandé and Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo are the most notable examples of social science studies' attempts at incorporating a more complex view of machismo. Maxine Baca Zinn's "Chicano Men and Masculinity" (1982), Hondagneu-Sotelo's "Overcoming Patriarchal Constraints: The Reconstruction of Gender Relations Among Mexican Immigrant Women and Men," (1992), and Alfredo Mirandé's "A Reinterpretation of Male Dominance in the Chicano Family," (1979) display the attempts to subvert previous claims of a monolithic Chicano family and gendered society. Hondagneu-Sotelo's article "Overcoming Patriarchal Constraints: The Reconstruction of Gender Relations among Mexican Immigrant Women and Men" (1992).

As a Brief example of this scholarship I turn to Hondagneu-Sotelo study. In "Overcoming Patriarchal Constraints: The Reconstruction of Gender Relations Among Mexican Immigrant Women and Men," Hondagneu-Sotelo explores the ways in which patriarchy is negotiate among women and men involved, either alone or together, in immigrating to the US. Her work is a response to ways in which immigration affects gender and family relationships. She states, "This article examines family stage migration from Mexico to the United States, whereby husbands precede the migration of their wives and children, and it highlights hoe patriarchal gender relations organize migration and how the migration process reconstructs patriarchy" (394). Her work adds what she says is a "slightly different twist" (394). Her "twist" complicates, what she identifies as the two main frameworks involved in these types of studies: the conflict between

traditional and acculturated modern values and the economic issues involved in providing for the family. She centers the” migration pattern itself“ (394) that has the greater affect on patriarchy. Her argument states, “that the partial dismantling of patriarchy arises from new patterns of behavior induced by the arrangements of family stage migration. In light of this analysis migration becomes a gendering process” (397-398). By looking at the negotiating of patriarchy from this perspective, Hondagneu-Sotelo provides valuable insight into the ways in which the limitations involved in locating Chicanos within a hierarchal power arrangement where men are the dominant and women the subordinate. She provides a key “twist” from Mirandé and Gutmann work by locating the immigrant who is connected to the forces influencing machismo in Mexico or in the United States.

Alfredo Mirandé’s essay “A Reinterpretation of Male Dominance in the Chicano Family” brings to light the ways in which recent scholarship dispels the quantitative truths established by a racist social science agenda. Unlike other ethnographic studies, this work can be seen as a precursor to the ethnographic study. This writer brings in the process full circle by calling the traditional, negative view of machismo into question and suggesting a new positive view. It seeks in addition to dispelling numerous myths and stereotypes about the role of the male in the Chicano family and to suggest an alternative conception that is more consistent with the nuances of Chicano culture and that is also much less stultifying. Mirandé’s states that “The basic thesis advanced in that the all-dominant and controlling Chicano male is largely a mythical figure—a fabrication of social scientists” (473-474) (emphasis his). He attempts to counter the hegemonic process involved in establishing myths as a natural and empirical truth. In addition, he states how “This paper sought to examine male dominance in the Chicano family and to suggest a new conceptualization which holds that the traditional view of the Chicano family as patriarchal and

authoritarian is erroneous and based on unsupported myths and stereotypes held both by social scientists and the public at large” (477). Like other essays and studies, the nature of rhetoric and the influence of hegemony are relegated to the periphery of the main components and frameworks guiding the projects. In the attempt to doispell the myth he falls back on creating alternative myths that seem to reduced the extent Chicano fathers practice machismo by locating machismo as an overt act of domination or exploitation without effectively addressing the subtleties of machismo.

In her article “Chicano Men and Masculinity,” Baca Zinn addresses her purpose for the article: “My purpose is to examine empirical challenges to machismo, to explore theoretical developments in the general literature on gender, and to apply both of these to alternative directions for studying and understanding Chicano men and masculinity” (30). In attempting to show that Chicano masculinity is influenced by larger structures of masculinity, not simply a relationship to Chicano culture in particular, she argues that “recent literature places emphasis on networks of social relations between men and women and the status structures within which their interactions occur” (31). She feels that male dominance is not a Chicano male uniqueness but a larger global structure of male dominance. The theoretical challenges she sites points to this global significance and are “crucial because it alerts us to the importance of structural variables in understanding sex stratification (31). She sites the challenges to previous scholarship on machismo stems from the rise in Chicano scholarship in the 60s and 70s. Out of this she concludes by stating that “This forces us to recognize the disturbing relationship between the stratification axes of race, class, and sex. To the extent that systems of social inequity limit men’s access to socially valued resources, they contribute to sexual stratification” (40). This linkage among race, class, and sex prove valuable in understanding the complexities involved

when discussing machismo. The question that has been raised in regards to her ideas on structures of racism, class inequalities, and gender is why was or is it that Chicanos' reaction to their oppression seem based in the working class when it is obvious that this type of domination takes place among upper class Chicanos.

More recent studies include ethnography as a primary investigative process. Within this time, Chicano and Chicana social sciences attempt to discredit earlier social science's work on machismo. This earlier social science investigations supported racism rather than explain racism's affects on the lives of Chicanos and Chicanas. Some of this work involves the family relationships. Family has always been addressed as one of the most important elements of Chicano and Chicana culture. The influence of family affects and is affected by machismo.

Ethnographic work shifts from the colonial justification of its domination of Chicanos towards a more complex understanding of men and families in an attempt to dispel the myths earlier works presented as quantitative truths. Included in this wave are writers like Matthew Gutmann ethnographic work on machismo, *The Meanings of Macho: Being a Man in Mexico City*, (1996) investigates the various definitions of machismo and masculinity in the Santo Domingo colonia of Mexico City. His ethnographic work disputes the common conception that Mexican men are negligent fathers and adulterous husbands. His focus on the "lived hegemony" influencing the everyday lives of working class men and women exposes a complex range of machismo as well as the heterosexual nature of machismo.

Another ethnographic work drawing attention in this latest wave is Alfredo Mirande's *Hombres y Machos: Masculinity and Latino Culture* (1997). His work involves interviews with a number of men from various class and educational backgrounds. He also disrupts the notion of the neglectful father and provides examples of how these men negotiate the construction and

exercise of machismo. What is lacking is the voices of the women in these men's lives. Miranda excuses this omission by reminding the reader of his lack of time and economic resources. To publish a study that excludes women, something Gutmann doesn't do, provides concern over the nature of power involved in the interviews.

While Gutmann attempts to provide who has power there is an overwhelming attempt by many of the men in the study to deflect their involvement in power used for domination. In Miranda's work the nature of this power is exclusively centered within male discourse. Both of these men suggest that power is important in understanding gender relationships, but neither attempt to explore the ways in which whose voices are dominant in the interviews are exercises of power in and of itself.

Included in this time period, is the inclusion of Chicana lesbians as an additional, creative, stunning, critical, and vibrant exposure of Chicano and Chicana communities inequalities. They bring in an alternative to the heteronormative acceptance of previous writings in all aspects of society. Writers like Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherríe Moraga, Ana Castillo, and Emma Pérez confront, from an interdisciplinary approach, the heteronormative, heterosexist, and homophobic aspects of their culture. Examples of these confrontations can be seen in Carla Trujillo's anthology *Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About* (1991). This anthology provides invaluable insight to the thoughts, actions, and feelings expressed by Chicana Lesbians. The anthology is developed around themes of "The Life," "The Desire," "The Color," and "The Struggle" Chicana lesbians express their relationships with women and, just as important, their relationships with themselves and their bodies. The use of various genres like poetry, short stories, personal narratives, and critical theory tell of an experienced considered taboo within the Chicano and Chicana community. They expose the

heterosexual imposed disconnection from their bodies, their subjectivity, their relationships and their vivid attempts to reconnect outside of heterosexual ideologies and hegemonies.

Gloria Anzaldúa's seminal work *Borderlands/La Frontera The New Mestiza* (1987) breaks free from traditional discourse on feminist identity. Her piece "La conciencia de la mestiza" is arguably the most noteworthy piece on Chicana Feminism. This essay is the most cited and read essay of her work. Though considered by many as an example of postmodernism, she both adheres to this claim and subverts it. If her text is postmodern, it is a historical postmodern, meaning she demonstrates what most mestizos and mestizas understand that because of the history of colonialization, mestizos and mestizas have always been involved in a postmodern subjectivity. She moves beyond what many consider the beginnings of Chicano and Chicana history (1848 and the end of the Mexican-American War). Her ability to reclaim her indigenous culture and explore her interpretation of indigenous history has been criticized for either cultural appropriation or blatant misrepresentation of history. Whatever the case, this amazing woman, who will be sorely missed, provides an alternative to the definition and use of heterosexual and patriarchal power that still mystifies many readers. For me personally, her writings provided me the possibility to develop the courage to face my own involvement and privileges of heterosexual and patriarchal power. I will miss her presence and the possibilities she would have developed. Ana Castillo's work emerges as one of the most significant influences in my life. Her positioning as a theorist, a poet, a cultural critic, and a novelist broke new ground in how scholarship can be perceived. Among her most important works are "*The Mixquiahuala Letters* (1992), *So Far From God* (1994), and *Massacre of the Dreamers: Essays on Xicanisma* (1995) confront various forms of domination and liberation.

I remember the first time I read *The Mixquiahuala Letters* I felt attacked as a man. The



male characters in the novel seemed stereotypical and cardboard cutouts of male subjectivity. The second time I opened my mind to the possibilities of my involvement in the patriarchy found in the male characters. The third time, I was faced with seeing, in every male character, the patriarchal and heterosexual thoughts and actions involved in my life. The two female characters, Teresa and Alicia, meet each other in a class while vacationing in Mexico. This chance meeting develops into a lifelong friendship that is developed in Mexico and the United States that patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality disrupt and creates conflicts among the two of them. They seek a relationship with a man, even at the cost of their own subjectivity and health. In doing so, they miss the opportunity to developed an intimate relationship with each other. This narrative of the problems the two women faced exposes the problems most, if not all, women face by existing in a heterosexual and patriarchal society. From her work, I gain the courage to begin to explore my involvement in heterosexuality and patriarchy that demanded of me the need to be critical of my history and future. The La Virgen/La malinche piece is heavily influenced by Castillo and some of the images I bring are directly related to The Mixquiahuala Letters.

Emma Pérez' *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (1999) presents a groundbreaking achievement in historiography discourse. She addresses the problems with standard historiography and presents a alternative approach, one that attempts to not only politicize historiography, but one whose political involvement addresses the most dire need for anyone dealing with the influences of the colonial project—the need to begin the decolonization process. She asks a key question in her introduction, “How do we identify a decolonizing, postcolonial, or oppositional method?” (4). The importance of this endeavor should not be underestimated. I have felt for a long time that decolonizing mind and body should be at the heart of Chicana and

Chicano scholarship. Her work attempts to locate Chicana Historiography in what she calls the “Decolonial Imaginary,” which is the time lag between the colonial and the decolonial and this location the decolonial is “within that which is intangible,’ while the imaginary “conjures fragmented identities, fragmented realities, that are ‘real’ but a real that is in question” 6). Hope may provide I way to see the “real in question” by connecting thoughts, actions, language, and rhetoric to hope in order to see if the “real in question” relates to hope of distorted forms of hope. What Pérez offers is a possibility to be involved in a decolonial project while remaining a position within the colonial traditions of the academy—in other words, to subvert the system from within the system.

Cherrie Moraga’s most widely read texts are *The Last Generation: Prose and Poetry* (1993) and *Loving in the War Years: lo que nunca pasó por sus labios* (2000). These two texts develop from a personal exploration of a Chicana born out of an interracial marriage. She addresses the ways in which she confronted her race, gender, and, above all, her sexuality. *Loving in the War Years* is perhaps her most widely read text and shows her acknowledgment of a cultural filled with injustices and just as full of resistance to the injustices. In this text, she employs poetry, prose, critical and cultural theory in a way that makes the personal political. In her *The Last Generation*, I find her work on “Queer Aztlán a piece that addresses the need to decolonize Aztlán from the patriarchal cultural nationalism that was the first to develop the concept of Aztlán. Her Aztlán attempts to free Aztlán from the borders of gender, race, class, and sexuality. It becomes an Aztlán where the queer is accepted and where an indigenous social order direct the social order.

Pérez, Anzaldúa, Moraga and Castillo also present an alternative type of scholar— a scholar working within many different genres. They are scholars, poets, cultural theorists,

novelists, and activists. They meld together the creative freedom found in poetry and fiction with the critical investigation required by scholars. They often present these combinations in their work as seen in Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Castillo answers her critics whom feel her scholarship is less than should be expected by reminding them that she is first and foremost a poet and since no one denies her ability to express her ideas in poetry; she feels this should apply to her scholarship. All scholarship has its flaws, its misconceptions, and its adherence to hegemonic myths. While scholarly critiques of Castillo and Anzaldúa have a place in analyzing their work, their seemingly "lack" of legitimate scholarship should in no way be used as an excuse not to address the critical nature of their works nor the critical questions raised in their works.

This inclusion of Chicana and Chicana lesbian feminist thought hasn't been lost on every Chicano. Some have the courage to include feminist thought into their work in a non-tokenizing way. These writers like Ilan Stavans' *The Hispanic Condition: The Future Power of a People* (2001) and *Bandito: The Death and Resurrection of Oscar "Zeta" Acosta* (2003) investigate machismo in a more critical manor and tone. No longer tied to the Corky Gonzalez' macho of the movimiento nor to the inferior Mexican of Paz, Stavans attempts to bring to light how machismo relates on a cultural level. In doing so, Stavans provides an additional aspect to the discourse on machismo by bringing latino, not just Chicano, experiences. In *Bandito...* Stavans appears ready to critique the experiences of Acosta in a way that seeks to critique the nuances of Acosta's life and involvement in the Movimiento. Yet, while he does critique Acosta's machismo, he does so by never addressing machismo connection to patriarchy. His strongest critique of machismo comes out of his essay "The Latin Phallic." Ramon Gutiérrez is another Chicano who has taken up the challenge to address machismo in critical way. His book *When*

*Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (1991), and his essay on Chicana scholarship "Community, Patriarchy and Individualism: The Politics of Chicano History and the Dream of Equality" (1993) demonstrate the ways in which the Chicanos in this latest wave address machismo with a feminist perspective. The key aspect of this wave is how these Chicano writers risk exposing the cracks in hegemonic patriarchy from the inside. "*When Jesus Came...*" explores the Spanish Colonial period in Northern Mexico and plays particular attention to the development of honor. Here we see honor as a commodity controlled by the Spanish elites: "Honors, as well as the concept of honor as a moral code, were elements of a feudal patriarchal ideology employed by the state to bolster its own power, to legitimate the rewards it granted persons for service to the monarchy, and to sanctify the reality of unequal power relationships in society" (226). This dispels the idea that honor is a social positive attribute available to everyone who has contributed to the collective. He also brings in how honor developed not through peaceful and benevolent actions or with physical aggression used to protect the community. Honor itself develops out of violence and is afforded to those serving in the military, especially in the post 9-11 United States. Guterrez states, "Conquest, domination, and protection were marks of human excellence; they were qualities that maintain the patrimony and perpetrated an honored image of the self over time" (226). The need to understand the underlying motivation of honor works to expose the ways in which honor is accorded to men that differs from the ways in which honor is bestowed upon women. Women were the people honorable men scrutinized most intensely in their households: "Since it was through the female's childbearing capacity that the family was reproduced, and maternity was undeniable while paternity was not, males attempted to strictly supervise their females' sexuality. The seclusion of a wife, daughters, mother, and sisters, and

the high symbolic value placed on premarital virginity, helped accomplished this” (235).

The bestowment of honor upon women derives from the ideals of femininity and motherhood and draws off the virgin/whore dichotomy. Honor is bestowed on women because they adhere to patriarchal constructs of the “good” woman. This demonstrates the ways in which honor is controlled by men and the difficulty women face as they attempt to bestowed honor upon each other. A major shift occurs in the latest moments of this wave. The shift focuses on rhetoric and language as the compelling nature of the construction of identity. As Sarah Mills explains Feminist theory is intensely involved in questions over access to discourse, since it is clear that women frequently do not have the same access as men to speaking rights...”(Discourse 97). Writers like Gloria Anzaldúa and Emma Pérez address the ways in which confronting machismo must include the nature of language and rhetoric. Mills adds to this by stating: Feminist theory has thus significantly modified the notion of discourse by setting it more clearly in its social context and by examining the possibilities of negotiating with these discursive structures. Using the notion of discourse has made that task of constructing political agendas and courses of action far more difficult, but it has enabled feminists to construct scenarios for social change and subject positions for active women as agents (Mills 103). Anzaldúa’s “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” and Pérez’ “Sexuality and Discourse: Notes from a Chicana Survivor” provide two excellent insights into the nature of language and rhetoric.

Each addresses the issues of language and rhetoric but each with a different style. Anzaldúa, as with much of her writings, works outside of traditional academic frameworks, while Pérez takes a more traditional approach. This is significant because it reminds us of the need to allow for multiple forms of expression, as Pérez notes “un sitio y una lengua.” (a site and a language). Sarah Mills expresses one possibility for the need of a site and language:

There are institutionalized constraints here which serve to silence women in terms of public speaking. This is not to suggest that women are simply incompetent speakers, but that discursive structures are sites where power struggles are played out. In mixed-sex conversations which take place in the public sphere, certain discursive rules prevail and they are generally those which are more in line with masculinist competitive norms of speech (Mills discourse 97-98).

The 70s and 80s shift concerning the discourse on machismo involves that for Chicanos, the inclusion and validation of Chicana scholarship must now be taken into account as Mills continues, Discourse structures are discontinuous; that is, they change over time because of women's resistance to them and because of changes in social structures. Also, since discourse is something you do (rather than something to which you are subjected), engaging with discourses of femininity constitutes an interactional relation of power rather than an imposition of power (Discourse 88).

The rise in Chicana scholars pressured Chicano scholars into including Chicana scholarship in order to have their work to be validated. The feminist activism arising from the Movimiento moved from the meeting and living rooms to the halls of the academy. No longer could Chicano activist and scholars ignore or invalidate the ways in which Chicanas sought freedom from the machismo embedded in the Movimiento. Feminist theory has thus significantly modified the notion of discourse by setting it more clearly in its social context and by examining the possibilities of negotiating with these discursive structures. Using the notion of discourse has made that task of constructing political agendas and courses of action far more difficult, but it has enabled feminists to construct scenarios for social change and subject positions for active women as agents (Mills discourse 103). This shift towards rhetoric provides

a compelling look at the dominarion of machismo. It moves us beyond personal interactions and social structures to see how important language is when dealing with machsimo. Without an emphasis on rhetoric, most of us are relegated to reinscribing the very nature of patriarchal oppression

Ray González' anthology *Muy Macho: Latino Men Confront Their Manhood* (1996) marks a significant addition to the works on machismo. By including an interdisciplinary and multiethnic approach using personal narratives, historical interpretations, and masculinity theory developed from Latinos, his anthology breaks free from the traditional academic approach. The reader is exposed to various perspectives on the common theme of machismo. González acknowledges how his anthology in the first attempt by Latinos to discuss personally their relationship with machismo. Including writers from different ethnic communities and a multigenerational approach, a personal account of machismo emerges. Like much of this wave of scholarship, machismo is seen as a complex concept that often provides a deep sense of uncertainty, anger, and hostility. Rodolfo Anaya's and Ilan Stavans's theories on machismo present machismo as problematic, insightful, and destructive natures of machismo. Elías Miguel Muñoz, Martín Espada, Leroy V. Quintana, Ray González, Virgil Suárez, and Alberto Álvaro Ríos explore the relationship with fathers and father figures. Dagoberto Glib, Omar S. Casañeda, Juan Felipe Herrera, Jack López, Luis Alberto Urrea, Ricardo Pau-Llosa, Rene Arroyo, and Luis J. Rodríguez explore the dynamics of their involvement in and growth through machsimo. Another key element of this lastest wave on Chicanos writing about machsimo comes from the inclusion and, more importantly, the acknowledgment and legitimization of the gay Chicano. Writers like David William Foster provide the possibilities of this need for additional Gay voices and literature. In his work, Foster explores the homoerotica found in gay and lesbian Chicano and

Latino culture.

Foster expresses his distinction between gay and queer: “I use gay to refer to a set of sexual identities that refer to a preference for same-sex erotic relations” and “Queer, by contrast, has come to signify the critique of the heterosexist paradigm” (7). This distinction can play a key role in discussion on machismo. By queering machismo, we may be able to expose “heterosexist paradigm” embedded in machismo because of machismo’s relationship to constructed masculinities but, more importantly, machismo’s relationship to patriarchy.

Foster expresses how queering the gay and hetero challenges any stable identity and causes concern for men and women seeking a stable identity. Foster states,

On the one hand, queering the patriarchy makes it possible for a gay identity to detach itself from the imperative of heterosexism in a systemic and theoretical way (rather than only as an oppositional stance that gay politics paradigmatically promotes, with the rather suspect binary of straight versus gay). But on the other hand, since the queer questions the gay. As much as it questions any and all notions of stable identity, it is often viewed as a threat to gay identity, dissolving it back to a nonidentity of heteronormativity (10).

The ways in which Foster and others challenge the notion of a stable identity fits into the notion of a borderland identity. It allows for studies on machismo to play within the fluid and contested regions of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Queer studies opens up avenues of connections from where a mapping of intricacies and influences can lead away from the colonial imposed dualities and binaries. It allows for one of the final steps in the progression of machismo discourse.

The next element in this review deals with the decolonial approach. For me, if Chicanos



and Chicanas are ever going to begin a process of rejuvenation that can lead us all towards new and creative futures, then a decolonial attitude is needed. This “attitude” can be seen in Gloria Anzaldúa’s “Mestiza Consciousness,” Cherríe Moraga’s “Queer Aztlán,” Emma Pérez’s “Decolonial Imaginary,” and Ana Castillo’s “Resurrection of the Dreamers. The time seems appropriate to begin a process by which a decolonial imaginary can begin. Though these writers only begin to describe what will be needed, if Chicanos and Chicanas can work towards the possibilities, they do provide hope for a future unencumbered by the oppressive and exploitive aspects of the colonial process.

Well it may be that the scholarship on machismo is relatively new, it is extensive. So extensive, in fact, that machismo can no longer be an accepted aspect of culture. Machismo is about power: the power to control, at the very least, the negotiations occurring among Chicanos and Chicanas.

To seek a clearer understanding of the construction and influential nature of machismo, the work must continue. The writers I included are by no means a exhaustive list of contributors; they do represent the trends in machismo discourse. The time is now for all Chicanos and Chicanas to risk, like the writers have, opening themselves to alternative new and creative futures and, by twisting Joaquin’s last words, We have endured, we shall endure!

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