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“This Land Is Holy!”

Intersections of Politics and Spirituality in Luis Alberto Urrea’s *The Hummingbird’s Daughter*

CHRISTINA GARCIA LOPEZ

Historically, the intersecting fields of Chican@ Studies and Border Studies have established areas of scholarship neglected in the academy and in that process have emphasized various forms and meanings of political resistance; and yet the spiritual dimensions of resistance have often been overlooked, risking erasure of a significant locus of political history. In answer to such oversight, the study of religion and spirituality is attracting more Chican@ Studies and Border Studies scholars, suggesting significant new directions for both fields.¹ Theresa Delgadillo’s *Spiritual Mestizaje: Religion, Gender, Race, and Nation in Contemporary Chicana Narrative* (2011) made an important intervention, demonstrating that literature functions as a significant site of representation and inquiry regarding the interplay of the political and the spiritual. Building on that premise, I examine Luis Alberto Urrea’s 2005 historical novel, *The Hummingbird’s Daughter*, for what its narrative reveals about these intersections as related to the transnational flows that have shaped the broader US–Mexico borderlands. Blending literary narrative, history, and biography to tell the story of famed spiritual healer and folk saint Teresa Urrea, the novel evokes the embedded relationship between politics, spirituality, and migration during the Porfiriato era. As the author brings “Teresita” and her community to life for readers, he simultaneously describes the Porfiriato era’s relationship with US interests, the state’s violent push towards modernization, and power struggles over indigenous land rights, all of which would eventually culminate in the Mexican Revolution and mass migration into the United States. Ultimately, I argue that, in its narrative representation of political conflicts over land rights during the Porfiriato, *The Hummingbird’s Daughter* functions as a form of witnessing to state violence and, further, highlights a complex, embodied

spirituality through which indigenous and mestizo peoples responded to state violence with contestation and counter-discourse.

I will focus momentarily on the framing of this narrative as transnational. Though *The Hummingbird's Daughter* was translated into Spanish as *La Hija de la Chuparroza* (2006), it was originally published in English, presumably for English-dominant audiences.² Set entirely in the northern Mexican states of Sinaloa and Sonora, it is only at the novel's end that we face towards "great, dark North America,"³ as the title character and her father, punished with political exile, hurtle towards the border on a train, a figurative symbol of modernity's forces. By ending where many Chican@ literary narratives might begin, Urrea forces readers to shift their frame of reference regarding historical and geographical parameters, encouraging us to resituate Chican@ literature in a hemispheric American context.⁴ While the novel's sequel, *Queen of America* (2011), centers on Teresa Urrea's life in the United States, the setting of *The Hummingbird's Daughter* in Mexico asserts to English-dominant readers the critical importance of moving south and beyond the US–Mexico border to amplify understanding of the historical relationship between both nations. Delgadillo observes the significance of this shift in national settings, as she states, "The fact that Latino/a fiction increasingly sets its stories beyond the borders of the US or imagines stories that unfold across multiple national borders reflects an intensification of Latino/a fiction's border-crossing identifications as well as the extension of a uniquely Latino/a critique throughout the hemisphere."⁵ Set in Mexico at a time that significantly determined the intertwined futures of both nations and later development of a Mexican American community, Luis Alberto Urrea's novel encourages critical readers to recognize this "Mexican" story as a hemispheric American one.

Here, I turn to Américo Paredes's term "Greater Mexico," originally coined in his 1958 work "*With His Pistol in His Hand*": *A Border Ballad and Its Hero* and later refined in his 1976 study, *A Texas-Mexican Cancionero: Folksongs of the Lower Border*⁶; in the context of the lower Rio Grande border, "Greater Mexico" acknowledges the interrelated histories and cultures of Mexican peoples on both sides of the border. Later, José E. Limón would use the term to refer to "all Mexicans, beyond Laredo and from either side, with all their commonalities and differences."⁷ Héctor Calderón would reiterate this emphasis in 2004, asserting that "the interrelatedness of Mexicans on both sides of the border is inescapable."⁸ Regarding emphasis on the border itself, José David Saldívar's *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies* (1997) stressed the importance of displacing traditional centers and margins in American Cultural Studies to understand the US–Mexico borderlands as a locus of cultural production, discourse, and knowledge.⁹ Ramón Saldívar's later work, *The Borderlands of Culture: Américo Paredes and the Transnational Imaginary* (2006), linked Border Studies, Greater Mexico, and transnationalism, arguing that Greater Mexico signals a "complex imaginary site for the emergence of new citizen-subjects and the construction of new spaces for the enactment of their politics outside the realm of the purely national."¹⁰ Ramón Saldívar further suggests that linking Paredes's concept of

Greater Mexico to a transnational framework “allows us to make sense of the new geographies of citizenship in an era of the emerging globalization of capital with its intensified flow of ideas, goods, images, services, and persons” (59). Working from this premise, I argue that, through literary narrative, *The Hummingbird’s Daughter* allows readers to make sense of spiritual epistemologies and practices as part of the globalized “flows” that created new citizen-subjects and politics during the Porfiriato. But moreover, as Urrea’s narrative expresses, spirituality functioned as a medium of resistance for pilgrims who made the journey to seek healing from “Teresita.”

Despite receiving many positive book reviews, the Kiriyaama Prize in 2006, and overall popular reception, *The Hummingbird’s Daughter* has yet to garner a significant level of scholarly analysis. I thus highlight the novel as a useful site of inquiry for Border Studies, Chican@ Studies, and transnational American Studies with emphasis on its religious and spiritual contexts. As the novel is based on a documented historical figure, I begin by briefly addressing the legacy of Teresa Urrea’s life in Mexico and as a borderlands figure of literature. Yet my analysis of the novel is not focused exclusively on the character of Teresa, for *The Hummingbird’s Daughter* is not solely about a regional folk saint; rather I focus on the ways in which the narrative witnesses to state violence through the lens of spiritual epistemologies, strategically enacted to resist, critique, and respond to political oppression. Further, my analysis considers the ways in which those epistemologies guide the characters’ movements and migrations through a landscape to which they conceive themselves as spiritually connected.

A Folk Saint for the Porfiriato: Understanding Teresita’s Legacy

Curandera and folk saint Teresa Urrea (1873–1906) is also known as “Teresita,” “la Santa de Cabora,” and “Queen of the Yaquis.” Her multiple names attest to the fact that, aside from the novels she has inspired, her story has been widely circulated in the form of oral folk narratives, newspaper stories, biographies, and scholarly studies.¹¹ However, her life story has evaded clear lines of distinction between fact and fiction. Robert McKee Irwin argues that, despite the number of documents existing regarding Teresa Urrea’s life, “there is no authoritative representation of her from her lifetime” as the telling of her story was dramatically shaped by political interests.¹² What is largely agreed on is that she was born in Ocoroni, Sinaloa, in 1873 as the “illegitimate child” of wealthy landowner Don Tomás Urrea and Cayetana Chávez, a young Tehueco Indian and domestic worker on his land. Though it is unclear whether the sexual relationship between the patrón and Chávez was consensual, Marian Perales states that “sexual relationships between employers and employees . . . were common in rural western Mexico during this period,” and that “unwanted sexual advances were often exacted upon criadas [house servants] as an extension of their vows of ‘submission, obedience, and respect’ to their patrons.”¹³ As an “illegitimate child,” Teresa (originally named María Rebeca Chávez) lived in servant quarters until her father sent for her to live as one of his “legitimate” children when she was a teenager.

Having earlier adopted the first name “Teresa,” she then also took the Urrea family name and moved to her father’s ranch in Cabora, Sonora, where she became apprentice to a *curandera* known as Huila, or María Sonora.

Her apprenticeship continued until Teresa reportedly fell into a coma, from which she emerged with a powerful “don,” or God-given healing power. Luis D. León writes of what followed after: “Between the years of 1890 and 1892, subsequent to her mystical conversion phase, word of Teresa’s healing power spread and people descended on Cabora en masse. . . . Pilgrims numbering in the thousands converged on the ranch at one time.”¹⁴ León states that the ranch transformed into a collective commune where hungry, wounded, and ailing pilgrims received not only healing but food and political inspiration; among these pilgrims were Mayo as well as Yaqui Indians, some of whom came from the village of Tomochic and “adopted her as their own ‘living saint’” (146). Though Teresa Urrea denied direct connection to indigenous political uprisings in her name, both the Mayo and the Tomochitecos took up the battle cry of “Viva la Santa de Cabora” in their rebellions, including the famed Tomochic rebellion.¹⁵ William C. Holden, her best-known biographer, explains how these events led to her dramatic exile: “Porfirio Díaz, alarmed that some of his political enemies might exploit this emotional upheaval and overthrow his dictatorship, had sent a full battalion of the Mexican army to arrest Teresita and conduct her to the international border at Nogales. He had forbade her to return under the penalty of being shot. All this had happened in 1892.”¹⁶ *The Hummingbird’s Daughter* ends precisely at the point of Teresa and her father’s exile to the United States. Though the sequel, *Queen of America*, tells the story of Teresa’s life after this point, within the original text we are left to imagine what the United States will hold for her as her train speeds towards the northern border.

Desirée Martín argues this exile is interrelated with the symbolic power of disruption signaled by “la Santa de Cabora.” Perceived as a “threat to Mexican national stability,” her exile made her “a symbol of revolutionary potential for Mexicans on both sides of the border.”¹⁷ Likewise asserting Teresa’s power as a “malleable” borderlands figure to destabilize national identities, Irwin explains that the folk saint “never ceases to produce meaning (albeit often conflicting meanings) pertinent to both national contexts.”¹⁸ This symbolic power clarifies why Teresa Urrea is “most widely known as a figure of literary representation,” as Martín argues, despite the existing documentation of her life in historical works and periodicals.¹⁹ Indeed Teresa has inspired several novels, written by authors both in Mexico and the United States. Mexican writer Heriberto Frías’s novel *Tomóchic* (1893) was followed in the United States by William Thomas Whitlock’s novel *Santa Teresa: A Tale of the Yaqui Rebellion* (1900), both written during Teresa’s lifetime.²⁰ Much more recently, Brianda Domecq’s 1990 novel, *La insólita historia de la Santa de Cabora* (also published as *The Astonishing Story of the Saint of Cabora* in 1998) preceded Luis Alberto Urrea’s two Teresita-inspired novels.²¹ Of the national distinctions between Domecq’s novel and *The Hummingbird’s Daughter*, Irwin argues that each “technically belongs to a particular

nationally defined literature (Urrea's is a novel of US literature; Domecq's is Mexican), yet any allegories produced in either are difficult to articulate in terms that are merely national."²² It is in this sense that we can best understand the representational power of Teresa Urrea as a borderlands figure, belonging neither to one nation or the other but rather signifying the flow of historical forces, people, and ideas.

To understand Luis Alberto Urrea's particular relationship to the life story of Teresa Urrea, we might look to his "Author's Note." According to the author, legendary stories of Teresita were long circulated in his family, describing her as a distant "aunt." On discovering that she was a documented figure in history, Urrea began a twenty-year process of research and writing. His research included eyewitness interviews, family documents such as letters, pictures, and articles relating to Teresa Urrea, and archival library work. Further, he conferred not only with writers, librarians, and scholars but also *curanderas*, clergy, and shamans.²³ This consultation with spiritual figures suggests he engaged varying forms of knowledge as a basis for the novel. For example, despite the tendency of reviewers and readers to label the novel as magical realism, Urrea specifies that "all 'miracles' attributed to Teresita are from the record, witnessed in writing in the archives" (498). This attachment of historical weight to "miraculous" narratives of witness acknowledges that, for pilgrims who flocked to Teresita, miracles were real and played a key role in resisting and responding to the baleful effects of the Porfiriato. To interpret the meanings of such resistance, I turn to a closer examination of the historical contexts of state violence and indigenous land rights in the era, alongside Luis Alberto Urrea's narrative representation of these contexts. When referencing the narrative, I refer to Teresa Urrea as "Teresita," which is how she is most frequently referred to in the novel; when referencing the historical person, I use the name "Teresa."

Narrative Witnessing to State Violence

General Porfirio Díaz first took presidential office in 1876. As historian Alan Knight explains, Díaz came into office after a revolt against the previous president (Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada) regarding the "evils of re-election"; however, he himself would rule for twenty-seven consecutive years, following an intermission in which Manuel González was president from 1880–1884.²⁴ With the exception of González's four-year term, Díaz ruled from 1876 to 1911, an era known popularly as the Porfiriato. This period was marked by a number of significant characteristics, namely the increased focus on modernization and economic partnership with US interests alongside the usurpation of communal landholdings and displacement of the peasantry and indigenous peoples. While Díaz's regime created an accommodating environment for these conditions, we should recall the modernizing forces underway in the United States economy during this period. Historians Gilbert G. González and Raul A. Fernández explain: "While Porfirian policies forcibly removed peasants from ancestral village lands, it would be wrong to assume that these were policies wholly designed in Mexico City. Like the

construction of railroads, oil exploration and exploitation, mining, and agricultural investments by foreign capital, the removal of peasants from village lands emanated from the integration and exploitation of Mexican natural resources into foreign, primarily U.S., industrial production.”²⁵ Thus, as we consider the conditions of landlessness and impoverishment that contributed to mass Mexican migration to the United States during the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), we must recall the role of US economic interests in Mexico, which helped stimulate those conditions.

The mass transference of land did not occur without conflict. To take a localized example that speaks to the regional contexts in *The Hummingbird’s Daughter*, we might examine the expropriation of indigenous Yaqui traditional lands in the river valley of Sonora, transferred not only to *hacendados* but also to politicians and US interests. According to Knight, 400,000 hectares went to the Torres family, “Sonoran oligarchs,” and 547,000 hectares were allotted to the Richardson Construction Company of Los Angeles.²⁶ Knight further explains that when Anglos and mestizos began to usurp the pueblos to which the Yaquis had been transferred, the Yaquis raised objection, claiming God had given them the whole river, rather than mere “allotments”; the Yaquis, like other indigenous tribes, understood their lands as sacred, given to them by God (111–12). In such an example, political history directly intersects not only with ethnic and cultural forces but with spirituality as well. Nicole Guidotti-Hernández elaborates on the relationship between land, spirituality, and politics, explaining that, because the Yaqui Indians viewed the land as sacred, “Mexican- and U.S.-backed encroachment in the Yaqui valley . . . was perceived as a declaration of war.”²⁷ Thus it was due to this understanding of the valley’s spiritual significance that the Yaquis hindered these forces, which “desire[d] to ‘construct and exploit’ the land through the building of railroads” (180).

The government responded to the resultant guerrilla fighting with brutal campaigns of massacre, deportation, and removal. Miguel Tinker Salas explains that, during the 1850s and 1860s, after failed efforts to transform the Yaquis into tranquil peons, the state took a note from Spanish practices and “implemented campaigns to exterminate them by separating the male and female populations,” deporting “captured Yaqui women and children to the northern border districts, far from their families and traditional surroundings.”²⁸ Indeed Tinker Salas asserts that, in urban areas, “abducted Yaqui children made up a great percentage of the household servants” (61). Atrocities committed in the name of modernization and development of the nation-state only increased as time progressed. The meaning of Mexican identity and nationhood was attended by endemic patterns of sexual violence, government corruption, religious persecution, and local wars between indigenous groups, ranchers, and banditos. By the 1900s, room was made for US colonists and economic interests by Mexican Federales undertaking increasingly brutal methods. Knight attests, “The Federales, newly equipped with Mausers [rifles], massacred women and children; Governor Izábal boasted of the tortures used to extract information from prisoners. Such measures were justifiable: did not the Yaquis flay their victims and

hang them with ropes made of their own skin? Had they not . . . forfeited any claim to membership of the human race?"²⁹ The conflict between the Yaquis and the Mexican state was driven by political, economic, and spiritual contexts that resulted in violence waged over land. This passage emphasizes that the Mexican state ethically justified a campaign of violent oppression by effectively dehumanizing the group whose resources it desired.

It is in blending these historical circumstances with fiction that Luis Alberto Urrea's *The Hummingbird's Daughter* creatively imagines a localized, intimate portrait of everyday life in rural, northwestern Mexico during the Porfiriato. While the central action of the text occurs on a ranch in the Cabora region of Sonora, the narrative opens on a different ranch in Sinaloa, the state just south of Sonora. On the *Santana rancho* near the town of Ocoroni, we find Teresita, as the narrative refers to her, about to be born to fourteen-year-old Cayetana Chávez. Cayetana is nicknamed "Semalú" or the Hummingbird, a bird associated with the divine across various indigenous traditions; thus it is Teresita who will become "the hummingbird's daughter," as suggested by the book's title. Though Teresita was fathered by Tomás Urrea, the ranch's white patrón, her mother is one of "the People," an assemblage of indigenous and mestizo peoples, made up of Ocoronis, Pimas, Yaquis, Guasaves, Mayos, and Tehuecos. Tomás rules over these indigenous and mestizo peoples whose land has become his through the Spanish crown. Playing his own role in the complicated, hierarchical, and patriarchal forging of a "mestizo México," he takes sexual advantage of this power, seducing the young indigenous and mestiza women on his ranch. Teresita thus functions as a representative figure of a mestizaje forged from unequal power relations, in terms of class, race, and gender.

When her father invites her to live with him in Sonora, Teresita becomes apprentice to Huila, an aged medicine woman and *partera* (midwife). As Huila shares her healing knowledge with Teresita, she informs the girl of her spiritual and familial lineage: "*Your grandmother and grandfather were good people. Poor people. Your grandmother . . . had the gift come down from her own mother. . . . The birthing and working of the plants. . . . Your grandfather was Catholic, and your grandmother followed the old ways. She was Mayo, and her own mother was Yaqui. Your grandfather was Tehueco, and the soldiers put him in a tree before you came.*"³⁰ This genealogy not only attests to the intermixing of indigenous groups and religious traditions but also dramatically chronicles the state violence marking Teresita's familial history. The story indicates that to be "put in a tree" is a euphemism for murder, in this case, at the hands of soldiers. For Teresita, knowing the lineage of her "gift" as a folk healer also means knowing the history of trauma she has inherited.

Scholar Yolanda Broyles-González remarks on how such violence historically altered family lines: "incessant raids by Mexican or U.S. soldiers reconfigured indigenous family . . . ties on a daily basis. Your changing family unit consisted of those who survived the last genocidal raid with you. Your children were whatever children you managed to grab and run with."³¹ Other state abuses included the forced removal

of peasants, as well as Yaquis and Mayos, from their homelands in order to “make room for land speculators and railroad builders,” after which they were often sent to henequen plantations, where they worked as “virtual slaves.”³² Such dislocations caused by state violence rearranged family lineages and further contributed to inheritances of trauma. Returning to the novel, the narrative telling of Teresita’s family history works to reveal that trauma to readers who likely have limited knowledge of these practices. Earlier in the text, Teresita’s mother, Cayetana, reflects on her own sense of being orphaned amidst the violence inflicted on her community: “Her poor cousin. He had shot himself in the head. Her mother and father were dead, shot down in an army raid in Tehueco lands. Her aunt and uncle had been hanged in a grove of mango trees by soldiers that mistook them for fleeing Yaquis near El Júpare. The men were strung up with their pants around their ankles. Both men and women hung naked as fruit. Some of the Mexicans had collected scalps. She sighed. . . . she was alone in the world.”³³ This excerpt moreover illustrates the levels of dehumanization committed against indigenous peoples, as references to army raids, Mexicans collecting scalps, and bodies hanging in trees signal a sprawling history and trajectory of trauma. Additionally, the passage denotes the personal effects that these violences bore out on individuals’ lives. The orphaning of children like Cayetana and her cousin must have been a common occurrence, even as popular narratives of both US and Mexican history tend to silence indigenous perspectives and experiences. In highlighting Cayetana’s inheritance of a story of state violence, later followed by her daughter’s inheritance of that same story, Urrea’s narrative works to excavate the often hidden traumas of history and make them personal; for, in Cayetana’s lonely sigh, readers may begin to imagine the immensity of her suffering.

This literary approach might be conceived of as a type of restorative witnessing shared by other expressive forms. For example, the image of men and women hanging from trees “naked as fruit” conjures Billie Holiday’s haunting song, “Strange Fruit,” with its lyrics of “black bodies swingin’ / in the Southern breeze / strange fruit hangin’ / from the poplar trees.” The visitation of embodied historical traumas through the expressive arts functions to confront us with what is too often “unspeakable,” unspoken, and forgotten. Gloria Anzaldúa’s poem “We Call Them Greasers” does similar work, as she inhabits the narrative voice of an Anglo colonizer, remembering his own terrorization of Mexicans on the Texas–Mexican border in order to acquire their lands. He recalls his disgust for the face of a woman he raped, describing her eyes as “beady . . . like an Indian’s,” and his subsequent murder of the woman and her male partner: “Afterwards I sat on her face until / her arms stopped flailing, / didn’t want to waste a bullet on her. / . . . / I walked up to where I had tied her man to the tree / and spat in his face. Lynch him, I told the boys.”³⁴ Anzaldúa’s willingness to imagine and depict the violent rape and lynching of colonization functions in the same manner as Urrea’s and Holiday’s willingness to conjure scenes of lynching. Such scenes serve not as voyeuristic sadism but as a form of witnessing that recalls and recognizes the racialized violence and suffering that official history erases.

In Urrea's narrative, these acts of violence are linked to religious contexts. In the following passage, the narrator recalls a massacre at Bécum, which, among other massacres, is retained in the local memory of "the People" as particularly heinous. Urrea writes,

The soldiers at Bécum had rounded up the townsfolk at gunpoint. They'd kicked the People, shoved them. The church doors were open, and the People trusted Christ, so they went in, thinking they had been offered refuge. The soldiers made strange jokes: 'Praise Jesus,' one said. . . . the soldiers slammed the doors and nailed them shut and the people within began crying out as they realized their fate and buckets of burning pitch were flung into the shattered windows and the cries rose to insane shrieks and frantic pounding as the 450 bodies within ignited.³⁵

In this narrative of traumatic public memory, the soldiers exploit the victims' trust in Christ and desire for refuge to lure them into a space where they may be more easily contained and killed. The material space of the church thus functions as a signifier of the state's use of institutional religion as a tool for containment. The circulation and remembrance of such stories take on racial meanings as well, as local mestizo and indigenous children come to fear "yoris" (white people) as inherently dangerous: "The devil, children said, was a gringo" (266). Here, the term "gringo" is used not in reference to Anglo-Americans but rather in reference to Mexican soldiers who are racialized as white, in contrast to the indigenous and mestizo peoples they attempt to displace. Amid "capitalist race domination," José E. Limón suggests, "folklore can, in its most disguised and symbolic form, speak critically to such domination."³⁶ In this instance, the "capitalist race domination" at hand is the state's use of violence to displace the indigenous and peasant classes from their lands to make way for foreign business interests in the modernization of Mexico. Thus the children's circulation of this oral folklore of "the devil as gringo" works in two ways. Firstly, it serves as a form of historical remembrance, an utterance of the social and psychological scars left by state violence, massacre, and dehumanization. Secondly, the narrative functions not only to remember violence but to name it as such, and to reject their own dehumanization by questioning the humanity of the "gringo" who has acted as ultimate violator. For, in the children's view, who could commit such violence but the devil himself?

Significantly, the term "devils" is used in an alternate instance in the text. When Tomás first arrives at his ranch in Cabora, where his daughter Teresita will later offer healing and refuge to thousands of pilgrims, he finds that it has been raided and burned. He is told that Yaquis committed the raid and, in the telling, they are described to him as animalistic, inhuman, and evil: "Llegaron con el amanecer, gritando como

diablos. No montaban caballos. Vinieron corriendo, a pie, brincando como venados, volando como buitres.”³⁷ Here, the Yaquis are compared to screaming devils, jumping like deer and flying like vultures. Thus, when this description of “Yaquis as devils” is read against the previous narrative of “the devil as gringo,” we see that, in both cases, violence and destruction committed by an opposing group is marked as inhuman and evil. In other words, where violence is committed by an “other,” humanity is called into question, and the folkloric figure of the “devil” is conjured in social imagination and discourse. However, when Tomás visits the Yaquis who reportedly burned his ranch, he learns that, unlike the violence of the soldiers at Bécum, their raid was driven by starvation, massacre, displacement, and fear wrought by the state’s actions. They tell him of “whole villages emptied by Mexican troops, of families marched into the sea, of children pierced by tree branches and left to rot, fed to sharks, trampled by horses,” and of “scalps collected from lone wanderers and sold to the state for bounty” (185). Ultimately, it is the act of willingly listening to the stories of “his enemies” that enables Tomás’s understanding, and it is the act of telling that allows the Yaquis to assert their own humanity.

In *The Hummingbird’s Daughter*, the act of storytelling and the complementary act of receiving story both function to remember and give witness to the systematic displacement and dehumanization experienced during the Porfiriato. For in Teresita’s eventual role as miraculous healer, receiving wounded and ailing refugees at the Cabora ranch would mean receiving not only their bodies but their stories as well. To elucidate the spiritual forces that drew them there, I turn now to a discussion of folk-religious practice and its relationship to political resistance.

Miraculous Narrative as “*Contra-decir*”

Despite Porfirio Díaz’s focus on a strongly centralized government, he clearly recognized that the Catholic Church, stripped of its land-wealth and economic power after the liberal victory in civil wars of the 1850s and 1860s, retained its power as “a moral force, capable of influencing the hearts and minds of men (and even more of women).”³⁸ Thus, likely with the intent of keeping the Church within his realm of power, Díaz’s regime tried to relax tensions between the Church and state (19). His 1881 marriage to Carmen Romero Rubio has been regarded by some as evidence of these efforts. Burton Kirkwood writes that Carmen, “devoutly Catholic” and daughter of Manuel Romero Rubio, a former member of the Lerdo de Tejada cabinet, not only “helped Díaz bridge hostilities with Lerdo’s former supporters” but also “helped Díaz assuage concerns among conservatives and Catholics as to whether the government would uphold the anticlerical components of the 1857 constitution.”³⁹ Kirkwood elaborates that “Díaz never strictly enforced these laws” and, “in exchange, at least for a while, the Church was a tacit supporter of the government” (118).

In this move, Díaz appears to have considered the great influence that inhabitants of the Mexican nation attributed to God in their daily lives and decisions.

Paul Vanderwood explains, “All during the second half of the nineteenth century Mexicans weighed doctors, technology, spirituality, priests, money, education, republicanism, individualism, progress—indeed the entire trajectory of their country and the balance of their lives between God and government.”⁴⁰ While the government was not the only power operating within the decision-making processes and epistemologies of the people, it has been a common mistake to equate social and cultural investment in God with an equal investment in the institutional Church. Despite continued adherence to spiritual practices and religious beliefs among the popular masses, the value of the institutional Church came under question. Vanderwood articulates the distinction between the religious institution of the Church and its clerics, and a belief in Christianity itself: “In the case of religion, change forced Mexicans to . . . reflect on the position and role of the official Church. . . . Power struggles between priests and civil authorities . . . caused some to become harshly anticlerical, though still firm Christians” (60). This distinction between religious identity and adherence to clericalism would play out in complicated ways across the various populations of Mexico.

For indigenous groups in particular, religious practices were often fashioned outside the boundaries of the Church, which also had implications regarding governance. In the northern reaches of Sonora, rural indigenous communities, in the absence of strong institutional presence, became accustomed to internal structures of rule, both in terms of government and religion. Knight explains, “Within Indian communities religion—a syncretic blend of Catholic and pre-Columbian beliefs and practices—was pervasive; there was no clear differentiation between sacred and secular. Political authority—when it emerged from within and was not imposed from without—mingled with religious, creating intertwined civil-religious hierarchies which served to integrate the community and to provide, where permitted, a vigorous form of self-government, resistant to external pressures.”⁴¹ Thus it was common for a group to structure its own religious practices and guidelines beyond the authority of the Catholic Church. For, as Vanderwood asserts, “most religious thought and practice, then and now, is local, concrete, and practical (as opposed to official and abstract), reflecting everyday needs.”⁴²

In this context, the tendency to reinterpret and refashion religious practices can be understood as a response to the immediate needs and social frameworks of a group, including some rural mestizo communities. Such reinterpretation is one way to understand the outgrowth and practice of local folk religion. Dialogues of negotiation between the local populace and the institutional Church serve to remind us that (1) positions of the institutional Church do not always necessarily stand in for those of the faithful, and (2) local populaces possess the ability to act as creative agents in the enactment of religion as well as governance and even influence the character of the Church on a local level. *Curanderismo* (folk healing) and the belief in folk saints (uncanonized by the official Church) represent two examples of how spirituality can operate on a local level outside the contexts of official doctrine and in response to

political conditions. In the context of northern Sonora during the Porfiriato era, the persistence of local healing methods of *curanderismo*, as well as widespread devotion to folk saints, such as Teresa Urrea, can be understood as powerful cultural and spiritual responses to state violence. For, as Broyles-González has argued, “the indigenous American tradition of grassroots popular miraculous narrative . . . constitutes a significant *contra-decir* (contra-diction, counter-discourse, and counter-memory) in the life of the oppressed. The miraculous utopian space is a form of collective self-affirming protest that extracts some freedom from—and preserves the memory of freedom within—the hardships of everyday life.”⁴³ I argue that this understanding of popular miraculous narrative as counter-discourse and protest enables us to understand the compelling power of Teresita as folk saint, both in terms of the historic person and her narrative legacy. However, before we can address the “miraculous utopian space” that pilgrims sought, it is important to understand the larger context of *curanderismo* and the syncretism it reflects.

For this purpose, I turn to Teresita’s mentor, Huila “the Skinny Woman,” as an embodiment of epistemological negotiation: “The masters called her María Sonora, but the People knew she was Huila, the Skinny Woman, their midwife and healer. . . . She lived in a room behind the patrón’s kitchen, from which Tomás believed she directed the domestic staff, but from which the People believed she commanded the spirits.”⁴⁴ Here, we see that Huila exists between two different epistemological interpretations of her identity with two different names. While the masters view Huila as a servant of their domestic household, who is afforded some respect but answers to their ultimate authority, the People hold her in reverence as one who wields power not merely in the immediate social order but within the spirit-world. Theresa Delgadillo writes that spirituality “denotes, on one hand, a connection to the sacred, a recognition of worlds or realities beyond those immediately visible and respect for the sacred knowledge that these bring and, on the other hand, a way of being in the world, a language of communication and interrelation.”⁴⁵ This articulation of spirituality as both epistemological and ontological enables us to better understand Huila’s character, as one who is powerful beyond the confines of patriarchal, economic social order while also inhabiting a specific way of being in the material world. Paula Gunn Allen states, “Medicine people are truly citizens of two worlds, and those who continue to walk the path of medicine power learn to keep their balance in both the ordinary and the non-ordinary worlds.”⁴⁶ As a medicine woman, Huila exemplifies the ways in which folk healers and their patients operate within a space of contradiction or *contra-decir* that negotiates the parameters of the social order.

Immediately significant is Huila’s ability to reconcile her seemingly divergent identities: “As María Sonora, she prayed to Dios; as Huila, she prayed to Lios. Dios had doves and lambs, and Lios had deer and hummingbirds. It was all the same to Huila.”⁴⁷ For Huila, the different interpretations afforded to her personality and to the gods seem irrelevant, for she views them in reference to the same stable spiritual center. For insight into this negotiation of difference, I refer again to Broyles-González. In

revisiting the lived experiences of her own Yaqui grandmother, she suggests all tribal peoples “adopted the survival and protection skills of chameleons,” learning the “art of *disimulo*: shielding and camouflaging the indigenous ways within the hide-and-seek of the new nation’s *mexicanidad*,” for, as she asserts, “nation formation has always meant forced incorporation.”⁴⁸ In this light, we might read Huila’s negotiation of multiple personal identities and identifiers for the gods as a survival strategy to successfully navigate the forces of national change. Thus her acceptance of the name “María Sonora,” like her willingness to pray to “Dios,” functions as an artful strategy of protective “camouflage” and survival.

Huila’s spiritual practices in the narrative illustrate an emphasis on the natural world situated alongside and in tandem with Christianity. An examination of the sacred objects on Huila’s altar provides a point of example: “A picture of the Virgen de Guadalupe stood on the altar, and a tall wooden crucifix. Stones, shells, a few bundles of sage and incense grass, and a paper-wasps’ nest. Small figures of Huila’s saints stood on either side of the cross. . . . To one side of the altar stood a lone glass of water.”⁴⁹ We might productively read Huila’s altar, a material site of her communication with the spiritual world, as a metaphor for the functioning of syncretism; here, “Catholic” objects such as saints and the crucifix are situated alongside not only the mestiza Virgen but also stones, shells, water, and a wasps’ nest, each of which signifies spiritual investment in a sacred local landscape. The altar offers a particular vocabulary through which to read affiliation with and negotiation of the sacred. Further, the individual objects on the altar can function as multivalent symbols, for, as Broyles-González explains, “many Euro-Catholic concepts were easily assimilable into preexisting indigenous terms and ideas.”⁵⁰ She expands, “the sacred cross symbol predates colonization; indigenous peoples thus appropriated the cross of Christ and reinterpreted it by merging it with what has for thousands of years been called the World Tree (El Arbol de la Vida or Yax che’il Kab), the pivot of the universe and the power of the four directions. What some might superficially read as Christian piety is also a declaration of indigenous culture. Similarly, the concept of immaculate conception or virgin birth was widespread in the native Americas” (125). Thus even the sacred objects on Huila’s altar, which seem to signify quintessentially Christian meanings, such as the crucifix, can also refer to indigenous spiritual systems, which are not replaced but rather take on additional interpretation. Thus, through a syncretic process of spiritual negotiation and survival, spiritual practices not only reflect *disimulo* but also a process of making sense from the historical matrix of colonization and modernization.

Curanderismo, the knowledge of which Huila passes on to Teresita, functions as a key site of syncretic practice in the text, highlighting the intersection between material and spiritual realities. Specifically, Teresita is inducted into the *partera* tradition (midwifery) through Huila’s careful training. As the narrative progresses, Teresita finds she has a special “don” (God-given gift) to ease the pain of others by laying hands on them. Claiming God has “spoken” to her, she becomes popular with

the local women giving birth, gradually replacing the aging Huila as *curandera* of Cabora and amassing a strong reputation. However, following a violent attack by a deranged ranch hand, Teresita is plunged into a catatonic-like state. Pronounced dead, her body is prepared for a funeral when she is suddenly “resurrected” to the fright of all those around her. On awakening, she claims to have met the Virgin and Itom Achai (God) in Heaven, before being sent back to earth to complete her work. Soon after her miraculous return, she foretells the death of Huila and the arrival of pilgrims, who indeed begin to descend on the ranch to see the “living dead girl,” as well as to receive blessings and healings. The mass influx of pilgrims who come to see “la Santa de Cabora” swells to around ten thousand people. The following passage depicts their journey:

They carried their dying and their dead, pulled travois with withered old women thrusting their bone-knob knees at the sky. They dragged sacks with bloated infants caught in the burlap like wounded seals. They bound their green stinking limbs in banana leaves, in foul bandages, in hemp ropes, tied their crushed arms to their sides, made slings of old clothing and aprons. They bound their split feet together and hobbled. They packed herbs in dank eyeholes where they had been shot or stabbed, where wire had sliced their eyeballs and infection and worms had destroyed their sight. Their brown and red gums dripped blood when they spoke her name. They left blood and bandages, pus and teeth, abandoned dead and feces all along the trails and roads that led to Cabora, snaky lines in the dirt, where a thousand feet hurried and crept, marching tirelessly to be near Teresita.⁵¹

Chronicling the effects and consequences of the Porfiriato era’s violence, this passage describes the visceral wounding of bodies, both young and old. I suggest that Urrea presents us with gruesome images in this passage to make real and embodied the often intangible costs of state violence. For, as Sharon Patricia Holland explains, “memory must be animated so that it can subvert the effects of its manipulation by the nation.”⁵² That subversion of national narratives that erase memories of state violence is here partially enacted by writing the wounded body into narrative. Further, Urrea’s words evoke the marking of the landscape as a site of testimony to that violence. Those “snaky lines in the dirt” littered with the effusions of dying bodies—stabbed, shot, bloated, and infected—testify to the mass movement of a people driven not only by their wounds but also by hope for restoration. Even as they mark the land with their suffering, they draw from it for healing; thus it is with limbs wrapped in banana leaves and eyeholes packed with herbs that the pilgrims make their way to Teresita.

While the gruesome image of pilgrims' gums dripping blood as they speak her name in some sense invokes an association with holiness, it is not ultimately Teresita's power they seek, but rather the touch of the Divine *through* her. Describing the masses that flocked to the actual historical figure of Teresa Urrea, Vanderwood clarifies this point: "People came to her with their dreadful sicknesses and high hopes . . . because they thought she could have been touched by the Divine. . . . They believed that . . . no healing occurred beyond His will, that the power to heal is a gift of God, and that divine miracles do occur."⁵³ Indeed even the real Teresa herself insisted she was not a saint but rather "an ordinary person to whom the Lord had given a special gift" (174). Many actual healings were reportedly witnessed at Cabora, although no one can offer evidence as to how they occurred. What is certain is that she resonated with pilgrims, for "some later fought and died with messages from La Santa tucked into their pockets and protective scapularies with her image around their necks" (199). Vanderwood explains that, while skeptics and cynics existed, her huge following is attributable to local epistemologies (from which her own were formed), which accepted that a divine, active God was capable of the miraculous, including healings (199). Further, such miracles were deemed possible without mediation of the Catholic Church: "To Teresa priests were not needed at all and neither was the Mass they celebrated. The faithful needed no intermediaries but should communicate directly with God through prayer" (187). And yet it was not so much the rejection of the institutional Church that concerned Porfirio Díaz but rather the fear that her spiritual preachings might inspire political rebellion among the indigenous.

The narrative of *The Hummingbird's Daughter* suggests that, like the Yaqui Indians, Teresita made explicit connections between God and land rights, leading to the charge that she incited uprisings through antichurch and antigovernment preaching. In a scene in which Pima traders report Teresita's preaching to the leader of the Tomochic, they attribute to her the following words: "Do you believe? Do you believe God put your feet on this land? God gave land to every man and woman! And this is your land! This land is holy! Do you believe? . . . No man, whether he is white or brown, can take the land from you! It came from God!"⁵⁴ This passage makes explicit connections between the body, land, and spirit and situates those relations as superseding all political claims. Though the real Teresa Urrea denied direct connection to the indigenous political uprisings in her name, the inspiration her words and actions provided to rebels seemed to indict her.⁵⁵ Thus Urrea's narrative ends with the inevitable arrest of both Teresita and Tomás, charged with aiding in activities against the state. Slimly escaping death, they face exile instead. Historically, many political exiles and refugees used the borderlands as a safe place from which to foment revolution in Mexico and, in the process, their political ideas helped shape Mexican American communities. Emilio Zamora writes, "México's most important social upheaval of the twentieth century—the Mexican Revolution of 1910—also contributed significantly to binational ties and interactions. This was especially true in reference to

political exiles.”⁵⁶ In this sense, Teresita’s exile alludes to a larger process of “binational interaction.”

When Teresita and her father are condemned to exile at the narrative’s end, they observe the train that will carry them into the “dark unknown” of the United States. Urrea writes, “Teresita had never seen a train, but she knew what it was when she saw it. . . . she was excited to see the great machine stretched out before the station like a grand serpent.”⁵⁷ Railroads have always functioned as the harbinger of modernization, so it is not remarkable that the train is represented as a new, exciting technology of historical achievement. However, the comparison of the train to “a grand serpent” signals deeper consciousness regarding modernization and its meanings. To better understand the serpent as a sacred symbol in indigenous spirituality, I turn to Gloria Anzaldúa’s work on the subject: “In pre-Columbian America the most notable symbol was the serpent. The Olmecs associated womanhood with the Serpent’s mouth which was guarded by rows of dangerous teeth, a sort of *vagina dentata*. They considered it the most sacred place on earth, a place of refuge, the creative womb from which all things were born and to which all things returned. . . . The destiny of humankind is to be devoured by the Serpent.”⁵⁸ With this contextualization of the serpentine symbol as signifying both creation and destruction, we can reevaluate the possible connotations at hand in Teresita’s gaze. The train signals a creative moment in time, in which new things would be born and old things destroyed. Certainly modernization can be accurately described as such; the glimmering possibilities of a new age are balanced alongside the inevitable destruction and transformation of the previous. In this sense, the train is a living, pulsing force of history, again reflected when the narrator comments, “In the distance, the locomotive chugged like a vast heart.”⁵⁹ The train is depicted as life force, living on its own volition and powering the functions of modernization. Describing serpentine metaphor, Theresa Delgadillo states that the serpent “works to evoke the pre-Christian, the earth, the animal and human linked, regeneration, body, knowledge, and mobility.”⁶⁰ I argue Luis Alberto Urrea uses the serpent in a similar fashion in this passage, evoking, through Teresita’s eyes, a view of modernity that implies movement and transformative regeneration rather than a split from embodied spiritual knowledge. Urrea’s use of this train-as-serpent image near the end of *The Hummingbird’s Daughter* encourages readers to discern the historical moment as marked by movement and consciousness still deeply embedded in the landscape, and enables readers to recognize the mobility and continuity of pre-Christian knowledge amid transformative change.

Conclusion

In conclusion, migrations northward across the US–Mexico border during the Porfiriato era, like those migrations during and after the Mexican Revolution, were often fueled by both political and religious currents. Further, the consequences and

outgrowths of those migrations often encompassed significations that invoke both spiritual and political meanings. Urrea's narrative, then, gestures towards a direction in Border Studies and Chican@ literary production that scholars and critics are beginning to take note of. I would echo Chicana scholar-activists Irene Lara and Elisa Facio, whose recent coedited work, *Fleshing the Spirit: Spirituality and Activism in Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous Women's Lives*, asserts a commitment and call to "decolonizing the academy that largely devalues or misunderstands spirituality, both as a serious academic topic and as an integral aspect of being alive."⁶¹ For, even as much work has been done to document the various forms of political resistance in the lives of indigenous and mestizo peoples on both sides of the border, the actual epistemologies and forces operating in their lives, and those of their ancestors, have often been displaced by scholarly standards of permissible knowledge. In contrast, Urrea's narrative highlights the embodied spiritual practices and beliefs that functioned as counter-discourse, and which guided movement through and engagement with the landscape during the Porfiriato. In addition, the narrative provides a form of witnessing to state violence, resisting national narratives that dehumanize recipients of that violence, and reaffirming humanity through the process of storytelling. Finally, *The Hummingbird's Daughter* situates important questions for scholars. Can a novel that chronicles the life and works of a miraculous healer and folk saint be considered a political novel? Might a novel that takes place almost entirely in Mexico be read, in some sense, as a Chican@ novel? In this case, the answers to these questions are yes, for the lived experience Urrea creatively represents neither stops at the border nor neatly divides spiritual and political concerns but rather forms part of a larger historical and transnational trajectory.

Notes

¹ Here, I refer to a cross section of works that branches from earlier scholarship and includes Kay Turner, *Beautiful Necessity: The Art and Meaning of Women's Altars* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999); Timothy Matovina and Gary Riebe-Estrella, eds., *Horizons of the Sacred: Mexican Traditions in U.S. Catholicism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002); Lara Medina, *Las Hermanas: Chicana/Latina Religious-Political Activism in the U.S. Catholic Church* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2004); Luis D. León, *La Llorona's Children: Religion, Life, and Death in the U.S.-Mexican Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Eliseo "Cheo" Torres with Timothy L. Sawyer Jr., *Curandero: A Life in Mexican Folk Healing* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005); Laura E. Pérez, *Chicana Art: The Politics of Spiritual and Aesthetic Altarities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Mario T. García, *Católicos: Resistance and Affirmation in Chicano Catholic History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008); Gastón Espinosa and Mario T. García, eds., *Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture* (Durham, NC:

Duke University Press, 2008); Elizabeth de la Portilla, *They All Want Magic: Curanderas and Folk Healing* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009); Juan Javier Pescador, *Crossing Borders with the Santo Niño de Atocha* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009); Theresa Delgadillo, *Spiritual Mestizaje: Religion, Gender, Race, and Nation in Contemporary Chicana Narrative* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011); Clara Román-Odio, *Sacred Iconographies in Chicana Cultural Productions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Desirée A. Martín, *Borderlands Saints: Secular Sanctity in Chicano/a and Mexican Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2014); Luis D. León, *The Political Spirituality of Cesar Chavez: Crossing Religious Borders* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); and Elisa Facio and Irene Lara, eds., *Fleshing the Spirit: Spirituality and Activism in Chicana, Latina, and Indigenous Women's Lives* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014).

² See Luis Alberto Urrea, *La Hija de la Chuparrosa: Una Novela*, trans. Enrique Hubbard Urrea (New York: Back Bay Books, 2006).

³ Luis Alberto Urrea, *The Hummingbird's Daughter* (New York: Little, Brown, 2005), 495.

⁴ José Martí's vision of hemispheric Americanism serves as a significant reference point for this reframing. See José Martí, "Nuestra America," *La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York*, January 10, 1891, and *El Partido Liberal* (Mexico City), January 30, 1891. In this most well-known of his essays, Martí situates Latin America as "Our America" and the United States as the "Other America." Also see José David Saldívar, *The Dialectics of Our America: Genealogy, Cultural Critique, and Literary History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), in which Saldívar observes of Martí's influence, "By looking at the Americas as a hemisphere and by analyzing the real and rhetorical, often hostile, battles between the United States and what Martí called 'Nuestra América'—'Our America'—it is possible to perceive what the literatures of the Americas have in common" (5).

⁵ Theresa Delgadillo, "The Criticality of Latino/a Fiction in the Twenty-First Century," *American Literary History* 23, no. 3 (2011): 601.

⁶ See Américo Paredes, *"With His Pistol in His Hand": A Border Ballad and Its Hero* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958), in which he introduces the term "Greater Mexico" to refer to "the area now comprising the Republic of Mexico, with the exception of the border regions" (129–30). Later, in *A Texas-Mexican Cancionero: Folksongs of the Lower Border* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), he altered the term to refer to "all the areas inhabited by people of Mexican culture—not only within the present limits of the Republic of Mexico but in the United States as well—in a cultural rather than a political sense" (xiv).

⁷ José E. Limón, *American Encounters: Greater Mexico, the United States, and the Erotics of Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 3.

⁸ Héctor Calderón, *Narratives of Greater Mexico: Essays on Chicano Literary History, Genre, and Borders* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), xiii.

⁹ See José David Saldívar, *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), ix–xiv.

¹⁰ Ramón Saldívar, *The Borderlands of Culture: Américo Paredes and the Transnational Imaginary* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 59.

¹¹ The most commonly cited newspaper series is Lauro Aguirre's "Tomóchic! Redención!" (1896), which listed Teresa Urrea as coauthor and was printed in *El Independiente* of El Paso, Texas. For biographical works, see Frank Bishop Putnam, "Teresa Urrea, 'The Saint of Cabora,'" *Southern California Quarterly* 45, no. 3 (1963): 245–64; William Curry Holden, *Teresita* (Owings Mills, MD: Stemmer House, 1978); Marian Perales, "Teresa Urrea: Curandera and Folk Saint," in *Latina Legacies: Identity, Biography, and Community*, ed. Vicki L. Ruiz and Virginia Sánchez Korrol (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 97–119; and Eliseo "Cheo" Torres with Timothy L. Sawyer Jr., "Art Esquibel Tells Me the Story of Teresita, Saint of Cabora," in Torres and Sawyer Jr., *Curandero*, 90–106. For recent scholarly works on Teresa Urrea, see Paul Vanderwood, *The Power of God Against the Guns of Government: Religious Upheaval in Mexico at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Luis D. León, "El Don: The Gift of Healing, from Mesoamerica to the Borderlands," in León, *La Llorona's Children*, 128–62; Gillian E. Newell, "Teresa Urrea, Santa de Cabora and Early Chicana? The Politics of Representation, Identity, and Social Memory," in *The Making of Saints: Contesting Sacred Ground*, ed. James F. Hopgood (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 90–106; Alex Nava, "Teresa Urrea: Mexican Mystic, Healer, and Apocalyptic Revolutionary," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73, no. 2 (2005): 497–519; Brandon Bayne, "From Saint to Seeker: Teresa Urrea's Search for a Place of Her Own," *Church History* 75, no. 3 (2006): 611–31; Robert McKee Irwin, "Santa Teresa de Cabora (and Her Villainous Sister Jovita): A Shape-Shifting Icon of Mexico's Northwest Borderlands," *Bilingual Review* 29, nos. 2/3 (2008): 89–100; Desirée A. Martín, "Saint of Contradiction: Teresa Urrea, La Santa de Cabora," in Martín, *Borderlands Saints*, 32–65; and Brett Hendrickson, "Curanderismo in the United States," in *Border Medicine: A Transcultural History of Mexican American Curanderismo*, by Brett Hendrickson (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 61–85.

¹² Irwin, "Santa Teresa de Cabora," 93.

¹³ Perales, "Teresa Urrea," 98–99.

¹⁴ León, *La Llorona's Children*, 145.

¹⁵ See Vanderwood, *Power of God*, 301–2.

¹⁶ Holden, *Teresita*, xiii–xiv.

¹⁷ Martín, *Borderlands Saints*, 50, 38–39.

¹⁸ Irwin, "Santa Teresa de Cabora," 93, 97.

¹⁹ Martín, *Borderlands Saints*, 35.

²⁰ Heriberto Frías, *Tomóchic* (1893; repr., Mexico City: Porrúa, 2010); and William Thomas Whitlock, *Santa Teresa: A Tale of the Yaquii Rebellion* (New York: Town Topics, 1900).

²¹ Brianda Domecq, *La insólita historia de la Santa de Cabora* (Mexico City: Planeta, 1990); and Brianda Domecq, *The Astonishing Story of the Saint of Cabora*, trans. Kay García (Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Press, 1998).

²² Irwin, “Santa Teresa de Cabora,” 97.

²³ See Luis Alberto Urrea, “Author’s Note,” in Urrea, *Hummingbird’s Daughter*, 497–99.

²⁴ See Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Volume 1: Porfirians, Liberals and Peasants* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 21.

²⁵ Gilbert G. Gonzalez and Raul A. Fernandez, *A Century of Chicano History: Empire, Nations, and Migration* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 35.

²⁶ Knight, *Mexican Revolution*, 111–12.

²⁷ Nicole M. Guidotti-Hernández, *Unspeakable Violence: Remapping U.S. and Mexican National Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 180.

²⁸ Miguel Tinker Salas, *In the Shadow of the Eagles: Sonora and the Transformation of the Border during the Porfiriato* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 61.

²⁹ Knight, *Mexican Revolution*, 112.

³⁰ Urrea, *Hummingbird’s Daughter*, 70, italics original.

³¹ Yolanda Broyles-González, “Indianizing Catholicism: Chicana/ India/ Mexicana Indigenous Spiritual Practices in our Image,” in *Chicana Traditions: Continuity and Change*, ed. Norma E. Cantú and Olga Nájera-Ramírez (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 121.

³² Gonzalez and Fernandez, *Century of Chicano History*, 40. Also, see Broyles-González, “Indianizing Catholicism,” which adds, “In Sonora and Sinaloa abuses included the capture and sale of Yaquis and Mayo tribal peoples into slavery. The Mexican government shipped them to the henequen plantations of Yucatán for fifty pesos a head” (119).

³³ Urrea, *Hummingbird’s Daughter*, 11.

³⁴ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), 134–35.

³⁵ Urrea, *Hummingbird’s Daughter*, 44.

³⁶ José E. Limón, *Dancing with the Devil: Society and Cultural Poetics in Mexican-American South Texas* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 185.

³⁷ Urrea, *Hummingbird’s Daughter*, 157.

- ³⁸ Knight, *Mexican Revolution*, 19.
- ³⁹ Burton Kirkwood, *The History of Mexico*, 2nd ed. (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press, 2010), 118.
- ⁴⁰ Vanderwood, *Power of God*, 59.
- ⁴¹ Knight, *Mexican Revolution*, 7.
- ⁴² Vanderwood, *Power of God*, 56.
- ⁴³ Broyles-González, "Indianizing Catholicism," 120.
- ⁴⁴ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 15.
- ⁴⁵ Delgadillo, *Spiritual Mestizaje*, 4.
- ⁴⁶ Paula Gunn Allen, *Grandmothers of the Light: A Medicine Woman's Sourcebook* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 21.
- ⁴⁷ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 16.
- ⁴⁸ Broyles-González, "Indianizing Catholicism," 121.
- ⁴⁹ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 81.
- ⁵⁰ Broyles-González, "Indianizing Catholicism," 125.
- ⁵¹ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 352.
- ⁵² Sharon Patricia Holland, *Raising the Dead: Readings of Death and (Black) Subjectivity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 74.
- ⁵³ Vanderwood, *Power of God*, 174.
- ⁵⁴ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 362.
- ⁵⁵ See Vanderwood, *Power of God*, 301–2.
- ⁵⁶ Emilio Zamora, *The World of the Mexican Worker in Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993), 63.
- ⁵⁷ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 473.
- ⁵⁸ Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 34.
- ⁵⁹ Urrea, *Hummingbird's Daughter*, 475.
- ⁶⁰ Delgadillo, *Spiritual Mestizaje*, 10.
- ⁶¹ Facio and Lara, *Fleshing the Spirit*, 3.

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