

WRITING THROUGH COLONIALISM: RHETORICAL SITUATIONS AND
APPROACHES FOR ETHNIC WRITERS

by

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DEDICATION

Dedicado a Ma, Pa y Ñoñi

Lo que cuenta se encuentra en esta página. Lo demás es puro cuento.

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I'd like to acknowledge my professors and classmates at Texas State University.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the writings of four scholars in Rhetoric and Composition Studies: *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness* by Krista Ratcliffe; *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric* by LuMing Mao; *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* by Scott Richard Lyons; and *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing* by Damián Baca. By presenting arguments geared towards the construction and inclusion of ethnic rhetorics, Ratcliffe, Mao, Lyons, and Baca overlap in three ways. These scholars combat ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms in the construction of their arguments, create rhetorical approaches that stem from the ethnic groups whose writings are analyzed, and identify colonialism as shaping the material and rhetorical situations for ethnic groups. These findings point towards the rhetorical and material situation for ethnic writers and exploit current methodological fissures in the study of rhetoric and writing.

CHAPTER I

Writing through Colonialism

This project has its inception in a course on ethnic rhetorics. This course provided a time and space to position ethnic writings side-by-side and compare their approaches. Because ethnic groups feverously argue for inclusion of their distinct histories, material realities, and rhetorical practices, readers may overlook commonalities in their writings. This thesis works at unearthing similar rhetorical approaches across ethnic writings.

This thesis analyzes rhetorical elements found in works by ethnic writers and their rhetorical situations in the US. At minimum, this thesis serves as a mental exercise. In this mental exercise, I learned what ethnic writers perceive as their material and rhetorical situations and witnessed their responses to them. Moreover, it was the first time that I had read extended works from Chinese American and Native American perspectives. At its best, this thesis serves to influence scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition Studies. It may contribute to the conversation on ethnic writers or cultural rhetorics to understand further the situations that these writers face and how their rhetorical maneuvers overlap, even as some them divert. As this thesis will elaborate later, these ethnic writers gravitate towards strikingly similar rhetorical maneuvers possibly because they identify and argue against the same forces: colonialism and its many guises.

While this type of rhetorical analysis may shape scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition Studies, rhetoric and its applications extend further than this specific community, so it's important to consider what this work can contribute beyond an academic setting. In his preface to *Rhetoric and Ethnicity*, Keith Gilyard states the importance and impact of studying, understanding, and analyzing ethnic rhetorics:

Serious attention to the rhetorics employed by an ethnically diverse populace constitutes a wise investment of time, energy, and resources in a national quest to realize a critical democracy. If such form of political organization is indeed our nation's goal, then we are compelled as part of our work to examine continually the wide range of ethnic discourses used in our country to fashion knowledge, participate in public affairs, and engage in formal education. (v)

Viewed this way, this thesis contributes to realizing some of these stated goals. This work required incredible amounts of energy, time, and resources to studying, understanding, and rhetorically analyzing ethnic writings. It also engages with knowledge creation in various rhetorical situations inside and outside of formal education. However, it's debatable whether this thesis will contribute to realizing a critical democracy.

In the realm of formal education, Rhetoric and Composition Studies continues to disenfranchise ethnic rhetoricians and scholars. In the spring of 2011, I enrolled in a course titled "Modern Rhetorical Theory" taught by Professor C. Jan Swearingen. *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks* edited by Carol S. Lipson and Roberta A. Binkley served as a primary book for the course. At the end of the course, Professor Swearingen asked us if we had liked this approach to rhetoric. Without fully comprehending what approach she meant, I assured her that I had enjoyed and learned from her teachings. It wasn't until graduate school when I read books and journals on rhetoric and composition that I understood what she meant by her approach. As the book's title states, she meant rhetorical study that partially destabilizes the Greek tradition's hold on rhetoric and instead considers other rhetorics, such as ethnic writers,

their histories, methods of writings, and writings. In this sense, this thesis works towards actively incorporating ethnic writings and rhetorical approaches to the study of rhetoric and composition. It helps in fashioning knowledge from the perspectives of ethnic writers.

This study constructs knowledge from the experiences and understandings of ethnic writers and scholars. It actively seeks to recognize and incorporate corporeal and geographic considerations in the construction of knowledge rather than beginning from abstractions and presenting them as universal to the rest of the rhetoric and composition academic community. Aja Y. Martinez's *Critical Race Counterstory as Rhetorical Methodology: Chican@ Academic Experience Told through Sophistic Argument, Allegory and Narrative* presents a great example of these corporeal and geographic considerations. Martinez constructs two characters, Alejandra and Alejandra's mother, and depicts a dialogue between them. After an incident occurs in Alejandra's Ph.D. class where she observes that her white classmates and professor do not completely understand race relations, Alejandra comments to her mother, "Tanner's [her professor] story went unchallenged by the white people in the class and the responsibility to comment on their authoritative figure's confession was left up to me, the sole person of color in the class, and I felt no power or authority to talk back when no one else in the room was willing to either" (80). In her situation, Alejandra considers her own position as a person of color, the corporeal, and the students in a classroom full of white people, the geographic, which allows her to see this specific rhetorical and material situation from a lens different from her peers. In this same manner, this thesis constructs knowledge that considers how ethnic writers position and respond to their own rhetorical situations while considering bodily and geographic specificities.

Statement of the Problem

The ethnic minority population in the US continues to increase. Specifically, “In the 2010 Census, just over one-third of the U.S. population reported their race and ethnicity as something other than non-Hispanic White alone. This group referred to as the ‘minority’ population for this report, increased from 86.9 million to 111.9 million between 2000 and 2010” (Humes, Jones, and Ramirez 17). Racial and ethnic minority populations now constitute 47 percent and 31 percent of the West and South, respectively (Humes, Jones, and Ramirez 17). These demographics affect higher education as well. The total number of minorities enrolling in the fall semesters has increased over the past years. Ethnic and racial minorities in 2008 constituted over 30 percent of the population in post-secondary institutions, which depicts a 55.7 percent change from 1998 to 2008 (Kim 11). This growth in ethnic and racial minority demographics means that the population in the US and in higher education has shifted and will continue to shift in the area of ethnic and racial minority growths. This demographic shift brings me back to Carol S. Lipson and Roberta A. Binkley.

To facilitate better rhetorical interaction between different ethnic and racial groups in the US, rhetoric and composition scholars must devote attention and resources to the study of ethnic rhetorics. However, scholars shouldn’t approach these texts from a perspective that fails to recognize the different histories and current material and rhetorical situations that ethnic groups encounter. In discussing the risks of applying Aristotle’s concept of rhetoric ubiquitously to other cultures, Carol S. Lipson and Roberta A. Binkley write:

It's not much of a stretch to look at rhetoric as contextualized culturally, with practices and values and norms differing in different cultural settings. Indeed, in the field of rhetoric and composition, the term alternative rhetorics is being used to describe rhetorical approaches in particular cultures that differ from the dominant paradigm. (10)

These scholars point towards the need to read, understand, and analyze writings while using the respective culture's own conceptions of rhetoric or the closest related term(s). While Lipson and Binkley label these rhetorical approaches and writings as alternative rhetorics, I label them as ethnic rhetorics because of my own focus on ethnic American writers.

A problem exists because it's difficult to rhetorically analyze ethnic writing practices and writings because of the Greco-Roman tradition's hold on the field of rhetoric and composition. Even when attempting to disengage with this tradition, scholars must address it in their writing, and perhaps, it always stays in the back of their minds influencing their rhetorical approaches to texts and production of writing. Scholars need to create more histories, theories, and approaches to rhetoric that consider the wide-ranging material situations, social structures, and rhetorical situations that ethnic writers encounter. These issues lead me to my overarching research questions guiding this thesis.

Research Questions

The research question stems from the course on ethnic rhetorics: How do these writers' rhetorical elements overlap? In the process of responding to this question, other questions surfaced. What do these writers see as their rhetorical situations? What rhetorical approaches can be extrapolated from these writers and how are they different

from traditional methods? What role does colonialism play in the construction of material and rhetorical situations for ethnic writers? To address these questions, this thesis conducts a comparative rhetorical analysis on four different ethnic writers: Krista Ratcliffe, LuMing Mao, Scott Richard Lyons, and Damián Baca.¹ The goal, then, is to construct a better picture of the material and rhetorical situations for ethnic writers and identify suitable methods for their analyses based on the writings of scholars in the field of Rhetoric and Composition Studies. Before beginning the analysis, the proceeding sections present a literature review, explain the rhetorical approach, provide summaries of the texts, and outline the rest of the thesis.

Review of Literature

The study of ethnic rhetorics already exists in Rhetoric and Composition, but it is not exhaustive or inclusive of all ethnic groups. Because of the minimal scholarship on ethnic rhetorics, scholars typically focus on a specific ethnicity or rhetorical tradition to assert that this specific group or tradition does in fact hold validity and can establish a rhetoric worthy of study in academic settings. However, this thesis considers the rhetorical approaches of writers from distinct ethnicities to examine the similarities across them. Because previous work has already laid a foundation for the rhetorical situations of various ethnicities, this thesis begins from this understanding and takes the next step to develop further these rhetorical situations and identify appropriate approaches to adequately analyze these situations. Previous work on ethnic rhetorics helps generate the rhetorical situations and critiques approaches for the study of ethnic writings.

¹ I realize that, to this point, I've categorized Krista Ratcliffe as an ethnic minority. Although she's not an ethnic minority, her writing acknowledges her own ethnic background, and I see her as providing great contributions to the scholarship on ethnic rhetorics.

Colonialism heavily shapes the rhetorical and material situations for ethnic writers. In “On the Rhetoric and Precedents of Racism,” Villanueva writes, “I remain tied to the belief that we must break from the colonial discourse that binds us all....What I mean is that there are attitudes from those we revered over the centuries which we inherit, that are woven into the discourse that we inherit” (656). Villanueva asserts that colonial discourses influence thinking and practices for ethnic writers. In addition to Villanueva, Jaime Armin Mejía notes the effects of colonialism and its discourse on ethnic writers. After exposing the problematic nature of ethnic studies programs in US universities that “privilege literary and cultural studies to the exclusion of literacy studies,” Mejía asserts that these practices exist because of “the truly colonialist nature of these programs” (51). Moreover, he proposes a change: “Rhetoric and Composition Studies integrally combined with Ethnic Studies that also focus on the literacy of not just Latinos/as but also of the indigenous folk in the United States, could significantly revitalize and change the colonialist nature of discourse and, more important, literacy studies in the Southwest and throughout the country” (52). These scholars point towards the role that colonialism and its discourse play in the creation and maintenance of ethnic writers. They identify colonialism as an obstacle that hinders progress for ethnic people. Similarly, scholars also identify stereotypes as part of the rhetorical situation.

Across various disciplines of English, scholars acknowledge that stereotypes construct the rhetorical situation for ethnic writers and writings. In “Indigenous-Centered Pedagogies: Strategies for Teaching Native American Literature and Culture,” Anette Portillo discusses her approach to teaching Native American literature to students and the dilemmas she encounters. In describing a common situation she faces with her classes,

Portillo writes, “it is no surprise that the majority of students come to class with no background in the course content and unfortunately have only learned about American Indian identity and experience through distorted stereotypes that unfortunately still continue to plague our national collective consciousness” (158). Portillo notes that ethnic writings typically encounter stereotypes, especially from people who have never read them. Further, these stereotypes plague the national collective consciousness not just specific people or spaces. In “Rhetorical Sovereignty: What do American Indians Want from Writing?,” Scott Richard Lyons demonstrates this same awareness. Discussing the types of representations he wants in classes, Lyons states that these representations should not work at “presenting its readers with Indian stereotypes, cultural appropriation, [or] a virtual absence of discourse on sovereignty and the status of Indian nations” (458). The minimal exposure that Indians receive in the class should not present them as the stereotyped ethnic Indian. These authors recognize that stereotypes abound when reading or writing about ethnic writers. These stereotypes influence the perception and reception of ethnic writings. Disciplinary methods can reduce the abundance of these stereotypes.

In “Post-Mao Chinese Literary Women’s Rhetoric Revisted: A Case for Enlightened Feminist Rhetorical Theory,” Hui Wu discusses the misrepresentation that occurs when scholars, and people in general, apply Western concepts to explore Chinese rhetoric. In discussing how misrepresentations occur, she writes, “Western literary critics who use ‘established’ frameworks to read Post-Mao women’s writing often conclude by manufacturing misrepresentations” (407). Although not specifically discussing Chinese Americans in the US, Wu’s observation of Chinese women writers demonstrates that people easily misrepresent Chinese writers and Chinese culture because of the

methodology in place. Referencing Victor Villanueva once again, he warns about the “developmental rather than a dialectical model” of communication when “steeped in colonial discourses” (658). These two scholars begin to question the methods in place for the study of ethnic rhetorics. Wu refuses to employ established Western frameworks for the study of non-Western writings. Villanueva champions a dialectical model of understanding and analyzing texts that effectively considers the ethnic and dominant groups for more appropriate approaches to rhetoric. While not many scholars perform cross-ethnic analyses, they do consider the implications of understanding, studying, and writing about different ethnic groups.

In “Changing Missions, Shifting Positions, and Breaking Silences,” Shirley Wilson Logan revisits positions statements made by the College Composition and Communication. In her introduction, she confesses of her “initial impulse to be broadly inclusive” of a “wide range of scholars—European scholars, Anglo-American scholars, Native American scholars, Latina scholars, and other scholars of various colors and ethnicities” (330-331). However, she decides against it because she sees it as a “trend that erases all differences as insignificant, as if difference does not matter as long as you have a good mix” (331). Logan demonstrates that she’s aware of oversimplifying or bundling ethnic groups because of vast cultural and contextual differences. On a related note, Stephanie L. Kerschbaum states concerns about essentializing difference:

Perspectives on difference that focus on categories as a means of identification and unpacking difference exhibit an impulse towards fixity that can constrain their usefulness for negotiating the shifting terrain of difference in writing classrooms. This fixity is visible in two strategies for

addressing difference and diversity: taxonomizing difference and redefining categories. (619)

Because ethnic and cultural categories of difference already exist and will not vanish any time soon, scholars of ethnic rhetorics cannot ignore them. While this thesis analyzes different ethnic writers, it doesn't lose focus of the differences that exist between them and of the fact that they are arbitrarily placed side-by-side. Nevertheless, there's importance in undertaking this task, and partially, suspending differences.

Arabella Lyons has considered the fixity Kerschbaum warns about, but she recognizes that scholars in Rhetoric and Composition have the capability to understand the complexity of categorical and taxonomized differences. Lyons writes, "Since rhetoric's primary grace is in recognizing and negotiating difference—*real* difference—composition and rhetorical studies are uniquely positioned to recognize diversity among cultures and within cultures without diminishing internal heterogeneity and political struggles" (351-352). Carefully, this work proceeds to recognize and unravel the effects of colonialism on ethnic writings and thoughts to construct rhetorical approaches that consider their rhetorical and material situations.

The rhetorical situation for ethnic writers easily creates layered dimensions for analysis. For example, in "Postcolonial Interventions in the Rhetorical Canon," Raka Shome writes,

the rhetorical goals and experiences of women of different races are different. For instance, a white woman might use rhetoric to negotiate with a patriarchal structure, but a nonwhite woman may use rhetoric to negotiate simultaneously with a patriarchal and a racial structure, and

perhaps more with the latter than the former. In other words, the experience, functions, and goals of rhetoric differ in different cultural spaces of women. (602)

While this literature review demonstrates some facets of the rhetorical situation for ethnic writers, it does not present an exhaustive account. As Shome demonstrates, to consider every aspect of the rhetorical situation for ethnic writers implies considering gender and race. Additionally, sexuality, citizenship status, physical appearance, among other factors contribute to the rhetorical situation, but this thesis focuses on colonialism, stereotypes/essentialisms, and rhetorical approaches. The end result, though, leaves ample space for the inclusion of other forces working against ethnic writers. Jacqueline Jones Royster reminds her readers of the importance on studying ethnic rhetorics.

In her foreword to *African American Rhetoric(s): Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Jacqueline Jones Royster offers insights into why ethnic rhetorical traditions, specifically an African American rhetorical tradition, deserve attention. Royster urges readers to expand their knowledge of ethnic and cultural practices and traditions to create understandings of different ethnic and racial groups. After affirming that not everyone follows European cultural traditions, Royster writes, “In broadening our horizons with experiences and information from different geographical and cultural spaces, we extend our horizon and enrich our understanding, not just of peripheral people in knowledge-making arenas but of human potential” (x). The rhetoric and composition community should educate itself on ethnic cultural traditions and rhetorical practices. The discourse of colonialism positions European cultural traditions as the pinnacle of all cultural

traditions, so scholars must move beyond simply challenging this notion to creating new rhetorical practices separate from it.

Collectively, the literature reviewed constructs a general rhetorical situation for ethnic writers. These ethnic minorities must grapple with colonialism, a dominant group, and limited rhetorical approaches to understanding and analyzing writings and writing practices. Because of these findings, I have selected specific approaches to analyzing the writings of Krista Ratcliffe, LuMing Mao, Scott Richard Lyons, and Damián Baca.

Rhetorical Approach

This study approaches the rhetorical analysis from the vantage point of various scholars: Hommi Babha, Samir Amin, and Walter D. Mignolo. While these scholars situate themselves in separate fields (Postcolonial Studies, Economics, and Latin American studies, respectively), they work towards the common goal of creating spaces for disenfranchised voices in academic, economic, and political spheres. Because of these similarities, it seems logical to group them together and bring cohesiveness to this thesis. It's also an emotionally-charged rhetorical maneuver because, following the lead of many ethnic writers, this thesis writer wants to cite scholars of color. Hopefully, this maneuver brings forth a different perspective to the study of rhetoric.

This thesis employs Hommi Bhabha's writing. In his essay titled "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," Bhabha advances the idea that

the force of ambivalence...gives the colonial stereotype its currency;
ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures;
informs its strategies of individuation and marginalization; produces the
effect of probabilistic truth and predictability which, for the stereotype,

must always be in *excess* of what can be empirically proved or logically construed. (original emphasis; 95)

Bhabha informs readers that the discourse of colonialism and force of ambivalence work toward creating colonial stereotypes that take lives of their own and can always be repeated, that is, invoked whenever necessary for the marginalization of ethnic groups. While Bhabha's intention is not "to deconstruct the colonial discourse to reveal its ideological misconceptions or repressions," his discourse of colonialism as a rhetorical approach locates colonial stereotypes in the rhetorical situations these ethnic writers encounter. While these writers demonstrate this self-awareness of stereotypes and essentialisms in their writing, they also acknowledge European methods and traditions.

In *Eurocentrism: Modernity, Religion, and Democracy A Critique of Eurocentrism and Culturalism*, Samir Amin introduces the concept of "Eurocentrism." Amin writes: "Eurocentrism is not, properly speaking, a social theory, which integrates various elements into a global and coherent vision of society and history. It is rather a prejudice that distorts social theories. It draws from its storehouse of components, retaining one or rejecting another according to the ideological needs of the moment" (166). He adds, "Eurocentric vision is the well-known version of Western history—a progression from Ancient Greece to Rome to feudal Christian Europe to capitalist Europe," and he charges elementary books and the general population for perpetuating this falsity (166). Amin's rhetorical approach works to locate European traditions and methods of viewing history, education, economy, and other practices. His approach helps identify what ethnic writers envision as the dominant group. After these writers identify the dominant group, they require rhetorics and methods of their own.

Lastly, Walter D. Mignolo's "de-linking" works to analyze what these writers have in common.² In "Delinking: The Rhetoric of Modernity, the Logic of Coloniality, and the Grammar of De-coloniality," Mignolo states that "De-linking today shall be thought out and projected as a de-linking from the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality" (463).³ Mignolo wants to break from the rhetoric of modernity and logic of coloniality to provide spaces for other people to recover their own histories, tell their own stories, and practice their own ways of living, especially if different from European practices. Moreover, he claims that de-linking will "remove the [Western] anchor in which the 'normalcy effect' has been produced as to hide the fact that the anchor can be removed and the edifice crumbled" (498-499). De-linking entails "border thinking."

"Border thinking" functions to bring other histories, economies, and ways of being to the fore. It entails negotiating the imposition of Western knowledge and practices on populations around the world rather than ignoring this imposition (497). Mignolo states that "Border thinking...is unthinkable without understanding the colonial difference. Furthermore, it is the recognition of the colonial difference from subaltern perspectives that demands border thinking" (*Local* 6). Mignolo explains that the colonial difference first emerges as a "spatial colonial difference" (i.e., barbarians) based on

² Mignolo alternates from "delinking" to "de-linking," but to stay consistent in my writing, I use "de-linking."

³ To provide a definition for his use of modernity, Mignolo cites Anthony Giddens:

Modernity refers to the modes of social life or organization which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence. This associates modernity with a time period and with an initial geographical location, but for the moment leaves its major characteristics safely stowed away in a block box. (464)

To explain the logic of coloniality, he turns to Frantz Fanon:

colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future of a dominated country. Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverse logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts it, disfigures and destroys it. (449)

location; then, it re-inscribes itself as “temporal colonial difference” (i.e., primitives) based on time (470). He notes that the “pinnacle of a progressive transition relied on the *colonization of space and time* to create a narrative of difference” (original emphasis; 470), a narrative that produced and produces serious material effects to its recipients. Border thinking requires the recognition of the colonial difference. In essence, the colonial difference creates the ethnic writer. Then, people can understand and negotiate this difference better.

Border thinkers’ writings attempt to move beyond this colonial difference and not perpetuate the same logic of coloniality by applying “geo-politics” and “body-politics” to thinking, writing, and practices.⁴ Rather than basing observations, thinking, and writing on strict theo- and ego-politics, border thinking and de-linking require “geo- and body politics of knowledge that on the one hand denounces the pretended universality of a particular ethnicity (body politics), located in a specific part of the planet (geo-politics)” (453).⁵ Border thinkers write from the exterior of colonialism not necessarily from outside of it (462), and they also write with an awareness and inclusion of corporeal experiences (484). In other words, colonialism is not an object a person can escape. It’s a force to be dealt with head on through border thinking.

While Bhabha, Amin, and Mignolo may come from separate disciplines and sometimes explicitly separate themselves from each other, they seem intricately tied to one another, and therefore, useful in grouping them together for this comparative

⁴ Like “de-linking,” Mignolo doesn’t stay consistent with the spelling of “geo-politics” and “body-politics,” so I will use them in the rest of the essay as I’ve written them here.

⁵ Mignolo asserts that “Christianity Theology (theo-politics) and secular philosophy (ego-politics) took over the thinking of and the rhetoric of modernity,” which didn’t account for spatial and corporeal forms of knowing (471). I’m not idealizing geo- and body-politics, but I do believe it’s a good argument to consider when writing about ethnic writers.

analysis.⁶ Before providing a chapter-by-chapter outline for the rest of this thesis, I provide summaries of the texts under analysis: Krista Ratcliffe's *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*; LuMing Mao's *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric*; Scott Richard Lyons' *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*; and Damián Baca's *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing*.

Summaries of Texts

In *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*, Krista Ratcliffe responds to Jacqueline Jones Royster's question: "How do we translate listening into language and action, into the creation of an appropriate response?" (1). Ratcliffe, then, suggests that readers can use "rhetorical listening," which she defines "as a trope for interpretive invention and as a code of cross-cultural conduct" (1). In her introduction, Ratcliffe demonstrates a conflict in critiquing gender at the intersection of race. She identifies gender and race as tropes in the US that acquire meaning through specific cultural logic(s), that is, a "belief system or way of reasoning that is shared within a culture" (10). For example, she situates gender in the US working within the following cultural logics: the logic of patriarchy, the logic of equal rights, the logic of comparable worth, and the logic of postmodern commonalities and differences (10). Moreover, she positions race working within different cultural logics: the logic of white supremacy, the logic of color-blindness, the logic of multiculturalism, and the logic of critical race theory (14). Ratcliffe delineates "three tactics (eavesdropping, listening metonymically, and

⁶ In "Delinking," Mignolo criticizes Hommi Bhabha, and postcolonial theorists in general, for being "heavily dependent on post-structuralism as far as Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida" (452), so he separates himself from this school of thought.

listening pedagogically)” for rhetorical listening, which she elaborates on in subsequent chapters (16).

“My particular interest,” explains Ratcliffe, “lies in how rhetorical listening may be employed to hear people’s intersecting identifications with gender and race (including whiteness), the purpose being to negotiate troubled identification in order to facilitate cross-cultural communication about any topic” (17). Ratcliffe demonstrates that Rhetoric and Composition Studies typically overlook listening because it’s often associated with reception rather than writing or producing. Ratcliffe constructs rhetorical listening and its tactics with the following:

1. Promoting an *understanding* of self and other
2. Proceeding within an *accountability* logic
3. Locating identifications across *commonalities* and *differences*
4. Analyzing *claims* as well as the *cultural logics* within which these claims function (original emphasis; 26)

She details how these different conditions work towards creating and applying rhetorical listening. Promoting an understanding of self and other entails listening to others while searching for discourses people do not or did not know existed and standing under them. The accountability logic makes a person listen with accountability, that is, with an ethical stance for listening to the present with a consideration for the past. Commonalities and differences create different identifications from person to person, so Ratcliffe suggests to create a dialectical conversation based on commonalities and differences to discuss both. Lastly, she constructs rhetorical listening so as to create listening that acknowledges commonalities and differences within their own cultural logics. Lastly, Ratcliffe informs

readers that she will listen to “(1) autoethnography, (2) academic research, and (3) the stories of others” (35).

In her second chapter, Ratcliffe firmly sets up her theoretical backing for rhetorical listening. She selects identification, disidentification, and non-identification as sites where people can employ rhetorical listening. She writes that Burke’s identification doesn’t completely fulfill the needs of rhetorical listening because his theory focuses on commonalities at the expense of differences. Ratcliffe turns to Diana Fuss to fill Burke’s gap. Diana Fuss presents identification and disidentification, and Ratcliffe says that these sites work better for rhetorical listening. However, Fuss’s theory backgrounds personal agency, so Burke’s theory, which foregrounds personal agency, works better in this respect for rhetorical listening. Additionally, Ratcliffe envisions her concepts of identification and disidentification to work in an energy-field field imagery, so they can overlap with each other. Moreover, she converts Trinh’s non-identification into a metonym to build a space where neither identification nor disidentification are available. Non-identification functions as “a place that assumes the existence of commonalities and differences,” which “provides a place for rhetorically listening across both” (75). In her following chapters, Ratcliffe demonstrates the different tactics for rhetorical listening: listening metonymically, eavesdropping, and listening pedagogically.

“Listening metonymically,” writes Ratcliffe “signifies the rhetorical-listening moves that listeners may make in public discussions when identifying a text or a person with a cultural group; specifically, this tactic invites listeners to assume that a text or a person is associated with—but not necessarily representative of—an entire cultural group” (original emphasis; 78). In her third chapter, Ratcliffe employs listening metonymically

to listen to the public debate between Audre Lorde and Mary Daly. While Lorde and Daly championed women's rights, they disagreed on how race intersects with gender. Ratcliffe identifies this disagreement as creating a rhetoric of dysfunctional silence that fails to produce any conversation, and perhaps, solutions. In this public debate, Ratcliffe informs readers that they can apply listening metonymically to diffuse the rhetoric of dysfunctional silence and move towards a rhetoric of listening. In this rhetoric of listening "lies the potential to turn denial into recognition, defensiveness into critique, and guilt/blame into accountability" (99). Eavesdropping works as Ratcliffe's second tactic.

In the fourth chapter, Ratcliffe writes, "*eavesdropping* is posited here as an ethical tactic for resisting the invisibility of a gendered whiteness in scholarly discourses within rhetoric and composition studies" (original emphasis; 101). She uses eavesdropping on history as a method of "circling through time in order to expose the circling of time" (108). Moreover, by employing eavesdropping, she uses the trope of whiteness with eavesdropping to explore the usage and history of whiteness and expose its dysfunctions. Lastly, she discusses discursive, authorial, reader, and sociopolitical agency and how these four positions require specific ethics to confront whiteness and its privileges.

Ratcliffe shifts the conversation to the class setting in the last chapter. She writes, "*Listening pedagogically* signifies the rhetorical-listening moves that students and teachers may make in the classroom discourses in order to recognize resistance, analyze it, and when necessary, resist it" (original emphasis; 133). She provides numerous "moves" to help instructors of writing to recognize effectively the ways in which race and gender

work in the US. She closes her chapter by analyzing four of her own students' texts which engage with discourses on race and gender.

LuMing Mao, in *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric*, identifies a Chinese American rhetoric in the making. In his introduction, Mao explains that he will use Ien Ang's concept of "togetherness-in-difference" to articulate Chinese American rhetorical tradition, which emerges out of Chinese and European American rhetorical traditions. He writes, "Instead of a stand-in for happy fusion or harmony, it is in fact infused with conflicts, contestations, and ambiguities," which offers a "dialectical form of communication that practices togetherness-in-difference without any 'exaggerated notion of uniqueness and incommensurability'" (3). Mao, in the first chapter, describes that identifying an ethnic rhetorical tradition entails contradictions, struggles, and negotiation in contexts of highly asymmetrical power relations. He employs the concept of "uniqueness-qua-coherence" to assert that Chinese American rhetoric does not take the European tradition as a frame of reference and is always in the process of making. Mao invokes Renato Rosaldo, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Mary Louise Pratt to state that Chinese American rhetoric works at the borderlands but should not be romanticized because it's often a method of survival for individuals. While he problematizes the term's underpinnings, Mao prefers to describe Chinese American rhetoric as a hybrid.

In his second chapter, Mao discusses the concept of Chinese face to challenge the polarity between Chinese and European face. He draws on Hsien Chin Hu to define face as being constructed by "lian" and "mianzi." Mao writes, "I want to define Chinese face, consisting of 脸 [lian] and 面子 [mianzi], as a public image that self likes to claim or

enhance for him- or herself from others in any communicative event. This is an image that signifies a reciprocal balance...between self and those others as they engage in a face-to-face interaction” (39). While *lian* can easily damage *mianzi*, more and prolonged damage to *mianzi* is required to affect *lian*, which means that a person’s loss of *lian* affects him or her more drastically. To support his discussion of face, Mao analyzes a student’s essay for a graduate school application, Min-Zhan Lu’s *Shanghai Quartet: The Crossings of Four Women of China*, a movie titled “The Story of Qiu Ju,” and an airplane incident involving US and Chinese airplanes flying over Chinese territory. Through his analysis, Mao establishes the relevance and intricacies of face in Chinese and US contexts, as individuals and entire nations work to establish and maintain a positive face.

In an attempt to challenge the directness-indirectness paradigm, Mao situates the discursive styles of Chinese and Chinese Americans in their own cultural contexts. He uses correlative thinking and topic-prominent characteristics of the Chinese language to describe and explain the appropriate rhetorical contexts for Chinese “indirectness.” Correlative thinking “uses the association of image—or concept—clusters to yield similarities or contrasts to provide richly vague significances” (15), which counters causal and part-whole relationships. However, he warns readers that correlative thinking doesn’t just occur in Chinese society but others as well. The author provides two examples for his claim: the Chinese zodiac calendar and the ying-yang relationships. Mao notes that these “correlative associations are not always binding....Their discursive forces are predicted upon the extent to which these associations have been fully institutionalized or firmly entrenched within structures of power” (69). In contemporary and Chinese language, the topic-comment structure has remained constant. First, a topic proceeds any

commentary since this topic contextualizes the commentary itself. “The contextualized nature of the Chinese language and the dominance of correlative thinking in Chinese culture,” asserts Mao, “both constitute a central context to understand the rhetoric of Chinese indirection more completely and provide a meta-discursive language to talk about and reflect upon it more felicitously” (73). To support his claim, Mao analyzes Min-Zhan Lu’s *Shanghai Quartet: The Crossings of Four Women of China* and Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts*. He closes the chapter by providing a narrative of his own “direct” and “indirect” responses to the question, “Where are you from?”

Because of its prominence is so prominent in European rhetorical tradition, this concept of individualism influences the view and understanding of other rhetorical practices, such as Chinese and Chinese American. Mao employs the concept of “shu,” which considers a person’s relation to others, to position Chinese and Chinese American rhetoric in its own terms and contexts rather than reading it through an individualism lens. By employing “shu” in relation to individualism, Mao identifies and constructs a comparable term but in Chinese tradition by his invoking of non-Western texts, such as Confucius’s *Analects* so as to challenge the discourse of deficiency in Chinese American rhetoric.

In the fifth chapter, Mao applies his Chinese American rhetoric to a community where Chinese Americans reside. He discusses their use of Chinese American rhetoric in addressing their concerns towards a local governmental body, charged with selecting an organization to renovate their business district. The Chinese American community didn’t

agree with a candidate, so they quickly organized themselves and provided commentary on this issue.

Following a topic-comment structure in his writing, Mao provides commentary in his last chapter. He ends by presenting, once more, the analogy of the Chinese fortune cookie to discuss the implications of Chinese American rhetoric, but also notes uncertainties in the continual practice of this rhetorical tradition. Mao also worries about intricacies that will go unnoticed or whether Chinese American rhetoric will be required at all in the future.

In *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and The Territories of Writing*, Damián Baca sets the foundation to his text by introducing Gloria Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness: "Using Gloria Anzaldúa's 'new mestiza' consciousness as a powerful aesthetics, I analyze how Mesoamerican and Western cultural materials intersect and interact to produce new possibilities, through a dynamic strategy of Mestiz@ invention" (1). Anzaldúa revives Mesoamerican rhetorical practices by following a tradition of *amoxltli*, "the pictographic 'codex books' that were systematically destroyed by Spanish combatants as a strategy for taming and subjugating indigenous minds" (26). He looks to writing beyond alphabetic literacy and recognizes dances, drawings, paintings, and pictography as forms of writing. By employing Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness, Baca asserts that "Mestiz@ rhetorics significantly revise dominant narratives of assimilation" (140).

In his second chapter, Baca presents Anzaldúa's work and its reception in academic scholarship. Baca notes that Anzaldúa writes from a "site of Mestiz@ resistance" (18), which he will use as a point of departure for the rest of his study. He

explains, “Mestiza consciousness, I argue, can revise Western rhetoric and composition traditions by articulating ‘new memories, subaltern recollections in which Aztec writing practices and Mesoamerican ritual acts are strategically reconfigured and embroidered within the post-Columbian world of colonial and global power” (25). In this sense, pre-Columbian writing practices prevail in contemporary times and locations.

To begin his discussion on Mestiz@ rhetorical practices, Baca provides a very general history of Mestiz@s from pre-Columbian times to the present. He notes pre-Columbian economic, political, and writing systems within these societies to affirm that such systems did exist before colonization. His focus goes from the major Mesoamerican civilization (i.e., Olmec, Aztec, Inca, and Maya) to México and present day US. Furthermore, he discusses the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Chican@ movement and their effects. He writes that Mestiz@s didn’t assimilate, “but rather they had no choice but to slowly blend their own values and lifestyles with Western worldviews” (58).

In his fourth chapter, Baca analyzes the *Codex Espangliensis: From Columbus to the Border Patrol* by Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Enrique Chagoya, and Felicia Rice. Rather than a traditional book, this text functions as a manuscript that opens to 21 feet in length when not in its accordion-like state, and it can be read from left to right and from right to left. His analysis of this writing demonstrates that “Mestiz@ codex rhetorics revise and displace the narrative of assimilation through continuous symbolic play with pairs, doubles, corresponding expressions and twins” (64). After analyzing the different ways in which the codex rhetorics revise dominant narratives of assimilation, Baca finishes his analysis by warning not to view visual writing in a decontextualized method because it

leads people “to misunderstand and underestimate the communicative power they hold for cultures that continue to produce them” (90).

Frederico Vigil’s buon fresco *The Genesis of the Rio Grande* is analyzed in the fifth chapter. Baca first describes the buon fresco as he positions it as working and still retaining Mesoamerican practices and icons. Baca argues that Monarca “symbolically evokes the historical conditions of subjugation and conquest” and argues that Malinche, rather than converting, fuses Judeo-Christian and Mesoamerican worlds (107-108). After analyzing the Frederico Vigil’s buon Fresco, Baca also asserts that the Torreón and National Hispanic Cultural Center “offer a counternarrative to downtown Albuquerque’s commercial-circuit expansion” (118).

In his sixth chapter, Baca inserts his commentary in Rhetoric and Composition Studies’ conversation on rhetorical traditions and practices. Baca clarifies that differences between Fernando Ortiz’s “transculturación,” Mary Louise Pratt’s “contact zones,” and Anzaldúa’s “mestiza consciousness” to illustrate the roles that these three concepts play, or can play, in the field of writing.

Baca, in his seventh chapter, reconsiders Rhetoric and Composition Studies through three new frameworks: Spatialization, Periodization, and Region versus Nation. These three frameworks together work towards questioning where, when, and how writing emerges. Through these frameworks, Baca repositions rhetoric and writing in different contexts surrounded by different people than the traditional US composition history and approaches because writing exists before and outside of composition’s history of writing.

In *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*, Scott Richard Lyons reconsiders material and rhetorical situations in contexts where Natives possess and employ their own agency. Lyons writes, “I use the x-mark to symbolize Native assent to the new, and to call into question old ideas of ‘assimilation’ and ‘acculturation’ (at very least they get the scare quotes). The sites that most interest me are the ones that are most controversial: identity, culture, and the idea of an ‘Indian nation’” (33).

In chapter one, “Identity Crisis,” Lyons begins by describing several controversies involving Indian identities. These controversies lead him to declare that an identity crisis exists. He affirms that colonialism created “the general state of uncertainty underlying Indian identity controversies and namely all of the criteria that are advanced to resolve them” (49). Employing Manuel Castell’s work, Lyons writes, “These three forms of identity—legitimate, resistance, and project—undergird all identity politics, and they deserve attention as we study assertions of Indian identity” (65). Lyons prefers a project identity above all others because they “transcend the local and seek to transform the world” (64). Through this project identity, Lyons envisions indigenous people around the world using concepts brought on because of colonialism to their advantage in acquiring political recognition and legal rights.

In “Culture and Its Cops,” Lyons proposes that definitions of culture in the modern era have changed “from signifying something someone did to something someone had” (78). Moreover, he proposes that culture alone cannot possibly constitute the cause of Samuel P. Huntington’s idea of clash of civilizations. Then, Lyons analyzes the Ojibwe language to support his idea that people create culture by doing: “Perhaps it would not be going too far to suggest that Ojibwe speakers do not have a culture at all.

Rather, it may be more accurate to say that they spend their time culturing” (88). His end-goal, which he aligns to the Ojibwe people, is to create more life. In discussing the practice of Native culture and promoting more life, Lyons identifies “culture cops” working against these goals. “If modernity doesn’t make space for the Indian,” writes Lyons, “the Indian may respond by denying the validity of modernity and becoming a culture cop” (96). A culture cop polices what and how an Indian does and looks like by restricting an Indian identity to specific parameters that are based on European literate practices and systems of thought (96-97). In essence, Lyons champions an Indian that embraces modernity and Indian heterogeneity.

In chapter three, “Nations and Nationalism since 1492,” Lyons provides his thoughts and analysis of Indian nationalism and how Indians can use this concept to gain recognition and rights. Resonating Ernest Gellner, Lyons argues that “Nationalists must claim both nationality, ‘an argument about legal status,’ and nationhood, ‘a claim about the character and integrity of one’s cultural identity,’ in one fell swoop” (117). Lyons proceeds to add that Anthony D. Smith’s concept of an “ethnie” helps achieve nationhood and nationality. He proposes that a “realist nationalism” paradigm serves to better achieve nationalism while not disregarding the diversity inherently present in Native ethnics. Native literary nationalism by modernizing the *ethnie* responds to this challenge of creating an identity and retaining heterogeneity.

In “Resignations,” the fourth and final chapter, Lyons champions the concept of citizen for Indian. He writes, “Our final x-mark to consider is the political identity configured by the technology of the modern nation: the *citizen*” (original emphasis; 170). Moreover, he adds, “I offer a simple maxim: *require what you want to produce*” (original

emphasis; 171). Lyons envisions for Indians to revitalize and promote political and economic well-being for themselves through their application of their rights as sovereign nations. These nations would produce citizens who meet certain criteria and perform certain functions, just like any other nation, for the sustainability of their own nations and people.

Outline of Thesis

While the authors of these texts write from different ethnic backgrounds and focus on several issues in Rhetoric and Composition Studies, their writings collectively argue for inclusion of ethnic minorities into social, economic, and political spheres. I use Homi Bhabha's "discourse of colonialism," in the third chapter, to argue that these writers must address different ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms that this same discourse produces. The writers identify various exigencies in their own lived realities. As they present propositions to these exigencies, the writers also counteract the constraints, specifically ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms, to construct effective rhetorical maneuvers to help bring more accurate representations of their respective ethnic groups. While combating ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms, these writers also identify a common dominant group imposing its rhetorical practices.

In the fourth chapter, I employ Samir Amin's concept of "Eurocentrism" to comparatively analyze these writings. The extensive contextualization—physical and abstract—of texts and rhetorical analyses overlap in the writings of these rhetoric and composition scholars. Contextualizing their texts and their rhetorical approaches work to counter the Eurocentric methods of rhetoric, unearth or create rhetorical traditions and situations, and construct spaces for other rhetorical traditions to exist alongside each

other. Focusing on different aspects to these writer's rhetorical approaches, the following chapter discusses how these approaches work towards inclusivity of rhetorical practices.

In the fifth chapter, I use Walter Mignolo's "de-linking" to argue that these writers, from a rhetoric and composition perspective, recognize and actively work against the logic of coloniality through "border thinking." By challenging this logic of coloniality and by writing from the colonial difference, these scholars articulate rhetorical approaches of negotiating differences without requiring their erasure. These rhetorical approaches preserve people's humanity and create a citizenry that simultaneously recognizes and values differences outside of hierarchical contexts, and they also heavily emphasize location and experience.

In the last chapter, I discuss the direction these writers point Rhetoric and Composition Studies towards and what the implications may be for the study of rhetoric and composition as a field. Here's the argument: Ratcliffe, Mao, Lyons, and Baca overlap in combating ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms in the construction of their arguments, creating rhetorical approaches that stem from the ethnic groups whose writings are analyzed, and identifying colonialism as shaping the material and rhetorical situation for ethnic groups.

CHAPTER II

Stereotypes and Essentialisms in Ethnic Rhetorical Situations

European nations colonized indigenous groups living in the Americas, Asia, Africa, and other parts of the globe. Textbooks, media, and people in general record this colonization and position it in the distant past. The physical, psychological, and emotional violence these colonized groups experienced defied their sheer survival, as colonizing troops appropriated lands and enacted physical violence against many groups. Because of these violent acts, it's a grave mistake for a person to state that colonization occurred in the past. This assertion reproduces the idea that our nations and people no longer colonize, and perhaps, that we live in a post-colonial state where nations don't possess the power to continue to enact the colonialism begun hundreds of years ago—an incorrect and costly assertion. Colonialism lives, and it thrives in previously conquered territories and continues to work at infiltrating others through the rhetorical situations that it creates for different people.

The untrained eye cannot detect the methods of colonization, but these colonial methods definitely follow people in their everyday thoughts and practices. I state this observation because of my own perceptions of others. Long before I physically saw a Native American, a Chinese American, or an Anglo American, I had already formulated images of them: physical characteristics, speech patterns, cultural traditions, demeanors, physical capabilities, linguistic practices, and other traits. To me, Native Americans represented people riding horses with tomahawks and long hair; Chinese Americans could build a space shuttle from scratch in their backyard; Anglo Americans built the US with their own hands. Because I grew up in a predominantly Mexican and Mexican American community, I also created generalized images of Latinos/as by only

referencing Mexican and Mexican Americans and their everyday practices within a restricted geographical location. To me, Latinas/os spoke Spanish, attended Catholic church on Sundays, ate barbacoa right after or right before attending church, and had extended families that typically lived no more than a street or two away from them. As false or true as these characteristics may be for these ethnic groups, it's completely inaccurate and dehumanizing to describe the entire group, millions of people, with the same generalized traits. My observations, which are not isolated events, lead me to conclude that these generalized images, whether imagined or real, influence the perception of ethnic groups in the eyes of the general public and in ethnic groups themselves. Colonialism continues its dominance over groups all over the world through the recreation of these images.

In the US, the media, the public education system, and, oftentimes, segregated community conditions cause people to create distorted images of ethnic groups. The media, for the most part, present television shows, movies, and news from the perspective of heterosexual Anglo Americans. The people in public education sectors systematically teach US history from the perspective of Anglo American immigrants and rarely from the perspective of indigenous groups who inhabited and continue to inhabit the territory. In the US, segregated communities hinder interaction between ethnic groups, which adds to the negative generalization of images formed about these ethnic groups.¹ I present some of these factors and interactions to provide a general orientation of the methods in which

¹ In "What Nobody Says About Austin: Is Austin the State's Most Segregated City?," Cecilia Ballí discusses how Austin's claim as one of the most progressive cities in the state may be farfetched. After finding a large concentration of Latinos in a construction site, Ballí realizes the "great Austin Divide"; she writes, "A long-standing east-west geographic rift shapes race and class relations in the capital to this day. The workmen lived on the east side of I-35, where the city's biggest concentration of minorities resides....The west side of I-35 was mostly white." These segregated conditions, in turn, also affect political representation and decisions.

colonial discourse still exercises its dominance in the US, not in an attempt to be thorough about the rhetorical situation—as it is clearly not. Moreover, the climate created through these colonial discourses provides a sense of the rhetorical situations ethnic writers in the US encounter as they respond to colonial discourses that dehumanize their existence as they attempt to make sense of themselves and their respective ethnic groups.

Ethnic American writers are acutely aware of how colonial discourses position and represent them in the US, so they employ rhetorical strategies that directly challenge colonial discourses while also advancing their own proposals. In *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha writes, “It [colonial discourse] is a form of discourse crucial to the binding of a range of differences and discriminations that inform the discursive and political practices of racial and cultural hierarchization” (96). Bhabha also notes one of the functions of colonial discourse: “The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial [and ethnic] origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (101). Ethnic writers thus encounter different constraints that work against their attempts to resolve exigencies caused by colonial discourses, particularly racialized essentialisms and ethnic stereotypes. Racialized essentialisms and ethnic stereotypes objectify individuals as well as entire racial and ethnic groups. This objectification takes an individual body, a human being, and creates a negative and misrepresented image. This image facilitates the general misrepresentation of the particular individual and of the entire ethnic group whom she allegedly represents. This misrepresentation objectifies and dehumanizes an individual, and her entire ethnic group. For example, rather than portraying any Latina woman named Lupita as an individual, colonial discourses in the US identify her through

her ethnic group: Latina. This Latina can now, and usually does, represent a brown body, a Spanish-speaking voice, an immigrant, and other stereotypical traits rather than represent her lived reality, which may or may not consist of traits associated with the imagined Latina. Furthermore, the mispresenting image affects everyone in the process. The objectified individual comes to embody the image. The image's creator further objectifies the individual through the image since the image is a dynamic and malleable product. Lastly, any third parties in contact with the image contributes to the objectification of the image by reproducing its misrepresentations without ever realizing their misunderstanding. These dehumanizing discourses create the far from objective or equitable atmosphere in the US for many ethnic writers.

Scott Richard Lyons, LuMing Mao, Damián Baca, and Krista Ratcliffe consider their rhetorical situations so as to construct arguments that may partially solve dilemmas for their respective ethnic groups. As I've previously described, ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms plague the ethnic populations in the US because of various colonizing reasons. Media representations consistently present racialized ethnic characters. US educational practices and policies depict unified and linear historical and linguistic trajectories that constantly position the white, Anglo American group at the center. Moreover, the general lack of intergroup relations among and in between ethnic enclaves reinforces ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms. In this essay, I position these writers in the ongoing colonization of people of color through colonial discourses. The writers identify various exigencies in their own lived realities, and as they present propositions to these exigencies, the writers also counteract the constraints, specifically ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms, to construct effective

rhetorical discourses that help bring more accurate representations of their respective ethnic groups. I am fully conscious that colonialism works through methods and discourses deeply engrained in our minds and bodies, so even in attempting to interrogate these discourses, we may inevitably reproduce them in the process; however, this obstacle provides the need to write about the forces of colonialism and colonial thought and base observations on lived realities—not imagined ones.

In *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*, Scott Richard Lyons constructs an approach that demonstrates a keen awareness of his position as a Native American and of the misrepresentations this ethnic identity confronts in the context of colonial discourse in the US. The exigency Lyons wants to resolve is best depicted in the following quotation:

The particular x-marks I am interested in—identity, culture, and the idea of the Indian nation—are historically contingent concepts, and my analyses of them should be understood as serving the larger project of developing functional modern institutions in Native America; that is, I see the modernization that was initiated by treaty signers as an unfinished project that can and should be pursued further. (12)

Lyons argues that Native Americans did not completely reject the process of modernization, such as accepting the infrastructures that provide educational systems and better living conditions. His focus on identity, culture, and the idea of the Indian nation suggests that he conceives Native America as aware, at least partially, of the possible effects of coming in contact with a different culture. Hence, Lyons' exigency is to reconceptualize the role of Native Americans as possessing a voice, albeit limited, in the colonial relations that ensued when European immigrants arrived on Native American

soil. In resolving this exigency, Lyons considers and addresses the constraints that inevitably emerge. Because of his own identity, Lyons identifies Indian spaces as a constraint, or ethnic stereotype, so he forwards a proposal that reclaims these imagined and real spaces for Native America in general and for the Ojibwes in particular.

Lyons identifies Indian space as a constraint to advance his proposal because various contexts represent Native Americans as being one with nature, so he clarifies and reclaims this space as a Native American. Lyons describes what appears to be the dominant representation of Indian space: He writes, “Everyone knows what Indian space is like. It is circular, communal, and never near a cosmopolitan center”; he continues to describe it as a space where “[s]tuff hangs...it may be drying, it may signify some religious meaning, or maybe it is just hanging” (16). Finally, however, he makes an assertion: “This [perception of Indian space] is a stereotype” (16) and proceeds to challenge this view of Indian space.

Lyons reimagines an Indian space in a modernized sense to provide a better understanding of modern Native Americans and the physical spaces they inhabit. The kitchen table symbolically represents a modern Indian space, and “[a]s symbolic of Indian space, the kitchen table may require a double hermeneutic” (20). He thus suggests that the kitchen table provides a democratic space where Indian communities reach a consensus on decisions, but they simultaneously ignore class and gender differences while other people may not be invited at all (20-21). This revision of Indian space exposes the reality that presents itself as a physical area where people practice democratic ideals and where racism, sexism, and other inequalities exist—much like in contemporary US society. Furthermore, this depiction of Indian space moves away from ethnically

stereotyped renditions of the types of spaces Indians inhabit. To further open our imagination, Lyons writes, “Indian space is never defined by tradition or culture alone because Native people migrate in modern times” (21). This last comment effectively deconstructs any preconceived notions of Indian spaces and accepts their ambivalence in modern times because it implies that whenever a Native American migrates, she creates a new Indian space. Nevertheless, this ethnic stereotype of space has deep effects on people.

Lyons’ identification and reorientation of Indian space attacks colonial discourses because this ethnic stereotype affects how Indians and others perceive Indians. In the context of colonial discourses, Lyons uses the “analytic of ambivalence” which “questions dogmatic and moralistic positions on the meaning of oppression and discrimination” (Bhabha 95). This maneuver to counter perceptions of stereotyped Indian spaces through their ambivalent natures helps Indians achieve some liberation because Indian space as an ethnic stereotype affects Indians as much as others. Indians may perceive they have lost a traditional and cherished way of living and identity if they no longer live in a tepee surrounded by trees, animals, and a community fire. They may believe the discourses surrounding the notion of a stereotyped Indian space, even if these discourses stem from an outsider’s perspective who doesn’t know the traditions or histories of Native Americans. This ethnic stereotype of space results in questioning, from Indians and others, whether a person truly can be an Indian if he or she does not live in a communal space surrounded by nature. This misrepresentation may play a role in the dire statistics reflecting dire poverty, deaths, and suicides that Lyons outlines at the beginning of his text. For this reason, it’s important for Indians and outsiders to acknowledge their participation in colonial discourses that may stem from an outsider’s

perspective but which effectively internalize themselves in Indians and which helps perpetuate their own ethnic stereotypes. Like Native Americans, Chinese Americans are also affected as these discourses position them as an ethnic stereotype.

In *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric*, LuMing Mao considers his exigencies and constraints in his claim that a Chinese American rhetorical tradition requires definition for having more productive intercultural relations with European Americans.² His exigency manifests itself because of the interconnectedness and interdependence of people with each other all over the world, yet there's still uncertainty in this type of interconnectedness because of power differentials: "a growing paradox—one that has produced a polarizing discourse pitting unreserved enthusiasm on one side against downright resistance on the other" (1). Because of his Chinese and European American background, Mao reflects and analyzes this paradox through his Chinese and European American rhetorical practices as he attempts to understand and explain these complicated rhetorics. However, he is fully aware that certain constraints exist to his advancing his rhetorical project when he writes that "it entails necessary perils" (3). To create a better understanding of both rhetorical traditions, Mao identifies the stereotype of indirection in Chinese culture as a particular constraint and challenges the indirectness versus directness paradigm. Colonial discourses produce this binary opposition that often forces people to identify with one idea or with one culture, while ignoring the inherent intricacies and influences of other forces already in play.

Mao's experiences provide him with a realistic view of the dominant group's

² I use European American for my section on Mao's writing because that's how he describes this particular group.

perceptions, in this case European Americans, towards Chinese and Chinese Americans that plague them in the US, so he uses these experiences and identifies a need to revise the stereotyped notion of indirectness in Chinese society. Mao clearly states indirectness is an ethnic stereotype that the population in the US generally holds toward Chinese and Chinese American people. By discussing the perception of directness and indirectness in Chinese culture, Mao states, “for Chinese and Chinese American students, to describe their communicative practices as ‘indirect’ reproduces and reinforces cultural stereotypes, and it squarely places them at the bottom of this hierarchy that pits indirection against directness” (65). This ethnic stereotype places Mao in a rhetorical situation that forces him to address this misconception while also tactfully advancing his views that the Chinese and European American rhetorical traditions can coexist while recognizing differences in their respective practices. His repositioning of Chinese and European American rhetorics recognizes a method of thinking that colonial discourses have tactically ignored and effectively silenced. Colonial discourses embed themselves in this conversation to recreate binary thinking. Mao moves beyond this binary conceptualization and positions binaries in a context where people have to consider other referents in complimentary, rather than oppositional, relationships.

Mao strategically repositions indirectness in a “topic-comment” and a “correlative thinking” context instead of in a directness paradigm to counter the idea that all Chinese and Chinese American people function in rhetorically indirect discourses. This maneuver provides a better understanding of Chinese and Chinese American rhetorical practices. Mao states that correlative thinking positions “sets” or “correlatives” in “a polarity that emphasizes the need for balance and interdependence between the two items,” not in a

binary or totalizing relationship (67-68). This interpretation of correlative thinking implies that two (or more) terms work with each other at all times, never assigning a hierarchical positioning to each other and simply acknowledging a reliant interdependence on both sides. Moreover, broadly conceived, he defines a topic-comment structure as a discourse style where the topics, or conditions, have to precede a “definite statement” (70-71). This discourse style means that Chinese rhetorical discourses describe a complete picture of the topic for the audience to better understand the statement and context of the statement at the end of the topic-comment structure.

With these two terms in play, Mao can now reposition Chinese indirectness in its own context: “To put the matter another way, the contextualized nature of the Chinese language and the dominance of correlative thinking in Chinese culture both constitute a central context to understand the rhetoric of Chinese indirection more completely and provide a meta-discursive language to talk about and reflect upon it more felicitously” (73). For the general US population, and rhetoric and composition scholars in particular, this contextualization redefines the method in which European Americans and others wrongfully position indirectness against directness discourse styles. Furthermore, by interpreting indirectness in terms of relationships rather than dichotomies, Mao advances his proposal of integrating European American and Chinese rhetorical traditions. They do not necessarily compete with each other. Rather, they provide a complementary relationship that challenges colonial discourses that create binary oppositions that carry real power differentials.

This new relationship counters colonial thinking and rhetorics as it opens a space to grant differences a place without positioning them in a hierarchical relationship to the

dominant referent. Bhabha states that colonial discourse works as an “apparatus that turns on the recognition and disavowal of racial/cultural/historical differences” (100), but Mao directly counters this disavowal of differences and instead embraces them. For Chinese and Chinese Americans as well as other national dominant and ethnic minority groups, this revision helps to understand the complementary relationships between both Chinese and European American traditions where neither subjugates the other. Instead, this relationship promotes interdependence and creates a space for other ethnic groups’ rhetorics to position themselves within this relationship since Mao nullifies oppositional thinking. Rather than a black-white binary, Mao envisions black-white-yellow-brown-red in relation to each other.³ Like Chinese Americans, Latinas/os also face constraints via ethnic stereotypes.

In *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing*, Damián Baca forcefully counters Mestiz@ narratives of assimilation. Baca’s exigency presents itself in the following quotation: “My aim is to illuminate the ways Mestiz@ inscriptions significantly revise dominant narratives of assimilation in order to critique enduring power structures and ensure culture” (2). In rectifying Mestiz@ narratives and writing practices, Baca presents an awareness of the pervasive narratives on Mestiz@s’ patriarchal nature. In essence, the narratives of patriarchy function as a colonial discourse that work against Mestiz@s and the perceptions of them at-large in the U.S. He counters this narrative by focusing on the historical and contemporary roles of women in Mexican-origin families.

³ As I write this statement, I’m reminded of the deeply embedded colonial discourses that objectify people as a color. My aim is not to reinforce this objectification but simply to point out the newly envisioned interdependence between ethnic groups as opposed to their colonial oppositional nature.

Informed by his research on Mesoamerican and Mestiz@ histories and cultures, Baca notices the problematic narrative of Mestiz@ patriarchy that surrounds current perceptions of Mestiz@s, so he identifies this misperception as a constraint towards advancing adequate representations of Mestiz@s in general. Baca writes, “Long before the arrival of Europeans, cultures across the hemisphere had developed their own civilized ways of life, many with matrifocal social organizations and networks that, perhaps surprisingly, persist today in Mestiz@, Mexican and other indigenous communities” (56). Baca suggests that the arrival of Europeans helped produce a narrative that positions Mestiz@ cultures as always patriarchal in interaction and power structure. While in some cases this characterization may be true, it cannot accurately represent the entire Mestiz@ populations from historical or contemporary standpoints. Baca begins to correct this misconstrued representation.

By referencing *Border Visions; Mexican Cultures of the Southwest United States* by Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez, Baca begins to counter this narrative of Mestiz@ patriarchy. In his ethnographic and archival study, Vélez-Ibáñez “examines the structured clusters of Mexican extended families” (56-57). Baca writes, “In his study of Mexican-origin clustered families, Vélez-Ibáñez’ [sic] furthermore illustrates just how much a role women have historically played and continue to play in the household, thereby countering the harmfully narrow stereotype that all Mexican cultures operate under a dominating patriarchy (57). Baca provides a specific example of a Mexican culture that contradicts the narrative of Mestiz@ patriarchy. It’s important to take note of the fact that Baca references Mexican-origin families in particular but generalizes to Mestiz@ cultures. We can take this generalization as a strategic rhetorical maneuver to counter the

narrative of Mestiz@ patriarchy and position Mestiz@ cultures in a matriarchal context rather than an attempt from Baca to free Mestiz@ cultures from patriarchal ways.

Baca demonstrates an awareness of his own analysis in relation to patriarchal and matriarchal structures in Mestiz@ cultures. He writes, “Mexican familial hubs, primarily matrifocal in nature, have never been without power struggle, as is demonstrated in Cherrie Moraga’s ‘Queer Azatlan: The Re-Formation of Chicano Tribe,’ Alma García’s *Chicana Feminist Thought*, and other helpful sources (57). However, Baca states that Mexican and Mestiz@ methods of living cannot be understood “without examining the material contributions and struggles of women in those cultures” (57). While he’s attempting to counter the colonial narrative of Mestiz@ patriarchy, Baca doesn’t disregard patriarchy and its effects. Nevertheless, he certainly counters this stereotype.

Colonial discourses formulate a static image of Latinas/os in the US for Latinas/os and non-Latinas/os alike.⁴ For example, the stereotype that Baca identifies helps drive specific images that persuade people to believe that all Latinas/os think and act within patriarchal familial structures. This stereotype affect, Latinas/os because they may begin to imagine themselves as patriarchal by nature, and even when thinking and acting from a matriarchal logic, they may misconstrue it as patriarchal nonetheless. Bhabha states that “colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an ‘other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible” (101). These colonial discourses create static images of people—that are knowable, visible, yet “other”—affect everyone in its path because individuals begin to question their own perceptions of each other, and they start to behave in certain ways or think in restrictive terms to fit a specific image, an image

⁴ I substitute the term Latina/o for Baca’s Mestiz@ simply because Latina/o is a term that I am used to and have used more often. I am still discussing the same people that Baca examines.

deeply rooted in colonial discourse produced by colonizers themselves. These static images engrain themselves in the people they attempt to describe, so even without a material or bodily colonizer, the colonized can continue the colonizing process by framing themselves in these images. Aside from ethnic minorities, Anglo Americans also discuss ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms to reach more equitable practices and thought.

In *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*, Krista Ratcliffe presents an exigency when she notices that rhetoricians and compositionists often ignore the skill of listening in rhetorical theory, which can alleviate some cross-cultural communication problems. Her exigency presents itself best in her statement: “My particular interest, however, lies in how rhetorical listening may be employed to hear people’s intersecting identifications with gender and race...to negotiate troubled identifications in order to facilitate cross-cultural communication about any topic” (17). She identifies a need for better communication practices because they will enhance relations between different ethnic minority and national dominant groups which promote less physical, emotional, and psychological violence. She faces several constraints in her pursuit of cross-cultural communication. One of these constraints is the method of talking about racism that creates a White/Other binary, which positions Whites as not implicated in racial issues and Others as completely responsible for producing solutions to these problems. After identifying specific racial issues, Ratcliffe provides a solution for this dilemma through her explanation of cultural logics and disrupts the colonial discourse that creates racialized essentialisms.

To reach her goal of more effective cross-cultural communication, Ratcliffe first

identifies the constraints found along the path to reach this goal. For her, the representation of race materializes as one of these constraints, which rhetoricians, compositionists, and people in general need to overcome for effective cross-cultural communication. Ratcliffe writes, “Standard definitions of *race* usually fall within a binary opposition, somewhere between biological grounding (now discounted by science) and cultural grounding (now championed in the academy) (original emphasis; 15). This racialized perspective “engenders stereotypes—such as, whites as the intellectually superior majority, Asian Americans as the model minority, and African Americans as athletically superior minority” (13). For Ratcliffe, racism is the constraint found within these stereotypes because it has heinous effects on people and their relationships with each other. Through racial discourses, images objectify people and place them in categories, whether or not they actually fit these prescriptive images. The author provides a solution to this constraint.

Ratcliffe delineates various cultural logics that position racism in a specific context to provide a space where racism may be discussed and analyzed. First, she describes a cultural logic as a “a belief system or way of reasoning within a culture” (10). Then, she places race in “(1) the logic of white supremacy; (2) the logic of color-blindness; (3) the logic of multiculturalism; and (4) the logic of critical race theory” (14). These logics situate race in different positions and advocate different approaches to dealing with them, such as by continuing the tradition of racial supremacy, ignoring race completely, focusing on ethnicity, or placing race at the forefront, respectively. Ratcliffe, thus, positions race and racialized essentialisms within a certain cultural context where participants can better understand them and their detrimental effects. Furthermore, she

promotes moving beyond a guilt/blame logic and towards an accountability logic (6) where people envision themselves accountable for their actions and thoughts and those of others rather than feeling guilty or placing blame on others. In this respect, Ratcliffe champions her idea of rhetorical listening while also contributing to identifying racialized essentialisms that hinder practices in cross-cultural communication. Her discussion of these practices directly questions colonial discourses that objectify people into racialized essentialisms.

In her text, Ratcliffe presents colonial discourses as methods to differentiate through race, which clearly demonstrates where colonial discourses originate. Colonial discourses have a point, or several points, of origin. By engaging the conversation of race and racialized essentialisms, Ratcliffe identifies and actively argues against colonial discourses that designate a specific racialized and stereotyped color to a person based on his or her physical appearance. This stereotype serves as the “primary point of subjectification in colonial discourse” because of the “desire for an originality which is again threatened by the differences of race, colour, and culture” (Bhabha 107). Her approach and acceptance of her white privilege clarifies that these colonial discourses first emerged from a white body. Because these colonial discourses originally emanated from a white body, they designate other people as a specific and tainted color, where the white body is simply a body, hence the terms African Americans, Mexican Americans, Chinese Americans, among other ethnically or racially grouped classifications. When a person or text invokes the idea of an “American,” it’s difficult not to envision a white (male) body. In essence, Ratcliffe asks (white) people to consider their position and take

an active role by listening to the concerns of other people of color before perpetuating colonial discourses that objectify a person through racialized essentialisms.

Scott Richard Lyons, LuMing Mao, Damián Baca, and Krista Ratcliffe write from distinct rhetorical traditions and lived experiences, so they apply their knowledges to the constructions of their arguments by identifying and reconceptualizing constraints while improving on specific exigencies. These specific exigencies and constraints differ from each other because Native Americans, Chinese Americans, Latinas/os, African Americans, and Anglo Americans do not always encounter the same dilemmas. These groups have different histories, oral and written, so their perceptions in the eyes of other people differ drastically. This perception and reception mean that ethnic groups inevitably deal with similar, but not necessarily identical, constraints and exigencies. Ethnic writers write from a position of former and continual colonization through colonial discourses. From this position, writers cannot ignore—even if they try to—colonization and colonial discourses that continue to subjugate people. Ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms emerge from the wound created by colonization.

These writers lived drenched in colonial discourses in the US that imagine, through media, textbooks, and other mediums, Americans as a static population typically depicted as displaying white physical characteristics, embodying English monolingualism, and by default, positioning themselves as superior to other Americans and the rest of the world. Other features and practices that do not align to this type of American get left out—they're excess baggage. Bhabha writes, "The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction" (101).

For these writers, the administration can represent the US government or academic institutions. The instruction, since these writers are professors, can be imagined through and beyond classroom practices where these writers continually juggle with presenting two (or more) rhetorical or scholarly traditions. The conquest that Bhabha mentions still occurs in different sites of contact, such as schools, communities, and institutions where whiteness—not necessarily white bodies—attempts to create a “better” society, a “more educated,” a less “savage” person. These ethnic and Anglo American writers notice the emergence of ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms birthed in colonial discourse, so they forcefully combat them.

Colonial discourses surround these writers on an everyday basis, so it is impressive for these writers to notice them rather than normalize them in their own thinking and writing. Baca, Mao, and Lyons may more easily distinguish colonial discourses because they come from distinct cultural and ethnic backgrounds that do not necessarily fit stereotypical American characteristics. However, Ratcliffe informs us that she had to do considerable race work to achieve a greater understanding of racial and essentialized relationships in the US. Different histories and rhetorical situations force people—writers for our purposes—to deal with colonialism and its effects with an array of responses. When these writers employ history, or a historical component to their argument, they reference distinct points in time, location, and geography.

Scott Richard Lyons traces his (rhizome) roots back to his Native American community, so it presents a different rhetorical argument than the rest of these writers. For example, Lyons writes, “The scene of writing was where indigenous ethnic groups began transforming themselves into actual nations, and treaty signings were the original

and most ubiquitous occasion for that remarkable historical shift” (123). His use of a historical event is not an original rhetorical maneuver compared to any of the other writers; however, it does become distinct when this historical event denotes a particular place, time, and space specific to his own history with Native Americans. In this sense, he invokes his own history as a Native American, which drastically shifts his rhetorical argument and distinguishes itself from the rest of the writers. Like Lyons, Mao embeds history in the construction of his argument.

LuMing Mao separates himself and his ethnic rhetoric from other ethnic groups by aligning his history with China and Chinese traditions. Once again, his rhetorical maneuver of invoking history in his argument is not different from other ethnic writers. His argument differentiates itself when the specific history it invokes is distinct from all the other writers’ histories. Mao specifically discusses Confucianism, Chinese folktales, and Chinese traditions in discussing his Chinese American rhetoric. The discussion of these ideas and traditions places Mao in a specific point of departure in relation to his own experiences and history, so it creates an identity that stems from a Chinese history. The ethnic portion of his identity comes from arriving to the US where his identity does not align with the imagined American identity, so colonial discourses effectively create an alien ethnic identity. Like Mao, Baca’s text uses history but specific to his ethnic affiliation.

To create a distinct argument that meets the specific political and cultural situation of different Latina/o groups, Damián Baca writes from a deep history and cultural networks for these groups which help create a Latina/o ethnic rhetoric. In questioning Latina/o presence in colonial discourses, Baca asks, “how, when, and under

what circumstances do Mestiz@s, this nation's largest ethnic and linguistic 'minority' group, enter into world history?" (xv). He poses this questions because it acknowledges that a long and conflicting relationship between Latina/o groups and European Americans, or whiteness in general, exists. Baca's argument, again, points towards a historical moment. His argument, however, differentiates itself because this specific historical moment exists in a space and time that are not identical to Chinese Americans, Native Americans, or European Americans. Latin America to the US serves as Baca's historical place; colonization from the beginning of Spanish colonial rule to the present serve as his time. Like Baca, Ratcliffe gestures towards historical situations and ethnicity to construct her argument.

Through the use of history, Ratcliffe exposes the notion that Anglo Americans also have a specific ethnicity and beginning in the US, and this historical grounding helps construct her argument. Ratcliffe writes, "Growing up as the great-great-granddaughter of white Quaker abolitionists whose home was an Indiana link in the Underground Railroad has given me a historical sense of right and wrong 'sides' in U.S. race relations" (6). This particular statement is intriguing because it demonstrates that Ratcliffe has a clear understanding that she is a white woman with a history that dates to the colonial foundations of the US. She aligns herself with a specific history and ethnicity; that is, she writes from the perspective of a white woman in the US that emerges from one of the 13 colonies in the Northeast. Nevertheless, this historical location and time position her writing in a manner that aligns but simultaneously questions the national dominant group in the context of the US, so it suits her project which asks (white) people to rhetorically

listen, so she works towards disrupting colonial discourses by making race and gender visible.

Ratcliffe advances rhetorically listening to each other for better cross-cultural communication to better understand gendered and raced tropes. Bhabha writes, “The myth of historical origination—racial purity, cultural priority” functions to keep colonial discourse alive and the colonized in their lower hierarchical position by fetishizing minority stereotypes and racialized essentialisms (106). Ratcliffe adamantly works to counter this racial purity and cultural priority. In a sense, Ratcliffe identifies a complicated history as white Quaker in the thirteen colonies. Furthermore, she states that because of “growing up with such identification,” she “had gender and race work to do” (6). While colonial discourses position European males as the originating and reference points to all other people, Ratcliffe unsettles this idea by countering the normalizing effects of whiteness in her own position as a writer and person.

As these writers advance their own agendas, they identify and counter ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms that permeate the US and affect ethnic and general populations. However, because of colonial discourses, the writers have to keep a keen awareness of their own reproduction of colonial discourses as they may exist in their own thoughts and manifest themselves through their writings. Bhabha writes, “the stereotype, which is its [colonial discourses’] major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place’, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated” (94-95). Even as we, these writers and the rest of the US, think and write about colonial discourses and their ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms, we have to consider that we are deeply

entrenched in colonial discourses that we may actually reproduce as we attempt to counter them. Nevertheless, these writers take rhetorical and practical steps toward discussing ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms that colonial discourses reproduce and which may reduce, perhaps end, colonial discourses in a distant future. Once we get beyond this type of colonial mentality and discourses, it's invigorating to imagine what type of ideas and beliefs can emerge and their effects on material realities.

CHAPTER III

Rhetorical Creations: Contextualizing Rhetorical Methods and Situations

Writing from an economics background, Samir Amin introduces the concept of “Eurocentrism,” in his book of the same title, as a powerful force that has worked, and continues to work, to shape heavily social theories and histories. Although he writes from an economics perspective, rhetoric and composition scholars can engage with the concept of Eurocentrism to understand and analyze rhetorical situations and traditions. In describing the concept of Eurocentrism, Amin writes, “The product of this Eurocentric vision is the well-known version of Western history—a progression from Ancient Greece to Rome to feudal Christian Europe to capitalist Europe—one of the most popular of received ideas” (165-166). This aspect of Eurocentrism corresponds with the traditional birth and progression of rhetoric as categorized in books and courses on rhetoric. Scholars tend to reference *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present* written by Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg as one of the prime examples of Eurocentric depiction of rhetoric because of its progression from Ancient Greece to the Western hemisphere. The critiques of this book, and by extension Rhetoric and Composition Studies, don’t discount its credibility or rhetorical historiography. Rather, the critiques simply contextualize *The Rhetorical Tradition* as a specific method of delineating and understanding a single rhetorical tradition.

Amin explains one of the functions of Eurocentrism:

Eurocentrism is not, properly speaking, a social theory, which integrates various elements into global and coherent vision of society and history. It is rather a prejudice that distorts social theories. It draws from its

storehouse of components, retaining one or rejecting another according to the ideological needs of the moment. (166)

Similarly, European colonizers stripped rhetoric and literacy skills from the civilizations they encountered by ignoring, destroying, or replacing the rhetoric and literacy practices of civilizations with Europe's own written and alphabetic languages. However, we shouldn't see this removal and replacement of writing practices as a successful annihilation of all traces of those literate and rhetorical practices.

The Greco-Roman tradition and its methods still claims great validity, carries extensive knowledge, and applies to innumerable situations.⁵ Nevertheless, its dissemination and application should continue on several conditions: Scholars need to fully respect, properly represent, and perhaps, even exercise other rhetorical traditions in rhetoric and composition courses. Not abiding by these conditions simply implies a lack of knowledge of the field. In Rhetoric and Composition Studies, scholars have successfully challenged the idea that the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition serves as the only method for defining, recognizing, understanding, and analyzing rhetorics from across the globe. The scholars that I will use in this essay provide ample evidence to support this previous statement. But what happens after the rhetorical tradition has been challenged? In *Eurocentrism*, Samir Amin critiques Edward Said for challenging the concept of "orientalism" but fails to propose "another system of explanation for facts which must be accounted for" (176). The goal, then, becomes to continue challenging the dominance of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition while also reviving or creating

⁵ For example, in an interview with C. Jan Swearingen, she states that Plato's dialogues are still vitally important. She writes, "The thing that most interested me was the discovery that his [Plato's] dialogues are intended to not conclude on any particular point. They're not intended to teach doctrines. They're intended to bring voices together to create an improved understanding of a topic or subject" (54).

lost, forgotten, or hidden rhetorical traditions from distinct geographical locations, peoples, experiences, and knowledges to create another system of rhetoric.

This chapter comparatively analyzes four texts: Krista Ratcliffe's *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*, LuMing Mao's *Chinese American Rhetoric: Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie*, Scott Richard Lyons' *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*, and Damián Baca's *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing*. The extensive contextualization—physical and abstract—of texts and rhetorical analyses overlap in these rhetoric and composition scholars' writings. Contextualizing their texts and rhetorical approaches works to counter the Eurocentric methods of rhetoric, unearth rhetorical situations, and construct spaces for other rhetorical traditions to exist alongside each other. Heeding Amin's advice, these writers provide different rhetorical traditions and a language to broaden Rhetoric and Composition Studies' rhetorical milieu while simultaneously keeping a keen awareness to these rhetorics' specificities and contexts. I argue that by acknowledging the materiality and cultural specificity of their respective rhetorical traditions, these writers construct methods of reading, writing, and rhetorically analyzing texts that consider their contexts; thus, they position their own rhetorics and ensuing analyses of them as one of many methods of approaching rhetorical situations. Moreover, these writers also develop their own rhetorics with the knowledge that they must account for, not exclude, other rhetorics.

In *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*, Krista Ratcliffe advances a proposition to value and practice the rhetorical art of listening and its usage as a method for cross-cultural communication. Ratcliffe's emphasis on cross-cultural communication and feminist lens provide her with an awareness of her position as an

Anglo American female and the exclusionary effects of the Western rhetorical tradition on minority groups. Moreover, these aspects allow her to identify the historically and culturally embedded nature of rhetorical practices. This awareness plays an immense role on her theorizing on rhetorical listening because it works to situate her conversation and rhetorical analysis within specific locations and histories. Ratcliffe's "cultural logics" help with this contextualization because they work to offer contexts and points of origins for the rhetorical practices that she discusses and the methods she uses to analyze them.

To contextualize her writing and rhetorical approach, Ratcliffe presents the concept of cultural logics. To define cultural logics, Ratcliffe begins by offering tropes that work within them: "Men and women are born into a culture with a symbolic system containing these terms [men and women] and their associated meanings" (10). The tropes of "men" and "women" function in this symbolic system but not in complete harmony: "What complicates matters is that symbolic systems often house competing cultural logics. A cultural logic is a belief system or a way of reasoning that is shared within a culture" (10). In providing this example and definition of cultural logics, Ratcliffe offers a space for modern commonalities while leaving room for postmodern differences, both of which she struggles through in her conception of rhetorical listening. In essence, Ratcliffe's definition of cultural logics engages with a specific culture but with insurmountable differences within it. The competing nature of cultural logics in symbolic systems allows Ratcliffe's approach to offer ample room for differences to exist next to each other. However, even as these differences prevail, a specific culture shares them. In the context of rhetoric and composition studies, sharing differences in a culture invites for various rhetorical traditions with internal differences. Ratcliffe invokes the Western

rhetorical tradition, specifically figures such as Diana Davis, Kenneth Burke, and Aristotle, so this tradition functions as one of her cultural logics and tools for analysis. Ratcliffe never claims that this rhetorical traditions functions as the sole means of understanding or rhetorical analyzing texts, so she situates herself in a myriad of other rhetorical practices. Additionally, she identifies the cultural logics at work in her specific material and rhetorical situations.

Ratcliffe presents “gender” working within specific cultural logics in the US to situate her own conversation. She writes: “For example, some common cultural logics associated with gender in the U.S. include: (1) the logic of patriarchy, (2) the logic of equal rights, (3) the logic of comparable worth, and (4) the logic of postmodern commonalities and differences” (10). Ratcliffe works to contextualize, as much as possible, her methods for interpreting a trope (i.e., gender) in a cultural world. By identifying some of the sources that affect her subject of study and the rhetorical methods to approach her study, Ratcliffe advocates for an awareness of rhetorical traditions and cultural influences. Without these recognitions, Ratcliffe may have erroneously applied her rhetorical analysis and conception of rhetorical listening. However, by presenting her rhetorical angle and cultural context, Ratcliffe pursues her rhetorical analysis in a respectful manner towards other rhetorical traditions, acknowledges the heavy impact of cultural factors in rhetorical situations, and advocates for a deeper understanding of rhetorical studies.

Ratcliffe begins her rhetorical analysis by presenting the physicality of the people and culture in discussion. In agreement with Judith Butler’s caution of irreducibility based on the materiality of bodies, Ratcliffe writes, “Granted, men and women are born

with particular, material bodies; however, they see organize, analyze, and value their bodies as men and women because they are born into a culture with a symbolic system” (10). Although she acknowledges Butler’s concern, Ratcliffe, nevertheless, forwards the idea that symbolic systems emerge from material bodies and situations. Without these physical components, a symbolic system loses its organization, analysis, and value for the participants involved and vice versa. These material bodies and situations create and influence the symbolic system from which cultural logics emerge. Ratcliffe acknowledges the reality of material situations without overlooking the dynamics they create for rhetorical situations or symbolic systems, which deepens her reading and analysis of writings.

In *Reading Chinese Fortunate Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric*, LuMing Mao presents Chinese and Chinese American rhetorical traditions as an important component to current scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition Studies. While advancing these rhetorical traditions, Mao emphasizes and elaborates on contextualizing them and their respective methods of rhetorical analyses. By presenting these aspects in his writing, Mao promotes an awareness, understanding, and inclusivity toward other rhetorical traditions and cultural communities. Mao employs the concept of “clusters” to depict an approach of rhetorically analyzing texts with consideration of context-specific conditions, bodily involvement, and particular localities.

To advance his notion of Chinese and Chinese American rhetorical traditions, Mao presents the concept of a “cluster.” We can find an understanding of what clusters entail and how they work through Mao’s elaboration on the resonance of 恕 (shu) with American individualism. Mao writes:

Differently stated, if the focal meaning of 恕 [shu] is the ability to infer and connect to others so as not to impose on them what you yourself do not want, one's understanding of how this ability can actually be put to action depends on 忠[zhong], 仁 [ren], 禮 [li], 考 [xiao], 悌 [di], 言 [yan], and 信 [xin]. Both 恕 and these other “siblings” form a conceptual cluster, and together they give meaning and substance to what I call “the discourse of 恕,” and to how individuals position themselves to realize and extend these reciprocal, ritualized, and humane relationships. (107)

The first portion of this quotation allows readers to understand that several words and ideas need to come together to create a “cluster” that works to contextualize and understand rhetorical situations and practices. In this case, 忠 (zhong), 仁 (ren), 禮 (li), 考 (xiao), 悌 (di), 言 (yan), and 信 (xin) collaborate with 恕 (shu) to construct the discourse of 恕 and provide a context and concepts that closely resemble American individualism but in Chinese and Chinese American rhetorical terms—vocabulary and conditions. A cluster allows for a rhetorical understanding, but it also acknowledges physical components.

Mao's cluster considers the discursive and conceptual understanding of rhetorical practices, but it also heavily accounts the physical bodies and locations from where these components emerge. While Mao informs that clusters “give meaning and substance” to the discourse of 恕, he states that “individuals position themselves to realize and extend these reciprocal, ritualized, and humane relationships” (107). From this assertion, Mao's clusters account for physical bodies, their locations, and situations. This acuteness to

physical structures functions to provide contexts beyond the discursive. Because he sees the physical geography and bodies that create rhetorical traditions, Mao discourages decontextualized rhetorical analyses of any texts.

Mao asserts that scholars and others must adequately contextualize rhetorical situations to perform any type of rhetorical analysis. This contextualization functions for the rhetorical situation itself and the scholar's methods of rhetorical analysis. In describing individualism, Mao writes, "a cluster of such terms should exist in both [rhetorical] traditions, and these terms should enjoy an equivalence of meaning between these terms, any talk about Chinese rhetorical practices lacking or discouraging or suppressing individualism becomes vacuous" (98). While the European American or Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition oftentimes overshadow other rhetorical traditions, Chinese and Chinese American rhetorical practices exist in their own contexts, their own methods, and their own languages. Because of differing contexts, approaches, and language, these rhetorics require their own clusters for analysis that emerge from in their own physical contexts rather than borrowing clusters of terms from irrelevant or contrastingly different rhetorical, cultural, and historical traditions.

Mao's articulation of "clusters" provides a space for recognizing and understanding a more complete picture of a Chinese American rhetorical situation. This rhetorical situation is embedded in the backdrop of particular histories, events, cultures, and worldviews that must be thoroughly considered and included when analyzing rhetorical situations for Chinese and Chinese Americans. Otherwise, an understanding of the situations and its rhetorical analysis will likely produce a rhetoric of deficiency and

reaffirm the belief that other people lack civilization, rationality, culture, and true humanity.

Damián Baca, in *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing*, counters the narrative of assimilation for people from Mesoamerica and surrounding regions, whom he calls Mestiz@s. In countering this narrative, he demonstrates a deep understanding of rhetorical traditions and the people that create them. In his text, Baca employs the concepts of “cultural networks” and “frameworks.” Coupled together, these concepts adequately contextualize and provide a more thorough and accurate perspective for understanding and rhetorically analyzing Mestiz@ writing and practices. By employing these terms, Baca provides a space for rhetorical traditions, histories, and communities separate from Eurocentric notions of them. Moreover, he recognizes the material conditions and situations that make rhetorical situations and traditions possible.

Baca identifies the material conditions that provide a context for rhetorical situations because these conditions heavily influence the trajectory and understanding of rhetorical traditions and analyses. In describing Analdúa’s Mestiz@ aesthetics, Baca writes, “Mestiz@ ways of life are informed through living, contextualized, cultural networks” (16). Moreover, after providing a historical account of Mestiz@s, Baca states, “Mestiz@s and their communities are interacting and connecting with each other and with the larger world around them, forming intricate cultural networks of persons and communities” (61). While he only explicitly mentions them three times in his text, “cultural networks” ooze through every page by assisting Baca to think and write about Mestiz@s and their material situations. Cultural networks function to recognize and name

material aspects from which rhetorical traditions emerge in living and contextualized events. In the quotation stated above, “living” implies Mestiz@s who perform physical actions, and “contextualized” locates the geographies, circumstances, and belief systems in which these actions ensue. This interpretation of his cultural networks aligns with one of his goals: “My aim...is to analyze historical possibilities, to develop new ways of thinking about writing today, based on material and corporeal practices that have shifted across time” (xvi). The physical aspects of cultural networks allow Baca to extract methods to rhetorically situate, analyze, and interpret Mestiz@ writings on their own terms, based on their own histories, and in their own contexts.

Baca uses the concept of a “framework” to investigate, understand, and analyze rhetorical practices and situations from these cultural networks. Readers come to partially understand what a framework entails by the following quote: “By assimilation, I refer to the dichotomous process of conversion imposed by the framework of Western expansion across the north Atlantic beginning in the late fifteenth century” (5). Then, Baca offers his own frameworks:

The frameworks [Spacialization, Periodization, and Region] I consider in chapter 5 are merely three of the many other “big picture” variations that could be derived from Gloria Anzaldúa’s new mestiza consciousness.

These modifications to the study of Western rhetoric and writing would equally emphasize connections, comparisons, and interpretive frameworks across and beyond national boundaries, thereby embracing more hemispheric, perhaps even global plurality. (13)

While Baca's frameworks inevitably consist of physical components, they profoundly rely on methods or approaches of understanding and rhetorically analyzing texts. Hence, it's possible to employ a framework to reinterpret and reanalyze a physical action that has already occurred in the past.

These frameworks account for the contextualized and rhetorical situations that created and continue to create Mestiz@ scripts. Baca asserts that "If positioned as a point of origin, Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness would revise and enlarge the frameworks used to account for histories of rhetoric and writing. Anzaldúa's aesthetic and theatrical strategy promotes new frameworks that transform the borders of Eurocentric history" (133). The frameworks that Baca counters are Eurocentric notions of rhetoric and rhetorical practices, and they do not transcend the passing of time, the movement from locations, or the people creating them. Instead, these frameworks must exist and be applied to the spatial and temporal locations from which they emerge—not from or in a decontextualized environment. This approach to revising or creating new rhetorical approaches fundamentally changes the understanding of rhetoric, rhetorical analyses, and histories of rhetoric. Furthermore, these rhetorical approaches capture the rhetorical situation in its contextualized form; that is, they account for the people, beliefs, culture, ways of life, and other material conditions.

Taken together, cultural networks and frameworks work to create a distinct rhetorical tradition for Mestiz@s that does not completely rely on Western rhetorics. This fundamental change distinguishes separate geographic locations, writing systems, and groups of people. By employing cultural networks and frameworks to his rhetorical analyses, Baca sets the stage for other rhetorical traditions and people to coexist and

coevolve with each other but always in their own practices, their own contexts, and their own rhetorics.

In *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent*, Scott Richard Lyons argues that Indians have charted their own paths in the situations that colonial forces coerced them into. In these situations, Natives considered options and made decisions that they hoped would “result in something good” (3). Lyons uses the term “x-mark” to contextualize the rhetorical situations that Indians were and are in.⁶ These x-marks works to contextualize, understand, and analyze the material conditions, ways of living, beliefs, values, and rhetorical texts created from these contexts. X-marks function to recognize the material conditions and locations that give context and meaning to Indian texts. Additionally, these x-marks function as tools to rhetorically analyze Indian texts.

Lyons provides multiple definitions of an x-mark to demonstrate the extensive resourcefulness of Indians in their struggles to defend and define themselves against a colonizing force. Lyons definition and use of the x-mark point towards a concept that describes physical bodies, geographic locations, and material conditions. The following quotation serves as one of Lyons’ definition: “An x-mark is a commitment to living new and perhaps unfamiliar ways, yet without promising to give up one’s people, values, or sense of community” (169). Not giving up “one’s people, values, or sense of community” describes the very real and material conditions that must be present for Indians and Indian ways of life to exist, even if they exist “under conditions that are not of one’s making” (2). A population of people, Indians in this case, should exist prior to the emergence of any type of rhetorical practices. Without these people and their situations, the need for or

⁶ Lyons writes that he uses “*Indian* and *Native* when referring to indigenous peoples of North America” (original emphasis; 67), but I stick with the term *Indian* in this chapter.

practice of rhetoric doesn't develop. Lyons recognizes and presents a physical context drenched in colonialism that creates the Indian and Indian ways of life. These colonial relations do not allow for Natives to continue living in the same territories and to continue practicing their own ways of life. Aside from describing the physical components to Indians' ways of life, x-marks present an approach to analyzing Indian texts.

Lyons' x-mark lays a foundation for understanding and rhetorically analyzing Indian texts in their own contexts and on their own terms. Lyons writes, "To understand these Native texts requires a vigilant awareness of the discursive formations that created their contexts, as early Native writers were always acutely aware of their rhetorical contexts and addressed them accordingly, sometimes through challenging or appropriating the dominant discourse of the day" (25). Looking for the various definitions that Lyons provides helps readers understand what an approach with the understanding and use of an x-mark entails. Lyons offers the following definitions in the construction of an x-mark: "The x-mark is a contaminated and coerced sign of consent made under conditions that are not of one's making" (2); "I am interested in the promise of the x-mark insofar as it stands, or more precisely as the promise moves through time, space, and discourse" (9);

The idea of an x-mark assumes that indigenous communities are and have always been composed of human beings who possess reason, rationality, individuality, an ability to think and to question, a suspicion of religious dogma or political authoritarianism, a desire to improve their lot and the

future of their progeny, and a wish to play some part in the larger world.
(12-13)

These definitions serve as an approach to comprehending and rhetorically analyzing Indian texts in their own contexts and rhetorical traditions. The first definition considers the real situations in which Indians employed their limited agency, in many cases, to retain or obtain bodily safety, material products, and psychological and emotional well-being. The second definition informs us that Indians and their acts shift according to spatial, temporal, and discursive contexts; that is, an x-mark provides a dynamic approach to understanding and analyzing Indian texts. The third description simultaneously works to discredit European claim to modernity and to attribute many of these modern developments to Indians and other civilizations or peoples.

Before rhetorically analyzing Indian texts and describing them as possessing European components, Lyons urges scholars to reconsider their stance and imagine Indians who participated in the construction of modern systems. To ignore any of these aspects of an x-mark in a rhetorical analysis may lead to an erroneous interpretation of the texts, one that may lead to the logic of deficiency. For example, instead of interpreting the written word as a method of appropriation for Indian to gain a limited voice in Indian-US relations, a person could identify this rhetorical maneuver as a sign of defeat and assimilation. By employing this term as a rhetorical mode of analysis, the x-mark broadens the rhetorical horizons of Indians and their texts and never loses sight of the contexts in which they were and continue to be created.

Scott Richard Lyons tactfully presents material conditions and a rhetorical approach to understanding Indian texts. In opposition to a strictly Eurocentric or Western

conception of rhetorical practice and its deliberate use in any rhetorical situation, Lyons advocates and presents the x-mark for scholars to consider the contexts and worldviews as they understand and analyze their communities and texts.

Ratcliffe, Mao, Baca, and Lyons perform a formidable job of reviving or creating rhetorical traditions and methods of analyses while acknowledging their own positions in relation to other rhetorical traditions and approaches. The overlap between these approaches to rhetorical analysis enables scholars to see the current trend of rhetorically analyzing ethnic writings. After elaborating on Eurocentrism in his text, Amin offers insights on how to move away from this distorted and exclusionary vision of history. He writes, “The process of systematically locating the Eurocentric deformations in dominant ideologies and social theories, retracing their genesis and bringing out weaknesses is not sufficient. An outmoded paradigm disappears only on the condition that another paradigm, freed from errors of the first, is positively expressed” (219). For scholars in the field of rhetoric and composition, his recommendations help scholars move away from the marginalizing effects of Eurocentric methods of rhetorical analyses and systematic ignorance of other rhetorical traditions. Ratcliffe, Mao, Baca, and Lyons overlap in many respects. All of them, in some form or another, counter the implementation of Greco-Roman traditions on every single material and rhetorical situation. These scholars thoroughly contextualize their rhetorical situations, and they carefully demarcate their approaches to rhetorical analyses so as to use rhetorical approaches that have roots in the same sites and people that created the texts they analyze. Although their texts vastly differ, these scholars certainly have overlapping approaches in their rhetorical analyses.

This overlap makes me assert that, collectively, they approach rhetoric and composition scholarship from a paradigm different from the Eurocentric perspective.

However, it's ridiculous to think that their approaches are free from errors.

Although not free from errors, their approaches definitely provide a more comprehensive perspective of rhetorical traditions and offer approaches to analyze these writings in their own contexts. Much like the Greco-Roman methods of rhetorical analyses, with time, these specific methods and rhetorical traditions may appear restrictive, exclusionary, or outright wrong. However, at no point do these scholars state or imply that their approaches to analyzing texts are the best or only ones. To the contrary, they overtly explain the realities they face in providing their rhetorical analyses. For example, after examining her students' four essays, Ratcliffe writes, "Rhetorical listening and its attendant tactics of eavesdropping, listening metonymically, and listening pedagogically will not solve all the world's problem, nor will they work well in all classroom situations. No theoretical tactic could meet such a test" (171). Similarly, in describing his situation in studying Chinese American rhetoric, Mao states, "I know I may never 'get it right,' but I also know that I cannot let this realization stop me, and that I cannot let my own apprehension or hesitation handicap my action, stifle my narrative" (17). Baca's own awareness of his contribution to the field comes from his acknowledgement that he's "[r]ethinking writing *from* Mesoamerican and Mestiz@ literatures" (original emphasis; xvi). Lyons expresses comparable sentiments: "The only reason I'm starting with a preface that begins with my own liminality, misconceptions, and childhood reading habits is to introduce myself and locate this work, however provisionally, in a particular time, space, and range of discourses" (xi). While these scholars provide fascinating and

innovative approaches in rhetorical analyses and traditions, Ratcliffe, Mao, Baca, and Lyons are mindful that they represent only a few methods of understanding and analyzing writings. Pursuing rhetorical approaches which are free from errors would seem too idealistic—maybe even impossible—to them given the disenfranchised positions they write from in the context of Rhetoric and Composition Studies. For now, these scholars build rhetorical traditions, approaches, and analyses that construct ample spaces for others—other scholars, other rhetorical traditions, other writing systems, other approaches for rhetorical analysis, other histories, other communities, and other people.

CHAPTER IV

A Rhetoric of Difference: Negotiating Difference from the Colonial Wound

Globalization has emerged as a topic of debate in relation to educational systems in the US and its effects on cultural, economic, and international relations that students currently and will encounter.¹ This debate creates a platform to discuss interactions between groups from various locations in the world and, perhaps more importantly, within the same nation. Physical and rhetorical interactions between dominant national with ethnic minority groups consequently lead to the presence, recognition, and articulation of individual differences, cultural differences, and national differences.² In essence, we students, scholars, and people in general have to train ourselves to respond to differences in a manner that fosters respectful and fruitful relations rather than leading to violent outcomes.

Colonialism represents an example of a violent outcome when colonizers negotiate ethnic and cultural differences. Interactions within the colonial process often involve the dehumanization of people who are not the same as the colonizer and who produce the “colonial difference” (Mignolo 3). To provide a more specific example, Europeans dehumanized indigenous people in the Americas to justify the appropriation of their lands, to explain mass murders, and to rationalize the raping of women. Ethnic and

¹ I make this observation based on my experiences with education courses, which have always designated time to read and discuss issues that pertain to globalization and how this affects students. In Rhetoric and Composition Studies, I’ve read about it to a lesser extent—for example, Christiane Donahue’s “Internationalization’ and Composition Studies: Reorienting the Discourse,” Bruce Horner and John Trimbur’s “English Only and U.S. College Composition,” and A. Suresh Canagarajah’s “The Place of World Englishes in Composition.” Nevertheless, the conversation exists in both fields.

² In writing “dominant majority group,” I don’t suggest that Anglo American are homogenous. However, I don’t want to engage the conversation on how Anglo Americans are multicultural in their own sense at this moment. As I’ve witnessed, this conversation often leads to reasserting that diversity already exists in curriculum and literature so that ethnic minority writings are not necessary for providing equitable and diverse practices and readings.

cultural differences function to determine who embodies a human or a savage, so the colonizers can impose their will on people. The United States provides a contemporary example of a dominant group still following the colonial process when interacting with people with ethnic and cultural differences. In this example, the dominant practices strip minority groups of their differing ways of lives, practices, and even liberty to create better, more productive citizens and members of society.³ Rhetoric as a discipline provides a venue for revising or, at minimum, recognizing some of these heinous actions by dominant groups on minority groups as the scholars I will analyze will illustrate later.

Rhetoric plays a key role in conducting interactions that foster mutual respect from any participating individuals or groups. As a discipline, rhetoric provides a space to discuss, analyze, and modify interactions between individuals and groups from various locations in the world with divergent ideological beliefs, physical attributes, and cultural practices. Specifically, LuMing Mao, Damián Baca, Scott Richard Lyons, and Krista Ratcliffe articulate the urgent need to negotiate differences in meaningful ways. Moreover, they provide methods of interacting with people that are different from each other in manners that do not dehumanize the individual or group and that do not erase differences. These scholars, then, work towards recognizing and challenging the logic of coloniality that plagues the modern world.

Mignolo defines this perverse logic as the logic of coloniality—a logic that subjugates differences, suppresses histories, objectifies humans, and eradicates societies. Mignolo states that “de-linking” occurs through the recognition and disavowal of the

³ I include liberty here thinking of two texts: Adela Licona’s and Marta Maldonado’s “The Social Production of Latin@ Visibilities and Invisibilities: Geographies of Power in Small Town America” and Los Tigres Del Norte’s “La Jaula de Oro.” In these texts, it’s made clear that certain immigrants fear leaving their home because of their undocumented status. Additionally, we can also consider prison demographics for people of color.

logic of coloniality. Moreover, he develops this concept to state that de-linking “foreground[s] other epistemologies, other principles of knowledge and understanding and, consequently, other economy [sic], other politics, other ethics” (453). Furthermore, Mignolo states that “de-linking presupposes to move toward a geo- and body politics of knowledge that on the one hand denounces the pretended universality of a particular ethnicity (body politics), located in a specific part of the planet (geo-politics), that is, Europe” (453). “Border thinking” functions as the method to de-link from the logic of coloniality.

“Border thinking,” explains Mignolo “is grounded not in Greek thinkers but in the colonial wound and imperial subordination and, as such, it should become the connector between the diversity of subaltern histories...and corresponding subjectivities” (493).

With Mignolo’s concepts in mind, I find that LuMing Mao, Damián Baca, Scott Richard Lyons, and Krista Ratcliffe write from the colonial difference, which effectively categorizes them as “border thinkers” who recognize and write against the logic of coloniality. In performing this task, Mao, Baca, Lyons, and Ratcliffe construct rhetorical methods of negotiating differences without requiring their erasure. These methods attempt to preserve people’s humanity and create a citizenry that recognizes differences outside—or at least in opposition to—hierarchical contexts.

In *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric*, LuMing Mao proposes for people to recognize differences and to exist surrounded by these differences without the impulse to erase or overpower them. “In short, what I intend to focus on in this book is a rhetoric that seeks not uniqueness-qua-coherence from within, but complexity, heterogeneity, and ambiguity from both within and without,” writes Mao,

“from a space where different rhetorical practices meet, clash, and grapple with each other, and where their encounters are always with highly asymmetrical relations of power” (29). Mao wants to emphasize the differences in rhetorical practices from one cultural group to another while consciously negotiating the asymmetrical power relations that exist, particularly as they manifest themselves in the US but also as they emerge from different areas in the world because of colonial and imperial domination. By taking this step, Mao recognizes the logic of coloniality that demands for eradication of differences rather than their negotiation. He proposes instead to negotiate differences even if they occur from asymmetrical relations of power.

Mao augment's his position by incorporating Ien Ang's concept of “togetherness-in-difference” to articulate how he envisions people coexisting with each other's differences. While describing Chinese American rhetoric, Mao states that people should not focus on a “harmony-in-difference” because this conceptualization concentrates on “positive change and transformation” as opposed to the perils engaged through togetherness-in-difference—“perils of misunderstanding, misinterpretations, and outright rejection” (3). Mao understands that differences may contradict and defy each other, but this awareness propels him toward accepting the responsibility to recognize and negotiate these differences with other people and groups. For Mao, these differences provide opportunities for people to understand each other because people live alongside each other and therefore should foster a rhetorical stance that accepts differences even when not completely understood.

Mao constructs a rhetorical approach to achieve a better understanding of Chinese and European rhetorical traditions that interact side-by-side in the US so as to create

Chinese American rhetoric. In discussing border thinkers, Mignolo writes, “This, in other words, is the key configuration of border thinking: *thinking from dichotomous concepts rather than ordering the world in dichotomies*” (original emphasis; *Local* 85). Mao doesn’t demonstrate incommensurability in his thinking and writing of Chinese American rhetoric, which would deny European American and Chinese rhetorical tradition to correspond. His acknowledgement of the logic of coloniality prompts him to reject any type of stance that presents these two traditions as “entirely incongruous” to each other, and he instead opts to visualize Chinese American rhetoric as one that “blurs the boundary and serves to challenge, to transcend this dualistic discourse or impulse” (3). In his disavowal of this dualistic discourse or impulse, Mao opens a space to reconsider the relationship between Chinese and European American rhetorical traditions in the US. This relationship entails a European colonial past and the colonial difference that it creates for people from China residing in the US. As a border thinker and writer, Mao does not ignore the colonial difference that exists between these two groups. Instead, he acknowledges this conflicting and tense relationship to start his thinking and writing from the colonial difference so as to move beyond its hold.

Mao’s rhetorical approach asks for people to exist with differences and stems from specific geo- and body-politics. Mao emigrated from China and now resides in the US, so this geo-political transition influences his approach to Chinese American rhetoric. He demonstrates a deep knowledge of Chinese history and practices, which he may have acquired from living in and continually visiting China, but not all Chinese Americans will possess this knowledge or take this particular angle to Chinese American rhetoric. The geographic location of China in relation to the US also affects his approach since he’s

aware of the marginalization of the Chinese in the US that may not occur in China. Because of this geographic shift, the geo-politics of Mao's approach to Chinese American rhetoric surfaces.

Similarly, Mao thinks and writes from a particular body-politics. Mao focuses on cultural aspects of Chinese and European American rhetorical traditions. Body-politics heavily influence Mao's perception of the current rhetorical situation for Chinese and Chinese Americans as depicted through his concept of "face," where he gestures towards physical and abstract definitions of this concept. His Chinese ethnic identity forces him to envision rhetoric as working to achieve better recognition and understanding of Chinese and Chinese American ethnic populations and their rhetorical practice in the US. As concise and altruistic as his rhetorical approach appears, we, scholars in rhetoric and composition, can't blindly accept every finding. We must heavily consider this rhetorical approach when discussing Chinese American rhetoric, but we must also possess an awareness of Mao's body-politics (i.e., American, Chinese, Chinese American, and male) and geo-politics (i.e., Chinese born, resides in a specific part of the US), and their effects on his conception of Chinese American rhetorics. To keep challenging the logic of coloniality, I want to note—in agreement with Mao—the plurality of Chinese American rhetoric, and not a singular method of conceptualizing it. Like Mao, Damián Baca recognizes the perverse logic of coloniality.

In *Mestiz@ Scripts, Digital Migrations, and the Territories of Writing*, Damián Baca examines the placement of Mestiz@s in history and writing practices. In his preface, Baca writes, "it is no surprise that Mesti@s are imagined as making a belated entrance into the 'advancement' of Western civilization. In my own field of English composition,

Mestiz@s appear only recently as unnamed linguistic ‘problems’ in remedial or standard first-year writing seminars” (xv). In explaining this late entrance into history, Baca acknowledges the colonial difference that drives these discourses: “Europe tragically viewed the region [Mesoamerica] as needing ‘civilization’ through preemptory warfare and occupation” (xvi). For Mestiz@s, the colonial difference presents itself in various forms because of the vast histories, practices, and current circumstances within and outside the US. As an ethnic writer, Baca demonstrates a keen awareness of the colonial wound that these Mestiz@ groups face. He considers this wound and the logic of coloniality as he attempts to think and write through them.

While the logic of coloniality presents a uniform West-to-East narrative of civilization, Damián Baca problematizes this narrative and widens the scope of writing practices. Through his writing, he depicts thinking that moves beyond the logic of coloniality, and instead, he generates spaces for differences to emerge. Baca questions the distorted representation of civilizations and those outside of them by redefining the space, time, and the idea of the nation-state in the construction of the European civilization narrative. He writes, “I propose three broad frameworks enabled by mestiza consciousness: Spacialization, Periodization, and Region versus Nation” (13). Moreover, Baca affirms that this examination of “rhetoric across national borders and cultural boundaries promotes a wider hemispheric view, beyond the path of Western expansion” (12). This maneuver works for differences to exist with each other outside of a hierarchy.

This method of conceptualizing rhetoric and writing works towards battling the logic of coloniality because it doesn’t negate the Western view of history and expansion; rather, it situates this perspective as one of many others. Baca’s “Spacialization,”

“Periodization,” and “Region versus Nation” work to expand the geographies of study, disrupt European historical categories, and question the idea of nation-based study, respectively (13). Together, they challenge the logic of coloniality because his approaches “emphasize connections, comparisons, and interpretive frameworks across and beyond national boundaries, thereby embracing a more hemispheric perspective, both literally and symbolically” (162). Baca’s use of these rhetorical approaches recognizes and challenges the logic of coloniality because they problematize the foundation that drives the logic of coloniality by undermining its temporal, spatial, and ideological locations. Thus, Baca creates a better method for negotiating ethnic and cultural differences. His rhetorical approaches, in essence, forcefully work toward the construction of histories and rhetorics from different points of origins and references.

Baca’s position emerges from the consideration of colonial relations between US, Mestiz@s, and Europe, but he attempts to move beyond the thinking that places quantifiable values on physical, cultural, and ideological characteristics through his three rhetorical approaches. Discussing how border thinking moves towards pluri-versal visions of the world, Mignolo writes, “A world in which many worlds could co-exist can only be made by the shared work and common goals of those who inhabit, dwell in one of the many worlds co-existing in one world where differences are not cast in terms of values or plus and minus degree of humanity” (499). Moreover, Mignolo, acknowledging Anibal Quijano’s commentary, warns that a total rejection of the European subject “would be to use the same logic and pretend that a different universalism will be better than the one that is today hegemonic and dominant” (“Delinking” 494). In accordance with Mignolo, Baca doesn’t ignore the European accounts of history or subjectivity:

Western contributions to rhetoric and composition would not be discarded in the new curriculum [based on Spatialization, Periodization, and Region versus Nation]. Instead, Mestiz@ rhetorics call for a monumental rereading and revising of composition and rhetoric history—this time not so much for what it collectively declares, but for what it too often conceals: the limits of an enduring Eurocentric teleology and its consequent dominant narrative of assimilation. (163)

Baca doesn't want Western contributions to be left out as this maneuver would perpetuate the logic of coloniality by purposefully excluding voices. Instead, he criticizes the Western and European paradigm as the referent to all populations in the world because these other populations also possess their own histories, practices, languages, and ways of living that have no obligation to mimicking Western traditions. Essentially, Baca recognizes the perspective of Western and European rhetoric but criticizes its uncritical appropriation and use as a measure of humanity to all other ethnic groups in the US and abroad. Baca speaks from the colonial wound while not recreating a set of universalities that dehumanize other ethnic minority groups.

To contextualize Baca's rejection of the logic of coloniality, we should consider the geo- and body-politics that influence his thinking and writing so as not to universalize his findings to everyone in every rhetorical situation. Baca writes from the geo-politics of the US where, historically, Mestiz@s have encountered injustices in various forms, such as ethnic cleansing and racial discrimination. Baca's positionality in relation to Mestiz@s directs his focus towards discussing specific issues in particular geographic regions, such as New Mexico, México, and Mesoamerica, where Baca's Mestiz@s can be found.

Undoubtedly, his geographic location also drives his choosings of writings to analyze, such as Frederico Vigil's buon fresco in Albuquerque, New Mexico. As an ethnic minority in the US, body-politics also play a role in Baca's counter to the logic of coloniality.

Baca, a person of color, focuses on the historical, temporal, and spatial aspects of Mestiz@s in the US to explore and exploit the fissures present in the logic of coloniality. The exploration into these fissures leads him to refocus the bodily experiences of Mestiz@s as a method to question the inadequacy found in the logic of coloniality in conceptualizing ethnic minority populations in the US and its subsequent effects. By emphasizing the body-politics of Mestiz@s, Baca articulates the diversity (i.e., different physical movements when writing and personal experiences) of the Mestiz@ population.

By using specific geo- and body-politics as they relate to his experience as a Mestizo, Baca constructs rhetorical methods to challenge the colonial difference and the logic of coloniality, which effectively creates a space for better negotiation of ethnic differences. This specific method of negotiating differences demands for its participants to consider the racial, ethnic, and colonial discourses that surround them while engaging in interactions with each other that do not reproduce more dehumanizing rhetoric based on racial and ethnic attributes. More importantly, this negotiation will perhaps lead to less violent material outcomes for Mestiz@s. Likewise, Lyons voices concerns about the perverse logic from a marginalized subject position.

In *X-Marks: Native American Signatures of Assent*, Scott Richard Lyons describes the struggles that Native Americans, Ojibwe in particular, encounter as they negotiate conflicted identities and Indian practices which the logic of coloniality and the

deep colonial wound produce. Lyons' negotiation of difference moves away from practices that erase or overpower each other: "Indigenous nationalism can pursue the goal of equality-of-differences and cultural survival without denying the cultural diversity that always exists within any community" (140). He promotes a rhetorical approach that negotiates differences outside of the logic of coloniality. It's easy to map and difficult to argue against the detrimental ways in which European colonizers subjugated differences by appropriating Native American land, imposing religious beliefs and cultural practices on Native Americans, and treating Native Americans as savages because of the colonial difference. Lyons recognizes the ways in which colonialism handles difference, so he actively works against these methods.

Lyons serves as an example of a writer combating the logic of coloniality because he recognizes that a dominant, colonial group exists, but he attempts to step away from their dehumanizing practices when negotiating differences. He writes, "Native nationalisms seek both cultural survival and political power, that is, both nationhood and nationality, and not just resistance to the dominant culture" (133). As previously mentioned, the challenge to the logic of coloniality stems from the recognition of a colonial wound inflicted by colonizing groups, so these ethnic and indigenous groups have to acknowledge this wound and attempt to recover from it. Lyons fully recognizes the presence of the colonial past (and present) that Native Americans suffered. The ethnic minorities can't afford to ignore the dominant group, but, as Lyons writes, it is "not just resistance to the dominant culture" (133). To recover from the dehumanizing logic of coloniality, Native Americans struggle through dire realities, which they encountered in the past and their current circumstances in the US so as to reclaim their humanity. As

they struggle through these obstacles, Native Americans reconceptualize new methods of handling differences to avoid perpetuating the same injustices on others through border thinking.

Lyons provides the rhizome as a metaphor to negotiate differences, a metaphor that actively combats the logic of coloniality. In articulating differences that exist within any community, Lyons writes, “Rhizomes exist underground and are composed of very complex and extremely diverse systems and networks of roots, bulbs, tubers, and burrows that are indescribable in any totalizing manner” (140). Discussing Anibal Quijano’s work, Mignolo writes that “modernity/rationality”—which Mignolo argues is inherently linked to coloniality—“is the exclusionary and totalitarian notion of Totality...that is a Totality that negates, exclude[s], and occlude[s] the difference and the possibilities of other totalities” (451). For this reason, I also situate Lyons as a border thinker who counters the logic of coloniality. He moves away from any type of thinking or articulation of difference that totalizes a particular community’s beliefs, practices, or values, which is a rhetorical maneuver that leaves space for other communities’ ways of living. The rhizome metaphor problematizes the notion of totalizing a specific community because the rhizome naturally relies on differences to function properly—differences between roots, bulbs, tubers, and burrows. Lyons never loses sight of the colonial wound, so he presents the rhizome as a metaphor to express a need for differences and to counteract the logic of coloniality.

The geo- and body-politics for Lyons places his argument within a specific context that serves to remind readers of geographic- and ethnic-specific situation that conceive his method of negotiating differences. The rhizome as a metaphor works as a

rhetorical approach for negotiating differences outside the logic of coloniality that works for Ojibwe in specific but also for people in general. This rhetorical approach arises from a specific geographic location situated in the US. In this geographic location, the land itself holds the history of colonization upon the arrival of European immigrants—first the Spanish and Portuguese and then the British. This particular geographical location helps Lyons envision a specific method of negotiating differences for the Ojibwe, but also for other people who may choose to apply this rhetorical approach in various situations.

Lyons physical attributes and ethnic identification, or body-politics, catapult his conceptualization of the rhizome metaphor as a rhetorical approach for negotiating differences. His lighter skin allows him to consider his own physical position in relation to his ethnicity and the rest of the people in the US, which prompts an inclusivity of differences and vast conceptualizations of Native Americans. These geo- and body-politics function as the point of departure in the creation of this rhetorical approach to negotiate differences. As rhetoricians and compositionists, acknowledging Lyons' own circumstances in advancing his proposition provides us with tools to properly apply his challenge to the logic of coloniality. Similarly, Krista Ratcliffe depicts thinking and writing that defies the logic of coloniality through border thinking.

In *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness*, Krista Ratcliffe provides methods of negotiating differences that reject erasure of differences and thus dehumanization. As an Anglo American feminist scholar, Ratcliffe demonstrates how she deals with racial differences through her conceptualization of rhetorical listening. She writes, "Defined more particularly as a code of cross-cultural conduct, rhetorical listening signifies a stance of openness that a person may choose to assume in cross-cultural

exchanges” (1). Cross-cultural exchanges prove difficult and perilous interactions because of ethnic and cultural differences. These exchanges require a particular (open) stance because they may evoke violent acts towards the people involved as a consequence of inappropriately handling differences. Ratcliffe acknowledges the effects of the colonial wound as she challenges the logic of coloniality.

Ratcliffe recognizes the effects of the colonial wound on herself as a woman; moreover, she acknowledges the effects of the colonial wound on others, especially on the experiences for people of color whom she attempts to understand better. In discussing the limitations of Kenneth Burke’s concept of identification, Ratcliffe writes:

What happens to the unnecessary differences? A corollary question is: Who defines and who decides what is necessary and unnecessary—or in other words who defines the terms of commonality, and who decides which differences must be bridged and which differences must be deemed excess and relegated outside the consubstantial of identification? In most cases, the answer is: the ‘I’ with the power. (59)

Through these questions and her response, Ratcliffe recognizes the logic of coloniality and the dehumanizing interactions that stem from it, specifically when European males situate themselves as the “‘I’ with the power” (59). This positioning involves an acknowledgment that their ways of living and thinking exist in a super relation to anyone else’s not in union with other colonized groups. The recognition of asymmetrical power relations prompts Ratcliffe to conceptualize a rhetorical approach that negotiates differences in a mode that does not dehumanize individuals.

Although Ratcliffe discusses identification and disidentification, I focus on her decision to employ the concept of non-identification as it constructs ground for negotiating differences and leaves a space for commonalities that a person may choose to revisit. Non-identification as a rhetorical approach functions to defy to the logic of coloniliaty. In exclaiming that denunciation of the colonizer's society is not enough, Mignolo states, "It is necessary for dissecting actors belonging (e.g., having citizenship, not necessarily the right blood or skin color) to a colonizing society (e.g., the US today) to join projects of decolonization (political and epistemic) that are, at once, articulated by the colonized and yet not the project of the colonized elite" (458).⁴ Ratcliffe's non-identification functions to challenge the logic of coloniality because she provides a method of negotiating differences that explicitly acknowledges the colonizer and the colonized, which at times, may exist within a single material body. In describing non-identification, Ratcliffe looks to the visual aspect of the term:

As such, the hyphen represents the "margin between," a place wherein people may consciously choose to position themselves to listen rhetorically. This "margin between" does not transcend ideology; it does, however, provide a place of pause, a place of reflection, a place that invites people to admit that gaps exist....In some cases, rhetorical listening in the place of identification may precede new identification; in other

⁴ I've been reluctant to use the word "decolonization" because in "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang argue that decolonization does not have a synonym. They state that "decolonization in the settler colonial context must involve the repatriation of land simultaneous to the recognition of how land and relations to land have always already been differently understood and enacted; that is, *all* of the land, and not just symbolically" (original emphasis; 7). Although Mignolo uses decolonization in this quotation, I want to emphasize how this concept works to help Ratcliffe employ border thinking.

cases, it enables us to revisit former identifications and disidentifications.

(72-73)

The negotiation of differences through non-identification provides a space to acknowledge that differences exist within presently acknowledged and unacknowledged differences. As a rhetorical approach, it also provides a space for commonalities to surface again, perhaps as differences that require further negotiation. Ratcliffe also discusses the position of a person in these interactions.

Ratcliffe explicitly demonstrates that both colonizer and colonized should engage in conversations with each other, which is an important step towards employing border thinking to combat the logic of coloniality. Mignolo writes that challenging the logic of coloniality requires “a double operation that includes both colonized and colonizer, although from the perspective and interests of the *damnés*” (458).⁵ In other words, if the dominant group requires recognizing and defeating their exclusive practices, it needs to be done in dialogue with ethnic minority groups. Ratcliffe states that “it is incumbent upon anyone” in a “dominant cultural position to engage in discursive fields other than her or his own,” but she also mentions that “it is incumbent upon those in less-dominant cultural positions to foster an involvement in, along with a healthy suspicious of, the dominant group’s choosing” (76). Ratcliffe recognizes the dominant and marginalized groups’ involvement when negotiation differences, which reflects an important step towards breaking free from the logic of coloniality. This rhetorical maneuver implicates everyone and requests for people to interact with a stance of openness and accountability.

⁵ Mignolo describes Fanon’s *damnés* as the “denied and defamed subject that has been a subject beyond the possibilities of knowing” (483).

Furthermore, it presents an involvement and accountability towards all parties involved with the colonial difference.

Ratcliffe's conceptualization of non-identification grows from her own geo- and body-politics, which we must acknowledge to accurately understand her own subjectivity and approach to negotiating differences. The geo-politics for Ratcliffe are deeply rooted in US soil but can also be traced back to Western Europe in accordance with her depiction of ancestral lineage. This geographical location shapes her conceptualization of what it means to negotiate differences while breaking away from the hold of the logic of coloniality as evidenced through her heavy emphasis on the aspect of listening, a skill dominant groups must acquire. Her body-politics also play a role.

Although we can describe Ratcliffe as part of the dominant group because of her being Anglo American, she also holds a marginalized corporeal position within this group because of her being a woman. In this sense, her body-politics influence the points she considers, such as non-identification, to negotiate differences. As rhetoric and composition scholars, we should appreciate the geo- and body-politics that inform Ratcliffe's work. As we consider and apply her rhetorical approach to negotiate differences, we must also recognize the influences on Ratcliffe's thinking and writing. In doing so, we will not fall in the trap of applying this specific rhetorical approach to every rhetorical situation as it may not prove fruitful for every interaction. In this sense, we also break away from the logic of coloniality by the recognition of other rhetorical approaches available for the negotiation of differences.

From its inception, the US functioned from the logic of coloniality. This logic led the US to perform severely demented and convoluted acts towards ethnic and indigenous

groups. Through the logic of coloniality, a perverse logic, a dominant group rationalizes monstrous acts. In contemporary times, the logic of coloniality still works but in more sophisticated methods. Currently, the logic of coloniality forces a disproportionate amount of people of color into prison systems, shoves ethnic minorities out of its education systems, and convinces people that atrocities in the past should remain in the past where no apologies or redemption is required, so the logic of coloniality certainly lives.

As globalization continues, the dehumanizing force of the colonial difference will reach more people. “The time has come, and the process is already in motion, for the re-writing of global history from the perspective and critical consciousness of coloniality and from within geo and body-political knowledge,” writes Mignolo (484). As border thinkers writing from the colonial wound, LuMing Mao, Damián Baca, Scott Richard Lyons, and Krista Ratcliffe construct rhetorical approaches that negotiate differences in methods that don’t subjugate or erase differences. Moreover, these approaches combat the logic of coloniality and consider geo- and body-politics so as to not generalize all rhetorical approaches and histories to everyone. People in general, and rhetoric and composition scholars in particular, must learn from the rhetorical approaches that these writers espouse as they serve as better methods to negotiate the colonial difference and move beyond the logic of coloniality.

The colonial difference plays an enormous role in acknowledging, articulating, and negotiation differences. Therefore, we shouldn’t deny the existence and influence of the colonial difference that creates a wound on marginalized groups. We should understand this colonial difference and its different manifestations in our own material

and rhetorical situations to negotiate appropriately methods of rhetorical interactions and promote better material conditions.

These scholars aggressively challenge the logic of coloniality and formulate rhetorical approaches to negotiate differences in the presence of the colonial difference. They use their own geo- and body-politics to exploit the fissures of the logic of coloniality in an effort to represent marginalized minority groups. As people who suffer from the colonial difference, these writers disrupt the foundation that requires people to eradicate or conquer differences. They demonstrate colossal efforts to destabilize this foundation. Although these rhetorical approaches arise in a time when we desperately need them, it's difficult to imagine a drastic change in our practices when we encounter a difference. As we move forward and create rhetorical approaches to negotiate differences, perhaps it's useful to consider that we may never break away from the logic of coloniality.

CHAPTER V

Closing Remarks

In this thesis, I've comparatively analyzed the writings of Krista Ratcliffe, LuMing Mao, Scott Richard Lyons, and Damián Baca and identified overlapping rhetorical elements in their writings. Specifically, they combat ethnic minority stereotypes and racialized essentialisms, identify colonialism and Eurocentrism as contributing to the creation of their material and rhetorical situations, and construct rhetorical approaches with roots firmly grounded in the society whose text is analyzed. For Rhetoric and Composition Studies, these overlapping rhetorical analyses point toward material and rhetorical situations which ethnic writers may encounter. For this reason, these writers' findings carry serious consequences for rhetoric and composition scholars, whether ethnic or other.

Ratcliffe, Mao, Lyons, and Baca demonstrate considerable knowledge of how and when ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms work against (and sometimes with) ethnic writers. When rhetorically analyzing texts created by ethnic writers, scholars need to consider the abundant ethnic stereotypes and racialized essentialisms and how these influence views of the writers and their writings. Moreover, scholars need to be aware of how ethnic writers' knowledge of these stereotypes and essentialisms force them to take strategic rhetorical maneuvers to reach their intended audience that produce the desired responses. These ethnic writers begin from a specific conversation.

By invoking the label of "ethnic" writers, the conversation begins in a certain historical and national time and space. The label ethnic writer implies that there's a dominant national group whose economics, politics, beliefs, ways of life, and culture

marginalize those of the ethnic minority. Colonialism, as these writers point out, works towards creating and maintaining these structures. When analyzing texts, then, scholars need to figure out what role colonialism played and continues to play in ethnic writers' lives and writings. Moreover, in undertaking the study of ethnic writings, scholars must recognize the Eurocentric vision that creates and maintains the field as a whole. Failing to recognize this bias may inadvertently lead rhetoricians and compositionists to understand and analyze various texts erroneously. After the acknowledgement of Eurocentric bias, then, the construction and application of an appropriate rhetorical approach or method to analyze the writing will follow.

The people whose texts or writing practices are analyzed should probably provide input in the ways in which we analyze their texts. In other words, we need to apply—and sometimes create—rhetorical methods and terms for a rhetorical analysis to situate texts in their own contexts and to understand better their rhetorical and material significance. The rhetorical approach or method should consider economic, political, cultural, temporal, spatial, and other material conditions in which the writers and their writings exist. This understanding and deployment of a rhetorical analysis will provide for richer and more accurate rhetorical analyses. These rhetoric and composition scholars also recognize stereotypes and essentialisms as functioning within an ethnic minority writer's material and rhetorical situation. However, these scholars require and deserve more attention in Rhetoric and Composition Studies.

While I've emphasized the importance of contextualizing and understanding ethnic writers, the insights that Ratcliffe, Mao, Lyons, and Baca serve the entire rhetoric and composition community. Collectively, these writers expand the range of Rhetoric and

Composition Studies as a field by questioning histories of rhetoric, expanding definitions of writing, implicating civilizations from around the globe, and situating themselves in wide-ranging temporal and spatial locations. For the entire field, these findings suggest that there's plenty of work to undertake. More works in Rhetoric and Composition Studies requires more people, time, spaces, texts, and resources to fill the gaping holes in our field. This direction of filling the gaps may position rhetoric and composition as a more relevant and enriching endeavor for a university entity and student-body because it's continuing its production of its own methodologies, theories, and practices. Simply said, these four scholars enrich Rhetoric and Composition Studies with their knowledge, but they also point towards a new direction that may prove to be economically fruitful for everyone in Rhetoric and Composition Studies.

I'll finish off by posing some questions since there are plenty of more identifiable similarities in these scholars' writings. For example, the use of languages other than English needs considerable analysis. These writers write in different languages to understand their situations, so how do these different languages influence their writing and meaning-making practices? Do their writings cross national boundaries because of their language use, or are their languages too embedded in a US context? The people they cite also seem ethnically different than traditional citations in the field of rhetoric and composition. In making this maneuver, does it create inclusion of more people or produce a different system of thought?¹⁸ These writers tend to employ fluidity and hybridity, but

¹⁸ Here, I'm considering Linda Martín Alcoff's "Sotomayor's Reasoning." In analyzing Supreme Court Judge Sonia Sotomayor's claim about her Latina identity and its importance on her judicial decisions, Alcoff writes, "Sotomayor's claim that identity makes a difference to judgment is based on the idea that that identity affects baseline knowledge as well as motivations, the direction of our attentiveness, and most strongly, our ability in some cases to understand the experiences of others" (127). If Alcoff's and Supreme Court Judge Sotomayor's claims are true, then, it would follow that citing ethnically diverse people would produce a different system of thought.

to what extent will these concepts work for ethnic writers? In other words, to what extent does fluidity and hybridity simply cover up the atrocities of colonialism since the ethnic writer always begins from a disenfranchised position?

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