“Indigenous Immigration: Latino identity and the process of Hemispheric assimilation”

In 2018, the influx of immigrants from Central America raised alarms of a national security crisis for the Trump Administration and human rights violations against immigrants for Latino legal aid groups. Within the rhetoric on both sides, the Indigenous immigrants constituted an invisible sector of the Latino immigrants from countries like Guatemala. With the lack of Indigenous language interpretation in both the immigrant detention centers and Latino advocacy groups, American Indians constituted an invisible minority within a minority that placed them at higher risk of receiving inadequate medical care, leading to the death of multiple Mayan children (Nolan 2019), of family separation, and discrimination in the workplace and education system once in the US (Hamilton 2018).

This essay will analyze the construction of Latinidad within the US and Latin America, and demonstrate how both share a common foundation of assimilating Indigenous peoples. The logics of essentializing Indigenousness with primitivity, of inevitable Indigenous extinction, and of “Mestizo nationhood” which have been weaponized against Indigneous peoples in Latin America, all ground real-world interactions of non-Indigneous Latinos towards Indigneous peoples. Ethnographic, autobiographical, and theoretical texts by Indigenous peoples across the Western Hemisphere are employed within a new theoretical framework of hemispheric settler colonialism: the models of nationhood and racial identity across Latin America and Anglo America (the US and Canada) constitute an ontological relationship against American Indian peoples’ existence and claims to land via cultural assimilation and/or physical genocide (Wolfe 2006). The category of “Latino/Hispanic” is a particularly important case study as Latin

American racial logics are questioned within diasporic Latino spaces as well as these intellectuals comparing Indigenous literature and academic work from Anglo America with those of Latin America. This essay will examine the erasure of Indigneous peoples through the role language plays for Latino immigrant subjectivity and how linguistic instances of Indigenous subjectivity complicates and even becomes superfluous to the racial narrative of Latinidad, because of inadequate Indigenous interpretation and Latino discrimination of Indigneous peoples in the US.

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Since the turn of the 21st century, the US is facing a shift that stems from south of the border discussed by journalists, politicians, and academics alike, most aptly described as The Latinization of the United States. Latinization is seen through two major shifts in the US: demographics and culture. By 2044, the demography of the US will see the White Anglos lose their place as the majority of the population, while the other minorities combined are set to become more than 50% of the population. With White Anglos becoming a minority, the Hispanic/Latino population will be the second largest minority of the nation at more than a quarter of the national population with 28.6% by 2060 (Colby and Ortman 2015). Culturally, the US has begun to become bilingual, with the most widely spoken language besides English is Spanish (Gonzalez-Barrera and Lopez 2013) and the US is now the second largest Hispanophone country at 52.6 million Spanish speakers, surpassing Spain (Burgen 2015). The US is only second to Mexico, with Mexico having 121 million speakers. From New York City to Los Angeles, Miami to San Antonio, the world described by Mike Davis's *Magical Urbanism* seems to be in full force from Latino street vendors to Latino Executives tuned into Univision and people speaking their version of Spanish from Puerto Rico to Peru, from Mexico to Ecuador. It

would seem as if English is the secondary language in *barrios* like Boyle Heights, CA or Jackson Heights, NY, where Mexican, Ecuadorian, Colombian stores and ads are visible at each corner. But, not all are Mestizo-Latino, there are Indians who do not fit into either Latino or Anglo. Where do these Indigenous peoples fit? With Mestizo-Latino academics and activists claiming that Latinos can "decolonize" the United States, what does this invisible minority within a minority find from Latino "Decolonization?"

Walking the streets of these Latino neighborhoods is akin to walking down streets in Mexico City or Bogota. It would seem that Latinization has opened up the US to one day become a Latin American nation. But, this is no multicultural paradise, it is a double-edged sword for Indigenous peoples, Indian peoples.

The Brown faces that bring Latin America upon their backs and souls may come from many countries with skin from all colors and shades, but each and every face seems united in that their beings are founded on *Español*. If you do not speak Spanish, you know family and friends who speak it and you all can relate in being from the world of the Spanish language (Oquendo 1995). Though it may seem that all these brown faces must speak English and/or Spanish, there is the forgotten Indians who live among Mestizo-Latinos. These Indigenous peoples live within Latino communities and can be functionally monolingual in an indigenous language since birth with little Spanish, or bilingual in an Indigenous language and Spanish (Coronel-Molina 2017, Machado-Casas 2009). But in *un barrio* there is space only for English and Spanish, and indigenous languages from Mixteco to Aymara have little place to be spoken and little respect by "other Latinos". So much is this so that many children of these Indians are separated from their languages, and begin to identify only with Spanish and English.

Indigenous languages, like all languages, are predicated on the use and lived nature of the language in daily life, be it with family or the wider local community to the level of the nation, or as Fanon describes it the national "*umwelt*" (Fanon 2008, 20). This lived communal experience under language holds the worldview in a clarity founded upon the generations of understanding that come from that community, a *Mitsein*. This *Mistein*, or Being-With, founded on knowing a language as one's parents or grandparents do/did which allows one to engage the world through authentic Indigenous worldviews. This Being-with, however, is also present even when one is outside of one's ancestral community. *Mitsein* for Indian peoples in a world where they traverse three worlds is founded on centering oneself in one's Indigenous identity. For Indigenous peoples like María, a Quiché from Guatemala who described Quiché for her as 'el centro de mi ser (the center of my being)' by which she can "be active with [her] community," or Carlos who described losing his Indigenous language of Pipil as 'killing who we are and our ability to do business back in our countries... our pueblos [hometowns]' (Machado-Casas 2009). The Indigenous languages they speak opens up the possibilities to be with an ancestral indigenous community and allows one to provide and act at home in the community.

But this *Mitsein* through language also occurs in the shared grammar, concepts, and metaphors that construct daily interactions either because they are highly detailed and visible, or go unsaid because they are common sense. The experience of lost-in-translation, where the translation from one language to another is done but there is a loss of part or all of the total meaning from the original language. This can be seen with the words "time" in English and "*pacha*" in Quechua. Both can be used for the same concept of things and events going through constant continuation and change, but in Quechua the word "*pacha*" also holds the meaning of space, where *pacha* can also be translated as space-time, world, or even universe. Here, a whole

world is lost in a narrow translation and even in the word "time" being unable to encompass concepts such as space and world together. In a colonial relationship, there are wrong assumptions that the colonized natives do not have the capability for abstract or "modern" concepts, such as the case of personhood and the inclusiveness or cultural mixture possible in meeting other cultures, though these concepts are very visible in words from Quechua like "*runa*" (person) (Grande 2015). To those who (re)learn Indigenous languages, there is a difficulty in coming to understand the world as an Indigenous ancestor does, but the tragedy comes from those Indigenous people who never feel the *need* to relearn or *ever live out* their indigeneity.

In the identification with Spanish and/or English, but not an Indigenous language, a shift in worldviews is created that must be seen through an intergenerational communal lens. This lens shows how the shift in identity is affected by the wave of immigration as a result of neocolonial violence affecting Latin American nations pushing Indigenous peoples out of their ancestral communities to the Spanish dominant cities, or out of the country altogether. In this way, the parents may be Indians but the children are not Indians living in Mestizo-Latino communities, but become Mestizo-Latinos themselves in identifying as Latino/Hispanic and Mestizo-Latino culture is what they will pass down. This Mestizo-Latino culture and its Spanish language will become the inheritance, and the Indian will be relegated to the past as a minor family detail or self-fetishized as "a once great people". But, this experience of an intergenerational shift, an assimilation, from Indian to Mestizo-Latino is founded upon two sets of conditions that will affect the continued relationship between grandparents and parents,who made the trek into the US with their living Indigenous culture, and the children, who deny their Indigenous identity so they can exist within the US or embrace Mestizo-Latino assimilation: (1) having Indigenous

languages seen as "irrelevant" in the US by both Anglos and Latinos and (2) daily racism by Anglos and Latinos which shames one in their Indigeneity so the language is hidden away so as to survive in these communities.

Indigenous Languages marked as irrelevant can be seen as the "passive" side of assimilation whereby the conditions for the Indigenous languages to survive are low. This is due to two reasons: (1) the lack of cohesive Indigenous communities in the US, and (2) the pragmatic value of Spanish and English in Latino communities. In an NBC article titled "With Migration, Indigenous Languages Going Extinct" (Sesin 2014) the cases of Indigenous families are seen through this inter-generational lens in how language shapes one's identity, and thus the shift from one to another. The case of Juana Sales, a Mam speaking Maya woman, and her family shows the vulnerability of imparting many indigenous languages to children, since languages like Mam are "critically endangered of becoming extinct." Languages such as Mam become threatened on both sides of the border from the lack of Indigenous language speakers, with Indigenous immigrants on the US side going to different communities, many across state lines, to find the best living conditions. These immigrants, many of them undocumented, cannot return to their home villages with their children due to the heavy policing of the borders and the threat of not being able to cross back to the US (Coleman 2007) On the Latin American side, mass migration due to heavy economic stress, such as with NAFTA pushing out many Mexican corn farmers unable to compete with subsidized US corn crops, can lead to populations many leaders of the community leave to find work and provide for the community from afar (Tzintzún et al. 2014, Sesin 2014).

For others, the primary reason children do not learn Indigenous languages is because it is better to only know Spanish and/or English in Mestizo-Latino spaces. In "English as a Second

Language" (ESL) spaces, the teachers often assume Indigenous students are Mestizo-Latinos who speak only Spanish, and in order to teach them they make the student forgo Indigenous languages such as Otomí to focus solely on Spanish and English (Machado-Casas 2009, Machado-Casas 2012). This can also be because of convenience, where children such as Agustin Hernandez who knows Mixteco and Spanish, yet only speaks Spanish because 'I prefer Spanish. I express myself better in Spanish, I like Spanish, and I feel more comfortable in Spanish' (Sesin 2014). This focus on Spanish is a departure from Mixteco, as Spanish becomes the language he sees merit in practicing and expanding on and it becomes the language others will see him through. This Spanish worldview becomes his primary lens; where his father grew up primarily with Mixteco and he sees it as his foundation in a world also involving Spanish and English, Augustin sees Spanish as his foundation and from here he engages Mixteco and English as foreign, as Other. However, this otherness is different, for English is the language of prestige in the US, and Mixteco is worthless to both the US and Mexico, therefore it is forgotten or abused.

On the matter of Abuse, the "active" side justifies the move from Indian languages to Spanish through "choice." This is a common reason given by those who want to be Mestizo-Latino but can never escape having been Indian. They "choose" to speak Spanish not because they are more comfortable in it, but because their Native tongue just cannot measure up to Spanish's prestige. It is more aptly called shame, or fear when physical violence is involved. Shame pervades the minds of many Indigenous peoples who immigrate out, as they have been abused physically and psychologically for not speaking Spanish. The violence that creates shame is done by both White-Anglos and Mestizo-Latinos. However, according to Juan Hernandez, a Oaxacan Mixteco, said "most of the people who discriminated against him were Spanish-speaking Latinos who held managerial positions" and would threaten to have him "fired" if he

could not take their abuse. This violence does not end in the workplace, for it involves children in class, who may see someone who is "short and has dark skin," and proceed to bully them by shouting "'*Oaxaquita*' and '*indito*'" [Little Oaxacan and Little Indian] (Esquivel 2012). One child, the son of Elvia Pacheco, was bullied by his middle school teacher and returned home threatening to kill himself if "she made him go to school again" and told his mom 'You embarrass me.' The child, branded as socially dead, would choose to die rather than to be Indigenous; it is the internalization of "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" in the mind of a middle school child. To secure his subjectivity as a student, he gives up his Indigenous identity, following the logic of the Indian boarding schools from which this mantra of assimilation was born.

Truthfully, both these sides are active, since the forces that would create a hegemonic Spanish speaking culture stems from the view of Latin America as adopting Spanish from the colonial age, and the view of Indian peoples as primitive savages who hindered national progress. Where many Indigenous peoples internalize this and hide their Indigeneity completely for "fifteen or twenty years" (Mendoza-Mori 2017, 47) or even their whole lives. This is visible in how many of the cities of Latin America are primarily Spanish speaking, and many Mestizos' hostile nature towards Indigenous peoples. They resemble the situations in US Mestizo-Latino cities because Latin America is the model that Mestizo-Latinos knew and thus shaped in the US. The violence that occurs in the Latin American cities are the sites where Indigenous identity begins to retreat to make way for Spanish. These also become the first experiences that shape the move to the US, where Indian peoples encounter a majority Spanish-speaking Mestizo population.

In an interview with the Kichwa leader Nina Pacari, she describes her childhood and young adult life and its relationship with radical and linguistic discrimination . Her experience in grade school was marred by a rejection of her intelligence where in the selection for a "book reading contest," she was "their best student" and "the school had to be represented by the best student," yet "nevertheless, I was not chosen to represent the school in the contest. I felt this was racism. It was a world where excellence was not acknowledged" (Pacari 2008, 280). The rejection of being able to read a book is a recreation of the Indian as associated with illiteracy. By association with being Indigenous and speaking Kichwa, she was categorized as being unfit to take on the role of a literate Indian, let alone the example of rationality that Mestizos ought to aspire towards.

This continuation of literacy continued when she moved to Quito for university. Trying to enter into a restaurant with other Indigenous friends, she was denied entry. The discussion between them to find a solution was that 'we must bring books if we want them to believe that we are students" by which "even though we are still Indians, if we were seen with books, we were perceived differently. In fact, we were immediately admitted into the restaurant" (281). In this performance of being students, Pacari had been able to play with the ambiguities of Indianness and Mestizoness. The books were a status symbol of rationality that showed both literacy in Spanish and the assimilation into Western models of education. Under Quispe's dichotomy of Indianness /White-Mestizoness, Pacari's mastery of Spanish had seemingly shown a move to overcoming the negative value of ignorance that is tied to Indianness, and actively comport herself as a Mestiza; a move towards whiteness that may practically guarantee herself the image of being Mestiza.

Yet, the linguistic implication of this is that the Indian and Indigenous languages hinder an acceptable Western rationality that is tied to language. The stereotype of the Indigenous Andean who mistakes the vowels "o" with "u," and "e with "i", or cannot pronounce "b" but says "w" (ex. "Bolivia" said as "Wuliwia"), indicates a linguistic affiliation with Quechua or Aymara; of being ontologically corrupted by even knowing Indigenous languages. In being a student and being literate, the White-Mestizo world begins to perceive this as the move towards whiteness or, even, of never having been an Indian.

This association of Indianness as diametrically opposed to literacy is amongst the first challenges of the radical *indigenistas* in the Andes. In *Tempestad en los Andes* (2017), Luis Valcárcel details the need for a "*rebeldía ortográfica,*" where the spelling Quechua words would no longer be linked to Spanish orthography, both historically in the case of written Quechua during the Spanish colonial era or currently of the "Academia [Mayor] de Madrid" (Vlacárcel 2017, 198-199). The goal of *Rebeldía ortográfica* was to create a self-sufficient alphabet and writing system that fit daily speech of Quechua speakers.

In this same vein, the Quechua intellectual Francisco Chukiwanka Ayulo proposed the "*Alfabeto syentifico Qeshwa Aymara*" which

> "Se abra dado al alma de los dweños naturales de esta tyerra el medyo más portentoso de qultura i perfejsyonamiento. No sabemos si así se abra resusitado a la libertad i a la sibilisasyon a todo un pweblo! i qyen sabe si asi la literatura propya de estos ermosos idyomas onomatopeyqos i ejspresibos de los matises más baryados del sentimyento i la ajsyon llegara a un grado de qultura que no podemos imaginar" (Francisco Chukiwanka Ayulo [1933] quoted in Peru Libertario 2017).*

Chukiwanka's hope was not to purify Quechua and Aymara from Spanish influence, as he recognizes that much of said languages' vocabularies "es tomado del qastellano" (ibid). Rather,

his project was more practical to Indigenous needs, as he sought to erase illiteracy by beginning from the daily uses of Quechua and Aymara, standardizing the orthography with a unified Quechua-Aymara alphabet, and integrating Spanish words so that they could be understood through the Indigenous writing system. This project of creating an organic education from the Indigenous languages both subverts the positivist project of approaching literacy through European influence, and of requiring the colonial period's writing system to understand Native languages. Read through this project, Pacari's survival tactics do not constitute the only process of negotiating Indigeneity, but of its potential in creating and reading Indigeneity as intrinsically capable of intellectual merit, now being gradually realized by Indigenous intellectuals in the Americas.

In Brazil, the presence of Indigenous peoples in the city of São Gabriel shows how internal migrations in Luso-America, have parallel colonial conditions with Hispanic Latin America. For the Tukanoan pan-ethnicity, the move into the city is already built with presumptions of their role as Indigenous peoples in knowing their languages and their view about other Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Within Brandhuber's article on why Tukanoans migrate into São Gabriel, he argues that Tukanoans internal conflicts amongst their own community (Brandhuber 1999). However, their access into the city, based on features of the Tukanoans's own history, constituted a self-constructed differentiation between themselves and other neighboring Native communities.

Following Independence in the early 19th century, clerics in Brazil developed the division between Tame Indians, who had adopted Christianity, and Wild Indians (Indios bravos), who had not converted and continued their traditional ways of life. (de Oliveira 2007). The official Brazilian policy then directed a paternalistic relationship towards the "Indios bravos" by

replacing wars with tutelary institutions, such as the Catholic missionaries and the representatives of the judicial system, to continue a "humane" civilizing project within the Interior of the Amazon.

In the case of the Tukanoans, they also differentiate themselves from the nomadic or "savage" nations around them, including the Makú and the Yanomani (Brandhuber 1999, 268). This division is based on the assimilation of Western education that came about with the earlier Salesian missionaries who constructed boarding schools in Tukanoan territories. This differentiation demonstrates how access to the city within internal colonial structures also becomes mediated by the racial superiority garnered in approximating oneself to Portugeuse as an emblem of civilization.

Though the most common narratives are seen through Indigenous immigrants and their children in the United States to life in the US, the ancestral communities of these Indigenous immigrants have a view of these diaspora children. One such perspective comes from Felipe Quispe, an Aymara revolutionary from Bolivia and a leading Indigenous intellectual. He describes the relationship the Indigenous community has with children of their Indigenous relatives living in other countries, of which it is a relationship of disconnect:

> The Aymaras who emigrated to other countries for work, to Spain, Argentina, the United States, even to the Bolivian lowlands, suddenly return with children born in those faraway lands who are quite "whitened" by Western culture, and they speak Spanish. They don't speak Aymara anymore and they cannot communicate with their grandmothers and aunts. They only make themselves understood by means of hand signs as if they were deaf-mutes.
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> All these behaviors are characteristic of today's Indians, "modernized" because they were born in foreign lands, and who furthermore have lost the Aymara style of walking,

> dancing, eating, and getting drunk. … You know and recognize that language is ideology, and ideology is thought. (2010, 292)

El Mallku's statement of "language is ideology, and ideology is thought" forces one to confront that an indigenous language, when it is affirmed as fundamental to oneself, opens the gate to embody both one's own and a communal indigeneity. The way language is able to communicate the reason why the world of Aymaras, and other Indigenous worlds, is as it is. This is why even if one physically acts like an Indian, one can still be a "colonized" subject because "the essence or the Indian presence of the ayllu" cannot be disclosed in its full wisdom to the Indigenous immigrant child by the community because the language holds the concepts and cultural knowledge witnessed through Indigenous peoples' histories (Quispe 2010, 292). Without the understanding of the significance these rituals have, the performances of Indian culture can easily become mere folklore. a spectacle that loses its common history, purpose, and actual ancestral performance without an Indian worldview. However, when done by elders with a proper understanding of the ceremonies, these rituals can be one of the ways Indigenous immigrants can begin to authentically re-connect with their Indigeneity (Delugan 2010).

However, language, and a lack thereof, shows a distance and the inability for an authentic relationship with both the community and the knowledge forged seen at the level of the body. The two sides having rationality and complex thought are reduced down to an infantilized relationship, where the most complex feelings the child can express are general need and surface level displays of emotion. This caretaker-infant relationship is unstable and will break down out of fatigue or is rejected because of its debilitating state for beings who are as rational as the other but unable to communicate it. In these situations one feels a disjuncture in one's self-identity and by the perception of the Self by the Other (Alcoff 2006). This situation is made all the more complicated as these "Others" are the very people that culturally and biologically shapes who

one is, the family. This disjuncture, born out of a colonial condition, can lead to the child seeking to live out Aymara culture in name, language, and being, or it can lead to the child's rejection of the community and to embrace of de-indianization. But, one's rejection does not erase this history lived out *in the present*, where an Indigenous child knows they are an Aymara, yet embraces Latinidad by rejecting their indigeneity. In being Aymara and yet embracing the worldview of the Mestizo-Latino, they becomes a being-for-others.

Some will argue that the child's choice is an authentic way of viewing their own being since they have not lived with their ancestors and only know Spanish. But first, I would have those critics refer back to the above section of this essay concerning Indigenous language death in the US. And second, this only solidifies Indigenous peoples as having to always disappear through a gradual cultural genocide where the next generation is less and less Indigenous than the last (Tuck and Yang, 2012). This choice by the child to return to their Indigeneity or bury and become a being-for-others under the Latino label is a choice made, in various situations and forms, by Indigenous peoples across América. These "choices" to reject oneself are never made within a vacuum and It is best summed up by this quote from Sartre (1992) in Being and Nothingness: "I am responsible for my being-for-others, but I am not the foundation of it" (475)

For Mestizo-Latinos, the aversion of Indigenous peoples to embrace Latinidad, to be(come) "Latino," can also be seen as an inauthentic response to be on the borderlands or in between two hyphenated identities. However, as described by families living in the US, the violence that grounds why one must learn and *identify* with Spanish and Latinidad is a colonial relationship where the borderlands resemble more of a homogenizing force than a liberating one. Mestizo-Latino hybridity is founded upon (1) the Mestizo as the mix of European and Amerindian, and as mixes between European, Amerindian, and African (Shorris 1992), and (2)

"Latino" or "Hispanic" as acknowledgements of the racial diversity of Latin America and making space for disparate identities within Latin America (Hernandez-Truyol 1994) and by forging a community from oppression in being Latin American and Spanish-speaking (Oquendo 1995). Latin American hybridity is expanded in Gloria Anzaldúa's work of *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987) and by subsequent authors such as Enrique Dussel (2005) with "the Borderlands" as the transgression of homogenous identities as Latina/os walk between multiple cultural, racial, and gendered identities in being both Latin and Anglo (United States) American. Although *Mestizaje* and has been used to critique the Eurocentric models of white racial superiority and purity, it has a colonial relationship for Indigenous peoples in the way its fluid hybridity can dissolve Indigenous worldviews and *Mitsein*.

Quechua author Sandy Grande (2015) places Mestizaje within a tradition of postmodern identity formation which transgresses subjectivity by a "refusal to prefer one language, one national heritage, or one culture at the expense of others" (473). Seen through the lens of postcolonial subjects, which Mestizo-Latinos claim through a primary identification with the Latin American nation-state, *Mestizaje* has historically and is currently done within a colonial framework that homogenizes Indigenous subjectivity within the frame of the nation-state (Shohat and Stam 1994). This fluid and hybrid identity is one that becomes problematic for Indigenous identity which is intimately connected to a grounded identity on ancestral land. This deterritorialization advocates viewing oneself as none of the singular racial identities that constitutes oneself in the present (Black, Indian, White, etc.) then reconstructing oneself within the mold of the model citizen of the Nation-state, the Mestizo. For, language becomes the field this is played out whereby his education in Spanish resembles the violence of the Indian boarding schools of the late 1800s. His education in an *hacendero's* estate required "physical,

psychic, moral, material, and spiritual torture" that did not create an organic process of learning Spanish under Aymara terms, but implanting a Spanish "brain" whereby the "literate Indian has two brains; one is poisoned by Spanish and the other continues to be Aymara. … There is no fusion of brains, nor fusion of cultures. One dominates the other" (Quispe Huanca, 293). The even and equal mix between two or multiple beings that the Mestizo can embody does not exist as it has already been constructed with a Spanish or Latin centric world as the being the world it engages with the Other in. The Mestizo is already constituted by its grounded and homogenous relationship that goes beyond race as homogenous, but not beyond worldview. For the Indian who has their being constituted in relation to a background of genocide, the conflict between Indigenous cultures and European Languages becomes a fight that is fought whether one is aware of it or not.

In Frida Rojas's account of Quechua immigration from Cochabamba, Bolivia, to Buenos Aires, Argentina, she illustrates Indigenous transnational and cosmopolitan life in neighborhoods such as Bajo Flores. Rojas offers the Quechua word *quepi* as an alternative metaphor of migration than the Spanish "mochila" that metaphorically carries homogenous Mestizo-national cultures from Latin America. The quepi opens up the influence of the " quechua, aymara, guarani quepi, and others" (592) from "Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay; and to a lesser extent, Uruguayans, Chileans, and Argentines from the provinces" (590). The retelling of that story through Quechua and other Native languages unpacks the homogenous narratives of Mestizo-nationality by expanding indigeneity as the transnational figure that does disappear immediately after leaving their ancestral lands.

Rojas's account gives two different movements of Indigenous language revitalization in Buenos Aires that come from affirmations of Indigeneity to national life: an insurgent

hybridization and interculturalidad. Rojas and the activist group Colectivo Situaciones contests the theorization of the city as unequivocally a site of language death, or a "cemetery of languages." In the cosmopolitan Indigenous experience of Buenos Aires and its ongoing language death of Indigneous languages, Rojas contends that Spanish is treading towards this death, as well. The development of Indigenous languages to "contaminate and ruin the syntax, the tones, and the modes of speech in Spanish" (592) becomes the site for a militantly hybridized Spanish that assures the mutual existence of all the languages at once.

This linguistic hybridization follows Jose Maria Argeudas's mediation on a national Peruvian language that fuses Spanish vocabulary and Quechua syntax. Argeudas argues that Spanish has hegemonic influence in national education and any writing in Quechua is a "limited literature and condemned to being forgotten" (Arguedas 1989, 26). What both Rojas's and Arguedas's projects have in common is conceding Spanish as the only viable lingua franca in public life for each ethnic and national group within Argentina and Peru.

The project to resolve Indigenous-Latino antagonisms becomes reduced into a project of linguistic hybridization founded on Spanish falls within Grande's critique of postmodern fluidity. This project deterritorializaes Indigeneity from land claims by removing subjectivity founded on Indigenous national claims and from ancestral relations with the assimilated Aymara child who cannot communicate with their uncles, aunts, grandparents, etc., except through infantilizing non-verbal means.

The model of *interculturalidad* becomes an alternative foundation to de-center Spanish as hegemonic in civil society. Interculturalidad is a political and educational program that calls for a cross-cultural education that affirms Indigenous and minority cultures as integral to national life as the national culture, and each is intrinsically valuable within their own cultural frameworks.

Rojas recounts that "a popular high school in my neighborhood debated in an assembly about why English was in the curriculum. So, these young folk rebelled and said 'No, we do not want to learn English, we have connections to our neighborhood and we want to learn to write Quechua, Guarani, and Aymara'" (Rojas 595). This declaration to choose to learn to write in Indigenous languages over English places the value of national life on its inherent diversity rather than a manufactured neoliberal cosmopolitanism that marks English as necessary for international commerce or travel. The choice for writing also seeks to overcome the passive violence that Native languages are impractical because they are oral languages. Formally teaching and learning Indigenous languages creates possibilities for expanding the field of official or public languages that provide access to resources such as work, government assistance, as well as cultural legitimacy that prevents the shame or impracticality towards Native language speakers (CONAIE 2014). Such a model of bi or multilingualism prevents the hierarchical and colonial logic that Spanish-only education attempts to uphold, which has turned Spanish psychologically toxic rather than as one aspect amongst a national polyphony.

To return to North America once more, the narrative of mixed-Nativeness and assimilation exists just as well within Canada, with the complexities of being Indigenous once one is assimilated and looking back at Indigeneity, rather than towards and against it. Brock Pitwanakwat, a mixed Nishanaabe from Canada who considers himself "(almost) assimilated," asks himself the same ontological question of "know[ing] something is missing, but I am not sure what" regarding his claim to Indigeneity. Describing his life as typically North American in the city with "too much junk food, too much television, … a formal education that instilled obedience instead of creativity " and a disconnect from Native ways of life for much of his life, the claims to being Nashinaabe or a non-Native Canadian comes from worries of not being

Native enough to be accepted for the community from which he claims his kinship. Pitawanakwat's answer comes about through his reading of Bonita Lawrence, stating "mixed-blood urban Native people are Native people for one clear reason: they come from Native families, that is … grounding a person as aboriginal" (163). This claim to his family as a matter of genealogy, rather than blood-quantum, means he makes claims to a collective history of the Nishnaabeg and a memory, both collective and personal, that connects him to being Nishnaabeg through his vital connection and lived nurturing by his mother and the absences in Nishnaabeg culture that would tie him to a culture of being Native.

In Pitawankwat's reading of Lawrence that "being Indigenous is not about place of residence, status, band membership, appearance, or language" opens up diasporic Indigeneity into the facticity of racial identity. Jack D. Forbes affirms that, in the case for Mestizos and Indians, "a person may still be Native American (of American Indigenous race [sic]), no matter what his or her social status or perceived culture" (Forbes 2008, 93). Forbes's statement challenges the racial ambiguity within discourses of Latinidad as border-crossing, epistemically transgressive, racially fluid, which subsequently locks Indigeneity from either incoporating Western cultural markers without negating an untouched Indigenous self or having to take on the specific Mestizo-Latino hybridity to register as an agent in modernity. Put into conversation with Pitawanakwat's reflection, Forbes's expansion of what Indigeneity can incorporate focuses in on a shared process of assimilation between the *Metis* and Mixed-bloods of Canada and the United States, between the *Mestizos* and *Caboclos* of Hispanic America and Brazil, and to all the other at once.

To conclude, future analyses of Indigneous migration must be grounded in a hemispheric discourse of assimilation and genocide that exists in the foundation of each country and their

projects of national consolidation. This is not a project of the city as colonial because of its physical infrastructure, since American Indians have traditions of constructing cities and urban living since before 1492 (Forbes 1998). The project is rather a focus on the different models of genocide which permeate national life in Latin America as influencing Latino racism towards Indigenous migrations and that this is not coincidental, but at the core of Latino identity which is founded on the affirmation or mixture of the already homgenizing national identities. Indigenous migration breaks down the old binaries of Anglo North America (US and Canada) and Latin America by revealing that Indigeneity poses an intrinsic challenge to the security and memory of Latino and Mestizo identities as complete project; as the oppressed Latino in Anglo America and, subsequently, the only challenge of Decolonization in the US and the Americas.

Notes

* [My translation] “The most prodigious medium of culture and perfectionning could have been given to the natural holders of this land. We do not know, as such, it would have resuscitated a whole people to freedom and civilization! And who knows if, as such, the very literature of these beautiful onomatopoeic and expressive languages of the most most bearded hues of feeling and action would arrive to a quality of culture that we could not even imagine.” (Chukiwanka Ayulo 1933).

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