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**LA RESOLANA: TRACING THE COMMUNICATIVE CARTOGRAPHIES OF
GATHERING SPACES
IN NORTH CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

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CARTOGRAPHIES OF GATHERING SPACES
IN NORTH CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

by

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Dedication

To the memory of all of those who have crossed over a la otra banda and now dwell en esa resolana más allá.

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IN NORTH CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

David Floyd García, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2015

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This study investigates how public gathering places directly relate to the formation of social movements in the Española Valley of northern New Mexico. Specifically, the project examines la Resolana, a local tradition of congregating in a public place where the sun reflects its warmth off a southern-facing wall in a plaza or courtyard. This study brings together anthropological and ethno historical data in order to contextualize the emergence of new politically active gathering spaces that invoke the historical name of resolana.

Following the production and circulation of the term resolana, this project pursues three lines of investigation: first, I will present ethnographic research of contemporary resolana practices in public places such as town plazas, restaurants and department stores. Next, I will discuss the cultural production of a local Chicano think tank, La Academia de la Nueva Raza, (LADLNR) from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s. Then, the dissertation will address LADLNR's theorization and deployment of the concept of resolana as a cultural metaphor for political action and local knowledge production. Finally, I will

address how today these forms of *resolana* articulate and factor into its contemporary implementation in the growing social movements in the state by socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in *acequia* (communal irrigation) communities.

This study engages a fundamental question in anthropology, which asks, how does place and space shape the formation of social movements? This question is explored in a new way theoretically in this study by looking at how *resolana* as a cultural form constitutes larger subjectivities called publics and counter-publics. In other words, this study offers an approach to cultural public spheres in northern New Mexico by examining discursive forms of speaking, gathering, and social mobilization.

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INTRODUCTION

La Resolana: A Communicative Cartography of Gathering Spaces In North Central New Mexico

This dissertation is about local cultural constructions of *Resolana*. One the foremost people to popularize the term, sociologist Tomas Atencio describes the resolana as, “a place where the sun reverberates off a wall creating a place of light, warmth and tranquility” (Atencio 2005). During the time between 2011 and 2013 when I conducted ethnographic work around my hometown of Española, New Mexico I would often hear this word brought up in both formal and informal situations to describe not only the literal sunnyside gathering place referred to above but also as a figurative space where the practices of learning, speaking and listening occur. This latter definition of resolana was articulated most often by community activists and local scholars, such as Atencio and his colleagues of La Academia de la Nueva Raza, who described it as a politically engaged process of generating local knowledge through praxis, which reflected not only local concerns but regional and global concerns as well.

In this work I illustrate how the term resolana is a key concept for the exploration of cultural spaces in north central New Mexico. What makes this term salient is its recognized importance within the communities that I conducted ethnographic research. Customarily, resolana is thought of as a gathering place where intergenerational groups of males would meet in a public space of a plaza to reflect and dialogue, usually in the local dialect of Spanish about the happenings of the everyday. For Atencio and his peers during the 1960’s the resolana came to be revitalized as a culturally significant space where local knowledge emerged and could be shared through dialogue.

Investigating how the locus of resolana in the following chapters is constructed,

imagined, and reimagined reveals its significance as a form of a local public sphere that serves as a counterpoint to the dominant ideas of democracy in the United States. Since northern New Mexico sits historically within the borderlands of the US and Latin America it serves as a place of reflection to see how Latina/o notions of space and place such as plazas, placitas, and practices such as “el paseo” or promenade and the idle moments in the day when the older folks talk in the resolanas of the villages vies for space in the cultural milieu of Main street USA.

The 2008 presidential elections that occurred in midst of the great recession brought many questions about the huge disparities between Wall Street and Main street. Globally, the occupy movements took to the streets and made public space through embodied political actions through marches, sit-ins, teach-ins and such. More recent political mobilizations in response to police brutality in Ferguson and also Baltimore show how bodies of minorities and people color do not have the same access to make public space in the US. For this reason it is important to note how Main Street is often more times than not coded as white suburbia. It reminds us that the making of public space is not universal, and brings to mind how places are constructed in the Southwest where Latinos and Native American are minorities who are the majority in the region.

Where and how do people gather and organize in north central New Mexico? Specifically the central question, which I aimed to address through my field data, “is to what extent does the resolana serve increasingly as a public sphere and or place of governance?” By public sphere I mean a space of collectivity agency that materially express the interests of a group or community. In this discussion of publics I draw upon the work of scholars such as Nancy Fraser who provides an alternate analysis to Jürgen

Habermas's constrained vision of the bourgeois public sphere. Fraser argues there are multiple spheres and alternative publics. These plural "publics" are made up of dominant "publics," "sub publics" and "counter publics" (1990). Secondly, I ask how do the cultural sensibilities toward light and warmth relate to the dynamics of what Nancy Frazer terms the arenas of discursive and market interactions (57). I approach this by examining *resolana* conceptually as a "lightscape" following the lead of Bille and Sørensen's idea of the anthropology of luminesce (2007). In this way we can investigate how various forms of agency are enacted within the *resolana*'s envelope of warmth. It is a microclimate as Atencio sees that is warmed by the reverberation of sunlight. In this dissertation I will trace the paths of these reverberations not just as discursive formations but also as sites of cultural production.

Approached as a multi sited ethnography this dissertation follows and analyzes the circulation of significant discourses dealing with traces of *resolana* as a phenomenon over the last century. The purpose of this is to sketch how this has dynamically shifted in meaning and how its deployment has proliferated in recent years. Though it has also circulated as an emergent idea in larger regional and national publics spheres, the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate solely its deployment in local discourses showing how the situatedness of its constructions, and deployments illustrates important factors of contextualization in its usage.

As *resolana* embodies a complex of meanings, this dissertation will focus on locating and contextualizing these meanings. I will show how its meanings reverberate metaphorically in relation to its deployments. This work will use this metaphor to follow the many social constructions of what a *resolana* means to people, as well as explore how

this concept circulates. The goal here is not to conclusively identify what it is, but to chart out how it is being used and why it matters to people around north central New Mexico.

A Hometown Ethnographer

Being an anthropologist working in my hometown does present issues, which I would like to begin to address here. As I start this study of gathering places I feel it is important give thanks to my audience for the privilege of being able to address this topic. Growing up in north central New Mexico as well as recently conducting ethnographic research in my hometown I have observed how important the simple action of asking permission to speak can be. Stressing this, as local activist and educator José Villa of La Villita New Mexico, would affirm “respect” and “asking people’s permission,” were two key values when working with local people of the region. As I consider this document as not to be an end in the conversation rather as invitation to further dialogue. A significant part of the work that distinguishes the discipline is the applied practice of being in the field by following the in Boasian school of conducting participant observation. It is typical that many anthropologists in the field take on employment in the community, in which they work. Such people as Charles Hale have pushed Anthropology further by advocating for a subfield that is “activist” positioned (2001). The aim of this push is for a political engagement with local communities that is collaborative.

As a cultural anthropologist doing multisited work within my hometown my overall objective when I started this project was to learn from people about their everyday situations. My interests in doing hometown ethnography were inspired by my experiences growing up in north central New Mexico. I recall that since a child I was

expected to work in collective community projects. My first community job started at the age of 14 when my family sent me to clean the community acequia, (i.e., communal irrigation canal) on the day of the annual spring-cleaning. Community people are expected to help the *peones* (i.e., hired workers) to clean the irrigation canals and they gather early in the morning during the one or two days that the work is being done. The multigenerational work team gathers waiting in the warmth of the resolana on the cold early morning, as they wait for the *mayordomo* (head of the work team) to arrive and for the work to be delegated among the group. This work or *tarea* involved learning alongside other seasoned *peones* clearing debris and digging out with shovels, listening and carefully asking questions. These interactions led me to learn about the local language and the acequia traditions. In Española, as well as in many northern New Mexico towns acequias are one of the most important cultural institutions that have survived since the Spanish period. The lessons I learned, and continue to learn, often happen in times of reflection when you have a brief moment of respite to “take five” What soon became clear was how the practice of gathering and working shaped my own ways of learning and asking questions.

The importance of this common place of the resolana would present itself in many different places. Growing up in north central New Mexico, I became refamiliarized in college through authors of Chicano literature and cultural text. I learned of its importance through the writings of La Academia de La Nueva Raza. It is perhaps that the beginning of this project initiated almost ten years ago in 2003 when my brother in law, then a Ph. D. candidate in history at the University of New Mexico, asked me to retrieve a collection of audio cassette tapes from Juan Estevan Arellano, a public intellectual known

through his activism and journalism. Around that time I had performed New Mexico traditional folk music for gatherings that Arellano had organized. So when my brother in law asked me if I knew him, I said yes. It turns out that my brother in law was interested in a collection of tapes in the possession of Arellano that had interviews conducted by José Padilla a Law student at Stanford. The interviews were with Mexican immigrants who had moved to Imperial Valley, California during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1914).

As it turned out southern Californian legal defense lawyer José Padilla had conducted many interviews under the auspices of an oral history project sponsored by a multistate Chicano collective known as La Academia de la Nueva Raza. This project utilized at the time a methodological process that the collective called *resolana*. This organization was based out of Embudo New Mexico, but had several out of state associates in San Antonio, El Paso, as well as local members in Taos, Las Vegas, Mora and Española.

It was very fortunate to have been asked by my brother in-law to help him locate the tapes from La Academia, as at that time I was beginning to formulate my dissertation research project and this led me to consider doing research in my hometown. I subsequently emerged myself in the archives of La Academia read many of the works of local authors dealing with history, folklore and ethnography. My interest in doing hometown ethnography and focusing on the *resolana* was also inspired by my work as a musician.

As a musician who has played for various functions such as weddings, graduation parties, funerals as well as informal gatherings I have experienced a large array of

situations in which my own practice of speaking as well as singing have privileged my research. The performative practice of being a musician shapes my own partial perspective as an anthropologist. During my fieldwork, I was often invited to participate in many of the gatherings I described in this dissertation to perform music appropriate for various occasions. Together, my position as both artist and anthropologist informs my methodology through a critical lens that I will call performance anthropology.

However, the intensification of my inquiry into these phenomena began around 2008. It is significant to state here that I feel personally that all of my insights I share here in this dissertation were informed by learning through *resolana*. Becoming a hometown musician in New Mexico I had to apprentice with many elder musicians. I learned the craft largely alongside more experienced musicians. I played with many bands and ensembles that played various events from local weddings, funerals, anniversaries and town fiestas. Learning and performing go hand in hand. I came to understand how the audience and performers dialogue and cooperatively shape the local expressive material culture. Ethnomusicologist Cipriano Vigil, who was also a member of the Academia collective, calls this way of learning “*música de la resolana*” (239, 2014). Foremost, learning the local language of these spaces was tantamount to becoming a proficient performer. What I gathered over the years is, that the *resolana* is largely a human sensibility that exists in public and is transmitted through dialogue.

A performative learning model also shapes my work as an anthropologist. Charles Briggs’s work on the community of Córdova New Mexico is a case in point (1988). Here he importantly identifies speech genres in performance however, what Briggs leaves out in terms of his analysis is sensitivity to the place and times where the creative speech

genres are anchored. I can perhaps say I started on my way to becoming an anthropologist by listening in the resolana and learning through my music performativity in dialogue with community audiences.

In 2008, I met anthropologist Joel Sherzer and French Literature scholar Dina Sherzer on the placita in Alcalde, New Mexico. On December 27th this community holds its annual patron saint's day celebration. Many people from the community gather on the plaza that day to visit and to see the all day ritual dances of the Matachines and the equestrian dance known as Los Comanches. These dances that take place at the center of this community's plaza are significant as they depict publicly through sound, gesture and synchronicity events from the community's past. That day I was involved in the day's activities as a violinist for both dances. I have done this now going on 16 years.

Over the years, by participating in the Alcalde Plaza celebrations and in festivities in Española, such as *La Función de San Antonio* I learned that the dances create a highly significant gathering space as they lead people to join the dancers and celebrate a sense of community. I argue that this space of visiting, joking, reflection and commenting on the unfolding drama presents itself as resolana as it is a discursive public where people visit and share in the reflection life and of living using a local sensibility of speaking which can be understood as the human warmth. This warmth, like the sunshine on a chilly morning lends itself to the cohesion of the community.

The narrative in which I am going to present in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation begins at time near the culmination of my ethnographic work which I conducted off and on over the period of three years starting in 2011 and ending in 2013. Doing ethnographic fieldwork in one's own hometown does present the researcher with

circumstances that often present themselves as everyday occurrences. The classic trope of the arrival of the anthropologist brings up more questions. Rather than looking at home as an ethnographic field site I like my work to question traditional anthropological studies that posits researchers solely as extractive agents of surveillance. Rather, I would invoke again my activist stance in which I am positioned with my community as hometown anthropologist who empathizes, cries, and sings along with his subjects.

This study investigates how public gathering places directly relate to social transformation in the Española Valley of northern New Mexico. Specifically, the project examines *la Resolana*, a local tradition of congregating in a public place where the sun reflects its warmth off a southern-facing wall in a plaza or courtyard (Atencio 2009). The study brings together anthropological and ethno-historical data in order to contextualize the emergence of new gathering spaces that invoke the name *resolana*, but in multiple forms and functions

By following the production and circulation of the term *resolana*, this project will pursue five lines of investigation. First, I will present ethnographic research of contemporary *resolana* practices in public places such as town plazas, restaurants and department stores. Next, I will discuss the cultural production of a local Chicano think tank La Academia de la Nueva Raza, (LADLNR) from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s. Then, specifically the dissertation will address its theorization and deployment of the concept of *resolana* as a cultural metaphor, and as a productive site political action and local knowledge meaning. Finally, I will show how these forms of *resolana* factor into its contemporary circulation within the *acequia* social movement. A movement involving a statewide coalition of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

This study engages a fundamental question in anthropology, which asks, how do place and space relate to the formation of social movements? This question is explored theoretically in this study by looking how resolana constitutes larger subjectivities called publics and counter-publics (Warner 2006). In other words, this study offers an approach to contemporary cultural public spheres in northern New Mexico by examining discursive forms of speaking, gathering, and social mobilization.

Background

It is important to consider the US Southwest critically as a region from the standpoint in which multiple cultural conflicts have figured into its history. It is a region in which there are multiple historical layers of endeavored colonial and neocolonial projects. One of the goals of this project is to describe how both local and global understandings of gathering places in this region are useful in the telling of the history of place. The central question this study concerns itself with is how resolana is significant to the way people talk about the region's history.

In this study one of the ways this is approached is to be sensitive to the location and “situatedness” of discourses, specifically starting with the principal investigator's reflexivity (Haraway 1988). As an anthropologist who studies his hometown, my research to a better understanding of how one's positionality influences the interpretation of our subjects' voices. The topic of gathering places investigated by a native hometown anthropologist offers a unique sensitivity to the people; language and culture that non-native researchers may miss. The goal here is to demonstrate how a sincere approximation of an intersectional analysis of multiple significant factors such as race,

ethnicity, class, sex, gender, sexuality and place of origin, can be advanced by a hometown ethnographer, who is generally in solidarity with his community of study.

Methodology

The field research for this project was conducted broadly over a four-year period beginning summer of 2008 until the summer of 2014. My research consisted of archival and ethnographic field visits. During this time I gathered archival data from various public and private archives both in the region as well as locally. I examined archives from the Center For Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico where La Academia de La Nueva Raza collection is located. La Academia produced a series of texts in the 1970's to 1980's that significantly popularized the term "resolana" (Montiel et al. 2009). I also conducted archival research at the New Mexico State Archive in Santa Fe, New Mexico where I studied the history of the town of Española and the formation of its plaza. Lastly, I conducted further archival research at The New Mexico State Archives where I researched the history of acequias and the regional associations of the Española Valley.

During this period I also conducted ethnographic research in Española. This consisted of formal and informal interviews and participant observation. I conducted approximately 15 interviews, of which 10 were oral histories. Most of my interviews were conducted from summer 2011 to summer of 2013. In addition, to this I gained further ethnographic insight by participating on the Española Fiesta Council in 2008 and 2010. During 2011 I also served on the board of Northern New Mexico Regional Arts Center, which is the managing entity of the Española Misión Plaza complex. My

participation in the council and the board allowed me to further my ethnographic observations of the management of the Española Plaza, fiestas and art institutions.

A significant part of my ethnographic observations were conducted in the Española Plaza, the mission complexes, and the annual fiestas. Here I was able to observe significant everyday public gathering spaces related to the deployment of the *resolana*. Concerning my fieldwork in the plaza I commenced by doing initial observations and journaling daily field notes utilizing thick and thin description. Next, I created “movement maps” in the model of Setha Low (2000) to chart the flows of people through the plaza at different times of the day (162). I used these maps to obtain an understanding of how the plaza was used throughout the year. Also, I engaged with people who I casually met in the plaza. I tried to develop a sensitivity of how people use their plaza through what Elijah Anderson (2010) calls “folk ethnography” or “a form of people watching that serves as a cultural and cognitive base on which people construct behavior in public.” This allowed me to observe diverse forms of social interactions to support my analysis of the different meanings of *resolana*. Other ethnographic data collection methods included taking thick descriptive field notes, auto-reflexive journaling, spatial mapping, and photographic analysis. As musician artist I also conducted what I term here performance ethnography.

In addition to visual observations, I attempted to be aware of the formal and informal “communicative competences” and forms of poetic public speaking that occur in these plaza spaces (Briggs 1988). I engaged in participating in the community of study by speaking and asking questions to people in the subject community. From these encounters, I was able to recruit people to participate in my oral history interviews.

Finally, the research for later chapters of this dissertation was conducted during my employment with a non-profit organization that hired me to be a community education coordinator and governance specialist. This allowed me to obtain further knowledge of local acequia associations in the region, while working with the New Mexico Acequia Association. In these roles I attended and presented at more than 25 local and regional acequia community meetings and workshops throughout the state. In addition I helped in the organization of network of community leaders that utilized the idea of *resolana* extensively.

Theoretical Summary of Chapters

Theoretically this work investigates the anthropology of space and place by researching the formation of public spheres in northern New Mexico, through an analysis of the varied meanings of *resolana*. My specific field site was my hometown Española. My fieldwork followed traditional ethnographic methods, in conjunction with the application of an activist's positionality.

This project is also based on the primary question of how public gathering places matter in the organization of community movements. Anthropologist Setha Low writes that the Latin American plaza is the symbolic central space through which communities organize themselves. In my home region I have seen how local plazas are often spaces of struggle where the tourism industries often dominate leaving locals unable to gather there because they feel unwelcomed. Anthropologist Sylvia Rodríguez (1997) asserts that locals often symbolically challenge this occupied space by gathering on the plaza during local ritual fiestas, and local festivals. However, this challenging of space only occurs for

a few days out of the year.

The argument my project makes is that in Española when people were displaced from the plaza they formed new gathering places that reminded them of their traditional plaza space. The gathering places became their *resolana*, and the subject of this study. The *resolana*, as previously mentioned is known traditionally as a place where people gather on the plaza in the warmth of the sun during the cold season. In the turn of events, both women and men, have reworked the idea of *resolana* to include practices in new informal spaces such as having coffee at MacDonald's or meeting people serendipitously at other commercial places such as Wal-Mart.

On another level, *resolana* has also captured the imagination of local intellectuals and political leaders who, since the 1970's, have transformed the idea of *resolana* into a metaphor for dialogue and political action. Various non-profit organizations have used the idea to organize local communities in northern New Mexico around issues of food sovereignty and the threat of water privatization. Here *resolana* is no longer thought of as just informal gathering but as a methodology for politically motivated collective action.

My conceptual framework looks at these gathering places through the public sphere theory advanced by Nancy Fraser (1990) and Michael Warner (2006). Here they forward the concepts of heterotopic "sub publics" and "counter publics." I remind the reader the idea of publics is thought of as subjectivities larger than that of the individual that form collectivities, in other words collective subjectivity. Going beyond the notion of identity in Warner's concept allows me to investigate how communities find cohesion through other ways of belonging.

I put this critical lens into conversation with performance studies that looks

critically at speech acts in what Joel Sherzer calls “Speech play and verbal art” (2002). Furthermore I trace this performativity in a larger spatial concept of “communicability” (Paredes, 1958)(Briggs, 2011). Through these lenses, I link the circulation of the term *resolana* as it formed various communicative cultural spaces.

Organization of Dissertation

Chapter 1 “ On the Española Plaza: Latina/o Public Space in the Heart of Pueblo Country” examines the significance of the plaza in north central New Mexico. It serves as a historical anchor for the other chapters in the dissertation. However, in this chapter I discuss the multiple and often competing imaginings of space in the region. Following in the tradition of other Mexican-American borderlands scholars such as Jose Limón (1984), Richard Flores (2002), and Michael Trujillo (2009) I employ the critical lens of Antonio Gramsci who advanced the concepts of “wars of position” and “wars of maneuver.” As José Limón argues the plaza becomes a significant place where “wars of position” and “wars of maneuver” are staged.

It is in the latter that concerns this dissertation, as it is often these audiences where *resolana* occurs. However, I argue that *plaza places* facilitate these cultural practices only temporarily and primarily take place during ritual settings such as in the local fiestas. I further argue that New Mexico’s cycles of conquests beginning in the Spanish period to the Anglo American period has affected every day occurrences of the *resolana* and reflect the complex relations that were formed between Mexican Americans, Native Americans and Anglo Americans. Finally I compare three plazas to advance my argument of the meanings of *la resolana*.

In Chapter 2 “The Sun Club: Public Gathering and Memory in the Microclimates of north central New Mexico” I examine how *resolana* is constituted in historical representations. Chapter 3 “La Nueva Resolana: Everyday Gathering Spaces in Commercial Places in Española Valley” follows the phenomena of *resolana* into everyday spaces. Following the cue of Leví Romero (2001) this chapter looks at how new gathering spaces are constituted around language use and conviviality.

Continuing on the trail of the phenomena of *resolana* chapter 4 “Writing in the Resolana: Two Print Counter publics in Rio Arriba The Academia de la Nueva Raza and Una Resolana” I explore the role of *la resolana* within the intellectual movement launched by La Academia.

Chapter 5 “Acequia Resolanas: Mutuality, Social Praxis and the New Mexico Acequia Association's Escuelita de las Acequias” illustrates how the term *resolana* is locally and regionally utilized today in the context of a region wide social movement centered on small scale communal irrigation. This chapter looks at how a non-profit organization uses the *resolana* as an instrument to organize people at the state and local level.

Significance

This study brings together anthropological and ethno historical data in order to contextualize the emergence of new gathering spaces that invoke the traditional name of *resolana*. Following the lead of George Marcus’ call for a “multi-sited ethnography” this project examines *resolana* not as a “reclamation” or “preservation” project but rather as a multiple and emergent “cultural form” embedded in its own historical processes (1995).

In tracing the social production and circulation of the term *resolana*, this project aimed to help reconstitute and understand Mexican American culture in *Española*. This study also aimed to contribute to a better understanding of the cultural significance plazas have played in Latin American communities. My study also attempted to recover the history of the Chicano think tank, *La Academia de la Nueva Raza*, which in the history of northern New Mexico and the Southwest played an important intellectual role through the documentation of local political activities.

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CHAPTER ONE

On the Plaza: Latina/o Public Space in the Heart of The Pueblo Country

Española es una chiquilla,

muy coquetilla,

que le gusta pasear.

Pero necesita una plaza,

porque ya en su casa,

ya la quieren casar.

-Juan Gabriel

This plaza is dead

-Española Resident

Speaking in the Sun: Plazas in North Central New Mexico

On September 18 2008 an assembly of approximately 9,500 people gathered on and around the Plaza de Española. For a city of a population of approximately 10,000 people this public assembly was perhaps one of the largest if not the largest in the area's history. As people waited in line to enter the plaza they visited with family and friends for what felt like hours under the intense September sun. The individuals on the plaza that day were there to hear Senator Barak Obama, the Democratic Party's presidential candidate. The rally was part of the last month of Obama's campaign leading up to the November 4th general election.

The plaza is alive with movement and talking. In the surrounding area the wind

blows dust up and rustles the leaves of the few trees that grow along the space on the western end of the city's square. On this day finding a space to stand on the plaza is challenging, finding some degree of shade to occupy is more so. The only significantly shaded areas on the plaza that can be found are in the shadow of the *Misión y Convento*, a monumental building erected to replicate a 16th century adobe mission church and convent, and this too is occupied by security, local politicians, and Obama's entourage. The Misión y Convento structure is the most imposing architecture on the plaza. It is not a historical catholic church, though it is built to resemble one. A simulacrum best describes it, as it architecturally recognizes the Hispanic heritage of the area, which was colonized and missionized by the Spanish empire in 1598. In front of this large colonial church-like structure, a kiosk in the center of the plaza offers a few people a place of respite however; it is crowded shoulder to shoulder. What one notices is the unusual lack of vegetation for a public space. The absence of trees in this urban space is due largely to the local ecology, as the region has a high desert climate. Here the scarcity and the high demand for it make water a highly conserved resource.

If one were to walk around, on the hill to the west of these buildings another grouping of structures close by are noticeable. Among them lies the Bond House, today a multi-use museum, which once served as the home to one of the area's leading mercantile capitalists and cattle baron during the turn of the 19th century. Below that sits the former Española Federal Post Office, which is now being used by a regional arts organization as classroom arts space for youth. Behind the old post office is an open cement-lined canal filled with cattails and debris of sand and trash. It is a portion of the *Acequia de los Vigiles*, a historical irrigation system that today seldom has water in the city proper.

Bridging the gap of the canal is a large fountain built in the style of Andalusian Spain, with three arabesque horseshoe-shaped arches. Attached below it are various levels of ponds that empty into a large pool at the edge of the street that divides the plaza, called Calle de las Españolas or, in English, the road of the multiple Españolas (Spanish women).

Looking from the perspective of the front door of the Bond house—which once served as the town’s city hall during the 1970’s—toward the east, the fountain’s arches frame the watersheds that feed the valley, which start in the distant Santa Fe and Truchas mountains. This fountain, as the former mayor Richard Lucero has said on numerous occasions, is meant to architecturally represent the area’s technological heritage, which was influenced by hydrological systems from the Middle East and Spain in the form of the earthen canal irrigation systems known as acequias. For Latina/os in northern New Mexico this heritage relates to the immense value which people place on water. The communities who use these canals know that the ribbon of vegetation, that riparian ecological area along the rivers, is dependent on the water conducted through these local systems. One is constantly reminded “Agua es Vida,” an adage of common sense that relates the people’s connection to the land and the resiliency required to live in this most arid climate.

Usually, due to the stringent conservation policies of the city, the fountain is empty, as water would evaporate in the direct sun. Along the cement lined canal is a large centennial cottonwood tree, one of the few of the large trees left on the property, which grew plentifully along the once living acequia in years past. It sits half dry, draped over the garbage-filled, moribund irrigation canal.

Momentously on the day of the Obama's rally, the sound of water from the plaza's fountain is heard as it flowed. This is not an everyday occurrence. People take the opportunity to take photographs with their friends and family while posing in front of the fully functional architecture feature. Throughout the year the fountain is filled with water only a handful of times. Only special civic events such fiestas, national car shows, and political rallies such as this would warrant the expenditure of such a scarce resource. It shows, perhaps, the value that the city places upon particular gatherings on the plaza.

In the crowd some gatherers waved small US flags, others held professionally made Democratic Party signs with Obama's official slogan "Change We Need." Cheers from the crowd of "¡Sí Se Puede!" "¡Viva Obama!" and "¡Obámanos!" were heard from the supporters of the presidential candidate and would-be 44th President of the United States. On the plaza this day he would address the large gathering from a platform and podium. The monumental structure of the Misión y Convento would serve as a visual backdrop to the speaker's political speech. As he spoke to the audience he affirmed the importance of, "placing the priorities of Indian Country back on the agenda in the White House," and urged the Hispanic community to represent themselves in the polls by "flexing their muscles" and by voting their numbers. In his speech that day he addressed the financial crisis of the nation: "We can't afford four more years of the same that has devastated Main Street and has seen pain trickling up to Wall Street."

The heat of the day was memorable not in terms of record-breaking weather but for the physical exertion of standing out in the sun for such a prolonged period. Governor Bill Richardson, while introducing Obama, shouted ¡Que viva Obama!" which he followed by, "By the way are you getting hot out there?" To which the crowd responded

affirmatively, “*Yeah!*” He then asked if they wanted him to curtail his talking, to which they enthusiastically responded, “*Yeah!*” while laughing and whistling. During his nearly half hour speech a middle-aged woman passed out, perhaps from the heat, and was quickly attended by the EMTs who were on hand. Others there that day commented on standing hours in the direct sunlight without the relief of shade. As of November Jessica Ledbetter, a online blogger from the neighboring community of Los Alamos, later reflected on the event and wrote, “We went to the Obama rally in Española, New Mexico, today, and we are now quite sunburned in the sun” (<http://jesspages.net/>). On such a day being on the plaza requires being unmercifully in the sun. Those who are wise to these extremes of the weather might affirm the locally known adage, “*más vale una larga sombra que una corta resolana*” (better a long shade than a short resolana)” (Oboler 2005).

To explain: traditionally, resolana is said to be the sunny side of a building or plaza. More specifically it is remembered as the multigenerational place where males would gather to dialogue on the plaza when the weather was cold. However, during the warm days of the year it is any place that is especially heated. In recent years there has been an intensification in usage of the term resolana. This study investigates the changing significance of the resolana. This chapter begins investigating the term *resolana* by looking at the literal place that it is conventionally most connected to, the plaza or *placita* of north central New Mexico (Montiel et al. 2009, Smith 2004).

First, I will historically contextualize the emergence and persistent significance of the plaza as a cultural space in what today is the U.S. Southwest. I will then address the plaza as a site for local forms of gathering and will assess to what extent resolana as a

gathering place is present at such sites. By comparing two plazas and one placita site in north central New Mexico this chapter will what discuss the relation of place to the cultural sensibilities of space and how the practice of gathering shapes and is shaped by this relationship. I will show how my tandem work as an anthropologist and community musician has given me a strategic positionality to participate and witness the practices on these plazas.

I look toward cultural geographer Jeffery S. Smith's work on the Las Vegas Plaza as a point of beginning. He says "...the best indicator of how well a plaza serves as a gathering place is the extent to which Indo-Hispano residents use the space on a daily basis" (Smith: 2004). In his treatment of the plaza of Las Vegas, New Mexico he identifies how the plaza serves as "the city's main *resolana*" or gathering place in contrast to other plazas such as those in Taos, Albuquerque and Santa Fe, which have had an influx of Anglos and, in his words, become "commodified spaces for tourists" (ibid: 40).

Within the context of Latina/o public spaces in the United States he further believes that plazas are the heart of many New Mexico towns. The purpose of this chapter is to examine perhaps the most emblematic places for gathering in the warmth of the *resolana*. The plaza holds a significant and perhaps romanticized space in the popular imagination of Latinas/os. As is shown above it is a politicized place. For many it is tied to the idealistic western notion of the *agora*, the setting of a public sphere or multiuse commons. As Main Street is to U.S. urban space so is the Plaza to Latin American urban space. The plaza is thought sometimes as the in-between third place between the first place, which is home, and the second place where one works (Walton and Ford: 2003). Such places could provide a public place whence one could perform one's public identity.

In these terms the plaza would seem to be a theatric place, where civic struggles for political representation would play out in what is called civil society. It is a place where the private citizen can be part of a larger organizational form known as a community. It can be a place where local resistance can be manifested through protests against dominant interests. It is also a platform where the state or private interests can promote their discourses publicly, whether in the form of bread or circuses. At other times plazas are spaces where the excesses of the carnivalesque can provide a temporary subversion of dominant discourses. Plazas are panoptic places where the unwelcomed are policed. As well, they are markets for tourist economies. They are places where communities can imagine themselves. At times they are also places that are abandoned and left vacant in the aftermath of late capitalism.

The plaza is also a U.S. American place. As Latin America is intrinsically part of the fabric of the U.S., the plaza and its sensibility as a cultural space have deep historical roots in this country. Aside from the substantial immigration and latinization of the U.S. in the last twenty years, this country also has within its borders continuous Latina/o communities that in some cases predate the establishment of the U.S. nation state. Areas such as the U.S. Southwest and Puerto Rico have had settlements organized around plazas since before European contact.

Española Plaza is not what one would expect in the context of the dominant American public sphere. Being on the plaza in the U.S. city of Española is a practice that is fairly new to the city, since the city proper never had a plaza until recently. As I will explain in this chapter, the politics of space in combination with place and architecture in the Española Valley offer a rich illustration of how this area simultaneously has the

earliest and the most recent plaza structures in the United States. Furthermore I will show how the shifting significance of these plaza places can be better understood by contextualizing their history and seeing how it relates to the shaping of Latina/o public spaces in the United States.

Indian Country

The plaza in north central New Mexico as an architectural feature has a history that is complicated by various layers of colonization. As an architectural form the plaza is neither solely a European imposition nor a purely indigenous space but a cultural union of these multiple spatial sensibilities.

In what is today north central New Mexico the earliest descriptions of plazas come from the colonial writings of Gaspar Pérez de Villagr , the chronicler of the Juan de O ate entrada in 1598, and from the letters of the latter, who was the first governor of the settlement. Tewa anthropologist Alfonso Ortiz observes that in 1598 the indigenous spatial paradigms of his home community of Ohkay Owingeh were categorized by

Villagr  as plazas:

El Pueblo, no constaua ni tenia

Mas que una sola pla a bien quadrada

Con quarto entradas solas curios puestos (1969:26)

(Authors Translation: The village, only was made up

with one sole square plaza

with four causeways unusually placed.)

The presence of a plaza in this village, as with many other Native settlement, was evidence of urban settlement design, which perhaps led the Spanish to categorize these northern indigenous communities with the persistent name of “Pueblo” or village. It is in these places that the building of mission churches aimed to Christianize the indigenous inhabitants of the region. It is important to postulate how these places could retain indigenous spatial significance in the face of colonial domination. Setha Low’s critical work on the Latin American plaza has shown that cultural resistance to colonization in fact can be found in the spatial appropriations and maintenance of indigenous spaces such as plazas” (2000: 47). Tewa Anthropologist Alfonso Ortiz as well as well as Tewa architect Rena Swentzell concretely identify the importance of Tewa spatial worldviews by identifying the plaza and its relationship to the pueblo center place and to the distant mountains and mesas located toward the cardinal directions (Ortiz 1969, Swentzell 2011:64). She likens the “bupingeh” or Tewa plaza as a container or bowl which serves as a “middle heart place” whose focal point is the inconspicuous feature of the “nansipu” (earth navel), which is usually a large stone or group of stones where people daily offer corn meal offerings. On other levels it is connected to similar earth navels in the surrounding mountains of the Pueblo’s watershed (Swentzell 2011: 64).

As a Chicano growing up in the Española Valley these Puebloan understandings of plaza space were esoteric to me. I came to know about these places as an outsider through daily interactions such as attending regular Catholic mass on Sundays or funeral services at the San Juan Mission church in Ohkay Owingeh, attending feast day dances and meals, driving through the Pueblo on a daily basis or, when I was older, going to the nearby Native American Casino to play music, listen to music, or dance at the lounge.

On a personal note, my experiences may not be typical, however many people in the valley that are not themselves tribal members do share with me these experiences. In my family I have heard personal narratives of how my grandparents on my mother's side of my family first met each other in the Pueblo as they were there accompanying their parents who were shopping at the Mercantile store known as Kramer's store. They eventually got married in the Church located at San Juan church. My grandparents on my father's side of the family also got married in the chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes across the street from the San Juan Parish, which is located about five yards from the Pueblo's nancipu.

As a young man in the 1990's it was in this Pueblo plaza space in front of the church I started learning to become a violinist for the dance drama of Los Matachines during a December 12th dance for Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. On that day, as an Indo-Hispano dance group from the neighboring community of Alcalde prepared to get ready to dance outside of the Catholic church of Saint John the Baptist church, I drew near where a violinist and guitarist were tuning up their instruments. From what I remember I asked if it would be difficult to teach me to play the music for the dance. I told him I was musician and that I owned and was learning the violin. He immediately asked me to drive home and get my instrument that very minute. So I headed home ten minutes away across the river and made it back halfway through the dance. During a brief pause between dances the musicians quickly assessed my skills to their apparent approval and tuned up my instrument to match theirs. I noticed that these musicians played in their own unique tuning, well below concert pitch. The violinist along with the guitarist who played through small amplifiers directed me what to do and told me to follow. I was

unamplified and sonically inconspicuous. Being on the plaza provided a non-goal oriented meeting space and the contact I needed to arrange my apprenticeship under him.

Many non-Pueblo peoples such as my grandparents have daily movements on and through the pueblo land base. Río Arriba County surrounds the land bases of the two tribal Pueblo nations of Santa Clara Pueblo, or Ka Po, and Ohkay Owingeh, formally San Juan Pueblo, and the Jicarilla Apache Nation. I have heard on numerous times that the land base of these communities is “checker-boarded” with non-Pueblo private lands. For people of the region there are constant reminders of how these places are a borderland that yet has to be contextually historicized or theorized. Signs on the roadways demarcating both private and Pueblo land bases are constantly contested with graffiti and bullet holes, or in some cases torn down. This largely is the legacy of the U.S.’s Native American land policies, starting with the Dawes Act of 1887 and leading up to the disastrous Bursum bill of 1922, which aimed to further dispossess the communal land base of the Pueblos and which in turn was overturned during the era of John Collier and the Reorganization Act of 1934. The squatting which occurred on Pueblo lands by Anglo and Indo-Hispanos during this period must be considered alongside, first, the failure of the 1848 treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to protect both Pueblo and Indo-Hispano communal land grant bases and, second, the influx of Anglo-American settlers in the 1880s that accompanied the expansion of the western train networks. The Pueblo land bases are quite different than reservations even though they are categorized as such. What makes them different is that Pueblo people were not as subject to Indian removal as many tribes in the eastern US had been. Pueblo people for the most part after 500 years still manage their homelands, understood as sovereign land grants that both the Spanish

empire and the U.S. nation state recognized. Today the multiple canes that each tribal governor retains are symbolic of this continuous recognition.

Pueblo relations with Latinos in north central New Mexico has been complex, to say the least. Today the County of Río Arriba County is a multifarious borderland of tribal sovereign nations of Pueblo tribes and the Jicarilla Apache Nation, communities of Spanish and Mexican land grant heirs, the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management public lands, Department of Defense lands, and other large and small private land holdings. The rivers and smaller streams systems also create networks of infrastructural and political boundaries that are present reminders on the landscape. During the early stages of Spanish colonization the huge network of irrigation systems called acequias were greatly expanded. As I mentioned elsewhere, these systems were the initial forms that paralleled the formation of mission churches and plazas. The earliest acequia systems were dug in the vicinity of the Río Grande and Río Chama confluence by order of the Spanish, but most likely through the labor of indigenous people. The canals to this day cross these political and cultural boundaries and borders.

Right across the river from where I grew up lays the remains of the ruins of the pueblo of Yungue Owingeh, or mockingbird place, known to the Spanish in colonial documents as Yunque Yunque. It is here that Spanish colonists, following their arrival in 1598, took up residence in the homes of the Tewa people of the summer moiety, who then moved to the village of Ohkay on the other side of the river. They built the church dedicated to San Gabriel and began construction on an acequia, which would provide them with a more reliable form of water delivery for crops. Today the church and settlement are present only as a ruin, which was excavated by a team of archeologists led

by Florence H. Ellis in 1969. It is recognized that the acequias that were built in that time are still in use according to the priority date of 1600 for the acequia of Chamita, which is legally the oldest for non-pueblo use.

Water priority dates are important political markers that were put into place following the implementation of the 1907 Territorial Water Code. This affirmed that water was to be understood in the territory as a property right assigned to be held by historically determined first users. Therefore Pueblo water rights are recognized as most senior followed by acequia communities. As these networks of water often service Pueblo and Indo-Hispano communities they create junctures through which water crosses various political jurisdictions. Often this water flowed through plaza places literally or symbolically, as discourses over management were part of the political sphere. Water serves as a highly contested border in terms of ethnic enclaves that use land in distinctive ways.

La Villa Real

Approximately five miles towards the southeast of Ohkay Owingeh is the plaza of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. For most of my life I have passed through this plaza on my way to a nearby mission school I attended or to visit my grandmother's sister, who lived right near the centuries old church. I learned growing up that when passing through this plaza space with someone who was Catholic it is customary to *persignarse* or make the sign of the cross with our right hand as we pass in front of the Holy Cross Parish Church, also known as the Iglesia de Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Usually this is done in the interior space of an automobile as one passes by. This is significant as this space is a busy

thoroughfare for automobile traffic as well as a parking lot for mass goers. This is largely due to the fact that the road nearly goes straight through the middle of it, making pedestrian traffic a bit hazardous. However, the practice of making the sign of the cross marks this place as revered. In the center of the plaza stands a cement crucifix painted white. This unassuming religious structure at the center was the point of reference to mark the dimensions of its land base in Spanish Colonial times. Thus, the plazas of surrounding communities have set spatial boundaries and relationships in distance.

Today it is hard to tell that this plaza was once one of the main public squares of the upper Río Grande we know as Río Arriba, the northernmost of the four Villas Reales, or royal chartered towns, in the department of Nuevo México during the Spanish colonial period, from the 17th century up until Mexican independence. In comparison, the other Villas Reales--Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and El Paso del Norte (today Juárez, Chihuahua)--have since grown into large urban centers. It is important to ponder the reasons why. Formally known as La Villa Nueva de Santa Cruz de la Cañada de los Mexicanos Españoles del Rey Nuestro Señor don Carlos Segundo, the town was founded in 1695 just following the return of the Spanish to these northern lands in 1692. The town has not always been situated at this location. Prior to the Indigenous Rebellions of 1680 and 1696, the community was located on the southern bank of the Santa Cruz River. This settlement was historically populated prior to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 but officially chartered later as the second Villa Real or royal Spanish township after Pedro de Peralta founded la Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco de Asís in 1610.

This town and plaza would have been architecturally organized under the Laws of the Indies and later according to the 1789 *Plan of Pitic* (Rivera 1988:18) that stipulated

that townships had to adhere to spatial dimensions of centralized squares. These laws dictated the building of a church on the central plaza with streets built in a gridiron design. This spatial plan was ubiquitous in Latin America as it centralized the urban cultural order around the plaza and the church. Though often interpreted locally throughout the empire to varying degrees, the design found its epitome in King Philip II's Counter-Reformation residence of the Escorial of Saint Lorenzo in Spain.

Today the only governmental buildings that exist on the north side of the plaza are the Santa Cruz irrigation district offices with its conspicuous blue cardboard sign out front reading "El Agua es la vida / Water is life." This entity manages the waters that come from the nearby river and are stored in the community dam. The district works with various local acequia associations, along with the conservation district, all recently recognized by the state as political subdivisions.

It is important to remind the reader that the colonial Spanish project of the state organized its panoply of institutions through the lens of Catholicism. Hence the naming of the landscape related not only to physical features but also to a pantheon of religious saints whose names sanctify the formerly hostile lands of New Spain. Towns, rivers, plazas, land grants and acequias were given the name of the local patron saint in addition to its indigenous name and or physical description, often to invoke their intercession and protection.

In the community of Santa Cruz, as was done earlier in the Spanish settlement near Ohkay Owingeh, the building and enhancement of hydraulic infrastructure was constructed to service the agricultural lands for the settlements. These agricultural lands, or *ranchitos* as they are known today, are small narrow strips of land that exist in the riparian

areas created by the acequia water delivery. Today these plots of land are typically small- usually 4 to 7 acres in size and many times even smaller due to subdivision among family members. Historically they were partitioned as individual land grants known as *suertes* o *líneas*. They were part of a Spanish system of land tenure that included upper watershed lands, which were held in common and known as *ejidos*, down to the lower valley lands, which were used for agricultural purposes. On the intermediary hills or plains in between the ejidos and the ranchitos were the lands for the building of churches, governmental buildings, plazas and individual *solares* or home sites. Typically homes were built in a plaza layout as to afford the community defensive measures if need be. Anthropologist Frances Leon Quintana affirms that settlement patterns in the Río Arriba exploited these forms of community planning (1991: xv). The remains of such plaza places can be seen within the Santa Cruz Basin in such communities as La Plaza del Cerro, in Chimayó (Usner 1995).

In contrast to the past, today many family homes or compounds are increasingly built on agricultural land due to the growing scarcity of non-agricultural lands. As is attested by a recent moratorium on land subdivisions in the neighboring county of Río Arriba, the recent pattern of land tenure over the last century is shifting to those that had been instituted during the previous Spanish Colonial period. The ranchitos mentioned above are usually family-owned and handed down as an inheritance. Today these are heavily subdivided due to a bottleneck of available lands for housing, causing family homes to be built on the agriculturally irrigated lands. Adjacent to these homes neighboring acequia farmlands vie for space amidst the economic pressures to develop the *suertes* for domestic purposes. This is largely due to the loss of portions of the

communal ejido lands, which were designated as solares—available lands on which to build homes.

Most structures today, rather than being built in plaza or *plazuela* or familial groupings, can be described as semi-rural sprawl. Adobe houses of yesteryear were typically small structures built by adding rooms to a primary structure as a family grew. If the family grew large and their means made it possible, the house began to take the shape of an **L**, forming the first part of a would-be patio house that was known as a casa solar. Today many of the homes are manufactured homes or trailer homes that are set parallel one after the other in on a permanent concrete foundation, in a suburban pattern most often on former subdivided agricultural lands. These new homes started being brought into the valley during the late 1970s.

As that happened, the lands that were once farmed began to lie fallow. On more than one occasion a local resident, Andrés Martínez, who lives just off the Santa Cruz plaza, has spoken to me about the loss of the plaza acequia. At one time the acequia used to run through the plaza area. He laments the concrete lining of the irrigation canal that has killed the big cottonwoods, which once lined and shaded it. Next door there is a defunct coffee shop and art gallery owned by outsiders that attempted to draw in tourism during the years of the current recession, to no avail. The streets around the plaza are partly formalized by the pavement that runs diagonally across the plaza. This street forks off and veers east, while the other heads north to the community of Fairview. Once, before much of the local system was cemented lined or piped underground, the acequia ran through the center of the plaza.

Wars of Maneuver

One would have to argue that the area's historical importance has been eclipsed in the popular imagination due largely to U.S. colonization following the Mexican American war. José Limón has argued that the entire US/Mexico borderlands has been a zone of cultural conflict, which he theorizes through the work of Marxist Antonio Gramsci's ideas of wars of maneuver and war positioning (Limón 1994:15). This frame allows us to categorize historical events by looking at significant period of warfare that ushered periods of conquest, resistance and acculturation. Apart from the earlier era of Spanish military domination and periods of resistance marked most notably by the 1680 Pueblo Revolt, historically this town was home to two additional military events of importance.

First, in 1837, one year following Texas's declaration of independence, New Mexico's Pueblo, Genízaro, and Hispano residents, discontented with Mexico's centralist government, rose in opposition and overthrew Albino Pérez, the territory's governor appointed by Mexican president, Antonio López de Santana. High taxation levied on the local population caused locals to organize a coup d'état and install José González, a Genízaro, as the region's first indigenous Spanish territorial governor. Soon this change in power was to be reversed afterwards by the loyalist elite. The genízaros were detribalized and landless people who came to be sold as slaves into Hispano villages by the Comanches and Utes. According to Ramón Gutiérrez by the late 18th century they made up one third of the jurisdiction of Nuevo México's population (1991: 171). What is notable in comparison to Texas's revolution was New Mexico's affirmation of the Mexican state, even while articulating a need for greater control of local affairs. With

Mexican Independence in 1821 the region saw the opening up of trade routes with the U.S. along the Santa Fe Trail.

The second event was the battle of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. As a youngster I never much knew about this battle. While doing fieldwork I asked various people from the town proper about the battle of Santa Cruz in 1847 few knew about it and few had any idea of where it took place. Many seemed to be unaware of it altogether. However, it recently did appear in public discourse in a local circulated newspaper called the *Green Fire Times*, a regional paper focusing on green economies and agriculture with story contributions from local writers. I first learned about the battle La cañada through a ballad composed by the former Lt. governor Roberto Mondragón titled “¿Nuevo México hasta cuándo?.”

Santa Cruz de la Cañada, el Embudo, Taos y Mora

Formaron la resistencia, la cual celebramos ahora.

(Author translation: Santa Cruz de la Cañada, el Embudo, Taos y Mora

Formed a resistance to the invaders that we celebrate today)

The song functioned as a critical recovery of a subjugated history which has all been marginalized from public memory. Here there is no plaque, there are grave markers, and no trace of the governmental buildings on the plaza. I ask Santa Cruz native Alejandro López while we together go for a hike into the surrounding hills near his home in Santa Cruz, where was the battle? Unclear of the details he directs my attention toward the city of Española in the distance and toward the commercial strip where there are fast-food restaurants and a multistoried casino near the center. For him the conquest is not complete but continually contested in material expressions throughout the valley.

He likens his own family's property with his house decorated in murals as such an expression. One in particular is painted on the southern facing wall of his home of his father and mother sitting in the *resolana* conversing. As an artist and journalist he worked diligently to transform his family's property from a defunct farm into a space of learning through action. López, the youngest or *xocoyote* of a family of 11 siblings, in addition working as a journalist he runs a small business teaching Spanish language workshops. While he is busy reviving his family's solar and jardín. His small property is bisected by an *acequia*, with the house in the lands above the irrigation canal and the sandy fields, where he has planted with the cooperation of various people, corn, chile, garlic, cucumbers, and even *alzafrán*. On the property he has two *hornos* and one circular *enramada*.

As a gay Indo-Hispano man he informed me that he often felt uncomfortable in the *resolana* of the local *estafeta* or Post office just off of the plaza. We are reminded how homophobia has often limited people's access to public places such as the plaza. As we walk back to his home walk from the foothills up on top of the eastern hills that look down on the Española valley the sun shines on his cornfields from the west causing them to dance.

Española es una chiquilla: Gendered Plaza Space

In 2008 regional musical artists Lorenzo Antonio and Grupo Sparx released a recording of "Que Bonito es Santa Fe," which received significant airplay circulation on local bilingual radio stations in the region. This song was a cover of a song written originally and released ten years earlier in 1997 by Mexican pop star and composer Juan

Gabriel. This techno-cumbia lauds the beauty of New Mexico's landscape and enchanting adobe aesthetic. Written within the recognizable tourist-luring discourse known as Santa Fe Style the performance functions like a travelogue mapping the exceptional aspects of the many towns in the area surrounding the state's capital city of Santa Fe.

The city of Española is one of the town's described. The narrator personifies the town as a woman who enjoys space to promenade, but as the lyrics go on to state, she is limited by the lack of plaza space to exercise this practice. This description contrasts to the city of Santa Fe, the song's focus, which is described, "con sus hermosas plazas y lindas casas pintadas todas café" (with its beautiful plazas and lovely houses all painted brown).

It can be said that the city of Española never did have a plaza historically, though native populations well before European colonization in 1598 had settled villages and towns in the area. The city itself as a settlement is a relative newcomer, being first settled around the depot stop of the Denver Rio Grande railroad in the 1880's. The railroad functioned to bring travelers south from Colorado through Española to Santa Fe. During this period Española was described in the memoir of cattle and mercantile capitalist Frank Bond as "a real tent town"(1946: 340). He contrasts Española to the "foreign city" of Santa Fe that stood apart with its plazas, boardwalks and balconies, in addition to the propensity of booming dance halls and saloons (ibid). In contrast Española was laid out alongside the railroad to facilitate a commercial corridor formed out of a railroad easement, which became Main Street.

As Bond's narrative and the song text make discernable, the town's specialization and growth surrounding the railroad marked a substantial difference between the cultural

places of the plaza and the main street. During the 1940's the railroad discontinued service and the town's economy shifted as many of its inhabitants either enlisted in the war efforts or migrated to other states to find work in the agricultural and livestock fields. By 1969 the vision of Española's moribund Main Street became the site of local politicians' revisioning and renewal. With this came a revival of local Spanish traditions, which aimed to reframe the city's history within the discourse of the greater valley's Spanish colonial history. One such revival was the annual Española Fiesta, which featured parades and music. Unlike many of the valley's religious patron saint fiestas, the Española fiesta was initially created as a civil invented tradition; based on early chamber of commerce pageants, it focused on the colonization of the valley by Juan de Oñate. By the 1990's this revival and re-visioning led city planners to re-conceptualize Main Street as a colonial Spanish Plaza and Mission. The city leaders hoped to tie a particular hispanophilic historic past to monumental architecture. Specifically in the 1990's, many of the town's older buildings were torn down in order to construct a replica of the San Gabriel Mission and Convent within a new plaza as it was envisioned to have appeared at the turn of the 16th century.

The city of Española, then, which was settled in the 1880's according to the dominant spatial arrangement of a U.S. main street, was by the 1990's was being reinvented as a historic Spanish colonial town. It can then be said the city of Española never did have a plaza historically, though native populations well before European colonization in 1598 had settled villages and towns in the area.

Contemporary oral histories retell the origin story of Española and of the naming of the town. Richard Lucero, a former city mayor who has been elected to that position

multiple times, has commented on a popular belief that is widely circulated among people from the region about the naming of the city. In an interview conducted by the author with the former Mayor while walking around the city's new Plaza y Misión, built in 1998, he stated:

In the year the railroad began to be built, around the railroad station that was there other business started developing...so a lady established a restaurant here and she would serve the people that would come off the train. She was a tall Spanish lady...her name was Josefa López, my great aunt. So this tall lady, Josefa López, had a restaurant and she was very proud Spaniard like most women were then. If you would go into the restaurant to eat the first thing she would say to you 'Yo soy la española, yo soy española.' 'So guess where we are going to eat when we get off the train?' "At la Española." So Española changes its name and they refer to it as La Española because of that lady.

Thus, the growth of the city surrounding the railroad marked a difference between cultural concepts of public space. As Lucero relates this city creation story the engendering of the town of Española as a female it is important to point out the emergence of new publics involved not only the workings of ethnic identity and invention of tradition but also entail a important processes of engendering the cultural concepts of main street and plaza. The Española foundational myth as I will call it here is a narrative which relates the introduction of mercantile capitalism into the valley. Within these intersections social class becomes important as the predominantly working class Española develops its own middle

class. This next section reveals concisely issues of space, history and gender as they pertain to identity boundary maintenance along and on the cultural sites of Main Street and the plaza. In particular I will be talking about the performances of the public pageantry known as the Española Fiestas.

The late 1960's were turbulent years for northern New Mexico. Many young men from this area saw combat in Viet Nam. At the same time their families back home witnessed a war on the homefront as the US National Guard paraded their tanks and troops northward on state highway 84 up to the village of Canjilón. This punitive maneuvering of troops served to muffle the social unrest caused by the uprising of a land grant activist group known as *El Alianza de los pueblo libres*. This group, under the leadership of a former Texas protestant preacher Reies López Tijerina, demanded social justice for the area's impoverished "Indo-Hispano" populations, as he came to call people of Mexican descent from the area. Tijerina advocated that much of the Indo-Hispanos' problems stemmed historically from the U.S. government's dismissal of the rights and privileges contained within the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. One of the Alianza's main concerns was over the disenfranchisement of Mexican land claims in the U.S.'s newly conquered territories after the Mexican American war. Tijerina was vocal that the U.S. had not protected Hispano land claims and had openly broken the international treaty.

During the month of June in 1967 a group of Alianza members known as "Los Valientes" attempted to make a citizen's arrest of the Río Arriba district attorney in Tierra Amarilla, claiming that the U.S. government was obstructing

justice. The attempt to make the arrest ended in violence as gunshots were exchanged between county police and Alianza members. Following the incident, known today as the Courthouse Raid, Tijerina and ‘Los Valientes’ went into hiding. The Governor, David Cargo, called upon the National Guard to apprehend Tijerina. Alianza followers fervently supported the outspoken Tijerina, often cheering him with proclamations of “*¡Viva Tijerina!*” (Oropeza,, 2005: 73). In New Mexico and elsewhere, public declarations such as these were commonplace at political campaign rallies. Also in the region they are also synonymous with religious ejaculations. “*¡Viva la virgin de Guadalupe!*,” “*¡Viva San Antonio Bendito!*,” are often heard during fiestas honoring patron saints during religious fiestas.

Meanwhile, in 1969 along the main street of Española the declarations of “*¡Viva Oñate!*,” “*¡Viva la Reina!*,” and *¡Viva la Fiesta!* were heard publicly (Dominguez 1975) . It was during that year that the city of Española held a fiesta in honor Juan de Oñate, the person credited for facilitating the first European settler colony in the area in 1598. The fiesta was called for by the urging of then Mayor Richard Lucero. Though civic fiestas had occurred in the valley off and on for years since 1932, Lucero’s revival in 1969 marked the start of continuous tradition that would continue on into the present. This fiesta seemed different from the ubiquitous religious based patron saints day events sponsored by the Catholic communities in the surrounding areas. The Oñate fiesta was envisioned as a civic event with a historical person as the figurehead rather than a saint. However, religion still played a large role despite this being a civic event.

According to a newspaper report, the mayor's championing came on heels of a trip where he had visited two major fairs, the Fiesta de Las Flores in El Paso, Texas, and the Feria Nacional de San Marcos in Aguascalientes, Mexico (ibid).

The 1969 fiesta was intricately planned (Salazar 1969). In conjunction to the fiesta the Governor of New Mexico signed a proclamation designating July 12 as "Oñate day in New Mexico." The festivities included three days of events that took place over the weekend throughout the valley. The festivities were kicked off at the Bandstand off of Main Street where local Spanish language musical and rock and roll acts performed throughout the three days. After the kickoff at the bandstand, a vespers mass followed at the nearby Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Following the mass a candlelight procession from the church to the grandstand was held. This led up to the coronation of the "Queen" of the Fiestas." This was then followed by two simultaneous events: the Queen's ball and a Teenage Dance (ibid).

The schedule demonstrated the religious and civic character of the events on the first day. In addition it suggests the dominance of the role of the Queen on the first day, as Oñate is not mentioned. The second day of events was highlighted by the *Oñate Entrada*. This event entailed the public horseback ride of re-enactors representing Oñate and a company of his soldiers as they took possession of the territory. Accompanying the cuadrilla were participants who played the role of Franciscan friars on foot who carried large crosses in the procession. In addition to the historical re-enactors there is a female court of fiesta royalty. The court is made up of one Reina or Queen and an accompanying group of *princesas*. The

later group is usually made up of two to six young women who are unmarried and under the age of 21. Within this group there is usually one or more members who represents one of the surrounding Indian Pueblo communities. The later women are marked with the title Indian Princess unlike the former, who are unmarked and know as solely *princesas*.

The final day of Fiesta in 1969 was highlighted by a High Mass in the morning followed by the General Parade down main street. Later on that afternoon a “Patriotic Presentation” was observed followed by final Mass later that evening. The structure of the three-day event presents the researcher many avenues to explore. As is evidenced by the three-day breakdown of events it is interesting to note the prevalence of religious activity in a civic event. In many ways the historical enactors and queen court are symbolic of the religious ideals of masculinity and femininity of the fiestas. It is perhaps why the constructions of gender, class, and ethnicity on Main Street have often been disciplined into the strict vision of religious piety sanctioned by the Catholic Church and the para-liturgical beliefs of the community. It is through this subjectification that I argue that these enactors find their position in public space.

The fiesta queen and her court visually accompany Oñate and his men. Dressed in white they have been simultaneously interpreted as representing the various formulation of the “ave” of traditional femininity, such as the Virgin Mary, and the Catholic Church (Grimes 1992). On the other hand, Oñate cuadrilla, dressed in 16th century military costume, serve to present the image of warriors. Implicit in both representations are notions of public and private. In the

public main street, “traditional ideals” of honor prohibit women to be in public space unaccompanied. Main Street can be understood to be a precarious zone of intercultural interaction. Once again a “traditional” interpretation would view men’s roles in these spaces as facilitating the protection of honor. I argue it is religion that is used as a private identity that is brought to the public space and whose honor is defended by the militia like historical re-enactors.

These expressions of military might on the plaza during the late 1960s to early 1970s are highly symbolic in light of the context of militant conflicts Tijerina and the Alianza had versus the state. It perhaps wouldn’t be lost on Rio Arribans who in 1967 had the National Guard descend on Tierra Amarilla after the so-called Court House raid. The fiestas with parades of horse ride were pitted in a symbolic war of position in the gramscian sense, while meanwhile actually military movements were still present in the community’s memory as much as the bolden *¡Que vivas!* were still fresh in the ears of the people.

My work in documenting plazas in the Espanola Valley perhaps add to the current debates on space, place and power. In this section I will discuss a third plaza or placita place in the greater Española Valley, the Placita de San Antonio in Alcalde, New Mexico. What is different categorically about these plazas from other studies is the lack of a significant tourism economy. This would suggest that these plazas would show more local visitation and use. However, the opposite is true. Though the city proper of Espanola would like to develop the plaza as a tourism site, both plazas remain on any given day empty. When I attended a meeting held by an NGO at the plaza misión, with aims of fostering economic

development though the championing of the tourism economy, one local attendee at the meeting negatively commented to the futility of the plan, “This plaza is dead.”

Placita de Alcalde

It is significant that the only time these plazas get used at all is when there is a special event such as a fiesta, a car show or a community day in which locals are welcomed to be in these places. Other than that these places see approximately little or no significant traffic. I found that a similar phenomena occurred at the Alcalde placita. It was basically empty aside from its daily use as a parking lot for an Easter Seals Care facility who has fenced off a significant portion of the once public plaza. Absent at both these sites is their use as an everyday cultural commons.

During fiesta is another matter. The intensification of gathering and conviviality during fiestas is well documented. Here, I will briefly narrate what typically what occurs. It is around 3 in the afternoon on December 27th and I am getting ready to accompany on the violin a group of 12 masked religious dancers. People are arriving at the small placita de San Antonio to see the Matachines dance drama done in honor of Saint Anthony, one of this community’s patron saints in the village of Alcalde, New Mexico. As the people arrive they gather, surrounding the plaza where the dancers will dance. Meanwhile, the dancers gather in the chapel named in honor of the patron saint, to get dressed and get out of the cold weather.

Meanwhile, outside people gather in small familiar groups; many are related to one of more of the dancers. On the margins of the circle of people standing out in the cold, tightly wrapped in heavy coats, hats, and sunglasses, are people sitting in their cars waiting for the action to start. Meanwhile, we musicians arrange our folding chairs centrally in front of the chapel facing outward, in very close proximity to the privileged vantage space where Saint Anthony is placed. You can say we play into the ears of San Antonio de Padua as he looks out on his community and the young masked youth who will be dancing in honor of his day or *función*.

The *mayordomo* (chapel custodians) of the church signals to the musicians to lead the dancers out of the *capilla* (chapel) and into plaza to initiate this annual ritual. The dancers march in two parallel lines carrying a three-pronged *palma* (trident) in their left hand and playing a *guaje* (gourd rattle) in the left in rhythm with the musicians. The dance starts and the pantomimed dance drama goes on for an hour and plays out. Meanwhile as I look out onto the gathered crowd, people in no regular fashion circulate around the outer ring to talk, greet and hug, visit amidst the droning of gourd rattles and strident tones from the violins which are playing aggressively double-stops in order to be heard through the sea of sounds. To me the more meaningful interactions occur not in the center of the plaza where the Matachines are moving but in the crowd before, during and following the dance drama.

The six different melodies we play in the span of the dance are repetitive and facilitate a sedative state. When not looking at the dancers I look at the crowd

of about 75 people. I look to the left and parked in close proximity to the ring of people is a SUV with an elderly woman sitting inside. She has a good warm vantage point to see the dancers. At her age it would be perhaps difficult to be exposed to the cold weather. Others stay in their warm cars in the perimeter of the plaza, ignoring the dance drama entirely and inviting people to visit with them by having their window lowered. Still the wind blows; it's a cold day. The ring of people shifts as a few people walk to the perimeter and retreat from where the high walls of houses cast a shadow on the plaza. Meanwhile the dancers in the center of the plaza keep warm by moving their bodies in choreographed motions taught through numerous practice sessions a month in advance.

Others find protection from the cold by locating the good spot at the margins of the placita where the sun reflects off of the southern facing wall. Here they lean up against the wall shoulder to shoulder. There you find a small one-foot tall buttress that spans the length of the wall, as if it was built for the sole purpose of aiding people by raising their feet from the cold ground and allowing the rays of the sun to do their thing. If they are wearing sunglasses or a hat better still to deflect the head-on assault of the sun. There in the microclimate they continue their *plática*, looking on and reflecting on the social drama before their senses--the plaza, the people, the dancers, and the musicians. When the dance ends the dancers gather up their dance paraphernalia, the plaza empties, often leaving behind men and women who are savoring one last second of *plática*, until they finally head out, to return next year for the chance to talk.

Setha Low's work on the Latin American plaza has shown that cultural

resistance to colonization can be found in the spatial appropriations and maintenance of indigenous spaces such as plazas” (2000: 47). The crux of this discussion lies here. Yet, how can we explain that the plaza seems like a lively place in the ethnographic description yet remains virtually empty the other 360 other days of the year? Sylvia Rodríguez in her analysis of Taos plaza, located 30 miles north of Alcalde’s placita de San Antonio, clues us in to the seeming apprehension of being public; she points out that most of the year the plaza is dominated by non-locals as a hub of a regional economy based on tourism (1997: 57). However, during Fiestas, she argues, the displaced locals reclaim the plaza for 3 days (33). Sarah Deutsch suggests that in the past plazas had far greater significance than they do now; the plaza prior to WWII was a central local institution which directed social relations in northern New Mexico’ villages toward “communal orientations” (353). She goes on to write that the chain of social relations that was tied to private property adjacent to the plaza was broken when one by one houses around this central cultural hub were gentrified and sold to non-*nuevomexicano* people (80).

In this dissertation I propose to analyze critically how a cultural practice of *la resolana*--or standing in the sun with someone else while reflecting in dialogue about the happenings of the world--has emerged again recently as a salient cultural practice with numerous circulations. This chapter has shown how gatherings in plaza spaces are important to local Indo-Hispano communities. However, they are limited culturally in large part by both intercultural conflicts with their Native American neighbors within the matrix of hegemonic white

spatial, racial and economic orders as well as the incongruences of the economics of tourism in a working class county. In the next chapter I will discuss how the everyday place and practice of resolana emerged historically in the region within the first half of the 20th century.

CHAPTER TWO

Ethnohistory and Memory of the Lightscares of the Resolana

Cantidades de hombres hay que tienen tanto genio que nada pueden hacer sino estar pensando de él en las sombras ó resolanas.

-La Voz del Pueblo 1903

This chapter describes the historical background of resolana in New Mexico, the first ethnohistorical contextualization of this topic to date. Though there are a critical number of scholarly publications on the topic of resolana none have addressed it comprehensively as a dynamic set of historical cultural practices and settings. Often it is encountered as a term defined as a synchronic “traditional” practice. This “traditional” and most widely circulated understanding of this term relates it as the residual cultural practice of males gathering in a public place where the sun reflects off a plaza or courtyard wall to reverberate which fosters a microclimate of warmth. This chapter analyzes by comparing and contrasting various archival, literary and ethnographic references to resolana in New Mexico over the last century. The goal is to illustrate how the description of multiple manifestations of resolanas can inform a better understanding of the topic.

In addition I will be addressing these references through the anthropologist Mikkel Bille’s analytical lens of “lightscape” which he writes allows us to “address the relationship between light and material culture” (2007). Largely in this chapter we will address how the light and warmth of resolana relate culturally to northern New Mexico’s climate, language and ideas of public commons. I begin this discussion however, not in New Mexico but in ancient Greece through a point of cross-cultural comparison that

illustrates a politicized sensibility toward sunlight and political discourse.

A popular story passed down recounts the legendary meeting of Alexander the Great with ancient Greece's chief philosopher of the public common Diogenes of Sinope. During this time Alexander, who built his empire by exercising his power through the use of military force, was visited and paid reverence by various statesmen and learned men from the territories he conquered. The emperor upon hearing that one of the Greek's most outspoken philosopher of the day, and father of the cynics Diogenes of Sinope would not come to see him, the supreme head of state decided to pay his lesser a visit.

It was known that Diogenes was an unconventional individual, who embodied his philosophy by disdaining all things private and living his life fully in view of the public. Living in a tunnel near the agora or public gathering space of his town, he would eat, sleep and as well masturbate in the view of the public. His philosophies as well as his behavior so much remind his detractors of the shameless habits of a dog, he earned the nickname the "cynic" which originates from the Greek term for dog-like.

As the tale goes on, Alexander upon arriving to the place where Diogenes was living, and seeing the philosopher resting on the ground in the trash of the street the ruler inquired how he might help or do if anything for this man of the public. Diogenes looking up at the figure standing above him responded, yes, you may stand a little out of my sun. Alexander laughed in astonishment at the man's candid response and disregard to his status as the sovereign. In an instant Alexander's companions readied to punish Diogenes for his outspokenness. Taking leave of Diogenes, the emperor without any signaling for any punitive measures to take place and instead tells his fellow companions, so be it if I were not Alexander, I would be Diogenes.

What we might interpret from this story is indeed profuse, however my main interest focuses is in Diogenes's request both in its style in which it was delivered as well as its content. Firstly, the audacity and forthrightness of Diogenes is exemplar of what is known as cynic "parrhesia" or "fearless speech" as described by philosopher Michel Foucault (2001:121). Here we have a man with no private possessions boldly articulating a request to the figurehead of the state. The content of what he asks for is no less in its essence profoundly elemental. In asking the ruler to lessen his shadow on him Diogenes asks not to be deprived of that agent and bringer of life being the sunlight one of the bare essentials of life or biopower.

The significance of this story shows an example of how the politics of speaking in public directly relates to the exercise of biopolitics over bios or bare life, territory and empire that is figuratively rendered as managed lightscape. Putting aside the likelihood that a sovereign would make such a visit to a person below him in the social order, the important thing to point out are the two principal transgressions central to the narrative. In the first is Alexander's visit which can be understood as an invasion of territory, which is symbolized here as the emperor's act of blocking the cynic's sunlight. It is this act that which gives the sovereign exercise the power to manage the bioenergy of the sunlight. The legendary meeting is foregrounded by Alexander's empire building and recognition by his subjects that he achieved through the military invasion of Persia. In order to get Diogenes to recognize his sovereignty Alexander appropriates and manages the sunlight, which was Diogenes' only source of warmth and being, as he owned no private possessions. What the emperor invades is the common of the public that is the warmth of the sun.

The other perceived transgression is Diogenes' response that is taken as an affront to the social hierarchy that Alexander represents. However, what Alexander perhaps realizes is that he must cautiously approach Diogenes as he is the embodiment of a public citizen, one who is recognized as a representative of the people. To punish Diogenes in public would only serve to make visible the logics of power exercised by Alexander. Here to interpret the rulers' actions solely in terms of *noblesse oblige* fails to make visible the power of the public to protect the public's energy source which is the sunlight.

Raising their Voices in the Resolanas

With these analytical lenses in mind we refocus our attention back to New Mexico by examining references to resolana from the period 1892-1940. The earliest of these come from regional newspapers written in Spanish, bilingual Spanish-English, and English. According to the scholarly work of Gabriel Méndez (2005) the Spanish-language journalism in the region, confronted, and at times challenge the hegemonic power Anglo Americans developed following the Mexican American War of 1846-48 and the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which brought closure to the war of maneuver. As an instrument of the literate public, the Spanish language press in New Mexico offered a rich, though not always complimentary description of Mexican and Indigenous peoples. But as an archival source, I argue, the news accounts offer various descriptive narratives of Nuevomexicano communities. With the recent digitalization of many archived newspapers it is now possible to consult a larger number of these narratives. During the years 1880-1935 Méndez cites 190 Spanish language newspapers in the Southwest. It is important not to generalize that these papers presented an unbiased

understanding of the local communities (2005:6). I will demonstrate in the following literary analysis of these papers that the news articles often defined the local cultures in discriminatory ways advancing biased social class and racialized discourses.

The earliest reference to *resolana* in New Mexico comes from the US period. In 1892 a pastoral letter written by the Catholic Archbishop Jean-Baptiste Salpointe to the region's Catholic reverends and to the archdiocese's faithful congregation. The letter was published in *La Revista Católica* a newspaper from Las Vegas, New Mexico that circulated throughout the archdiocese's Spanish speaking public. The overall message of the letter critiques the problem of low congregational attendance of weekly mass in New Mexico. This trend was distressing, as Salpointe explains for the churches' coffers depend on the congregations' weekly attendance and Sunday donations. What is significant in the archbishop's observations was the gendered dynamics of his critique, which particularly stressed the males being absent from mass. In the following portion of the letter Salpointe gives us his explanation for the low attendance. He states:

Esto hemos visto antes en la diócesis de Santa Fe: y ahora ¿qué es lo que vemos en ella, y con poca diferencia entre los mismos habitantes? Exceptuando algunas parroquias, en las cuales se observan todavía las anteriores tradiciones religiosas, y en las demás en corto número de familias que guardan la fe de sus padres, podemos decir que son muchos particularmente entre los hombres, los cristanos de esta diócesis que no hacen caso de aquello á que los obligan los mandamientos de la Iglesia. En los Domingos y dias de fiesta, saldrán de sus casas, no para ir á Misa, aunque lo pudieran, sino para ir al campo, á sus trabajos,

como en los demás días de la semana, ó á juntarse con otros y platicar en la resolana; ó lo que es peor todavía, se reunen en las cantinas durante el tiempo del Santo Sacrificio, y aun á corta distancia de la Iglesia. En estos dias, para contibuir de cualquier modo á la subsistencia de los sacerdotes, ó á la contruccion y compostura de las Iglesias, no se les debe decir ni palabra

(La Revista Católica March 6,1892).

(Author's translation: We have seen this [attendance reduction] in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe before: and now what is this disparity we see with the same inhabitants? Except for some of the parishes, which still observe the same earlier religious traditions and other small in number who maintain the faith of their fathers, we can say that there are many in particular men, Christians of this diocese who it doesn't matter that which obliges them to follow the commandments of the church. During Sundays and days of religious observances they leave their houses, but not to go to mass, even though they could, but to go to work like on other days of the week, or they gather with others and talk in the resolana; or what is worse still, they gather in the bars while communion is occurring, just a short distance from the church. These days contributions of any kind to the subsistence of the priests or for the construction and upkeep of the churches buildings, goes without saying.)

Being the earliest found reference to resolana in the region while it was a US territory is significant as it shows us that during a time in New Mexico only forty four years following the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) that congregating in a sunny place was perhaps an emergent practice or a continuation of a older tradition. This reference situates resolana as alternative place of congregation, though not seemingly a positive one, nor a pious one in the eyes of the Archbishop. What is significant is that we see that it is a place that couples the practice of gathering with the practice of “talk.” Perhaps this scenario suggests a socio-political change to a private sacred sphere where the men in this case would only be listeners from an older more traditional public sphere where they were active speakers. It is important to contextualize this same period as intensification of the religious mutual aide organizations such as the *Hermandad de Nuestro Señor Jesús Nazareno*. This finding makes us question if there was a possible relationship between the resolaneros and these lay societies. Finally the letter indicates the Archbishop recognized that the men refused to give up their resolana meeting times to comply with the church’s directive.

Moving on, we get another historical glimpse from further south, only two years later on August 4, 1894 when, *El Demócrata* a Las Cruces Spanish language newspaper published an article entitled “Alerta Pueblo.” The article called for citizens to get out to vote in the forthcoming November 4th elections. Written from a pro Democratic Party stance the articles compare past times when the party was twice as small and its membership did not have “energy” or hold important political posts in comparison to the Republican party. The journalist who chronicled the event stated, “Hoy solo hay unos cuantos hombres incapaces de hacer algo mas que escribir artículos en periódicos y dar

gritos en la resolana” (Author’s translation: Today there are only a few men capable of doing something more than writing articles in the newspapers and shouting in the resolana).

This reference to resolana is an important one in that it couples the place, even though pejoratively, with the political discourse of newspapers. Here it is likened to a place where political talk takes place in an aural sphere in contrast to the literate one of newspapers articles. What is significant is that this article marks resolana as a sphere or theater in which political discourse takes place. However, the article contrasts it with what it considers active participants or “capable men” in the political process. We are to interpret resolana in this context as talk that is ineffective of influencing the political system.

Nearly a decade later on 1903 in an August 15 news article published by *La Voz del Pueblo*, a Las Vegas newspaper, a journalist bemoaned the fact that men gathering in the public in the microclimates of the shade or the sunnyside somehow wasted their genius, by simply sitting and idly talking to one another. On August 17, 1906 a news brief published in *El Labrador* also from Las Cruces shows how resolana was thought of as a discursive sphere, a place where rumors and gossips circulated. The brief stated, “Los rumores que habrá revolución en México el 16 de septiembre, es ni mas ni menos platica de resolana.” (Author’s translation: The rumors that there will be a revolution in Mexico on September 16th are nothing more than talk of the resolana). In these contexts the term had come to signify within these literary periodical publics an undervalued or cultural disparaged form of discourse that represented gossip or hearsay. These highly visible public places as well as cultural practices of gathering as described in the news

articles, I will argue later are highly contested racial and class borderland spaces.

In 1907 in Taos, New Mexico the editor and owner of *La Revista of Taos* José Montaner began a decade long heated print crusade to denigrate both the resolana and the people who congregated around it. In an article titled “Análogo” in that year he made a comparison of New Mexico to a recently published article by Venezuelan journalist Juan Enríquez Girón who wrote about Puerto Rico’s cultural attitudes toward progress and modernity. Here Girón pits progressivism in opposition to “envious” people who he considers ignorant and uneducated who favor the playing the “jarana” a guitar like stringed musical instrument and drinking ‘vino.” At this point Montaner then makes an analogy by hypothetically asking what would Girón think of New Mexico. Montaner wrote:

Que tal si en mencionado escritor viniera aquí, en Taos, verbo y gracia, y viera la kabilla de hombres que aún se llaman pro-mí-nen-tes, dedicados á tan vil tarea denigrando (aún que sin la más pequeña razón) en sus resolanas y en sus visitas más ó menos familiares, chupando cigarillos a lado de la estufa, á toda familia ó todo hombre á quién envidian y quisieran en su vil corazón hacer desaparecer del globo si possible fuse (*La Revista of Taos* 1907)

(Author’s translation: “What do you think if the mentioned writer would come here to Taos for example and he were to see the gang of men who despite being called Pro-mi-nent are dedicated to such vile and denigrated actions (without any sign of rationality) in their resolanas and somewhat familial gatherings, smoking cigarettes at the side of

fireplace with their families or male gatherings talking about which other family or person who in their vile hearts they are jealous of and who they would like see gone from the world.)

In 1909, Montaner wrote a similar commentary in his Spanish language newspaper, which at that time had a circulation of over 2000. Montaner offered a stern racialized representation of the resolana in the Taos Plaza. In a short brief he wrote:

“No te asocies con ese populacho resolanero y vagabundo, si no quieres ser victim de su lengua venenosa para denigrate á ti y tú familia en las cantinas y resolanas. Con esos jenízaros ni palabras buenas ni malas, más que enseñarles su lugar (*La Revista of Taos 1909*).”

(Author’s translation: “Do not associate with that common resolanero and vagabond, if you do not want to be a victim of his poisonous tongue, which he uses to denigrate you and your family in the bars and resolanas. With those “Genizaros” [or detribalized Indians] do not even speak to them other than to put them in their place.

This description is key to understanding how both social class and racial dynamics within Indo-Hispanic communities had its intersectional divisions. The newspaper represents how a literate public espoused negative attitudes toward another public sphere that was aural in character, and as this example illustrates quite critical of the current political discourse of the day. By doing this, newspaper editors such as Montaner sought to shore up power within his paper through an unmarked discourse of “civility” which he represented in opposition to the resolanas which he marked as belonging to classless,

uncivilized, mixed-raced peoples.

The negative attitudes espoused by *La Revista de Taos* of the resolana were not isolated and were prominent throughout the region. A further newspaper criticism of the resolana and the resolaneros was published in a southern New Mexico newspaper from Las Cruces called *El Eco*. On the day New Mexico became a state of the union on January 6th 1912 a reference to the resolana appeared in an editorial satire titled “Cuando un editor dijo la verdad” (When a newspaper editor says the truth). In it the editor states, “Las mujeres de esta plaza saben bailar mejor que hacer pan. Mientras las mujeres van a la iglesia á lucir sus mal forjados trajes los hombres se quedan en la resolana mintiendo.” (Author translation: “The women of this plaza know how to dance more than they know how to make bread. Meanwhile the women go to church to showoff their badly designed clothing, the men stay in the resolana telling tall tales”).

Without a doubt the above commentary about the men and women’s Sunday ritual was a common practice in New Mexico, I question why such customs were news worthy. I argue that the commentary is more about the changing norms of New Mexico and a criticism of the customs of a recently conquered population. It is significant that this article admonishes both sexes as they exercise publicly conspicuous spatial practices that challenge the new hegemonic order. The newspapers and their readerships, as I mentioned before, generally were one of the most significant emergent discursive publics who were associated with the Anglo American elite following the Mexican American war, and often chose to adopt the cultural ways of the dominant culture. I do not mean to suggest that all of New Mexico’s elite chose to accept the new social order, but rather that a significant number did. However the cultural conflicts were to continue as during

this time as warfare of position as Hispanic elites distanced themselves from their perceived anti-modern subalterns.

Further north a year later, a 1913 column printed in the *El Nuevo Mexicano de Santa Fé* titled “A que toga” [sic] (What a fancy suit!) contrasts the modern industrious man who is well dressed in his Sunday best to the resolanero who spends his time leisurely sitting on a plaza or drinking in the local bars. This article further contrasts the modern man as honorable and hard working to the resolanero who laments his fate. A journalist wrote;

“Y los que se quejan de la mala suerte son por lo general aquellos perezosos que no teniendo respeto para ellos mismos, ninguna afrenta se les hace el que sufra su familia mientras ellos pasan las horas y aun los dias de adorno en las banquetas, resolanas, calles y en las tabernas (*El Nuevo Mexicano de Santa Fé* 1913).”

(Author’s translation: “And those who complain of their bad luck are generally those lazy people who having no respect for even themselves, and have no shame in what sufferings their families go through while they pass the hours and days away adorning the walls, resolanas, streets and bars.)

The article deploys various archetypes representing good public men and their negative counterparts. Overall, the pointed criticisms towards the resolaneros emerge tandemly as the elite Hispanos articulate their own ethnic identifications as Spanish Americans through these same newspapers. Nieto-Phillips in his book *The Language of Blood* supports this contention and posits that Spanish-speaking elites of Mexican ancestry in the region began deploying Hispanophilia as a strategic method in articulating themselves into the

US body politic (2004). By separating themselves from the resolaneros they attempted to distinguish themselves apart, as honorable Spaniards, whose culture resembled that of the new Anglo American elite. Thus, by reviewing commentaries on the resolaneros I suggest that Spanish language editors often served as a counter public to critique the commoner classes, yet it is ironic that the news articles they produced, today also serve to document that the resolana became a critical counter public. The editors of these newspapers described the resolaneros to be at times oppositional, subversive, and anti-modern.

By the 1930s various articles in newspapers circulated new cultural interpretation of how the resolana functioned and was used in the political public sphere. However, this representation was not the norm and traditionally meaning continued. As described by 1930s newspapers the resolana was a place where public opinion was hotly debated, swayed and lobbied. On March 27, 1930 in *El Nuevo Mexicano* an article appeared entitled “David Chaves no se prestará de candidato para mayor dem.” (David Chaves will not run as a democratic candidate for mayor). At this time the resolaneros were euphemistically called “oracles of the park” and were identified as a kind of authority over the political climate of the of State’s capital city of Santa Fe. The article states, “A segun los oráculos del parque los amigos demócratas de Santa Fe todavia ayer andaban en el aire en cuanto a su canidato para mayor en las próximas elecciones.” (According to the oracles of the park our democrat friends in in Santa Fe still are undecided on whom to support for Mayor in the upcoming elections). It appears that *El Nuevo Mexicano* recognized that the resolaneros discussed politics and could be converted into important political vehicles by both the democrat and republican parties. The news article further

states, “Ahora los amigos resolaneros dicen que se rumora que los demócrata se están considerando la proposición de endorser la candidatura del Mayor McConvery (republicano) y solo nominar candidatos para miembros del Concilio.” (And now our resolana friends say that it is rumored that the Democrats are considering the proposition of only endorsing McConvery the Republican mayoral candidate, and nominating other members for the council).

Six months later on September 14, 1930 *El Nuevo Mexicano*, the same capital city newspaper, an editorial further recognized the influence of the resolaneros as an important political sphere. In this example we see how the resolaneros act as agents in the political discourse of the day. In the section titled “Las Convenciones,” (The political conventions) the editor once again euphemistically refers to the resolaneros as conventioners of the park, thus legitimizing the resolana as a space and practice of authority and significance. The editorial states:

“Por eso, - señalan los convencionistas del Parque- a los demócratas les importa un pito de lo que hagan los republicanos; cuando tengan su convencion; o quienes sean sus candidatos; y, despues de madura consideración parece que los amigos resolaneros en esta vez le han dado al clavo en la mera cabeza. Pero lo que si es cierto es que el pueblo se ha puesto muy águila durante estos últimos años y los amigos politicos se ven en duras penas cuando tartan de jugarle el dedo en la boca al pueblo como solian hacerlo con tanta impunidad en otros tiempos, y , quien quito, que al fin y al cabo, algo resulte de toda esta chirinola que verdaderamente sea de beneficio para la

ciudadanía en general y la propagación de un buen gobierno en Nuevo Mexico (*El Nuevo Mexicano* 1930).

(Author's translation: "For that reason, the conventioners of the park corroborate- that it could matter less to the Democrats as to when the Republicans have their convention or who happens to be their candidates. After careful consideration it seems our friends the resolaneros have predicted correctly have hit the nail on the head. What is for certain is that the community has become more critically aware the last couple of years and it has become difficult for politicians to attempt to silence the greater community as they have not done in the past with such impunity. Who can deny, that in the end it seems if all this hoopla can truly be to the benefit to the general citizenry as well as the propagation of good government in New Mexico.

The circulation in the newspapers of the term *resolana* presents us with a new understanding of the historical context from which many academics have virtually ignored. *Resolana* is shown to be a virtual hotbed of popular debate and political discourse. Perhaps the most compelling evidence for this new context comes from a *El Defensor del Pueblo* article titled, "La Legislatura Ha Caminado muy bien de Ambos Lados" (The Legislature has Moved Along Well on Both Sides). In this example the journalist states:

Lo que ha notado el mundo es que los legsiadores de esta
están de por sí no hayan resolaneros (Lobbists) ni para remedio. Esto

señala una época, por primera vez, en la política de Nuevo México

(El Defensor del Pueblo 1931)

(Author's translation:) "What everyone has taken note of is that the legislators are working independently being that there are no lobbyists to be found. This marks for the first time and new era in politics in New Mexico.

This historical data shows resolaneros as constituting an oral public as political lobbyists. Journalists in their newspaper publics often stigmatized these practices. What led to this change is perhaps evident in other alternative descriptions of resolana of the time.

In May 12, 1932, a different contexts of the term resolanero appeared in a news article from *El Nuevo Mexicano*. It was titled the "Banco de Hot Springs victima de ladrones" and suggested that the term also signified "bystander." The news short refers to the resolaneros as passive bystanders who witnessed an event, "Los resolaneros dicen, que afuera lo esperaba otro compañero y que en seguida los dos montaron un automóvil Chevrolet en el que esperaba otro individuo y hasta la fecha no se sabe de su paradero" (The resolaneros [bystanders] said that, the accomplice waited for his partner outside and the two left in a Chevrolet automobile, after waiting for another individual and to this date there is no information about their whereabouts. In this context the resolaneros do not retain their active political character. One additional citation from the August 4, 1932 issue of the *Santa Fe El Nuevo Mexicano*, however, retains the earlier negative connotation. In an article called "Pequeñeces de consecuencia" (Stories of small consequence) we revisit a common representation found in past news articles where, resolaneros are described in a denigrating class based voice and represented as men

without honor. In a satirical tone the author parodies a legal notice where a man publicly dissolve his financial responsibility towards his ex-spouse. The article states:

“De hoy en adelante no sere responsable por cuentas contraidas en mi nombre por mi esposa María Barrigona quien sin razon justa abandonó mi cama y mesa. Así rezan los avisos que muy amenudo aparencen en los periódicos cuandos algunos esposos tienen algunos enojos y casi siempre la esposa se desata en el siguiente número del periódico con la declarición al efecto de que el esposo nada tiene porque apenarse, pues en ninguna parte tiene crédito y ella lo abandonó por borracho, abusive, mentecato y grandioso resolanero que ni para partir leña le sirve (*El Nuevo Mexicano* 1932).

(Author’s translation: “From today forward I will not be responsible for the outstanding bills charged in the name of my wife Maria Barrigona who without reason abandoned my home and bed. So say many of the notices that frequently appear in the newspapers when a husband and wife are quarreling and almost always the wife will release the following declaration in a current newspaper to the effect that he has nothing to worry about as he has no credit anywhere and that she abandoned him for drunkard, abusive, lair as well as a grandiose resolanero and who is not even competent enough to chop wood.

The description stereotypically marks the resolanero as a drunken, underemployed, liar, as well as abusive husband to which the author adds the title grandiose resolanero. It seems that the Spanish newspapers in general apart from the few examples given from the 1930s generally have a negative bias toward the resolana. These

findings are significant as scholarship by historian Pablo Mitchell maintains that the Anglo media press of that time typically denigrated Hispanos and Indians, for what he terms “excessive body comportment” (2005: 100). Nevertheless, the multiple and varied references in the newspapers from cities, towns and villages leads to the historical understanding that the resolana was a diffuse term related to discursive practices of men who enjoyed interacting with one another in public and sunny places. What can be gathered from these examples is that resolana was a recognized place and practice in many towns. From what we can gather from newspaper accounts is that these sites in various degrees served as political forums. In the state’s capital the practices and opinions of the resolaneros were recognized to be significant and a form of political lobbying.

The Sun Club: Resolana through the Modernist Lens

Thus far we have covered documentary evidence based on journalistic narratives dealing with resolana that were published largely in Spanish and for the regions Spanish speaking population. As I have shown resolana was represented often in the negative, thus the interpretation and reading of the newspaper archives must be critical and be read against the grain. The next subsection deals with narratives and artifacts that were produced largely in an era when Anglo Americans represented the region through emergent English language discourses by those who had recently settled or were traveling through the state. I will address how modernist artists, writers and anthropologists such as John Collier Jr. and Irving Rusinow and well as projects of the Works Progress Administration represented the light of resolana during the 1920’s and through the war years.

As was described in the preceding chapter with the advent of the train transit in the 1880's throughout the southwest many Anglo Americans arrived to the region. New Mexico captured the interest of many a migrating easterner who sought refuge in the territory either to become mercantile capitalists or to escape the cold damp climate of the industrialized east coast. This was the case for many people who came to New Mexico to escape spread and ills of tuberculosis. The region's character was popularly deployed at that time as the "Sunshine State" and drew the interests of health professionals planning to establish sanatoriums for people suffering from tuberculosis. For others the exotic culture the Native American and the "medieval customs" of Mexican-American peoples seemingly offered many artists and writers the place to sidestep modernity. One such emblematic figure of this movement is Mable Dodge Luhan, who was part of the art colony in Taos. The colony became influential in the emergence of various modernist discourses that aimed to salvage the remnants of the region's cultural past. In many regards this project was informed by imperialist nostalgia, yet it created new cultural imaginaries that to this day are still dominant in the region.

We begin to trace the meaning of *resolana* in these narratives in a letter Mabel Dodge Luhan wrote to D.H. Lawrence, who was a close friend who she had invited to New Mexico in 1924 (Hopkins Reily 2014). She described the *resolana* as a warm climate in Taos, associated with the gathering of Mexican men on the plaza. In the letter, she described the sweet air of Taos as filling one's being, while the region's silence calmed the body, and allowed one to immerse in one's occupation or the idleness of the moment. Luhan would say that the climate prompted one's career because the altitude made everyone work a little harder, and gave a person the illusion of functioning more

efficiently. With respect to Mexicans Luhan commented they sat on their haunches at the corner of the plaza, forming what Americans call the “Sun Club,” and together they felt fully occupied in their activities (197).

It is important to note that in the letter Luhan identifies the Taos plaza to be a gathering place where the *resolana* is practiced and which Americans like herself call the “Sun Club.” What is significant is that she relates to this gathering place a far different meaning from Montaner’s Spanish language newspaper descriptions found in *La Revista de Taos* ten years earlier. The “feeling of being occupied” Luhan contrasts with the act of being idle. This sympathetic description from an Anglo American perspective sheds light on the *resolana* as a community institution where males gather to do a task. Luhan unfortunately does not elaborate upon what she means by idleness and being occupied.

Furthermore, the representation of the “Sun Club” incites one to think about Luhan’s description tandemly with the stereotypical trope of the lazy Mexican. How can we also place this idea of occupation and action together with idea of the plaza commons being challenged and occupied by the Mexican male body during a time when the hegemonic order is being restructured under the US regime of empire. In many *Manito* communities prior to the Second World War mercantile capitalists often visited the plazas to pick up crops owed to them. Often men, who were part of the *partidario* system waited for the trains, because they were share croppers obliged to give part of their harvest to their landlords. The plazas, thus were locations where the men waited for the arrival of their landlords who came in trains to pick up part of the harvest that was due in lieu of rent. At times these visits were oppressive to locals, as the harvest they had to turn over was needed to feed their own families. A way out of this *partidario* system, as Sarah

Deutsche states in her work *No Separate Refuge* (1989) was for the men to seek a better income by migrating out of their communities and find alternative forms of employment in the cattle industry or agricultural work. For this task it was also necessary for the men to gather in the plaza and wait to be contracted by state labor contractors known as the *reenganche*.

Following WWII as I reiterated in my last chapter Sylvia Rodríguez points out the public practice of gathering in the Taos plaza changed drastically as tourism became the economic motor of this common. Locals were in effect displaced (*desplazados*) from using the main plazas as gathering places. Similar changes occurred to the main plazas in Santa Fe and the Old Town of Albuquerque (Wilson 1997, Horton 2010, Andrés 2000). Most significant to this phenomenon as Silvia Rodríguez (1997) further points out is that tourism did not completely change the status of the plazas as a gathering place. Using a Bakhtinian symbolic analysis Rodríguez argues that during civic and religious fiestas the plazas are reclaimed as temporary counter-public spaces, in which locals re-occupy what they perceived as their lost plaza commons. This disruption causes the everyday generally non-locally based tourism economy to close their storefronts for the weekend while locals gather.

La Resolana of the Works Progress Administration

As local economies shifted from mercantile capitalism to a tourist based capitalism right before the Second World War, the narratives about the plazas that I was able to recover are written in a discourse that reflects the culture of the tourist industry. Two important manuscripts about the resolanas are found in the New Mexico State

archival collections of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). On April 20 of 1937 the New Mexico's Writers Project contributor Reyes Martínez submitted an English language text entitled "La Resolana." The Writers Project was under the auspices of the nationwide new deal WPA that was a federal sponsored institution to provide employment during the era of the Great Depression. Many of these Writers' projects were commissioned to compile state handbooks that provided information on their state's history, folklore and folkways. In New Mexico, one of the main purposes of the Writers' project was to develop articles to promote the state's tourism. As one the few native Hispano writers familiar with the Spanish language and community customs in these projects, Martinez's writings have left a compelling ethnographic description of the resolana. I quote the manuscript in its entirety here:

Squatted on the ground, on the south side of a certain house in the central plaza of the village of Arroyo Hondo several groups of men, young and old whiled away their time. Some were engaged in playing "Crucita", by rolling matches on the ground so as to make one roll over the other and both form a cross; others were playing "Pitanilla", a game similar to our checkers game, played with small stones or pebbles, on lines drawn on the ground; still others played "Pica" by throwing two coins, or buttons, alternately, against the wall, allowing them to roll on the ground in an effect to make one of them come within the length of a certain stick (used as a measure) from the other coin on the ground. Some of the younger men were spinning tops farther away from the men on the ground. Other men stood with their backs to the wall observing the proceedings.

The house was located at the southern end of the east row of houses, which formed the square of the village and had a considerable stretch of open ground southward. Here the men of the village habitually congregated on Sundays, in the summer, and on sunny, warm days during the fall and winter months. The place was aptly named “La Resolana” (resolana means a plaza exposed to the sun, and, more properly, one with a higher background than the foreground). The broadside of the house faced south. The wall was unusually high on that side and absorbed, and, in turn, reflected on the bystanders a considerable quantity of the sun’s heat. In the summer, and alternately a less degree in the winter, it afforded protection from the cold northerly breeze.

The house was finally torn down by the owner about the year 1927 and another of the old landmarks of the village passed into oblivion. La Resolana is, also a term applied to any sunny location especially the south wall of any house or row of adjoining houses. Spanish Americans of this region were always a people who loved to sun themselves at every opportunity offered, and the long rows, or groups of men standing or sitting in the sun was a common sight to be seen in any village or town of northern New Mexico, even down the sunnyside of San Francisco Street at the capital city Santa Fe. How this tendency developed in this people is hard to explain, probably it was the supposition that the sun is the main source of energy, and under this supposition may have hoped to absorb much of this vitalizing energy by prolonged periods of exposure to the suns rays, at places most

advantageously located, although those most devoted to this custom usually exhibited more sluggish than energetic characteristics- probably caused by overdoses of sunlight!

La Resolana is not as popular nowadays as it was in bygone years.

The rush of modern times has almost destroyed one of the most cherished customs, or shall we say pastimes?, of a happy-go-lucky people (Martinez 1937).

The manuscript is a rich description of a lightscape of the resolana. However, we must question the document's representation as it posits that were males gathering squarely on the activity of playing games and in doing so it infantilizes these subjects. We must think of this this narrative in what it presents and what is absent. Male Mexican bodies are described as consumers of space, talking Spanish, gazing the happenings about town, and perhaps talking politics, and assessing why the tourists visit their homes. For this reason this narrative must be understood as a description prepared for tourist consumption. What Martínez's narrative accomplishes, nonetheless, is its general description of the dimensions and architecture of the lightscares of the resolana. He recognizes the importance of the sunlight as an energy source. Commonly, sunlight for many of these communities was utilized in many ways: such as dehydrating foodstuffs for preservation, the drying of adobe bricks and plaster in construction, and as is described in the narrative as heating source.

It is important still not too discount the description of the games and their role in structuring conviviality and solidarity. This narrative also points out that the space is multigenerational but dominantly male. This is important as it serves as a pedagogical place where the younger boys can learn to discern forms of public male comportment and

ways of speaking.

Furthermore, what is notable is the author's interpretation of people taking in the sun. Though he has no clear explanation of this phenomena he does suggest that this resolana practice is not only about absorbing the sun's rays, it is also about idleness and overindulgence which he calls an "overdose." He's tone conveys ambivalence towards the subject as well as the audience, typical of many Hispano writers of the period. Literary critics Génaro Padilla (1991) as well as Tey Diana Rebolledo (1990) have described the writings of minority authors of color such as Martínez as "imprisoned narratives" because the intended audience were Anglo Americans who wanted to learn about "quaint traditions," rather than the deep seated histories of colonization and displacement.

Setting aside, the merits of Martínez's analysis of the resolana, his narrative nonetheless informs us that by 1937 despite its popular practice it was waning. It is troubling to learn that Martínez believes that the "rush of modern times" was leading to the disappearance of the resolana rather than directly connecting this loss to the Mexican Americans' displacement from their communities' public places due to gentrification. His conclusion, of identifying resolana as one of "the most cherished customs, or shall we say pastimes?, of a happy-go-lucky people's [sic]" is indeed a remarkable marker of a social class bias that remains silent or conflated in the document. As we have read the fact that many Spanish-language newspapers were such opponents of the resolana goes to show what Martínez's narrative accomplishes in its reification of resolana as a folk custom. The resolana is deployed through a discourse of folklore and cultural preservation. In this new iteration of resolana it has become detached from its former

political meaning.

Lorin Brown another Hispano writer who was employed by the Writer's project, wrote the following narrative based on his own ethnographic work done in Córdoba, New Mexico. According to anthropologists Briggs and Wiegler who edited his WPA papers, he wrote over 150 narratives over a range of topics (Brown, Briggs and Wiegler 1978: 259).

In the following narrative Brown describes the *resolana* as:

A group of four *pensionistas* gather every afternoon at the home of their senior member. They have been dubbed *Los Senadores* ("the Senators") by a wit of the village. They gather in the shade in the summer and in the winter seek the *resolana* or sunny side of their host's humble home. The group is composed of two brothers, the elder eighty-seven, and the two neighbors, one entirely blind yet mentally alert and in full possession of faculties that throughout his active life have earned him the title of *Pícaro*, a shameless rogue known for his double dealing. The fourth member of the group is entirely innocuous tolerated because of his ability as a listener and a convenient witness to astonishing recitals. An outsider drawing near the group cannot possibly receive the full flavor of their conversation if his presence is known. He is then the one questioned, and his views on affairs of the village as well as from the outside world are sought. The floor is given up to him entirely, perhaps to the satisfaction of his audience but not to himself. One must be a shameless eavesdropper to hear the tales of the past related without restraint.

The old men live again the days of their youth, and many glimpses

may be gained of a bygone day by implication contained in some chance remark or by direct relation of events of long ago. It is amusing to hear the rebuke administered by the oldest of this quartet to the *Pícaro* who happens to be his godson and therefore must take the rebuke with good grace. “*Pendejo, qué sabes tú?*” (Fool, what do you know?). It was thus or thus.” The godson is apparently as old as his *padrino* and blind besides. Perhaps this is fortunate, because his *padrino*’s little blue eyes kindle to the pinpoints of wrath as he rebukes this presumption one who dares question his statements concerning the duel between the *difuntos* (“deceased”) Juan Antonio and Manuelito who fought on the Cuestecita, of the superiority of mules over horses, or that the Negro, Pata de Palo, was a much better schoolteacher than Simón. The lowering sun disperses the meeting. *Pícaro*’s self-effacing wife comes to lead her lord and master home to his supper of *atole* and hot cornmeal. *Pícaro* attributes the fact that he has all his teeth and not a single gray hair to this repast. His blindness he regards as an act of God to which he has philosophically resigned himself, especially since it makes his check larger than those received by the other Senators. All his life he has endeavored to acquire a living with the least effort. Always the self-centered individualist, he accepts this physical disability as another instance of Providence manifesting itself on his behalf. *Los Senadores* will doubtless continue

to meet as long as they are physically able, until death, like *Pícaro*'s black-shawled wife, comes to lead them home (ibid., 110).

Brown frames the narrative within the lightscapes of the afternoon shade or *resolana* near the home of the eldest *Senador*. The setting of the sun signals its culmination. The narrative unlike the previous one focuses more in depth on the speech performances of the subjects as well as various performative dynamics in the space. In addition, it illustrates how such factors as social status both ascribed and achieved such as age, income, and residence structures who can speak and who is conceded authority in the conversation. It is notable that the nickname of the men gathered in the shade or the *resolana* clues us in to this lightscape's former importance in the governance of the community.

In addition to the above Brown keys us in on the importance of "shame" in structuring speech performance or as he calls them "astonishing recitals." He states how speaking and even listening are to be done with "shame." *Vergüenza* as it is called in Spanish is a major cultural structure for comportment as attested by Kutsche and Van Ness (1981) in their work on Cañones, New Mexico. They in turn based their insights on an article published by Facundo Valdez on "vergüenza" in its counterpart "sin vergüenza" being without shame. The rogue in this situation would be performing fearless speech or parrhesia much like his Greek counterpart Diogenes of Sinope, however it would be in this case understood as being shameless.

Though written for the same audience as Martínez's piece, Brown's attention reveals a rich ethnographic description. In Particular, Brown provides a socio-economic context by showing that these men receive a retirement pension, most likely for military

service, and thus they have the means to devote time to activities away from work and home. This is an important facet of who has the privilege to be part of the resolana without feeling shame. Those who are judged shameless for spending time in the resolana are perhaps those who have earned status allowing them to right to gather as opposed to those who are deemed idle or lazy by the community.

In 1940 Rubén Cobos New Mexico's best-known regional Spanish language lexicographer published a useful reference of the resolana in *A Dictionary of New Mexico and Southern Colorado Spanish*. His three entries offer insight into the evolving and varied meanings of the resolana at that time:

resolana f [NM Sp. Resolana] sheltered and sunny side of a building.

resolanero m [NM Sp. Resolanero] a term applied to a retired man who whiles away his time in the winter sitting out on the sunny side of his house chatting with his friends; lazy, shiftless.

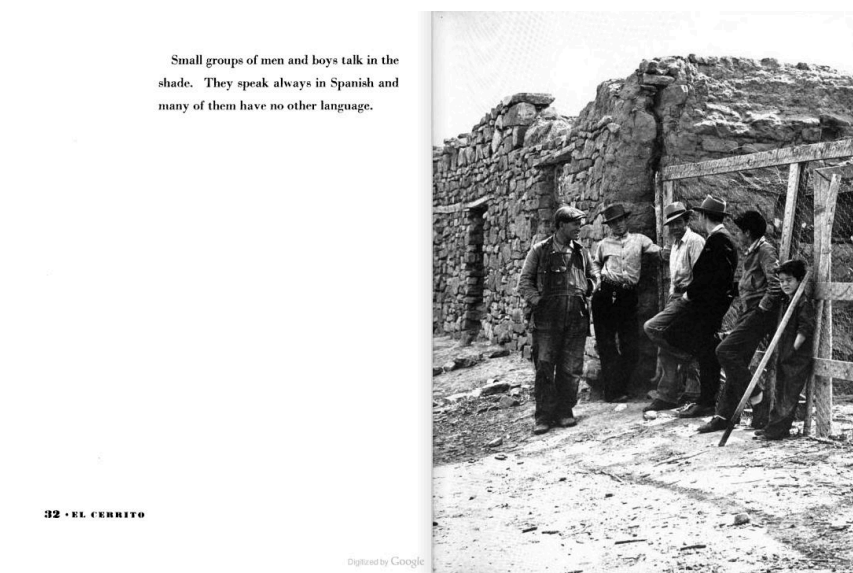
resolaniar vi. [NM-CO Sp. resolaneear, fr. Sp. resolaniar] to spend hours on end sitting on the sunny side of one's house or that of a neighbor, conversing and discussing events of the day. (2003: 201)

It is interesting that by this time the political discursive resolana and the game playing resolana are absent in the dictionary entries. In addition, it defines the resolanero as a retiree, which corroborates with Brown's description, rather than the site being multigenerational as posited by Martínez.

We find further examples of resolana in a 1942 United States Department of Agriculture report authored by Irving Rusinow and titled *A Camera Report on El Cerrito: A Typical Spanish-American Community in New Mexico*. The report which is structured

as a photographic essay gives a respective visual ethnographic rendering of a northern New Mexican village. The purpose of the report was in line with the WPA and USDA federal mandates to make ecological and cultural suggestions to improve the lives of Spanish- American communities. This mandate, however, was largely influenced by ethnocentric views that Mexican culture was dysfunctional and a detriment to social mobility. Figure 2.1 offers an illustration to how the camera lens frames the photographic production of a representation of the practice of gathering in plazas.

Figure 2.1: Facsimile of image and text by Irving Rusinow of multigenerational gathering 1942.



Here we see a photograph accompanied by a caption with an intergenerational group of Spanish-American males standing near a stonewall and chicken wire fence (see Figure 2.1). The caption reads “Small groups of men and boys talk in the shade. They speak always in Spanish and many of them have no other language” (Rusinow 1942: 32). For

Rusinow, though the word *resolana* doesn't appear in his text the gathering Spanish speakers in public space captures his attention. His caption reminds us of prevalent cultural deficit theories of the period.

Figure 2.2: Facsimile of image and text by Irving Rusinow of after mass gathering 1942.



In the next image (see Figure 2.2) Rusinow again photographs the people gathering as they leave a Catholic service. His caption aids us in contextualizing the photographic text. He states, Men get together for a half hour after the service. This is almost as much a part of going to church as the service it self" (ibid., 15). Here the gender segregation is noteworthy as it seems that women and female children issue forth out of the church with a destination in mind and the men and young boys stand

stationary, grouped in circles or leaning against the church fence exuding a particular masculinity and domain over the space. Without interpreting too much into the photograph we must remind ourselves to the importance of the gazing eye and its power to exercise domination through surveillance over place and space. In sum, with the documentation projects of the WPA and the USDA the federal government used their pen and camera to capture the light and shade found in the many resolanas of northern New Mexico.

The photograph (see Figure 2.3) illustrated here is from Nancy Hopkins Reily's book titled *Georgia O'Keeffe/ A Private Friendship Volume II* (2014). In it we see an image of the modernist artist Georgia O'Keeffe standing in the shade under a ramada. This photograph captioned "11-5 Georgia O'Keeffe under the Resolana at Abiquiu House, September 11, 1950," reflects how the place of the resolana had captured other New Mexican modernist artists much like it did Dodge Luhan thirty years earlier (265). It is possible to say that this image reflects the cultural appropriation of the Mexican-American place and space described by Rusinow and written about by Mexican American journalists. Also the image reflects a changing gender and class relationship to public space in northern New Mexico. Absent from the photograph are the traces of communal gathering. It seems this is an individualized privatized resolana in the shade.

Figure 2.3: Facsimile of text and image of Georgia O’Keeffe under the shade of her Resolana 1950.



11-5 Georgia O’Keeffe Under the Resolana at Abiquiú House, September 11, 1950

Before I move on to the next section of edic views of the resolana I conclude this section by looking at the 1963 work of sociologists Sam Schulman and Anne M. Smith entitled “The Concept of “Heath” Among Spanish Speaking Villagers of New Mexico and Colorado (1963).” In this work the authors aim to use theories of personality and culture to define this region’s people. Based on a group ethnographic fieldwork study consisting of interviews and quantitative surveys, they discuss common personality archetypes found among the Mexican Americans of New Mexico. These “types” in this study’s assessment had the significance of being a folk category within the villages “health-disease complex” (226). The study found that people associated with the resolana and the resolaneros were deemed to be suffering from some sort of illness or aliment. Schulman and Smith state:

“Each village has its share of flojos or resolaneros (slothful and lazy ones) who are regarded with contempt. They are physically capable of working, but they do not. They pass the hard work off on family and friends and expand their energy in “wheeling and dealing.” If a man has the external signs of good health but is suffering from a non- obvious condition, he may suppress over expressions of his illness, especially an interruption of his routine to keep from being labeled a *flojo* (230).

It is difficult to assert when exactly the public gathering such as resolana and resolanero began to be interpreted as pathological, like in the study by Schulman and Smith. This is not a common analysis found in any literature or in the oral traditions of New Mexicans. Perhaps their findings are unique and a misjudgment of their observations. In my assessment, after the Second World War, culturally the region underwent a major economic transformation as I mentioned earlier, moving from a mixed economy of mercantile capitalism and small farm agriculture to an economy primarily dependent on tourism and service employment. In some parts military employment and large scale agriculture was an also significant aspect of the economy. The wheeling and dealing strategies of the resolanero must be considered as responses to these economic and cultural changes.

Coda: Resolana In The Valley Today

It is around 9:30 on a Sunday morning and a small group composed of six men gather outside the southern wall facing the church of San José waiting for Mass to begin.

The weather of 15 degrees Celsius, with a slight breeze coming from the west, is common for a typical day in January. By the wall it is a few degrees warmer than inside the church at this hour. The majority of the congregation arrives and parks their cars and trucks in the parking lot of the church. From here they enter walking bundled up in their heavy coats and scarfs to the main entrance on the eastern side of this corrugated steel sided church. Once seated inside many join in the congregation led rosary.

As for the group of men on the south side of the building talking to each other, they huddle in a circle formation with their hands in their pockets of their denim jeans keeping warm. They are the male members of the choir who have arrived prior to set up their musical equipment inside the church. However, rather than staying indoors, after they have quietly set up microphones, tuned their guitars and prepared the week's order of music for the day's 10:00 am Mass, the men go outside and congregate around a more familiar place known as la resolana.

This place is not easily locatable. It is a sensation, a feeling of warmth, an envelope of temporary comfort that vacillates and interrupts the cold breeze. It is a moving microclimate generated by the refraction of sunlight off of the blacktop parking lot and the steel sided building. This intergenerational male group is made up of an elder man in his eighties (Interlocutor 1), three men in their late fifties to early sixties (Interlocutors 2 and 3) and a young man in his early twenties and, the myself, age 33. The older men exchange their verbal artistry as the younger ones listen on.

Stirring around, trying to do the best to stay warm, as if it were an invisible campfire they variably exchange the latest local news of the day and talk about music.

This day the conversation shifts to the need to recruit local musicians for an upcoming wake. The topic brings up the news of a recent passing.

Interlocutor 1: ¿Supo que murió el Pete García? (*Did you know that Pete García passed away?*)

Group: [nods in agreement]

Interlocutor 1: ¿Era pariente tuyo? (*Was he related to you?*) Moves in closer

Interlocutor 2: yeah era mi carnal, tuvimos el entierro el viernes pasado
(*Yes, that was my brother, we buried him last Friday.*)

Interlocutor 1: Lo siento mucho (*My condolences, I feel
profoundly about your loss*) Reaching across the space of the circle
to offering a combination handshake and embrace.

Interlocutor 3: I would have gone, pero I barely found out; I didn't know
hasta me que dijo mi vieja ayer.

Interlocutor 2: ¿Qué podemos hacer? Ya vamos todos pa' allá.

El mundo hoy en día esta muy acelerado. Se nos fue la vida y ya
nosotros semos los viejos. (What can we do? We are all heading
down that road. The world nowadays is really accelerated.

Life has passed us by and now we are the old ones.)

Interlocutor 3: ¡A mí, no! Yo todavía tengo mis veinticinco ABRILES!

(I am not old! I am still a young one! In reality he is in his mid sixties)

Group: [laughter at the incredibility of the comment]

Interlocutor 2: Es como me decía este camarada UNA VEZ, “

¿Cuántos años tienes tú? Izque le dijo el otro, “¡Ninguno!” Entonces

le preguntó “¿Cómo es que no tienes “Ningunos años?” “Si” Isque le dijo, “¡Todos se me han ido!” Patting the back of Interlocutor 3 while laughing (It is like the joke this a good friend once told me, “How old are you? (Literally, how many years do you have left to live) Said one guy. The other said, “None!” “How can you be ageless? (Literally, how can you have no years?” ‘Yes said the other one, “They have all past me by.”

Group: The group lets out a solidarity laugh that defuses the formality of situation.

Interlocutor 1: ¿Ya es tiempo? ¡Vamonos, muchachos! (Is it time for mass to start? Lets go, lads!) Someone checks their cellphone and confers that it is time. Led by Interlocutor 1 the group heads slowly for the church to prepare to perform the music for mass.

After mass I agree to help out the choir director at the upcoming wake.

The place in which this above discourse occurs perhaps complicates our understanding of place and space. I would argue that it is the envelope of the warmth that forms la resolana that leads to the cohesion of this gathering and serves as a domain where local language is anchored. I argue that the resolana is a space where locals feel they feel a moment of respite before or after having to do work. The politics of language in relation to place changes in relative to this envelope of feeling. Once the musicians enter the church building the language domain shifts to the culturally dominant language of English led by a non-local priest. As the elders of this community, these musician have earned the status to co-facilitate the congregation in singing parts of the mass bilingually or in Spanish.

Among the musicians there are accomplished composers of local Spanish language music. For some people in the congregation the few songs in the local dialect of Spanish offers them a feeling of home.

This feeling of home emerges from the microclimate of warmth, the space where these guys joke, play with formalities, touch each other forming social bonds. It is in this place where warmth is felt, the warmth Raymond Williams argues that becomes a systemic structure of feeling. Here the tension of the cold weather, the passing of a brother, the comradely and solidarity of humor allows these resolaneros (Men who gathers in the Sunny place) a respite moment, where they can enjoy their solidarity.

This last ethnographic narrative shows how the importance of the lightscape is to the concept of gathering among males in the Río Arriba region of northern New Mexico. These bonds on a larger-scale tend to strengthen kinship ties throughout the community by invoking a cultural sensibility, that been the spreading of information through a linguistic infrastructure. In this last case the culturally sensitive information of a death in the family was mediated through speech play that allowed a loosening of social tensions allowing for solidarity among the people present. In this space the heat generated by the sunlight parallels the human warmth shared among resolaneros.

In the next chapter, I will discuss how New Mexicans displaced from plazas and resolana gatherings have generated new spaces in commercial everyday places such as restaurants, bars and local casinos. We will continue to trace the meaning of these lightscapes of sunlight, shade and warmth as they are reconfigured in indoor places throughout the Española Valley.

CHAPTER THREE

"La Nueva Resolana": Everyday Gathering Spaces in Commercial

Places in Río Arriba

El que nace pa' resolanero

dondequiera hace resolana

-Levi Romero

Late in the evening on December 22, 2013 I went to the Walmart Supercenter located in Ranchitos, New Mexico off of Riverside Drive. I had in mind to shop around to see if I could find a few last hour Christmas gifts. In Española like elsewhere this big box chain is one of the few businesses open until midnight. At the entrance to the store the lines were long, costumers visited talking each other in the aisles being that there were only two checkout stations open.

Seeing a relative, friend or just an acquaintance looking around the aisles or checkout often lends itself to what would seem to be serendipitous opportunities to catch up on the latest gossip. One goes or reversely refrains from going to Walmart with the tacit knowledge and knows that they will be seen and that you will recognize somebody who will unwittingly engage you in a conversation. The conspicuousness of this place also causes people to avoid it for the same reason.

On this day I met up with an old friend in his late fifties walking through the store. He doesn't have a shopping cart, perhaps he is with someone, maybe not. His eyes light up when we see each other. I tell him, "¿Cómo 'sta Mr. Rodríguez?" He responds, "Aquí nomás, checking it out." We know each other from many years of playing music

together. Being away from home finishing my degree over the last couple of years has disconnected us. The last time I saw him we had played a benefit concert to raise funds for the local county health center. His own health has visibly diminished. At one time this 5 foot 9-inch teacher was an intimidating visage full of life and song. Today he looks a kind of thin that is troubling. Nevertheless, he is dressed sharp. I ask him, “¿How are things pa’ rumbo de Abiquiú?” He says, “Alright no complaints, just checking it out, seeing who I can see.” I ask him about his brother and he tells me that he and his wife are doing good. Before we part, He says it’s a shame that the only time we visit with each other nowadays is when we see each other at Walmart. I confess to him, “You know sometimes I come to Walmart just to see who I know and get the chance to catch up with them even if its for a split second.” He laughs and enthusiastically agrees with me in my sensibility. You know that’s right! I tell him that we should get together to visit and informally play some local ranchera music on the guitars. We part following the exchange of seasonal best wishes and a happy coming New Year.

Two weeks later back in Texas I learn through social media that my friend had died a few days following our encounter at Walmart. The chance of visiting my friend for the last time stayed with me. I wondered why he was idling around the aisles of this big-box store thirty-some miles away from his home. I came to the conclusion that this was his *despedida* that is, a custom some people practice then they know they are soon going to die soon, so they need to say farewell.

I, ask myself, the significance of the place in which Mr. Rodríguez chose to do some deep hanging out the last days of his life. In my mind he came to one of the public places used by the local community. This is a highly significant discursive practice of the

everyday life because he came to a commercial zone, rather than the plaza. Today, in many cities, the commercial zones have replaced the social milieu of the plazas in New Mexico.

Big box commercial stores such as these are often criticized for destroying small businesses and local economies. In Española as in many other places, globally such large chains can underprice competition and provide working-class communities with affordable alternatives to local mom-and-pop stores. Over the last decade the ongoing depressed economy of New Mexico has led many people to shop at large discount stores and abandon their local stores due to their tight income. Current economic indicators position Rio Arriba as one of the poorest counties in the state after the counties of San Juan and Mora (US Census 2015).

The fastest growing businesses in the county are high interest payday loan establishments. As of 2014 the city of Española with its population of approximately 10,000 people had 23 such businesses (ibid). In many cases these businesses would open in the vacant buildings of closed local stores. Many people whom I talked with often blamed the various Native American Casinos in the area for the blighted villages in the valley. Others quote the narcotics problem of Española that is a nationally recognized problem. During the last decade academics have addressed this local issue through the work of anthropologists Michael Trujillo (2009) and Angela García (2010) who have respectively each both published an ethnographic monograph on the subject. While both focused on a description of the high rate of heroin overdoses in the county neither addressed its direct effect on the local economy.

Likewise, economic problems associated with are often ignored by scholars who

focus on space. Architects and regional planners are often concerned with theorizations of space. Most notably Mike Davis book *Magical Urbanism* argues that public urban spaces in the US over the last decade have undergone a process of increased “Latinization” in response to immigration to the US from Latin American countries (2001). In the American Southwest immigration has certainly impacted the cultural composition of the region. However, more significant of all has been the proximity of the Southwest to the U.S.-Mexico border that has historically fostered the maintenance of the Spanish language in the private and public spheres of New Mexico. Spanish has been a common language in use since the late 1500s. According to Bills and Vigil (2008) immigration has aided the Spanish language maintenance and retention beyond the multigenerational shift to English, which is typical in most regions of the US, as theorists propose that by the third generation the Spanish language is lost. From my own observations of New Mexico and Española, Spanish language continues to be used at the local level, such as in community meetings and in other official business settings. Spanish is commonly used in official settings, with linguistic shifts to English, reflecting a bilingual form of official discourse. Public officials consciously reaffirm the use of Spanish in order to include immigrant monolingual Spanish speakers within the civic dialogue. What prompted many of my initial inquiries in this overall project over space and the resolana, was my interest in understanding how community dialogue is fostered in Latina/o publics through the use of Spanish and bilingual Spanglish. Furthermore what I am articulating is how a linguistic infrastructure of counter-public language domains affects politics and governance from the everyday conversations over coffee to the official business of political subdivisions of the state such as the local irrigation

communities.

When I first began to ask around Rio Arriba about the local governance of the community irrigation canals or acequias I was advised to seek out the leaders and community commissioners, not in an offices, but rather in the places they gathered, such as in fast-food restaurants where they drink their morning coffee. I came to know these leaders and their peers as they met to have coffee and informally discuss the happenings of the day. Though I will discuss the details of this acequia governance in Chapter 5, here I will focus on the local businesses and how the customers' social needs shape these publics. I found the practice of gathering for coffee to be significant and not a residue of yesteryears but an emergent local Latino/a oral public. These sorts of special practices could be found throughout Rio Arriba and neighboring counties. The main features of these early morning gathering spaces is the abundant presence of older people over the age of 50, who are usually retired, yet continue to be quite politically active. In such places they encounter their peers as wells newcomers and use Spanish as their primary linguistic domain even though their primary language is English. In these Latino publics it is common to overhear conversational language shifts.

Architect and poet Levi Romero (2001) of the University of New Mexico maintains that Latinos in northern New Mexico have converted such spaces as settings where the traditional Resolana is manifested. He furthers that although this is a common practice, the resolana is also practiced in unlikely spaces such as Wal-Mart snack bars, along the side of the road, and US post offices. He calls these places within the restaurants, or commercial settings "La Nueva Resolana" or The New Resolana. By

conducting fieldwork Romero was able to conclude that his informants explained that the town plazas are no longer the only locality for the resolana. One of his informants stated:

Sabe usted que yo ya ni voy al parque. A mi mejor me gusta venir aquí.

Aquí me siento en la resolana a ver la gente pasar y en veces encuentro algun amigo y ponemos a platicar (27).

(Author's translation: You know I no longer go to the plaza. I prefer coming here. I sit in the resolana and watch people pass by and something I met up with some friend and we start visit and talk.)

In a joint publication with cultural critic Spenser Herrera and Romero address the sacredness of the resolana in these cultural spaces. Romero and Herrera state:

La Plaza, la resolana and *el camposanto* are traditional sacred spaces that have been mainstays of Chicano culture for generations. Their social and cultural significance have been instrumental in defining Chicano cultural space. However, their communal impact has slowly faded away under the pressure of cultural assimilation. These spaces were once key Community gathering places where people would meet, plan, celebrate, share *chisme*, honor loved ones, or just simply pass the time. They were epicenters of Chicano culture. They helped preserve the social fabric of our people and created a link to the rest of the Hispano America. In tucked corners across the Southwest United States these Chicano sacred spaces still exist today but to a much lesser degree in a more commercialized form than their historical precedents (prologue xi: 2014)

When identifying these spaces as sacred Romero and Herrera are aware of their social significance to community cohesion and resilience. In the later part of their appraisal of

these spaces they argue that these spaces have waned from their historical counterparts in the face of commercialization. I concur, but also argue that new gathering spaces have emerged in relation to our entrance into late capitalism, and in the postmodern period the importance of commercial zones have overshadowed the traditional plaza spaces, and deterritorialized the people who commonly frequented them. However, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, *resolanas* though no longer practiced in the plazas of Rio Arriba during the entire year, are reclaimed during fiestas, when Mexican American locals gather in their plazas and coexist in the spaces controlled by tourists.

My main point here is that Mexican Americans use language to reclaim their social spaces regardless of where they practice the *resolana*. Traditional spaces, such as those Romero and Herrera claim have waned, is fact, yet new spaces are constantly produced. In these spaces, where the Spanish language is spoken, the hegemonic spatial domain of the English language is challenged, and the act of speaking Spanish becomes political, which for many is the continuity of the *resolana*.

For the moment let us focus on a other aspect of gathering which is the creation of what Ray Oldenburg (2009) calls “Third Place” not to be confused with Soja’s (1996) Third Space. The former is a concept of place, which describes the places of social interaction away from the domestic sphere of “First Place” of home and the “Second Place” of the job or employment. They are cafés, malls, beauty salons, barbershops and places where people gather and, dialogue reigns supreme. Similar to Jürgen Habermas’s (1991(1963)) classic study of bourgeois public sphere Oldenburg depicts Third Place sites to be found in places such as the bar of the television show “Cheers,” where everybody knows your name. In Española, such third places are common, as not only

knowing peoples personal names is key, but also developing a knowledge of their kin relations and information about their community in general. The importance of knowing beyond a person's name allows people to spatialize their communities' kinship and social networks. I now move to how the nueva resolana has emerged in commercial spaces such as restaurants and stores.

“I go there for the social aspect”

It is 5:16 on a chilly March morning and the local McDonalds workers have been on the job prepping the restaurant for business, mopping floors, brewing the coffee or doing maintenance to the soda fountain. Though the restaurant is open 24 hours a day the dinning area inside the restaurant is only open from 5:30 am – 11:00 pm. Outside in their vehicles are the *madrugadores* (earlier morning risers). They arrive early and patiently wait for the doors to open at 5:30am, so they can have their coffee and meet friends for their daily conversations. Some of the regulars have the privilege to be let in before the official time of business.

I have been coming to these early morning gatherings for 3 years and I have become aware that this is a Third Place for northern New Mexicans. They begin to gather in the morning under the dark skies and when they enter the restaurant they seat under bright florescent lights. Aside from the restaurant workers the first person to arrive is a woman in her 70's. She sits in her accustomed corner spot and awaits for the others to arrive. By 6:00am there are seven people sitting in her half booth table. As each person arrives they come in and address the people at the table with a “*Bueno Días*” (Good Morning) greeting. Sometimes they try to evoke their interlocutors into a

formalized exchange when they say “*Buenos Días le dé Dios*” (May God grant you a good day) which elicits a similar formal response of the same salutation.

Most of the conversations in this place are usually in local Spanish. English is used mostly to clarify miscommunications or to engage in word play. Word play and, what is call *plática de los tiempos de antes* are valued discursive themes at these gatherings. The latter refers to discursive genres dealing with a person’s memory to recover the past. One day for instance a man came in and greeted everyone at the table with “Good morning le dé Dios.” The purpose of this code-switching was to bring humor into very formal conversation that was taking place at this daily gathering. Here the common item, which brings about the shared sense of *communitas* is the hot coffee which is specially priced for seniors. Though everyone drinks coffee some have brought their own cookies from home and share them among the others at the table. During the summer months the shared cookies are often replaced with fresh cucumbers, radishes and jalapeños grown in their kitchen gardens. These early risers or *madrugadores* are only one of several typical groups who gather at the restaurant on a daily basis.

The Table of the Old Ones

One man makes a self-referential joke about the McDonald’s early morning crowd by posing a question to those gathered “*saben ustedes dónde está la mesa de las viejas*” (Do you all know where the plateau/ table of the old women is?) Growing in Española Valley the question seemed clear as a local person would quickly know the place name of “Mesa de las Viejas” which is a locally know place where people go hunting for deer and elk and also a good place to harvest piñón nuts. Jokingly, however, this statement can also be

translated as - the table where the women sit. The gentleman sees that I respond in the affirmative along with the others at the table. So he picks me out and then says to me, “You are studying to be a doctor, right? So do you know where the mesa de los viejos is?” Everybody at the table laughs at my expense. This is because the community is lightly poking fun at me, for being educated, yet not understanding the double meaning of his question. His point is to socially level my status and allow me to participate with the others. The speaker informs me “*Ésta es, aquí*” as he lets out a chuckle. Interestingly, as he makes fun of me, he also jokingly belittles himself and the others by calling himself a *viejo* (oldtimer). This word play levels all of our statuses and makes our gathering intimate and communal, but clearly marks my status as not being an elder.

But more so, the speaker referentially marks how this gathering place is about a space for those who are older, retired, and has the opportunity to develop social personas. It is a nueva resolana where the elderly meet and converse about the past and present. I, as a younger man of 35 am often asked what am I doing here, and why I am not at work. My presence in the nueva resolana is a bit odd to many due to my age and expectation that I should be working. They do not know that I am an anthropologist and when they see me, on their way out from the restaurant and heading to work in the nearby town of Los Alamos or Santa Fe, they do not understand why I am participating in this resolana.

It is also significant to detail the gender dynamics of this space. As the joke above relates to the Spanish word *Viejos*, the term is gender neutral but is generally unmarked as masculine. The gathering, even though it is an integrated place where men and women meet, it is predominantly a male space. Of the hundred or so men that come in the morning about 15 percent are women. Many of these women accompany their spouses.

Only a handful of women come alone. Single women, however, are the most active speakers who share their insights in this nueva resolana.

As for active speakers, speech performance and status among the group is often judged by various factors. The shared sense of *communitas* among the gathered is intensified by the use of the Spanish language or bilingualism through-out their language play conversations. This type of language practice is not common among the younger people unless they are with their parents, as the youth tend to be passive bilinguals or only use monolingual English. Very few younger people frequent the restaurant at these hours, and when they enter for brief moments they generally greet people with “have a good day,” “*Buenos Días*” (Good Morning) or “*Que tenga un buen día*” (Have a good day). These people come into the restaurant as they pick up their breakfast food at the counter on their way out to work.

By 6:45 AM the first group of *los madrugadores* disperses and another group forms in the center of the restaurant where there is a long row of two tables with chairs. This is a noticeable change, as the many of the people sitting at the first table stand up and move to the other table. Initially, the make up of this second group is generally all men. This group is known as *los políticos* (The Politicians) by those who frequent the restaurant. As new people come in and take up the vacated spaces a new group forms where the *madrugadores* once sat. In this table, where Dora and Mr. Trujillo now sit with me, I ask her about the different gatherings at the table. Dora is a woman in her mid 70s and Mr. Trujillo is a retired school-teacher in his early 80’s. They are not related to each other or the people who enter the restaurant and sit with them. Both speak to me and

comment on the various groups of people who gather at McDonald's every morning. Our conversation is as follows:

Dora: You know this group here is called the Brady bunch but I think the better name would be the Rowdy Bunch?

Author: The Rowdy Bunch? ¿Acúal grupo?

Dora: This one right here, Right HERE (indicates her surroundings) This one, over here are the little rascals, Ok? Then we have a group of women who sit over there we call the Golden Girls.

Author: The Golden Girls? They do not come everyday?

Dora: No they do not come everyday. Off and on. WHAT IS YOUR QUESTION, Your number one question?

Author: What is the main reason you like to come over here in the mornings?

Trujillo: Company, and coffee is secondary

Author: Hardly anybody eats the food, they just drink the coffee

Dora: Well it is for the gossip, for news, for coffee, for company. Just to enjoy because guess what most of the people that come here live alone. So we come here so we won't be talking to the walls.

Author: Most of the people are retired?

Dora: The majority are retired. YOU'RE retired aren't you? (To Trujillo)

Trujillo: huh?

Dora: YOU ARE RETIRED?

Trujillo: RETARDED!

Dora: Oh, he is retarded, see that is what I mean.

Author: Some of them are retired others are not?

Dora: Most of them are retarded (pretending to ignore his presence).

Trujillo: Most of them are retired I'm retarded?

Dora: (Laughter) This is funny!

Author: Then there are now two of us, so I don't feel so lonely.

Trujillo: Oh no no I'm not alone.

Dora: it's funny I have been coming here for 10 years.

Author: 10 years?

Dora: Yeah, what happen was I came back from San Jose, California. I got back and I was building a house at the time my husband passed away.

Author: How long, 10 years?

Dora: No it has been longer than that but I came by myself and I decided to build a house. I bought this property there and I would spend days weeks at home trying to get something done. I wouldn't go anywhere. My son says, "Mom you need to get out. You need to go out there meet people to talk to. You can't be here all alone all the time you know." But I said "I have so much to do." He said, "it doesn't matter." And when you go to a restaurant don't sit at a table by yourself. Go sit at the counter with everyone, so you can ask questions. Converse, or whatever. And lo and behold about that time El Johnny King me *desía*, "come on Dora." I knew him from before, "come on over we have a group there at McDonald's that gets together every morning and we have coffee or something to eat," so he kept begging me and begging me and finally one day I said well I'm going to go so I came and we used to sit in over there in that corner. Earnestine

and Robert, and there was like 15 people. GUESS WHAT? Ernestine and Lawrence and I are the only ones alive from that group. They are all gone, but then people still come in and they sit down. So it is kind of a way to gather with people to find out what is happening around.

Author: El Johnny King, *el viene* at 5:30 in the morning?

Dora: He comes in very early. He says he comes in at 6:30am. I asked him if the door is open or if he had to stand and wait. Ha ha [Laughter] *Me dice*, “Its open” but anyway he is early and by 7:30 he leaves, and why? What does he do?

NOTHING. NOW when I come I usually come at around 8:00am, well sometimes A little earlier and sometimes a little later but I usually stay a couple of hours.

Some people come and leave and another group comes in and they leave.

Author: My other question is what other places do people get together to have coffee?

Trujillo: Joanne’s.

Vigil: Ooooh *van a los Indios en San Juan en el Casino*.

Dora: al the Ohkay Casino.

Vigil: Yeah a lot of people.

Author: ¿Hay un grupo que se junta at Chuck Wagon?

Dora: There is a group that goes there but I don’t like it. Excuse me. Let me get coffee for this *viejito*.

The insights from Dora and the other’s conversations had led me to better understand the various relationships people foster in their gatherings over daily coffee. However, it is important to state that my interviews gathered in this Nueva Resolana, must have been

affected by my use of a recorder and possibly changed the dynamics of our conversations. As Charles Briggs (1986) affirms the interview is often an oppressive instrument of research that inserts the unwanted effect of surveillance upon interviewees.

With this in mind, I noticed early on, when I began this project and started interviewing people in Española and the surrounding communities, that most people spoke to me in English, even when I interviewed them in Spanish. This leads me to believe that despite my competence in the local dialect my work as an anthropologist rather than as an everyday gatherer marked my otherness. I noticed that when I did not take an audio recorder or a notebook people's relationships with me changed. This pedagogic mode of engagement with my interlocutors taught me about the hermeneutic relations that are formed through the Nueva Resolana. For example, a man who came daily to McDonalds introduced himself to me and commented that he wanted to participate in my project. To him it was important that I was documenting the significant function of the gathering spaces for the locals. He stated, "I come here for the social aspect." This was a valuable insight, which embodied why the practice of resolana continues to be a significant organic social practice of engagement.

After a couple of months of conducting research in McDonald's and in other restaurants people began to speak to me in Spanish or, bilingual English. Interestingly enough my relationship to the people also changed. Often I would serendipitously run into one or more of the people who would gather at McDonald's throughout the day. One of the main places I would see these Nuevo Resolaneros would be at local funeral homes or churches. In these places, I was not seen as an anthropologist, but rather as a musician who was invited by the bereaved family members to play at their relative's wake or

funeral services. It was during this time the gatherers at McDonalds would often relate to me as a musician. Many times as I entered the door, I would hear them say “*Ahí viene el músico,*” or often I would be greeted with someone singing the first lines of their favorite *canción ranchera* to see if I recognized the tune, and if I knew how to sing it. It was a test of my competence of the local language and the musical genre that I was recognized in the community to have a skill in. This factor gave me an enhanced status among the early morning gatherers. I was seen as a bearer of a musical tradition bearer and in turn given the respect to participate in their *resolana* dialogue rather than only be a passive listener. As people began to know me through our conversations in the Nueva Resolana, my interactions in the restaurants led me to know more people. Soon, around town, people began to greet me and acknowledged my role as an anthropologists, who also was a musician willing to participate in local gatherings. At times, I felt that, people expected me to play my guitar before I was allowed to observe them. I, therefore, tacitly carried my guitar to many places. At least fifty times I was asked at McDonalds to talk about my work as musician, rather than discuss my anthropological project. Many people also assumed that I was really a music teacher at the university, rather than an anthropologist. Often it would take me a while to explain to them that anthropology was not solely about music. Other times people would engage me in conversations that would take as long as an hour and a half, in which they would prove me why I was not studying bones. I would explain what my discipline was about, but since they were accustomed to defining anthropology as a study of bones and music, I eventually resigned myself and told them that I studied “culture and traditions.” Nonetheless, these inquiries into my profession allowed me to develop bonds with the locals and continue observing them in the

restaurants, specifically at McDonald's. After my conversations I would leave and jot my field notes off site.

Los Políticos

At McDonald's by 7:30 am the gathering in the table of *los madrugadores* would generally begin to dissipate. The one or two of the early riser gatherers, who lingered on would conspicuously move from their tables and congregate at the most centrally located table in the restaurant, where the new group would sit together. From there they would observe the action at the counter or listen to the conversations taking place by the cashier box. This Nuevo Resolana is not only a cultural distinct linguistic sphere it is also a space for the exercising of gazes by the resolaneros. As people enter the restaurant, the people gathered at the tables direct their gazes at the incoming customers and conspicuously make comment about them. This practice of seeing and reflecting on what is occurring constitutes a key facet of this public. This practice parallels what Setha Low (2010) states takes place in the Latin American plazas where men gather and conspicuously observe the foreign tourists, particularly the women. However, what differs in the New Mexican context is that the resolaneros only dialogue in Spanish and thus foster a Spanish language enclave. This is significant since the later it gets in the restaurant most of the people who enter are young and they only speak English. The resolaneros, therefore, speak Spanish to mark their status and to identify themselves as a Spanish language in-group. The customers are aware of this, and that they are being observed.

As the time passes, more males gather at McDonald's. These are the late morning gatherers and in age are slightly younger than the early morning risers. They are in their

early sixties to early seventies. They meet and form a formidable block. They arrange the tables and form two rows where 10 Latino men sit face to face. These men are referred to by locals as “*los políticos*” or in English (the politicians). The atmosphere of this space changes when occasionally; a woman accompanies her husband to the restaurant, and joins the men. If a critical mass of women gather, usually 5 to 7 they often isolate themselves from the men and sit in a separate table. This type of women’s space does not occur frequently. Generally Dora habituates this type of space, and the women she called the “Golden Girls.” In all these groups local Spanish and bilingualism are central to these publics. However, when few women are present they usually sit integrated with the men, and thus keeping them in check in regards to sexist behavior or comments. The women do not allow the *resolaneros* to make lewd or sexist jokes about the appearance of women who enter the restaurant. This common occurrence only takes place, if only one or no women are present among the old men. In these occasions the space takes on a carnivalesque style, where the men make jokes specifically with women being the butt of the joke.

In other occasions the Nuevo Resolana becomes a place for networking and passing gossip to shame someone for their behavior. I observed during one visit at McDonald’s, when a widow who frequents the Nuevo Resolana informed her listeners at the table that a man who had been recommended to fix her car by one of the *resolaneros* did a poor job. She then pointed at the mechanic who had worked on her car. She said “*Ese hombre allí me robó.*” (That man here has stolen from me). The situation had begun a week earlier when she asked at her table, “*Nececito alguien que sabe componer carros*” (I need someone to fix my car). The discussion at the table quickly revealed that a man

sitting in another table was a competent mechanic. It is important to note that though many of the gatherers are retired or disabled many come to early morning coffee to discuss their plans for their day. Others who are underemployed also attend these coffee talks looking for employment doing odd jobs. The women informed the gatherers at her table that she had paid the mechanic but he never completed the job. She loudly voiced her concerns and used peer pressure until one of the *resolaneros* stood up and walked towards the mechanic, asking him to complete the job or return the woman's money.

The following week the woman returned to McDonald's and informed the gatherers that the man had not completed the job. Interestingly the *resolaneros* noticed that the mechanic stopped coming to the McDonald's ever since he was asked to make good on his contract with the woman. When the question around the table was asked about his whereabouts, everyone responded that "*No se ha mira'o aquí*" (He hasn't been seen around here). The gatherers were acting as a collective watchdog group, who through social ostracizing would punish people like the bad mechanic. This story gives us a sense of how this community serves as a popular venue where grievances can be addressed or mediated without appealing to small claims court or criminal action. Pressure is exerted by talk among the vast networks of these non-office holding "*políticos*."

Once again focusing our attention on the language of los *políticos*, on one particular occasion I listened how the practice of the local Spanish dialect is compulsory as the language of place. For example, a local Latino man came to the table where the *políticos* were sitting. He greeted them by saying, "Good morning." To which the central figure of the group responded in a snarky reproaching tone, "*¿QUÉ PASÓ? Quizas juites*

a la escuela y *apredites* muy bien con la maestra?” Immediately, the man highly embarrassed changed his language and began conversing in Spanish. Though the político was kidding with his interlocutor his brief speech performance is telling. In this table the style of discourse that is shared is Spanish.

The político’s critical speech style is known within a genre known as “*carria*.” A Mexican American and Mexican ethnopoetic speech act that Alvin Korte calls, “a joking and embarrassment game in which participants are invited to engage in lighthearted schemes designed to incite an individual to break from the value system “ (2013). *Carria* is a style of speech that finds humor through deprecation of its subject. Similar to roast humor it is a social leveling genre that fosters solidarity with those who find it in good humor. It serves as a vehicle to inculcate the cultural value of *vergüenza* or shame (Valdez 1979).

Furthermore, as it is customary for people to greet each other when they enter or sit down in the Nueva Resolana it is also deemed proper to say farewell, and not in haste, but in a calm deliberate fashion which doesn’t deny anybody the respect they are due. In one case the most senior of the gatherers takes leave of the table to go about his daily business in town or back at his home. He tells a younger man in his mid sixties, “*Ahí nos vemos, cara meada*” (Hopefully we will be seeing each other around, PEE FACE), as he laughs. The other man dissimulating not hearing the insult returns his customary “Que le vaya muy bien CAMARADA!” (May you have a good day COMRADE!). However, he reciprocates with a tag comeback, as he leaves out the door. He states “*Dile a la honey que ya es tiempo pa cambiarte el pañal*” (Tell your girlfriend that it is time to change your diaper) and merrily laughs while he waves through the glass doors at the others

sitting at the table.

This situation shows how two friends who have known each other for a long time can playfully say deprecating humor at each other. However, in terms of status the elder man has years, which afford him the right to talk shamelessly to his younger counterpart. The younger man has to dissimulate and be humiliated in the presence of an older person out of respect. The younger man waits until the older man is perceivably out of hearing range when he makes his comeback. The people at the table laugh, but some in their facial expressions indicate a feeling of anxiety because a younger man's response had crossed line into unwarranted shamelessness.

The above narrative shows how carrila is about the inculcation of power and speaking. I argue that it is a particular genre of humor, which is integral to resolana spaces such as these. For example in the interview with Dora and Trujillo, which I cited in the earlier part of this chapter the word retard used by Dora and Trujillo should be understood in this context. Trujillo's comment meant to poke fun of Dora, and likewise demonstrates that there is a bond between them, that allows them to kiddingly depreciate one another without having their feelings hurt. An insightful advice I was told by an elder was "*hazte pendejo mi hijito y aprendas mucho*" (pretend you know nothing my son and you will learn a lot). This mode of dissimulation allows for solidarity among the speakers by not placing too much attention to the skills of one particular speech performer. What I found in these examples of carrilla, is their use in the Nuevo Resolana as verbal play and a social discourse to level the different statuses of people.

La Despedida

Between 8:30 and 9:30am in McDonald's and in other restaurants the discourses associated with the Nuevo Resolana dissipate as people leave to other places. Some people go to work, while others go home. As I mentioned above it is customary that when people leave their tables they address the entire table and say their farewells. It is also important for people to wish people good health, as well as the health of their family. For example, someone would say "*Ahí nos vemos*" (We will be *seeing* you later) or "*Mandale saludes a Robert por mí*" (Send my regards, literally health for me). These salutations show how the Nueva Resolana serves as a place to reaffirm friendships, kinship ties, or one's compadrazgo (fictive kinship) in the valley. In this way the resolana spaces can become sites that can engender political action. In fact when local politicians are running their campaigns the Nuevo Resolanas around town are hot spots for people to influence the vote of their peers. Yet as a critical space for politics it is also intrinsically a space for the development of counter-publics. The spaces of the resolana can also be used to foster counter-hegemonic discourses that influence the community and its political sphere. Within the gatherings of the resolana, people share information, discuss politics and transmit counter-publics developed by the resolaneros or transmitted by them from the voices of the disenchanted. It is also a space that peers use to help and advocate for each other as in the same case of the woman who met the bad mechanic.

In the next chapter I will address the formation of two groups that used the idea of resolana as a community-organizing model. The first example is from the late 1960s work of La Academia de la Nueva Raza. Then I examine the activities of the

organization known as Una Resolana, which was a collective of artists who formed an organization, a half-century later.

CHAPTER FOUR

Writing in the Resolana: Two Print Counter-publics in Río Arriba,

La Academia de la Nueva Raza and Una Resolana

The participants were brought together, they talked about their stories and came to a consensual validation and understanding of the meaning of their experiences. This dialogue process called a macro-spiral of thought and action, became the “new resolana” a process and place for all participants to meet and uncover knowledge, gain understanding, and learn together from their common experiences. As challenges emerged in the community, the community of action would come together for specific action.

- Tomás Atencio

I started also recognizing the fantastic importance of the way people think, speak, act - the design of it all. Then I have to understand the experience, the practice of the people. But I also know that without practice there is no knowledge; at least it is difficult to understand without practice.

- Paulo Freire

...and you call yourself the Sun?

-David Martínez

On May 5, 2009, I opened a group page on the social media website Facebook and called it La Resolana (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unaresolana/>). I had been

on this particular social media website for only a couple of months, wanting to see how the format lent itself to facilitating a space for people to meet and discuss northern New Mexican “culture” and literature. What interested me at the time was to investigate the different manifestations of *resolana*, besides its embodiment in the “Nueva Resolana” (e.g. non-goal oriented face to face everyday interactions) that I describe in Chapter 3. My intent was to explore *la resolana* as an idea associated with northern New Mexico late 1960s politics, and in later decades its re-mergence as a metaphor for consciousness raising political social praxis. In particular, I wanted to explore its use in cyberspace, so I began to ask my peers what kinds of *resolana* could work in cyberspace? At the time I wasn’t yet familiar with the well cultivated ideas proposed by Tomás Atencio in 1995 in regards to the “*resolana electrónica*,” (Montiel et al. 50) so I immersed myself in exploring how computer based groups used the *resolana* to facilitate dialogue and foster community gatherings.

Atencio, a native Chicano from Dixon New Mexico in Rio Arriba county, through his work as a social worker and phenomenologist came to reinvigorate and transform the idea of *resolana* in the context of the late 1960s. His legacy was the propagation of a post WWII idea of *resolana* which continues to be employed today. Atencio is a figure most recognized for his affirmation that the *resolana* was a key space for dialogue and cooperative knowledge building in northern New Mexican village communities. He proposed it was native to New Mexican and Southern Coloradan communities, and paralleled its practice to the ancient Greek agora. Later on in the 1990s, he reconfigured new expressions of the *resolana* in relation to 21st century digital contexts, in what he termed the “*resolana electrónica*.” Many of these later ideas developed out of the

intellectualization of *resolana*, that he and his northern New Mexican peers employed during the 1960's and 1970's, during a period called the "Embudo Renaissance."

In 1969, in the midst of the Chicano Movement and larger civil rights movements around the US, Atencio and several of his neighbors centered in the town of Dixon, New Mexico in Río Arriba County, created a community organization called La Academia de la Nueva Raza (LADLNR), the Academy of the New Humanity, dedicated to popular education aimed at discussing and documenting the areas subjected history as well as contemporary issues. The work of this group became both an intellectual key and literary contribution to the Chicano Movement as whole, being that this group developed networks of influence that reached into many states in the Southwest.

As I have shown thus far in the proceeding chapters, *resolana* has historically had a political function for more than a century, which had waned by the end of World War II. This chapter will address the history of *resolana* as it emerged during a revival in the late 1960's when it came to be deployed as a metaphor for praxis. I will illustrate the *resolana*'s revival and its contributions to the formation of various organizations in the last fifty years.

In this chapter, I will describe how the neglected space of the *resolana* became infused with Chicano politics and liberation theology, and in turn created an imagined intellectual community through the propagation of local print culture, both newsprint and digital. Most importantly, I will show how this Chicano community exercised its collective agency as a counter-public which deployed a discourse of autochthonous knowledge producing, in its "own language," to resist the pressures to accept the political domination of Anglo society. Here I will describe the utilization of the term *resolana* by

LADLNR, as an emerging counter public developed in northern New Mexico.

This chapter concludes with my current ethnographic experiences conducted among members of Una Resolana, who modeled their work based on the earlier work of LADLNR. I will argue that Una Resolana was critically influenced by the work of La Academia de la Nueva Raza and continues to document and disseminating news about Mexican Americans by the use of print publications. Finally, this chapter will show how print journalism and “resolana electrónica” create emergent new materializations of the resolana.

En Estas Salas Relumbra el Oro del Barrio

In November of 1969, a small group of local people centered in Río Arriba initially got together with the expressed intention “...to collect and document our ancestral lore and oral history as well as current events and ideas, with the aim of building a body of knowledge meaningful to La Raza” (Cuaderno 1971: 4). Composed of local community members, farmers, and emerging college and seminary educated young adults, they founded their group with the name “La Academia de Aztlán”(ibid). The idea of forming La Academia was inspired a few months earlier, when folks from New Mexico attended the Youth Liberation Conference in Denver, Colorado. In March, at the conference they listened to the poetry of Alurista, a Chicano political activists and intellectual, who introduced the concept of Aztlán as a spiritual vehicle to inspire people into nationalist political action. Alusrista’s poem was the preamble to the Plan Espírtual de Aztlán which called Mexican Americans to take political action in support of their communities’ needs.

During this time for Mexican-Americans who identified as Chicana and Chicano in the Southwest, the idea of Aztlán was a nationalist narrative that affirmed their times to an imagined mythic homeland. Aztlán spiritually unified urban and rural Mexican-Americans in a common movement to affirm their brown cultural pride and assert their rights over the lands they inhabited, which were part of their patrimony as descendants of the Aztecs and other indigenous peoples.

Drawing on this re-affirmation of indigenous past La Academia de Aztlán had their subsequent meeting a couple of months later in January of 1970. Though initially invoking the pre-Hispanic myth in their name, the local group quickly networked with people in neighboring counties and states, and chose to reflect a wider conception and philosophy in their name. They changed their organization's name to La Academia de La Nueva Raza to reflect a mestizo conception of a new humanity, which resonated with the New Humanism of revolutionary movements throughout Latin America. Though the group had *asociados* or associates from as far away as California, Texas, and New York, it remained localized in northern New Mexico where the majority of general meetings were conducted.

While the activities of La Academia developed, most Chicanas and Chicanos outside of New Mexico, mainly learned about the Chicana/o politics of New Mexico through the political activism centered around the land grant struggle disputes launched by *La Alianza Federal de Mercedes* (The Alliance of Federal Land Grants) and led by the charismatic leader Reis López Tijerina. His legal battles to regain ownership of lands dispossessed from *Indo-Hispanos* and converted into national forest, gained national attention, after Tijerina took a militant stance against the U.S. federal

government. While most Chicanos and Chicanas learned about Tijerina's activities, few knew about the work of La Academia and their organization of small scale farmers who had not lost their land base, but were also economically impoverished. In New Mexico, although the majority of Mexicans lost their land after the Mexican American War of 1846-48, many families were able to retain small portions of land called *suertes* or *líneas* (small thin strips of land adjacent to a stream system or acequia). These land owners, for over a century had resiliently struggled to keep their family's lands together in spite of the economic changes that had taken place. Most farmers subsisted on the profits from their crops, but also on the wages they earned as service sector employees or migrant farm workers. The intellectual work and print organizing of the LADLNR strove to represent these resilient farmers and document how their local knowledge had helped them remain in their homes.

To document this resiliency, LADLNR identified five symbolic and foundational pillars of community based knowledge that had to be studied. In their organizational by-laws they were to document their communities': 1) oral history, 2) personal narrative, 3) oral literature and folklore, 4) art, and 5) music. They came to understand these metaphorically as *El Oro del Barrio* - The Gold of the Neighborhood. The key approach of the collection process for the resolana was called "mining the gold" in which investigators and organizers would draw on people's reflections of community change. LADLNR *asociados* (associates), working with community volunteers, began interviewing and audio recording conversations with elders and other significant people knowledgeable of New Mexico's history. These conversations were then transcribed and, analyzed by the interviewers. She or he would then draw out thematic vignettes that were

used in LADLNR group meeting discussions. The group would then select *temas* (topics) for further investigation, to be discussed with the community. Eventually, many of these thematic vignettes would be anthologized in the group's first published book titled *Entre Verde y Seco* (1972). The book included chapters dealing with oral narratives about everyday life, personal oral histories, and photography and artwork of Rio Arriba. This book, and the other publications that followed, were used to stimulate and direct critical dialogues about experiential knowledge from the past and the present in which interlocutors would encouraged to critically reflect on their culture and history. Members of LADLNR from quickly came to understand that documenting their community's knowledge would be one of the organization's principal endeavors. The newly formed group soon realized the necessity to incorporate as a non-profit organization.

The idea of *resolana* that circulated among the members and in published materials by this organization was theorized gradually into a formal methodology. It is important to point out that even though the mission of La Academia's main aim was to document local knowledge and encourage local dialogue, their goals were by no means parochial. The aim of their local focus was done to first to serve the community. The membership of La Academia was diverse, however, and many of their concerns were political and centered in dialoguing intellectual themes. Their meeting discussions often involved reflecting on the issues dealing with colonization, power, education and liberation. In addition to these themes religion and spirituality were also discussed. Father Luis Jaramillo and Reverend Antonio Medina brought to the discussions of the group themes enmeshed with ideas of liberation theology from converging Catholic and Protestant perspectives. These were balanced to include perspectives and conversations

of indigenous spiritualities and alternative cosmogonies. For instance, Conchero dance leader Andrés Segura shared his writings on Nahuatl philosophy and ceremonial dance groups he was introducing into the Southwest (1973: 16). Enriqueta Longeaux Vázquez, another associate and practitioner of the Conchero dance, wrote one of the earliest foundational essays on Chicana issues, in LADLNR's publication titled *El Cuaderno de Vez en Cuando* (The Notebook on Once in a While) (Academia 1971), and *Soy Chicana Primero* (I am a Chicana First) (ibid 17-22). Consuelo Pacheco brought to the group her knowledge of community organizing and communication in southern Arizona as well as local notions of well being and health in the idea of *la vida buen y sana* which she cooperatively developed in dialogue with Atencio. Another significant intellectual contribution to the LADLNR was Paolo Freire's work on popular education in Brazil. In 1972, Dr. Freire was invited by LADLNR to give a presentation in Abiquiú, New Mexico. Several of Freire's ideas were adopted by the group and became part of their educational praxis in achieving liberation for Mexican Americans. They were also foundational in reshaping the revival of *la resolana* during this period.

LADLNR as a group was generally concerned with the direction transformation of the community was taking shape. They were critical of development whose purpose was to assimilate the region from state and federal institutions level. In particular, LADLNR role in forwarding popular education had to do with the groups critique of institutional education role in transforming the village communities in northern New Mexico.

La Academia saw institutional education as a major agent of colonization that reproduced the values of dominant culture. Facundo Valdez co-founder who was a social

worker related in various personal communications how the consolidation of village schools into districts de-centralized village life. For instance in the town of Cañones in 1966 the villagers were resistive of district consolidation as it forced the erosion of village autonomy in educational matters and local values. In Kutche and Van Ness their ethnographic description in “School fight” (1981) provides us example of how school busing of students in rural settings served to decentralize community cohesions and promote language shift from Spanish to English. Consolidation had similar effects in Native American boarding schools in directing language shift away from native languages towards the acquisition of English. For this reason La Academia affirmed its organization as a “counter institutional” (Academia 1972) space where local knowledge was seen as central to strengthening community cohesion and self determination.

They based much of their popular educational model from Paulo Friere see (Figure 4:1) and Ivan Ilich work in “deschooling society” (1971). Freire's work presents a radical critique on dominant institutional forms of education such as these. This critique showed how many forms of colonizing pedagogy are based upon the teacher center classroom known as the “banking system” (1970). Here students are perceived as empty vessels to be filled with the information by way of teacher monologues. He advocated a student centric environment where local knowledge was based in dialogue and embodied in action. He argued that through critical dialogue and praxis a community could mobilize towards goals of liberation.

Figure 4:1 Tomás Atencio, Elza Freire, Paulo Freire and Antonio Luján in Rio Arriba, NM 1972.



La Academia in New Mexico utilized these insights and linked them to the widely recognized local space of dialogue - the *resolana*. One goal of the Academia was to foster a counter institutional form of education that would empower its practitioners to critically address issues around them with locally constituted knowledge.

Writing in the Resolana: Local Journalism in Rio Arriba

The Chicano and Chicana movements in northern New Mexico ushered in the renaissance of local print journalism and other print media. The late fifties had seen the decline and eclipse of Spanish language newspapers in the region, with the closing of *El Nuevo Mexicano* in Santa Fe in 1958 due to “diminished circulation” (Meléndez 2005:

216). According to Gabriel Meléndez many newspapers and journals underwent language shift from Spanish to bilingual and finally printing in monolingual English towards the end of this decade.

Various counter publics that emerged throughout the Southwest resisted this trend. Newsletters, pamphlets, broadsides and chapter books were important local media outlets where Chicana and Chicano activists affirmed the local vernacular. *El Grito del Norte*, published from 1968 to 1974 in Española, and written predominantly by Chicanas became a popular regional movement newspaper. Its focus was both local and global. One of my informants, Adelita Medina, a writer for the paper, related to me that each of the journalists of *El Grito* was given an assignment to focus on another country in addition to the United States. They were to cover news about parallel political movements around the world. Though *El Grito del norte* is known for its politically engaged coverage of the land grant movement, it positioned their coverage of the movement globally. One writer of *El Grito*, who later participated with LADLNR was Enriqueta Vásquez. Her writings about local struggles as well as international struggles like the Viet Nam War reflected the emphasis on anti-imperial transnational solidarities. Historian Lorena Oropeza (2005) has shown that writers such as Vásquez mobilized critical publics, deploying gender and ethnic discourses to support the growing anti war sentiment of the 1970s. Furthermore, Maylei Blackwell (2011) has shown in her book, *¡Chicana Power!* how the emergence of Chicana feminisms during this same period accompanied the deployment of print publics. In essence, the publications of the Chicano/a Movement sought wider power by creating diverse forms of solidarities locally, regionally, and transnationally.

These insights bring us back to discussing how *resolana* emerged during this same time as a politically engaged model of thought and action. Atencio the co-founder of La Academia uncovered the importance of this term through his professorial interests in philosophical traditions of ancient Greece. Aided by his formal studies in philosophy and sociology he began to reflect through the study of phenomenology about local spaces which foster conviviality and dialogue like the agora of Socrates.

He argued the *resolana* practices of northern New Mexico paralleled the sensibility of classical Greek and Roman discursive traditions of where men would meet and dialogue. This occurred to him in the story about visiting a relative in his home village who had gifted him a box historical papers relating to his family. Upon taking leave of his uncle and walking home through the village with his box, he passed by the local mercantile store where men gathered on a daily basis to talk to one another under the front portal or porch. They invited him to join them. While he conversed with the men, they inquired about the box and Atencio shared its contents with them. They proceeded to inspect the documents in the box while relaying deep contextual information about them through dialogue. Information such as local and regional history, kinship ties, and knowledge about land tenure was exchanged and reflected upon late on into the afternoon. For Atencio this local dialogue was an important watershed moment in identifying the *resolana* as a local space of reflection and knowledge in a non-institutional setting.

With this in mind, Atencio brought this idea to LADLNR and its members then merged this dialogic practice with Paulo Freire's notions of "*conscientização*" or critical consciousness raising. It is here where the *resolana* garners its reemergence during the

politically charged era of the early 1970's, see (Figure 4:2).

Figure 4:2 Early Meeting of La Academia in Embudo New Mexico, circa 1971.



The way *resolana* became deployed critically within La Academia differed from the reified representation in folklore as a space for leisure as described in Chapter 3.

LADLNR organized community oral history projects, where people shared memories of their culture and history through dialogue. This process fostered the transmission of information from the older generation to the younger and with that, this became a vehicle for Spanish language maintenance. Non-institutional spaces like this can foster minority heritage language in contrast to schools where the painful memory of punishment for speaking ones' home language still popularly looms.

Their process in regards to the oral history documentation process, members of La Academia after engaging in dialogue and conducting their interviews, they would then transcribe the recording. This point in the process served to allow the interviewer to reflect again on the dialogue so that themes could be drawn out for further discussion.

The next step was to return the transcribed text to the interviewee for further comment or criticism. This latter step then led to a key plan of action based upon the shared analysis. As opposed to many oral history projects that saw collection as a final goal the Academia used this methodology to incite praxis based on issues and problems identified by community members themselves. The outcome of these service projects were reflections on the creation of knowledge that would enter this process of dialogue once again. The *Oro del Barrio* was understood as a subjugated local knowledge that could be reactivated dynamically through a dialogic process of thought and action - la resolana. In other words, it was turning “*lo dicho*” or the symbolic into “*lo hecho*” or action. Disembodied knowledge was not useful unless put into action or incarnated.

This model developed over time and the Academia began building more substantial projects based on dialogues in the community. Initial projects in 1972 included critically analyzing federal development funding. Largely this was caused by a significant increase in funding for Rio Arriba following the national attention the 1967 Tierra Amarilla " courthouse raid produced. In particular, one project funded by the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) called “Operation breakthrough" aimed to develop low-income housing in seven rural northern New Mexico counties. The criticism which was published by LADLNR in their newsletter published in the spring of 1972 *La Madrugada* gathered critical view points from the community to raise awareness regarding this plan for development organized from the federal level. La Academia’s assessment was published in five short critical pieces that included essays, song texts, photographs and pencil line drawings. La Academia wrote the essays specifically for the local public and addressed this public as “Queridos Paisanos” (Beloved Countrymen).

Furthermore, the essays invoked the popular both by rendering the essays in local informal dialect and by using *dichos* (colloquial sayings) as the titles to the newsletter articles. In one essay called “¡A Tu Tierra Grulla Porque Esta No Es Tuya!” (Get back to what is your own), writer Alberto Lovato boldly warns his readers about the federal plan. He states “¡Sobre aviso no hay engaño!” (¡This is a warning; I’m not trying to deceive you!) Lovato’s warning read as follows:

Se trata de un proyecto para trae casas ya hechas en la fábrica
y ponerlas ay hechas bola todas apeñuscadas en algotro lugar
lejos de sus parientes, de sus vecinos - lejos de su rancho, primo.
Acuérdense del dichito que dice: Más vale casita vieja y conocida
que casa nueva por conocer (y que se le caiga ensima porque es
de cartón) (Lovato 1972: 2)

Author’s translation:

It is a project that will bring prefabricated houses in factories
and set them up all piled up, all heaped together in some other
place far from your relatives, you neighbors, far from your
rancho cousin. Now remember the saying: An old house is worth
more than a new one you know nothing about (and that will fall
down on top of you because it is made of cardboard).

The newsletter’s purpose was to circulate consciousness raising discourses based out of real conversations that happened in the community. Documentation in the form of this literary public genre of the newsletter for LADLNR serves as a strategic essentialism or a tool to stimulate further reflective dialogue in the community. It aims were to circulate

information and viewpoints not addressed in dominant media, to empower people to organize plans of action. Atencio called this empowerment “respond-ability” a term he coined or the ability to respond to critical issues that affected the community. The issue raised about housing is an important one as the local self-sufficiency of community planning and architecture of the community is being transformed from above without sufficient native support.

The housing issue is a symbolic one that is useful for us to use as a metaphor for the work of LADLNR. The house represents a local knowledge base that was familiar and local epistemologies. What they advocated was to build upon this base rather than supplant these local epistemologies with outside ideas that served to replace local decision-making. The Academia looked at knowledge as dynamic, however it was critical of how power allowed the dominant culture to unilaterally force change. The groups adherence to the vernacular Spanish language served as counter hegemonic position during a time when language shift was quickly occurring. The narratives in the newsletter affirm local custom and language and are rhetorically based much of the time on local *dichos*, such as “*hombre aprehendido nunca es vencido*” (One who is prepared is never defeated).

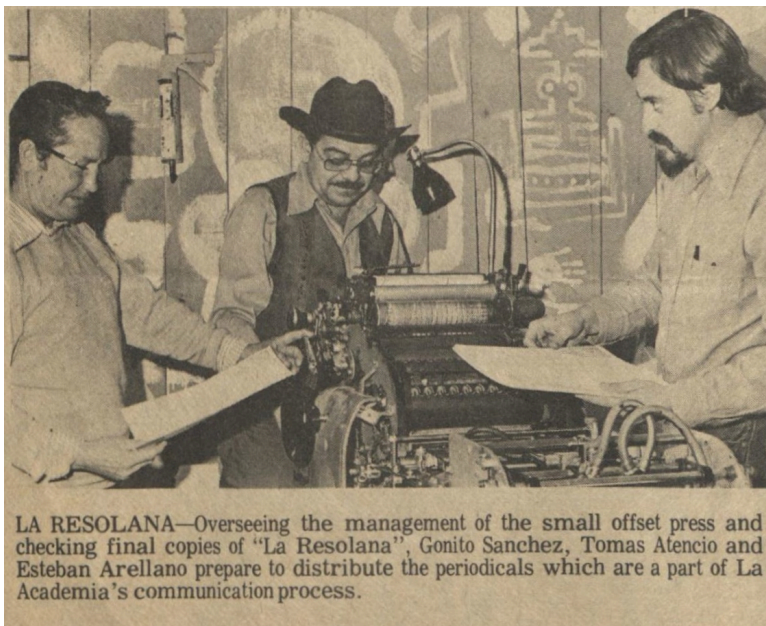
The uses of popular adages, or *dichos* as they are called in Spanish, became an art form in everyday speech to critic the system and empower the locals. There were many people who were venerable masters of the proverbial allusions that exalt common sense mores and values within their communities. These verbal experts are tradition bearers of word phrases of local knowledge that have had and continue to this day to have deep resonances in the collective consciousness of the people. *Dichos* are

oral history texts that quote the speech and knowledge of their ancestors, and as such this oral performance act functions as a speech convention that gives what is been said the weight of past generations. In the 1970s' northern New Mexico LADLNR members saw the value of how *dichos*, specifically those spoken in Spanish, contained local knowledge about New Mexico's social, historical and geographic landscapes. They called this local knowledge *el oro del barrio*. The performance of *dichos*, also contained a critical component, that challenged hegemonic structures and allowed the surfacing of subjugated local knowledges. The *dicho*, which Lovato advanced, "...más vale casita vieja y conocida que casa nueva por conocer" illustrates the group's critical knowledge base. According to Lovato, the old house is not preferred because it is old, but rather on the basis that it leaves individuals in familiar places, where they can reach out to family and friends during crisis times. As was discussed earlier in Chapter 1 the restructuring of northern New Mexican Latina/o homes is what happened to the plaza spaces as they became Americanized into main streets. These new spaces often times were not conducive to customary conviviality between neighbors. The erection of new neighborhoods led to the dispersal of networks and weakened the mutual aid ties that had previously existed and helped neighbors, friends, and family during periods of stress. During the 1960s and 70s HUD built track homes both in Native American Pueblos and Latina/os places in northern New Mexico. Rina Swentzell argues that such federal planned and deployed buildings such as the BIA Santa Clara Day School served to disintegrate relationships which previous local community planning and spatialization had structured (1990). Similarly, the new houses in Rio Arriba County pushed forth new spatiality and set of relationships dictated from above from the federal level.

Publications of La Academia

In the previous section we have seen how print materials were used to raise critical consciousness about the rapid shifts in the community. In exploring the print activities of La Academia and their contribution to the resurgence of la resolana I now turn to their project “El cuaderno de vez en cuando (The Intermittent Journal). In the summer of 1971 La Academia began publication of “El Cuaderno de vez en cuando” (1971). It was intermittent journal as it had a total of 5 issues which were distributed at the local bars, for \$1.50 and to mailed to subscribers for \$5 a year. The first issue was designed and printed by a California Chicano press called Centro de Communication. The next issues were created within the organization after La Academia acquired an offset press and a paper cutter (See Figure 4.3).

Figure 4:3 Gonito Sánchez, Tomás Atencio and Juan Estevan Arellano working Academia’s press, circa 1972.



The journal temporarily served as the principal regional literary media outlet and was used to circulate political historical knowledge. La Academia published different types of literary genres that included: historical essays, poetry, *cuentos* (folktales), recovered historical works, editorials, song lyrics, and academic essays. Spanish was the principal language used in the journal, but often they published bilingual news articles. Among the most significant publications was Juan Estevan Arrellano's picaresque novel *Inocencio* (1992), which first appeared in the journal in four consecutive serial contributions. The novel was entirely written in Spanish and, today it is remembered as one of the few New Mexican Spanish language novels produced in the U.S. at that time.

In 1972 the group anthologized the oral histories and personal narratives that they had been using in their gatherings and created a textbook called *Entre Verde Y Seco*. The work all in Spanish presented the words of the elders of the 1960's and 1970s. The point was to document not only for posterity these voices but to put them in dialogue with younger readers. The transliteration of the texts oral narratives strived to faithfully represent the local dialect. These readers were prompted to reflect on the words in order to create plans of how they could put the ideas into action or praxis. The narratives were transcribed narratives collected in dialogue from elders in the community but are not identified specifically. In the following vignette a village elder talks about the disappearance of the custom of *La palabra del hombre*, which translates to The Word of a Man:

En tiempos atrás había hombres pero pienso que ahora no hay.

Antes, un hombre le decía al otro, "Amigo, préstame dos pesos, se los entrego al puesto del sol." Bueno, al ponerse el sol ay (sic)

venía el hombre a devolverle sus dos pesos porque la palabra valía y era la única nota entre ellos. Esa es cosa de hombres. Ahora no vale la palabra de un hombre tiene uno que arreglar documentos complicados, bien asegurados por las leyes pa tener los reclamos seguros. Hay mucha desconfianza en estos negocios.

¿Por qué ha cambiao? (sic) Pues han llegado muchos extranjeros con otros estilos y otras maneras y se ponen muy vivos ellos y cambean las leyes a favor de los ricos y nos van dejando a los pobres a un lao. Viene un extranjero y nos hecha un espechi y como creemos en la palabra de los hombres, nos creemos de él también. Nuestra raza siempre ha tenido mucha confianza en la persona pero en los extranjeros como no la conocen abusan de ella. Semos tan buenos, que pa nada semos buenos. ¿Qué quieres? ¿Qué quieres? ¡Tenemos corazón bueno y sano!

(Academia:1972)

(Author's translation: In the past there were real men but now there are no longer. In the past a man would tell another, "Friend lend me two pesos and I will return them by this evening." So by sundown the man would come and return the two pesos because his word was valued, it was the only agreement between them. That is being a man. Now a man's word is not valued. You have to arrange complicated documents, insured by laws in order to have secure transactions. There is considerably insecurity in these dealings. Why has it changed? Well many foreigners with other methods and ways take

advantage and change the laws in the favor of the rich and they leave the poor behind. A foreigner will come and will give a speech and we who believe in a man's word, we believe in him. Our people have always had a lot of faith in the person's word, but as the foreigners don't recognize this custom they abuse it. We are good to everyone that to the point that we are devalued. [We ask] What do you want? What can we do for you? We have good and giving hearts!

Here LADLNR fostered a poetics of both oral publics and literate publics to resist the community's disintegration. This was accomplished by gathering, dialoging, and finally documenting dialogue in literary texts for further circulation. Recent cultural critique by Raúl Villa describes such praxis as "barrio-logos" or a complex of culturally "affirming spatial practices" which work to strengthen the barrio and while resisting, "barrioization," memory loss, breakup of community (2009: 8). Using Villa's concept we can overall describe LADLNR's *resolana* as a *barrio-logos* that aimed to strengthen and affirm local knowledges.

The work of LADLNR and its concept of *resolana* had lasting effects in the northern region of the state and also came to influence many projects where the *asociados* (associates) of La Academia resided. For example, in San Antonio Texas *asociados* Tito Moreno and Chista Cantú and other associates created La Universidad de los Barrios where they adopted the *resolana* as a type of critical dialogue (Montejano 2010: 240). In Stanford California the *resolana* dialogic method and its documentation program were replicated by Stanford Law student José Padilla. He and a team of researchers collected a series of oral history interviews in Brawley, California. They

interviewed Mexicans who had experienced the Mexican Revolution (1910-1919) and the causes why Mexicans immigrated to the United States. These dialogues were transcribed and anthologized. The material was not published, but has been deposited in the Stanford Library.

It is important to note, that in New Mexico LADLNR also branched off into several activist projects. While La Academia members continued to publish, they actively participated in the creation of Las Clinicas del Norte. The organization lobbied for the establishment of community health clinics providing services to low-income people. Later in the 1980's, La Academia members where utilize resolana later in various other organizations such as The Rio Grande Institute, which focused on education and publishing, Siete del Norte, a community development cooperation, and The New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA), that advocates for local irrigation associations in the state. Paula García a leader in the acequia movement in the state told how her involvement in the NMAA was nurtured early on through participation in local community service programs such as Americorp which were managed by Siete del Norte and supported by the Rio Grande Institute. This story is detailed furthered in the next chapter. She learned the resolana methodology through this involvement. The particular history of how LADLNR refocused “development” to be localized is far more detailed, however for this current dissertation it is important to state that the idea of resolana had important resonance in these later organizations. Many of these were often managed by former members of Academia. The members of La academia and the so-called Embudo renaissance went on do work through these later groups which had resolana as praxis as

an essential methodology. In the next section I will detail the group I participated which utilized resolana as a critical space for action in person as well as online.

The Light of our Words

In 2009, as I was doing preliminary ethnographic work in the Española valley, I started an online group on the social media site Facebook. Within days of starting the Facebook group “La Resolana” I began to reflect on how this online group could serve as a gathering space, similar to the resolana of the plaza of yesteryear, or the Nueva Resolana spaces found in commercial places (see chapter 3). Using contemporary technology, the point was to test if social media via the Internet could facilitate a space for people to come together.

This activist positioning largely recast the anthropological object of my study in new directions. In facilitating both a virtual online community and as a group which met in person this gave me insights into how the idea of resolana could be put into practice to generate knowledge. The following is a description of the community collective that I founded with others. I (we) use the plural in this section to identify the work done cooperatively. I will utilize the first person to speak on matters I personally acted or reflected on. The life of this counter public began on May 5th with my idea of belonging to a group that could discuss local cultural and health issues in my hometown. Typing a name and posting a general description initiated this community interest group. I wrote on Facebook:

Hermanas y hermanos it is my wish that we can use this space to
inquire, discuss, dialogue, share ideas, about northern New Mexico

and southern Colorado through our literature, writers and thinkers.

Above all this group hopes to be about you and how we can use these ideas to reshape our worlds for the better. As Tomás Atencio and others of La Academia de la Nueva Raza define it, the concept of La Resolana is about "light," "enlightenment" and "dialogue" about ideas that affect our local, regional, and global spaces in which we interact. It emphasizes the cultivation of local knowledge and practices that are vital to community health and well-being.

Unfortunately, due to the forces of colonization, the uncontrolled growth of capitalism such practices and epistemologies have often been subjugated and relegated to the peripheries by these and various other hegemonic forces. In addition it is important to recognize the uses and misuses of knowledge that can damage and hurt our communities. We must think of ways to re-conceptualize and critically uncover and renew the ideas shared here as ways to best honor our communities, families, and friends. Importantly, resolana is a concept put into practice by activating thought into action. Through a spiral process of thought and action we build local knowledge in order to respond to pending issues that affect the communities that we come from and our relationship to the land and water. This forum hopes to extend this concept to the realms of education, community cooperation and sharing of knowledge.

Finally as this is a virtual space it is in the best interest for members to use it to organize gatherings, meetings, conferences, and pláticas both formal and informal to facilitate the social interaction of users and as a way to invite guest speakers, presenters, in addition to future members. And finally, any material both physical and intellectual submitted to this site remains the sole ownership of its proprietor who submitted it unless the person in writing notes otherwise. As this site will be in perpetual process of being updated I urge any members who wish to help with the administration of this site to volunteer. This site was created and is currently administered by David F. García of El Guache, Nuevo México. Any faults and omissions in the maintenance of the site are solely those of the administration (Una Resolana Website <https://www.facebook.com/groups/unaresolana/>).

Much like sending a letter addressed to an imagined community of sisters and brothers, this group was started. This action led to three years of active co-facilitating a group that became an active community art collective. The first thing that was done with the online group was to invite interested people to join. Being new to online social media, I leaned that the format lent itself to remake particular local networks. I say particular, as many of my high school and community college friends that I had lost contact with were now easily contactable. It, however, didn't facilitate remaking networks with people who didn't have access to computers or an Internet connection. As soon as online dialogue

began, useful ideas emerged such as a critique of the name of the group. Fellow academic colleague Leví Romero who joined the group and whose article I had shared a link to, immediately made an useful suggestion. He critiqued the singular article “La” in the name “La Resolana.” He conveyed that for the purposes of facilitating the group it would be good not to appropriate the name as a brand, he suggested “Una Resolana” as to suggest that this group was one of many possible resolanas that and not the definitive one.

Following the name change, online dialogue suggested that we get together in person, so the group began to gather by holding juntas or meetings at people’s homes. The number of people who attended these gatherings was ten to twelve. They were nearly equally proportioned between women and men. It is important to mention that initially the online group had thirty or so members. The people who did meet were not complete strangers as the majority of those who met in person were friends and acquaintances from high school or the local community college. A reflection that was voiced at one such gathering was that “It was like having a class without any teacher to interfere.”

These first meetings were held much like house parties in the well-recognized manner of Saul Alinsky's form of organizing. The purpose was to dialogue about New Mexico writers and loosely discuss the theme of health and food security in northern New Mexico. Prior to these meetings various readings were posted online for the group to go over, such as the Romero “Nueva Resolana” essay, as well as a declaration entitled “Nuestras Mujeres Hablan” (Our Women Speak), a living document signed by various local indigenous and acequia leaders in the region who stated the importance of

protecting local farming and foodway practices through saving seeds and affirming the sacredness of the land.

Una Resolana - First Meetings

The next action that this group did was to quickly organize its first gathering for May 17, 2009, which it called Junta de Resolaneras/os Número 1. Our first meetings were prearranged into a structure and order that was organized by people in the online group. One of the most significant structures for the in situ gathering that was agreed upon was the circle. The circle was more than the arrangement of chairs so that everyone could see each other without having their backs to one another. This was perhaps the most significant way the architecture of gathering spaces could structure how people interact. This agreed upon space parallels other spaces where dialogue occurs such as indigenous circles and feminist consciousness-raising groups. Our circle was like the kitchen table where food is shared and conversations occur. We often did meet while eating so the arrangement was organic. The circle is notable as it forms a spatial enclave where active human bodies constitute the circle and people address one other within the circle. This served to help collectivize our voices. An opening invocation and prayer started off the meetings. Next, food was shared such as pozolito (hominy) or atole (blue corn gruel) . After eating and or simultaneously dialoging we would do short themed readings that would open up to a forum of critical questions and comments.

Another conscious effort on the social media page of the group was to affirm multilingualism and local ways of speaking. Many of the group's messages were written bilingually in Spanish and English. In our later written documentation, local language

was further affirmed by documenting code switching and bilingualism in our publications.

Ten people attended the first meeting - five women and five men in their mid-twenties to mid-fifties. One of the gatherers suggested we take minutes of the proceedings. Her notes on the proceedings of the meetings were posted on the Facebook site a few days following the meeting. I, or another one of the participants usually facilitated the meeting and compiled these notes. Posts generally garnered about 120 views from the online community. Two aspects were significant: the number of responses to the thread and the number of likes on the thread. The first demonstrates active participation both in the in situ meetings as well as in online space. Below are the notes of a subsequent meeting:

June 1st 2009 Meeting

Minutes from la segunda junta (Córdova)

Minutes of the La Segundo junta de resolaneras/os:

Location: Córdova, New Mexico (Angelo Sandoval, Host)

Meeting: May 31st, 2009

Meeting Began: 4 pm

Present: Angelo Sandoval and daughter, Amanda Salinas,

Beata Tsosie-Peña, Luis Peña & family, Enrique Martínez,

Norma Navarro, David Martínez, Sixto Aguirre, Adán Baca,

and David F. García.

The meeting began with the meal provided by the hosts.

This was followed by brief discussion of the uses of medicinal plants and herbal remedies.

Plants discussed: Chicoria, Chamizo hediondo, Chimajito, and Rosa de Castilla.

A visit of La iglesia de San Antonio de Padua was facilitated by Angelo.

A discussion of iconography and oral histories of Nuestro Señor de Esquipulas ensued.

Upon returning to the Sandoval home, Ol Mel Patch Community Arts Space (OMPCAS) was discussed.

-Some of the affiliates of the Arts presented the OMPCAS Mission Statement and History document.

-Enrique Martínez commented that the purpose of the group using the specific building in question was to “Bridging the Gap of the Old and New.”

-The OMPCAS affiliated talked about the group’s plan to get the center operational.

-Past events, Lowrider bike show.

-future events- Muraling on the Plaza

The majority of present members of Una Resolana gave OMPCAS a unanimous vote of support.

Discussion was raised about Sun Valley Music closing and the need to write an editorial to support Roy Montoya’s

service to his community as his business has fostered and supported the arts in Valley for many years.

The need to editorialize in local papers was raised.

Angelo Sandoval spoke about writing letters to the editors and read one his editorial on the topic of Adán Baca's Poetry and passed around other editorials he had written.

The goal of Una Resolana to create a chapbook or newsletter was discussed.

-Adán Baca commented on the publication of the

“La placa” “Nuestro Aztlán”

-Beata Tsosie commented on the Rina Swentzell's

“Flowering Tree” publications

-Enrique Martínez spoke about the DIY cost of creating chapbooks

-The topic of the cultural importance of obituaries in northern New Mexico was discussed.

-Current RGS policies and methods

-Enrique Martínez commented on the need to research the meaning of local given names.

-Angelo commented on having experienced working on a newspaper

-Adán Baca addressed the group about genealogy and chap booking, poster, and flyer making from California.

-Baca commented on the creation of a collaborative writing,

which emphasized collective authorship rather than individual.

Beata Tsosie commented that the chapbook should have a theme rather than be random works.

The topic of Obituaries was continued.

-Angelo commented on the obituary is about the people around the person “No lone adobe stands alone,”

“We are part of a community.”

Beata and Luis commented that it is not about glorification of the individual self.

Luis connected it to how people memorialize family or friends on T-shirts

Members shared with the group new and older works:

David García presented Trovo del Café y el Atole that he and Patricia Trujillo are working on to be preformed for the Acequia youth gathering the weekend of June 5th and 6th.

Adán Baca read his poem “Beans”

Adán Baca read his poem “New Found Indifference for the City Different”

Angelo Sandoval read his poem “Mundo Malo”

Enrique Martínez read his poem “Graveyard”

The meeting ended with the group discussing the newsletter or chapbook

-Enrique suggested the name “Declamación” from

David F. García’s discussion of the Trovo

There was a concern that some members could not make the next meeting due to other engagements but it was decided that it should nevertheless be held, as Luis suggested, to keep the momentum going forward.

Adjournment- around 9pm

The next Resolana Junta is scheduled for June 14th, at Adán Baca’s home in Westside Española, time TBA.

Please feel free to add anything I missed!

Submitted by David F. García.

(Una Resolana website:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unaresolana/>)

Later Meetings of Una Resolana

Now I will describe two subsequent gatherings we had as a collective. The first of these was held at the home of a member in the afternoon and lasted into the evening. Approximately 13-15 people attended. Men and women and also children were present. The invitation was done on social media allowing people using the platform to invite interested parties. As was the agreed upon convention for hosting the food was potluck, meaning everyone was to bring a dish and the host was to provide the main dish. Food was a central focus of these gatherings as it allowed for people to break bread together prior to the meal. First an elder among the group was asked to do an invocation or prayer

for the meal. The gatherers all sat at different tables. This allowed for sociality to occur much like it would at a party or family gathering. The food itself was one of the topics at many of the tables as people commented on their favorite dishes and shared recipes. As the meal wound down, chairs were taken outside and were arranged in a circle in the backyard.

That evening a special guest was invited to address the gathering on their individual theme. The guest for that night was Marian Naranjo, the founder of another local organization called HOPE "Honor Our Pueblo Existence." Naranjo spoke as an indigenous Tewa woman from the community of Santa Clara Pueblo on the adverse effects of hazardous waste contamination related to Los Alamos National Laboratory. She spoke directly to two issues dealing with the legacy of colonization and the disruption of healthy ways of life. One symbolic example she gave is how dump areas where hazardous waste is stored at the National Laboratories are named culturally appropriating nomenclature held sacred by the Tewa. She furthered this argument by reaffirming the importance of the lands taken by the National Labs in the 1940s as important ancestral sites that have sacred significance to her community. After her talk the group opened up into a forum in which questions and comments proposed. As that part of the meeting, ended the guest was thanked, and the host asked if anybody would like more food. While the gatherers ate they dispersed, taking a break, to talk among themselves. The preceding meal lasted for about an hour and a half, and the talk about the same. It was at this time some of the guests left and others arrived. The break lasted for about an hour during which people had more food and drink. It was already dark when another one of the gatherers proposed that we do a poetry reading or open mike. This part

of the UR meetings was conventional as we structured time for readings at each of our meetings. The meetings were designed to be open and informal, with the primary restriction being that the gatherer must be invited. The people regrouped around the circle chairs and sat down while individual poets read from their work. One of the poets who had a reputation with working with youth in the schools and was also a substance abuse counselor at a local organization introduced our featured guest. Ara Cruz was from Denver, Colorado and he presented his poetry. After the guest performed local poets participated in the order of the "Round Robin." This is a local tradition that gives space for people to present their poetry. Many of the poets read their new work, or shared their work in progress. Some of the poems had been previously circulated in our Facebook page or on personal pages with tag links notifying people of the online poem. Thus, our gatherings served as performance spaces to circulate our members' poetry. This allowed the poets to receive critical feedback. David Martínez a writer from Chimayó performed a version of the following piece:

The Sun

you call yourself

The Sun

but all you do is cast clouds

of self doubt and hatred

you call yourself

The Sun

but all you do is enlighten us

with chiva overloads

and politico shinanigans
you call yourself
The Sun
but the only nourishment
you provide is
SuperSave ads
and pendejada police blotters
you call yourself
The Sun
but all you do is
drunken us with
DJ Eyes at Reds
and "benefit" borracheras
at Tropies
you call yourself
The Sun
but all you do
is sell 50 cent
hatred on Long John Silver
streetcorners
you call yourself
The Sun
but all you do is exploit

my brothers and sisters
to sell your shit
and risk their safety
for maniacal lies
and suicidal stories
of molesterstecatosjamberosdrugaddictedchotas
and artshows by politically privileged chamacos
in shallowsouled conventos
and you call yourself
The Sun?!?!?

In this piece Martínez critically questions the representation of his community in a local newspaper called the *Rio Grande Sun*. Debates around the newspaper were commonplace at meetings. Often it was expressed that this group provides a space that acted as a corrective of the perceived distortions presented in that paper. In critically questioning the dominance of the “Sun” Martínez’s poem utilizes *parrhesia* or speaking boldly as a poetic of truth telling which direct us to another lightscape and possible utopia. This is perhaps reflected in the bold but ambivalent punctuation at the end.

As the opportunity to read poetry went round the room and everyone had the chance to perform or speak, the question was asked who would host the next gathering. Various people responded and made commitments for the coming weeks. At this point people began to help clean up, formally thank the host and bid farewell for the time being.

Besides being a place for conviviality, the meeting served to raise consciousness about various issues, in particular the issues brought to the forefront by the guest speakers. It also provided a place to voice friendly debate. Another aspect that group accomplished was serving as critical listeners to the presented materials. The stance of the group was also critical in the narratives that were circulated within the group. For instance, the more popular pieces of poetry ended up in the chapbook that the group put together collaboratively. This is important as the group self-documented the narratives that circulated at the meetings. Finally, sharing of food allowed for forms of mutuality to structure the event. The success of such meetings would have not been possible without people bringing their best to the table. Finally, the dynamics of the group approximated a learning community of peers, which in the end was one of its goals.

The next junta or gathering which I document here was organized at the home of a couple who were centrally involved in the collective. The themes of the junta were food, community health and permaculture. The meeting featured guests involved in a nonprofit that worked with indigenous communities in Guatemala. Today they were giving a talk and demonstration on permaculture at the home of the host. Food was served and people gathered in the living room in a circle. The featured speaker, Edson Xiloj Cuin of Qachuu Aloom (Mother Earth) Association in Rabinal, Guatemala along with Sarah Montgomery of The Garden's Edge, a nonprofit organization, gave a talk about corn, its emergence in Mesoamerica and the threat posed by industrial chemical fertilizers and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). He spoke of the hegemonic ideas diffused in Guatemalan universities where the current politics promoted the use of these industrial products and discouraged traditional agriculture as practiced by the Maya.

This discourse ignited many questions and comments from the gatherers. One particular comment raised the group's discussion over the cost of food for low income families. Another comment brought up the fact of how issues stemming from colonization hampered the traditional growing of food. One gatherer stated "We were organic before organic even existed. Now they have appropriated our ways and are now selling it back to us at a high cost."

This junta, besides being a place of consciousness raising, also served as a place of action and planning. The couple who hosted this meeting, also organized subsequent gatherings which served to put into action the idea of organizing backyard community gardens. In one of these planning meetings the members discussed organizing a pool of cooperative labor, under the direction of one of the hosts. During this meeting the group also discussed creating berms or terraced landscape structures to improve the local drainage systems used for agricultural purposes.

In summary, the internet resolana culminated in the organization of meetings, where important issues were discussed and action took place. The actions of the gatherers put into practice the theory of Tomás Atencio who proposed that resolanas serve to convert thought into praxis. The meetings also support Atencio's views on conviviality. When people meet to discuss community issues they form a conviviality group dynamic, which ensues in the identification of critical issues and the transformation of dialogue into action. Succinctly this is what was the goal of the associates of La Academia and the same our Una Resolana group sought to embody. As such, the previous two descriptions of the later collective's juntas illustrate using resolana as a process of putting thought into action. In the next section I will relate how this group documented its words in two self-

published chapbooks.

Declamación Chapbook as Print Public

Early on in the collective's existence the interest in self-publishing grew among the participants. The first project that was proposed was a chapbook documenting selected poetry shared by individuals in the juntas. There was voiced criticism of local media both in the forum and in the poetry shared by particular gatherers at the meeting. For instance the sentiment of David Martínez's poem was one such criticism. Others identified a lack representation or misrepresentation in the media outlets. Still others remarked about the hegemonic positions advanced by the Anglophonic media publics. Lack of diversity in journalism was also brought up. Another issue was accessibility to the Internet since in New Mexico few families had Internet at home, and most would access the web at public libraries. This was brought up in conversation in the group, not as empirical data but from day to day observations. These issues were part of the dialogues that took place that inspired the group to write and create print publics.

The first chapbook we collaborated was called *Declamación* (2009). The name was decided upon at a meeting in Córdova, New Mexico. I introduced the idea, while I recited a poem my grandmother used to share with me. While we sat in the front porch of our host's house I informed the group that the tradition of declamation of poetry was a verbal art once taught in local schools. During my grandmother's youth learning poetry and performing it was highly valued. My grandmother said that her father would reward her for each poem full she would memorize from the local Spanish-language newspaper. The group agreed that our chapbook should be called *Declamación* and I was honored

that the memory of this historic local practice would be commemorated in our writings.

The production of the chapbook drew upon the expertise of various participants in the group. Adán one of the more seasoned poets, shared his knowledge to the group by bringing in some of the chapbooks he had produced a few years back. Luis shared with the group his skills of desktop publishing and expertise of computers. The educators in the group shared their knowledge of formatting and editing. Altogether, these people had the know-how to produce a chapbook. Many of the steps in the process served as mini workshops that helped others acquire skills from those who were more experienced. For instance the process of editing was presented in two workshops at the gatherings. Five members sat at a round table with one copy of each of the draft poems. One by one each one of the drafts was read by a person at the table, marked up with editorial suggestions, and then passed on to the next editorial reader. After all the pieces had gone through the editorial board they had various editorial change suggestions. These copies we returned to the writer to make a decision on the suggested changes. The final draft was then given to the editorial board to determine placement within the collection in the chapbook. Thus this process fostered a learning community in which skills were shared and decisions were made cooperatively.

Declamación II

The production of the second chapbook *Declamación II* (2011) undertook a different process. Once the first one had been published a general e-mail call was made to the Una Resolana members to make submissions. This represented a different process that circumvented the communal performativity in the space that had been

fostered at meetings. In addition, these newer works were not collectively edited. Therefore, it took much longer for the subsequent Declamación chapbook to be published. Nevertheless, the creation of both works represented the continuity of the resolana process. Both chapbooks documented the poetic and political discourses shared at the meetings. For example, Luis Peña, a member of the UR collective concisely summarized online the process of the chapbook production and explains how the second chapbook was produced. Peña states:

Resolaneros/Resolaneras,

Here it is. After more that two years of sitting in limbo, I am proud to present to you the second edition of Declamación. If you have received this, it is because you have submitted a piece of poetry, prose, or art. It is because of you that this publication was possible. Please give yourself a round of applause and a pat on the back! This is more that just a book of poetry, it is quantifiable evidence of a consciousness that has matured in Northern NM outside of the "institution". We did not get a grant to do this book, no was it assigned in a class... we did it because it needed to happen. Along the way there were challenges, but I think that this makes the end product that much more powerful. I want to send a special thank you to Robert Tomlinson, who did the front cover. I want you to know, brother, that your piece brought some serious and much needed medicine to the book. It raised the bar and really pushed us to make sure that this was

going to be the finest f**cking chapbook in the history of the Norte!

Also, special thanks to David Garcia for keeping the fire lit and

expecting nothing less than the best - we did it carnal (Una Resolana:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unaresolana/>).

In retrospect, the ultimate purpose of documenting the actions and movements of such groups is to demonstrate how Resolana as conceived by LADLNR continued as a local model for generating action and thought through discourse.

The gatherings of the Una Resolana collective continued periodically from the summer of 2009 until the fall of 2012 when the collective published its second chapbook, "*Declamación II* (2012)." Afterwards the group became dormant due to various issues. Many associates of the gathering continued organizing in other spaces often inviting people from the Una Resolana to participate elsewhere. People were organizing around their own issues and events. The synergy created from the UR manifested itself in strengthening the cohesiveness and networks of other non UR gatherings. The significance of the group translated into participation with associates in other groups such as an Environmental Justice Youth group organized by Tewa Women United a non-profit organization. This group was organized by Beata Tsosie Peña to facilitate dialogue and action among youth in the valley to address the legacy of Los Alamos hazardous contamination.

I participated in another group called La Puente a group that was organized also by a non-profit group called the New Mexico Acequia Association. This work is detailed in Chapter 5 of this study. Also during this time a robust gathering of poets and writers

began holding open mike poetry readings at the local public library in Española and in the neighboring cities. Prior to the group undergoing a dormant phase or possible disbandment it was asked to facilitate a poetry gathering and reading of their last Chapbook. On the day of the reading the spatial arrangement of the library chairs was placed in a circle. This differed from other poetry reading events at this place where the seating arrangement was oriented much like a traditional classroom or stage setting. Though the group somewhat ended, its significance was still evidenced in the makeup of later groups which often drew upon the networks which were developed. By drawing on these networks when events were happening it added the ability to create bases of multiple circles that would at times come together.

The final gathering of the Una Resolana group took place a couple of weeks later on March 22, 2012 at the local Northern New Mexico University. The group was invited to discuss their work and to read from their new chapbook as part of a four part humanities symposium series dealing with labor history, indigenous leadership in New Mexico's Pueblo communities, and a discussion of art installations by a local artist. The UR event was titled "Una Resolana: The Light of Our Words."

In summation, the work of LADLNR inspired an important intellectual counter public centered in northern New Mexico. The recovery of these histories helps us contextualize Mexican-American movements in the United States as they were conceptualized and articulated in region and in place. Such movements are often documented from the top down, with emphasis on charismatic leadership. What happened in New Mexico is largely unknown to the national community. A group of organic intellectuals emerged, reflected on their cultural traditions, and mobilized their

community to become actors in their own history.

CHAPTER FIVE

Acequia Resolanas: Mutuality, Social Praxis and the New Mexico Acequia

Association's Escuelita de las Acequias

*¿Saben de la plaza bella,
donde ha jardines sin flores,
ríos y acequias sin agua,
mujeres sin vergüenza
y hombres sin palabra?*

-Author Unknown

Gracias por darme la palabra

-Paula García

Son ochocientos soldados que trae por la sierra...

-Corrido de Valentín de la Sierra

One of the more significant forms of infrastructure in Río Arriba in north central New Mexico are the thousands of miles of gravity-fed irrigation canals called acequias. These primarily earthen hydraulic systems are expansions of older, smaller scale Pueblo Indian forms of irrigation. During the Spanish colonial period and Mexican period, acequias proliferated to provide water service to a growing population that relied on locally grown food and livestock raising. As aerial photos can attest, acequias extend the riparian zones that are formed along the rivers, creating complex ecological green belts of

agricultural lands. Many of these lands are private properties; usually thin strips on the average of 6-7 acres called líneas or suertes, which are serviced by communal acequia irrigation systems. Along with acequias, the historic forms of land settlement that are found in New Mexico and Southern Colorado differ from more industrial agriculture found in the southern part of New Mexico and other surrounding states.

Apart from the physical canals, acequias are communities of interest that form associations that are recognized as political subdivisions of the state of New Mexico. They are second only to Native American governments as the oldest forms of government in the state, with some of the earliest associations forming with the arrival and colonization by the Spanish empire at the turn of the 17th century.

This chapter will show how resolana matters to acequia communities as a traditional gathering space, a place of governance, and a metaphor for organizing. I will also show how the resolana functions as a space for networking, not only locally but also regionally and globally. People who utilize these spaces mediate hegemonic forms of democracy and water management to create these networks. Taking into account the significance of language performance and space I will show how resolana structures the local ethnopoetics of governance of acequias in New Mexico. This will be done through analyzing auto-ethnographic and ethnographic narratives as well as my continuing work with a non-profit organization, the New Mexico Acequia Association, which promotes the interests of acequias statewide and nationally.

The Acequia Clearing

Growing up in Río Arriba I was intimately familiar with the acequia that ran through my family's seven-acre apple orchard and livestock pasture. Surrounding the actual canal is a litany of specialized terms in Spanish. As I would listen to how people would speak, over a lifetime slowly started to unravel the linguistic infrastructure and ways of speaking that constitute the cultural significance of the acequia.

As a young man I did various tasks on the ranch, fixing fences, watering trees, and cutting weeds; this day-to-day-work was done when I got home from school. In the fall I often picked apples and loaded them into the back of my grandfather's pickup truck so that my family could sell them at nearby regional flea markets on the weekends for extra income. I remember my grandfather Manuel, who only spoke Spanish and was known for his musical ability as well as for his public speaking among his family. He would often be up in the trees passing bushels of apples down the ladder for me to load. He would talk to me and I would listen, unable to respond to him in his mother tongue because I primarily grew up as what linguists call a "passive bilingual." I grew up around both languages, but only English was promoted by the dominant culture in the schools in which I learned to read and write. We had a significant exposure to Spanish, with excellent comprehension, but young adults in the 1990's were not expected to know or perform Spanish in public aside from in music. I would later in life come to understand that one is not born being able to speak, but one becomes a speaker through public performance, which affirms collective agency.

At age 15 or 16 I was sent by my family to the annual *limpia* or community cleaning of the acequia, my first job as a young man in our neighborhood. The *limpia* or

saca, as it is called in other acequia communities, involves participation of each of the *parciantes* or acequia members.

On a crisp early morning, the sun has not yet come out from behind the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east. My father drives us in his truck to a place close by where there is access to the local acequia. My father often nostalgically relates his experiences of having to work on the *limpia* of the acequia prior to the time when the community had built a concrete main head gate where the water is diverted off the river. During this time the young men would have to gather stones and wade in the river to repair a stone diversion dam under the supervision of the *mayordomo* or ditch boss. After arriving we park our vehicle like the others already there, making sure to not park in the clearing in the center, thus allowing people to gather in that place. There are already about ten people gathered, mostly males who will make up the day's work crew. After about fifteen minutes, more people arrive; the horizon is bright in the sky, and we finally get down from our truck to join the others. I button my jacket to keep warm. It's about 6:30 in morning on a mid-March day with fifty or so men (and less than five women), ranging in age from 15 to mid-60s, standing in a circle shoulder to shoulder, talking in hushed tones in Spanish, some with one hand in a pocket and the other one holding a shovel. One of the older men in the gathering takes out a file and demonstrates to others how having clean and sharp tools helps make the work easier. He says you have to be mentally sharp like your shovel, "hay que ser aguza'o como esta pala pa' trabajar l' acequia." In other words this is not work for dummies. The sun peeks its head out from behind the mountains. The *mayordomo*, who is the only permanent employee of the community, is getting his papers in order on a clipboard in his truck before gathering with the others.

"Buenos Dias les dé Dios, ¿Cómo amanecieron?" An antiphonal chorus responds back the same. "¿Listos a trabajar muchachos?" to which the group offers a less enthusiastic response and a couple of anxious laughs here and there. The small conversations continue as the mayordomo goes person to person with his list of *parciantes*, or *parciantes* which are the irrigation community members, and *peones*, or day laborers, to see who has reported for today's limpia work crew. The sun begins to create resolanas. The people gather there inconspicuously to warm up and talk to each other. Leaning on their shovels, the older men talk to one another as the younger ones listen and whisper questions to their elders for clarifications of what is going on.

The mayordomo meets to the side with one of the three members of the *comisión*, or commissioners, who are the democratically elected officials of the acequia, to discuss the work to be done today. After that, the mayordomo addresses everyone generally to do roll call. One by one, he calls the *parciantes*' names. They and the *peones* who represent the *parciantes* respond "*¡presente!*" There are about seventy *parciantes* in our acequia. After roll call the mayordomo goes over preliminary instructions for the group work and the individual *tareas* or work assignments, usually a section of the ditch that the peon has the responsibility to clean out within a few minutes. The crew walks to the acequia and forms a line inside the dry canal. The mayordomo with a *vara* or measuring stick marks off the first *tareas*, which are work tasks of about five to ten feet long of ditch canal. In my first year of participating in the limpia I was placed in the care of one of the older workers. With the person in front of me and the person behind me we formed a cohort of mutual help that aided one another as the work progressed throughout the day. I was the most unskilled that first year, and being a greenhorn I really didn't know how to

efficiently use a shovel. The older workers modeled and instructed me through informal *tú* commands, explaining what I should do: “corta la barba - cut the brush,” “quita la barraña - take out the weed pile,” “endreza el bordo - straighten out the bank,” “saca las jaras - take out the willows,” “limpa las hojas - clean the leaves,” “tira las piedras pa’ allá - throw the rocks over there.” The domain of the *limpia* is primarily two dialects of Spanish, the northern New Mexican heard from local men, and the northern Mexican on the lips of young immigrant laborers who were hired out by the *parciantes*. The younger person is expected to listen attentively while not looking directly at the speaker and to reflect on what is being said.

After about ten minutes of work on the first *tarea* the *mayordomo*, who is walking either along the top of the ditch bank or among the workers, shouts *¡Vuelta!* to signal the workers to turn and change positions--to either move forward or cycle to the next section of *acequia* to be cleaned. The signal is often to stop work while people in the line walk down the *acequia* to other parts to be cleared. Once we are there, the *mayordomo* or a designated *rayador* or measurer passes with the *vara* to mark off a new *tarea*. Once the measurement is done the *peones* begin again, working with their shovels to cut weeds and overgrowth, filling in damaged *acequia* banks with dirt, cutting down invasive plants such as Siberian elms, picking up trash and the occasional dead animal carcass. Once the *peones* are finished with their own *tareas* they often help out their neighboring workers to get the section done before the *mayordomo* calls out “¡Vuelta!” for the next change. This practice has various implications: first, it helps the less skilled individual have equity among his peers; next, it allows for the group to finish their collective *tareas* sooner, allowing them to take a short break from work. This sentiment is captured concisely in

the local popular dicho or saying, “*Entre más manos el trabajo es menos*” - With more hands working together the task is easier to accomplish.” This shows how mutual aid is a part of the values of this kind of community work. In the idle brief moments during the break, peones shed jackets and sweaters and reflect on the work they have done, and often carefully finish off the work, cleaning out leaves or small rocks, leaving the irrigation canal immaculately clean. When the mayordomo sees that many of the workers are talking and not working he quickly calls out again, “¡Vuelta!” to repeat the process.

By noontime the workers break for lunch and return an hour later. Some go to the homes of the parcientes who prepare them food. Others bring their lunch, while others head to town to purchase fast food or a couple of cold beers. In the afternoon the crews gain in solidarity as they work together. By the end of the day it is time to share a moment of rest after a long day’s work. Remembering my own experiences, it was a time when one of my fellow workers shared with me my first cold beer.

The acequia cleaning is predominantly a male space. It is an intergenerational space as well as a multilingual space. From personal experience I can also attest that the acequia cleaning is vital to community health and resiliency. During the mid 1990s, after I was sent by my family for two consecutive years to serve as the peon to cooperatively clean the acequia, the Commission discontinued community workdays. The effect was noticeable, as the opportunity to see neighbors discuss community issues and gather in the traditional *resolana* ended. With a curtailment of involvement in high context interactions between neighbors, today the only time the community gathers is for the biannual acequia meeting. In other neighboring communities that continue to observe these customs, communication tends to be more robust.

This description of an acequia cleaning from my youth, though perhaps idealized, gives a general idea of what these events entail. The March 2012 newsletter of the New Mexico Acequia Association described the cleaning as such:

The cleaning of the acequia is one of the few occasions where many of our neighbors see each other. In our acequia, the Mayordomo goes door-to-door with a memo for each *parciante* providing the details of the spring-cleaning. This one-on-one relationship gives us an opportunity to stay connected and to talk about our plans for the growing season. On the morning of the cleaning, the *peones* with their shovels in hand talk in the *resolana* before walking to the start of the acequia madre, which is the part maintained in common by all the *parciantes*. For young men, having the strength to labor for a full day with an acequia crew is part of their coming of age. In addition to their support role to their family members cleaning the acequia (meals, etc.), some women also participate in the labor of the spring-cleaning (García 2012: 3).

As we have seen in the preceding ethnographic account, *resolana* is an outdoor lightscape that serves as an envelope of human interaction and dialogue. This is a *resolana* of workers who co-create a social space and respite prior to engaging manual labor, and then again in the brief moments when they are breaking from work. The work itself creates heat to which the workers respond by removing layers of clothes. Once the sun is up the *peones* often seek out the shade as they work, and when there is a stolen moment they reflect on the work they've done or show younger men the strategies of how to work smarter and not harder. The hierarchy of speaking and order in these spaces generally follows Charles Briggs's analysis of the experienced elders as performers with the younger serving as the audience, who affirm the speech act of the elder with such

formulas as, “yes, it is true ” (Briggs 1988:1). These interactions in turn are structured within values of *respeto*, which affirm the status of elders as speakers to be deferred to. What this present project shows is that these linguistic spaces and communicative speech performances often are situated in place, as with the acequia cleaning and its *resolana*. Here pedagogical genres of modeling work pass from older, more experienced workers to the younger. This lightscape of Resolana is a significant ephemeral social space in which local language and intergenerational learning occurs. In the next subsection I will discuss my participation in local acequia governance.

Local Acequia Associations: You have to know how to talk to the people

In the spring of 2007 I was hired by a nonprofit to create a radio program that discussed the significance of acequias in northern New Mexico. This earlier project served to create rapport between various important key interlocutors for the current dissertation. In the radio program, titled “Agua es Vida,” I interviewed five individuals in their home communities around Rio Arriba. The individuals interviewed were recognizes leaders in their local communities and at the state level. This project further brought me in closer contact with local community acequias and led me, in 2009, to organize, a community oral history project about acequias called “Pláticas” or Dialogues. This project aimed to have and record informal talks with elders in my own community. With the permission and guidance of a local acequia commission I went out and conducted about ten talks. I interviewed past mayordomos and commissioners and various acequia *parciantes*.

In the process of this project I became aware of a saying that became ubiquitous throughout my later work. In the audio program one of the interviewees articulated the importance of water to acequia communities in Spanish as “El agua es vida” (Water is life). The ethos of this statement I would come to better appreciate over the next years during the research for this chapter. Later on, I myself would often shout this affirmation at different kinds of acequia gatherings throughout the state, provoking people to chant it along with me. One interviewee explained to me, “ In my frame of mind it is everybody’s business, because I will say the metaphor again, l’ agua es vida, no? It is our livelihood, it was our livelihood, it was our ancestors’ livelihood way back, I think we need to address this issue with the people further up in the political realm. The water is life and a lot of people are losing. In the long run, we all are going to lose, it was a very tight community and water was a big, big deal.” As is expressed by this *parciante*, for him water is the fundamental life source of his community.

Later on that year the commission assisting in the updating of our acequia bylaws approached me to do contractual work. I was approached due to my interest and education in acequia matters. I met with the commissioners of the acequia at a local restaurant. The commissioners sat outside on a table near the entrance of the restaurant. It was here that this local acequia association held their *juntas* or public meetings—another example of the cultural space known as *resolana*. The actual attendance at the meeting was a reduced percentage of the total membership of about 130 members, but enough to form a quorum for conducting business. This spatial arrangement for the public meetings of this acequia is quite common. Though some acequias met at community centers or local fire stations, many local associations don't have the resources to have a permanent

indoor public meeting place. Even though the place is not ideal for large public meetings, it is the rule rather than the exception for these political subdivisions to have their meetings in buildings that are not their own. In some cases they meet outdoors.

The pressing issue that was brought up at the meeting I was asked to attend was the recent court case in which a neighboring acequia association denied a request to transfer individual water rights outside of the communal system. The argument that this case sustained was whether the acequia officials had the right to make a decision on behalf of the community that could be counter to individual property owners. This challenge to the 2003 legislation, which was passed, affirmed the right for acequias to determine whether or not such proposed water transfers would be detrimental to the system as a whole. The passage of water transfer legislation in 2003 was largely the work of lobbying by regional and statewide associations such as the NMAA. This was a great accomplishment by many who saw these measures as a shift in the decision-making process from the state engineer's office to that of local acequias. In general, local associations were empowered to make decisions on water transfers prior to decisions by the State Engineer's office. Before this, if an individual property owner wanted to make a transfer she or he only needed to fill out a request to the State Engineer. Under the 2003 legislation individuals needed to first submit a request to the community and then the acequia commission would make a determination based upon community input in favor or against the proposed transfer.

An important issue, however, was that for associations to utilize this new ability to make determinations on proposed water transfers they needed to adopt language in their bylaws legally empowering them to use this power. It is interesting that the

association I was asked to work with waited nearly eight years to move forward to add this language to their bylaws. Although a much younger face among those in attendance - mostly middle-aged males - the president and the secretary recommended me based upon my interest and academic qualifications to work on the project of updating the bylaws. I was handed a copy of the then-current acequia bylaws and a copy of the bylaws of a neighboring association that I was to use as a model to draft a revision to present to the membership. The pressing issue to be updated in the proposed revision was the inclusion of water-transfer language as well as an additional amendment dealing with water banking.

I began my work by doing some research to create a file of past bylaws to see how changes over the years were represented in these social contracts. The earliest of I found in the archives of the local acequia were written in Spanish, “Reglas y regulaciones para el manejo de la acequia.” There was no date but they were signed by a majority of the commissions and the mayordomo. The typescript and font in which this document was written dates it to between the 1950s to the 1960s. The document is three pages long. It lists twelve *reglas*, each dealing with day-to-day management of acequia business, such as collecting membership fees, rules for *peones* or workers, and rules for entrusting the commission with the power to make the necessary “arreglos” or arrangements for the maintenance and repairs of the infrastructure. Lexicographer Rubén Cobos defines the verb *arreglar* in his New Mexican Spanish dictionary as: “to adjust, to arrange, to settle; *arreglárselas como puedan*, to settle matters, problems, etc. as best as people can” (2003). This time-honored practice of customary oral-based governance is what acequia scholar José Rivera (2005) has credited as being central to acequia resiliency. Here we

can approximate a working definition of arreglos as customary oral based regulations made by the commission based on *palabra de hombre* or word of honor. The codification under US territorial law of these Mexican forms of rules and regulations makes an appearance in the *Revised Statutes and Laws of Territorial of New Mexico*, “El arreglo de las acequias que ya estan trabanjadas quedará establecido tal como se hizo y permanece hasta hoy, y las prevenciones de este acto, seran vigentes y en sobservancia desde el dia de su publication.” “The regulations of ditches (acequias) which have been worked, shall remain as they were made and remain up to this date, and the provisions of this act shall be in force and observed from the day of its publication (1865: 23-24).

Whether these are the earliest written rules and regulations of this association, it is difficult to ascertain. It is possible that perhaps this association had older rules and regulations that were customary oral agreements, or that any older documents have simply been lost. This is commonly the case as many government records from these political subdivisions are often incomplete. This is largely due to the lack of permanent archival space. More often than not archival files are kept in the personal care of commission officials. These sorts of papers generally include ledger books, receipts for contracted work, occasional foundational and historical documents such as state adjudications records, copies of the current bylaws, and old leger books of membership dues.

In inspecting these records, one gets the impression that the written documents present a partial and incomplete representation of the association's history. The “*reglas*” that document the later bylaws I was given by the commission, which were current at the time, were composed in English. What I found significant in the current bylaws is the

shift from Spanish to English, which occurred amidst the New Mexico state's adjudication of the stream system. During 1969 the state filed suit against all the water users in the stream system that diverted water from the Río Chama. This action accompanied major transfers of water from the San Juan River basin in a tunnel under the Continental Divide into the Chama River. Known as the San Juan / Chama diversion, this public works project transferred water south through the tunnel and river from the San Juan to the Chama / Río Grande basin for use by urban centers such as Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Las Cruces.

This adjudication, like others in the state still ongoing, enabled the State Engineers' office to quantify the amount water being used by traditional farmers in the various watersheds in the State. This change was most notably marked by a shift in language from Spanish to English in official documents of this period. This is significant, as language choice is central to acequia politics of identity. In affirming this opinion, Victor Mascareñas, a northern New Mexico acequia parciante, once emphatically told me in personal communication - "An acequia is not the same thing as a ditch." The classic Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of relative values being embedding in language choice finds a good example in this statement. The noticeable change in the association organizational documents from *regulations* to "bylaws" is a language shift that represents a change in values. In the earlier document in Spanish, identified as "reglas y regulaciones de la acequia de ... [name of community]," the document is oriented towards governance that affirms custom. The subsequent documents in English are identified as "Los [name of community] Ditch Bylaws." Juan Esteban Arellano, a noted acequia advocate, has pointed out that the terms were neither interchangeable nor

satisfactory translations. Arellano affirmed his opinion in later conversations concerning language shift: "Nuestra es una lengua con mucha sabiduría, es lo mismo que digo yo de las acequias, se están destruyendo porque perdimos la lengua, y en eso perdimos la sabiduría del ambiente. (Our language has a lot of wisdom, the same can be said of the acequias, which I say are being destroyed because we are losing our local language, and with it we lose our wisdom of our environment)." The shift in language orientation relates to a shift between distinct spatial mapping of worlds that are anchored in different value systems.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, José Rivera (2005) identifies the "arreglo" as a key customary concept in the governance of the acequia. He argues that two factors led local governance away from this form - the adoption of the 1907 Water Code, which defines water as a private property right severable from the land, and water adjudication, which quantified, solidified, and furthered formalized relations into legalized relationships codified in state Statutes 72 and 73, which, with others such as the open meetings act, privilege documentation over customary oral contracts and arrangements.

As the meeting progressed, the general tone vacillated between moments of informality that paralleled coffee talk, and moments when one of the commissioners, the secretary, often reminded the committee to return to parliamentary procedure following Robert's Rules of Order. This was to expedite the written agenda and the day's business. These shifts paralleled corresponding code switching. On one occasion the president spoke of the importance of not losing communication with los *miembros* or members "hay que saber hablar con la gente," (You have to know how to talk with the people) he

said. "Tenemos gente mayor que no sale o no pueden venir a estas juntas por eso hay que visitarlos pa' dejarlos saber de lo que está pasando" (We have older people who don't leave their homes and are unable to attend these meetings for that reason we must visit them to let them know what is going on). For this reason much of interactions of the acequia are not sole within the sole domain of the annual meeting but also individual home visits and everyday chance meetings in the community of the mayordomo with acequia parciales.

The process of getting the new bylaws was a long one. Only this past year in 2015 did the community finally pass the proposed bylaws, which I worked on. The words of the then president held much weight. This marks seven years of talking and building agreement, or *hablando y arreglando con la gente* (Talking and coming to understandings with the people). What is clear is acequia governance is not fast moving. A good irrigator knows how to slowly maneuver the water across the landscape. The flow cannot be forced without facing the damage of erosion. Talking about the acequia is the same - a slow mediated process.

The anthropological literature on acequias is growing. In the last 20 years it has become an emergent focus of study. Even though acequias have been discussed in classic anthropological studies of Hispano communities in northern New Mexico and Colorado, they are often relegated to the foreground of various ethnographic narratives focusing on identity and heritage. Typical of such narratives are the writings of Paul Kutsche and John Van Ness's (1981) work in Cañones. In contrast, Sylvia Rodríguez (2006), (1987) has looked at the acequia communities as itself as a topic of study. Her earlier work (1987) contextualizes local political protest and mobilization during the 1970's following

the proposed real estate development in Taos County. Rodriguez's work presents a basis from which this present research follows. A central concern within her work is how cultural production of space challenges hegemony.

In the 2000s Rodriguez was contracted by the Taos Valley acequia association as an applied anthropologist to write a narrative that would describe the cultural significance of the water for these communities. Her book *Acequia Water Sanctity in Taos Valley* (2006) details how the acequia communities produce sacred space through cleanings, processions that embed spiritual ties into the landscape, especially around waterways. Another significant scholar who has looked at acequias is Devón Peña (1988) who has focused on ecological issues as they have affected local agricultural practices. Aside from these, as noted above, José Rivera (2005) and LADLNR associate Juan Estevan Arellano (2014) have done significant work writing about acequia matters.

Gendered Space and Governance in Acequia Resolanas

Academic literature has not focused on gender issues of governance save for a few critical interventions that are significant. Certain texts using the lens of Chicana feminisms provide a much-needed opening in the field of acequia studies. I argue that the making of women's space is the most dynamic aspect of today's acequias. In this next section we will discuss the gendered dynamics of acequia resolanas. This discussion will lead us to illustrate how speaking and language domains have been actively shifted by participation by local women. This follows the trend of many woman-centered activist groups who have gone on to take the lead in building larger statewide movements. Though it may seem a recent development, women's central participation has had historic

precedence dating back in some cases to the foundation of some local associations.

One of the most significant and controversial academic interventions into the study of the gender dynamics of acequias and the resolana is Ida M. Luján's 1999 chapter "Challenging Tradition: Opening the Headgate." It is a key critique, as she describes the changing role of women in the governance of the acequia. In the piece she articulates a personal narrative about the traditional rigidity of prescribed gender roles in a northern New Mexico village in Río Arriba. As a Chicana she identifies the annual meeting and acequia cleaning as a place of heated gender conflict. This conflict as detailed by Luján centers on the lack representation of women in governance and the traditionalism of ascribed gender spheres. She relates the anxiety she physically feels remembering the sexism her mother and she faced negotiating their water allocations with the all-male elected officials of their local acequias.

This is what I now associate with spring's arrival- old, middle-aged, and young men standing or squatting in the shade or resolana [sunshine] of the sacristía [sacristy], the traditional meeting place outside the locked church, depending on the state of the spring weather. My mother and I are the only women. The men's disgust at our presence is only thinly veiled. The other women dutifully wait in their husbands' vehicles ladylike and uninvolved in the fray and dust and the harsh words swirling mere yards from them. They will not acknowledge us at these acequia meetings; however, the next day at Mass we will greet great one another warmly, embrace, and inquire about more genteel activities. Battling to control internal torrents of emotion so strong, I can't easily find my voice.

I cringe inside at her daring, her power, as my mother takes on those men. She challenges their disrespectful treatment of her, their failure to notify her of acequia meetings or ditch cleaning, and their failure to notify her of acequia meetings or ditch cleaning, and their participation in other parcientes' unlawful trespass and appropriation of her water. I want to protect her, to spare her from this yearly drama, yet I I'm so intimidated by them, by her. I am proud of my mother for standing her ground and for her determination to protect her children's property. "What do you, a woman, need water for?" They ask. "You need to concern yourself with your house." I choke on my anger at the unequal treatment merely because of our gender and the casual disregard of our property rights (101).

The central conflict she had with the acequia arose over her family's individual water rights that were conferred to the community supposedly by an oral contract (arreglo) of her late father. She argues that sexism created an oppression that limited her and her mothers' agency as citizens to participate fully in the governance of the acequia. To clarify, in acequia communities, the acequia provides the infrastructure, which is held in common, for delivery of water and not the actual water right that is looked at as a property right. On the other hand, what Luján is arguing is that she and her mother's roles as members of a common the delivery system were limited, since the community marginalized women voices as parcientes.

Following the Mexican-American war New Mexico and southern Colorado underwent a process of liberalization. According to Historian María E. Montoya (2002), the prior Spanish laws and Mexican laws were incompatible with the US laws. For example, Mexican women found that US coverture laws, a legal state where a woman's property is under the husband's authority, denied their autonomy in private property ownership that was formally protected under Mexican Spanish law. This key point, Montoya has suggested, aided liberalization and general dispossession of land among inhabitants of New Mexico, in particular, women.

The gender formation of half of the Mexican subjects in regards to property rights was a critical intersection along with racial formation in how US citizenship was made. This point is relevant to acequia communities as membership in this common is based upon property ownership. It is unclear if women had local voting rights in these communities prior to and after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. It is, however, likely that they played somewhat of a role based in the gardens they managed. Carol Asher in her (2014) dissertation points out the political agency that women had during the late 19th century up until the 1920s. Through the suffrage movement, winning (white) women the right to vote in the state of New Mexico by 1918, women were on the road to regain the rights of property owners. This shows how during this period property ownership was coupled with suffrage.

In this essay Luján makes critical insights relating to gender roles and their relation to governance. What she describes is the central subject of her text,

namely how the *resolana* functions not solely as a public sphere but as a place of governance. First, we see the *resolana* as a place itself, a gendered minority-majority public space where a Spanish language domain is fostered, and thus it is a minority space amidst dominant culture. Next, it is evident the *acequia*'s ethnopoetics of local linguistic style and code of governance are being challenged by Luján in her essay. She points out that since this was a customary arrangement there was no written contract but presumably an oral contract. Though not identified in this chapter, this custom is known as “*la palabra del hombre*” or with the honor of one’s word. Literally it can mean “a man’s word.” Customarily, this is form of contract based on the gendered values of honor that were once commonplace throughout the colonial Spanish empire. Generally these held that men had honor and women and children were limited to the private domestic sphere, where they were ideally supposed to avoid tarnishing male honor by having *vergüenza* or shame. Though these were colonial complexes they served to inform contemporary notions of the talking subject.

The first epigram of this chapter relates concisely how these structures intersect. Despite an idealized masculinist view, the verse asks the question:

Do you know of a beautiful public,
where there are flowerless gardens,
and rivers and *acequias* without water?

Where the women are shameless,
and where a man’s word is not valued?

This verse poetically relates political discourse to access to the life-giving water. Notions of shame are represented here as being a value that women are supposed to have, and “palabra” or man’s word is gendered as masculine. Though Luján doesn’t address this verse, following her lead we can question masculinist ideals of the political sphere.

Luján's essay represents an alternative view where the “shameless women” are making acequia space through practices that challenge the dominance of patriarchy. She does this by simultaneously deploying hegemonic discourses of literacy and legibility in English as a legitimate juridical language, all the while participating in the local language Spanish.

She also discusses instruments of surveillance such as the tape recorder that significantly change local discourses of governance on the acequia. As has been mentioned in preceding chapters, Facundo Valdez (1979) affirms the importance of the shame complex in structuring sociality. Valdez looks at how notions of shame--or more precisely shamelessness or *sin vergüenza* functions in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado as an inverse virtue. If a speech act were interpreted as being out of order it would be perhaps considered by some as shameless. However, it is more important how these actions can be understood in the frame of parrhesia or bold speech, as was discussed in Chapter 2. Here we see how when gendered for a man “bold speech” is understood as a social *faux pas* and marks the individual as a *pícaro* or a rogue. Sexism conveys shame to parallel speech acts when performed by women. What is key in marking this practice is when parrhesiac acts or bold speech acts gain public support in the form of collective agency. Within a public framework, we can see how counter-publics and sub-publics may form discourses and gain momentum through a circulation of practices.

Following the performance theory of Judith Butler we can see how such subversive speech acts or bodily practices can, with repetition, change the structure. One of the key issues is individual agency and collective agency. This is perhaps what we are witnessing in tandem through the emergence of female space in acequia governance and the customary procedures of *arreglos* or oral-based honor.

In challenging the acequia Luján uses bilingualism and literacy as inroads into fuller participation in the political sphere. This can, however, be taken as a critique of key forms of procedure known as the "arreglos," or verbal agreements among members of the acequia. For better or worse, with her education as a lawyer, Luján strategically uses English literacy and surveillance as tools to make her interventions. We have to keep in mind that she affirms local Spanish at the same time she introduces new specialized registers of English. As she details in her essay, she became a commissioner and proceeded to audio record the public meeting to render them documented. This practice most likely had the effect of silencing oral discourse in the public meetings. Aware of this she mediates "shamelessness" with "self-protection," and states:

I do it purposely because it introduces an element of intimidation that serves as my *baque* [backup] when my anxiety level rises. I can draw on the official trappings of my office, formal surroundings, and written documents to equalize the balance of power. I am cognizant of the exploitation of their illiteracy or their discomfort of English. English feels like a weapon in my hands. My use of it feels cold and calculated (105).

She challenges the male domain of the acequia resolana with an intervention that challenges acequia custom and practice as she makes female space in her particular acequia association. It is clear from my own field experience that many acequias utilize a similar mode of governmental dialectics between forms of custom such as arreglos and more dominant legal discourse. Luján deploys legal discourse to be legible in the eyes of the state.

She goes on to describe her intervention in shifting the gender dynamics of the domain of this phallogentric polis. My personal knowledge of this particularly small acequia is that it has less than twenty members or *parciantes*, where everybody knows one another. Central to her critique is the acequia's adherence to custom or, as she puts it, "They insist on following unwritten rules practiced over decades." Recognized acequia organizer Janice Varela insists on the importance of custom in this form of governance, and that it be recognized in state statutes. Here the central issue is complex and not easily identifiable.

Luján's timely chapter was published at a time when various Chicana feminist texts were discussing wider perspectives of Chicana social and political spaces. From her discussion we see the centrality of the resolana as a political place or polis. Here the resolana and acequia converge as the former serves the later as a place of governance. Her practice of simultaneously deploying the legal language while speaking local Spanish is a practice that has ushered in the acequia as a political subdivision in which polyglossia is the rule rather than exception. Governance in these spaces involves negotiating oral forms of arreglos as well as mediating the legalistic language of the state. This has accompanied shifts in gender dynamics as women have further carved out a female space

in acequias as innovators of language and governance.

Luján and other acequia scholars before her have forwarded a hypothesis of "traditionalism" which is unconvincing. She bases this argument on a limited inspection of the historical records of the presence of women in acequia roles. What is important to keep in mind is the citizenship status of women in New Mexico during the last century and half. Mary Montoya's fundamental work on women and land tenure in New Mexico *Translating Property* (2002) makes a key argument that needs to be addressed here, which is the issue of community property. José Rivera does point out that women were often present in the creation of early acequia spaces and management. The narrative of the foundation of the Chamisal acequia is a case in point. In such cases women ingeniously engineered their own communities' acequias in the face of sexism. Furthermore Sarah Deutsch's critical text *No Separate Refuge* (1989) has shown that gender roles in northern New Mexico shifted greatly from the late 19th century up until World War II. Of necessity, men followed migrant employment into other states. The ranches were left primarily under the care of women. This is often spoken about as the emergence of *la mujerota*, this was a period in which woman in northern New Mexico took up many traditional roles of the men from the 1880's up until the 1940's. Deutsch also emphasizes the centrality of women's gardens in the resiliency of families, and their role in organizing networks of Mexican Americans in rural northern New Mexico. This point is central to my argument, as these garden spaces are located in the *resolana*, the warm spots of the property. Organizing space today is metaphorically centralized as places where food production, seed saving, and water management is anchored to place. These spaces are key to alternative articulations of female-centered notions of acequia /

resolana spaces.

Summing up her work, Luján's presentation of individualized female agency marks a clear break in the traditions of language politics and customary forms of governance such as the *arreglo* and the *resolana*. In contrast, later on in this chapter I will discuss how women are generating collective agency and women's space for the purpose of base-building, utilizing and affirming local language and customary forms of governance.

Conviviality and movement building in northern New Mexico_

Women have played instrumental roles in transforming *acequia* space, which has significantly affirmed the resiliency and cohesion of these communities. As is described in another significant article published in 2010 by Patricia Trujillo in *Ms. Magazine* titled "An *Acequia* runs through it." The main thesis of the article argues that until recent times, the practice of governing, management, and maintenance of *acequias* has been a male-dominated endeavor, but recently women have emerged as the next generation of *acequia* leadership. Significantly she describes how women cooperatively coordinated, "the most successful campaigns for *acequias* and water rights in New Mexico history" (ibid.:39) In the article she talks about the legislative passage of two 2003 state statutes dealing with water transfers and water banking led by the New Mexico *Acequia* Association a primarily woman centered and community oriented non-profit organization. Trujillo bases her article on a focus group interview with the staff of the NMAA and most visible leader in the today's *acequia* movement, Paula García, the president of the NMAA. She contextualizes the perceived new trend in leadership that challenges the historical representational displacement of women in local agriculture. In

the article García states that, "...the erasure of women in acequia history was not only due to the actions of individual men; some of the traditional roles women held were displaced by modernization of agriculture" (ibid.: 39) by both commercialization of seed stock and then treating acequias as a conveyance for water that was a property right. "When you look at agricultural traditions as a whole, the woman's role is a lot more central" (ibid.: 38). What she points out are the roles of women as users of the acequia and as seed savers as well as horticulturalists or keepers of familial gardens. It is important that many of these gardens were often planted in areas receptive of resolanas, since the growing season was often short in the high arid deserts of north central New Mexico.

The New Mexico Acequia Association and Paula García

In the next section I will discuss my work with the New Mexico Acequia Association. I first met individuals from this non-profit organization in the neighboring county of Mora during a field school with students from around the state studying traditional irrigation practices in the region.

The New Mexico Acequia Association (NMAA) is a nonprofit membership organization whose mission is to "protect water and our acequias, grow healthy food for our families and communities and honor our cultural heritage" (lasacequias.org). It began in 1980 amid the formation of other regional acequia associations.

Many of the older regional association throughout the state were formed in response to the state adjudications. The purposes of these were to improve communication among local acequia associations and share resources such as legal and

historical information data. These were organized to create legislation that culminated in the creation of the legislative acequia and community ditch fund.

Not all the regional associations partner with NMAA. In its inception it was largely organized to aid with governance and technical support. However, the most significant work this membership organization has accomplished during the time of its existence has been working for legislative change, which culminated in 2003 with the passage of two legislative bills, one of which gained for local associations the autonomy to vote on water transfers at the local level; the other gave the same associations the ability to form water banks to protect their community common.

During the field school I attended we toured various traditional and historical water infrastructures. Acequias made up the majority of systems that we toured. On this expedition various local, regional and state level acequia leaders and activists gave the students a historical context.

It was at the field school that I met the director of the organization, Paula Garcia. Originally from Mora, she gave inspired speech dealing with the historical challenges that have affected communities in the state. In Garcia's personal practice of speaking within a gathering she often was strategic in drawing in the elder acequeros. She recognized the authority vested in communal forms of address: "gracias por darme la palabra"(Thank you for deferring me the space to speak). Her discourse is conscientious of crossing into the threshold of the speaking sphere. This form of speaking aims to defer to a collective discourse and agency. This is key to understanding acequia discourse, which I argue, derives from the *resolana*. It functions to spread out consensus among the audience rather than to emphasize individual agency. She mobilizes a shared history of

acequias.

One of the main points she made was the passage of the historical 1907 Water Code. What changed in 1907 was the relationship of how water was viewed by the state. Prior to the passage of these codes, known in western states as the Colorado water doctrine, water was viewed as part of the land and non-transferable. It put into place the idea of water rights as a property that could be commodified. This ushered in a period in which all water in the state needed to be quantified and subsequently adjudicated.

Following her in-depth talk she gave the students a tour of her family property and gardens. I asked her how she began working in her own community. She mentioned she had begun participating in a service learning organization called Los Siete del Norte, an organization closely associated with LADLNR and its members. In passing she mentioned how much of the context for current social movements of acequias associations in New Mexico intellectually owed their foundations to such groups. She further stated that to historicize these groups would be a worthy project to explore. In that comment she prompted the investigation that turned into this dissertation.

My first contractual work with the New Mexico Acequia Association involved a job of translating a bylaws template into Spanish. The bylaws template is a document that was generated by the organization as part of their governance handbook that is employed by the organizers to aid local acequia associations in updating their own charters. This aids local acequia governments to be compliant with state statutes. Acequia leader Alfredo Montoya and NMAA board member informed me that the template was based off of various acequia bylaws already in use. However it would seem that many of these it was based on were documents in English.

More likely than not the purpose of translating such a document would be for accessibility, but another reason could be the affirmation of local language. A case in point would be to help acequias who have their reglas, regulaciones and ordenanzas draw on current legal language in Spanish rather than having a bilingual document or having a monolingual English document.

Later in the spring of 2011 I was asked by García to join the NMAA as a community education and governance specialist. In this capacity I was asked to aid the non-profit in a process of reengaging with grassroots organizing by facilitating communication among acequia leadership. I learned that the organization had recently obtained a Kellogg grant to fund this engagement. It was based upon popular education, whose aim was to alter relations of power. Initially the project that I was to work on was called La Escuela de las Acequias. Its goal was to build networks through dialogue between local acequia leaders utilizing popular education. Dialogue in the local language of the project invoked a politically active idea of *resolana*. *Resolana* as it is understood here is a dynamic spiral of thought, action, and reflection through which all work is accomplished. The NMAA understood the relationship of local acequia as networks of concentric circles of shared values. These relations were to be affirmed through *tareas* or projects that were co-created by the acequia leaders. The leaders themselves were encouraged to work cooperatively and bring in younger leaders to mentor.

The tried knowledge of elders based upon experience was to be affirmed and to serve as a basis for praxis or action. Following these actions a shared analysis facilitated through dialogue allows the participants to refine their process to polish what is termed *Oro del Barrio* (literally, gold of the neighborhood) or refined knowledge, which can be

called upon when needed.

Building these knowledge bases or compiling this *oro* requires practice to cultivate much like the work of farming. As the networks between the leaders of local associations are cultivated, the goal is to make change in the political sphere. The NMAA's Theory of Change as is expressed in their literature is as follows:

Core values are at the center of our work. In our theory of change, our intention is to promote and carry on our core values despite economic and political forces that pull away from core values. In doing so, we manifest our self-determination in direct contrast to the opposite which would be assimilation (lasacequias.org).

NMAA likens this work to a process of “consciousness raising” following the ideas of Paolo Freire, the Brazilian popular education theorist. Paula Garcia states in the *Librito Número 1* a booklet of the Escuelita de las Acequias that two main issues that are currently central to the NMAA are: (1) affirmation of acequia custom and local governance, and agriculture and (2) “raising critical consciousness about the commodification of land, water and food” (2011: 7).

The circulation within these acequia networks in resolana or dialogue aims to build a larger base of influence in which they can collectivize their agency to make political change.

Encuentros and Resolanas

The central tenant of Resolana as deployed by the NMAA in this mode is to serve as a model of knowledge production, facilitating the emergence of local knowledge. Here I will illustrate: aside from the local gathering spot for having coffee, local acequias often don't have the opportunity to meet and share day-to-day strategies with their peers in neighboring associations outside of their particular region. *Encuentros* serve as places of conviviality. However their purpose is goal-oriented. For instance, one particular local association may have planned and put into action a local gardening initiative, and the encuentro allows them a space to talk about both successes and challenges. The narratives shared around the table serve to express values implicit in the work that each one of the participants does in their everyday lives. Many of these narratives get pedagogically

framed within the encuentro as past experience from which new plans can be based upon. One of the goals is for the attendees to start thinking up their own plan of action. This also involves talking with others. Larger transregional projects involve collaboratively working with people from different local acequia associations from different streams. An example of this would be a local or regional association requesting political or technical support from the larger network of the greater community. One of the insights that I came to understand was the value people at these gatherings put on inconsequential knowledge, as late Facundo Valdez often called it. Often these were personal narratives such as familial history, joking, and anecdotes--many of the genres considered *plática de antes* (Briggs: 1988). The time when this inconsequential knowledge was most circulated was during the breaks.

During breaks an organic form of conviviality occurs. In these moments participants meet with other people who share common interests, goals, or values, often to get details about a particular project or ask advice about their own. As the encuentro regroups often there would be an activity in which people would move their bodies to dance and/or sing. At one such encuentro the entire group was invited to dance *La Marcha*. This is a social dance that is often done at local weddings and fiestas. In this dance couples form a chain of two lines and state united by the holding of hands while doing a series of role plays such as forming a cradle, going under the bridge, and finally and most significantly, forming a spiral that creates a internal counter spiral. It finally resolves itself into an unified circle.

At the conclusion, I led the group in a role play or acto of a folk song called “el piojo y la pulga.” The song relates the marriage of lice and a tick. The couple can't marry since they lack the necessary items to have a wedding. At this point their animal neighbors each bring an item to share with the couple and the community. The song is modeled off the mutual aid of comadrazco, a female-centered form of cooperation between persons in a community different from the more recognized religious based fictive kinship of compadrazgo. These exercises go on to reaffirm community networks and create relations of kinship and the bodily warmth of conviviality.

Escuelita de Las Acequias

On September 15th approximately 42 Acequia leaders convened at the La Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas New Mexico for a two-day encuentro gathering held by the NMAA. The purpose of the gathering was to introduce the NMAA's new theoretical model of engagement known as La Escuelita de las Acequias. The overarching goal of this new model of engagement is cultivation and strengthening of local Acequia leadership. The intentions of the gathering from the viewpoint of the NMAA were threefold: (1) to introduce the concept, (2) ask for the approval and recommendations by veteran leaders in regards to the concept, and (3) envision ways of utilizing the concept in practice in local communities.

The gathering commenced with introductions by the executive director of the NMAA, Paula García. In her opening comments García historically contextualized the

movement for the protection of Acequia water in NM by relating the significance of the nearby Las Vegas Plaza. Historically, in 1846 General Steven Watts Kearney and the US Army invaded Mexico's northern departments, and he proclaimed, "Not a pepper, not an onion will be disturbed." García pointed out that was the least of the worries of the Mexican populations in the region, which were now occupied by the United States, a nation-state that was waging a war of aggression predicated on imperial expansion. The major issues of land and water continue to be pressing issues in the state and must be understood and framed with this major historic shift in power in mind.

Following my own introduction, Antonio Medina led the invocation. Medina's central message was that the people are no longer conscious of the profound spirit of nature around them: "Estamos muy ocupados haciendo nada" (We are so occupied with things that really don't matter). He pointed out that the idea of the Escuelita has the potential of reconnecting us to a better understanding with our environment, as it utilizes a methodology employed by the La Academia de la Nueva Raza. Medina then read a vignette entitled "La Buena Vida" from the book published by La Academia entitled *Entre Verde Y Seco* (1972). The recorded oral narrative of Mano Trinidad that Medina read addressed the profound shift in cultural values in the region. Mano Trinidad specifically stated that, "We have sold the proper value of things for a perceived future life of pleasure." In addition, he pointed out that we no longer have an intimate relationship with the world around us. Instead, we are shamed to have our hands dirtied by hard work. Overall, the passage presented a critique of our contemporary society and

its disconnection with what makes us spiritually human--that being, creating our own sustenance.

After the invocation I introduced the concept of the *Mesa del Banquete* (The Banquet Table) and signaled its importance as a symbol of a gathering place for family, knowledge and dialogue. It is perhaps this symbol that best centralizes a conceptual space where knowledge of culture and food ways finds a focal point. As poet Joy Harjo (2002: 123) has pointed out, "The world begins at the kitchen table," "no matter what we must eat to live." I stated that the idea of the Mesa del Banquete is intended to reconnect us to the importance and reverence this space has had historically in our culture. The kitchen table, food and eating in general has diminished over the years into a mundane activity where we hardly recognize the sacredness of food. I then read a traditional family food blessing shared with me from Frances L. García, this was followed by a poem entitled "Molino Abandonado," (Abandon grain mill) that included the coro of the trilla de trigo: "Sopla viento, solpa más y la paja volará, ahí preparado el banquete pa' todo el que vaya entrando"(Blow wind, blow more and the straw will fly away, over there I have prepared a banquet for all that have come to join) The function of the *coro* (Chorus) was to act as an invitation to the participants to partake and share in the communal banquet table.

At this time the attending participants were asked to form a semi-circle around the Mesa del Banquete that was placed in the center of the room. The guests then formed a circle around the Mesa with their items in hand. Each attendee then spoke about their item(s) and placed them on the table. This activity, though planned out for 45 minutes,

lasted almost an hour and a half. It was a particularly good activity that created a center of focus for the entire two-day gathering. The two following narratives give an example of how and what was spoken in this space.

Narrative 1

Gracias por haberme dado la palabra y si en algo me equivoco les pido su perdón. Yo soy Paula García vengo de Mora y me criaron en un valle que se llama Peñasco Blanco con mi hermanita Pamela y también le dicen Las Quebraditas or south Carmen pero Peñasco Blanco es el nombre propio.

Y truje este maíz que viene de la milpa de mi abuelo Juan Pablo García y viene de una milpa de maíz azul pero de vez en cuando sale un elote de este color como, muy a lo lejos sale de este color [morado], también es muy especial. Yo empecé a sembrar maíz cuando yo tenía como veintidós años. Vine de Albuquerque de UNM para trabajar en el *Americorps* y quería sembrar un jardincito y fui a pedirles semilla a mi abuelo y ya había pasado mucho años que él no había sembrado y tuvimos que ir al garage y ahí tenía como una cubeta, *it was covered* y tenía maíz azul. Habían pasado como veinticinco años que él no había sembrado y tenía maíz azul allí. Y me dio un poquito porque no tenía mucha confianza que yo podía sembrarlo. En ese tiempo mi abuelo no compartió la semilla de las calabaza todavía porque todavía no tenía confianza en mí . Después de como tres años de sembrar al fin tenía confianza y me dio más y él

comenzó a sembrar otra vez el maíz. Sembró unas milpas tan bonitas y sacó la semilla también mi abuelita y me dio diferentes tipos de maíz, maíz dulce, calabaza, y otras cositas, y cuando la sembró mi abuelo, que se llamaba Juan Pablo. Decía, “Mira nomás como está tu jardín! ¿Qué no estás cuidado la semilla de tu bisabuela Josefina? Siempre me decía a mí de la semilla de mí abuela. Por eso truje este elote. Es muy importante para mí porque tengo esa relación con mis abuelos que ellos sembraban y me enseñaron a mí como sembrar y también, porque cuando yo me siento mal, me canso mucho del trabajo, lo que me gusta comer es el atole, me sana , me sana el atole. Entonces es algo para mí que es muy importante. Tiene mucho significado para mi personalmente y porque esta lucha es muy larga. Es una lucha de toda la vida. Y para mantenernos buenos y sanos, el atole es lo que nos mantiene. Lo agradezco mucho al maíz por este ofrecimiento.

(Authors traslation: Thank you for conceding me space to speak, if I may blunder I ask your forgiveness. I am Paula García I am from Mora and I was raised in a valley called Peñasco Blanco with my sister Pamela, it is also called Las Quebraditas or South Carmen, but Peñasco Blanco is its proper name.

And I brought this corn that came from the cornfield of my grandfather Juan Pablo García and it comes from a blue corn cornfield, but

once in awhile we get a corn of this color, it is rare that it comes out this color [purple] it is also special. I started to plant corn when I was about twenty-two. I came from Albuquerque from UNM [University of New Mexico] to work with *Americorps* and I wanted to plant a small garden and I went to ask my grandfather for seed, and it had already been quite a bit a time he had stopped planting and we went to the garage and there in a bucket, it was covered, there he had the blue corn. It had already been twenty-five years that he hadn't planted there. He gave me a little bit because he wasn't confident that I could grow it. At that time my grandfather didn't share with me his squash seeds with me.

After about three years of growing he finally had confidence in me and he gave me more and he began to sow his own corn again. He had such beautiful cornfields and my grandmother revealed her own seeds and she gave me different varieties of corn, sweet corn, squash, and other things. When my grandfather planted, his name was Juan Pablo, he would say, Look at how your garden is growing! Aren't you taking care of your great- grandmother Josefina's seeds? He would always refer to them as my great-grandmother's seeds. For that reason I have brought this ear of corn. It is really important for me because I have that relation with my grandparents who planted it and who taught me how to plant also, and also because when I am feeling bad, I feel tired from work, what I like to eat is

blue corn gruel, it heals me, the *atole* keeps me healthy Therefore this is something very important. It has a lot of meaning for me personally because this struggle is very taxing. It is a life long struggle. And in order to maintain good and healthy, the *atole* sustains us. I thank the corn a lot for this offering.

Narrative 2

Yo vengo del valle de Chimayó, entre la carretera de Española y Truchas. Me acordé cuando llegue aquí que tenía que traer algo, pero se me olvidó. Pero estuvo mejor porque trujé lo mejor, lo que es más importante para mí y este es mi sombrero. Este sudor que esta aquí representa mucho años de trabajo en mi rancho, limpiado acequias, cercando, yendo tras las vacas, perspirándome de todo y el sudor como este señor estaba diciendo del agua, es como la sangre. Pues el sudor viene del cuerpo y nomás es la sangre que es refinada clara. Asina la miro yo y como les digo el sudor es lo que es más importante del cuerpo porque es como le limpia uno lo que tiene uno adentro.

Ahora en día miro, todos están sentados más de nada. Se ocupan en nada, si no están picando a las maquinitas, que le dicen. No tienen más que hacer. Como la comadrita dijo ahorita, “¿Pues, qué estás haciendo?” “Nada” “¿Por qué no? Hay mucho que hacer. Tengo muchos parientes que

digán, “ayúdame” pa’ qué les digo. Mi abuelo me dijo una vez, me decía a mí que tenía que sudar el cuerpo. Me decía él, “¡Que sude ese cuerpo!” Me platicaba y me decía porque es importante para que sanes de lo que tienes. Por eso todos están enfermos. Tienen el corazón, tienen la sangre y la diabetes, tienen de todo y ¿Por qué? Porque no se ocupan en nada y no mueven el cuerpo ya, que es la mejor cosa que puede hacer uno.

Les hablé de la sobada, mi abuelo era curandero y sobador en el valle. Me acuerdo que la gente venía para que le sobara. Le llevaban a Mora. Le llevaban a Guadalupita. Le llevaban pa’ allá pa’ rumbo de Chama y esos lugares. Él me platicara que el agua y la tierra se van juntas. Y me decía que no vendiera la tierra porque la tierra es la que sostiene al individuo. Esa es la riqueza del individuo. Él que vive con la tierra es parte de la tierra y esa tierra también esta conectada como decir al agua. Porque si no hay agua no hay nada. Como vimos este verano tuvimos un “*drought*” que dicen, la sequía, pues todavía lo hicimos. Estaban todos que, “pa’ aca está muy seco y no va haber nada.” No, también con l’ agua y la tierra viene la fe. Yo siempre he tenido fe. Yo nunca me rajo de la fe eso es lo que cuenta para vivir también. Si no hay fe, no hay nada. Y me fue muy bien, gracias a Dios. Producía lo que sembré y hasta ahora estuvimos sacando lo que tengo. Lo que agarré es la misma cosa con los animales,...no me rajo pues, cuando una persona se raja no sigue

adelante. Nunca se raja uno en la vida, me platicaba mi papá. “Él que se raja no es suficiente de hombre. ¿Tienes problemas? Sigues adelante. Pa’ adelante vas, nunca mires pa’ tras. El camino que va pa’ tras es lo que ya lo *cruzates* ya lo *pasates* cuando vas adelante vas mirando lo que está allá para que lo mires. Y doy muchas gracias por darme la oportunidad con ustedes.

(Authors Translation: I come from the valley of Chimayó between the road from Española and Truchas. I remembered when I arrived here that I had to bring something, but I forgot. But it was for the best because I have something better, that which is the most important to me and it is my hat. This sweat, which it has, represents many years of work on my ranch, cleaning acequias, fencing, going after cows, and perspiring, the sweat as this gentleman was saying about the water is just like blood. Well sweat comes from the body and it is nothing else but the clear refined blood. That is how I look at it and I tell you that sweat is the most important thing to the body because the way the body has to clean out what one has inside.

Today I see everybody just sitting down more than anything. Occupied doing nothing, fingering things on their appliances, as they call them. They have nothing else to do. Like our Co-mother here said a little while ago, “What are you doing? “Nothing!” Why not? There are a whole lot of things for us to do I have many relatives that say, “Help me” what

can I say. My grandfather told me one time; he told me that the body must sweat. He told me, "Make your body sweat!" He talked to me and would tell me that it is important to heal what ails you. That is why we are sick. Heart conditions, blood conditions, diabetes, they have everything and why? Because they do not occupy themselves in anything and they don't move their body, which is the best thing one can do.

I'll tell you about traditional massage therapy, my grandfather was a healer and a masseuse in the valley. The people would come so that he could massage them. They would take him to Mora. They would take him to Guadalupita. They would take him over there near Chama and those places. He would tell me the water and the land goes together. Don't sell your land because the land is what sustains the individual. It is the wealth of a person. He who lives with the earth is part of the soil and that soil is connected to the water, because without water there is nothing. Like we saw this spring we had drought, but we still made it. Everyone was, back and forth saying its too dry there is not going to be nothing [harvests]. Along with the water and the land also comes faith. I have always had faith. I never give up my faith. That is what counts to also live. If there is no faith, there is nothing. It has been good thanks to God. I harvested what I planted; and we are even still harvesting what I have. I have the same thing with the animals, I don't give up, and when a person gives up he

doesn't get ahead. Never to give up on life my father use to tell me. He who is gives up is not enough of a man. Do you have problems? Keep going forward. Move foreword. Don't look back. The road that leads back is what you have already traversed and passed, when you move ahead you can see what is over there. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here with you.

After the all the members presented their items and placed them on the table the group took a brief break. Following the break a slide presentation was shown showing pictures of various NMAA programs and projects. The photographs featured scenes of acequia and farm landscapes, and multi-generational learning, food growing, and preparations by Sembrando Semillas Youth. The purpose of the visual images was to lead into a conversation dealing with cooperative work and projects that have been done in the past by NMAA. Originally the digital slide show was to be presented in conjunction with a manual slide show of photographs taken in the 1970 and 1980's by Alejandro López [an academia associate] entitled "El ciclo de la comida." However, the light in the room did not allow an appropriate presentation of the particular slideshow.

In the next portion of the day, Paula García, the executive director of the NMAA, introduced the concept of the Escuelita de las Acequias and NMAA's theory of change. At this time she formally recognized the members of the La Academia de la Nueva Raza, a group formed during the late 1960's, whose mission was to document the rural Chicano

knowledge base and use it as means to develop a movement for popular education in the southwest. This organization was a significant influence on the conceptualization of the NMAA's own theory of change and focus on praxis (action-based knowledge). It conceptualized a concept of dialogue that it called Resolana and utilized it as a conduit to learn and document the oral histories, life histories, and personal narratives of community elders.

Paula García spoke about the mission of the Escuelita de las Acequias to inspire and create a base of support for local leaders to defend their customary usage of the Acequia and to generate plans of action. She pointed out that popular education has a foundational goal of social change. This social change is developed through a spiral model of praxis that includes three facets: Shared Analysis and Decisions, Shared Work and Practice, and finally Reflection and Understanding, this methodology is known shorthand as a *Tarea* based on the acequia cleaning practice.

She furthered that the education that it aimed to circulate was based on community core values. One important point is that the Escuelita de las Acequia is a model of engagement that seeks to build and support leadership, and that it change hearts and minds in raising consciousness about core values. Following this it is important to embody these concepts through praxis, which then allows for the opportunity for reflection on the work that has been done. The Escuelita goal is to foster these three processes by facilitating the coordination of a community.

I then spoke of the need to decolonize the power dynamics of learning. The

importance of being able to name one's world is a question of power. Traditional classroom learning utilizes the banking model, which posits the teacher as the all-knowing head of the classroom and the students as the empty vessels to be filled with knowledge. The Escuelita takes a different model for education. It models a space where teachers have the responsibility of being students and students have the responsibility of being teachers. In the Escuelita all participants are simultaneously Maestros/Estudiantes. This can be facilitated by critically becoming conscious of the power relationships, by recognizing authority and learning how it relates to the ability to exercise power in utilizing a traditional knowledge base. The lack of opportunity to exercise power in many cases derives from colonial impositions of values and languages.

The group then took a break for the day and gathered later that night for dinner with musical guests Carlitos Medina, AJ Martínez and Daniel Gallegos. Many attendees later complimented the group on their heartfelt performance. The following day, on September 16th, the group reconvened after a breakfast at 8:30am. The table was opened up for reflection on the previous day. Following an opening prayer Paula García introduced the *Tema* or theme of community and commodification. The gathering on this day was opened with a reading of the popular poem from the late 19th century entitled "El Ferrocarril." This poem speaks to the commodification of labor and the shift away from subsistence agriculture toward a labor market. The poem seemed not to work very well. There needs to be a better way to contextualize the commonsense and core values that are implicit in our popular cultural traditions and customs.

Paula García then introduced the need for an analytic tool and a practice case study. She then invited Gabriel Estrada and William Gonzales, both of Las Vegas, to present the historical context of the case. Gabriel Estrada was the first to present. He started his talk speaking about the Río Gallinas and the “Pueblo Water Right” that the courts awarded the city of Las Vegas, one of two in the entire country. He furthered his thoughts on the frustration of the rising costs of litigation between the Acequias and municipality of Las Vegas. He stated, “Four million dollars and we have not seen anything from litigation.” He put forth the view that the lawyers would be careless about resolution to the case as long as they were making money. He stated, “they [attorneys] are all in cahoots for services not rendered, they are all in cahoots.” He put forward the need for mediation. He said, “We need people with their heart in it, ...there are no better people then here today in this room.”

William Gonzales, who spoke later, concurred with Estrada and commented on the water-sharing practices and media campaign through which the Acequia communities organized. Pueblo Water Right doctrine, as he explained, views water as follows: “as a community grows you can take as much water as the community needs.” This doctrine puts the City of Las Vegas in direct competition with the Acequias. However, the city and the Acequias had mediated a water sharing agreement, although the State engineer office stated, “It was unable to administer the agreement.” One of the factors that Gonzales put forward was the attitude that despite the great heart and spirituality that is

put into the Acequia, they were not taken seriously: “we are looked upon as hobby farmers.”

Historically, on the Pecos watershed there have been three major adjudications. In 1922 there was a partial adjudication. In 1933 the federal government came to pass the Hope Decree. And finally, in 1991, came the current adjudication, which is not complete and involves the city of Las Vegas. The city and the Acequias came up with their own agreement but the State engineer came up with it’s own sharing agreement and their revised agreement, which was worse.

William latter spoke about the public campaign on the radio done by the Acequia. Later he spoke about the idea of rallying all the tractors and doing a parade to show our solidarity. Another idea was having a blue flag to show solidarity and to show what values we are trying to hold on to.

The common theme that Gonzales put forth was that the Acequia and the city of Las Vegas “need to get together and come to an sharing agreement.” At this point Paula García began to open up the discussion. Using the analytical tool, she brought up the need to identify the relations of power.

Antonio Media then stated that the oppression needed to be reflected upon. This is where consciousness raising occurs but he stated the need to further this reflection into an act of liberation that places power and freedom into the hands of the people. Facundo Valdez ended the conversation with a dicho using it to show how those in power don’t attend to the underdog. He said for them in power, “Los piensamentos de la gente pobre

son como los pedos de un burro flaco” (The ideas of poor people are like the farts of an emaciated donkey). The It is important to keep in mind that the analysis be not an end in itself but coupled with direct plans of action regarding how to approach the problem in creative ways and make steps toward accomplishing these plans.

The final part of the two-day gathering focused on assessing the feasibility of Escuelitas at the local level. One example of a Tarea that was given was the Almacén y Troja project in Mora. Both Mariano Rivera and Antonio Medina spoke about the conception of this project to a further degree. This was just an example as projects can range from Acequia restoration projects to oral history projects to community gardens to what the local leaders and their community deem fit for a tarea. In regard to the development of leadership, one of the ideas that were suggested by Jorge García is that current leadership should assist in cultivating emerging leadership. This may be one possible way to build community and up-and-coming leaders. Patricia Trujillo suggested a tarea that involved engaging institutions of education such as Northern New Mexico College, working with them to become aware of the needs of our regions and then create dynamic curriculum in partnership with the community to formalize future Acequia leaders.

Finally, the gathering was closed in a circle formation with a final recognition of the cardinal directions and a prayer. Facundo Valdez ended the gathering in song with a rendition of the canción Josefina. He made an important point when he talked about learning how to sing alongside an out-of-tune guitar. He pointed out when we work with

different people with different views, which at times may be out of harmony with our own views, we nevertheless must learn to work with them and learn from them different modalities of thinking.

Singing

The NMAA developed its own mode of community organizing that utilized the concept of *resolana* as a central term. For many years the association would use the term to organize community consciousness meetings to plan out actions to address foreseeable threats to the livelihood of the communal systems. One of the major threats is the commodification of water throughout the state.

Water in New Mexico is a scarce resource. In addition, the state holds various interstate and international compacts with Texas and Mexico that ensure delivery of agreed-upon quantities of water. The largest pressures on the availability of water in the state are the growing urban centers of Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces. As all water in the state has been appropriated, when new development occurs water must be transferred from one place to another.

The severability of water from land was a practice first allowed by the 1907 water code, which conferred water rights to private-property owners. Prior to this date water in communal Acequias was managed as a shared resource tied to the land. The predicament that these Acequias are facing is the fact that water rights can be sold like property. The communal systems, which depend on private property owners sharing a vested interest,

becomes eroded piece by piece as water speculators and brokers promise big dollars to individual water rights holders. This water is then severed from these systems and sold to more affluent urban zones.

The NMAA utilizes the term *resolana* to organize politically with community members to strategize how to make their interests at the level of state legislative and judicial government. However, at another level the Acequia have to make their interests heard at the national level to entities such as United States Forest Service and United States Department of Agriculture. The economic power that Acequias exercise is small both federally and within the state. Making their interests known to their representatives is difficult, therefore the acequias have organized to form various regional associations as well as the statewide NPO. These associations function as publics that aim to influence public opinion toward the Acequia interests.

I will give an example of how *resolana* is being used in these forums. On October 3 of 2011 an advisory committee organized by the USDA to give recommendations to the secretary of USDA was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico at a local hotel conference center. This meeting's aim was to hear public comment in regards to the addressing of grievances and claims of discrimination to minority and women farmers. The committee known as the USDA Advisory Committee on Diversity held various other public meetings throughout the United States.

So as to best make their interests heard, the NMAA organized 20 community members to meet the night before and for the day of the scheduled meeting. On the night

before a gathering called a resolana was to take place to discuss strategies to approach the meeting. At the resolana, community members were led by the director of the NPO and briefed to the format of the meeting. We were told that individually each person in attendance was to be given only three minutes to make public comment. This led to a comment from one of the members who stated that we should organize our comments since there were many topics to cover in a short amount of time. It was noted that it would be best to be strategic and allow those who had shared concerns to use their expertise in fields of knowledge they knew best. This was agreed upon. After the resolana people stayed nearly an hour after to visit with old friends.

The day of the meeting arrived as planned. People lined up to give their public comment. The group organized by the NPO gave their comments individually throughout the day. One of the disappointments was the failure of the regional forester of USFS to attend, as many of the claims of unfair discriminatory practices were directed toward his office.

As the day went on many members gathered outside in a somewhat organic resolana. Here, several of the small-scale farmers and ranchers reflected on what had occurred inside. As the group of 4 to 5 people stood outside in the sun this October day, they talked about their actions in the meeting and possible future strategies for organizing against the problems they were facing.

The Shovel and the Eight hundred acequias

The sun has yet to come out and I travel to the home of Don Bustos, who is heading out today from the Española valley, with his tractor in tow, driving 75 miles south to the main Civic Plaza to participate in an action march against a development by the development cooperation Santolina on the West side of Albuquerque. As Bustos has mentioned before, such a large-scale development would jeopardize traditional farmers and farming by taking water away from agricultural use. Concerned acequia members in Albuquerque led by Dr. Virginia Necochea and her organization Contra Santolina organized the action that day. In showing his support to the former organizations Bustos called upon his networks throughout the state to lend his support to a farmers' march action. Many like Bustos have brought their tractors to lead the procession to the Bernalillo county complex in order to give testimony on how this development would pose adverse effects to already strained water resources in the state. I have my shovel and my song to sing in the march. By quickly organizing, in the span of a week and calling upon the networks of farmers and allies three hundred marchers amassed and walked to give public comment that day. From all over the state acequia farmers organized to quickly respond to an impending challenge.

As the previous subsection has described the work of NMAA to strengthen networks of concentric circles, the base of these are the local acequia associations, widening to include regional associations and finally creating a base within the statewide Association. These networks include other membership organizations and NPOs. The

wider partnerships involve organizations that share similar values. The purpose of fostering such networks is to have the ability to respond to pressing issues with what Paula García terms "base de apoyo" or a network of support. Garcia, who has invoked the imagery of 800 soldiers who are in the mountain country on numerous occasions, drew this metaphor from the corrido of Valentín de la Sierra. On numerous occasions I have been asked to sing the ballad during organizational gatherings such as workshop meetings and the annual Congress of acequias. This ballad deploys, at its emotive core, references to rural landscapes, revolutionary action, and the religious iconography of the Virgin of Guadalupe, whom the protagonist defends at the cost of his life. At one such meeting the president of the board took poetic license with the ballad and improvised: "son 800 acequeros que trae por la sierra la Paula García" (They number eight hundred acequia leaders that Paula has up in the highlands). Here is a latent example of how music along with literary texts are put into practice as instruments to frame political organizing.

In putting ballads such as these into performance in these contexts the purpose is to draw upon a poetics of place that connects past struggles within greater Mexico with those of the present. It positions actors within social movement publics within an epic narrative.

For many publics the influencing of the state is an important concern. As I have shown, these Acequia members find agency through the resolana, where they create knowledge that they use to build up and plan for further action. Here we can see the formation of multiple publics as they are used to create cohesion in the imagined

community. By analyzing and talking alongside my interlocutors I become a co-creator of resolana as a performative practice of dialogue. By utilizing communicative cartographies the goal is to better understand how the formation of these community-building spaces function to allow or restrict the transcendence of local interests to the level of the state.

This chapter has shown how Resolana can be utilized in its various manifestations. Its multivalence contains deep-seated meaning among the communities that employ its usage. I have shown how it is used by acequia communities as a descriptive toponym, as a lightscape that moves, as a gathering space where dialogue takes place, and finally as a theory of knowledge production and history. This chapter further affirms a coupling of local language to these Resolana spaces. In addition these spaces provide needed respite from the grind of the everyday, allowing practitioners to reflect and dialogue not only in and about local spaces but also about national and global concerns.

This chapter has also discussed how the acequia as a political subdivision of the state utilizes many forms of resolana in their management. They are also innovators in the generation of new manifestations of resolana, such as described in the organizing efforts of the New Mexico Acequia Association. Most significantly we have seen how the resolana has been a traditional place of governance as well as a contemporary place for political organizing and strategizing. Local communities are achieving resiliency by activating communal agency through publics such as the resolana.

CONCLUSION

En tu casa no me quieren

porque yo vivo cantando

- Facundo Valdez

Pretty much todo es una canción

-northern New Mexican musician

Singing “La despedida”

During the summer of 2014 while completing this present manuscript I was taken aback as two of my central interlocutors in this investigation passed away suddenly. On July 16 Tomás Atencio age 81 passed away after a lengthy illness and was followed in death weeks later on August 3 by longtime friend and Academia de Nueva Raza co-founder Facundo Váldez age 82.

I was invited to sing at both these well-respected men’s funeral services. It was truly an honor for me to lend my practice to sing to the memory of these pillars in the community. Singing a farewell “la despedida” is a practice I in fact learned from the late Facundo Valdez. He made it an ethnopoetic practice in community settings to take leave of those present through song. In the following narrative I wish to follow his example and show how the musical genre of farewell known as “la despedida” mattered both to these two esteemed *resolaneros* and their respected families.

Early in the winter of 2014 I had heard from both friends and colleagues that professor Tomás Atencio’s health was deteriorating. Sensing the limited time to honor Dr. Atencio’s life and work while he was still alive, LADLNR associate Alejandro López published a tribute to Tomás Atencio in the *Green Fire Times*, a regionally circulated newspaper on traditional agriculture in New Mexico. In subsequent weeks following the publication of the news article I heard from various people that had gone to visit the ailing professor.

I decided that upon my arrival back to New Mexico in June of 2014 I would go and visit him and his spouse Consuelo Pacheco. The last time I seen the two was two years prior when I had invited both Atencio and Pacheco to attend an *encuentro* for the *Escuelita de las Acequias* that I had co-facilitated when I worked with the New Mexico Acequia Association. I telephoned their residence. Consuelo Pacheco let me know of the gravity of Atencio's health. I asked her when would be appropriate to set up a time to make a *visita* to see both of them. I hadn't intended for the visit to be academically related instead I let her know I was intending to take my guitar to sing some songs for both of them. The purpose more than anything was to *llevarle música al maestro* (to gift the professor some music) to lift his spirits. Consuelo Pacheco agreed and let me know that the following week would be a good time for me to come over.

The day arrived I traveled to the Atencio-Pacheco home in Sawmill Albuquerque. On the way to their home I passed by many new homes being built for low-income families; a project whose legacy is directly related to the local community activist work done by Atencio and Pacheco. I passed a commercial district in their neighborhood and saw a three-panel mural on a southern facing wall with the word "RESOLANA" emblazoned in the center. On the panel to the left the phrase "*Una vida buena y sana.*" (A good and healthy life) and on the right the words "*Raza cósmica.*" (Cosmic Humanity). It was clear I was nearing the home of the father and mother of the Chicano era idea of *resolana*.

When I arrived I visited with Consuelo Pacheco and Tomás Atencio and their assistant caretaker. We sat down in the living room and I handed Pacheco a zip lock packet of *atole* (blue cornmeal) that was grown by my family. She let me know that Atencio was in his bedroom as he was bedridden. I asked Pacheco, “what are your and Tomás Atencio’s favorite *canciones*?” She responded that Tomás liked *canciones rancheras*. Informed by many of his associates from LADLNR Dr. Atencio’s in addition to his intellectual practices he was a practicing musician who wrote many songs poetically embodying his politics. I responded that I knew songs that I could play. I was taken into Tomás Atencio’s room and I began to sing, “*Voy afinar mi guitarra, para cantarle a mi tierra, una canción que me piden, ranchera como la sierra...*” Pacheco and her assistant who were in the room with Dr. Atencio and me began to sing along. I sang many songs of my repertoire that I had learned from many years of playing at small familial *fiestas* in northern New Mexico. I sang “El Quelite” “La Facundita” “El trovo del café y el atole.” and “El corrido del hijo desobediente.” Then I sang a couple of my own songs about the acequias “Los mayordomos,” and “Canción de las acequias.” I told them how Dr. Atencio’s work had inspired the two compositions, especially the embedded poetics to *el oro del barrio* and the idea of *querencia*. Before I left Consuelo Pacheco informed me that the family would like me to sing at Dr. Atencio’s memorial services. I was honored by the request and said that I would certainly be there to play whenever the family needed me.

Leaving I knew I would never see Dr. Atencio alive again and in my mind these songs were my gift to him to thank him for help and as a way of bidding him farewell on his journey. To me they were instrumental in me learning through doing or action a form of a larger ritual series of *despedidas* that were to unfold over the next month.

Una Fiesta de Retiro (A Retirement Party)

A few of weeks later back in northern New Mexico the staff of NMAA gathered at a family's home to celebrate the retirement of one of its staff members Lucille Trujillo. Many of the staff and board members of the NMAA and friends of the organization attended. I took my accordion and my friend Jeremías Martínez took his guitar to sing "Las mañanitas" (early morning song) to Lucille Trujillo on the day of her retirement. With all the people gathered together we all sang for the retiree. To my delight Facundo Valdez and Antonio Medina attended the *fiestecita*. Both of them were founding members of LADLNR and fellow board members of the NMAA. Facundo Valdez had since last December retired from the board; presently Antonio Medina serves as the chairperson of NMAA's board of directors.

They were both happy to see me. My friend and I, after singing to the retiree and having some food, we both sat with Valdez and Medina to visit and *platicar*. The conversation turned to discuss the health of their close friend Tomás Atencio who they both had recently gone to visit. I told them that I had gone to sing for Dr. Atencio a couple of weeks earlier. Facundo Valdez mentioned that the time was nearing that he

would have to also sing “la despedida” for his friend. Valdez as I have mentioned in the previous chapter was well recognized among the community for his speaking and masterful “despedidas.” He asked me if I knew “La barca de oro.” We both started singing it, *Yo ya me voy al puerto donde se halla...* Antonio Medina and others around joined in. I asked my friend Jeremías to lend me his guitar. I proceeded to accompany *maestro* Facundo. It was not easy to follow his lead. His timing was not familiar to me. At first I played trying to match the pitches in his voices. *¿Valseada o ranchera lenta?* (3/4 time or a slow 4/4) I thought to myself while trying not to force the singers into an uncomfortable rhythmic pattern as I floated in a hybrid way between the two. It goes to say accompanying one’s own singing with the guitar is an easier task than providing impromptu accompaniment to a singer who often sings marking their own time others yet in and out of time with the rhythmic *golpes* provided by the *guitarrero*. Next we sang a corrido “El hijo desobediente” which relates the ranching story of a tragedy that befell a disobedient son. This is followed by “La monedita de oro” a canción ranchera that relates the love of a proud but poor singer whose would be in-laws did not think highly of him, because he was a singer, “*En tu casa no me quieren, porque yo vivo cantando.*” As the party went on, people had drinks and shared a cake. The time to leave came and Facundo Valdez stood-up and started to sing his typical farewell song the *Siete y siete son catorce...* The song was central piece to Valdez’s repertory of *canciones*. He was often asked to sing it a meeting closer that he would stimulate others to sing the

chorus along with him. On one occasion Valdez sang he explained the song's meaning:

Y ahorita, siendo que yo siempre pago por mi comida o donde está el pan con una canción que aprendí de mi abuela. Y más antes la cantaba mejor pero yo me junté con un señor de allá de Dixon. Ustedes lo conocen, el Tomás Atencio. Es medio hablantín *asina* como mi camarada Antonio Medina. (risas) Y él de volada siempre quería cantar. *Traiba* una guitarra desafinada, con tres cuerdas. Yo siempre había tenido muy buena tonada en mi voz, pero tuve que aprender a cantar con una guitarra *desatonada*. (risas) Entonces ahora no canto bien es porque me enseñaron así como cantar con una guitarra *desatonada*.

En esas comunidades en que trabajamos tenemos que aprender como trabajar con gente que a veces no están *atonadas* o diferentes. Pero no quiero hablar ya tanto que ya ahorita la tartamudez llega muy pronto. *My stuttering comes and takes over and that's not good*. Pero, esta canción se llama... no se como llamarla porque yo la aprendí cuando estaba muy joven. Pero creo que hay los temas de, como dicen, “amor,” “love,” “astronomy,” “mathematics,” lo que quieran ponerle. Ustedes tienen imaginaciones más grandes que la mía. Porque a mí a veces me falta el modo de pensar claramente. No nomás yo, pero a veces mis compañeros dicen, “como andas enreda’o,” y enreda’o quiere decir

muchas cosas, no nomás que estoy enreda'o, pero no me puedo desenredar,
que está peor. Por eso les digo...

Siete y siete son catorce

Siete y siete son catorce

Catorce y siete veintiuna

Despedidas se habrán oído

Despedidas se habrán oído

Pero como ésta ninguna...

Here, Facundo Valdez describes how the despedida functions on one order as a reciprocal gift for the sustenance that was shared with him. On another level his despedida performs yet another necessary social function that is creating a culturally recognized, poetically satisfying end point to the social gathering. For Facundo Valdez singing was a practice that he used to intensify social bonds with those who had gathered. As I have mentioned before once in a meeting he recommend that all NMAA meetings start and conclude with a song. Valdez's practice of singing in this way spatially and temporally fosters a local space for the local Spanish language. As I argue throughout this dissertation the resolana is a dynamic structure similar to a discursive theater where the language domain is Spanish and its speakers through conversation reflect and mediate upon their social space. As Poet Leví Romero's epigram affirms, "*El que nace pa' resolanero dondequiera hace resolana*" In the case of Valdez, his mastery of the nuevomexicano resolana serves

this purpose, but also challenges dominant monolingual anglophonic publics because the dominant language becomes Spanish.

In sum, as the party ended people slowly make way to their automobiles. The visit and Valdez's song, has helped to renew their social networks and their affirmation of the significance of retaining the Spanish language as a cultural space.

El maestro cruzó el cerco

Later on that week I received a call from Consuelo Pacheco that she was going through her and Tomás Atencio's library, and they thought it best to gift me various books of anthropology, mostly the works of Claude Levi-Strauss and Margaret Meade. She asked me when I would be in town to pick them up. I told her in two days. The next day in the evening I began to see memorial postings for Tomás Atencio on social media. I tried calling to confirm the sad news but the phone was busy throughout the night. The day arrived and I was back again in Albuquerque and called Consuelo Pacheco to give my condolences. She asked me to visit with the family and pick out the books. I arrived and the house was full of family members and friends. They invited me to eat a meal with them and they discussed the memorial services and dialogue with me what songs they wanted for me to play at the service. "¿Sabes esa de la barca?" "Yes," I conferred, which one? Knowing it was going to be a church service I recalled my religious song repertoire. The one that goes "¿Tú has venido a la orilla?" "Yes, that one." Consuelo Pacheco asked me if I could play the family song a couple of songs on the guitar. I told

her I had not brought my instrument with me. To my surprise Pacheco brought out the guitar of the late Tomás Atencio and asked me kindly to play a couple of songs in honor of the deceased. I sensed the solemnity of the moment and began singing the requested song. Dr. Atencio's brother Amos Atencio recalled fondly the times his brother would sing and play the guitar. In a matter of half hour we collaboratively compiled a list of songs on a notebook, which they wanted me to sing at the service they had planned in Atencio's hometown of Dixon, New Mexico. In addition they asked me if I would work collaboratively with Atencio's LADLNR colleague and long time friend Antonio Medina, who was to deliver one of the eulogies. They wanted us together to facilitate a *resolana* for people to share memories of maestro Tomás after the church service. I was deeply honored to be given such a large responsibility of co-facilitating a *resolana* in the memory of one of the principal intellectuals and practitioners' of this genre. There were going to be two public services for Dr. Atencio, one in Albuquerque and the other in Dixon.

The Albuquerque service took place a few blocks away from the Atencio-Pacheco home at the San Felipe de Nerí Church in Old Town Plaza. Due to that I was traveling from two hours away I arrived late to the 10 am service. The church was packed with the overflow of people standing shoulder to shoulder in the back of the church. I stood for a while in the back of the church, and tried to shift my way through the crowd in an attempt to reach the front of the building, but people continued to come in.

After 20 minutes into the service I decided to go outside. It wasn't surprising that

many people, some LADLNR *asociados*, were gathered outside sitting on the *bancos* (benches) under the *sombra* (shade) of a tree. Many of Dr. Atencio's closest friends shared the space conferring *la pesamé* or condolences. "*Lo siento,*" "*ya se nos fue*" and *pa' allá vamos todos*" "*Nos adelantó.*" (I am sorry, He left us, and we're all going his way. He leads us where we are going). Some said why they preferred being outside, "I am not much of a Catholic," "It was too packed and I can't stand for a long time," a woman was heard saying. Still another said, "*mejor aquí en la resolana* Tomás would have preferred it." As the mass inside presented a formal memorial for Dr. Atencio outside provided a counterpoint where people could dialogue, embrace, give handshakes, joke and most importantly feel the warmth of another persons voice and presence. The mass finished and the people inside joined the others outside and visited talking in Spanish, English or switching between the two. A line formed to greet the mourners made up of the immediate family. Others took the time to visit with friends and acquaintances. People who had not seen each other for years were surprised to see who had gathered. "*Allí anda Morgán...hace un buen tiempo que no le ha habido visto*" (Over there is Morgan...its been a while since I've visited him). Gathered outside was the who's who of the New Mexico's *Movimiento Chicano*. The gathering following the Mass lasted about 45 minutes. The stragglers remained outside the church to participate in the last delectable bite of the *plática*. What this gathering illustrated was perhaps a contemporary parallel of what Irving Rusinow witnessed back in 1942 in El Cerrito New Mexico, that the *resolana* gathering outside of the church is as significant as what occurs

inside. Atencio's intellectual contribution allows us to describe the dynamics of these informal spaces, which have a significant role in shaping community cohesion.

The Dixon Service and Resolana

The second service took place the next day on July 27th 2014 in Dr. Atencio's hometown of Dixon, New Mexico. As I said before the family had requested that I play the music for the Presbyterian service and also to facilitate with Antonio Medina a resolana to follow the meal that was to be served after the church service.

I contacted Medina earlier that week and we agreed upon the four songs that I was to play. I also let him know that I was going to play along with my good friend Jeremías Martínez who was going to play the guitar while I played the accordion. We worked that week rehearsing the songs. "Pescador de Hombres," "Cuán Grande es Él," "Amazing Grace" and "Nuevo México, Lindo y Querido."

I made copies of the words to facilitate the congregation to help sing along. I also added into the lyric sheet the words for "La Barca de Oro" which was the special despedida song that Facundo Valdez was going to sing during the service. Once again the congregation filled the church. Atencio's older brother led the people in the Lords prayer. Medina then rose to eulogize Atencio's central work in LADLNR dealing with his research on "consentización y liberación" (consciousness raising and liberation). It was difficult to hear Medina's voice as the sound system was faulty. Medina, a retired Presbyterian reverend, known for his oratorical virtuosity was subdued. Medina was

followed by the deceased's brother Amos Atencio, who spoke about Tomas's life history. After these moving presentations Facundo Valdez was called upon to present. The 81 years old man walked slowly to the lectern from five pews behind. He told how he had met Atencio doing social work around the southwest. He reiterated that the most important lesson he learned from Atencio, while they traveled around the Southwest working in Mexican American communities, was the love for the music they shared and the pleasure they received when they performed for others. He jokingly added that many times they had to sing along with an out of tune guitar. As he prepared his voice to sing, I stood up to assist him by holding the microphone behind the pulpit. Significantly, he sang *a capella* as he often did. *maestro* Facundo sang:

No volverán mis ojos a mirarte
y tus oídos escuchán canto,
Voy a aumentar los mares con mi llanto
Adios mujer, adios para siempre, ádios.

After his song, there was a long silence and Valdez sat down with Dr. Atencio's brothers behind the lectern. Antonio Medina looked at me and signaled that we should begin playing our final song. I played the guitar and began to sing:

Voy a afinar mi guitarra
para cantarle a mi tierra
una canción que me piden

ranchera como la sierra...

When we finished people began to walk outside to talk and gather much the same manner as what happened in Albuquerque the day before. Whether this was a *resolana* I will not venture to say. What was evident was how our local Spanish language permeated our surroundings. As people headed to the *Sala Filantropica* for lunch, a group of men in their late 60's gathered in the corner to chat, all of them former associates of LADLNR. Inside the hall Elena Arellano also an LADLNR associate served the buffet and fed some one hundred guests. While people waited in line, most people spoke in Spanish, and formed groups of two and three people. At the same time, others moved down the hall and sat with friends while they ate.

The day's events provided an inversion of the everyday language that is spoken in public. Here the dominant language spoken was Spanish both in the public domain of the ceremony that had transpired, as well as in the private interactions that I observed. Primarily, this was due to the age of the people gathered. I was probably one of the youngest people there at age 35. When I spoke to people, I respectfully refrained from speaking in second person familiar form. However formality for a younger person is more than speaking in the *Usted* form. It involves listening for cues when to speak and when to listen.

An hour into the meal people began to bid their goodbyes. I asked Consuelo Pacheco if we should start the *resolana*. She concurred and I asked Facundo Valdez to

sing again. He walked to the head of the dining room and began... *siete y siete son catorce...*

After that many people continued to leave. I have to admit that I must not have been a successful facilitator as few people chose to speak and share their memories of Dr. Tomás Atencio. Acting as facilitator had overwhelmed me. What I learned from this experience is that a non-goal oriented resolana is very different than the Post-Academia de la Nueva Raza Resolana. This made me reflect upon what Facundo Valdez had once told me. According to him an organic resolana that creates a space of humanistic warmth is difficult to organize, if it is not planned ahead of time or is not a designated place. For him it was the process of assembling inconsequential knowledge of relationships people had with place and putting it into practice. He once shared with me that resolana was such significant gathering space for dialogue not because people were lonely but it served as a needed space because people were solitary and the plática shared was indispensable to develop strategies to cope with everyday issues.

Other people spoke and Valdez's despedida served as the final statement of the day. Little were we to know that that this occasion would be Facundo Valdez's last public performance. Following Atencio's farewell ceremony, that afternoon he was taken to the hospital and he passed away one week later.

La Despedida de Facundo Valdez

Later that week a friend called me to inform me that Facundo Valdez had passed away. Memories and reflections flooded my mind. A few months earlier, the annual Congreso de las Acequias honored him with its Lifetime Achievement award. In his acceptance speech, he effectively delivered his own *despedida*. In it he recalled his upbringing in Las Agüitas, New Mexico. He added "*a mí me criaron con la ley del monte*" (I was raised with the law of the mountains). He spoke as well about "the dignity of working with ones hands, honoring the spirit of the land, and the need for community self-sufficiency."

Valdez ended the speech with a musical "*remanche*," as he called it, literally a rhetorical rivet to secure his narrative - a *ranchera* song, "*No soy monedita de oro*," (I'm not a little gold coin). He sang as I accompanied him on the guitar. The protagonist of this famous love song defies the doubtful parents of his girlfriend by negating the central metaphor of conventional wealth, the gold coin which everyone loves: "*No soy monedita de oro pa' caerle bien a todos*" (I'm not just a little gold coin which pleases everyone). He has no money - only his sincerity, his desire for truth, and his song, even though it may be out of tune. The singer redefines true wealth and reminds his beloved's parents, that no one can love or care for her more. He has two arms to sustain her and a heart for her life. "Go ask your parents, who would give more for their daughter," he sings:

...dos brazos pa' mantenerte

y un corazon para tu vida.

"Anda, dile a tus padres

¿quién de más por su hija?

Time and again Valdez used the symbolism of this song in as an expression of his own desire to create alternative spaces, where inconvenient truths can be discussed in the language of the people. His strength and resolve come from the land; he is a rock that doesn't give way to the chisel:

Soy piedra que no se alisa

por más que talles y talles.

As he sang, Facundo would often add glosses and commentary to the verses, to communicate fully his intentions to his listeners. Like the singer, he was a champion of the virtues of the people who made their living from the land. His wealth is also the land itself, with the sky for his roof and the sun for his blanket:

el cielo tengo por techo

y el sol nomás por cobija.

Like Diogenes of Sinope, his most powerful resource and "possession" is the barelife need of sunlight itself, the source of *resolana*.

A couple of days later I was called again by Antonio Medina who was asked again to deliver an eulogy for a fellow *asociado*. He asked me to accompany him with music that was to be interwoven into the narrative of his remembrance. I agreed to travel to Mora, New Mexico and that we could go over the music selections prior to the rosary services. We met at a local bar and decided on the songs. We chose "La Barca de Oro" and "Canción de Las Acequias." This was difficult for me, as I would be repeating the

same song which Valdez himself sang just days before at Tomás Atencio's services.

Again, I was deeply moved.

As the services began the rosary was sung by the Hermandad de Nuestro Jesús de Nazareno. The group consisted of twenty or so men singing the five mysteries of the rosary in unison. The antiphonal, responsorial singing style is typical of the local genre of the *alabado* hymns on the passion of Christ. The "Ave María" is not one these hymns, but is sung as part of the rosary, to facilitate the soul of the departed to be received into heaven. The cantor sang the individual first half, "Dios te salve María Madre de Dios..." to which the community in unison would respond with, "...Santa María madre de Dios ruega por nosotros pecadores ahora en hora de nuestra muerte así sea, Jesús María." At important events the rosary prayers are musicalized.

Following the rosary, Antonio Medina and I made our way to the lectern in the front of the church. Medina's words escaped me, as I was very nervous. When he signaled to me I rose to the lectern and spoke in Spanish and explained how Valdez had been one of my most important teachers. Before I knew it I had begun to sing *a capella* "La barca de oro." I was extremely anxious and worried as I sang. Soon, however, the audience joined me and the chorus relaxed me. A polyphony of tuned and untuned voices cohesively came together. As I sang "no volverán mis ojos a mirarte y tus oídos escucharán mi canto," (my eyes will never see you again and your ears will hear my song) I recalled Valdez singing the same verses, and I realized then that I would never see him nor hear his songs again. After I finished I sat down and Medina continued to

speaking about Valdez's work with the acequia and shared a poem Facundo had written about the state of the acequia communities. Once again Medina signaled me to sing. I walked to the front of the nave of the church, near the casket, and where Valdez's widow sat.

I talked about his relationship to the land and his work ethic. I said that Valdez was a tireless fighter for the acequias in the state. I then began to sing Valdez's favorite song of mine that he sang during NMAA meetings. "Canción de las acequias." Like traditional acequia songs from nearby Picurís Pueblo, it is sung to the beat of a rock on a shovel blade. This is the improvised "instrument" used by acequia work crews, who are too busy to bring along a guitar. My despedida for Facundo Valdez went like this as I tapped out the rhythm on the shovel blade:

Ya viene amaneciendo,
yo sigo trabajando
para mantener
lo que yo quiero tanto

Ya vamos a la acequia
a la acequia van todos.
Agarra ya la pala
para limpiar el bordo

Limpiamos la acequia

para traer el agua.

En la primavera

el agua es vida

Preparamos el jardín,

la semilla sembramos

de frijol maiz y chile

y luego la regamos

Ya llegó el otoño

la siembra pepenamos.

Y damos la gracias

por todo lo del campo.

La noche está llegando

yo sigo trabajando

para mantener

a lo que yo quiero tanto

Reflections on Facundo Valdez's Music

One of the best lessons I learned from Valdez was the significance of sharing one's music with others in efforts to generate and maintain community cohesion. Dr. Valdez would metaphorically call this tradition “singing along with my out of tune shovel.” He also taught me that reflecting on the audience’s feedback is what is important in understanding how communities maintain cultural traditions via music. Musical poetics, Valdez would also say is a key to maintaining our Spanish language.

Toward the end of this research I was asked to sing at the home of an older community musician who often held gatherings of 6 to 10 people under the back porch of his home for events such as the Ohkay Owingeh feast day, Easter, and or Christmas. There would be home-prepared party food and beers. The three to four male musicians would occupy one side of the backyard or porch as they tuned up. Though we may play one or two songs in English the majority of the songs we sang were *canción ranchera*, *corrido*, or *bolero*. Usually these events lasted from 3 in the afternoon until it got dark. It is important that these are not to be conceived as paid gigs they are familiar gatherings.

Music at these events is a big deal as the family often simultaneously sings and visits with one another. The women, who normally lead the singing, bring out their *cuadernos* or notebooks with favorite song texts. They then direct the musicians what songs to play. The singing begins, “*En una jaula de oro pendiente de un balcón, se hallaba una calandria cantando su dolor*” (In a gilded cage hanging the balcony a lark sang its song of suffering). The song is a *canción ranchera* that derives from the ubiquitous romance tradition that can be found in any country where Spanish is sung.

What makes this present context distinctive is the hosts' aim to generate a powerful public, or as in this case a counter public, an envelope of human warmth where local language can be performed, improvised and where they can aspire toward a cultural utopia.

Margaret, the woman who calls out the songs to be sung requests from the musicians another song. She requests a song *El Rey* a popular composition written by José Alfredo Jiménez which the head musician is familiar with. The musician feigns being unfamiliar with it and plays a D chord on the guitar, also know as *Re* in solfeggio. Margaret speaking over the voices of people talking, visiting, and laughing repeats more emphatically, “¡El Rey!” The head musician jokingly, “Are you calling me the king? There is no king here, Elvis has left the building?” No, esa de “*Yo sé bien que estoy afuera.*” The head musicians jokes around and tells her, “We are all outside, ¿qué me estás diciendo?” The next thing you are going to tell me is que estamos *sentados* [a pun on "en Taos," for the place name] y no en Ranchitos. (laughing) “Sometimes it is hard to tell what they are asking for because *Pretty much todo es una canción.*” The bilingualism in this speech event involves a sophisticated simultaneous meditation of at least two languages. The last comment gives us an insight to how the code switching is performed to the amusement of those gathered. It shows that anything has the possibility of being a heterotopia where cultural texts are differentially translated back and forth across this linguistic border and a 3rd place understanding is formed. It is in this dynamic dialogue between codes that I understand as a *resolana* space.

Conclusion

Recent scholarship such as the critiques of Fregoso and Bejarano (2010) challenge conventional anthropologists' framing of the field site as being a place of study, and encourage us to understand the field site as "a place where theory is produced" rather than as an epistemological void which the anthropologist interprets. This study has shown three significant aspects that inform the construction of space by United States citizens of Mexican background in northern New Mexico. The first is that a form of gathering called the *resolana*, which over the last century has varied in its manifestations as a form of dialogue that takes places in public places, has served to strengthen the resiliency of Chicana/o bonds. It has also served to reinforce the linguistic reproduction of Spanish and local bilingual Spanish-English language usage. Second, *resolana* lightscapes have historically fostered gathering spaces. And, third, is that these gathering spaces historically have been important as publics and counterpublics where local discourses circulated.

In summary, I have attempted to demonstrate that the *resolana* has emerged historically at different times and in different contexts. I have shown that *resolana* has taken various forms throughout this dissertation: 1, as microclimate related to lightscapes, 2, as an historical intergenerational male gathering space and political sphere, 3 as an acequia governance space, 4 as theoretical model for knowledge production which came out of a revival of the space as employed by Tomás Atencio and LADLNR and 5 as a

space of conviviality for organizing and strengthening networks as in the work of the NMAA.

In Chapter 1 we see the plaza which has often been fetishized as the public space par excellence is not a significant everyday gathering space for working class northern New Mexicans, aside from the occasional fiesta pageant and as a space to have political campaigns. It serves more as a symbolic ethnic enclave space, which is memorial rather than utilitarian. Plaza spaces are symbolically important during local fiestas and festivals when local people occupy these spaces by deploying local public discourses that are manifested in: music, the public use of Spanish, Hispanic pageantry commemorating the colonization of New Mexico, and the display of low-rider cars, dance, and other manifestations of Mexican American culture.

The historical materials discussed in Chapter 2 of this study are perhaps the most significant. The *resolana* was shown to have been an important political vehicle from 1892 to the 1940s. This chapter shows that representations of *resolana* in local newspapers contributed to a robust political debate during a time when effects of modernity were reshaping power relations in New Mexico. The *resolana* served as a place of political reflection and opinion, which allowed politically underrepresented Mexican Americans to voice their opinion on local and state politics. Unfortunately, I have also illustrated, however, that various political and social issues led to diminishing this form of counter-public by the 1940s.

Chapter 3 argues that the linguistic domain of the “*Nueva Resolana*” is deployed

in gathering spaces where local Spanish is the dominant language. People gather in coffee shops or restaurants to share their morning coffee and discuss important issues about their lives, their community or to conduct business. The Nueva Resolana also serves to challenge social class hierarchies, as people gather to share their sense of community. In chapter 4, the resolana is discussed in relation to how the Chicano organization of the late 1960s, La Academia, reclaimed the practice of resolana and revived its usage. I have shown how the resolana was reaffirmed as a metaphor for knowledge making through practices that were documented into a literary space. The second part of this chapter shows how contemporary groups have been influenced to utilize literary spaces to articulate resolana as a forum for political action and cultural heritage maintenance. This chapter shows how the resolana was manifested in print media. Chapter 5 illustrates how the resolana has been articulated within acequia communities and served in the organization of acequia governance structures. This chapter further shows how in acequia communities Spanish language infrastructures have affirmed the continuity of the resolana. The Resolana in turn has served to affirm community cooperation and mutual aid. Finally, I have ended here as to reflect on the contributions of two of the most important resolaneros Dr. Tomas Atencio and Facundo Valdez.

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