

## Con Tem p lation

with temple/with the temple/within the temple/the temple within

*I did not intend these notes to turn into a letter to you, the others who shared this week's experience (workshop is such an inadequate word) but that is what came, so here it is...*

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the name and the flying thing: sparrow.

Cambio de sigñal.

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It comes it comes through humbleness, this thing we call the poem. We need something from it and it—does it need anything from us? It needs to be allowed to go its way, a request our hand could refuse, as we can refuse our natural world the same. The energy of the poem is demanding. Lorca says we must invoke and wrestle with our *duende*. No soft inspiration, no amused inspiration...

contemplation involves everyone  
there is no separation  
animals are involved  
insects are involved.

pages turning  
the air stirs  
& the world dies  
& the world dies  
living harmoniously

She has so many voices you hear only none

\*and if she were a book, it would mostly be footnotes

Naropa is located on Arapahoe Avenue  
so where are the Arapaho?

*What I take away from our shared experience, more than the notes I took throughout class (which are full of gems of wisdom), is a sense of having experienced something sacred with all of you, something which now connects us in a way that words alone could not have.*

a reconnection to the land and the healing power of language, activism, awareness, and community

Understood as a collective endeavor  
The rituals they become a collective form of action/  
what happens when we don't remember

the people who lived here until 150 years ago  
the massacre that drove them away, and how their  
descendants have begun to find some healing

yo vengo en mi conmigo  
hasta no soy nada  
como estos manos parido

in praise of animals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects  
*(contemplation is a collective endeavor)*

"caw""yip""howl""growl""bleat""yowl""grunt""squeal""squeak"  
"rattle""hoot""crow""scream""hiss""rumble""sing""twitter"  
"chirp""flutter""burp""chatter""low""bray""bark""neigh"  
"rustle""tick""click""caw"

\*and if they were a book, it would mostly be footnotes

In 1858 gold was discovered near Pike's Peak. Settlers poured into Colorado hoping to get rich. But the [Arapaho](#), their allies the [Cheyenne](#), and other native peoples already lived here. For [some politicians](#), the answer to this "problem" was simple -- get rid of the Indians. The Arapaho tried to remain at peace, but tensions built. U.S. Major [Edward W. Wynkoop](#) invited the Arapaho and Cheyenne to come to a site on Sand Creek, about 100 miles southeast of Denver, to negotiate peace. But Wynkoop was called away to Kansas, and [Colonel John Chivington](#), an outspoken advocate of wiping out all Indians, moved in and opened fire on the Sand Creek encampment, mostly women and children because the men were out hunting. Some soldiers, including [Silas S. Soule](#), were so horrified that they refused to fire. Chivington's men [mutilated the bodies of their victims](#) and put them on public display in Denver, applauded by the [Rocky Mountain News](#). Congress held [hearings](#) and issued a report condemning Chivington, who was court-martialed, but not [convicted](#). Soule was murdered not long after he testified at the hearings. The Cheyenne and Arapaho left Colorado for [Oklahoma](#), [Wyoming](#), and [Montana](#).

Despite many obstacles, the Arapaho and Cheyenne are [reconnecting](#) and working to preserve their [language](#), their [culture](#) and the [memory of what happened](#) to them. They hold [annual runs](#) for spiritual healing from the effects of the Sand Creek trauma. In 2006, they had a ceremony honoring [Silas Soule](#). In 2007, the site of the massacre was dedicated as a [national monument](#). Some of the Sand Creek victims' bodies ended up in the Army Medical Museum, which transferred them to the Smithsonian Institute. In 1989, the [Smithsonian finally agreed to return them](#) to their people.

[Simon Ortiz](#) evokes both pain and possibility in his poem "From Sand Creek" (from [the book](#) with the same name):

*This America  
has been a burden  
of steel and mad  
death,  
but, look now,  
there are flowers  
and new grass  
and a spring wind  
rising  
from Sand Creek.*

\*and if we were a book, we would mostly be footnotes

Con los huecos de mis lagrimas  
en la montana que es yo  
de los espacios entre los contrarios  
yo nado

[ within mountains ]

the lighting of the sage

listen with accuracy  
hear with accuracy

time  
versus the environment

destruction/construction

loss/redemption

collaboration

indigenous: idea throughout—being of service is one of the guidelines

energy has direction

you are empowered by being of service

ego/eco(home) = same = save

it is our humanness that is at stake

perspective

[  
the ancient mists of...

connecting ]

*cambio de signio*  
significance

know the sparrow  
[sunlight & pines]

*We were asked at the beginning of our first day together to learn to listen as accurately as possible. This focus on listening rather than producing words--although I did produce words all week long, maybe even more than if we had been given daily writing assignments--was a relief in the middle of the inundation of words I experience each day of SWP. It's odd to feel like you're drowning in something you love--not sure if it's a good thing or a bad thing. Last week I referred to it as "marinating" in words, in poetry. This week only our contemplation together kept my head above water.*

devoted to listening to one particular  
beginning, something moving under current,  
abajo del agua  
all through humidity, everything enticing us not to be honest  
we come crying  
to the poem

I have yet learned  
how to play my resonance

the purpose of dissonance  
is music  
is unity

as one  
made of  
many

**Sa ta na ma**/balances both hemispheres of the  
brain/dissonance/infinity/life/death/rebirth/infinity/life/death/  
rebirth

...we make a pact: we enter the temple that is inner and we look at the horror on the altar, kiss its feet, throw catalpa flowers in its hair. It is the terrible death-lover inside of us: the one who lives with the knowledge that the other side is nowhere if not utterly, invisibly here...

aquifer

liquid veins

ripe blue

course deep

drive force

through granite walls

black with night

gold with crystal

cut

smooth

form new thoughts

soften generations

driven forces seek

form world

earth's deep water

runs beneath

opens new doors

clears our roots

to sprout new trees

Compounded/layered/dissonance/many voices to come to truth

## Perspective

*One of the monuments at Little Bighorn  
honors the fallen US Army soldiers who  
“cleared the district of the Yellowstone  
of hostile Indians.”*

*Hostile? Of course they were.  
Wouldn't you be?*

*We came from Europe, “discovered” their land  
drove them from it,  
gave them cheap trinkets  
and smallpox-infested blankets.*

*When we were the ones who suddenly experienced  
people from another land  
another religion  
coming to “our” land  
and killing some of us  
we called them terrorists  
went to their land  
and hunted them down.*

*I suspect they call us “hostile”, too.*

*“Your mothers flesh sticks in my teeth”*

courage  
for our work to stop the violence  
courage  
for a free presence

Who is “our”? What is the hour? I interrogate *We* with a lice brush, but I permit her to be the confused traffic circle in the middle of the piece. Many days, I wish I was a gorilla who could pick through the fur of fellow-gorillas for bugs and maybe immediately eat them. This seems a much simpler commerce than words and meaning and death-bridges.

doorway  
lifestyle  
exist  
acknowledge  
the ancestors

*lessons from indigenous peoples:*

anger, ask for guidance  
African idea, become one of the ancestors  
Kaluli people, crying, highest form of communication with the gods  
Chinos, a people of service.

create  
for

*Our time together, and particularly our silence and wordless vocalizations together fed my soul and made my voice stronger when I did speak. I do not sing alone, and yet in the circle of our community-within-a-community I felt moved to share a song with you all, and was blessed by your receiving of it. Here are the words again, for you each to carry away with you:*

*Circle 'round for freedom  
Circle 'round for peace  
For all of us imprisoned  
Circle for release*

*Circle for the planet  
Circle for each soul  
For the children of our children  
Keep the circle whole.*

*(Various versions are available; I know it as Hymn #155 in the Unitarian Universalist hymnal, "Singing the Living Tradition".)*

If you are in a mode of being of service, then...could we be happy in love and free in welcoming difficulty? We are used to a sense of isolation. What if more offerings to the greater were standard...part of awakening dependent co-arising!

Being of service. Energy has direction. Where are we headed?



Our time, a time of danger,

It is hard to listen.

*Listen.*

We are taught a way learning  
that covers up the truth because  
someone always wants to be in  
power/It is a silencing before  
even one, single word is spoken.

**Devoid of emotion  
Machine**

My grief resides on my right side  
Travels deep into my rib cage makes me awake  
I want what I can not have  
When I weep it dissolves

the ritual of taking sea shells to the tallest mountain top to honor the cycle of water

Baile de chino

Everything we heard here  
from our own obsession  
a locked closet  
door closed, yet the universe moves toward  
justice  
“que cresta es” a Chilean skirt also  
moves toward justice

And so to keep the heart in the center of the poem, so that the writer's heart and the poem's heart are the same and the seamless between art and one's own pulse is reinstated. Every day, every act of poeming, every act of conTEMPLation.

*listen with curiosity*

*sounds shapes changing*

*time people*

*As I listened deeply to all of you, I heard much of myself in your words, and was reminded again that we--all human beings--are more alike than we are different. May we keep the circle whole.*

*Bowing in gratitude and love,*

*Ann, Cecilia, Christopher, Diana, Emily, Hannah, Jacob, Jonas, Jordan, Kelly,*

*Kimberlie, Marcia, Sara, Suzanne*