Border Cross Warning: We are not responsible for items lost during your oppression. My Forged Identities Speaking Back.

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Abstract

In this story, Silvia Patricia Solís poignantly speaks from multiple embodied identities to capture the complexities involved in the crossing of a physical and symbolic US/Mexico border. La Mexicana, La India, La Trenzuda, La Bruja, and La Morena are each unraveled to speak back to their own oppression and to reclaim and redefine who they really are.

I am an open ended vagina, my spoken word is my endless reach

Within my brown skin I carry with me multiple identities demanding to be forged

La mexicana, la india, la trenzuda, la bruja y la morena

This is their border crossing

La Mexicana en mí, cruza fronteras con
La india en mí, que se unte con el credo de
La trenzuda en mí y respira la pasión de
La bruja en mí que sana con amor
A la morena en mí...

Nací de la cuna de mi madre, de su familia, de una espiritualidad en éxtasis, but I am told I was born in the border town of Matamoros, Tamaulipas, and by crossing the Rio Bravo, al otro lado, to the slums of the US, my family became ‘dysfunctional’ because my mother chose to be a single parent, and that I should have natural knowledge of yerbas and empacho because intellectual hegemony renamed me curandera.

I reclaim the fragmented woman I am through the multiple identities I carry.

I am not a fortuneteller, from a static border town and an unstable family.

Soy una mujer que fluye entre fronteras, credos y pasiones.

La Mexicana en mi...
La Mexicana en mí is my place of origin. I was born in Mexico. Mexico is where I was conceived, Mexico is what my mother loves, Mexico is the first light I saw as I was leaving my mother’s womb. This was my first vision of the world, and no Xicanismo or US feminism can give me that. Mexico is where I was breastfed, ran free, climbed trees and learned the toughness of the streets. La Mexicana reminds me that I am not a homeless, bastard child, seeking a mythical utopia. She crossed la frontera with me.

La India en mi....
La India en mi sits in the borderlands that is my body. She was born out of coraje de una mujer marginada, colonizada, violada, educándose para ser escuchada. She begs me to uncover our silenced history. She begs me to not give up this struggle within this neocolonial world. She begs me to search for our history through our matriarch. The history taken away by the rape of our bodies and our lands. She tells me that our spirit is still fighting for survival.

Bibiana Suárez, Tembandumba de la Quimbamba (Palés Matos), acrylic paint on aluminum panel, 23.5 x 23.5 in., from the series Memoria (Memory), 2005-2011
She tells me - screaming inside my soul - the shackles placed on our bodies, pinning us down, raping us, cutting us through until our nipples bleed, can no longer breast feed our children our spirituality, nuestra cosmovisión. These shackles can only be removed through love and a machete, not through a fucking US Passport. The wound is deep.

La Trenzuda en mí
La trenzuda nació de mi manto espiritual. I wear my trenzas crisscrossed around my chest as ammunition. La trenzuda weaves together this embodied space called my voice. These trenzas are woven, tejidas con orgullo y con privilegio de hablar con los espíritus, de invocar a las Diosas y santos y de seguir tejiendo tradiciones sagradas. La trenzuda es mi credo, es mi diosa morena a la que me encomiendo. La trenzuda es la revolucionaria, guerrillera, soldadera, peleonera, habladora, puta, la cualquiera, la mal educada y marginada pero nunca la sumisa. La trenzuda soy yo and all the women before me. She is my nahual, transforming herself within me.

La Bruja en mí....
La bruja es mi altar. She is the knower and spinner of webs. She sees, imagines and senses la obscuridad y la luz. La bruja has claimed her space in the center of my borderland and I am her creation, living out her remedios y trabajos. She scolds me, me regaña and then heals me. She removes the masks from people’s bodies to expose their bleeding pain and reminds me that she is my knowledge. She healed me when I saw my grandfather dying, the only father I knew. She healed me when I could not forgive myself for leaving his side that day to go work for a white supremacist, academic institution y los académicos y académicas it produces. I never saw him alive again. She heals me when our Brown bodies expose their White masks to show no respect. She heals me as a form of resistance to this heartless, cold academic institution, which is swallowing our respect, our humanity and our spirits. We have forgotten to stop.

La morena en mí...
La morena en mí nació de la frontera donde el color de mi piel obtuvo su valor. La frontera is the midpoint between a transculturation of worlds, carved by the converging edges of the Río Bravo. The line that divides my brown skin and my white-washed, second-rate, slum generated education. A space called border, created to divide global economies, social classes, family ties and identities for the pursuit of the fucking American Imperial Dream. A racist border wall, dug deep into our mother’s land raping her, raping us only to create a diaspora of death. Who is accountable for those bodies? Who is responsible for stopping the deaths caused by a militia claiming sovereignty. Who is responsible for the men and women of color, with guns patrolling for an imperialista power? The border is a vein between el norte y el sur, it is in pain, about to tear open and flood us with its blood. Blood carrying the remains of those who have died, who have left children, family, and tears through their journey, and who have had their rosarios torn by men with guns. The color of my flesh reminds me that I am constantly crossing those fronteras.

La morena was born out of that frontera. She is the hybrid, the creation, the transculturation of my multiple identities. La morena is the skin, the flesh I am. La morena is.

And only la costura de mi abuela will help me sew back the fragments that I am. ....