

**Blood/Memory in N. Scott Momaday's *The Names: A Memoir*
and Linda Hogan's *The Woman Who Watches over the World:*
*A Native Memoir***

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Abstract

Drawing on N. Scott Momaday's *The Names: A Memoir* and Linda Hogan's *The Woman Who Watches over the World: A Native Memoir* as comparative texts, this essay dissects the dynamics of indigenous memories as they are retrieved and formulated through critical encounters of disparate bloodlines and cultural legacies, in effect, through the blurring of boundaries between the indigenous and the alien. Momaday provocatively juxtaposes blood with memory and, in so doing, significantly transforms the "taxonomy of delegitimation through genetic mixing into an authenticating genealogy of stories and story-telling." Both Momaday and Hogan write back on colonial discourse by re-inscribing the othered Native American memory and history into genetic codes that are carried through and passed down from generation to generation. The genetic constitution preserves memory in the body. Whereas the government's designation of American Indian "blood quantum" problematizes Native American identities, "blood memory" holds tight on Native American bloodlines, and by naming the genetic ties to specific Indian nations, particularly to illustrious ancestry, Native American authors recuperate an integrated Native self. They count on memory to be their genes of survival, of "survivance."

Keywords

N. Scott Momaday, Linda Hogan, the Indian blood, blood memory
North American Native Literature

The object grows; it expands farther and farther beyond definition. . . . At last I am desperate, desperately afraid of being suffocated, lost in some dimple or fold of this vague, enormous thing. I try to cry out, but I have no voice.

—N. Scott Momaday, *The Names* 63

I was in another geography, the mixing zone where things meet, visions are revealed. It is a forgotten world, with unknown features of its interior. It is a place that has no language, no history.

—Linda Hogan, *The Woman Who Watches over the World* 166

Drawing on N. Scott Momaday's *The Names: A Memoir* (1976) and Linda Hogan's *The Woman Who Watches Over the World: A Native Memoir* (2001) as comparative texts,¹ this paper aims to study the complex dialectics between voice and silence, and between forgetting and remembrance in Native American cultural memory, taking this memory as a bellwether of contemporary Native American literary representation of tribal history which has been "othered."² It investigates the crisis of memory and explores the relationship between past and present, remembering and forgetting. By concentrating on Native memoirs, this study approaches memory and remembrance both as a cultural and as a genetic category that defines Native American identities. More specifically, I am interested in how indigenous memories survive into contemporary times in the face of a high degree of cultural assimilation and genetic hybridity. My argument pivots on Momaday's signature trope, "memory in the blood," or "blood memory," to dissect how indigenous identities have been formulated through critical encounters of disparate bloodlines and cultural legacies, in effect, through the blurring of boundaries between the indigenous and the alien.

¹ Hereafter *The Names* will be indicated as *N* and *The Woman Who Watches over the World* as *W*.

² This essay is a revision of a conference paper "'Critical Encounters': The Othered History, the Alien Memory—N. Scott Momaday's *The Names: A Memoir* (1976) and Linda Hogan's *The Woman Who Watches over the World: A Native Memoir* (2001)," originally presented at the 12th National Conference of the English and American Literature Association of the ROC held at National Chiao-Tong University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, on December 4, 2004. I wish to thank the ROC's National Science Council for a research grant in support of this project (NSC92-2411-H-017-002-BJ), Professor Iping Liang for her careful editing, and two anonymous reviewers for their critical insights.

Coined in Momaday's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *House Made of Dawn* (1968) and developed in his subsequent works, "memory in the blood" has generated considerable controversy that informs much of contemporary debates over "authentic" Native American identities and yet consequently achieves "tropic power by blurring the distinctions between racial identity and narrative" (C. Allen 93-94). As Chadwick Allen insightfully states, Momaday's trope seems to be an appropriation and rectification of the U.S. government's attempt to regulate Native American identities through tabulations of "blood quantum" or "degree of Indian blood" (94). Momaday provocatively juxtaposes blood with memory and, in so doing, significantly transforms the "taxonomy of delegitimation through genetic mixing into an authenticating genealogy of stories and story-telling" (C. Allen 94). He writes back on colonial discourse by re-inscribing the othered Native American memory and thus history into genetic codes that are carried through and passed down from generation to generation. Blood memory, a memory though forgotten yet never lost, redefines Native American authenticity in terms of recollecting and remembering. The genetic constitution preserves memory in the body. Whereas the government's designation of American Indian "blood quantum" problematizes Native American identities, "blood memory" holds tight on Native American bloodlines and by naming the genetic ties to specific Indian nations, particularly to illustrious ancestry, Native American authors recuperate an integrated Native self. They count on memory to be their genes of survival, or, rather, "survivance" in Gerald Vizenor's word.³

This essay will first trace the scientific/racist discourse from the Enlightenment onward that has conceived of Indian (non-white) blood as the "object," which threatens to contaminate colonial genetic purity—a projection of colonial desire, anxiety, and inner conflicts. It will then move on to the U.S. government's systematic regulation of Indian blood as a cover for the whites' avaricious colonizing project. Mindful of both colonial impositions, the Euramerican alienation of Indian blood and the U.S. government's definitions and fractionalization of indigenous blood, I argue that by transforming the "object" into the "indigenous" through imaginative recollection and remembrance of Native American ancestry, both Momaday and Hogan envision a contemporary Native American self reintegrated. Whereas "blood quantum" fractionalizes indigenous identities, "blood memory" functions as a synthesizing power that recovers the

³ Vizenor coins the word "survivance" by conjoining "survival" with "resistance." As he affirms, Native Americans not only survive the genocide of colonialism but also continue to prosper with a "native sense of presence, a notion of sovereignty and a will to resist dominance" (53). For details, please see Vizenor.

missing blood links for them. Both were born into an alienating and alienated relationship with non-native (m)others. Both confront the enigma of mixed-blood ancestry, denigrated status in Native and white communities, and a sense of belonging nowhere. Both, nonetheless, successfully establish their indigenous genealogical continuation through “blood memory.” Thereby both convert the abject into the indigenous and transform the scientific measuring of Indian “blood quantum” into the imaginative recollection of “blood memory.”

Indian Blood: The Abject

Indeed, it is the “Indian” blood that has been perpetually considered to be the “abject” in the colonial discourse. The abject is a complex psychological concept developed by Julia Kristeva in *Powers of Horror* (1980). By definition, the abject consists of those elements, particularly of the body, that transgress and threaten our sense of cleanliness and propriety. In practice, the abject covers all the bodily functions, or aspects of the body, which are deemed impure or inappropriate for public display or discussion. The Indian blood has been viewed as a form of ethnic abjection, which threatens to contaminate the purity of the white blood as unmarked and unnamed. Enlightenment naturalist historians, such as Carl von Linné and Georges-Louis Leclerc (also known as Comte de Buffon,) embarked on the classification of racial blood on the basis of an ordered hierarchy, which was “the God-given order of Nature” (von Linné 10). At the top of the human chain are the Europeans, while non-Europeans are classified as lower races in this general schema of evolutionary capacity. Scientific objectivity conflated with quasi-religious thinking thus lays out a solid ground for the hierarchal classification of races. David Hume’s 1754 version of “Of National Characters” contains the famous footnote in which he suspects “all other species of men . . . to be naturally inferior to the whites” (33). Immanuel Kant more specifically classifies human beings into four categories—white (Europeans), yellow (Asians), black (Africans) and red (American Indians), as he interprets racial taxonomy in terms of climate and skin color. Whereas Europeans of the temperate zone are safely placed at the top, the indigenous peoples of the Americas are located “at the lowest point,” inferior not only to the whites but also to the yellows and blacks.⁴ By the mid-nineteenth century, according to Nancy Stepan, European scientists had established racial

⁴ Victorian critic Joseph Arthur Gobineau, however, divides the races of the world on physiological grounds into the white, the yellow, and the black, a conventional division of his day, leaving the red (the indigenes of the Americas) out of the picture. For details, see Young 103.

biology as a popular subject of scientific investigation, addressing the boundaries among different racial groups and the “degenerations that threatened when those boundaries were transgressed” (98).

Stepan is primarily concerned with the subject of biological degeneration resulting from the European tendency toward interracial sex or marriage in overseas colonies, considering miscegenation as an outcome of the temperate Europeans being “tropicalized” (99). Enlightenment thinkers located Reason among those who inhabited the temperate zone, conceiving of all peoples that lived beyond the polar circles or between the tropics as inferior and more vulnerable to disease and illness than the Europeans of the temperate zone. Miscegenation as both a biological and cultural concept is therefore pejorative in its historical context. With its legacy in racist economics, miscegenation indicates a threat to or contamination of racial purity.

Indeed, racialized thinking has never been marginal to European culture. In *Colonial Desire: Hybridity, Culture and Race*, a landmark investigation of (post)colonial discourse around race and culture, Robert Young defines “colonial desire” in terms of its furtive fascination with miscegenation and inter-racial transgression. As Young observes, in the Western natural history of humankind, since it was coined in 1864, the word “miscegenation” tended to be used interchangeably with “hybridity,” a term to describe the offspring of humans of different races, which yet implies that different “races” were entirely of different “species.”⁵ The uneasy and disturbing issues that connect miscegenation with hybridity continue to feed the imagination of natural historians. For instance, as Young notes, Darwin in his chapter “On the Races of Man” in *The Descent of Man* (1871) focuses on the subject of hybridity and begins by adducing all the evidence in favor of the classification of man while segregating different races as different species (Young 12). Though the role of hybridization in evolution was too complicated a problem for him to solve, Darwin cited Robert Knox, among others, for his analysis of the infertility of hybrids (Young 12-13). According to Young, Knox, an Edinburgh

⁵ “A species” literally refers to a class of “plants” or “animals” which bear similar main characteristics and are able to breed with one another whereas “a race” is one of the major groups human beings can be divided into according to their physical features, such as the color of their skin. Western natural historians are uneasy about the obscuring of the boundary between the human and non-human by the use of the word “miscegenation” interchangeably with “hybridity,” for, while the former refers to interracial sex and marriage, the latter implies crosses among distinct “species.” T. H. Huxley, for example, argues, “there is a great difference between ‘mongrels,’ which are crosses between distinct *races*, and ‘hybrids,’ which are crosses between distinct *species*” (qtd. in Young 10; italics added).

anatomist and racial theorist, inferred from his studies on animals the conclusion that hybrids are generally infertile. As Knox puts it, “animals of the same species are fertile, reproducing their kind for ever; whilst on the contrary, if an animal be the product of two distinct species, the hybrid, more or less, was sure to perish. . . . The products of such mixture are not fertile” (qtd. in Young 8).⁶

All these concepts around the hybrids are actually linked to and arise from historical legacies of colonialism and racism. As Young notes, renowned Victorians such as Count Joseph Arthur Gobineau and Louis Agassiz delineated an inequality of power among different races, asserting that the fusion of blood may affect human evolution and civilization: “miscegenation produces a mongrel group that makes up a ‘raceless chaos,’ merely a corruption of the originals, degenerate and degraded, threatening to subvert the vigor and virtue of the pure races with which they come into contact” (Young 18).⁷ To Gobineau, white races possess more possibilities for biological evolution whereas colored races are more subject to barbarism (Young 99). Robert Dale Owen, an American race scientist, supposes that mixed races are inferior and destined to become extinct, concluding “the mixed race is inferior, in physical power and in health, to the pure race” (qtd. in Young 147). It is within this universal antipathy toward racial hybridity that Johann Gottfried Herder argues colonization and racial mixture introduce a fatal heterogeneity, a “wild mixture of various races and nations under one scepter,” though Herder does not hesitate to relate the fact that human progress in effect comes from cultural mixture and communication, whereby cultural achievements of one society are “grated onto another” (qtd. in Young 39).⁸ Louis Agassiz, the Swiss-American ethnologist, cannot forbear from dwelling on the nightmare of hybridity as well, saying, “the production of halfbreeds is as much a sin against nature, as incest in a civilized

⁶ For an introductory overview of hybridity and infertility, refer to Young 6-19. See also Brah and Coombes, in which the contributors examine the persistent fear and anxiety about racial contamination by drawing on the experience and discourse of hybridity, while they also trace the manifestations of hybridity in debates about miscegenation, in scientific notions of genetics and race, in processes of cultural translation, and in conceptualizations of nation and community.

⁷ Among Young’s main sources of analysis are Louis Agassiz’s “Sketch of the Natural Provinces of the Animal World and Their Relation to the Different Types of Man,” in Josiah C. Nott and George R. Gliddon (eds.), *Types of Mankind*, and Joseph Arthur Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*.

⁸ Herder attacks colonialism not on the basis of unjustified oppression and exploitation of colonized peoples but rather because he contends that territorial expansion will decimate the colonizing nation. For, “the most natural state . . . is one nation, with one national character. . . . Nothing therefore appears so directly opposite to the end of government as the unnatural enlargement of states, the wild mixture of various races and nations under one scepter” (qtd. in Young 39).

community is a sin against purity of character” (qtd. in Young 149). European anxiety over racial hybridity is thus exemplified by the radical insistence on racial purity, as John Ruskin put it in his inaugural lecture on art, which he delivered at Oxford in 1870.⁹ Ruskin advances the solipsist viewpoint of a nation fixed on racial segregation and the cultural domination of the colored races: “There is a destiny now possible to us, the highest ever set before a nation to be accepted or refused. We are still undegenerate in race; a race mingled of the best northern blood. We are not yet dissolute in temper, but still have the firmness to govern . . .” (17).

The idea of race has always been based on cultural as well as political, scientific, and social constructions, and the close interdependence among them is such as to make them inseparable. Racial theory, substantiated and “proved” by various forms of science, has been appropriated as a general category of understanding that extends to “theories of anthropology, archaeology, classics, ethnology, geography, geology, folklore, history, language, law, literature, and theology, and thus [derives] from almost every academic discipline to permeate definitions of culture and nation” (Young 93). Blood becomes the fundamental determinant of human culture and history. The Western colonial agent constructs itself through the “abjection” of the primitive (the native and the indigenous). Unlike Homi Bhabha, who celebrates hybridity as essential to establish a third space that gestures beyond traditional oppositions, Rey Chow contends that “ethnic hybridity is itself a form of abjection” (148). We may regard this abjection as more fundamental than the process of othering that informs the historical tactic of Orientalism. For, in psychoanalytical terms, “abjection” is primary whereas “othering” is secondary.¹⁰ In other words, the native is the colonial abject turned outward.

Blood Quantum and Blood Memory

While the maintenance of racial (blood) purity remains central to the colonial agenda, the indigenous blood is stigmatized as the abject, which threatens the stability and fixity of the bloodlines. Western racial economy privileges Eur-

⁹ Ruskin delivered his inaugural lecture as Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford on February 8, 1870. As he put it in the main part of the lecture, art education and cultural work in general should be practical, “worthy,” and in sympathy with national character. It was on this basis that he went on to expound his idea that colonial leadership would strengthen a nation’s moral fiber on which its commerce and artistic production depended. The audience of Ruskin’s lecture was so large that the venue had to be moved from the University Museum to the Sheldonian Theatre. See Ruskin 16-20.

¹⁰ For ethnicity and abjection, see Chow 128-52.

american pure blood. And yet, as we have seen, colonial desire, “constituted by a dialectic of attraction and repulsion,” brings with it the threat of the fecund fertility of the colonial desiring machine (Young 175). A culture in its colonial operation becomes hybridized and alienated from its European “original.” In the face of the deterioration of bloodlines, the consequence of de-civilization, the U.S. federal policies have paradoxically subjected Native Americans to an inclusive standard of “blood quantum” or “degree of Indian blood.” Native American identity is fractionalized and estranged through a governmental measuring of blood. A standard of racial identification, blood quantum was in actuality invented to serve as a device for documenting and fractionalizing “Indian” status for the federal government’s purpose of alienating Native individuals from their collectively held lands. Seemingly enshrining racial purity as the ideal for authentic American Indian identity, blood quantum in reality discloses the fact that more than 98 percent of contemporary Native Americans are genetic hybrids. Consequently, mixed-blood Native Americans are considered genetically estranged from their full-blood indigenous ancestors once a certain “degree” of mixing with races other than the indigenous has been passed.

This is, in effect, to estrange the indigenous into the alien, to make them strangers in their homelands. Native American activist M. Annette Jaimes has traced the federal government implementation of blood quantum to the passage of the General Allotment Act in 1887.¹¹ According to Jaimes, Native Americans were required to prove one-half or more Indian blood in order to receive allotments of their tribal estate and the trick was that “surplus” lands were then made available to white settlers. As Jaimes documents, the already shrunken Native American land base was “legally” reduced by another staggering ninety million acres—the standard of blood quantum was developed into a taxonomy of variable Indian identity that came to control their access to their tribal lands and all federal services, including commodity rations, annuity payments, and health care (qtd. in C. Allen 96-97). Native American identity became subject to a genetic burden of proof whereas the criteria were always the inventions of the white government. Thereby blood quantum represents a fundamental attack on the tribal sovereignty of Native American nations. Not only were tribal lands transformed into white settlers’ homes and Natives into perpetual exiles in their homelands, but Native Americans became a vanishing race as the racial (blood) codes excluded the genetically marginalized from both identification as Native American citizens and consequent entitlements (qtd. in C. Allen 97).

¹¹ For Jaimes’ work, please see C. Allen 96-97.

The legal documents (treaties), endorsed by a blood myth, served together to alienate Native Americans from their living material base. Tribal men, women, and children were transported to “another geography” as they lost the large continent as their home-base. In tracking “another geography,” Hogan undertakes a trip to “Indian Territory” just as their ancestors did in the nineteenth century, while Momaday journeys from “Indian Territory,” now the state of Oklahoma, meaning “red earth,” to his ancestral homeland in the Black Hills. Both, however, trace their ancestry all the way back to the age of Removal, imagining their forebears walking the “Trail of Tears.”¹² Both carry with them mementos not only for memory and connection, but also as proofs of life and of the lives of their tribes. For both, the writing of memoirs enables them to re-collect and re-member the heavily charged history and geography, or, rather, in Edward Said’s phrase, to call for “a geographical inquiry into historical experience” (7). What they have tried to do is to face the fact that they were, in Hogan’s words, “in another geography, the mixing zone where things meet, visions are revealed. It is a forgotten world, with unknown features of its interior. It is a place that has no language, no history” (W 166).

But, it is not that there is indeed no history, but, rather, that history has been forgotten, resisting representation as language falls short. “[H]istory, like geography, lives in the body and it is marrow-deep,” as Hogan confesses in her memoir (W 59). This remark inevitably leads us to Momaday’s signature trope “memory in the blood.” History is encoded in the blood and laid down as geography “along the tracks and pathways and synapses” (W 59). In a passage seemingly expounding Momaday’s trope, Hogan states:

¹² The idea of removing Native American people from their lands originated when Thomas Jefferson brought off the Louisiana Purchase early in the nineteenth century by buying the homelands of several hundred tribes, ironically not from the tribes themselves but from France, for the sum of nineteen million dollars. Jefferson considered it to be degrading if “Indians” and the whites lived in proximity with each other and thought that the only remedy was to remove the “Indians.” Jefferson’s idea was carefully drafted into law as the Removal Act, under the stewardship of the Southern white supremacist John C. Calhoun, and was implemented by Andrew Jackson (P. Allen 11-12). In 1830, as the U.S. Congress passed the “Indian Removal Acts” which gave the federal government power to remove all Native Americans from their lands east of the Mississippi River to territories west of the river, some tribes, especially the Cherokee, refused to leave their homelands. In 1838, U.S. troops began forcibly rounding them up in North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. During the brutal winter between 1838 and 1839, about 4,000 Cherokee died as a result of the removal. The route they traversed and the journey itself become known as “the Trail of Tears” or, as a direct translation from the Cherokee, “the Trail Where They Cried” (“*Nunna daul Tsuny.*”) For details, see Ehle.

I was only one of the fallen in a lineage of fallen worlds and people. Those of us who walked out of genocide by some cast of fortune still struggle with the brokenness of our bodies and hearts. Terror, even now, for many of us, is remembered inside us, history present in our cells that came from our ancestor's cells, from bodies hated, removed, starved, and killed. (*W* 59)

No one would fail to recognize the passage as an explicit elaboration of Momaday's concept of blood memory. Tribal removal trauma, concealed as genes/cells/germs running through blood, is reactivated and acts out as a wound, which cries. Like Hogan, Momaday depicts his blood (body) memory (history) by tracing his forebears' traumatic removal from home. Momaday recounts a memory of his mother's when at three or four years old she was playing in the woods where, three generations before, her great-grandmother's people had passed on the "Trail of Tears." Native American historical trauma becomes Momaday's personal text mediated through his mother's memory, or in Cathy Caruth's words, "history, like trauma, is never simply one's own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other's traumas" (24). Momaday's mother's memory has become his own. This is, according to him, "the real burden of the blood; this is immortality. I remember" (*N* 22).

If blood quantum stands as a "metonym for the 'problem'" of defining Native American personal and communal identities (C. Allen 98), Momaday then twists it into his "blood memory," a genetic tie that is carried by his blood and is thus immortal (as even a small degree will do). Momaday imagines his tribal elders in order to project himself into their life spans and beyond—through blood.

It is then interesting to see how the official standard of Indian blood quantum is tested and teased out in Momaday's birth documents. In a passage where Momaday conflates his birth with his tribal ancestors' imprisonment through a common geographical locale at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Momaday strategically inserts a notarized document, issued by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Anadarko [Oklahoma] Area Office, to certify his birth, and yet does so only to denounce its validity by naming it and dropping it once and for all:

To whom it may concern:

This is to certify that the records of this office show that Novarro Scott Mammedaty was born February 27, 1934 at Lawton, Oklahoma,

and is of $7/8$ degree, as shown on the Kiowa Indian Census roll opposite Number 2035. . . .

By Act of June 2, 1925 (42 Stat. 253), all Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States were declared to be citizens of the United States. (*N* 42)

Whoever has been following the opening genealogical diagram or Momaday's narrative in his memoir will be able to figure that Momaday's blood quantum is at best $9/16$ or less than $4/16$, instead of $7/8$. The insertion of this birth certificate apparently challenges the notion of blood quantum as a defining factor of Native American identity. The birth document demystifies the fractionalizing figures and reveals the absurdity of the federal authority to grant tribal membership/citizenship. It is nominated and yet dropped immediately as Momaday contrasts and displaces the governmental imposition by drawing on a tribal locale, Tsoai in Kiowa, meaning "rock tree," after which his name, Tsoai-talee, "Rock-Tree Boy," is given by a tribal elder Pohd-lohk.

Blood and Memory

Consequently, by substituting a name, which embodies a distinctive tribal line for one, based on fractionalization of blood (body parts), Momaday recognizes as the first notable event in his life the journey from Oklahoma (his birthplace) to the Black Hills (tribal/ancestral home-base):

When I was six months old my parents took me to Devil's Tower, Wyoming, which is called in Kiowa Tsoai, "rock tree." Here are stories within stories; I want to imagine a day in the life of a man, Pohd-lohk, who gave me a name. (*N* 42)

The name intimately connects the newborn to a landscape significant in the tribal memory. It invokes the stories of his ancestry associated with that landscape. It is not his blood quantum, inscribed by the white government, which confers his identity. Rather, it is his blood memory that functions to reach a self-definition. Momaday counts on the story of his being situated in the tribal lineage for his identification. In so doing, he simultaneously identifies his tribe as a people rooted in the American landscape rather than as one that is imprisoned in the Indian Territory or in the official standard of blood quantum.

Whereas Momaday in actuality departs from Oklahoma for his ancestral home-base in the Black Hills, the Indian Removal and its consequences distinguish Hogan's writing as that which comes out of the tribal communities of Oklahoma. Hogan depicts the repeated dispossession of Oklahoma Indians, their landless condition, and their stubborn survival. She writes to capture the land of removal, with its detritus of loss and adaptations, and the tight, never-ending weaving of family and cultural histories from one generation to the next. William Bevis argues in his essay, "Native American Novels: Homing In," that in Native American literature, "coming home, staying put, contracting, even what we call 'regressing' to a place, a past where one has been before, is not only the primary story, it is a primary mode of knowledge and a primary good" (582). But Bevis' contention that Native American heroes come home presupposes that there is a place of origin, an ancestral homeland, or even a recently acquired reservation to come home to. For Hogan, homecoming is, nevertheless, a never fulfilled dream. In her autobiographical essay "The Two Lives," Hogan, caught up by her disparate bloodlines, by "two lives," states that land-loss is a common characteristic of contemporary Native American people: "We are landless Indians. . . . We are made to believe that poverty is created by ourselves" rather than being a predictable product of the history of colonization ("Two Lives" 237). Born of working class parents and raised in Colorado in and near major metropolitan areas, Hogan's own "homing in" must, of necessity, be an imaginative act rather than an actual one.

In the title poem of her 1978 book *Calling Myself Home*, Hogan asserts: "This land is the house / we have always lived in" (6). While that poem and many others are ostensibly about her father's roots in (and her childhood visits to) the red clay of rural Oklahoma, local place cannot be her primary concern, as the following lines from "Heritage" make clear: "From my family I have learned the secrets / of never having a home" (*Calling* 17). This homelessness has roots at least as far back as Hogan's paternal grandmother, who recounts tribal tales of a sacred stick that sent the Chickasaw people on their peripatetic way along the "Trail of Tears" (*Calling* 17). In "Blessing," Hogan defines her tribe's name thus: "Chickasaw / chikkih asachi, which means / they left as a tribe not a very great while ago. / They are always leaving, those people" (*Calling* 27).

How then, in the face of departure, landlessness, and lack of place, does one "call oneself home?" How do the exilic Natives establish a "home" at all? Native dwellings are constantly subject to mutation: "Always in transit, the promise of homecoming . . . becomes an impossibility," to borrow Iain Chamber's words (5). This in effect echoes Gloria Anzaldúa's idea of home as she claims, "I am a turtle,

wherever I go I carry 'home' on my back" (43).¹³ Home is at once "rooted" and "floating," for home as "root" is transmuted into "route" as her migratory tribal ancestors were removed from their home-base.

Early in the nineteenth century, while the rapidly growing U.S. expanded into the lower South, white settlers faced what they regarded as an obstacle. This area was home to the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole nations. These Indian nations, in the view of the settlers and many other white Americans, were standing in the way of progress and thus should be removed for the white civilizing mission to be accomplished. Hogan's ancestor, Levi Colbert of Chickasaw, was the major opponent of the Indian Removal (Hale and Gibson 52). By 1837, the Jackson administration had removed 46,000 Native American people from their land east of the Mississippi, and had secured treaties, which led to the removal of a larger number. Most members of the five southeastern nations had been relocated west, opening 25 million acres of land to white settlement and to slavery. By early 1838, most Chickasaw Indians were in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Although the Chickasaw's removal to the Indian Territory along the Trail of Tears, as their removal route later became popularly known, was not as terrible as the experience was for the Cherokee or the Creek, the Chickasaw met with immense difficulties such as disease, hunger, maltreatment and abuse by the federal government, all of which inflicted pain on the tribe.

Hogan confronts her tribal trauma of being uprooted from the Chickasaw homeland. Hogan identifies herself as a direct descendant of the Colbert family, major opponents to the Indian Removal. Her memoir depicts the landscape of the Chickasaw relocation land in Gene Autry, Oklahoma. This "home away from home" resurges constantly amid "phantom pain" to be "phantom worlds." Into her personal history, she integrates stories from her tribal past. In Hogan's writing, the smallest detail can evoke a whole history: that Chief Joseph's skull was sold to be used as an ashtray sums up the tragic mistreatment of Native Americans at the hands of whites; the U.S. government's war on Native Americans destroys tribal legacies in spirit and landscape.

¹³Anzaldúa is a self-named Chicana from Hargill, Texas, a border town also known as El Valle, "the Valley," an agricultural area notorious for its mistreatment of people of Aztec descent. Her works, *This Bridge Called My Back* (1983; co-edited with Cherríe Moraga), *Borderlands: La Frontera* (1987/1999), *Making Face/Making Soul: Hacienda Caras* (1990), *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation* (2002; co-edited with AnaLouise Keating) are her attempts to repossess the borderlands as home while she de-territorializes home as border. The page reference is made to the 1999 version of *Borderlands*. For more about Anzaldúa's border writing, please see Huang.

As a Chickasaw mixed-blood, Hogan confesses that she is “from the Colbert family, of mixed blood” (W 117); her most poignant experience comes from the dilemma of the mixed-blood Natives paradoxically treated as aliens and ironically exiled in their homeland. Unlike Momaday, who still displays possession of his birth certificate, though it proves mere a confounded identity, Hogan was born into a state of “no memory,” “no stories,” and “no history” (W 105). Living in a world of between is not just “limbo”: “It was a life more empty than that”; “‘between’ was, is, the root of my very existence” (W 34). She confesses that she has no dreams of a future; she had been suicidal as far back as she could remember, praying each night for death, as if she had “inherited all the wounds of an American history along with a family which hadn’t yet learned to love, touch, or care” (W 42).

It is the dilemma of the parallel worlds she inhabits, the parallel bloodlines at once indigenous and alien which informs much of her personal history as it is in effect merely a mirror of the larger history of the Americas. She contains “blood of both victim and victimizer” (W 119). But recognition of her white ancestry never allows any “upward” movement racially, as even a small degree of Indian blood always and already contaminates its purity. She remains the alien even while bearing the burden of guilt for her white predecessors. If the fractionalized blood quantum in Momaday’s birth certificate fails to pin down any Native American identity, Hogan possesses no such proof and yet is equally alienated with her birth and life “unremembered,” “unspoken,” and “unacknowledged” (W 105).

Alien blood results in alien memory. Memory becomes psychological ruins. Hogan’s memoir paradoxically contains no memory as she “lose[s] the memory of every day” (W 54) while facing “doorless house of [larger] memory” (W 94); her mother has no memory of her birth, offered no stories about her as a child (W 105); the loss of memory accompanies her illness, and so does pain (W 132); her young mind “survives by forgetting” (W 145)—“the darkness of that long forgetting” (W 161); she would “wake up . . . with almost no memory” (W 159). She continuously laments “the darkness of that long forgetting” (W 161): “I lose memory (floating memory)” (W 162, 171); her “memory ruined” (W 163); her “memory loss” (164) occurs in times of pain (W 167); this memory loss is a result of “what humans do when there is no understanding” (W 180); she needed to “forg[e]t this memory” (W 190).

Petar Ramadanovic’s recent work *Forgetting Futures* reignites the debate about the crisis of memory and the search to understand the relationship between past and present, remembering and forgetting, placing trauma, identity, and race

under an intellectual microscope. The book as a trauma study was significantly initiated by a close reading of Momaday's passage in *The Names*, quoted in length:

. . . And *now* I am afraid, nearly terrified, and yet I have no will to resist; I remain attentive, strangely curious in proportion as I am afraid. The huge, shapeless mass is displacing all of the air, all of the space in the room. It swells against me. It is soft and supple and resilient, like a great bag of water. At last I am desperate, desperately afraid of being suffocated, lost in some dimple or fold of this vague, enormous thing. I try to cry out, but I have no voice. (Momaday, *N* 63; qtd. in Ramadanovic 1)

Appropriating Momaday's passage, Ramadanovic aims to disclose the characteristic of "memorial processes" (1). Momaday faces a past growing out of all proportion, beyond definition, which threatens to obscure his vision. The past expands and becomes vague and enormous to the point that "there ceases to be one object his memory can apprehend and bring back" (Ramadanovic 1). As he tries to remember, he paradoxically forgets. Ramadanovic contends that forgetting, "a spilling over the boundaries of thinghood, beyond presence," is intrinsic to memory and is what makes remembrance possible: the dislocation of the past in reminiscence should then be regarded as a process, fundamental for the work of memory. The remembrance of the past cannot perform the roles of integration (of identity) and gathering (of facts) without at the same time forcing a "dispersion, effacement, and a forgetting of what has happened" (Ramadanovic 2-3).

We cannot disagree with Ramadanovic's brilliant elaboration on the dialectic between remembrance and forgetting, for forgetting as we understand is neither the opposite of remembering, nor an omission. And yet, Ramadanovic fails to recognize what is in "a name," because right following the passage of his opaque vision, Momaday prescribes the secret medicine of "[r]estor[ing] [his] voice for [himself]" (*N* 63):

How many times has this memory been nearly recovered, the definition almost realized! Again and again I have come to that awful edge, that one word, perhaps, that I cannot bring from my mouth. I sometimes think that it is surely *a name, the name of someone or something*, that if only I could utter it, the terrific mass would sap away into focus, and I should see and recognize what it is at once; I

should have it then, once and for all, in my possession. (*N* 63; italics added)

Momaday's memory fails, for remembrance can be retarded by a crisis of communal and individual identity, by the loss of the unspeakable and unspoken past which is perpetually alienated. *The Names* asks how Native Americans can recover from this monumental psychic rupture. Ramadanovic fails to dissect what is in a "name." We should then go back to the name of "Tsoai," which I have elaborated on earlier, the name of both "*someone*" and "*something*." Momaday is named after the tribal home-base, a name given by his tribal elder. Both personal and communal history is carried on by a name. The recurrence of the name sustains tribal survival. Momaday's opaque consciousness spotlights the danger to tribal identity of losing the memory of their location of origin as they lost their land. The "name" then maintains the dynamics of remembrance and commemoration. The name of "Tsoai," displacing Momaday's official birth certificate, is emblematic of his recovery of indigenous ancestry, of the tribal efforts to establish a home, a community, a land, as the grounding of the Native self, the source of the Native origin. To remember is not to discover the past outright but, rather, to heal the wounded, fragmented, and alienated present. Momaday's official birth certificate does not sustain anything in his "possession," but a name does—the name of both the Native self and Native land, and ultimately, that of the Native spirit.

Native Americans have a long memory. As Michel de Certeau puts it, they do not forget their land under occupation by "foreigners." In their villages, they preserve a painful recognition of five centuries of colonization (226). Constantly, they go back to their ancestral home-base and, in so doing, they "keep alive the memory of what the Europeans have forgotten," as de Certeau states, preserving a memory that has left hardly a trace in the occupiers' historiographical literature (227). While this memory constitutes Native American resistance, it is yet punctuated by cruel repression and is marked on the "tortured body": "the body is memory," as de Certeau argues (227). Momaday contrasts and displaces the governmental imposition by drawing on a tribal locale, Tsoai, after which his name, Tsoai-talee, "Rock-Tree Boy" is given. Substituting a name, which embodies both a distinctive bloodline and a tribal home for one, based on fractionalization of blood (body parts), Momaday intimately connects his blood with his ancestral blood, his body with a landscape significant in the tribal memory. What can Momaday count on for remembering a trip taken back to his ancestors' Black Hills at the age of six months? It is his inherited blood memory that functions to help reach a self-definition.

It invokes the stories of his ancestry associated with that landscape. It is not his blood quantum, inscribed by the white government, which confers his identity.

Blood Memory Revisited

Momaday puts in his *House Made of Dawn*, “though [his grandmother] lived out her long life in the shadow of Rainy Mountain, the immense landscape of the continental interior—all of its seasons and its sounds—lay like memory in her blood” (129).¹⁴ The very passage is repeated in his *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969) as opening with slight modification (7).¹⁵ Momaday brings to life the stories of his grandmother by relating it to the “memory in her blood,” as he narrates:

Although my grandmother lived out her long life in the shadow of Rainy Mountain, the immense landscape of the continental interior lay like *memory in her blood*. She could tell of the Crows, whom she had never seen, and of the Black Hills, where she had never been. I wanted to see in reality what she had seen more perfectly in the mind’s eye, and traveled fifteen hundred miles to begin my pilgrimage. (*Way* 7; italics added)

In the tribal body is stored the repressed indigenous historical memory. It is the racial memory embodied in the story in the blood. It is such cultural coding as exists beyond conscious remembering, so deeply engrained and psychologically imbedded as to be capable of being spoken of as “in the blood” (Weaver 8). Though renowned critics such as Arnold Krupat remain wary of the essentialist dangers of blood logic,¹⁶ Momaday’s lexicon of the “memory in the blood” is to be understood

¹⁴ *House Made of Dawn* was originally published in 1968 and recently reissued in 1999. The page reference is made to the 1999 version of the book.

¹⁵ *The Way to Rainy Mountain* was originally published in 1969 and recently reissued in 2001. The page reference is made to the 2001 version of the book. The book hereafter will be referred to as *Way*.

¹⁶ Arnold Krupat derides Momaday for his use of the phrases “racial memory” and “memory in the blood” in *Red Matters* (76-97). He attacks the essentialist dangers of references to “Indian blood,” as he asserts that Native American resistance should not be associated with the vexed category of “Indian blood,” which is roughly parallel to the concept of race (xi). To dismantle the intricate edifice of racism, it is imperative, as Louis Owens and Gerald Vizenor demonstrate to Krupat, to expose the essentialism embodied in the very idea of “Indian blood” and to discard its associated policies as well. “Indian blood” in effect appears to Krupat as “a discourse of

as an “evocative synonym for ‘culture’” (Weaver 7). What matters is not the biological blood, but, rather, the Native American cultural and communal milieu and Native American ways of life. The genetic body serves as a metaphor for the strengthened ties to the cultural heritages Native American forebears have passed down from generation to generation. It voices a common tribal understanding of the ancestral landscapes and the universe as well, of the access to a distinct culture, and of a particular colonial experience incomprehensible to non-Natives. Since Native American lands were expropriated, their bodies tortured, and their memory fragmented, they can rely only on the collective memory which each of the tribal individuals partake of as well as contribute to so as to fill the vacuum of meaning.

Paula Gunn Allen also uses the genetic metaphor to refer to a memory peculiar to Native Americans, as she writes in her edited *Spider Woman's Granddaughters* (1989): “The workings of *racial memory* are truly mysterious. No Cherokee can forget the Trail of Tears, the time when entire Indian nations were abducted and held captive in strange lands by force of arms” (168; italics added). The Cherokee can never forget the “Trail of Tears” not because of some “genetic determinism” but because “its importance to heritage and identity are passed down through story from generation to generation” (Weaver 8).

The body is memory as it carries the law of equality and rebelliousness that organizes not only the indigenous group's interior relations, but also its relation to the occupiers. The body constitutes the material base for remembering a dislocated/displaced past. To redeem their sense of identity in the face of enormous collective loss, Native Americans count on the memory as it is preserved in their blood, in their body. Native Americans “seize hold of memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger,” to put it in Walter Benjamin's words (255).

If Native identities along with their lands have been lost, there is yet a central core that remains, somehow undamaged. Hogan is returning to “the Indian world and [her] own ways” (W 173). What sustains this return and subsequent recovery is a memory deeply rooted in her Native blood, which she speaks of as “marrow-deep.” As she puts it, “[w]e sleep with all those whose blood or lives we share, inheriting their histories”; “[b]ut [she] also hold[s] there are forces deeper than blood” (W 114). It is to these memories imbedded “deeper than blood” that she looks, to “the roots of tradition and their growth from ages-old human integrity and knowledge of the world” (W 119-20). Native Americans come from people who lived in a time when dances, with their central fire, were outlawed, gatherings suspect, languages

conquest,” as he cites Pauline Turner Strong and Barrik Van Winkle (76). Krupat remains wary of blood logic, even in the interest of rights and resistances.

forbidden. The Native ancestors were outlaws, the alien. Hogan, in her efforts to remember, does not hesitate to draw on a dialectic of the self and other, us and them, for her reintegration of the broken histories/memories and broken self alienated by her Indian blood:

But, however broken or burned to the ground *they* were, many of *us* have risen out of the forbidden ways. . . . I am one of the children who lived inside my grandmother, and was carried, cell, gene, and spirit, within mourners along the Trail of Tears. (W 123)

In taking a trip to Oklahoma, the destination of the “Trail of Tears” and the destiny of modern Natives, Hogan turns the exterior landscape of the “Red Earth” into “the place of [her] interior” (116). It was not her birthplace, but it is her home, the place of “[her] heart, [her] inner world,” the place “where [she] lived before [she] was born”: “Oklahoma was the place that shaped [her] with its loving people, beauty, and heat” (W 116). Hogan appeals to the memory that is carried and passed down along with “cell, gene, and spirit,” “deeper than blood.” The outlaw/alien “they” become the empowering “other” that contributes to the rising of her present / contemporary self, “us.” The alienated Indian blood, in her retrieval of memories, undergoes metamorphosis to become the empowering indigenous blood which has carried memories with “cell, gene, and spirit” “along the Trail of Tears.”

Hogan’s journey “mirrors” the “Trail of Tears.” She narrates that when she arrived in Indian Territory, she was struck, as always, by the silence and stillness of the “Red Earth.” She has always felt it: “a physical line crossed where suddenly everything is changed, as if [she’s] an animal recognizing territory” (W 116). At that moment, she saw the world with “[her] grandmother’s eyes: “‘Oklahoma,’ was a word, means red earth, red people. It is a term of connection. I always feel a certain love coming from the land itself, and that day I did; my grand/mother’s world remembered us” (W 123-24). It is her intimate connection with her grandmother through their genetic identification in the blood that configures Oklahoma as “a geography of healing” (W 149).

Hogan conceives of the blood that is alien and alienated, summoned to be “removed” and contained in the Indian Territory, as indigenous to red earth. Both Hogan and Momaday write back to the colonial discourse of the blood, asserting that the mixing of Indian blood effects healing. Both disrupt the racial economy that sought to connect external differences to an innate mental capacity for civilization. While Western Enlightenment thinkers based their philosophy on an “exclusive”

principle to expel “the abject” out of their pure/white blood, the U.S. government employed an “inclusive” standard to delude and dilute Indian blood into blood quantum. Hogan and Momaday expose colonial contradictions and replicate the hybrid Indian blood as a positive good. Hybridity becomes a strength through which the best qualities of the “human” and “alien” are amalgamated. Both trace a genealogy that interprets the hybrid Indian blood as both being Native (indigenous) to the Americas and having a multiple identity. It is the body memory that they count on for salvation: as Hogan puts it, “there is the body with its innumerable waves of memory” (W 33).

Momaday’s body memory comes from his grandmother. As Momaday puts it, in his *House Made of Dawn* and *The Way to Rainy Mountain*, “[t]hough [my grandmother] lived out her long life in the shadow of Rainy Mountain, the immense landscape of the continental interior—all of its seasons and its sounds—lay like memory in her blood” (*House* 129; *Way* 7). He refers explicitly to his grandmother’s “memory in the blood.” Part of his project in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* is for him to recount the physical pilgrimage he made across his ancestral landscape and to couple this homing journey with the extant knowledge of his tribe to develop in his own memory what had fully been operative in his grandmother’s lifetime and had developed in her “memory in the blood” (C. Allen 102). Momaday imagines his grandmother in order to project himself back through actual physical contact with the land his grandmother inhabited, and through her blood. The very blood identification is what makes Native Americans indigenous to the land. He conjures an indigenous ancestor to the land, describes his encounters with the conjured ancestor, draws his identification with her as occurring through “blood,” and, in so doing, envisions the emergence of the Native self.

This is what Momaday refers to as “blood memory,” in effect, an act of self-invention and self-empowerment, which permeates his work as a functioning principle. The self is empowered by a remote missing link with his ancestor. In *The Names*, Momaday imagines himself standing in front of his grandmother’s house in Oklahoma, weaving the stories of his grandfather with the Oklahoma landscape. The image of his grandfather is superimposed on that of Momaday as a boy when he recounts the ritual giveaway where his grandfather was honored with a gift of a hunting horse, a story his father related to him earlier: as the gift is passed to the boy, Momaday narrates, “my fingers are crisped, my fingertips bear hard upon the life of this black horse. Oh my grandfather, take hold of this horse” (N 96). A bit earlier than this superimposed imagining, Momaday remembers himself as a small boy looking in a mirror and beginning to draw the outlines of the mirror reflection

on paper. He labels the picture with the name of his Kiowa grandfather: "I write, in my child's hand, beneath the drawing, 'This is someone. Maybe this is Mammedaty. This is Mammedaty when he was a boy'" (*N* 93). Momaday's first self-portrait leads straight back to his ancestry. The picture of himself turns into a picture of his grandfather. The contemporary Indian boy renders himself coincident with indigenous ancestors and with indigenous history, making his tribal past and his contemporary self indigenous through trans-generational genetic ties.

Momaday's Native blood does not come from the paternal lineage alone. Whereas his maternal family abounds with whites predecessors—I. J. Galyen, Nancy, George Scott, Theodore and Anne Ellis, a thinly threaded blood connection to a Cherokee great-grandmother finally becomes the blood which defines his mother's Native identity, and the consequence is the 7/8 degree Indian blood as mistakenly shown in Momaday's birth certificate. This is, indeed, a super model of how the alien turns into the indigenous, which is the life story of his mother Natachee Scott, who names herself Natachee, meaning "Little Moon," identical with the name of her Cherokee ancestor:

In 1929, my mother was a Southern belle; she was about to embark upon an extraordinary life. It was about this time that she began to see herself as an Indian. That dim native heritage became a fascination and a cause for her . . . ; it became her. She imagined who she was. This act of the imagination was, I believe, among the most important events of my mother's early life, as later the same essential act was to be among the most important of my own. (*N* 23-25)

As an alien on both sides (the white and the red), Natachee reinvented herself as indigenous. Her "exotic" physical appearance aided her in "passing" as an "Indian." Though at every turn she was reminded that she was an "interloper" and that "she could expect to have no place among them," she eventually managed to participate in the Navajo and Jemez communities where she lived (*N* 39). She brought new blood to the Kiowa just as one hundred years before, a slave woman, whom people stole from her homeland of Mexico, brought new blood to the tribe in her children. She is Momaday's great-great-grandmother, named Kau-au-oainty.

Epilogue

Consequently, though Momaday's memoir remains "tribal specific and place connected" (Hafen 20), the Kiowa culture is one of mixing, the amalgamation of the alien and the indigenous. Or, rather, the dividing line between the two no longer holds. The Kwuda, "the coming out people," the name they could "know that they were and who they were"—"They could at last say to themselves, 'We are, and our name is Kwuda'" (N 1), is arrived at through interaction with others, a name given by the Crows. But even a name is not constant, and the Kwudas' identity evolves as new blood joins. Momaday often makes it clear that the Kiowas' sense of self is an array of pieces. The patterns have been pivoting on an outsider now on the inside. It starts with fear of the newcomers to their group but eventually the outsider becomes an accepted member of the tribe. Identity comes from community, not blood quantum levels. With close cultural contact, customs, beliefs, and traditions can be shared, learned, transmitted, and applied. Momaday recounts his "blood memory," a Kiowa history of mixing and redefining themselves.

Momaday traces genealogy and emphasizes continuity, in particular with his Kiowa relatives. Ironically, however, it is his experience of discontinuity, the experience of the alien that becomes the shaping force of his memoir. His mother was one-eighth Cherokee and seven-eighths Euramerican blends, and young Momaday spent his childhood in several different Southwestern communities (Gallup, Shiprock, Tuba City, Chinle, San Carlos, Hobbes), where he was in close contact with Navajo and San Carlos Apache, as well as Hispanic and Anglo children. Momaday portrays himself at once an insider and outsider and his memory is spurred by the sum of these diverse bloodlines.

Whereas Momaday makes "good" with his blood memory, Hogan survives by "making do," as Betty Louise Bell describes it: "a recognition of ordinary lives, the lives of Native Americans, fragmented and forever affected by extraordinary losses"; under the pressure of loss, the survival of tribal people depends on the "adaptations to loss that discover continuity and affirm life" (3). Hogan inherited her mother's tendency toward severe depression, and was pushed into a soul-crushing "marriage" at age 12. She later overcame suicidal alcoholism by working to help other native people, a commitment that inspired her to adopt two young Lakota girls who had been so severely abused that they sustained profound psychological disorders. With generational continuation in adopting Lakota alien daughters and making them as indigenous to red earth as she is, she counters loss with revelation in hauntingly beautiful meditations on water, earth, bone, and fire,

silence and words, which reveal the link between the suffering of her ancestors and the traumas that have beset her, her (grand)mothers and daughters. She furthermore blends her personal history of struggle with the story of native women who participated in key events during the Indian Wars more than a century ago in such a way that tribal history and her personal memory become mutual illuminating through a common genetic tie of “red” blood. She weaves personal history with stories of important Native American figures of the past such as Lozen, the woman who was the military strategist for Geronimo, and Ohiyesha, the Santee Sioux medical doctor who witnessed the massacre at Wounded Knee along with the two daughters of Oglaga Lakota heritage, to locate a home for both herself and her homeless daughters. The once disparate bloodlines conjoin to empower the indigenous line, filling the missing link in her memory.

Kenneth Lincoln insightfully comments that “[t]ribal life centers on a common blood, a shared and inherited body of tradition, a communal place, a mutual past and present” (93). Native Americans, as Hogan puts it, live not only “inside a body but within a story as well, and our story resides in the land” (W 204). While Native Americans always consider themselves indigenous to the land, the impulse behind the invention of the “Indian blood” is the colonizer’s intense fear of what Heidegger termed “not-at-homeness,” “the inexorable deracination that comes with colonial displacement,” to borrow Louis Owens’ words (116). The Native memory as transmitted and sustained in the blood is then about “survival, *sur vivre*, to live on” (Bhabha 37) with a blood and a memory that crosses over.

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Air Guitar. Hogan, Linda. *The Woman Who Watches Over the World*. Hongo, Garrett. *Volcano: A Memoir of Hawaii*. *Mingus, Charles. *Beneath the Underdog*. Momaday, N. Scott. *The Names*. Monette, Paul. *Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir*. *The Names: A Memoir* differs from the traditional autobiographical account in both its approach and its subject matter. Again, Momaday has structured his writing to reflect the essence rather than the chronology. Across a cultural continuum of his and own and his ancestors' experiences, Momaday weaves imaginative re-creations. In this memoir, Momaday sustains a mythic familial and tribal consciousness by naming the significant events that shape their distinctive spirit. For Momaday, active participation in a life experience does not necessarily imply that he is the protagonist in that event. He adheres to the Native American beliefs in the timelessness of the universe and the vital union of the physical and the spiritual worlds. Therefore, Momaday's memoir serves two purposes. 1 *The Woman Who Watches Over the World*, Linda Hogan's "œnative memoir," opens with the story of a clay woman that Hogan saw at a museum gift shop in San Martin, Mexico. The figure appealed to Hogan's imagination as it offered an apt illustration of a powerful female healer who protected the world with her own body and at the same time, being made of clay, represented the connection between all first peoples and the earth. Hogan had the clay woman shipped to her home but, unfortunately, it arrived broken. Momaday's transformation of blood quantum discourse into the blood memory concept is deeply rooted in indigenous epistemologies and individual experience.