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## Indigenous Ecofeminism and Literature of Matrilineage in Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms*\*

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Tubylczy ekofeminizm i literatura matrylinearności  
w powieści Lindy Hogan *Solar Storms*

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**Abstract.** This article focuses on indigenous ecofeminism and literature of matrilineage in Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* (1995), a novel of environmental protest and indigenous "survivance," a portmanteau word from "survival" and "resistance." It analyzes the ability of inter-female bonding in mending the protagonist's broken connections with her communal and natural environment. It depicts a gynocratic community in which women enjoy a pivotal position as leaders, storytellers, and secret keepers of healing traditions. In this novel, indigenous feminism intersects with ecofeminism, highlighting woman–nature symbolic connections as well as woman's role in ecological conservation.

**Keywords:** ecofeminism, indigenous feminism, gynocracy, Linda Hogan

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**Abstrakt.** Artykuł dotyczy kwestii ekofeminizmu tubylczego i literatury matrylinearnej w powieści Lindy Hogan *Solar Storms*. Autorka analizuje zdolność tworzenia więzi między kobietami w kontekście naprawiania zerwanych więzi bohaterki z jej środowiskiem społecznym i naturalnym. Przedstawia gynokratyczną społeczność, w której kobiety zajmują kluczową pozycję jako przywódczynie, gawędziarki czy szamanki. W powieści feminizm tubylczy krzyżuje się z ekofeminizmem, podkreślając symboliczne powiązania kobieta–natura, a także rolę kobiety w ochronie środowiska.

**Słowa kluczowe:** ekofeminizm, feminizm tubylczy, gynokracja, Linda Hogan

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This article, which reflects on indigenous ecofeminism and literature of matrilineage in Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* (1995), focuses on the ability of female bonding to restore broken connections within a fictional First Nations community in Canada. *Solar Storms*, by Native American ecofeminist writer and environmental justice activist Linda Hogan, is a narrative of "survivance," survival and resistance, in which the female protagonist, Angel, reconstructs her identity in a gynocratic indigenous community. Her matrilineal mentors, grandmother Bush, great-grandmother Agnes, and great-great-grandmother Dora-Rouge, re-enter her life as she stands at the threshold of adulthood. The quartet embark on a quest journey where they expect reconciliation between Angel and her abusive mother on the one hand, and between Angel and her motherland on the other. Her healing requires a holistic vision where human beings respect the bonds with each other, with animals, plants, rivers, mountains, and all surrounding natural elements. This rite of passage involves the protagonist's microcosmic reconnection with her matrilineal mentors to reach out for her abusive mother, as well as her reconnection with the community and the environment at a larger macrocosmic scale. The article is divided into four major sections, starting with a theoretical overview of the intersection of indigenous feminism with ecofeminism, followed by the study of Hogan's *Solar Storms* as a relevant instance of literature of matrilineage, a narrative of "survivance," as well as a narrative of healing and empowerment.

## 2. INDIGENOUS (ECO)FEMINISM

Indigenous feminism is an intersectional branch of feminism that pays attention to issues of gender, race, decolonization, and sovereignty. Many indigenous communities are gynocratic (they bestow authority to women) and matrilineal (they trace ancestry through the maternal line). Indigenous women tell the stories and hold a focal position in the organization of their communities; their status reflects

a universe in harmony with the feminine principles of “peace, tolerance, sharing, relationship, balance, harmony, and just distribution of goods” (Allen, 1986, p. 16). With colonization, however, women’s roles were reduced to childbearing, rearing, and domestic chores because the invaders “could not tolerate peoples who allowed women to occupy prominent positions and decision-making capacity at every level of society” (Allen, 1986, p. 3). Some white women, who were taken prisoners by indigenous tribes, wrote captivity narratives, such as Mary Rowlandson who admits that no man “ever offered the least abuse of unchastity to [her] in word or action” (qtd. in Baym et al., 2003, p. 337). Some women remained with their captors because they enjoyed the egalitarian aspect of indigenous communities. This fact certainly disturbed the white patriarchal system, whose perpetuation would rest on the devaluation of alternative systems. Kim Anderson (2000) contends that:

The Europeans who first arrived in Canada were shocked by the position of Aboriginal women in their respective societies. It was not long before they realized that, in order to dominate the land and the people that were occupying it, they needed to disempower the women. Indigenous systems that allocated power to women were incompatible with the kind of colonial power dynamics that would be necessary to maintain colonial power. (qtd. in Baym et al., 2003, p. 34)

The demonization of indigenous women hence became one of the solutions to maintain control not only over the indigenous populations, but also over white women. With the redefinition of gender roles, colonization has shaken the foundation of communal structure. Therefore, in contemporary indigenous literatures, women are revived as sustainers of communal solidarity and agents of substantial change; they are also preservers of healing traditions, secret keepers of herbal medicines and ritual ceremonies.

Indigenous feminism intersects with ecofeminism, which is a sub-branch of ecocriticism<sup>1</sup> defined by Noël Sturgeon as “a movement that makes connections between environmentalisms and feminisms;” she argues “that the ideologies that authorize injustices based on gender, race and class are related to the ideologies that sanction the exploitation and degradation of the environment” (1997, p. 23). The first ecofeminists have called attention to woman’s ability for ecological conservation owing to the existence of woman/nature symbolic connections since “Mother Nature”

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<sup>1</sup> Raising the readers’ awareness about the environment has become an important literary concern since ecological catastrophes are presently threatening humanity. Cheryl Glotfelty explains that “ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary studies” because “literature does not float above the material world in some aesthetic ether, but rather, plays a part in an immensely complex global system, in which energy, matter, *and ideas* interact” (1996, p. 16, italics in the original). Indigenous literature lends itself to ecocritical reading since it reflects a biocentric worldview that, as opposed to the Western anthropocentric one, views an intrinsic value in all forms of life (animals, plants, etc.).

and “Mother Earth” are usually depicted in feminine and even sexual terms (penetration, fertilization, rape, etc.). This approach has later been criticized as essentialist; modern ecofeminists rely on an intersectional approach to analyze male’s nature-culture dichotomization in order to exploit both women and nonhuman beings. Along Françoise d’Eaubonne, the pioneer of ecofeminism, they believe that man’s control over the land has led to surplus production and environmental destruction while his control over women has led to surplus birth and subordination (1980, p. 64). In this regard, ecofeminists and indigenous feminists find a common ground in the rejection of an established hierarchical, patriarchal system, dominated by the hegemonic white man or the oppressed/oppressive colored man. Contemporary ecofeminists take an activist stance to end injustice, not only based on gender, but also on race and class.

Hogan, a pioneer ecofeminist activist, considers that the patriarchal system is responsible for both the subjugation of woman and land. A powerful female archetype prevails in her novels where women constitute the backbone of gynocratic communities. *Solar Storms* describes a woman-centered community “in which matrilocality, matrifocality, matrilinearity, maternal control of household goods and resources [...] were and are present and active features of traditional tribal life” (Allen, 1986, pp. 3–4).<sup>2</sup> The novel nostalgically reconstitutes the pre-colonial indigenous culture in which women used to have important positions, not only as bearers of children and weavers of communal ties, but also, like Bush with her hunting and fishing skills, as food providers. It also highlights the importance of inter-female bonding, interconnecting Angel’s fight for the continuity of her matrilineage with her fight for the conservation of the environment.

One major feature of indigenous (eco)feminism, as depicted in *Solar Storms*, is the image and role attributed to men. The novel celebrates Angel’s union with Tommy in most romantic terms, and men like Tommy, Husk, and Tulik have good relations with nature, mostly playing the role of ecological conservationists. Tulik, for instance, teaches Angel how to harvest plants in a sustainable manner. He cuts some of them and pulls some others with their roots, “but only if there were enough left to survive” (Hogan, 1995, p. 260). He sometimes speaks and sings to the plants while touching them carefully. Angel watches him closely, observes the germination and growing of plants, studies the environments in which they grow, and the animals that eat them. Hogan represents the stance of ecofeminism in “healing” the “artificial separations” and “challenging existing power structures” of “culture/nature, mind/body, black/white, man/woman, intellect/emotion” (Dreese, 2002, p. 14). She shows that, albeit the privileged position she gives to women, she is not sexist.

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<sup>2</sup> In this quote, the concepts of “matrilocality,” “matrifocality,” and “matrilinearity” refer respectively to the fact of residing within the mother’s family, the fact of placing motherhood in a pivotal position, and the fact of tracing descent through the maternal line (*Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary*, 2020).

### 3. *SOLAR STORMS*: AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE LITERATURE OF MATRILINEAGE

In the beginning of her rite of passage, Angel returns to Adam's Rib, a fictional place on the Great Lakes boundaries between the United States of America and Canada. The land/body nexus that appears in the toponym "Adam's Rib" confers a symbolic importance to the land by alluding to the creation of Eve from Adam's rib. Angel is returning to her mother (Eve) and her land (Adam's Rib), hence blurring the distinction between the mother and the land. By referring to the story of Genesis through the name "Adam's Rib," Hogan shows the image of women in Biblical narratives as opposed to their image in indigenous gynocratic communities. She subverts the secondary role attributed to women in this religious scripture, as mouthed by Michael Horse, a character in her first novel *Mean Spirit*. He tells a priest, "I am writing a new chapter of the Bible" (Hogan, 1990, p. 273) in which he decries man's domination over other living beings who are equal in the natural order.

In *Solar Storms*, Angel discovers that women in Adam's Rib are the "Abandoned Ones," mostly mixed-blood women who were procreated by the rape of their mothers and grandmothers by white fur trappers. She learns that when "the land was worn out," white men "moved on to what hadn't yet been destroyed, leaving their women and children behind, as if they too were used-up animals" (Hogan, 1995, p. 28). The plight of these women was tightly connected to the plight of their land; white men exploited and abandoned both of them as soon as they were worn-out. The two have developed a strong bond as the "land spoke what a woman must do to survive" (p. 204). Angel's healing depends on mending the ties with both women and the land. She says, "I began to love the women as I began to love the land [...] All of us together had found something back in our lives" (p. 314). In ecofeminist terms, the oppression of women is related to the exploitation of nature, and women are perhaps particularly sensitive to environmental problems.

In *Solar Storms*, Hogan seems to follow the traditional "homing-in plot," which William Bevis (1987) contrasts with the mainstream bildungsroman plot of "leaving home." He identifies a three-part plot pattern in three Native American Renaissance novels: Navarre Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn* (1968), Leslie Mormon Silko's *Ceremony* (1977), and James Welch's *The Death of Jim Loney* (1979). First, a protagonist who has been away comes home and recovers his/her identity. Then, a respectful traditional elder helps in the resolution of the plot. Finally, the protagonist's fate is strongly determined by his/her reconnection to the land, the community, and the past. The "homing-in plot" of these novels suggests that indigenous identity does not only consist in discovering oneself, but

also in reaching out for a “transpersonal self” (Bevis, 1987, p. 585). As such, the traumatized protagonist returns home for bereavement within the community whose collective ailment is relieved through ritual ceremonies. *Solar Storms* abides by the same “homing-in” tradition. In the beginning of the novel, Angel is a quiet teenager who bears the burden of childhood maternal abuse and mutilation. She recalls the day when the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) took her away from her violent mother and placed her in foster homes. She intimates, “all I had was a life on paper stored in file cabinets, a series of foster homes. I’d been lost from my own people, taken from my mother” (Hogan, 1995, pp. 26–27). Notwithstanding her mother’s abuse, Angel decides to return home, looking for her in a critical phase of her identity construction, at the age of seventeen. If she wants to reconstruct her shattered identity, she must travel back to her past because:

Failure to know your mother, that is, your position and its attendant traditions, history, and place in the scheme of things, is failure to remember your significance, your reality, your right relationship to earth and society. It is the same thing as being lost, isolated, abandoned, self-estranged, and alienated from your own life. (Allen, 1986, p. 210)

Angel needs a rite of passage to adulthood, and it should happen inside her cultural and ecological environment. With her matrilineal mentors, she goes on a quest journey, and when they arrive in mother Hannah’s abode, they find her physically and mentally ill, flung into alcoholism and sexual exploitation. As Angel comes to the realization that the invaders have destroyed her mother and her land, she laments, “my beginning was Hannah’s beginning, one of broken lives, gone animals, trees felled and kindled. Our beginnings were intricately bound up in the history of the land” (Hogan, 1995, p. 96). She learns that her mother was raped by white invaders when she was a girl. Her “*skin was a garment of scars,*” full of “*burns and incisions,*” as if “*someone had written on her [...] the signatures of torturers*” (p. 99, italics in the original). The shaman who tries to heal Hannah’s “soul loss” explains that her sickness reaches back to the time of genocide perpetrated against her people.

Hannah’s case is appropriate for an ecofeminist analysis since her rape coincides with the depletion of the resources of her land. She is the outcome of “fragments and pieces left behind by fur traders, soldiers, priests, and schools” (p. 67). Angel realizes that her mother was abusive because she “was part of her and she hated herself” (p. 345). She also understands that her mother’s abuse is the outcome of the intergenerational trauma suffered by her people. The cyanide odor of rotten carcasses emanating from Hannah’s body symbolizes this intergenerational trauma. It comes from her mother Loretta, a descendant of “the people who became

so hungry they ate the poisoned carcasses of deer that the settlers left out for the wolves” (p. 39). This example shows that trauma and abuse are passed down from one generation to another, and that Loretta “wasn’t the original sin.” Loretta had abused and abandoned Hannah; Hannah repeated the same family story with her daughter Angel. Loretta and Hannah are abused and abusive women, both victims and victimizers. Trauma goes through their “cell-deep memory” (p. 137), but Angel wants to break the chain of violence. Significantly, her body does not smell the cyanide odor of rotten carcasses.

Hannah dies just after her reconciliation with Angel. While the daughter prepares her mother for burial, she discovers the burn scars on her skin. She wraps her body in newspapers, realizing how appropriate it is “to place her on words of war, obituaries, stories of carnage and misery, and true stories that had been changed to lies. [...] Some of the words stuck to her body, dark ink, but [she] did not wash them off; it was a suitable skin.” She describes her mother’s body as “a body under siege, a battleground” (p. 253), and believes it should be covered with a historical proof of the massacre. Despite her childhood reminiscences of an abusive mother, therefore, Angel meets her with compassion. Silvia Schultersmandl argues that Angel is not affected by the norms of the “phallogocentric culture dominating women, ethnic minorities, and nonhuman nature” (2005, p. 73). She is exceptionally able to forgive the abuse of her mother, transcending the “patriarchal laws that advocate maternal guilt and bad motherhood” (2005, p. 74). Her forgiveness reflects her newly gained female agency, as well as her confrontation with patriarchal norms and expectations.

In many indigenous novels, such as Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn* (1968), the eventual death of a character entails rebirth following the natural cycle of Spring after Winter. In *Solar Storms*, Angel’s discovery of a baby half-sister near her mother’s deathbed illustrates this cyclical nature. She assumes her responsibility in raising her half-sister, and with this mission at hand, she feels revived. She gives her two names: “Our Future” in the indigenous language and “Aurora” in English; both names herald the dawn of a new age for the community. “Aurora borealis,” also called Northern Lights, is a natural phenomenon that appears in the northern parts of the globe, especially after a solar storm. Angel compares the aurora borealis phenomenon to the spider web of matrilineage, to which she must contribute by raising the baby who would become the new custodian of cultural heritage, free from maternal abuse and cultural trauma. Angel and Tommy take Aurora to a tribal ceremony, holding her high and showing her to the community. She becomes “the child of many parents” (Hogan 1995, p. 264) as all members of the community contribute to her care, and the absence of Aurora’s biological mother is replaced by the presence of her numerous surrogate mothers. The responsibility of her care unifies the community for which she thenceforward represents cultural revival.



#### 4. *SOLAR STORMS*: A NARRATIVE OF “SURVIVANCE”

Native American novelist and critic Gerald Vizenor argues that the danger of extinction motivates indigenous “survivance,” a portmanteau word from “survival” and “resistance.” He uses the term “survivance” to describe indigenous peoples’ lives through centuries of pressure and oppression. He attempts to overhaul the vicious effects of quincentenary genocidal policies on indigenous inhabitants, emphasizing survival without victimization. Relying on *The American Heritage Dictionary*, which explains the use of the prefix “-ance” in expressing an “action,” he defines “survivance” as “an active sense of presence, the continuance of stories” which “are renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry” (1994, p. 7). He considers indigenous writers as “postindian warriors” who practice writing as resistance; they “encounter their enemies with the same courage in literature as their ancestors once evinced on horses” (p. 4). Their storytelling is an act of “survivance” that questions the master narratives of settler colonialism, in which indigenous inhabitants are victimized and stereotyped as Vanishing Indians, Noble Savages, first ecologists, brave warriors, and last survivors of a vanishing race.

In *Solar Storms*, Angel starts her peaceful protest following grandmother Bush who writes newspaper reports on the crimes perpetrated against her people. She is “a truth-teller, a journalist” who wants to get photographs to *The Nation* or *The New York Times* (Hogan, 1995, p. 308). She shows the role of photojournalism in particular, and writing in general, in informing the world about indigenous peoples’ resistance. With their testimonies, they not only defend their contemporary tribesmen, but also take revenge for their ancestors who suffered and died without witness. Through writing, Bush and Angel succeed in rallying activists from other tribes to their cause. Arlie, a “master strategist” (Hogan, 1995, p. 308), comes to their rescue; he follows Sitting Bull and Geronimo as leadership models to become a leader that indigenous peoples need in their contemporary struggle against mainstream oppression.

Bush and Angel, in addressing Euro-American audiences through their own media, are mouthpieces for the author who seeks to change her readers’ attitudes towards indigenous and environmental issues. Angel describes the difficulty with which Bush types her reports: “The keys were hard to push down; I could see it took effort, but she was going to tell the world what happened” (Hogan, 1995, p. 289). Albeit a difficult task, writing would become an efficient weapon of resistance in the hands of Bush, who also teaches Angel the art of sewing traditional tunics for the protestors against the James Bay Project. Sewing, like weaving, stands for female alliance and creativity; it symbolically helps Angel in piecing together the fragments of her identity. Angel, Bush, and fellow activists practice the nonviolent



or passive resistance championed by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., involving methods of protest and persuasion that use slogans, posters, caricatures, music, radio, and television. In her analysis of resistance through the act of sewing, Christine Jespersen names it “sustainable resistance” (2010, p. 294). The idea of barricading the railroad tracks is inspired from the indigenous creation story of the Beaver. The Beaver took trees, pebbles, and clay to lay sticks across the water (a kind of dam) on which creatures would walk; he made a covenant of mutual respect with the human being, but the latter broke it (Hogan, 1995, p. 304). While the Beaver sustainably built a dam to help other creatures, BEEVCO, the fictional corporation that stands for Hydro-Quebec corporation, is building a dam to change the course of water, destroy the ecosystem and the creatures that dwell in it. BEEVCO workers describe the pacific protestors as “eco-terrorists;” Angel observes, “reversing the truth, they would call us terrorists” (Hogan, 1995, p. 283). Those who shield behind the “metal armor” of their machines are convinced that destroying the land is not a problem as long as there is material advantage. Barbara J. Cook explains:

Although Hogan acknowledges the possibility of violence by the tribe, she depicts a community that returns to wholeness through its nonviolent fight in a struggle that enables its members to respect themselves again. In the process they recover the spirituality of their ancestors as they remember the old stories and songs. (2003, p. 49)

For Hogan, violence should not characterize the mindset of those who struggle for the protection of the land. In an interview with Laura Coltelli, she states that she is “against violence” and that “war and peace” have always been her “occupation and preoccupation” (1990, p. 79). In *Solar Storms*, the police, equipped with rifles and machine guns, usually turn peaceful demonstrations into violent riots. Angel concedes that she was once on the edge of succumbing to violence, but she refrained; she had realized how deleterious the act would be on her spiritual balance. She shows that indigenous people, who do not resort to violence, prove their elevated moral qualities and affirm their role as custodians of the Earth.

Hence, Hogan – like her protagonist – achieves “survivance” through her return to her cultural origins, and even to her traumatic past. She intimates, “our renewal often flows from loss, pain, ashes. We are like giant redwood trees, with new life springing from our fallen selves” (qtd. in Jensen, 2004, p. 122). She not only learns from her losses and pains, but also as a mixed-blood, from her position between two cultures, which allows her to be a mediator between the victim and the victimizer. This is both true for the author and many of her protagonists, including Angel in *Solar Storms*, who voice her philosophy.

### 5. *SOLAR STORMS*: A NARRATIVE OF HEALING AND EMPOWERMENT

In *Solar Storms*, Angel acquires an “inner language” by which she feels in symbiosis with the human and the nonhuman worlds. As Bush prepares the journey by collecting information from maps, Angel describes her as Marco Polo, the famous Italian cartographer. She wonders why Bush “placed so much faith in paper when she trusted nothing else about the world that had created those maps” (Hogan, 1995, p. 173). Angel uses one of these maps to find healing herbs for the ailing Agnes, but she gets lost and the latter dies. When a fragment of Bush’s torn map falls from her hands, Dora-Rouge asks her to “throw it away” (p. 173), indicating the use of maps as instruments of colonial lies. The women no longer rely on Bush’s inaccurate maps but on Dora-Rouge’s “deeper map” (p. 123) or innate comprehension of nature. With Dora-Rouge’s “deeper map,” the journey takes a mythical dimension as the relationship between women, animals, land, and water becomes more powerful. Angel says, “we went to another kind of time. [...] I was travelling backward in time into myself” (p. 64) to re-emerge “transformed, like Jonah from the belly of the whale” (p. 68). She believes “the watery paths” are “tributaries of [her] own blood” (p. 137), and she increasingly communicates with the environment until her “heart and the beat of the land” become one (p. 236).

Hogan defines Angel’s “inner language” as “a deep moving underground language,” the “currents” of which pass between the human being “and the rest of nature” (p. 57). This “inner language” between humans and nonhumans allows Angel to connect with the deep roots of her people, which reach back to the pre-colonial symbiosis between indigenous people and their natural surroundings. Strange feelings and perceptions invade her soul; she remembers all the natural connections she has lost and searched for throughout her life. She believes in a language shared by humans, animals, and plants. She also believes in “a place inside the human that spoke with the land” as her ancestors who “found direction in their dreams. They dreamed charts of land and currents of water.” Their “hunger maps” (p. 170), seen during their sleep, would lead them to the place of food. She becomes like those people “who found their ways in dreaming,” and she also learns about plants and their healing properties. For instance, she dreams of a rhizome (Fig. 1), a root that grows circles around itself, multiplying and creating new connections. Like the offshoots of a rhizome, women in Angel’s matrilineage are connected “underground, the older trees feeding the young, sending off shoots, growing” (p. 48). The eco-language of these examples shows Angel’s strong healing connection to her land and her community.

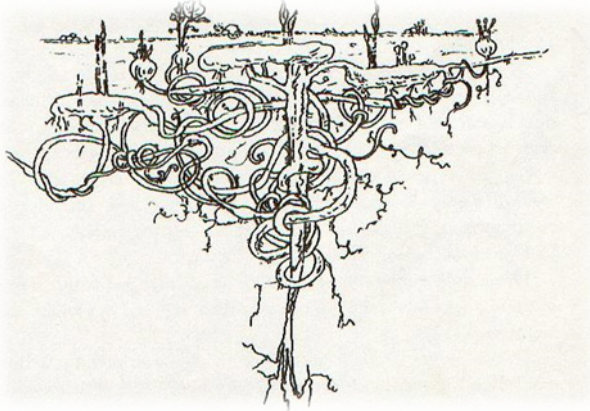


Figure 1. Rhizome (Hogan, 1995, p. 189)

Hogan believes that stories restore “broken connections” (p. 40) between the individual, the community, the land, and the animals. Grandmothers’ stories call Angel home, as they offer her model narratives for her identity construction. Grandmother Agnes says, “as in Genesis, the first *word* shaped what would follow. It was of utmost importance. It determined the kind of *world* that would be created” (p. 37, italics added). In the indigenous tradition, as in the Biblical one, the word influences the world. Angel proudly claims, “I had been empty space, and now I was finding a language, a story, to shape myself by” (p. 94). While inarticulateness has been a symptom of her alienation in the beginning of her quest, her healing has required a holistic vision where human beings respect the bonds with each other, with animals, plants, rivers, mountains and all surrounding natural elements.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Hogan’s *Solar Storms* celebrates harmonious relationships between women of different generations (Dora-Rouge, Agnes, Bush, Hannah, Angel, and Aurora) who explore “the previously unconscious bonds that have tied them to both their real as well as historical mothers and grandmothers” (Maglin, 1980, p. 257). It belongs to a “literature of matrilineage,” written by women who consecrate their intergenerational female bonding for the preservation of culture and the conservation of nature. The different generations represent women as the custodians of indigenous traditions who chaperon Angel during her rite of passage from a “rootless teenager” (Hogan, 1995, p. 25) to *Maniki*, “a true human being” (p. 347). Hogan’s novel is equally an expression of “sustainable resistance” against the quincentenary

oppression of indigenous peoples in North America. Angel stands for the fate of her long-silenced people and the hidden history of genocide. As the novel comes to an end, she recovers her voice, and the obscure sides of a violent past are brought into light. She eventually reaches physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wholeness by repositioning herself inside her community and landscape. The circular narrative structure brings her home, as described by Bevis in the “homing-in plot,” and the feminine archetype helps her in finding her position in the web of life. Depicting the cumulative intergenerational trauma, the author bears witness to the predicament of her entire race, and provides a sense of empowerment for her protagonist, herself, and her community.

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