

TRANSLATIONS OF MYTHS IN THE POETRY OF PAULA GUNN ALLEN AND WENDY ROSE¹

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Abstract: The present analysis aims at demonstrating that the traveling of myths in the poetry of Paula Gunn Allen and Wendy Rose has two directions; on the one hand, the term translation represents hereby a process of decoding and filtering myths that pass from the American Indian cultures towards a mainstream readership and, on the other hand, it represents a process of deconstructing the dominant society's myths concerning Native people, especially women, thus re-empowering the latter. Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna Pueblo / Sioux) is one of the contemporary American Indian writers to take issue with the myth of Pocahontas, which has been haunting the American imagination for centuries. In her poetry, Allen also introduces references to Pueblo mythical figures that need to be interpreted for those unfamiliar with them. Similarly, Wendy Rose (Hopi / Miwok), whose worldview is grounded in tribal spirituality, reveals the quintessence of the Hopi creation myth. At the same time, she engages critically with the mainstream stereotype of "the squaw" that she resists from a tribal standpoint.

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