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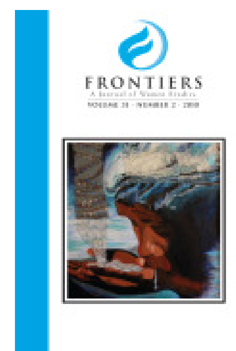

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Julia Sanchez's Story

An Indigenous Woman between Nations

RENYA RAMIREZ

> The Mexicans in town would say that we were Indians and the Indians would say that we were Mexican. It was very confusing. . . . I felt ashamed of being Mexican and Indian. You would see these pretty blonde girls with these dresses. You would wish, Why could I not be born blonde and light [skinned]? You know that image. You want to be white.
>
> Julia Sanchez, Interview, 26 April 1995

> Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the questions constantly: "In reality, who am I?"
>
> Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

This essay will examine the complex life story of a Native American/Chicana, Julia Sanchez, whose identity revolves around her experience as a person of mixed heritage.[1] She inhabits a blurred zone outside the United States, Mexico, Aztlán, and her own tribal community but not fully belonging within any of these national/cultural identities. According to Renato Rosaldo, cultural citizenship includes the right for people to be different and still belong to the nation.[2] It also involves the cultural processes by which subordinated groups interact with dominant notions of belonging. This view of cultural citizenship, the anthropologist Lok Siu argues, has been dependent on the assumption that people participate and are subjected to one cultural and political system.[3] Sanchez's narrative enriches and extends Rosaldo's notion of cultural citizenship because her life is shaped by more than one nation-state. Citizenship has also been assumed to be a white male enterprise where women are subservient to men.[4] With support from other Indian women, Sanchez becomes empowered and able to claim her Indian identity, subverting the

dominant constructions of identity in both the United States and Mexico. Her story runs counter to citizenship scholars like T. H. Marshall, Stuart Hall, and David Held, whose theories emphasize political and social participation within the nation-state and leave out the importance of women's relationships in the private sphere.[5] This essay argues that transnational as well as gendered perspectives must be considered within notions of cultural citizenship in order to create a world where women like Sanchez, who live between nations, can one day belong.

Before I tell Sanchez's life story, I must first discuss the relationship between cultural citizenship and Native Americans. Native Americans question prior notions of cultural citizenship because they are often fighting to assert their sovereign rights as tribal citizens within a colonial context rather than fighting for membership within the dominant nation-state. However, cultural citizenship, I argue, is still relevant for Indian people. For example, Annette Jaimes-Guerrero examines how tribal governments, altered by federally imposed governmental structures, have denied tribal enrollment to Indian women and their children.[6] Cultural citizenship is thus relevant to Indian women's struggles to belong in all community contexts and must be fully explored as part of an enlarged notion of cultural citizenship that includes the particularities of Native American experience.

Sanchez grew up as a migrant farm worker in central California and lived on the Tule River Indian reservation outside of Porterville for a few years in her early teens. Her mother is Mexican and her father is Yokut from Tule River Indian reservation.[7] Her family followed the crops around the Central San Joaquin Valley in California. She now lives in San Jose, California. She begins:

> I was born in Tulare, California, August 23, 1953. My parents were both migrant workers, so we moved around a lot. At first we used to go out in the fields to help them out, me and my brothers, but then as more kids came along, there were seven of us. I am the oldest of all seven. The more kids that started coming into our family, being the oldest, I had to stay home and watch them. I did not get to start school until I was already eight years old. My parents kept me home that long. We moved around a lot. We moved around the San Joaquin Valley, following the crops to Orange Cove, Reedly, Dinuba, Sanger, and Selma. I remember the grapes and peaches. My dad, during the off season, would do pruning.
>
> I just remember wasps and black widows when we used to do grapes. I was never afraid of black widows. I mean it was this thing you learned. You took it like routine. You saw one and then you would brush it off. And

my mother would always say to make sure your sleeves are real tight and you would wear gloves. After I got bitten I was deadly afraid of black widows. I could not even see a picture of one. When we moved to Fresno, my garage was full of them. I had chills for a half-hour when one fell on me. It used to be scary. You adapt, I guess, [when you work with them], but when one actually bites, and you are at your death, it is a different story. I have been bitten by wasps, and once I was so angry at my brother that he was not doing his share of the work. I was so mad that the sting did not do anything to me. When I told my grandmother about it she said, "It was probably because you were so angry that it probably did not take hold." I think I was more afraid of the wasps than the black widows. I guess because they could come at you at any place and sting you. It was always so hot. Really hot. When my parents had me stay home with the kids, at least I was not out there doing all that stuff, that work.

Both my parents spoke Spanish. My grandmother, my father's mother, had married a Mexican man. My great-grandmother, who was Indian, married a man who was Mexican and Chumash, who spoke Spanish. Back then being Indian was like it was not a very good thing to be. It is almost like a white racist person saying that black is the worst that you can be. Mexican people were really prejudiced against Indians. So, being that my grandmother was half-Mexican and half-Indian, I guess my grandfather was not too strong against it because he married her. But, she was not allowed to have anything to do with her Indian culture. That is one reason why my grandmother did not enroll her kids on the reservation.

My mother's side of the family was prejudiced against my dad. I can remember instances when they had big parties. My mother was allowed to go just as long as she did not bring her husband. When I think about it now, that had to be the reason why. It makes me so angry. I thought maybe that it was because my dad drank too much. Being the way that he was raised, he did not have any class. It was almost like maybe he was a little bit backwards. He did not have any manners and things like that. My grandmother on my mother's side of the family was more cultured, [she had] more class. I think that was what it was. It might have been they just did not like it that he was Indian. My dad was not really accepted. I used to think that it was because my dad liked to drink, but now that I think about it, they all liked to drink. They would all get together and drink. So what was the difference? Does he [my dad] get obnoxious? That is what it had to have been [that he was Indian]. They would have reunions, and they would all get together. My dad would be all upset, but my mother

could not go with her whole family, since her husband was not accepted. That was really hard. I could hear them arguing about it.

When we went up to [my dad's] reservation, we had a hard time. The kids on the reservation did not accept us too well either. We spoke Spanish and they said we did not belong up there. My oldest brother would get into a fight almost every day for almost a whole year. The [Indian] kids did not accept him. Every day after school, they would say, "You half-breed! You are just a dumb Mexican! You don't belong up here [on the reservation]!" They did not have a school on the reservation. We would have to go downtown, and, of course, all the kids from the reservation had to take one bus downtown. Knowing that they would call it "the Indian bus," the kids from downtown would call us Indians. They did not like us either. So what are we supposed to do. The Mexicans in town would say that we were Indians, and the Indians would say that we were Mexican. It was very confusing. That is why I teach them [my children] both their heritages. It does not matter what you are, just as long as you are proud of what you are. I wish my parents had done that with us. We would not have felt ashamed from either side.

My schooling [involved] not knowing how I got through from one grade to the next. It was really difficult for me. My dad would try to teach me things before I started school. But because we were moving around a lot, it got harder and harder for me. By third grade you are doing multiplication. I did not know mine. It was getting hard. I never noticed the teachers taking any special interest in me or in the kids who were having a hard time. I just felt like I was floating in the class, and they just kept moving me from grade to grade. I figure because of my age they did not want to hold me back. I was there, and that was it. There was no special help.

I felt ashamed of being Mexican and Indian. You would see these pretty blonde girls with these dresses. You would wish, "Why could I not be born blonde and light [skinned]?" You know that image. You want to be white. You would not get all these different racist remarks against you. It was hard. I did not feel any of that prejudice against me when I was that little. A year ago [I felt it] when I lived in Fresno. The neighbor came out and she called me a dirty wetback. I know it is still going around. It hits you. When my parents separated and I went to live with my grandmother, my grandmother was like, "Now you are just Mexican. Don't even mention anything about being Indian. Don't even talk about the Indian part!" I went to live with her in Dinuba. I was going on thirteen. My mother's mother was Mexican. She would say, "Don't talk about it." She would

look at me [in a glaring way]. I knew that I could not talk about it or anything. It was hard, when I enrolled in the Dinuba school district. My grandmother does not read or write English. I used to have to help her with the paperwork. We were filling out my ethnic background. I wanted to put down Indian, but I did not want to go against her. I went ahead and just put down Mexican. Part of me always wanted to do that [put down Indian]. My sister was rebellious; she was five years younger. When she went to high school she went ahead and put down Indian. She got all this help. She even got a grant to go to college. Why could I not be stubborn headed or strong willed and done it?

Now, I feel like I am Indian and Mexican. I am not ashamed to say Indian like I used to be. People used to make me feel like it was taboo to say that I was Indian. People react different. I have not gotten a negative response like when I was a kid. I still talk to Indian students in high school. They see a lot of negative things. When my kids go to school, there are so many Mexican Indians, Mexican mixtures. My son says that when he says he is Indian, no one says anything. He takes pride in who he is. His ancestors are a mixture of Mexican, Indian, and Irish. I feel my kids can be open about their culture.

I think when I moved here to San Jose [California] right across from an Indian family [that's when I could begin to tell others I was Indian]. They [my neighbors] were Sioux Indian. I told them I was part Indian too. I am California Indian. But I don't really know too much about it. I started going to powwows, and then I felt like I can do this. I can bring it out. I can talk about it.

When I first met Lorraine [at the Indian Center], right away she accepted me. Even though there are instances like last year, when I went to the Indian Center and I did not feel accepted because I am a mixture or because I am California Indian. When I met other people in these other groups, they accepted me. Like Maria Flores, she is Navajo and Spanish. I liked her right off the bat. She would talk to me in part Spanish. This is my kind of people. I grew up speaking part Spanish and part English. She says it does not matter how much Indian you are. Some of the people at the Indian education [center] over there, I asked them if they would teach my granddaughter Indian dancing. She is only about one sixteenth now. They say that they only teach up to one-eighth or more. I bring them [my family] over to this other center. If it is part of their family history, then they should know about it. This is at St. Phillips in San Jose, California. I had one person who is in our Alliance (an American Indian organization in San Jose) in the teacher awareness thing. He has pictures of his

> grandfather in Indian history books and says, "At least I know where I come from." I told him that I did not know exactly all [my] family history, but I knew that I was California Indian from Tule Indian reservation. He started saying that almost everyone wants to be Indian now. Another lady said the same thing when she came to her meeting. I said, "Yes, but there are circumstances where it was kept from you, and [I am] barely now trying to put it all together!"[8]

Sanchez tells her life story against a historical backdrop of changing conceptions of race, culture, and identity.[9] Dominant notions of citizenship supported by government policy in the United States and Mexico influenced the way in which Sanchez constructed her identity during her childhood. She was ashamed to be Mexican and Indian. Later in life, she started to reclaim her Indian identity, which both the United States and Mexico has tried to erase. Gender has become a pivotal category as she becomes empowered and speaks against the dominant constructions of identity that try to confine her.

Dominant conceptions of Indian identity in Mexico and the United States made it difficult for Sanchez to be both Indian and Mexican as a child. In the United States, Indian identity is viewed as primarily a matter of ethnicity. In Mexico, it is mostly a question of culture and class. Sanchez does not wear her traditional Indian dress or speak her native language, which is necessary to be considered a "real Indian" in Mexico. Therefore, she would be viewed as a mestiza. A mestizo is neither Indian nor white, but is considered to be a new race, a prototypical Mexican. This nationalist ideal dilutes any other ethnic identity and subsumes the citizen within the Mexican nation. Mestizaje is a nationalist model that embodies a pride in a legendary, static sense of Indian identity. In Mexico, any claim to one's Indian identity is completely ignored as part of the dominant narrative of mestizaje. To remain Indian in Mexico means rejecting a very powerful consolidating force within the Mexican national identity that recognizes Indianness but not Indians.[10]

On the other hand, claiming an Indian identity in the United States has drastically different parameters. If one is a member of a federally "recognized" tribe, one can officially claim an Indian identity. Sanchez is not an enrolled member of her tribe, even though her cousins are; she is not "full blooded." Indeed, the notion of the "real Indian" proves to be very important for Indians in both United States and Mexico in order to determine access to political rights and resources. In 1979, for example, because the Samish and Snohomish tribes of Puget Sound in Washington State were identified as being "legally extinct," they were not allowed to fish. Federally "recognized" tribes that had gained rights in 1974 for half of the yearly salmon catch in the landmark

federal court decision *Boldt v. the United States* challenged the struggle of the Samish and Snohomish tribes for their Native fishing rights. As one writer put it, "It boils down to trying to protect tribal fisheries from groups which the Tulalips [a recognized tribe] view as not genuine Indians."[11] Some "recognized" tribes feel that they are more entitled to resources than are "nonrecognized" groups because of the discourse of authenticity. This discourse drives a wedge between tribal groups along lines of "recognition."

In Mexico, narratives of authenticity disempower Indian people by decreasing the numbers who can legally claim their aboriginal right to the Americas. Alexander Ewen argues that estimates of the ratio of Indians who belong to a distinct cultural group could be as high as forty percent in Mexico. In addition, if a criterion utilized in the United States to determine Indian identity were employed in Mexico, almost ninety percent of the Mexican population has enough Indian blood to be considered Indigenous, if Mexicans knew their tribal ancestry. These figures demonstrate how the Mexican nationalist narrative of mestizaje has decreased the power of the numerically strong Indian population in Mexico. Ewen further argues that if mestizos in Mexico decided to identify as Indians, it could transform the political and ethnic composition in Mexico dramatically.[12]

As a migrant farmworker in the central San Joaquin Valley, Sanchez endured a childhood of poverty, racism, indifferent schooling, being ignored, and working in the fields under the hot sun, bitten by insects and covered in pesticide residue. She weaves throughout her narrative a sense of both Indian and Mexican identities. We learn that as a child her Indianness was denied and stigmatized, partly because her father was California Indian. Since her father was Indian and assumed to be an alcoholic by her mother's family, he was excluded from family events. Because Sanchez felt her Indianness through her father, she did not feel she fully belonged within her mother's family.

A fine example of the contradiction that the Indian part of Mexican identity represents can be found in Arturo Islas's *Migrant Souls.*[13] We witness this contradiction through Josie, the main character. The Indian is not really supposed to exist, but somehow stubbornly stays alive within Josie. Her Indian identity challenges the grand narrative as told by Mama Chona. Josie is seen as inferior because her negative Indian qualities are not up to the Angel family standards. Being Indian is tied to certain negative values, such as being uncouth, lazy, stubborn, and low-class. To be closer to the Spanish ways and culture is seen as better, more lady-like, even higher class. The family name, Angel, is a pun that alludes to the higher and lower strata contained within her Spanish and Indian identity. In this configuration the Spanish occupies a space closer to heaven and the Indian occupies a lower position. To take this one step further,

the Spanish represents modern man, who is at the highest level in Mexican society, closer to God and to civilization, and in stark contrast to the Indian, the premodern at the lowest level in Mexican society.

The Spanish brought with them the distinction between *gente de razón* (civilized people possessing reason) and *indios bárbaros* (barbaric Indians, who lack reason).[14] In the novel, becoming "decent people" means the hiding of one's Indian history and identity. The main character, Josie, is punished when she exhibits "Indian behavior," for example, when she puts her braid in her mouth and crosses her legs. Josie's mother is born with Indian features, but she powders her dark skin daily to appear as light-skinned as her sisters.[15] Likewise, for Sanchez, the Indian—the premodern—is supposed to be left behind and forgotten.

In both the United States and Mexico, the dominant narratives of evolution and assimilation have deeply affected Indian people, making their inclusion into the nation impossible. As a result of these dominant discourses Sanchez could either be viewed as a premodern individual on the reservation or stranded within the liminal space between the traditional and the modern in the city. Embedded in this continuum between the traditional and the modern is an evolutionary framework that places the traditional subject, who is perceived as being less civilized and ultimately inferior, at the bottom, and the modern subject, who is viewed as more complex and considered superior, on the top. This continuum is contained within an assimilationist model, which argues for the construction of a modern national subject who is culturally pure and homogeneous. Assimilation is based on the underlying assumption that less powerful groups must lose their separate identities and become more like the dominant group. Thus, in this assimilationist framework, Indians cannot have tribal culture and be modern at the same time. Indians do not fit within the construction of homogeneity enshrined by both governments. Moreover, in Mexico, Sanchez cannot be the prototypical mestiza—not Spanish, not Indian, but a mixture. In the United States, Sanchez does not fit the model of assimilation and whiteness that marginalizes all subordinated racial and ethnic communities.[16] Sanchez does not fit easily within either nation.

Sanchez's narrative is influenced by a national identity historically based on a notion of homogeneity in both the United States and Mexico. The political and ideological project of the federal government in Mexico after the Mexican revolution in 1910 was the forced integration of the Indian population into the nation for the sake of modernization. In 1917 Manual Gamio, the father of indigenismo, called for cultural homogenization of the country because he viewed the Indigenous population as an anomaly dating from pre-Hispanic culture. Without integration, he believed that Indians were condemned to live

in awful poverty and isolation. His ideas directed the attempts of the Office of Regional Population of the Republic and the Office of Anthropology to prepare the Indigenous populations for racial fusion, cultural integration, linguistic unification, and economic balance. In 1921 the Ministry of Education was founded to promote integration and linguistic homogenization throughout the country.[17] Teachers were sent out as missionaries to remote Indian villages to teach the Spanish language and Western culture.

Similarly, in the early nineteenth century the United States government created the boarding school system to assimilate Indian children so they would become suitable for incorporation into the nation. Indian children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in schools far away to be socialized to act more like white citizens. For example, Indian women were taught to dress and be subservient like their white female counterparts.[18]

The nationalism that contributed to these notions of homogeneity created a barrier to the inclusion of not only ethnic, but also gender diversity. Indigenous women in Mexico were described in the narratives of nation-building (enacted by the policies of indigenismo) as ignorant, connected to rural areas, or as mothers of the mestizo, the symbol of Mexican identity produced in the amalgamation of the Indian and Spanish races.[19] Indian women in both the United States and Mexico have been described in sexual terms as a means of portraying the fusion of white and Indian races. The tale of Cortes and la Malinche in Mexico and the story of Pocahontas and Captain John Smith in United States are narratives of sexual appropriation of the Indian woman by the European invader. These stories of sexual appropriation place Sanchez in a second-class category in both national contexts as submissive to the dominant European male that pursues her in accordance with male norms of conquest.[20]

Sanchez and her family are also affected by how race has been constructed both in the United States and in Mexico. The racialized discourses in both countries emphasize inferiority and superiority and revolve around agricultural metaphors of stock and breeding. This accounts for the term "half-breed" within Sanchez's narrative. Race as a classification is linked to biological origins, and group belonging is assumed to be determined by physical origins. Biological essentialism can also be seen within discussions of blood when blood is supposed to determine one's temperament, personality, and outlook. Sanchez's father was stigmatized and viewed as low-class. Her mother's side of the family assumed that he has problems with alcohol, even though they all liked to drink. Indian blood is, therefore, thought to cause one to become an alcoholic or be given to angry outbursts.

Sanchez and her brothers were also excluded because they were not white.

White settlers, who had brought their own hierarchical distinctions to America, saw the need to consolidate themselves as a homogeneous white racial category. The European nation became imagined as a homogeneous category of whiteness to further exclude people of color from belonging in the Americas.[21] Indian people, who were not white, were excluded along with other people of color. For Sanchez, gender, race, and class intersect. She could not be like the "white rancher girls," because of the color of her skin and because of her class status. She was relegated to work in the fields and lived in shacks provided by the white ranchers. As migrant workers, Sanchez and her family could never fit into dominant culture.

Sanchez's life story is also influenced by how culture has been assumed to be homogenous, pure, and static. The Mexican kids called Sanchez and her brothers Indians, and the Indian kids called them Mexicans. When they were children, Sanchez and her brothers lived in that blurred zone between nations, classes, and cultures.[22] Their mixed identity put them in the borderlands, between "authentic" identities, neither Mexican nor Indian. Ultimately, Sanchez rejected these dominant constructions of Indian identity and over time changed her conceptions of culture and identity. She reflected on her treatment as a child and decided to change her own assumptions and to teach her children to be proud of "both their heritages." She refused to accept the dominant notions of culture and identity as homogeneous, pure, and static and validates her children's experience of mixed identity.

Sanchez claimed the Indian part of her identity that governmental policy has worked to erase. She was able to tell a Lakota woman about her California Indian identity. Later, she felt accepted by others who are of mixed ancestry. She explains: "Like Maria Flores, I am Indian and Spanish. I liked her right off the bat. She would talk to me in part Spanish. This is my kind of people. I grew up speaking part Spanish and part English. Maria says it does not matter how much Indian you are." Finding other people who speak "part Spanish and part English," thrilled Sanchez. It gave her a sense of belonging that had been absent in her childhood.

Some, however, would argue that because Sanchez is not an enrolled member of a state or federally "recognized" tribe, she does not have the right to self-identify as an Indian. For example, David Comsilk, assistant director of admissions at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma, argues that tribal membership [in a state or federally "recognized" tribe] is the foundation of sovereignty and that self-identification is an assault on the group.[23] This determination of Indian identity does not include federal and state "nonrecognized" tribal members who are demanding that the government honor treaties never ratified so that they can become reinstated as sovereign nations. It also

does not take into account that tribal councils can be male-dominated, denying enrollment to Indian women and their children.[24]

Furthermore, tribal enrollment that uses blood quantum criteria is often inaccurate. Matthew Snipp, a Native sociologist, explains how blood quantum is based on censuses and other official counts conducted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Enumerators sometimes assigned blood quantum according to physical and behavioral characteristics. For example, a person might be determined to be full-blood if he or she did not speak English. Therefore, the accuracy of these censuses by modern standards of survey research is highly suspect, and determining tribal enrollment from these blood quantum records is likely to be flawed. Another problem with these records is that there were Indians who did not want to identify to the enumerator as full-blood because this label carried a powerful stigma.[25] As a result, today many Indian people cannot fit within official tribal enrollment guidelines determined by blood quantum. Thus, determining Indian identity based solely on enrollment in a federally "recognized" tribe leaves many Indian people out.[26]

Sanchez explains that her sister asserted her Indian identity because she was rebellious, and her rebellious attitude helped her sister become an active subject, allowing her to challenge the dominant discourse that says that Indian identity must remain silent and hidden. Sanchez wishes she had been rebellious like her sister because she would have also received scholarships and grants. Now she asserts her Indian identity when others insinuate she is not Indian, saying, "There are circumstances where it was kept from me and I am barely now trying to put it together!" In both Mexico and the United States, the Indian is supposed to disappear. She challenges the dominant discourse that tries to deny who she really is, and, like her sister, Sanchez has claimed her voice. She spoke up against the Indian man who questions Indians who do not have knowledge about their Indian identity. Her newly found rebelliousness enables her to become a subject rather than an object.

Empowerment for Chicanas, according to Inés Hernández-Avila, must include reclaiming the little Indian girl who is related to La Malinche. Hernández-Avila tells how the little Indian girl within the Chicana identity has been abandoned, ignored, and unloved. She also explains that La Malinche is the "one who opened her legs and in giving she gave over the continent to foreign control."[27] La Malinche, she argues, represents Mother Earth, the feminine aspect of this continent, which continues to be invaded, exploited, and tortured, similar to the treatment of Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas. Both Malinche and the little Indian girl must be reclaimed as active subjects who made choices within the oppressive framework in which they

have lived. Both of these symbols, she further argues, can be compared to the Chicana, who also lives in difficult conditions.

Hernández-Avila explains that within the Aztec tradition, La Malinche is seen as a path-opener, one who blesses the path with the incense from the sahumador (a clay-like vessel that symbolizes Mother Earth). In a like way; each Mexicana/Chicana could transform these wounds from dominant society and become like La Malinche, the path-opener, a warrior woman for her people. There have been many Malinches, according to Hernández-Avila, such as Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, Dolores Huerta, writers, poets, artists like Joy Harjo and Cherríe Moraga, and all undocumented workers. All have changed the wounds inflicted by dominant culture and transformed them into sites of healing and resistance. Hernández-Avila reminds us that La Malinche and this little Indian girl, who have both been cast out and hidden, must be reclaimed and valorized as symbols of Indian identity. She further asserts that the historical events used to separate Chicanos/as from their Indian identity can be reclaimed and used as sites of empowerment.[28]

Empowerment occurred when Sanchez began to reclaim the Indian within her. For Sanchez, the site of wounding, the denied aspect of her identity, became a site of healing. This points to the need to acknowledge the wounding experiences dominant society has inflicted on Indian people.

INDIAN WOMEN, PEER SUPPORT, AND CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

Sanchez's empowerment is also inextricably linked to being accepted and feeling encouragement from her female friends. Kathleen Coll, an anthropologist, argues that there is a connection between peer support, autoestima (self-esteem), and public collective acts, which are essential to Latina women's struggles for cultural citizenship.[29] Similarly, Sanchez's female peers encourage her to claim an Indian identity, an often stigmatized and negated identity within both the Mexican and United States national contexts. Sanchez's peer support reveals the relationship between the intimate world of the private sphere and Indian women's public struggles to belong. This gendered aspect of cultural citizenship challenges much of the literature on citizenship, which focuses on rights, entitlements, and social belonging in the public sphere within the context of the nation-state.[30] The sole focus on the public realm silences critical issues within the private sphere like domestic violence, which many Native American women must confront.

Sanchez's experience makes obvious the need for us to create a society in the United States where difference is accepted and validated. There needs to be spaces within the schools and the community where multiplicity is valorized.

Sanchez prefers to go to one Indian center where her granddaughter can learn to connect with her Indian ancestry even if it is "only one-sixteenth." This desire to learn one's culture, regardless of blood quantum, must be acknowledged in order for marginalized groups to connect within society. By researching our ancestral histories, we can realize that we are all connected through the historical processes that have occurred throughout the Americas. Sanchez's narrative shows the historical connection between Mexicans and California Indians. She believes that if those Indian children on her reservation, who did not accept her as an Indian person, could have known that their ancestors spoke Spanish, they might have understood the historical intermingling between Mexicans and California Indians. The reality of this intermixture is present within her own sense of identity.

The illusion of homogeneity within the United States needs to be dismantled, and heterogeneity must emerge as the underlying assumption that guides all programs within the schools and the community. In this way, Sanchez could become accepted as Native American and Chicana simultaneously. One strategy would be to increase the dialogue between Native American and Chicana/o scholars. We can compare and contrast Indian women's experiences in both national contexts. We can also work together toward disrupting homogenous notions of authenticity within both the Chicana/o and Native American community.

For example, reading the early history of Chicano studies gives us insight into how Chicano nationalism marginalized Native Americans in the United States. By creating a sense of homeland, by reclaiming territory that had once belonged to Mexico, the story of Aztlán, Chicana/o identity, and Chicano nationalism has been a very important challenge to the dominant assimilation discourse in the United States.[31] As a national symbol for Chicanos, Aztlán represents the southwestern part of the United States, composed of the territory ceded to the United States by Mexico in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. Aztlán also represents the spiritual union of the Chicanos with their indigenous roots. However, by claiming their Indian roots through a mythic story of an Aztec Aztlán, this early work of Chicano nationalists leaves out the historical presence of Indian tribes in the Southwest area.[32] For example, Rudolfo Anaya, an early Chicano scholar, does recognize the Rio Grande pueblos as the old guardians of the land in the Southwest (Aztlán), but then argues that Chicanos should be the new guardians of the homeland of Aztlán.[33] This displacing of Pueblo Indian tribes is problematic and points to the historical focus of Chicano studies on the relationship between the dominant and the subordinate group, without considering perspectives from other subordinated ethnic and racial communities.

In contrast, Laura Perez argues that Chicana feminists realized the early

imagining of Aztlán by Chicano nationalists was imperialist and patriarchal. They worked to construct Chicana mestiza identity (influenced by Native American philosophies) using ideals of interdependency and collective consciousness.[34] For example, in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza,* Gloria Anzaldúa reappropriates Aztlán, the borderlands, to include those who have been excluded by ethnonationalism. Like Hernández-Ávila, Chicana feminists have also reappropriated female symbols like La Malinche and recoded them to become resistant figures to patriarchal discourse.[35] In Borderlands, Anzaldúa focuses on reclaiming various Indigenous figures in a symbolic manner. This decolonizing process is very important, and I would suggest that Chicana feminists engage in more discussion and documentation of Indigenous women's history and contemporary issues. This could assist in Indigenous peoples' fight for their rights as well as deepen connections between Chicanas/os and Indian people.

In order for these connections to occur, members of Chicana/o student organizations could benefit from embracing notions of Chicana/o identity, which include Indian people. Federico Besserer, a lecturer at the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana-Ixtapalapa, conducted his fieldwork on the Mixtecs, an Indian tribe living and working in Mexico as well as California. In 1993, Mixtec Indians who were attending California State University in Fresno voiced their frustration to Besserer about the Chicana/o students on campus. Mixtec Indian students were trying to gain political support from a Chicana/o student organization on campus, but they were unsuccessful. The Chicana/o students did not view the Mixtec students as Chicana/o or as Mexican American because they were Indian and could not speak Spanish. The dominant Mexican national narratives of Indian identity confused these Chicana/o students. They placed the Mixtecs outside the Mexican nation as Indians.[36]

The Chicana/o students also placed the Mixtec Indian students outside of the Chicana/o nation. Because the Mixtec Indian students' sense of homeland does not embody the Southwest (Aztlán), they would not claim a connection to Aztec roots. Because Mixtec students do not speak Spanish, they do not fit within this essential component of an authentic Chicana/o identity. The Mixtec students could not be seen as "authentic" Native Americans, since they do not live on a reservation. Furthermore, their homeland is south of the United States–Mexico border, and they are not federally "recognized." They also do not fit within the Mexico mestizo identity. Because of these narrow definitions, the Mixtecs are unable to belong fully within the Native American, Chicana/o, and/or Mexican communities.

Sanchez and the Mixtec Indian students are living a transnational existence, outside an authentic Chicana/o and Native American reality. This suggests that

using authenticity as a criterion in order to belong is severely limiting. It does not take into account peoples' travel, movement, and senses of culture, community, and identity. Neither Sanchez and the Mixtec Indian students fully belong within the United States and/or the Mexican nation. Cultural citizenship for Sanchez and the Mixtec Indian students must include their transnational experience defined as including people who live away from a place-based sense of homeland.[37] This definition would include groups such as urban Native Americans and Mexican Indians, who live away from their villages. My definition of transnational also includes those who are of mixed ancestry and do not fit within homogenous notions of authentic identity as well as those who live between different tribal, ethnic, or other national identities.[38]

In order for Sanchez and these Mixtec students to belong fully within the Chicana/o, Native American, Mexican Indian, United States and/or Mexican community, their transnational existence must be understood and taken into consideration in the determination of citizenship rights. For example, Beserer explains that in his studies of the Oaxacan community of San Juan Mixtepec, which is comprised primarily of speakers of the Mixtec indigenous language, the population is geographically dispersed. Most live outside the territorial limits of the community, even though they continue to participate in political, social, and economic life. Thousands live in settlements in order to work in the United States. The people in these new settlements sustain communication and ties with their ancestral homelands in Oaxaca.[39]

Similarly, Sanchez's senses of Indian culture, community, and identity are not based solely on a geographical homeland, but include gathering sites in the urban area. This dispersed sense of home outside one's ancestral area must be recognized and included within discussions of citizenship rights. The Ho-Chunk Nation in the United States, for example, set up a tribal office in the Chicago area in order to serve and provide tribal citizenship benefits to its tribal members, who live away from the reservation.[40] Furthermore, in order to deepen our understanding of these transnational realities, Chicana/o and Native American Studies must extend their analyses to include experiences that cross national borders. Rather than simply focusing on the interaction between dominant and subordinate groups, more focused comparative work between racial and ethnic communities is needed.

Sanchez is now able to claim her sense of Indian identity that authenticity discourse, assimilation theory, and the federal government within the United States and Mexico have attempted to erase. Her narrative points to the importance of the influence of social support and solidarity between Indian women within the private sphere, which encourages them to make their claims within the public domain. In this way, Sanchez has helped break down the barrier

between the private and public realm within citizenship discussions. This challenges citizenship scholars, such as Stuart Hall and David Held, who have been primarily concerned with social justice and entitlement within the nation-state. Furthermore, since Sanchez does not fully belong within the United States, Mexico, Aztlán, or her own tribal community, her story enriches cultural citizenship to include issues of belonging to more than one nation. Additionally, Indians who live away from their reservations in the United States or villages in Mexico need to be considered in tribal and national citizenship discussions. There must also be more dialogue between Chicanas/os and Native American scholars about transnational citizenship issues so that Indian women who live between nations can one day belong. These discussions will redefine citizenship studies in particular and extend the gendered dimension of cultural citizenship.

NOTES

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1. Julia Sanchez is a pseudonym used to protect her privacy. Sanchez agreed to be interviewed as part of my dissertation research at Stanford University; see Renya K. Ramirez, "Healing Through Grief: Reimaging Culture, Community and Citzenship in San Jose, California" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1999).

2. Renato Rosaldo, "Cultural Citizenship, Inequality, and Multiculturalism," in *Latino Cultural Citizenship: Claiming Space, Identity, and Rights*, eds. William V. Flores and Rina Benmayor (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

3. Lok Siu, "Diasporic Cultural Citizenship: Chineseness and Belonging in Central America and Panama," *Social Text* 69 (2002): 1–28. Siu analyzes how the Chinese diaspora challenges existing notions of cultural citizenship, which focus on subordinated peoples' experience with a singular nation-state. Using the case of Chinese in Panama, she argues that analyses of cultural citizenship in the diaspora must discuss the community's participation and dual affiliation in the cultural systems of both the larger diaspora and the nation. Additionally, it must discuss the role of the homeland state in shaping diasporic identifications.

4. Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

5. T. H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development* (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1964); Stuart Hall and David Held, "Citizens and Citizenship," in *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s,* eds. Stuart Hall and Martin Jacque (New York: Verso Press, 1990). For a critique of citizenship theory, see Kathleen Coll, "*Autoestima*, Citizenship, and Immigrant Women's Activism in San Francisco, California," (paper presented at the annual American Anthropological Association meeting, San Francisco, California, November 2000).

6. Annette Jaimes-Guerrero, "Civil Rights versus Sovereignty: Native American Women Life and Land Struggles," in *Feminist Geneologies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, eds. Chandra Mohanty and Jacqui Alexander (New York: Routledge, 1997).

7. Yokut is a problematic term coined by anthropologists for many California tribal groups.

8. Julia Sanchez, interviewed by author, San Jose CA, 26 April 1995.

9. Renato Rosaldo "Changing Chicano Narratives," in *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon, 1993), 144–68. This chapter was especially helpful in providing me with a way to analyze Sanchez's life story.

10. Alexander Ewen, "Mexico: The Crisis of Identity," in *Native American Voices: A Reader*, eds. Susan Lobo and Steve Talbot (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1998), 101.

11. Timothy Egan. "Indians Become Foes in Bids for Tribal Rights," *New York Times*, 6 December 1992, 8.

12. Ewen, *Native American Voices*, 100–102.

13. Arturo Islas, *Migrant Souls* (New York: Avon Books, 1990).

14. Ana Maria Alonso, *Thread of Blood: Colonialism, Revolution, and Gender on Mexico's Northern Frontier* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), 62.

15. Renato Rosaldo, "Race and the Borderlands in Arturo Islas's *Migrant Souls*," (paper presented at the Critical Theory Conference, Davis CA, 25 April 1992).

16. For an in-depth discussion of the problems with this evolutionary and assimilationist perspective, see Renato Rosaldo, "Border Crossings," in *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis* (Boston: Beacon, 1993), 196–214.

17. Rosalua Aida Hernandez Castillo, *Histories and Stories from Chiapas: Border Identities in Southern Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000).

18. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

19. Lorena Martos, "Recasting the Historic Gaze," in *Gender Dimensions in Education in Latin America*, ed. Nelly P. Stromquist, (Washington DC: Inter-American Council for Integral Development, Organization of American States, 1996); and Hernandez Castillo, *Histories and Stories from Chiapas*, 27.

20. Mary Pratt, "Women, Literature, and National Brotherhood," in *Women, Culture and Politics in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 59.

21. Nations in Europe were imagined as being composed of homogeneous racial

stock. After 1814, national common origin was commonly described in terms of "blood relationship," family ties, tribal unity, and unmixed origin. See Hanna Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1951), 166. Daniel A. Segal, "The European: Allegories of Racial Purity," *Anthropology Today* 7:5 (1991): 5, 7.

22. Rosaldo, "Border Crossings," 196–217.

23. Jerry Reynolds, "Indian Writers: Real or Imagined," *Indian Country Today*, September 1993: A3.

24. Jaimes-Guerrero, "Civil Rights versus Sovereignty."

25. Matthew Snipp, "Some Alternative Approaches to the Classification of American Indians and Alaska Natives," (paper presented at the annual American Indian and Alaska Native Education Research Agenda Conference, Albuquerque NM 30 May–1 June 2000).

26. Jaimes-Guerrero argues that the United States federal government has used tribal enrollment criteria, such as blood quantum, to exterminate Indian people statistically. As there are fewer numbers of enrolled tribal members, eventually the federal government can get out of their treaty obligations and the "Indian business." See Annette Jaimes-Guerrero, "Federal Identification Policy," *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 283–95; Kimberly Tallbear, "Racialising Tribal Identity and the Implications for Political and Cultural Development," (paper presentation at the annual Indigenous Peoples and Racism Conference, Sidney, Australia, 20–22 February 2001). Similarly, Tallbear argues that the continued use of racial ideology, such as blood quantum and DNA analysis, by tribes and the government to bolster claims of authenticity could help fulfill dominant assumptions of extinction and/or assimilation. For example, the Western Mohegan Tribe has contracted to have their DNA analyzed to support their claims of authenticity. In addition, the General Assembly of the State of Vermont has proposed that DNA testing should be used to determine Indian identity. Tallbear argues that successfully adhering to this racial ideology is a difficult political strategy. For example, continued use of blood quantum could lead to tribal extinction as Indians continue to marry outside their tribal groups. This reliance on race and biology to prove authenticity could, therefore, eventually backfire on tribes. Indian people will then become like other people of color in this country; they will no longer have to be taken seriously as members of tribal nations or as the rightful inheritors of the land and its resources.

27. Inés Hernández-Avila, "An Open Letter to Chicanas: On the Power and Politics of Origin," in *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Writings of North America*, eds. Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 144–57. I would argue that this reclaiming of connection to Indigenous ancestors should not take away rights set aside for Indigenous and Native American groups.

28. Hernández-Avila, "An Open Letter," 144–57.

29. Coll, "*Autoestima*," 1, 2.

30. Stuart Hall and David Held, "Citizens," 172–88; Bryan S. Turner, "Outline of a Theory of Citizenship," *Sociology* 24:2 (1990): 2; and Coll, "*Autoestima*," 46–48.

31. Laura Elisa Perez, "El desorden, Nationalism, and Chicana/o Aesthetics," in *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalism, Transnational Feminisms, and the State*, eds. Caren Kaplen, Norma Alarcon, and Minoo Moallem (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 25, 26.

32. Luis Leal, "In Search of Aztlan," in *Aztlan: Essays on the Chicano Homeland*, ed. Rudolfo Anaya (Albuquerque NM: Academia/El Norte Publications, 1989), 8, 11.

33. Rudolfo Anaya in *Aztlán: Essays on the Chicano Homeland*, 231–41. I wish to thank Mishauna Goeman for a conversation we had on this issue on September 22, 1999. See Curtis Marez, "Signifying Spain, Becoming Comanche, Making Mexicans: Indian Captivity and the History of Chicana/o Popular Performance," *American Quarterly* 53:2 (2001): 267–68.

34. Perez, "El desorden," 25, 26.

35. Norma Alarcon, "Anzaldua's *Frontera*: Inscribing Genetics," in *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity*, eds. Smadar Lavie and Ted Swedenburg (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

36. Federico Besserer, "A Space of View: Transnational Spaces and Perspectives," (paper presented at the Transnationalism: An Exchange of Theoretical Perspectives from Latin American Africanist and Asian Anthropology Conference, Manchester, United Kingdom, 16–18 May 1998).

37. See Besserer, "A Space of View." He also argues that cultural citizenship must also include transnational perspectives.

38. I wish to thank Mishauna Goeman for a conversation we had on this issue of transnationalism in 22 September 1999.

39. See Besserer, "A Space of View," 1–20, for his discussion on transnationalism and the experience of the Mixtecs in Mexico and the United States.

40. Terry Straus and Debra Valentino, "Retribalization in Urban Indian Communities," in *American Indians and the Urban Experience*, eds. Susan Lobo and Kurt Peters (California: Altamira Press, 2001), 89–90.