

Reclaiming the Rhetoric of Reies López Tijerina: Border Identity and Agency in “The Land Grant Question”

Josue David Cisneros

Chicano activist Reies Tijerina’s speech known as “The Land Grant Question” provides a point of analysis in this article for assessing contradictory understandings of Tijerina and his movement, La Alianza Federal de Mercedes. The author explores how in both its rhetorical content and form, Tijerina’s speech navigated and negotiated identity and agency for the Alianza and Mexican Americans. The speech represents border rhetoric, a type of vernacular discourse that migrates across borders, sustains contradictions, and crafts a middle space. Reclaiming Tijerina’s rhetoric extends Chicano movement studies, illuminates notions of rhetorical agency, and highlights a rhetorically-inflected notion of the border.

Keywords: Agency; Border Rhetoric; Chicano; Public Address; Reies López Tijerina; Social Movement; Vernacular

It probably should go without saying that there has been a dearth of scholarship on Chicana/o movement rhetoric relative to that of other freedom struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. Though previous studies traced the movements’ rhetorical contexts and prominent rhetorical themes (Hammerback & Jensen, 1998; Hammerback, Jensen, & Gutierrez, 1985; Jensen & Hammerback, 1982), Holling (2008) astutely observed that past research has largely “missed [the] opportunity in pushing forward

Josue David Cisneros (Ph.D., University of Georgia, 2009) is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Northeastern University. This article was adapted from a larger chapter of the author’s dissertation completed under the direction of Dr. Vanessa B. Beasley and Dr. Edward M. Panetta. An earlier version of this article was presented at the 14th Biennial Conference of the Rhetoric Society of America in May 2010. The author is indebted to his doctoral committee, the members of the Athens of America Rhetoric Reading Group (AARRG), and Matthew P. Brigham for their significant help in developing the manuscript. *Correspondence:* Josue David Cisneros, 204 Lake Hall, Department of Communication Studies, 360 Huntington Avenue, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115; E-mail: j.cisneros@neu.edu

methodological considerations or approaches to the study of Chicano rhetoric” (p. 299; for exceptions, see Delgado, 1995, 1998; Flores, 1996; Hammerback & Jensen, 1994; LaWare, 1998). The problem is not with the study of Chicana/o rhetoric per se, nor with the close rhetorical/textual analysis of the movement’s public discourse, but rather with the limited methodological and theoretical approaches of past research. Therefore, this article reengages with Chicano movement discourses and explores the resonances of identity and agency given rise therein.

Specifically, I focus on the “vernacular discourse” of Reies López Tijerina and the Alianza Federal de Mercedes (Federal Alliance of Land Grants), moving beyond the background and basic themes of their rhetoric to consider its implications for rhetorical theory. Vernacular discourses emanate from vernacular communities, counter-publics, and/or the disempowered and thus stand in relationship to “civic,” or mainstream, discourses such as those of mass media, the state, or other empowered groups (Ono & Sloop, 1995; Sloop & Ono, 1997). Historical discourses like those of Tijerina and the Alianza represent vernaculars ripe for study, for the agitators of Chicana/o movements were “everyday citizens” engaged in “vernacular expressions” of culture, identity, and resistance, from whom we can continue to glean theoretical insights (Holling, 2008, p. 300). By exploring Reies Tijerina and the Alianza’s vernacular discourse, enacted through both content and form and with “both liberatory and constraining dimensions” (Holling & Calafell, 2011, p. 21), I explore the theoretical contributions of Chicana/o movement rhetoric.

Though the Mexican-American land grant struggle stemmed as far back as the nineteenth century (when corporations and wealthy Anglo farmers used trickery, legal maneuvering, and outright violence to take land guaranteed in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo), the Alianza—founded in 1963 by Pentecostal-preacher-turned-political-activist Reies Tijerina—appealed to a conservative Catholic, rural, and isolated group of New Mexican “Hispanos,” energizing previous land rights groups and infusing the cause with new life (Tijerina, 2000). Tijerina himself was widely recognized as a “fiery and effective speaker” (Gardner, 1970, p. 44; see also Fernandez & Jensen, 1995, pp. 129–130), and the Alianza’s campaign for the return of land and cultural rights took shape through public speeches, newspapers, local radio, letters, marches, protests, and even confrontational activities (Hammerback et al., 1985, pp. 12–13). Yet the Alianza was most (in)famous for their 1967 armed takeover of the federal courthouse in Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico, resulting in a shoot-out with police and the federal hunt and arrest of the Aliancistas. The courthouse raid occurred during a period of the late 1960s ripe with social movement agitation (see Andrews, 1969; Scott & Smith, 1969; Stewart, 1997). It reached front pages and TV screens across the country, catapulting the Alianza’s regional land-grant movement onto the national stage (Busto, 2005). As Gutiérrez (2000) later wrote, the feeling at the time was that the Alianza “did what Malcolm X and the Black Panthers only talked about. [They] waged war against the state of New Mexico and the United States government” (p. xvi).

The obvious importance of rhetoric to the movement notwithstanding, Hammerback and colleagues’ 1985 observation remains remarkably true today: “although

biographers and scholars chronicled his life and explained his movement . . . Tijerina [and the Alianza] received no in-depth rhetorical study" (p. 14). Hammerback and colleagues' (1985) own work focused on the "why, how, and with what effect" of Tijerina's rhetoric (p. 7), including his background, motivations to speak, and basic rhetorical themes (Fernandez & Jensen, 1995; Hammerback & Jensen, 1980; see also Busto, 2005), demonstrating that Tijerina adapted his message across language and culture, shaping a "rhetorical world" (Hammerback et al., 1985, p. 176).

Nevertheless, contradictory portrayals of Tijerina and the Alianza dominate current scholarship. Their activism has been described at once as radical, rebellious, even revolutionary, and as conservative and reformist. For some, the Alianza represented the "radical wing" of the Chicana/o movement (Maciel & Peña, 2000, p. 274): "aggressive," "dramatic," and "audacious," characterized by "militancy," even "separatism" (Rosales, 1996, p. 154); a "rebellion" (Blawis, 1971, p. 36) "at odds with the majority" (Gardner, 1970, p. 70). For others, even the Alianza's most "radical" actions were seen as aberrations, or at most, instruments to draw attention to their reformist, civil rights message (Bebout, 2007; Oropeza, 2008), a message which "reflected . . . conservative values" and was "more traditional than radical" (Hammerback et al., 1985, pp. 160–162; see also Busto, 2005, p. 151). Considering these conflicting assessments of the scope and meaning of Tijerina and the Alianza's activism demonstrates that they provide fruitful cases for exploring the tensions, exigencies, and resonances of Chicana/o vernacular rhetoric.

Rather than providing a comprehensive sense of the Alianza's activism, this article focuses on a rhetorical moment in the broader movement to develop an understanding of how they negotiated competing pressures and constituted situated identity and agency. Specifically, I analyze Tijerina's speech known as "The Land Grant Question" delivered on November 26, 1967, just five months after the courthouse raid. "The Land Grant Question," I argue, demonstrated a vernacular strategy in both its argumentative content and form I refer to as "border rhetoric." The speech continually crossed over and inhabited the line between integration and separation, between U.S. citizen and foreigner; Tijerina constructed legal and moral appeals for the civil rights of Mexican-American citizens and radical and confrontational discourse of racial/ethnic nationalism. These contrasting dimensions of the speech encapsulate a broader tension in the historical understanding of Tijerina and the Alianza, which I seek to reclaim, and speak to the problems and possibilities of identity and agency in vernacular rhetoric.

In what follows, I first develop my use of the term border rhetoric and its implications for identity and agency; then I analyze "The Land Grant Question" through this theoretical lens to put it into new focus; and finally I consider the lessons the speech provides. Even though "The Land Grant Question" was "typical of Tijerina's public discourse during the 1960s" (Fernandez & Jensen, 1995, p. 130), my aim is not to provide a systematic interpretation of Tijerina's entire rhetorical corpus. Rather, "The Land Grant Question" provides a point of departure for reconsidering Tijerina's discourse and for exploring the rhetorical lessons of border rhetoric.

Theorizing Border Rhetoric

The notion of the border has undoubtedly contributed myriad critical and theoretical insight. Across a vast critical scholarship on borders, borderlands, border identity, and border thinking, there is an emphasis on the “border” as a concept that informs identity and agency. On one hand, the border can be conceived “as a dynamic site of hegemonic struggle over . . . the formation of national and ethnic identities.” On the other, the border represents the possibilities for agency found in the “social-spatial politics of movement, mobility, migration, and displacement” (DeChaine, 2012, pp. 4–5). In this section, I review past theorizations of the border as a site of identity/agency and then focus on a rhetorically inflected approach.

One vein of previous scholarship understands the border/borderlands as a material and cultural space with(in) which Chicana/os and Latina/os live and struggle and that entails pressures of racialization, alienation, geopolitics, and coloniality (Anzaldúa, 1987; Delgado, 2000; Molina Guzmán & Valdivia, 2004; Ono & Sloop, 2002; Pérez Firmat, 1986). The border exemplifies, in both a material and cultural sense, the dynamic history of colonial bordering in the Southwestern United States, the cultural and racial borders Mexican Americans, Chicana/os, and other Latina/os have been forced to traverse, and the “border culture” in which they find themselves “with a foot in [multiple] worlds” (Flores, 1996, p. 142; see Amaya, 2007; Calafell & Delgado, 2004; Saldívar, 1997). Borders are material realities and social constructs structuring the experiences and identities of Latina/os who are always crossing over, under, or being crossed by, borders—cultural, linguistic, and physical (Flores, 2003; Valdivia, 2004).

A broader, overlapping view conceives the border as metaphor to understand processes of globalization, transculturation, and affected “border” groups, such as migrants or refugees (Appadurai, 1996; García Canclini, 1995; Gómez-Peña, 1996; Mignolo, 2000). This view emphasizes politics of movement, migration, and liminality taking shape in transnational spaces and the accelerated movement of capital and people. The border represents a space betwixt and between recognized traditions of political economy and cultural practice (Brady, 2007). Those who represent “borderline conditions,” both physical and metaphorical, are faced with the reality of contradiction and migration as a way to negotiate agency (Bhabha, 1994, p. 9).

Thus the border represents a space/place for the constitution and contestation of identities as well as a constraint and condition of possibility for vernacular agency. The border cuts and divides but also provides the possibility for contact and crossing. The borderlands are “not a comfortable territory to live in,” because they represent a place of suffering, struggle, and even violence, yet the borderlands also provide the chance to “sustain contradictions” and mold “ambivalence into something else” (Anzaldúa, 1987, pp. vii, 79). As border theorists consistently argue, border(land)s represent spaces of contradiction that can be embraced as a source of affirmative identity; border identity opportunizes conditions such as migration, displacement, and doubleness as strategies for survival and struggle (Mignolo, 2000).

Drawing on these theorizations of the border, I want to explore *border rhetoric* as a type of vernacular discourse that encapsulates aforementioned notions of identity

and agency but that foregrounds rhetorical performance and enactment (Calafell, 2007; Moreman, 2008). As John Louis Lucaites argued, “every rhetorical performance enacts and contains a theory of its own agency—of its own possibilities—as it structures and enacts relationships between speaker and audience, self and other, action and structure” (quoted in Geisler, 2004, p. 13). In this sense, agency and identity are not understood as the static possessions of certain groups or individuals but instead as constituted in particular rhetorical performances (Campbell, 2005; Charland, 1987). Identity and agency are situated rhetorical articulations taking shape in a confluence of context and form that both enable and constrain rhetors to speak and act. “Neither texts nor rhetors ‘have’ agency separate from their contextual articulations,” which highlights the importance of attending to the rhetorical enactments that concretely but contingently materialize identity and agency (Rand, 2008, p. 299). This is not to suggest, of course, a “magical” understanding of agency which (re)situates it in an already-realized, humanist subject (Gunn & Cloud, 2010). Rather, seeing agency and identity as rhetorical articulations suggests they are textual and “relational,” “productively and destructively” negotiated between rhetoric, rhetor, audience, and context (Lundberg & Gunn, 2005, p. 97). Agency and identity are both consequents of, and constructed in, concrete rhetorical/performative moments (Sowards, 2010). From the perspective of critical rhetoric, the interplay between civic and vernacular discourses illuminates the continual contestation over identity and agency (Sloop & Ono, 1997). Though vernacular discourses are not always transgressive, Latina/o vernaculars, “self-produced by and within Latin@ communities” in “visual, verbal, written and/or performative form,” can potentially enact “liberatory” identity and agency (Holling & Calafell, 2011, p. 21).

In sum, though vernacular rhetorics are shaped and constrained by preexisting “material exigencies and social inequities,” border rhetorics become avenues for “asserting subjectivity and agency” (Holling, 2008, p. 304). Flores’ (1996) discussion of Chicana feminist writings provided one of the clearest illustrations of this dynamic between identity and agency in border rhetoric, demonstrating that Chicana feminists converted their “border experience” (straddling borders of race, gender, culture, class, and sexuality) into a “rhetoric of difference” that affirmed identity through the positive rearticulation of difference. Chicanas celebrated their differences, thus contributing to a space (or “homeland”) from which to speak and be. In this sense, Chicana feminists’ use of border rhetoric (through a speaking of/from the borderlands) negotiated provisional identity and agency and enabled them to build bridges with other groups. Likewise, Sowards (2010) argued that Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers, articulated agency and negotiated multiple identities through a strategy of “*haciendo caras*” (literally, making face): the performance of multiple gestures, faces, looks, and embodiment. Responding to and refashioning pressures of gender, race, and ethnicity, Huerta’s rhetoric negotiated agency and affirmed identity through themes of “flexibility, hope and optimism, resistance, [and] transformation” (p. 240). Enck-Wanzer (2006) analyzed the “intersectional rhetoric” of the Puerto Rican Young Lords, showing how the movement wrestled with race, poverty, and democratic conventions to create a “collective agency” and identity

that could challenge “the system.” Finally, recent national protests by immigrant activists similarly contested the “borders” of U.S. civic identity through a vernacular discourse of hybridity (Cisneros, 2011). These and other case studies of vernacular discourse emphasize interstices, liminality, doubleness, and displacement as strategy for identity/agency (Calafell, 2007; Chávez, 2010).

Broadly conceived, then, “border rhetoric” represents a type of vernacular discourse that draws from the problems and possibilities of the border(lands) but entails consequences for subaltern identity and agency. In terms of its “content,” border rhetoric enacts “a double critique,” speaking “from both traditions and, at the same time, from neither of them” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 67). As Mignolo described, “border thinking” held in tension local (vernacular) histories and (colonizing) global designs, constructing “an other thinking” that worked in/through both subalternized and colonial knowledges (p. 66). Likewise, Ono and Sloop (2002) emphasized that border (or “outlaw”) logic, which they similarly called “thinking otherwise,” often “challenge[d] existing paradigms from within” (p. 157). Both decoloniality theorists like Mignolo and critical rhetoric scholars like Ono and Sloop emphasized a different, “syncretic” (Ono & Sloop, 1995, p. 23) epistemology that motivates border discourse. As is evident in the case studies above (Cisneros, 2011; Flores, 1996; Enck-Wanzer, 2006; Sowards, 2010), this quality is expressed in a rhetorical content that holds in tension differing traditions and ways of thinking, that entails the “disruption of dichotomies through being” itself (in) “a dichotomy” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 85).

Likewise, the rhetorical *form* of border rhetoric employs this “double critique,” working in and through dialectics to critique multiple discursive and political styles (Enck-Wanzer, 2006). Returning to Flores’ (1996) discussion of Chicana feminists, for example, a sort of border rhetorical style—“a mix of poetry, prose, and stream of consciousness” and the “jump from English to Spanish to Indian to Spanglish” (p. 152)—in Chicana feminist writings broke down borders, built bridges, and created space for Chicanas to speak/be. It would seem a sort of “pastiche” (Ono & Sloop, 1995, p. 23) characterizes the rhetorical form of this vernacular discourse—a confluence of different “textual” elements, a suturing of rhetorical traditions. The form of border rhetoric, as well as its “content,” may challenge borders and help provide agency and voice for those voices and agents that have been “subalternized” (Mignolo, 2000, p. 67).

Reexamining the rhetoric of Reies Tijerina and the Alianza provides an opportunity to clarify these theoretical dimensions of vernacular identity and agency and to get a snapshot of “border rhetoric.” Recall that conflicting understandings of the Alianza’s and Tijerina’s discourse persist. How can we understand the group’s struggle for citizenship rights (i.e., “conservative” appeals) in concert with their well-known “militant” (even violent) separatism? Mining this contradiction by narrowing the unit of analysis to a situated rhetorical performance elucidates the contextual ways Tijerina and the Alianza discursively articulated agency and identity. Thus the next section analyzes Tijerina’s speech, “The Land Grant Question,” to illuminate the crafting of border rhetoric in both rhetorical form and content. Tijerina’s speech navigated betwixt and between these dichotomies to offer contradictory but complementary

notions of identity and agency for the Alianza, Latina/os, and Anglos. The *content* of Tijerina's speech moved between a reformist, civil rights discourse and a revolutionary, ethno-nationalist discourse. Through the speech's rhetorical *form*, Tijerina emphasized a (border) identity and agency for his movement primarily through a reliance on (mixed) metaphor. Tijerina's speech represented "an other thinking" in/from/through this contradiction characteristic of border rhetoric.

Border Rhetoric in "The Land Grant Question": Agency and Identity

"The Land Grant Question" was one of many speeches Tijerina delivered in the English language, outside of New Mexico, and to mostly white audiences during a national speaking tour in 1967. More than likely because it occurred after the courthouse raid and because it is one of the few Alianza texts published in English, the speech has been included in several collections as a representative example of Tijerina's rhetoric (Gottheimer, 2003; Tice, 1971). Not surprisingly, limited scholarly discussions of "The Land Grant Question" echo the larger contradictory understandings discussed above. The speech stands, in Gottheimer's (2003) anthology, as an example of Tijerina, "the most militant Chicano activist of his time" (p. 306); through violent rhetoric and appeals to separatism, the speech re-presented the Alianza's previous acts of violence and physical confrontation (such as the courthouse raid). However, according to Fernandez and Jensen (1995), Tijerina's speech centered on "appeals to cultural, political, economic, and educational rights"; Tijerina "assumed the role of the teacher" and delivered an instructional message aimed at interethnic understanding with his mostly white audience (pp. 130, 132). For Fernandez and Jensen, the speech represented not militancy, separatism, or violence but rather encapsulated Tijerina's "real" message of civil and cultural "rights" (see, Oropeza, 2008). While some claimed "The Land Grant Question" was centered on themes of civil rights and citizenship, others described it as confrontational, "militant," presenting an ethno-nationalist condemnation of Anglo society. Because of these contrasting estimations, "The Land Grant Question" presents a case study for the exploration of "border rhetoric" and its negotiation of identity and agency through rhetorical content and form.

Border Rhetoric and/in Rhetorical Content

Tijerina's speech primarily moved between two arguments: one a radical ethno-nationalist discourse and the other a reformist civil rights appeal. These arguments in Tijerina's speech stood in tension, yet each drew on the rhetorical and historical moment to articulate distinct forms of agency and identity for Mexican Americans and Anglos. "The Land Grant Question" at times called for reform and inclusion and at other times for rejection and separation; at times it interpellated Mexican Americans as a separate race and nation apart from the "Anglo" United States, while at other times "The Land Grant Question" emphasized that Mexican Americans were

deserving of full citizenship. In a way, these were schizophrenic appeals, but they must be understood and held in tension to fully appreciate their rhetorical and political significance.

“The New Breed”: An Ethno-Nationalist Identity and Agency

Despite those claims that “The Land Grant Question” focused exclusively on “conservative” appeals to civil rights, throughout the speech Tijerina embodied the position of “outsider” standing in solidarity with his people rather than with American society. Instead of identifying with the United States, Tijerina condemned its imperialism and “evil” repression of Mexican Americans. Tijerina constructed an identity for himself and his supporters that relied on ethnic nationalism. In contrast, Tijerina placed his mostly Anglo audience in the position of enemies. This ethno-nationalist identity also created a particular revolutionary agency over against U.S. society by capitalizing on portrayals of the Alianza as racial separatists and radicals. While separatist agency was affirmed for Latina/os, Anglos were positioned as antagonists.

First, Tijerina enacted an ethno-nationalist identity, constructing Mexican Americans as a separate race and nation. He explained that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo recognized a distinct nation. According to the treaty power of the Constitution, Tijerina argued, “treaties . . . become the supreme law of the land,” making the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo equivalent to the Constitution and “inviolable” (p. 3–4). “A life of a nation, of a people, depends on this treaty”; “It is our Constitution,” yet “all those privileges, immunities and rights were frozen completely and wrecked” by the Anglo government (p. 4). This nationalist identification was based in international laws and documents. Legal evidence proved that Mexican Americans were a separate “nation” recognized by a treaty, protected by their own Constitution, and thus sovereign.

Though the sovereignty of Mexican Americans was guaranteed in legal documents, Tijerina noted that the “nation” of Mexican Americans, like others nations of the world, had been subject to U.S. imperialism: “Even though [the] United States prides itself” on being the “ruler and referee, umpire throughout the world,” in reality, the United States “keeps a foot in Guantanamo Base”; “Through a treaty he keeps a foot in Vietnam,” and likewise, the United States keeps its “finger or foot . . . on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo” (3). Using the metaphor of the “foot,” Tijerina personified the United States violently subjugating other nations with “his” imperialist boot, stretching the metaphor to the subjugation of a document (the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo) and the “nation” which it protected (Mexican Americans). Whether his explicit gendering of the United States was intentional or not, it contributed to a vivid picture of U.S. violence and imperialism. Placing Mexican Americans with other nations as subjects of U.S. imperialism furthered the articulation of an oppositional, nationalist identity.

Mexican Americans were not only a “nation” according to Tijerina, but they were also a race, a “new breed . . . born out of law” from “Law Two, Title One, Book Four”

of the *Law of the Indies* (the governing document of the Spanish colonies, p. 7). For Tijerina, the recognition in this historical document, which legally recognized mestizos (mixed race people) and permitted intermarriage between criollos (Spaniards) and indios (“Indians”), provided evidence not only for the existence of a separate Mexican American “nation” but also for the existence of a new race. “Every nation has a date of birth,” including the “Anglo,” the “Jewish nation,” and the “Spanish American,” which was born “four hundred and thirty years” ago, at this moment of legal recognition. This race/nation had been reaffirmed through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The equivalence between “nation” and “race” here, and the reliance on historical/legal proof, provided a strategy of pride and a claim of sovereignty for Mexican Americans, who had the same right to survival and self-government as did “Anglos” and the “Jewish nation.”

Tijerina’s use of the term “Spanish American” to describe the “new breed” was significant because it encapsulated his blend of race and nationalism situated in the mixing of the “Spanish” and Native “American” into the mestizo. Tijerina’s term “Indo-Hispanos,” which he often used instead of “Spanish American,” also signaled this racial/ethnic nationalism because it drew on the Spanish traditions so important to northern New Mexicans (i.e., “Hispano” or “Spanish”) but combined them with an appeal to shared ethnic indigenous heritage (indio or Native “American;” see Bebout, 2007). In other words, Tijerina claimed that the new breed was united not only by historical and legal ties but also by mixed blood—literally by shared substance. “Indo-Hispano” and “Spanish American” constructed identification for Mexican Americans based on presumed shared racial heritage and translated this racial/ethnic identification into a basis for nationalism (similar to the later term Chicano; see Delgado, 1998).

The “new breed” constituted not only a collective identity for Mexican Americans but also for Latin American people. It stretched across the hemisphere and was united in a struggle for land rights and self-determination: “As our land grants were taken away here in New Mexico, in Mexico were taken away from the Indians and the new breed by blue eyed Spaniards. . . . In Argentina the same, in Brazil, Chile, Peru—all throughout South America, ladies and gentlemen” (1967/1971, p. 18). Tijerina framed the “new breed” as a separate, hemispheric race/nation—one that was “catching up” to the Anglo and would not suffer the imperialism of the United States (or the Spaniard) much longer (18). The new breed spread throughout Latin America; beyond its blood ties, the new breed shared a common experience of white imperialism and a common struggle for land. Tijerina’s terms “Indo-Hispano,” “Spanish American,” and “the new breed” here were used to refer to Mexican Americans and Latina/os more broadly and represented what Delgado (1995) called a “rhetoric of otherness” (p. 448); Tijerina affirmed a common and separate racial/national identity, dissociated Mexican Americans (and Latina/os) from Anglos, and issued a call to separate, collective people-hood. The “new breed” provided a point of racial/ethnic solidarity and cultural pride for Mexican Americans, but more than that it provided an argument for political subjectivity and self-determination through nationalism.

Tijerina's deployment of racial/ethnic nationalism stood in contrast to predominant societal racialization of Latina/os and Mexican Americans as lazy, dirty, and so on (Flores, 2003). In contrast, Tijerina's racialization provided a point of pride and a collective identity for his supporters; the term "new breed," for example, seemed to connote superiority to other "breeds." "Spanish Americans" were not only a superior "breed" but also a separate "nation" (8). In fact, Tijerina conflated race and nationalism, lodging them both in the same legal/historical evidence. Tijerina's ethno-nationalist position served a consummatory function: It constructed a collective "people" (a "race" and "breed"), a shared enemy (Anglos), and an ongoing historical struggle between the two (nationalism). Though this ethno-nationalist concept of Mexican American and Latina/o identity preceded and, according to Bebout (2007), later inspired the term "Chicana/o," it served a similar purpose "as a signifier of identity, cultural pride, and anti-assimilation" (Holling, 2008, p. 303), as well as hemispheric solidarity.

Of course, Tijerina's ethno-nationalist notion of Mexican American and Latina/o racial identity, like its antecedents (e.g., the "Raza C3smica") and its successors (e.g., Chicano), rested on troubling gendered and racialized assumptions. For one, the idea of a "new breed" combining Spanish/European and Indian/Native American elements rested on the presumption that the "feminine," "dark" Indian was "domesticated" by the "masculine" and "white" Spaniard, their miscegenation producing a new racial hybrid. These notions would later and rightly come under criticism, especially by Chicana feminists, for their patriarchal and racial ascriptions (Anzaldua, 1987). Tijerina seemed to valorize indigenous ethnicity/culture over the links to Spanish culture; as he argued, "the tortilla, the chili [the Spaniard] didn't give us. Those are our original fruits, fruits of the new breed" (23). Though this celebrated an indigenous past often erased from memory, it also did so in a romanticized and fetishized manor. The concept of the "new breed," with its conflation of race, culture, and nation, problematically rooted common identity in potentially exclusive characteristics and risked collapsing differences between Mexican Americans (Flores, 1996). While all this was true, appeals to the "new breed" were also powerful, for they furthered the construction of a collective identity for Mexican Americans (and Latina/os) rooted in racial/ethnic pride in contrast to dominant racialization of Mexican Americans in U.S. society. Through the rhetoric of racial identity, Tijerina constructed potentially affirming commonalities that could justify solidarity and sovereignty from U.S. society.

Tijerina's process of identity constitution extended not only to Mexican Americans and Latina/os but also to his empirical audience of Anglos. Remember that Tijerina delivered "The Land Grant Question" in the wake of the courthouse raid to a mostly Anglo audience at the University of Colorado in Denver during a national speaking tour. Though he articulated an ethno-nationalist identity for Mexican Americans and Latina/os in the speech, he also interpellated his immediate audience into its own persona. Tijerina argued that Anglo society was the perpetrator of "evils" and "crimes" against the new breed, that it was worthy of condemnation as such, and that these crimes must be exposed to the light of day. At the very beginning

of “The Land Grant Question,” for example, Tijerina stated his aim was to “destroy certain lies, fabricated, calculated with evil intention . . . To explain the historical, organized crimes of [the] federal government” and the “constitutional, legal and international laws that have been frozen completely—with evil intentions” (p. 2). He told his audience, “we must learn to distinguish between the reality and discrimination” (p. 4). The truth, or “reality,” of the “new breed” had been occluded, or “frozen”; it had been couched in “lies, fabricated, calculated with evil intentions,” and must be thawed and uncovered. Tijerina explained that in American schools Anglo conspirators had “frozen the Spanish American education” because “they don’t want our children to know about the treaty, about the land grants, about the historical background, about the dates of our birth . . . because then they will have pride” (18–19). The truth of the new breed’s existence as a race/nation had been “frozen” and “hidden” from Mexican American children by Anglo society. Likewise, the land grants had been stolen (“frozen”) from the new breed and their rights as a nation had been violated. The metaphor of freezing, a frequent one in this speech, as well as that of hiding implied intention rather than a natural condition. Not only had Anglo society conspired in stealing the land and culture of this new breed across the continent, but in the United States they kept the children in the dark to these truths annihilate the Indo-Hispano.

Relating to global events outside of the United States, Tijerina stated, “There is a hidden side . . . a dark side of the history of the United States”; the United States was responsible for violence and colonization across the globe, not only against the “new breed,” which demonstrated that it was a society steeped in evil. “Uncle Sam,” he stated, “likes violence. That’s what he’s doing in Vietnam. And that’s what he wants me to do so he can destroy me immediately” (12–14). “That is why the government . . . is trying to brand me as a ‘rebel, criminal’ and send me to the penitentiary . . . because he’s afraid to face these facts” (18). Tijerina here, as in other parts of the speech, moved between the persecution he faced as an individual, the backlash faced by the Alianza, and the oppression confronting Latin Americans and others across the world. The United States’ obsession with violence was evident at a number of levels; as Tijerina was facing persecution and imprisonment by the U.S. government, so too were Mexican Americans, Latina/os, and other oppressed people (like the Vietnamese) experiencing the violence of the federal government. Tijerina indicated these various expressions of violence pointed to the reality that Anglo society was rooted in violence. While Tijerina constructed an ethno-nationalist identity for the Alianza (“new breed,” “Indo-Hispano”), it stood in opposition to an evil Anglo culture that Tijerina personified through images of the United States’ imperialist “foot” and the violence of “Uncle Sam.”

Tijerina’s radical ethno-nationalist discourse did not call on government redress or civil rights but demanded solidarity. As he stated, the new breed’s hemispheric struggle “will be a chain reaction. Let’s not fool ourselves. It will come to surface . . . the whole thing between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak. It’s catching up. That is why the government . . . is trying to brand me as a ‘rebel, criminal’ and send me to the penitentiary” (18). Unlike other civil rights leaders of the time who

constructed the persona of social activist and civil rights leader (Hammerback & Jensen, 1998, p. 5; Lucaites & Condit, 1990, pp. 9, 14), Tijerina presented himself here primarily as an “other”—an outsider decrying corrupt society and exposing its crimes to the light of day. Tijerina identified not with American citizens but with a new breed/nation that was a victim of systematic and deep-seated imperialism. He implicated Anglo/U.S. society in a world-wide project of racism. Latina/os everywhere were united as the “new breed” to fight against evil Anglo imperialism (just as it was being combated in places like Vietnam). In a brief statement of desperation Tijerina clamored, “Ladies and gentlemen, we cannot swallow it. We cannot live with this kind of destruction, fake, [sic] hypocrisy, murdering, killing, [and] destroying!” (18). Thus Tijerina’s exclamation of despair worked almost as a grito—a cry of suffering, pain, frustration, and a call for revolution (Gardner, 1970); though the United States had intentionally frozen the truths and the laws and committed violence against the “new breed” they were not dead; the laws could be thawed the life of the people revived.

Tijerina’s oppositional identity construction also entailed a collective agency for the Alianza and Latina/os, one that positioned them as harbingers of a coming confrontation. Hope rested not in reform of the present system or the promise of reason but in the leveling justice of a coming “chain reaction.” Tijerina argued, “This is the era of justice and claims”; the “Indian” and “black man” are clamoring for justice, and “small nations are getting independence, such as [in] Africa.” The militancy of the late 1960s as well as revolutionary struggles throughout the world represented a chain reaction of justice that would overtake the world and remake it. Though these diverse groups struggling for freedom did not “use atom bombs to secure their independence,” he stated, “the pressure of justice” seemed no less fateful: “The pressure of humanity and the pressure of mankind will deliver . . . [and] liberate these land grants” (23). Tijerina intimated a coming revolution—a “chain reaction” brought on by the struggles of oppressed groups, a “pressure of justice” that would overthrow the present system and “liberate” the new breed.

Tijerina’s ominous and prophetic language of a “chain reaction,” the coming “pressure of justice,” and his reference to “atom bombs” suggest an apocalyptic tenor to “The Land Grant Question.” In apocalyptic discourse, “justice will require not an enforcement of the terms of the covenant . . . but a destruction of evil itself” (Darsey, 1997, p. 117). As Robert Terrill (2004) summarized, “American culture [is] so hopelessly corrupt that only a catastrophic cleansing . . . can effect the necessary changes” (p. 29). Apocalyptic language is not the language of reform but rather of revolution: the making of a new world. Thus Tijerina seemed to claim that America was hopelessly lost in its evil and could not be saved from the coming wave of justice. The “chain reaction” included struggles at home (such as those of Native Americans and blacks) and struggles abroad (such as wars in Vietnam and Africa); a worldwide revolution of justice was coming. Likewise, the Alianza movement was part of these struggles for liberation that would overtake the present world and remake it. As Tijerina (1967/1971) stated, “with power you cannot reason” (p. 15). In other words, U.S. society was hopelessly corrupt, and these movements promised to inaugurate a coming “era of justice”

(p. 18). Tijerina's clear invocation of "atom bombs" in reference to global liberation movements seemed to buttress the idea that the "pressure of mankind" would bring about apocalyptic changes.

In one sense, Tijerina's ethno-nationalist identity and apocalyptic language was representative of many radical movements during the late 1960s (black power, for example). Yet in another sense, it stands in contrast to portrayals of Tijerina as entirely concerned with the discourse of rights and citizenship. The rights that Tijerina claimed here were not citizenship rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution but rather the treaty rights concerning property and culture guaranteed to a colonized nation. Tijerina located agency outside of conventional U.S. national identity, and he demanded respect for Mexican Americans as a separate race and people. Tijerina inverted racial privilege, stripping "evil" Anglos of agency and situating it with the "new breed," which was at the vanguard of a global "chain reaction" of the oppressed. In these moments, Tijerina seemed to draw on the tenor of the courthouse raid to construct a confrontational and almost revolutionary agency for his supporters. In concert with his apocalyptic language, the agency of the "new breed" was not that of claiming rights, citizenship, or collaborating with Anglos; the new breed's agency shared the force of "atom bombs" and promised to bring about a "chain reaction" of "justice" and "liberation."

If we read more closely into the above passages, we see that this ethno-nationalist agency was complex. On one hand, the rhetorical positioning of the Alianza in relation to global liberation movements softened the controversy over the courthouse raid by reading it into a larger wave of agitational events; the Alianza was part of a coming "chain reaction," suggesting a force greater than any one group or actor. On the other hand, by positioning the Alianza and the "new breed" in the context of liberation movements throughout the world, Tijerina strengthened the Alianza's radical agency by making them the vanguard of a global movement for justice. Tijerina claimed that through participation in a coming wave of international racial freedom, "Indo-Hispanos" could affirm their sovereignty and help usher in a new order. The notions of identity and agency dovetailed: A racial/ethnic nationalist identity meant that agency could be found in the Alianza's racial solidarity and continued confrontation with evil Anglo society.

"As an American Citizen": Reformist Identity and Agency

In moments throughout "The Land Grant Question," Tijerina articulated agency and identity for Mexican Americans through a type of ethno-nationalist discourse. Yet at other times (and in contrast) Tijerina focused on the discourse of civil rights, framing himself and Mexican Americans as U.S. citizens, demanding the United States stay faithful to its noble (constitutional) founding by protecting Mexican Americans' civil rights. Rather than frame Mexican Americans as a separate race/nation in opposition to Anglos, here "The Land Grant Question" emphasized mutual understanding and collaboration. Appealing to the U.S. Constitution and U.S. citizenship, Tijerina constructed a shared American identity and articulated a commitment to reforming U.S.

society, a sense of agency that included his Anglo audience and invited them to participate in the process of renewal. Through the language of jeremiad (rather than apocalypticism), the speech emphasized the ability of Mexican Americans and Anglos to work together to reform the nation.

Tijerina (1967/1971) stated, in reference to the land grant struggle, for example, “We are not asking for something that does not belong to us legally, constitutionally, ladies and gentlemen . . . The land grant question is part . . . of the Constitution” (p. 12). “I am not against any nation or race or creed or religion or political philosophies,” argued Tijerina, “but I only stand as a citizen, as an *American citizen*, for those *rights* that truthfully, constitutionally belongs [sic] to the Spanish American” (4, emphasis added). In these passages, then, we see a different sort of identity taking shape, not through a separate ethnic nationalism but rather through identification with Anglo Americans, U.S. citizenship, and U.S. laws.

If the “Indo-Hispano” was Tijerina’s metaphor for identity in his more radical ethno-nationalist discourse (literally a blend of Spanish/Hispano and Native American/Indio), he provided a different notion of “Spanish American” here: an “American citizen” of “Spanish” descent who held equal rights and an equal stake in the future of the nation (i.e., “Spanish” modified “American,” or U.S. citizen). As evidence of this, Tijerina not only explicitly identified himself as a citizen but again referenced “blood” ties; though now he emphasized the ties to his blood “brothers” the Anglo Americans. “Am I anti-Anglo?” Tijerina asked, “No, sir. I like to stay alive and I like to help the Anglo . . . He’s my older brother . . . He needs me and I need him” (13). The familial metaphor (in place of the “breed”) stressed the bond shared by “Anglos” and Mexican Americans rather than the common racial/ethnic bonds shared by Indo-Hispanos across the hemisphere. Though Tijerina’s use of “brothers” potentially maintained a certain level of “blood” relation, it was also undergirded by the stronger bond of citizenship. In contrast to elsewhere in the speech, where he explicitly stated that the Indo-Hispano was a separate race and nation, legally sovereign in its own right, Tijerina now explicitly identified himself as citizen and the Alianza’s as a demand for Constitutional rights, for example, “Our culture was not respected nor [sic] protected, even though the Constitution provides for it” (16). While still recognized as a distinct cultural group, Mexican Americans were part of the larger “American family.”

Interesting here is the gender dynamic of this identification, particularly the contrast between the specificity with which Tijerina addressed both his male and female audience (i.e., “ladies and gentlemen”) and the generic masculine inflection he provided for “the Anglo” (i.e., “he,” “him,” and “brother”). Setting aside the possibility that this masculinizing of Anglo society/citizenship might be a result of Tijerina’s dominant language of Spanish with its gendering of nouns, this gendered ascription might also be read as a subtle carrying over of the critique of U.S. imperialism from Tijerina’s more ethno-nationalist discourse. In contrast to the gender-inclusiveness in addressing his audience, Tijerina’s explicit masculinizing of dominant Anglo society (“brother”) might have continued to highlight the exclusionary practices of dominant U.S. society (“Uncle Sam”) while explicitly identifying as citizen. On the other

hand, we could read Tijerina's use of gendered pronouns to refer to Anglo Americans as his complicity with a gendered "ideal." Tijerina might have been reifying here, willingly or unwillingly, a patriarchal ideology of identity and citizenship with his attempt to use masculine pronouns ("he," "him," and "brothers") in a gender-neutral way.

Nevertheless, Tijerina continued this identification with Anglos on the basis of citizenship by refuting the "narrow and stupid opinions" that he and his supporters were "rebels." Instead, Tijerina seemed to distance himself from the courthouse raid and wished to "explain the background of our claims in order to help those that truly want to understand because we—like the black man [sic] and like the Indian—are here to stay" (4). Tijerina (re)framed his goal (and that of other social movements of the time) as one of explaining and reaching understanding (Fernandez & Jensen, 1995)—not to combat the lies and conspiracies of the federal government but to combat ignorance among "those who really want to understand because we are part of America," and "we belong here" (5). Implying that his organization and its cause had been misunderstood, Tijerina purported to clarify their allegiance to the U.S. nation and desire to be part of Anglo society ("we are part of America"). The metaphor Tijerina used here was not that of "freezing" (which implied evil intentions by someone who had frozen truths/laws) but the metaphor of disease: "I think you should be interested in knowing the facts. In order to understand the, [sic] or to find a medicine for the illness we must discover first what is the kind of disease . . . how the illness or disease developed" (5). In other words, American society as a whole (of which Mexican Americans were a part) was ill with ignorance; information and justice, "law and order" (4), would be its medicine. Rather than suggesting a stance of antagonism, opposition, and "otherness," now Tijerina positioned Mexican Americans within the U.S. "body politic," purportedly dedicated to its overall health. In addition to distinctly different metaphors, Tijerina spoke of "facts" rather than "truths," a word choice implying fewer moral certainties and more evidentiary grounding. According to the earlier metaphor, Tijerina intended to thaw the laws and truths that had been frozen (by evil Anglos), but here he intended to cure the disease of ignorance and oppression that was affecting all Americans using the medicine of facts.

While in his more radical ethno-nationalist discourse Tijerina stood in opposition to his "evil" Anglo audience, in these more "conservative" or reformist moments Tijerina reshaped the identity and relationship of Anglos and Aliancistas. Consistent with his reference to Anglos and Mexican Americans as family, Tijerina emphasized shared identity (as citizens) and reserved a place for Anglos within the Alianza movement. Though the "bad Anglos" would ignore Tijerina and continue their "bitter" and "proudful [sic]" politics, he stated, "the good [Anglos] are always with the Constitution and with truth and justice" (21). Tijerina gave his audience a choice: oppose the Alianza and be constituted as a "bad Anglo" or stand in solidarity with the Alianza and become a "good Anglo," committed to law, truth, and justice. He clarified, "we invite all good Anglos . . . to help us with our struggle . . . You claim your rights under the Constitution; we claim our land grants under the Constitution . . . We are true Americans" (23).

In sum, the Alianza was defined as “other” by virtue of their confrontational actions at Tierra Amarilla (not to mention their race and culture). In response, Tijerina channeled U.S. laws, dominant traditions, and values to establish identity for Mexican Americans by constituting them as full U.S. citizen-subjects. To borrow from Leff and Utley’s (2004) analysis of Dr. King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” in these moments of reformist, civil rights discourse Tijerina was “critical of his white audience but not alienated from it” and “encourage[d] the white audience to reaffirm its basic values” by joining the Alianza’s struggle (p. 49). He assured his white audience that the Alianza was “part of America,” that their struggle was rooted in the laws and documents foundational to the nation, and he called on “good” Anglos to join the movement for justice. Tijerina constituted Mexican Americans as full citizens, in contrast to the de facto marginalization, racialization, and exclusion which they had experienced (Delgado, 1998).

Tijerina’s identity construction was again accompanied by an articulation of agency for the Alianza, Mexican Americans, and Anglos. In concert with his focus on citizenship and civil rights, Tijerina emphasized the Alianza’s efforts to seek legal reform through the courts and legislature. He stated, “we [can] not survive . . . without focusing the attention of the world on to these facts and these laws and these rights, ladies and gentlemen. So, we will prove in the courts . . . We will show the proof, facts, evidence” (23). Rather than call for separation from Anglo society, Tijerina called for reconciliation through a return to facts, truths, and laws. Instead of demanding sovereignty he called for full citizenship (i.e., “rights”).

In place of the prophetic language of apocalypticism, this articulation of agency relied instead on the tried and true American jeremiad. Tijerina stated, “If we are to survive we must come face to face and face our sins and our crimes and confess them” (13). Like a jeremiadic prophet (Fernandez & Jensen, 1995), Tijerina sought to call his audience to be “good Anglos” and good citizens, to seek reconciliation, to repent rather than to face condemnation. In apocalyptic discourse, justice will inevitably bring about a revolution to the present system (or as Tijerina described, a coming “chain reaction”). On the contrary, the American jeremiad, in Robert Terrill’s (2004) words, expresses “faith that in American exceptionalism and morality lie the potential to resolve issues of racism and inequality” (p. 29). Unlike apocalyptic rhetoric, the jeremiad is “a vehicle of reform” that is “profoundly optimistic” (Darsey, 1997, p. 114). The jeremiad, then, is a rhetoric of covenant renewal, of repentance, reform, and return rather than revolution; as expressed in the voices of leaders such as Dr. King, the American jeremiad calls on American society to repent of its sins of racism and return to its divinely ordained founding promises (Murphy, 1990). In his jeremiad, Tijerina affirmed America’s traditions and founding laws as specially ordained and presented agency for Mexican Americans as well as for his Anglo audience in the possibility of repentance and return. The “United States has a role to play in this continent,” Tijerina (1967/1971) stated, and “God has been keeping up with the conduct of this nation since 1776.” But the nation had strayed from God and from its founding principles. The Alianza was exposing these crimes to the light of day, just as other civil rights movements had been doing. As agents of

repentance and renewal, “you can see we are needed [in this country],” he noted; “we have a role to play in its divine plan” (22). This vision of the Alianza’s agency again dovetailed with Tijerina’s identificatory strategy; as members of the nation, the Alianza was attempting to illuminate America’s sins and bring repentance (i.e., “our sins and our crimes”). The Alianza’s divinely ordained role was to force Anglo society to come “face to face” with its sins. In this light, Tijerina called his audience to exercise their agency too and “face our sins and our crimes and confess them” (13), to “not turn our backs . . . to the Constitution” (23) but rather to repent and revive its promises. Both the Alianza and the Anglo audience had agency in the process of turning America back onto the right track: the Alianza’s as the moral conscience of a nation and Anglos as penitents reaffirming basic values, rights, and liberty for all.

On one hand, this was a powerful construction of collective agency because the Alianza, Mexican Americans, and other civil rights movements were situated as the only groups capable of bringing America into reconciliation with its “sins.” America had to “come face to face” with and “confess” its sins, yet only the Alianza could bring this reconciliation about (“we have a role to play in [the nation’s] divine plan”). Thus Tijerina articulated the agency of the Alianza not as a rebellion but in the quintessential image of jeremiadic prophets, clamoring for repentance and for reconciliation. Tijerina and the Alianza were reformers pushing the United States to “confess . . . publicly” (14) and remedy its sins toward “Spanish Americans,” thereby returning the nation to its original promise as a beacon of hope and freedom. Despite earlier appeals to racial separatism, Tijerina seemed to call for solidarity among Anglos and Mexican Americans, affirming the Constitution and citizenship. While earlier he situated agency in the “new breed”—the harbinger of a chain reaction that would make the United States pay for its evil—now Tijerina and the Alianza spoke to Anglos as fellow citizens calling for repentance, accountability, and justice.

While in his more ethno-nationalist discourse Tijerina justified the sovereignty and separation of Mexican Americans, here he continually appealed for recognition and cooperation: “Ladies and gentlemen, behold our country coming to nothing just like all the empires. Let’s help” (24). Tijerina placed the Alianza at the vanguard of an attempt to bring America back to its founding values, pushing the courthouse raid into the background and emphasizing Mexican Americans’ agency as already members of the broader U.S. nation/culture. By pointing to the gap between what the law promised to its citizens and what it delivered, Tijerina demanded full rights for Mexican Americans, reading them into the nation’s laws and traditions. However, the limits of this “culturetypal” agency (Lucaites & Condit, 1990)—one rooted in appealing to the dominant culture, to civil rights, to citizenship—were exposed in the tension between Tijerina’s continual pronouncements of the injustices done to Mexican Americans by U.S. society and the desperate appeals to that very society to change its “sinful” ways. This articulation of agency was circumscribed because repentance was ultimately in the hands of dominant society. With appeals to civil rights, ultimately the true power to bring about justice resided in the dominant culture. Though the Alianza were the moral conscience of the nation, it was only Anglos who could once and for all confess their sins and recognize Mexican Americans as full citizens.

Tierra Amarilla had thrust the Alianza to the forefront of the burgeoning Chicano movement, and it also presented a number of challenges as Tijerina toured the country speaking about the cause. These tensions were represented in the contrasting arguments, personae, and senses of agency Tijerina constructed in "The Land Grant Question." One argument constituted a relationship of opposition and the other enacted full inclusion, one situated agency in separation from and confrontation with dominant society and the other found agency in promises of inclusion and reform. When Tijerina constituted the Alianza (and Latina/os more broadly) as a "new breed," this contributed to a revolutionary and separatist agency, whereas when he constituted the Alianza as "American citizens" seeking full citizenship, agency was articulated as the ability to call on dominant society to reform. Not surprisingly, as I mentioned above, conflicting assessments over the meaning of "The Land Grant Question" and the broader movement persist, but "The Land Grant Question" moved back and forth between these tensions. Rather than, on one hand, eschewing cultural and racial difference to achieve inclusion or, on the other, rejecting inclusion for the sake of separatism, Tijerina struck a back and forth filled with tensions and contradictions and constituted different ratios of identity and agency.

However, it is important to emphasize that these two strands of argument, though they seem dichotomous, existed in tandem and formed a rhetorical content indicative of border discourse. In fact, they are interwoven throughout the text, at times existing in stark contrast, and at other times sutured together. Perhaps one final example from the speech can demonstrate:

Right now [the Alianza] look like a cricket . . . King of the insects . . . All the cricket can do is just "cricket, cricket, cricket." Just a noise, that's all. But you know, if that cricket gets in the eye and the ear of the lion and scratches the inside, there is nothing the lion can do. There is nothing . . . the lion can use . . . to destroy the cricket because . . . he's way deep in the structure inside. The more the lion scratches himself the more deeper [sic] the cricket goes inside and scratches. We are a cricket, but we are too deep inside of this continent, of this country, ladies and gentlemen. And the lion, the greatest giant ever built by taxpayers, Uncle Sam. There's nothing he can do to destroy us. Let's face it (22).

Tijerina's metaphor, appropriated from an ancient Yaqui Native American myth, explained the Alianza's mission and demonstrated the double movement of the speech's rhetorical content. The metaphor strengthened the articulations of identity and agency Tijerina had been constructing throughout the speech. On one hand, the metaphor supported the identification of Alianza members as citizens, "way deep in the structure" of the United States, and Tijerina's articulation of agency as the call for reform. The cricket was crying out for justice, though it sounded like a small noise to the great lion. The lion could scratch at (persecute) the cricket, as it had done for centuries, but it would only push the cricket "more deeper" into the structure and intensify its demand for recognition. Ostensibly, the Alianza was not aimed at destroying this great lion or separating from it, but demanding the lion to come to terms with the cricket, to reach symbiosis. On the other hand, the polysemy of this metaphor, indicative of the border quality of Tijerina's rhetoric, equally supports Tijerina's

radical ethno-nationalist discourse. The cricket, “King of the insects,” antagonized the lion (the great imperial power) though it was small. Try as it might, “there is nothing . . . the lion can use . . . to destroy the cricket” (22). The more it was persecuted, the more the cricket buried itself in the lion, “scratch[ing]” at the great beast. This interpretation of antagonism rather than symbiosis—of revolution from within—was buttressed by the final line of the quotation, where Tijerina clarified that “there’s nothing [the lion, “Uncle Sam”] can do to destroy us. Let’s face it,” a conclusion that rang with the tone of defiance rather than deference.

Therefore, this final quotation demonstrates how “The Land Grant Question” actually moved back and forth across this border between reformist civil rights discourse and radical ethno-nationalist discourse throughout the speech (pp. 12–14, 14–15, 22–24). Tijerina offered a rhetorical “content” through which his movement could break down binaries and find a position of empowerment that resisted easy categorization. By migrating between contradictory modes of agency and identification, Tijerina critiqued dominant logics but also strategically appropriated them; he addressed multiple functions and constituencies, serving all at once to clarify the Alianza’s message, answer detractors, constitute the movement, and subvert and challenge racial hierarchies of U.S. identity. Tijerina channeled the radical energy of Tierra Amarilla into a consummatory moment that threatened Anglo society but also squelched threats about the organization being too radical or communistic. The speech moved between an emphasis on “Oneness” (i.e., civil rights, inclusion) and a demand for “fragmentation” (i.e., ethno-nationalism, separateness, González, 1990, p. 280–282). In fact, the speech inhabited and “colonized” (Terrill, 2000) the borders between “oneness” and “fragmentation,” demanding both integration and separateness, enacting reformism and revolution, thereby problematizing these borders. This “content” was nomadic, characterized by multiple shifting points of articulation and drastically different instantiations of agency and identity. Tijerina “oscillated” (Brouwer, 2001, p. 57) in the speech between different articulations of identity and agency, portraying himself and the movement as rebels fighting the system and as U.S. citizens worthy of inclusion. Mexican Americans were at times (and at once) a separate race and nation fighting for its independence and ordinary Americans demanding protection. The Alianza both indicted America as evil and promised a return to America’s basic foundations. Though it seemed inconsistent, the border discourse of “The Land Grant Question” worked within, from, and through these contradictions to create space to speak and act that resisted easy categorization or cooptation.

Border Rhetoric and/in Form

In the content of the speech Tijerina demonstrated a discursive “double critique” or movement between and inhabiting of these tensions (Mignolo, 2000, p. 67), affirming complex identity and agency for the Alianza and critiquing dominant logics of race and citizenship. Yet border rhetoric also took shape in the rhetorical form of “The Land Grant Question” through its persistent deployment of border tropes (e.g.,

metaphor) and its decolonization of the English language. Perhaps most clearly, the speech's persistent use of metaphor, a feature of the speech that other scholars have recognized (Fernandez & Jensen, 1995), articulated border rhetorical form. Mexican Americans, for example, were a "new breed," a "nation" like the "Jewish nation," subjugated by America's imperialist "boot," whose laws were "frozen" and "wrecked," but who were leading a "chain reaction" of justice across the world. At other times, Mexican Americans were related to their Anglo "brother," concerned about the growing "disease" of ignorance and injustice, calling for repentance of "sins," and demanding inclusion and respect as American citizens. I discussed above how these metaphors enacted different forms of identity and agency for Mexican Americans and Anglos throughout the speech. More generally, Tijerina's persistent use of metaphors, from freezing to animals to disease to boots, were more than just ornamentation but rather represented a way the speech activated border rhetoric in its form. We could call metaphor a "border trope," since its function is to cross cognitive borders—to help us see one thing through the perspective of something completely different (Cisneros, 2008). Tijerina's use of metaphors helped to break down boundaries of thought and present "an other thinking," another way of seeing the place of Mexican Americans and/in U.S. society beyond a binary between assimilation or exclusion. More precisely, these metaphors moved between and inhabited this dichotomy creating a middle space for the Alianza to claim identity and agency.

The cricket provides just one example of Tijerina's use of metaphor to articulate complex agency and identity. Tijerina, the Alianza, and Mexican Americans could be both separatists and citizens, betwixt and between reformers and revolutionaries. Metaphors like the "new breed" and "brothers," as I argued above, were polysemous, activating radical identity/agency, critiquing U.S. imperialism but also enacting identification with U.S. laws to various degrees. These metaphors activated multiple meanings often simultaneously, they provided for the possibility of constructing diverse voice(s) and enacting contradictory modes of positioning. The speech's metaphors contributed to the ability for Tijerina to move between these dichotomies, to hold them in tension and appeal to different audiences: Alianza supporters, other radical movements, and the empirical, mostly white audience. Metaphors often become sedimented as "repositories of cultural understandings" and "dominant ideologies" (Cisneros, 2008, p. 571), yet Tijerina's metaphors were ripe with multiple meanings and thus provided the opportunity for double-ness.

Furthermore, the border quality of metaphor in "The Land Grant Question" was compounded by Tijerina's persistent use of mixed metaphor (e.g., crickets on lions, the United States' "foot" on a "document"). Tijerina moved between metaphors that communicated varying levels of intentionality and blame for Anglos and power and agency for Mexican Americans ("frozen" versus "ill," "new breed" versus "brother"). A term like "Indo-Hispano," for example, represented a border trope coined by Tijerina that enacted the very existence of the "new breed," drawing together diverse Latina/o peoples into a racial and political subjectivity. The use of mixed metaphor provided an opportunity to reframe the world, imbuing it with new meaning and making connections where there had heretofore been none. Even more, these mixed

metaphors and tropes sometimes strained understanding, breaking down cognitive patterns. We could chalk this up to the inevitable errors of a non-native English-speaker. However, it is also possible to read them as further evidence of Tijerina's stylistic decolonization of U.S. language and culture and enactment of border rhetoric (Flores, 1996).

In fact, Tijerina's peculiar language choices and the prevalence of errors of grammar, syntax, and idiom are another quality of the speech's rhetorical form. This stylistic represents another way deterritorialization took shape through rhetorical form. Tijerina's language barrier was a topic that he often brought up in his speeches and interviews, sometimes as evidence of the systematic oppression faced by Mexican Americans in the United States. As he stated at the beginning of "The Land Grant Question," "I will sacrifice as always my language politely to please those that don't know the Castilian language, even though the Constitution does not limit the languages in the United States to English only" (p. 3). Tijerina made clear that his use of the English language was a sacrifice for his audience's sake; he performed the persona of the citizen-reformer by conceding to his audience and speaking English. However, Tijerina's rhetorical performance also problematized English's hegemony by subverting its rules and clouding its meaning. Though Tijerina "sacrificed" to speak in English, throughout the speech he transgressed the language (its grammar and syntax) as a performance of a more complex relationship to U.S. culture. This stylistic element of Tijerina's speech performed and critiqued the effects of colonization faced by Mexican Americans ("Congress enacted laws to rape our cities, our villages, our language," p. 22–23). At several moments in the speech, Tijerina chastised his audience for their strong reactions to his language choices. Thus, despite his stated acquiescence to English, in his unsettling of its preeminence, Tijerina was combating "linguistic terrorism," or "the act of shaming and humiliation experienced from one's native tongue being disgraced and ridiculed," of being forced to abandon one's language (Holling & Calafell, 2011, p. 27; see Anzaldúa, 1987). In the form of his speech as well as his arguments, Tijerina performed the very identity that could move across borders and stretch even the "borders" of belonging.

Conclusion

A conflicting portrayal of Tijerina and the Alianza persists. Were they rebels or reformists, confrontational or conservative? Extending previous studies, this article focused on a rhetorical text from the movement to put this debate into new light. In my view, the contradictory dimensions of "The Land Grant Question" noted by commentators and scholars can be understood as evidence of the enactment of border rhetoric. Tijerina's speech, which took place during a particular moment of the Alianza's expanding national activism, deterritorialized borders between citizenship and ethnic separatism, between reform and rebellion. His speech held these binaries in tension, affirming the possibility of both rejecting and embracing U.S. citizenship, both eschewing and renewing U.S. identity. In this final section, I explore the conclusions drawn from this case study for rhetorical theory and studies of Chicana/o rhetoric.

The border has been a topic of much important critical literature to date, yet this article has emphasized the importance of a rhetorical-performative approach to borders. In fact, Tijerina's speech demonstrates that border identity and agency make the most sense when viewed as articulated in moments of vernacular discourse. Understood as liminal and migratory, border identity and agency can only take shape in situated and contextual rhetorical performances. They are unstable and thus materialize in momentary articulations. Tracing rhetorical enactments of border identity and agency necessitates consideration of both content and form, as was evident in the complex relationships enacted in "The Land Grant Question." In particular, the function of (mixed) metaphor was inseparable from and instrumental to the shifting meanings of the speech. While many comment on the complex epistemology of border identity, this article suggests the importance of rhetorical-performative enactment and the relationship between content and form that bears on the study of border rhetoric, as it does with other forms of vernacular discourse (Enck-Wanzer, 2006; Rand, 2008). Tijerina's speech also suggests insights for the ways in which border rhetorics activate agency and identity.

Border rhetoric constructs identity by integrating and moving between a "rhetoric of difference" and a rhetoric of "sameness" (Flores, 1996). A rhetoric of "difference" alone risks further marginalization while a rhetoric of "sameness" can lead to cooptation. Border rhetoric, then, seems to integrate these strands into a "double critique," a speaking from and to both traditions. This identity constitution is multiply encoded and potentially contradictory, a space "that is neither inside nor outside" but rather inhabits those "binaries" (Noe, 2009, p. 597), and is "most crucially, a survival strategy" (Muñoz, 1999, p. 18). To construct an affirmative identity—a discursive space or "homeland"—border groups must embrace, challenge, and integrate the tensions and contradictions of the multiple worlds they are torn between. Furthermore, it is precisely through tension, migration, and doubleness that border rhetoric creates the possibility for agency. Tijerina's speech highlights a particular feature of border agency mainly that it "simultaneously works on, with, and against a cultural form" (Muñoz, 1999, p. 11–12). By integrating and challenging multiple agentic orientations, border rhetoric crafts an agency that is migratory, that moves between different orientations and sits betwixt and between recognized traditions. We see this not only in Tijerina's speech but in other case studies I reviewed (Enck-Wanzer, 2006; Sowards, 2010), where Latina/o vernaculars articulated liminal relations of agency enabling "the ability to adapt and shift as quickly as power does within discourse" (Muñoz, 1999, p. 19). In "The Land Grant Question," this shifting and contradictory agency contributed to and privileged the ability to adapt in response to racism and suppression. In sum, if agency is "inherently, protean, ambiguous, open to reversal," then border rhetoric perhaps represents one of the most "promiscuous" forms of rhetorical agency (Campbell, 2005, p. 2).

However, the drastic rise of Tijerina and the Alianza after the courthouse raid in 1967 was accompanied by an equally dramatic fall, which tells us something else about the tenuous nature of border rhetoric. Border discourse may be at times too threatening or too foreign to challenge dominant logics. A discourse that is betwixt

and between evades easy categorization—both its bane and its boon. Thus in spite (or perhaps because) of Tijerina's border rhetoric, the Alianza was framed as a radical and communistic organization, which fueled its increasing marginalization. Throughout the early 1970s the Alianza was weakened by government persecution, imprisonment, societal backlash, and internal struggle (Busto, 2005). Furthermore, Tijerina's border rhetoric itself arguably contained some of the strands of its own unraveling, such as its problematic patriarchal and racialized assumptions about Chicano masculinity and the "new breed." These observations remind us that vernaculars are not always ore even primarily liberatory, but rather that the relationship between resistance to and reification of dominant logics is tenuous (Holling, 2006). Border rhetoric often evaporates in the moment, resulting in dismissal, misappropriation, or in its unraveling as a sustained political strategy.

However, that the Alianza ultimately failed in bridging diverse audiences and achieving its stated goals does not and should not discount the movement's significance or the potential of border rhetoric as vernacular strategy. Evaluating the rhetorical and political significance of a social movement based on its success in appealing to dominant power brokers has always been the quickest way to marginalize all but the smallest group of movements. The agitative climate of the late 1960s coupled with the Alianza's militant activism brought heightened surveillance and persecution from government officials as well as societal repression, both of which contributed to its diminution. However, its collaboration with other prominent movements of the time (civil rights, black power, Native American movements) and its recognized impact on the development of Chicana/o activism suggests the Alianza had a lasting rhetorical impact despite its marginalization (Busto, 2005; Bebout, 2007; Oropeza, 2008). Furthermore, the gender dynamics of this particular speech notwithstanding, the leadership of women in the Alianza and the role they had in the broader movement (for example, Patsy Tijerina and Elizabeth "Betita" Martínez [Rosales, 2000, p. 327; Schmidt Camacho, 2008, pp. 152–155]), indicates the reach of the Alianza, as well as the rhetorical effectivity of border rhetoric, is more complex than can be gleaned from a simple measure of intended effects.

Of course, exploring the Alianza's broader impact is beyond the scope of this limited analysis. Nevertheless, reconsidering the dichotomous understandings of Tijerina and the Alianza and "reclaiming" the movement and its rhetoric, as I have begun to do, can contribute to expanding understandings not only of the Alianza's true significance but also of Chicana/o vernacular discourses more broadly. This rhetoric contributes theoretical insights about the operation of border discourse and the performance of identity and agency in Chicana/o movement rhetoric. In light of the disciplinary move from "Chicano communication" to "Latina/o communication" (Holling, 2008), reclaiming the Alianza's rhetoric and putting them into conversation with theoretical and critical developments provides the opportunity to complicate limited past scholarship on Chicano rhetoric and contribute to richer, more complex historical understandings. Doing so would necessitate a broader consideration of the Alianza campaign—verbal, visual, and performative/embodied. Though it is thought to be one of the most conventional and well-understood Mexican American vernacular

groups, the Alianza and Tijerina's rhetorical and political significance need to be complicated. Their unique activism challenges conventional understandings of a unified "Chicano rhetoric" and anticipated some of the characteristic features of Latina/o vernaculars of the next several decades. Previous work on Chicano movement rhetoric deserves to be extended, explored, and complicated in light of contemporary theoretical debates. Rhetorical studies of these groups can help enrich our histories of social movements, certainly, but they can also contribute to evolving theoretical insights and illuminate contemporary rhetorical struggles (as recent work by Sowards [2010], Enck-Wanzer [2006], and Holling [2008], among others, demonstrates). As the field of Latina/o communication and public address evolve into new areas of emphasis and diverse theoretical domains, it is also important to return to, reclaim, and complicate the historical roots we think we know so well.

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