



Universidad de Valladolid

Facultad de Filosofía y Letras

Grado en Estudios Ingleses

**American Borders: Borderlines and Borderlands in
Thomas King's "Borders" and Helena Viramontes'
"The Cariboo Café"**

Alexis Julia Sáez Lutz

Tutor: Jesús Benito Sánchez

Departamento de Filología Inglesa

Curso: 2021-2022

Abstract

Borders have vastly defined the way society and communities have been organized, directly affecting certain cultures and groups of people. The border itself has always presented problems, as the idea of it just bringing political order is merely utopic, and it has often been defied or even rejected when imposed. With the creation of borders, also come borderlands, a fuzzy area where cultures coexist and intertwine. In this study, the concepts of borderlines and borderlands are explored and put into historical context, analyzing them along the works of two different authors: Thomas King's "Borders" and Helena Viramontes' "The Cariboo Café".

Key Words: Borders, Blackfoot, Chicano, America, Culture, Nationalism

Resumen

Las fronteras han definido en gran medida la forma en la que la sociedad y las comunidades están organizadas, afectando directamente a ciertas culturas y grupos de personas. La frontera en sí siempre ha presentado ciertos problemas, ya que la idea de que únicamente traen una organización política es meramente utópica, y muchas veces es desafiada o incluso rechazada cuando se impone. Con la creación de las fronteras, también surgen las tierras fronterizas, donde las dos culturas divididas coexisten y se entrelazan. En este trabajo los conceptos de línea fronteriza y tierras fronterizas son estudiados junto con su contexto histórico, analizándolos con las obras de dos autores diferentes: "Borders" de Thomas King, y "The Cariboo Café" de Helena Viramontes.

Palabras Clave: Fronteras, Blackfoot, Chicano, América, Cultura, Nacionalismo

Index:

1. Introduction.....	6
2. The Border in American Culture: From Borderline to Borderlands.....	8
2.1. <u>The Frontier</u>	8
2.2. <u>The Frontier in American culture: Frederick Jackson Turner</u>	8
2.3. <u>Border as a Line: Dividing Communities</u>	10
2.4. <u>Borderlands</u>	12
3. Thomas King, “Borders”	16
4. Helena Viramontes, “The Cariboo Café”	22
5. Conclusion.....	29
6. Bibliography.....	31

1. Introduction

Borderlines and borderlands, two similar terms with very different meanings. These two types of borders are the ones surrounding the United States of America, each one of them with their own characteristics and consequences. Throughout American history, there have been many different meanings associated with the term “frontier”, as, initially, it is intended to bring political order, separating territories and communities. This is the case of the American Canadian border on the 49th parallel. However, with the borderline also comes the rejection of such, as it being artificially created, it divides communities that were already settled – this being the case of Blackfoot natives.

However, despite the initial notion of borderlines intended to create organization between nations, there is also another side to borders, which is the *borderland*. The borderland is an area of interaction between communities that are divided by the borderline, and this is the case of the Mexican American border. Whereas the 49th parallel has a more distinct borderline, the border following the Rio Grande course is not as marked, as the surrounding areas also make up the frontier. It, therefore, creates an area of communication and interaction, but also one of tension and conflict, proving that borders are much more than just lines created to separate nations, as it is not as simple as that. With the creation of borders come new communities, cultures, and there are many areas and settlements that are affected by them.

This distinction between the borderline and borderland has been addressed by many authors, including Thomas King in his short story “Borders” (1993), who focused on the frontier between Canada and the United States, and its influence on Native American Blackfoot due to the unnatural break created to form the frontier. In the case of the southern border, authors such as Gloria Anzaldúa and Helena Viramontes have focused on the contrary, the borderland, and how it is a territory where both of the separated cultures intertwine. This can be seen in their works *Borderlands/La Frontera* (Anzaldúa, 1987) and “The Cariboo Café” (Viramontes, 1995).

In this paper, the notion of the term “frontier” is discussed, following the study of the usage of the word itself and its influence on the American culture according to historian Frederick Jackson Turner. Moreover, the history of Blackfoot natives and how they have been affected by such division on the northern American border is also analyzed focusing on the idea of the borderline, along with the consequences of the southern

border, which affected the Chicanos, and is considered to be a borderland. These two concepts – borderline and borderland – are later on seen in Thomas King’s “Borders”, where the author explores the borderline, and in Helena Viramontes’ “The Cariboo Café”, in which borderlands are the main focal point, following their own conclusions.

2. The Border in American Culture: From Borderline to Borderlands

2.1. The frontier

The term “frontier” has always been difficult to define, as a frontier itself is hard to establish. According to the Oxford Dictionary, a frontier is defined as “a line that separates two countries, etc.; the land near this line” (“frontier”). However, despite being commonly known as an artificial line imposed to politically divide different territories, the reality is quite different. The concept that a border simply separates territories, bringing order and structure to the way the World works is not realistic. As defined by the Oxford dictionary, the frontier is not only made up of the borderline itself, but also of the area near the border, which is known as *borderland*.

With the creation of different borders, communities and societies are also divided, as many areas where different cultures once coexisted are divided due to a political arrangement, bringing conflict and problems as a consequence of this separation. Insiders become outsiders, and cannot freely move from one place to another, despite previously being able to, and with the borderlines, the borderlands emerge. This area is the reality of the frontier, where the two neighboring territories intertwine, creating an area of violence, uncertainty, communication, and interaction between these two places and, therefore, societies.

2.2. The Frontier in American culture: Frederick Jackson Turner

The word “frontier” has meant many different things throughout American history, and it has therefore changed the perception of the understanding of the word, depending on what point in American history it is used in. When the Europeans first arrived in the American continent, they used the frontier to mark a distinction between their society, which they considered as essentially civilized, and the outsiders, seen as the uncivilized. This frontier brought them a sense of protection, separating what they knew from the unknown. Their frontier kept on expanding as they colonized Native American territories and presumably uncivilized land, and the frontier moved further out West throughout the years.

Therefore, in 1890, the superintendent of the American census declared that American settlements in the west were so dispersed, that it was no longer viable to maintain the frontier out west, so they would not be included in the census reports, despite

belonging to the United States. However, the American historian Frederick Jackson Turner was greatly opposed to this decision and wrote *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* in 1893. In his essay, he defends how important the frontier was in the shaping of this new nation, and how the borders as such are what made America what it was. With this, Turner created a new idea of “frontier”, which was later on studied by many historians. According to Turner, once Europeans started to settle in the newfound land, they started to shape society in an entirely different way as what they were used to in Europe, which is what separated European society from the new American way of life. “The American frontier is sharply distinguished from the European frontier—a fortified boundary line running through dense populations. The most significant thing about the American frontier is, that it lies at the hither edge of free land.” (Turner, 1893, 3) For decades, the western side of the American frontier kept advancing and moving further out west, shaping itself differently throughout the upcoming years. Settlements started to become more and more isolated, making it harder to set a fixed frontier.

As Turner stated in his work, the western frontier is “the meeting point between savagery and civilization” (Turner, 1893, 3). As opposed to the European border, the American frontier is not adjacent to civilization, whereas it is next to “free land”. This is also something that helped shape American society, since it gave them the freedom to keep changing their borderline, as they could settle in new areas that were “free”.

According to Turner, the industrial development and expansion was also a key factor in the shaping of the frontier. “The Atlantic frontier was compounded of fisherman, fur-trader, miner, cattle-raiser, and farmer. Excepting the fisherman, each type of industry was on the march toward the West, impelled by an irresistible attraction. Each passed in successive waves across the continent.” (Turner, 1893, 12). At first, most of the American industry was centered in the east coast, this included farming, fishing, mining, ... Most of these industries, except for fishing industry, were able to expand towards the West, bringing industrialization with them, and, therefore, new settlers. This is another factor that created a frontier between the Indians and the colonies.

Turner also presents the Western area as a land of opportunities. Having access to so much free land gives the colonizers the opportunity to industrialize even more areas and become wealthier and more powerful, which is essential in the shaping of America.

Since the days when the fleet of Columbus sailed into the waters of the New World, America has been another name for opportunity, and the people of the United States have taken their tone from the incessant expansion which has not only been open but has even been forced upon them. He would be a rash prophet who should assert that the expansive character of American life has now entirely ceased. Movement has been its dominant fact, and, unless this training has no effect upon a people, the American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise. (Turner, 1893, 37).

Because of all this, Turner rejected the idea of not including these new territories and settlements in the census, as they formed part of all of the possible opportunities America had out West.

2.3. Border as a Line: Dividing Communities

Throughout American history, the concept of a “frontier” has heavily changed and been influenced, depending on the area and era in discussion. Up until the eighteenth-century, the Great Lakes, the Lower Missouri Valley and the Greater Rio Grande Basin were all areas of “borderlands”. This means that Europeans coexisted with indigenous people, as they did not have a clear and distinct border. However, after revolutions such as the Seven Years War (1756-1763) that heavily affected the Great Lakes, borders were set, causing these areas to go from “borderlands” to “bordered lands”, and the communities to be divided as such. Moreover, due to these revolutions, many Native Americans were banished from their land, and many others died because of diseases brought by the Europeans. This border, which was imposed in the Great Lakes, then shaped into what we know as the Canadian American border nowadays.

The Native Americans were the community that were most affected by these changes, as, quite often, these new “border lines” completely divided their communities. This happened with the Blackfoot community, which reside in what we know now as the Canadian American border. They are set in the Great Plains of Montana, in the US, and the province of Alberta, Canada. This border, which is imposed in the present day, completely divides this community, as they live in reserves on either side of this frontier. Since the very beginning, there was a lot of conflict between the natives and the whites in this area, and at times, even between the community itself. In 1855, the Blackfoot community signed a treaty with the United States, in which, in exchange for Americans to be able to use their lands, they would be given \$20,000 annually. However, this treaty was not respected, and conflict arose.

There were many discussions to find a way to protect Blackfoot lands, and in the late nineteenth-century, they came to the conclusion that they should have a reserve which was completely off limits to the whites. This territory would then go from the Missouri River, up to International Boundaries. “To protect the Blackfeet from this fate, Indian officials discussed the idea of creating an "Indian Territory." This reserve, forever closed to white men, would stretch from the Missouri River to the International Boundary” (Sharp, 1970, 6). Despite the rules that were set on this territory, the Gold Rush brought hundreds of miners into their land, not at all respecting what was previously decided.

There was a constant state of tension between the Blackfoot community and the whites led by a series of unfortunate events. “In both the American and Canadian Wests, the story is one of conflict between primitive and civilized peoples. On the American side, this conflict was continuous, with unceasing guerrilla warfare punctuated by occasional formal military campaigns” (Sharp, 1970, 3). In the early 1860s, there was a whisky trade crossing the nation, which brought ships full of whisky to Montana through the Missouri River, directly passing through the Blackfoot territory. This was illegal at the time due to the Act of 1834. Mountain Chief, who was a notable Blackfoot warrior, tried to stop this, along many other Blackfoot chiefs. Moreover, many failed attempts at peace, the illegal whisky trade, and several murders, such as John Bozeman’s – a white pioneer supposedly killed by Blackfoot warriors – and Malcolm Clarke – a fur trader killed by Owl Child, a Blackfoot warrior – all led to the Marias Massacre. This massacre, on January 23rd, 1870, took place at a Blackfoot campsite in Montana. On this day, 173 Native American were killed, the casualties were mostly made up of women, children, and elders. This attack was conducted by Major Baker, who assaulted a friendly indigenous campsite. This brought a lot of attention nation-wide for Native American rights and caused this topic to be discussed more. “News of the brutal attack prompted immediate protests as a wave of resentment swept the country. Humanitarians quickly labeled it a "massacre," which indeed it was.” (Sharp, 1970, 10).

President Grant, whose mandate went from 1869 to 1877, brought new changes for the Native Americans. After the Marias Massacre, Grant introduced the “Peace Policy”, which had very positive aspirations, but in reality, not much changed. The policies were not respected, and in 1876, the Great Sioux War began, where indigenous communities fought the whites over the Black Hills, located in South Dakota.

After these incidents, in 1882, the United States banned the free movement of Blackfoot natives between the US and Canada, despite their community being set right on the border. This caused the community to be completely divided, marking an end to the “borderland” and turning it into a “bordered land”. This artificially imposed border, still in practice in the present day, has brought many problems for the Blackfoot community, and it is completely rejected by the Natives of the land. “This drastic policy finally made the forty-ninth parallel a barrier to the northern Indians. From that time onward the Blackfeet were truly one people, divided by an in- visible line.” (Sharp, 1970, 15). Now, to be able to go from one part of the Blackfoot territory to the other, they would need to cross the American Canadian border, therefore, presenting the necessary documents to be able to cross from one country to the other. According to the American and Canadian government, Blackfoot natives are only required to present a tribal ID to cross the border, but the reality is not always the case, as many border patrols demand they state if they are Blackfoot Americans or Canadians, bringing conflict to this community due to the imposed borderline.

2.4. Borderlands

Despite de concept of “bordered lines” discussed above, there is an entirely different understanding of the concept of “borders”, as seen in Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera*. In this essay, Anzaldúa presents the American border as a borderland, where multiple groups of people who belong to different ethnic, social, and religious groups all coexist in the same space.

Anzaldúa focuses on the Mexican American border in her book and gives insight on what it is like living at the border, as she herself lived on the border set between Mexico and Texas, where both American and Mexican cultures intertwined. She talks about many different topics that affect Chicanos, those who are from Mexican origin but are living in the US, and focuses on issues that go from the crossing of the border, to the language barrier, and even the concept of being stuck between two cultures, which happens to Chicanos so often.

In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Anzaldúa starts off presenting “Aztlán”. Despite being questioned by many historians if this place even depicts a reality, it is seen by many Chicanos as the borderland, the place where Mexicans and Americans live together, and it is supposedly set between the Northwest of Mexico and Southwest of the United States.

The following notion from her book emphasizes the concept of Aztlán, and how some Chicanos state that it is where they are from: “Some call themselves Chicanos and see themselves as people whose true homeland is Aztlán [the U.S. Southwest]. (Anzaldúa, 1987, 1)”

The term “Aztlán” resurfaced with the Chicano movement in the 1960s, but the term itself dates back to Aztec times, however, it is not entirely certain that this place ever existed. “The biggest fact of contention amongst historians and archeologists regarding Aztlán is whether it existed or if it were akin to some of New Spain’s (Mexico) other mythical locations, like Cevola or Cibola, and the Seven Cities of Gold.” (Muñoz-Hunt, 2019, 55).

Moreover, with the Chicano movement, “Aztlán” was used to empower their nationality. In 1969, *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*, which is a manifesto supporting indigenous rights, was published. It was written by a Chicano poet named Alurista and was adopted at the Chicano Youth Conference held in Denver, Colorado. With the creation of Aztlán, Chicanos were able to create a space where they could inherit their national identity and culture. The manifesto presented a list of goals aimed towards the Chicanos to build and organize themselves in order to free themselves from their oppression. “Once we are committed to the idea and philosophy of El Plan de Aztlan, we can conclude that social, economic, cultural and political independence is the only road to total liberation from oppression, exploitation and racism.” (Alurista, 1969, 2). In a way, the concept of Aztlán allowed Chicanos to remerge into their own culture, after being so heavily influenced by the whites. “El Plan,” as it was often abbreviated, called for “reclamation of culture, language, pride, and identity” and the crowd in attendance “rallied around Alurista’s depiction of Aztlán.” (Muñoz-Hunt, 2019, 61).

Consequently, Aztlán is a space separated from both Mexico and the United States. The Chicanos, who consider Aztlán to be their true origin, are hybrid of these two nations, and, therefore, cultures. Chicanos are neither Mexican nor American, but they are a group of their own, stuck between these two parallels. Hence, supporting Aztlán, Chicanos have a place of their own, where they have their own cultural identity, where there are traces of both United States, and their homeland.

Aztlán, the home of the Aztec, Mexican, and Chicano/a, alienated from Americanness but still umbilically tied to its Pre-Colombian homeland, does not belong to either place.

Regardless of the border peoples' self-identification as Tejanos, Mexicano/as, Mexican Americans, Spanish, Spanish Americans, Americans, Latino/as, or Chicano/as deriving from the ancient cultures, Spain, or the US, a new double hybrid has emerged. (Muñoz-Hunt, 2019, 63).

Anzaldúa uses Aztlán to bring light to the mix of cultures presented in the borderland. However, she does not just focus on the border itself in her book, but also brings light to many issues that Chicanos face, at times even in their own culture, including sexism, homophobia, jealousy, and the inability to further on their education. At first, Anzaldúa presents the Mexican American borders as an open wound: “The U.S.-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds.” (Anzaldúa, 1987, 3). Here, the author presents the border as an open wound between the Third World (Mexico) and the First World (the U.S.), and begins to explain how, despite being separated by a thin line, these two lands are completely different. The south dreams of escaping to the north, where a “land of opportunities” awaits them.

With the political barrier between Mexico and the United States, also came a language barrier, between Spanish and English. This affected the Chicano citizens, as most would speak their mother language, being Spanish, but had to adjust to the one spoken in the U.S., English. Anzaldúa explains how this led Chicanos to speak many different languages: “1. Standard English 2. Working class and slang English 3. Standard Spanish 4. Standard Mexican Spanish 5. North Mexican Spanish dialect 6. Chicano Spanish (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California have regional variations) 7. Tex-Mex 8. Pachuco (called *caló*).” (Anzaldúa, 1987, 55). All of these language variations mentioned in her book are to be spoken in different situations, and she explains how she, and her fellow Chicano classmates, were shunned at school for speaking English with a Mexican accent, or even for having names that were too difficult for English speakers to pronounce. At times, many Chicanos use their own variations of the language, speak in Spanglish, or even use anglicisms when speaking in Spanish, which is when they borrow an American word and turn it into Spanish (for instance, using *bola* for *ball*, instead of *balón*).

However, despite all of this, one of the prevailing issues Chicanos face is the loss of cultural identity.

Nosotros los Chicanos straddle the borderlands. On one side of us, we are constantly exposed to the Spanish of the Mexicans, on the other side we hear the Anglos' incessant clamoring so

that we forget our language. Among ourselves we don't say nosotros los americanos, o nosotros los españoles, o nosotros los hispanos. We say nosotros los mexicanos (by mexicanos we do not mean citizens of Mexico; we do not mean a national identity, but a racial one). We distinguish between mexicanos del otro lado and mexicanos de este lado. (Anzaldúa, 1987, 62).

This notion reinforces the idea present throughout Anzaldúa entire book, and that is that Chicanos are stuck between two cultures, not fully belonging to either one, but belonging to both simultaneously. Despite being divided from their homeland due to the Mexican American border, the entire “Aztlán” area, previously mentioned, is inhabited by many others who live the same life as Anzaldúa did, and who suffer a loss of cultural identity. Neither fully accepted by Mexicans nor Americans, Chicanos have a culture of their own, coexisting in this borderland between the US and Mexico, where an entirely different culture can be found.

3. Thomas King, “Borders”

Borders have commonly been used to divide territories to gain political order. However, with this division, communities and societies are separated, and not able to freely move from one place to another. Moreover, with this division often comes conflict, as many territories seek further territorial power. Aminatou Haidar, born in Morocco in 1966, is a Saharawi activist and direct victim of borderline division. Since the 1970s, Morocco and Western Sahara have been in a constant state of conflict and tension, with a Western Sahara War lasting from 1975 to 1991, which broke out with “El Frente Polisario”, a Saharawi front formed to fight against the Spanish occupation in Western Sahara, allied with Morocco. Throughout the conflict and tension present between these two nations, Haidar was arrested and tortured for supporting the Polisario Front.

Pictures of Aminetu Haidar’s tortured body from the time of her release from jail have circulated widely amongst international solidarity movements, turning her into an icon for Saharawi nationalist militancy. She is one of the main promoters of the Saharawi intifada, a civil resistance movement which has been emerging in the occupied territories since the year 2000. (Solana, 2011, 59).

In 2009, on her way back from the USA using her Moroccan passport, she marked her nationality as Saharawi in the airport of El Aiuún, a city in Western Sahara occupied by Morocco. Because of this, Moroccan authorities took her passport and forms of identification and forcefully put her on a flight to Lanzarote, Spain. Without the proper identification, Haidar was stranded in Spain, not able to get a flight back to her home country where her children and family lived. “Once inside the airport, Haidar insisted she be put on the first flight back to El Aiuún. However, the Spanish authorities explained she could not be allowed to fly out the country without a passport.” (Solana, 2011, 60). Haidar was a victim of the injustices presented with the imposition of borderlines. She was able to exceptionally enter a country without any forms of identification, but the same exception could not be made for her to return home. She then started a hunger strike which lasted 34 days, resulting in her hospitalization and was finally allowed back to her country, where she would be under house arrest, proving that borderlines can be defied.

Following up the idea that borders are a line dividing communities, Thomas King reinforces this notion in his work “Borders”. Where there once was a time when Blackfoot was one community, with the Blackfoot natives being able to move through their land as they pleased, it is now a community living in an area divided by the Canadian American

border, also known as the 49th parallel, which is portrayed in King's narrative, as it is set between these two nations. King was born in California, USA, and moved to Canada in 1979 to work at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. "King himself is an exemplar of transnationality and indigeneity. Born in Sacramento, California, to a Cherokee father and German- Greek mother, he began writing fiction and literary criticism after moving from the US to Canada in 1979 to take up an academic post at the University of Lethbridge in Albert" (Andrews, Jennifer, and Priscilla L. Walton, 2006, 602). King is the son of a Cherokee man and a woman of European origin. Coming from both a Native American and a white person, King is able to understand the duality of being "in-between" two cultures, which is what he portrays in "Borders". After moving back and forth between the US and Canada, he was able to witness what the 49th parallel meant for Native Americans. "King's own positioning brings a further complexity to his writing, for as an "American" Cherokee who moved to Canada, he can be a Canadian writer and a Native writer, but he cannot be a Canadian Native writer because the Cherokees are not "native" to Canada" (Andrews, Jennifer, and Priscilla L. Walton, 2006, 605). Being an American-born Cherokee but identifying as a Canadian writer brought problems to his identity. Not being native to either territory made him seem like an outsider in both places, which is what King tries to transmit in many of his works. The feeling of not truly belonging and being seen as an outsider is a trait that many of his characters have, and it is also what makes many Native Americans reject this borderline.

In King's short story "Borders", the female main character and her son, the narrator, are trying to go to Salt Lake City, Utah, to visit her daughter Laetitia, who moved away from the Blackfoot reserve they live in at the age of seventeen, which is on the Canadian side. However, the narrator and his mother encounter problems when trying to cross the borders, as their nationality, Blackfoot, is not accepted by the border patrol on neither the American nor Canadian side.

Throughout King's narrative, he brings light to the discrimination these groups suffer regarding their culture, history and identity. The officers at the border are completely dismissive of their culture and origins, and do not accept their Blackfoot nationality as a valid answer. The borderline, which was artificially imposed, divided the Blackfoot community, which was once one, into American Blackfoot and Canadian Blackfoot, despite still being the same people and community. This makes the Native Americans belonging to this community have to identify with a nationality that is not

truly their own, as, according to the border patrols in the narrative, they need to state whether they are American or Canadian to be able to go from one country to the other. The natives, despite not being accepted in the borderline, are directly affected by it.

"Now, I know that we got Blackfeet on the American side and the Canadians got Blackfeet on their side. Just so we can keep our records straight, what side do you come from?" I knew exactly what my mother was going to say, and I could have told them if they had asked me. "Canadian side or American side?" asked the guard. "Blackfoot side," she said." (King, 1993, 135-136)

The artificial border set between the US and Canada did not include the other communities that inhabited the land at the same time that this border was created, leaving this third possible side, the Blackfoot side, not included in their division. The only accepted answers are either American or Canadian, despite having other communities such as the Blackfoot community living right on it. At the time when this border was created, they were not the ones crossing the border, whereas the border crossed their land, forcefully changing their nationality and community as a whole. With this, the natives became direct victims of colonialism, as throughout the process, their cultural identity was affected as they were more and more forcefully influenced by the colonizers.

The title of the narrative itself also gives insight on how the plot unfolds, having "borders" in plural. It shows how neither the American nor the Canadian border are accepting of the Blackfoot nationality, and the main characters are rejected at both. King also plays with the stereotypes often associated to both borders.

Just hearing the names of these towns, you would expect that Sweetgrass, which is a nice name and sounds like it is related to other places such as Medicine Hat and Moose Jaw and Kicking Horse Pass, would be on the Canadian side, and that Coutts, which sounds abrupt and rude, would be on the American side. But this was not the case. (King, 134)

As stated by the narrator, one might think that Coutts, which sounds worse than Sweetgrass, would be on the American side, however, it is actually on the Canadian side. It is easy to see why the narrator mentions this, and the border patrol on the American side is much less accepting of their Blackfoot identity, and their patience for the situation runs out quite swiftly, making this border seem much ruder and stricter. On the Canadian side, on the other hand, despite not accepting it either, the border officer asks them questions about another fellow Blackfoot and tells them she would also be proud of belonging to their community. One thing they do have in common though is that they are

both demanding of the proper identification and leave the narrator and his mother stranded between borders, not being able to enter either side. The only thing accessible to them is a duty-free shop, which they first look at fondly on their way to the border, remembering how they once stopped there on their way to dropping off Laetitia when she left the reserve, but, after being the only place they were able to go to when they were denied entry to either country, they started to resent it, and quickly became friends with Mel, the shop owner.

At the duty-free shop, the narrator noticed that Mel had a name tag with both the American and Canadian flags on it. "The manager had a name tag with a tiny American flag on one side and a tiny Canadian flag on the other. His name was Mel." (King, 141). The fact that the manager wears both flags on him represents the positive relationship these two nations have, which does not include them, as it is not as easy for the mother and son to cross the border, as one might think. The process these two characters have to go through represents the reality of crossing the border, when it comes to non-American people. Mel can easily cross the border, being white and a citizen of either America or Canada, so he is therefore shocked to hear that the narrator and his mother are stranded in-between: "You know, you read about these things, but you just don't believe it. You just don't believe it." (King, 142).

Mel, along with the narrator and the officer patrols, witnessed how persistent the mother was with her identity, and the next morning, they also witnessed how she tried to cross the border again to go visit her daughter, but the outcome was the same as before. After the second night stranded between nations, the media showed up, asking both the border patrols and the characters about the situation.

They mostly talked to my mother. Every so often one of the reporters would come over and ask me questions about how it felt to be an Indian without a country. I told them we had a nice house on the reserve and that my cousins had a couple of horses we rode when we went fishing. (King, 142-143).

The reporter asked these questions to the boy, and the boy responds with their nice living situation, but the answer is not what the reporters would expect considering they view them as outsiders, and, therefore, as an uncivilized society. Nonetheless, once the media appeared, bringing light to the situation, they tried to cross the border to enter the United States one last time. When they got there, the officer greeted them with a welcoming smile, contrary to what had happened the previous days.

"Morning, ma'am." "Good morning." "Where you heading?" "Salt Lake City." "Purpose of your visit?" "Visit my daughter." "Any tobacco, liquor, or firearms?" "Don't smoke." "Any plants or fruit?" "Not any more." "Citizenship?" "Blackfoot." The guard rocked back on his heels and jammed his thumbs into his gun belt. "Thank you," he said, his fingers patting the butt of the revolver. "Have a pleasant trip." (King, 143-144)

It was not until the story became relevant that they were finally let in the border, proving that they did not in fact need to declare that they were neither American nor Canadian, as being Blackfoot was just as valid. This concept proves how these borders that were imposed are nothing more than an artificial line dividing people and communities, as they were let in just the same. This resembles Haidar's situation at the Lanzarote airport, as she was not let go until she was hospitalized due to her hunger strike and her circumstances were known worldwide. Both of these occurrences showcase how these borders can be defied and transformed when sovereignty and political power are present and interested in doing so.

Furthermore, a key factor throughout King's narrative is the conception that for Native Americans, in this case, the Blackfoot, borders are not as important and almost arbitrary. As seen with the mother and son, they are keen to cross the artificial border which is set on the territory which was once their own. They view these borders negatively, as this line divided their people and made it difficult for them to keep their identity and nationality, since, as seen in the narrative, their Blackfoot identity was not accepted. The mother completely rejects this national border and does not recognize them, whereas completely diminishes the idea of having to identify as anything other than Blackfoot. However, for Americans and Canadians, the borders are viewed as something completely different. They see the Blackfoot as outsiders and consider the borders to be protection from the unknown. These borders bring a sense of security to the citizens living in these countries but make outsiders anxious when faced with the patrols.

Most of the postcards said we should come down and see the city, but whenever I mentioned this, my mother would stiffen up. So I was surprised when she bought two new tires for the car and put on her blue dress with the green and yellow flowers. I had to dress up, too, for my mother did not want us crossing the border looking like Americans. (King, 133)

My mother straightened the dress across her thighs, leaned against the wheel, and drove all the way to the border in first gear, slowly, as if she were trying to see through a bad storm or riding high on black ice. (King, 134)

The mother “stiffens up” with the mere thought of having to cross the border to visit her daughter in Salt Lake City and approaches the borderline with fear, the reason for this is because of her controversial citizenship. Nationality and cultural identity are one of the main themes in King’s story, seeing that each character identifies their nationality to be different, despite coming from the same place. The father of both Laetitia and the narrator is not present in the story, but it is mentioned that he is American, making it easier for Laetitia to be able to cross the border, and allowing her to have a different view of the United States. “Dad's American," Laetitia told my mother, "so I can go and come as I please.” (King, 131). On the other hand, however, the mother only considers herself as Blackfoot, which is prevailing in the plot, as this is the reason for all of the unfortunate events the characters had to go through. This is also visible in the way they communicate with each other, while Laetitia spoke to her mother in English, her mother always spoke to her son and to Laetitia in Blackfoot. “You can still see the mountain from here," my mother told Laetitia in Blackfoot. "Lots of mountains in Salt Lake," Laetitia told her in English.’ (King, 133). The fact that these two characters do not even speak to each other in the same language emphasized the differences in cultural identity present in the text, marking yet another distinction between these two cultures.

Therefore, King’s narrative reinforces the conception that borders, despite being supposedly created to bring order and political organization to different nations, often come with problems as it unnaturally divides communities that were once set on the land that is divided. These borderlines are rejected by the ones that are excluded, as they become outsiders in the same land where they were once insiders, which is what the narrator’s mother defended throughout King’s “Borders”. Where some see the border as protection from the uncivilized, others, in this case, the Natives, see it as a place where they need to leave behind their own culture to be accepted by them. This causes a distinct separation between two communities that once coexisted in the same place, marking a difference between those who are the same, the American or Canadians, from those they see as different, the Native Americans. Consequently, while Americans and Canadians can still easily cross the border, it has made it harder for other communities, such as the Blackfoot in the narrative.

4. Helena Viramontes, “The Cariboo Café”

When politically dividing territories with borders, a distinction is created between those who belong in the divided land and those who do not. Those who are seen as outsiders, and the ones that are insiders and are, therefore, accepted. However, with the artificial creation of these dividing lines, as seen in Thomas King’s “Borders”, often come problems inasmuch as the social and familial bonds can easily cut across politically imposed borderlines. Nonetheless, other than the creation of thin borders on the perimeter of nations, there is another possibility, which is the emergence of fuzzy areas we could call borderlands. Borderlands are commonly found in the southern part of the United States, along the Mexican American border. It is an area where interaction between both communities is possible, but where conflict, fear, and violence are also present. Unlike the unnatural break imposed on the 49th parallel, the border following the course of the Rio Grande is not just made up of the borderline, as it includes the areas around it, creating these so-called borderlands. The borderlands are melting pots, where different cultures intertwine, clash and interact, creating new ones.

As seen in Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera*, the Chicanos mainly live in the borderland between United States and Mexico, being the direct result of the mix of these two cultures. In “To Live in the Borderland Means You”, a poem by Anzaldúa included in her novel *Borderlands/La Frontera*, she explains how living in the borderland affects the national identity of its inhabitants, having to choose whether they feel American or Mexican, but not being fully accepted by either one.

To live in the borderland means you are neither hispana india negra española ni gabacha, eres mestiza, mulata, half-breed caught in the crossfire between camps while carrying all five races on your back not knowing which side to turn to, run from; (Anzaldúa, 1987, 194-195).

Living in the American borderland they are seen as outsiders by the insiders, and insiders by the outsiders. This means they are seen as immigrants and the uncivilized by the Americans, but they are seen as traitors and insiders by Mexicans who live on the other side of the border.

To live in the Borderlands means knowing that the india in you, betrayed for 500 years, is no longer speaking to you, that mexicanas call you rajetas, that denying the Anglo inside you is as bad as having denied the Indian or Black; (Anzaldúa, 1987, 194-195).

The notion that borderlands are a place of cultural interaction and where these two cultures are confronted is also present in Helena Viramontes' "The Cariboo Café". Helena Viramontes was born in Los Angeles, California, and is a notable Chicano writer. According to Viramontes, she did not start writing until the 70s, after she left college, which coincided with the beginning of the Chicano movement. "I actually began writing after college. It was after I graduated from Immaculate Heart College in '71. It was the height of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement." (Viramontes, and Flys-Junquera, 2001, 231).

Since then, Viramontes has written many political pieces – including "The Cariboo Café" – to bring light to what Chicanos have to face, seeking some sort of action to change what their reality is truly like.

For example in the "Cariboo Café," which I consider my most political piece – because in that piece I was truly so outraged – I really felt I brought the readers into the story, and I wanted the readers to press their face against the window and see what was going on and say "Its your fault if you do not do something now," to indict the reader, to move them to some kind of political action. (Viramontes, and Flys-Junquera, 2001, 233).

"The Cariboo Café" depicts the cruel reality of "illegal aliens" living in the U.S. It is a narrative set with violence and tension, with the purpose of recreating the atmosphere Chicanos face. This short story has three chapters, each one of them written from a different perspective focusing on diverse problems illegal immigrants have to go through. Most of the narrative is set in the café itself, which can be seen as a representation of the border crossing between United States and Mexico. In the café we see how immigrants come and go, along with the police, which also happens along the border. The café owner and cook states how he never hung-up signs scaring people off or refusing to serve anyone, as if he did, he would not get any business due to the type of customers he usually has.

Not once did I hang up all those stupid signs. You know, like 'We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone,' or 'No shirt, no shoes, no service.' To tell you the truth – which is what I always do though it don't pay – I wouldn't have nobody walking through that door. The streets are full of scum, but scum gotta eat too is the way I see it. (Viramontes, 1995, 68)

The only thing the café cook cares about is whether his customers have money or not. He serves anyone "whose got the greens" (Viramontes, 1995, 69). The café is

indirectly linked to everything that occurs throughout the plot, and everything that each character does leads back to the café.

In the first chapter, Sonya, a young girl around the age of six, and her younger brother, Macky, are locked out of their home because Sonya lost their house key. Throughout this initial chapter, Viramontes portrays the fear immigrants have of the police, as they worry they will be deported by “La Migra” (the border patrol). Sonya, being roughly five or six years old, already lives in fear, scared by the mere sirens of police cars passing nearby. “The police are men in black who get kids and send them to Tijuana, says Popi. Whenever you see them, run, because they hate you, says Popi.” (Viramontes, 1995, 67). We are shown how Sonya and her family arrived at the U.S. with a plan, saving up enough money to afford a better life. However, the reality ended up being quite different, as the children would grow up living in secret, hiding from the police, with a set of rules they would need to follow to keep safe.

Rule one: never talk to strangers, not even the neighbor who paced up and down the hallway talking to himself. Rule two: the police, or “polie” as Sonya’s popi pronounced the word, was La Migra in disguise and this should always be avoided. Rule three: keep your key with you at all times – the four walls of the apartment were the only protection against the streets until Popi returned home. (Viramontes, 1995, 65).

Sonya and her family’s living situation shows how despite their efforts to live a better life, they are still living in poverty in one of the richest countries in the world, facing the consequences of the rejection they suffer because of their origins. “Crossing the border does not garner one entrance into America; the ‘inside’ of America is reserved for insiders only.” (Franco, 2002, 122-123). Moreover, throughout the narrative, all the immigrants present in the text fear the police, which is what Viramontes intended to portray. “‘The Cariboo Café’ centers on displaced persons, a blurring of national and geographical borders leaving only the marginalized people who suffer the police anti-immigrant racism.’ (Viramontes, and Flys-Junquera, 2001, 224).

After Sonya realized she had lost her key, and having to look after her starving brother, she decided to go to her teacher’s house, from where she picked Macky up, to get some food. However, after having to hide from the police along the way, they lost track of where they were, and ended up at the Cariboo Café, the “zero-zero place” as they called it due to the paint on the sign being mostly worn off. The “double zero” could signify that the usual customers there have a loss of identity and symbolizes the area

between both the American and Mexican border. “The remaining o’s in its faded name (“oo Cafe”) become read as zeros—the characters in the story dub it as ‘the zero-zero place’ or ‘the double zero café’ (68)—signifying a place of absence and a double exile, from home and from the newly adopted location.” (Mujcinovic, 2003, 171). It represents the forced exile many of these customers had to go through due to the situation in their homeland, and how they feel lost in their new country because of their lack of nationality and proper identification, having to constantly hide and escape in places as the café, as if they were still crossing the border. “With ‘The Cariboo Café’ we see that the border zone reaches far beyond the border, displacing people on the very ground they live on.” (Franco, 2002, 127).

The second chapter of Viramontes’ narrative is written from the café’s cook’s point of view. He witnesses how immigrants come and go, and even feels pity for some of them – one of them being Macky – as he reminded him of his late son, Jojo, when he was a child. However, he mentions how he does not like his sister, Sonya. “It’s his sister I don’t like. She’s got these poking eyes that follow you ‘round ‘cause she don’t trust no one.” (Viramontes, 1995, 70). In this notion, Viramontes shows the reality of a young immigrant child – from the young age of six, Sonya is already suspicious of everyone else, as she was told from the very beginning that she could not trust anyone. She is resented for that, despite following what her parents always told her to do due to them being illegal immigrants.

The cook mentions how throughout the day, he often sees green vans come up to the street, and when this happens, the immigrants run to hide, seeking safety. On one occurrence, three of them ran into the café’s bathroom, and despite being regular customers, the cook disapproved of this and told the agents. “They looked at me as if I’m gonna stop them, but when I go on stirring the chile, they run to the bathroom. Now look, I’m a nice guy, but I don’t like to be used, you know? Just ‘cause they’re regulars don’t mean jackshit. I run an honest business. And that’s what I told them agents.” (Viramontes, 1995, 71). These immigrants were betrayed by the cook, proving that despite being inside the border, they will always be seen as outsiders.

The third and final chapter of “The Cariboo Café” is written from a Latin American woman’s point of view, who is also the mother of Geraldo, whom she lost as he was taken by the government officials. Throughout this chapter, we are shown how

this mother is grieving and looking for her child all because of the unjust government's actions. When asking them to give her son back, the official completely ignores her, telling the mother that "Anyone who so willfully supports the Contras in any form must be arrested and punished without delay." (Viramontes, 1995, 73). Despite Geraldo only being five years old, he is punished and taken away, suffering the consequences of a full-grown adult, with his mother begging to get ahold of him. "Don't be foolish woman. Now off with your nonsense. We will try to locate your Pedro." "Geraldo." (Viramontes, 1995, 74). By not even caring to learn the young child's name, the officer shows just how often this incident happens, where children are taken away from their families. He says a random Spanish name, implying that they are all the same, and will all have the same inevitable tragic ending.

After several years of missing her son, the woman emigrates from her home country in Central America to the U.S. looking for a better life. She left as she could not envision her life back home without him. "Without Geraldo, this is not my home: the earth beneath it, not my country. This is why I have to leave." (Viramontes, 1995, 75).

The woman, after arriving at the U.S., mistakes an immigrant child there for Geraldo, who happens to be Macky. She takes him and Sonya in, and they even go to the café. As the police officers arrive at the café, the woman takes the child and tries to run away, trying to escape what already once happened to her before – losing her beloved son.

She jumps from the table, grabs Geraldo by the wrist, his sister dragged along because, like her, she refuses to release his hand. Their lips are mouthing words she can't hear, can't comprehend. Run, Run is all she can think to do, Run through the hallway, out to the alley, Run because they will never take him away again. (Viramontes, 1995, 78)

Sonya, who holds on tight to Macky, is dragged along with him as the woman tries to escape from the officers. The word "run" starts with a capital letter in every instance, emphasizing how hard she is trying to run away, as it is the only thing she can think of in that moment. She does not want her "child" to be taken away from her again. She has suffered the same thing before in El Salvador, and tries to escape. "Although she has escaped the violence of El Salvador immigrating to America, she is only recolonized within another economy of violence." (Swyt, 1998, 199).

However, the ending is not as she hoped, as the final incident, which shifted from the third person to the first-person perspective, shows how after several threats from both the mother and the officer, the mother is presumably shot in the head.

I am laughing, howling at their stupidity because they should know by now that I will never let my son go. And then I hear something crunching like broken glass against my forehead and I am blinded by the liquid darkness. But I hold onto his hand. That I can feel, you see, I'll never let go. Because we are going home. My son and I. (Viramontes, 1995, 79).

This being the last paragraph in “The Cariboo Café” shows the cruel reality of immigrants living across the border. There are several ways to interpret the last line in the narrative, but one of the main ways the line “because we are going home” can be seen as is the mother being murdered holding the boy she believed to be her son, which was her final wish, or even the mother and son dying together, being direct victims of the migration officers present in the borderland, justifying the constant fear each immigrant character had of “la migra”, which was present from the very beginning of the narrative. “The narratives come together in the “double zero place,” and although the frayed edges cross momentarily, “going home” is not a resolution but instead a deferral. Sonya’s inability to trace her way home becomes an allegory of the plight of the “displaced people” that meet in the Cariboo café.” (Swyt, 1998, 199).

Throughout the narrative, the characters live in a state of exile and displacement. From the American woman who had to leave her country looking for a better future, to Sonya and Macky who also suffer the consequences of immigration and were displaced due to losing their apartment key, to even the cook, who suffered in silence because of his late son.

Each character in this story exists in a state of painful displacement: a “refugee woman” whose five year old son, Geraldo, vanished in El Salvador; a cook whose son, JoJo, was killed in Vietnam; and two children, Sonya and Macky, who have lost their apartment key and their way home. From their various sites of dislocation, these precariously balanced lives interpret war, death, and destruction. (Swyt, 1998, 196)

Overall, “The Cariboo Café” portrays how living in the borderland for immigrants means living in fear. It means they have to often leave behind their families and friends in forceful exiles, looking for a better future because of their living situation in their home country, but risking never seeing them again because of the strict border patrols. The

borderland is the area where immigrants and Americans coexist and interact, but also face tension, violence, and repression.

5. Conclusion

As seen throughout this study, borders are much more than lines dividing territories and communities. From the very beginning in America, these lines marked a clear separation from those who were insiders, and those who were outsiders. From the time of the colonization of America, the western border created a frontier from the uncivilized society settled on the other side of the line. When arriving at the unknown land that was America, the colonizers created this frontier to seek protection from the presumed savagery of the natives, and this concept has prevailed until present time, where the border is used by insiders as protection from the outside.

When imposing a border, however, it is often defied and rejected, as seen in cases such as the Blackfoot natives. The notion that borderlines are created to bring political order and security is nothing but utopic, as the distinction is unnatural, causing problems as what the characters in King's "Borders" experienced. Nonetheless, the concept of the borderland seen in the southern border of the United States brings a different sense of perception. The break is not as artificial, as it compromises the entire area surrounding the borderline. There is not a clear cut between territories, as seen in Viramontes' "The Cariboo Café" and Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*. There is further cultural exchange between the territories and interaction, although it is an area of violence and tension because of this.

King's "Borders" and Viramontes' "The Cariboo Café" both have this concept in common, the idea that the borders imposed around the United States bring negative consequences to non-Americans. In King's narrative, the borderline between Canada and the United States separated Native American settlements, dividing a community that once coexisted into two, split by an artificial line that would not include them, making it harder to cross from one side to the other, as their nationality – Blackfoot – is not valid according to the border patrols. In Viramontes' story, on the other hand, the borderland is presented as a land of tension for illegal immigrants.

To conclude, when creating borders, there are often two variations that emerge: borderlines and borderlands. Borderlines are nothing more than the idyllic idea of bringing political order to the world, but the reality is not quite like that. As seen with the Blackfoot natives and King's narrative, they are also rejected, defied and separate communities because of the unnatural division they follow. Moreover, borderlands

include the area surrounding it too, viewing the border as an open wound. It is not a clean-cut division, as it is also made up of the territory around it, and, therefore, the people living there too. It allows interaction, communication, but brings fear and tension with it as well. All of this supports the idea the borders are not mere lines of separation, as the concept itself implies much more than that.

6. Bibliography

Adelman, Jeremy, and Stephen Aron. "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History." *The American Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 3, [Oxford University Press, American Historical Association], 1999, pp. 814–41, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2650990>.

Alurista. "El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán." *Documents of Latin American and Latino Art*, 1969, icaa.mfah.org/s/es/item/803398#c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-1673%2C0%2C5895%2C3299.

Andrews, Jennifer, and Priscilla L. Walton. "Rethinking Canadian and American Nationality: Indigeneity and the 49th Parallel in Thomas King." *American Literary History*, vol. 18, no. 3, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 600–17, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3876725>.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = La Frontera*. 1st ed., Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987.

Broughton, Chad. "The World at the u.s.-Mexican Border." *Contexts*, vol. 9, no. 1, [Sage Publications, Inc., American Sociological Association], 2010, pp. 68–70, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41960085>.

Davidson, Arnold E., et al. *Border Crossings: Thomas King's Cultural Inversions*. University of Toronto Press, 2003, <https://doi.org/10.3138/9781442671539>. Accessed 11 May 2022.

Franco, Dean. "Re-Placing the Border in Ethnic American Literature." *Cultural Critique*, no. 50, 2002, pp. 104–34, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1354690>. Accessed 2 May 2022.

"Frontier Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes | Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.Com." *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/frontier?q=frontier. Accessed 2 Apr. 2022.

Gutiérrez-Jones, Carl. "RETHINKING THE BORDERLANDS: BETWEEN LITERARY AND LEGAL DISCOURSE." *Dispositio*, vol. 16, no. 41, 1991, pp. 45–60, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41491404>. Accessed 2 May 2022.

Gruber, Eva, editor. *Thomas King: Works and Impact*. Boydell & Brewer, 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.cttn34mb>. Accessed 11 May 2022.

Hannerz, Ulf. "Borders." *International Social Science Journal*, vol. 49, no. 154, 2010, pp. 537–48. Crossref, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2451.1997.tb00043.x>.

Juricek, John T. "American Usage of the Word 'Frontier' from Colonial Times to Frederick Jackson Turner." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 110,

no. 1, American Philosophical Society, 1966, pp. 10–34, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/985999>.

King, Thomas. “Borders.” *One Good Story, That One*. 2nd ed. Toronto: Harper Perennial Canada, 1993. 131–47.

Mayer, Evelyn P. “Beyond Border Binaries: Borderlines, Borderlands, and In-Betweenness in Thomas King’s Short Story ‘Borders.’” *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, no. 43, 2011, p. 67. Crossref, <https://doi.org/10.7202/1009455ar>.

Mujcinovic, Fatima. “Multiple Articulations of Exile in US Latina Literature: Confronting Exilic Absence and Trauma.” *MELUS*, vol. 28, no. 4, 2003, pp. 167–86, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3595305>. Accessed 2 May 2022.

Muñoz-Hunt, Toni. “Aztlán: From Mythos to Logos in the American Southwest.” *Borders in Globalization Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2019, pp. 54–65. Crossref, <https://doi.org/10.18357/bigr11201919041>.

Nischik, Reingard M., editor. *The Canadian Short Story: Interpretations*. NED-New edition, Boydell & Brewer, 2007, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt169wdqk>. Accessed 11 May 2022.

Sharp, Paul F. “Blackfeet of the Border: One People, Divided.” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, vol. 20, no. 1, Montana Historical Society, 1970, pp. 2–15, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4517429>.

Solana, Vivian. “A Woman is Stronger than our State”: *Performing Sovereignty on the Margins of the State*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2011, <https://vav.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/vav/article/view/12017>

Swyt, Wendy. “Hungry Women: Borderlands Mythos in Two Stories by Helena Maria Viramontes.” *MELUS*, vol. 23, no. 2, 1998, pp. 189–201, <https://doi.org/10.2307/468019>. Accessed 23 Apr. 2022.

Turner, Frederick Jackson. “The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Frontier in American History, by Frederick Jackson Turner.” *The Project Gutenberg eBook, The Frontier in American History, by Frederick Jackson Turner*, www.gutenberg.org/files/22994/22994-h/22994-h.htm. Accessed 11 May 2022.

Viramontes, Helena Maria, “The Cariboo Cafe.” *The Moths and Other Stories*. 1985. Houston: Arte Publico P, 1995. 65-79.

Viramontes, Helena María, and Carmen Flys-Junquera. “Helena María Viramontes: Social and Political Perspectives of a Chicana Writer.” *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*, vol. 5, 2001, pp. 223–38, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20641560>. Accessed 30 Apr. 2022.