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Reclamation: A Feminist Genealogy of the Cultural Symbols of the Chicana Feminist Movement

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Abstract

This thesis will explore two significant cultural symbols of Mexican-American/Chicano culture: La Malinche and the Virgin of Guadalupe [La Virgen de Guadalupe]. The Chicana Feminist Movement, a notable women of color feminist movement, is considered to have been created and most active in the 1960s-1980s era of the United States. An examination will be conducted on how the two cultural symbols, La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe, have impacted the creation and development of the Chicana Feminist Movement during the 'hey day' of the movement, 1960s-1980s. A theoretical framework encompassing a broader cultural theory will be used in addition to feminist postcolonial theory, and the theory of intersectionality. This will be coupled with a feminist genealogical methodological approach that focuses on the changing conceptualizations of the analysis materials, revealing the intricate connections made between the movement's development and the re-analysis and re-historicizing of the two cultural symbols. Through this complex approach, a central argument will be made that both symbols, but predominantly La Malinche, aided in creating and establishing a developing Chicana feminist consciousness that was then used to tackle the multi-oppressed lives of many Chicana feminists.

Key words: Chicana, women of color feminism, intersectionality, feminist postcolonialism, cultural theory, Mexican-American, Chicano

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Aim and Research Question.....	5
2. Previous Research.....	6
3. Theoretical Framework.....	8
3.1 Cultural Theory.....	8
3.2 Feminist Postcolonial Theory.....	9
3.3 Theory of Intersectionality.....	11
4. Methodology.....	13
4.1 Feminist Genealogy.....	13
4.2 Materials.....	16
4.3 Ethics and Reflection.....	17
5. Analysis.....	18
5.1 The Silenced and Unacknowledged Histories of Chicanas: My Central Argument.....	18
5.2 Chicana Feminist Consciousness Raising: A Re-Membering of La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe.....	19
5.3 Challenging Traditional Chicana Gender Roles: the ‘Ideal Chicana’ and the Traditional Family Re-Interpreted.....	20
5.3.1 Sexuality and Motherhood: Challenges by La Virgen and La Malinche.....	22
5.3.2 La Malinche: The Traitor Mother.....	23
5.3.3 La Virgen de Guadalupe: Sexual Beginnings.....	25
5.4 Challenging Cultural Nationalism, Machismo, and the Loyalist Debate.....	28
5.4.1 La Virgen and La Malinche: Counterarguments to the Cultural Nationalist Debate ...	30
5.4.2 La Virgen de Guadalupe as a Perpetuation of Nationalist Discourses.....	31
5.4.3 La Malinche and Precursors to Chicana Feminism.....	33
6. Conclusion.....	35
7. References.....	38

1. Introduction

Our everyday lives are intricately structured through the creation and continuous interaction with cultural symbols. What if these cultural symbols were problematized or reclaimed for the empowerment of a movement? A contention has occurred between two of the most visible cultural symbols of Mexican-American/Chicano culture: La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe (the Virgin of Guadalupe). La Malinche embodies all that is wrong and evil about a woman due to her labeling as the ‘traitress’ of the Mexican nation and the ‘mother of a bastard race’. The Virgen de Guadalupe, on the other hand, is the saint and mother of the Mexican people, embodying the values of the ideal Chicana woman: a good mother and wife. Their symbolizations have been challenged, reclaimed and re-membered to not only develop the Chicana Feminist Movement, but challenge the gender ideals that have long constricted the Chicana women.

Social movements, specifically feminist social movements, have long sparked interest and debates within the gender studies field (McCann and Kim, 2013). A crucial development in understandings regarding feminist social movements is the development of ‘women of color’ feminist movements or ‘multiracial’ feminisms (Thompson, 2002/2013; Baca Zinn and Dill, 1996). Women of color feminist movements, such as Black and Chicana feminist movements, arose during the pivotal 1960s period in the United States during what has been considered the second-wave of the women’s movement (Roth, 2004). An important hallmark of the women of color feminist movements during this time was their focus on their multi-oppressional identities along racial, class and gendered axes (Roth, 2004). This aspect of the women of color movements differed from the mainstream U.S. Anglo women’s movement at the time, calling for an alternative perspective of feminism that included all facets of women’s lives. One such women of color movement, the Chicana Feminist Movement, strove to spread this message; calling for the acknowledgment of the “triple oppression” of “racism, imperialism, and sexism” that formed and subjugated Chicana women’s identities (Martínez, 1972/1997, p. 32). Chicana feminism, like many other women of color feminist movements grew from within “the structure of a cultural nationalist movement,” raising awareness for the patriarchal oppression that limited Chicana feminist’s identities (García, 1997, p. 4).

The Terminology of ‘Chicana’ and ‘Chicano’

The ethnic identifier, *Chicana* and *Chicano*, refers to individuals who have migrated into the U.S. from Mexico, or who have been generationally born and raised as Mexican-Americans within the U.S. (García, 1997; Martínez, 1972/1997). Though synonymous with the terminology of ‘Mexican-American’, this paper will refer to the ethnic identifiers of ‘Chicano’ and ‘Chicana’ to respect the choices of the Chicana Feminist Movement and Chicano movement. As noted by De la Garza (1979 as cited in Roth, 2004), Chicano/a is also used to signify more than the Mexican-American ethnic identifier because the term “Mexican-American was seen by Chicana/o activists as less than radical, and as describing a political outlook that did not ‘recognize any systematic inequalities’ affecting the community” (p. 130). To further clarify, ‘Chicana’ refers to the feminine, while ‘Chicano’ refers to the masculine.

The Beginning of The Chicana Feminist Movement: El Movimiento

The United States during the 1960s was a time of revolution and uprising for various social movements, such as the anti-Vietnam War movement and Black power movement (Roth, 2004; García, 1997). It is during this period that a rise in *El Movimiento*, or the Chicano cultural nationalist movement, occurred (García, 1997). El Movimiento was a collective of Mexican-American individuals who galvanized around the growing tensions facing the Mexican-American communities in the U.S. at the time. This included the growing disparities between Mexican-Americans and other ethnic groups with “one-third of Mexican-Americans living in poverty”, and being faced with eighth grade as the educational attainment average for Mexican-Americans, the lowest in the country (García, 1997, p. 3). The Chicano movement organized to solidify their demand for “social, political, and economic self-determination and autonomy for Mexican-American communities throughout the United States” (García, 1997, p.4). The growing racism and marginalized positioning of Chicanos/as was considered the sole focus of the Chicano movement, leaving out the Chicana women’s experiences of patriarchal oppression that seeded the formation of the Chicana Feminist Movement.

Within the Chicano movement was the growing discontentment of Chicana women participants, facing the growing sense of misogyny and gendered discrimination that Chicanos within the movement perpetuated. Not only have Chicana scholars considered Chicano history as historically unrecognized and misinterpreted by American historians, but Chicanas as women

“have been slighted even more, because they do not have a formally recognized role in the historical and cultural process” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 14). It is the perpetuated slighted role of Chicanas throughout history and the Chicano movement that led to the development of “Chicana feminist consciousness” and the subsequent Chicana Feminist Movement in 1969 (García, 1997; Blackwell, 2011). Chicana feminist works like Blackwell (2011) reveal the social inequality that was rife throughout the Chicano movement, relegating Chicanas to domestic chores and subservient roles within the movement. Leadership positions were only open to Chicano men, and the general cultural linking of patriarchal ideals and misogyny or machismo, an aspect long considered to be pertinent to Mexican-American culture, was perpetuated (Blackwell, 2011; García, 1997). The subservient roles and sexist experiences that many Chicanas were forced to endure led to the formation of feminist groups throughout college campuses in the U.S., and Chicana feminist newspaper publications that spread the newly formed ideals of Chicana feminists. The newly formed Chicana Feminist Movement aimed to acknowledge and battle against the plagued identities of Chicanas along racial, class, and gendered lines; a solidification to form a cultural shift in the perpetuation of patriarchal ideals within Mexican-American culture (García, 1989, 1997; Blackwell, 2011, Anzaldúa, 1987).

Cultural Symbols and Their Importance

To further our understanding of the Chicana Feminist Movement entails an exploration of the surrounding Mexican-American culture in which the movement was created and developed within. Important signifiers or modes of exploring the expansive Mexican-American culture includes ‘cultural symbolizations’ that aid in unearthing specified aspects of Mexican-American culture and the Chicana Feminist Movement. Two cultural symbols will be utilized in this paper, *La Malinche* and *La Virgen de Guadalupe*. Each has a unique historical past and contested origins that can aid in developing our understanding of the creation and progression of the Chicana Feminist Movement of the 1960s-1980s¹. This period will be the focus of this thesis due to major scholars on the movement reflecting it as the ‘hey day’ or prime of the movement (Blackwell, 2011; García, 1997; Roth, 2004).

¹ This is a brief introduction to the Virgen of Guadalupe and La Malinche symbols based on the analysis materials used. I acknowledge that I may be missing other perspectives or pieces of information, but will attempt to include as much as possible in the analysis.

La Malinche: The ‘Traitoress’

La Malinche is synonymous with various names, Malinalli and Doña Marina are only a few examples, revealing the intricate variations in meaning and history that have been accredited to this cultural symbol. The common origin story, though a history that has been highly contested and will be examined in the analytical chapter of this paper, paints La Malinche as a traitor (Anzaldúa, 1987; Blackwell, 2011; Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979). As an Aztec woman in the 16th century, La Malinche or Malinalli Tenepal, her original Aztec name, was born noble and went from the life of an “Aztec princess to Mayan slave” when forced to become Cortés’s concubine, leader of the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 24-25). La Malinche survived her enslavement to Cortés by serving as a translator between the Spanish and the Aztecs. She has been warranted the labels of ‘whore’, ‘unnatural mother’, and ‘traitress’ through Mexican-American culture due to her ‘allegiance’ to the Spanish, blaming her for the conquest of the Aztecs (Anzaldúa, 1987; Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979). The most important cultural understanding that La Malinche offers is the creation of ‘the bastard race’ of Mexicans with the mixture of Aztec and Spanish blood (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 24). La Malinche as a historical figure and cultural symbol has been passed down through out generations of Mexican-American culture, serving as a reminder of the tortured colonized past of Chicanas and Chicanos.

La Virgen de Guadalupe “Our Lady of Guadalupe”

La Virgen de Guadalupe, or ‘Virgin de Guadalupe’, has a differing past in comparison to La Malinche. La Virgen de Guadalupe serves as an important cultural symbol of the Catholic religion that many Chicanos/as identify within (Anzaldúa, 1987). She is also referred to synonymously with the Catholic ‘Virgin Mary’ as “the chaste protective mother, the defender of the Mexican People” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 30). La Virgen de Guadalupe is a powerful image within Mexican-American culture, being claimed as “the single most potent religious, political and cultural image of the Chicano/Mexicano” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 30). La Virgen de Guadalupe is depicted as the savior of the Chicano/a culture, usually through religious and nationalist imaging. La Virgen de Guadalupe is an important symbol within the Chicano movement of the 1960s, being used as one of the hallmark symbols of the Mexican-American community to illicit both nationalistic and prideful sentiments within the Chicano/a community (Blackwell, 2011).

The Chicana Feminist Movement through Cultural Symbolizations

The cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe are only two of many cultural symbols to select from. They are key symbols that have been repeatedly and consistently part of the Chicana Feminist Movement narrative due to the work of several key Chicana scholars (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979; Alarcón, 1981/2015; Anzaldúa, 1987; García, 1997; Moya, 2001; Blackwell, 2011). Both symbols also have long been part of the Mexican-American cultural narrative, revealing a wide expanse of analytical positionings to explore. La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe can unearth the intricacies of the Chicana Feminist Movement, revealing detailed aspects of the progression of the movement and the Chicana feminist identities and controversies that were created throughout. Specifically, an analysis of the Chicana Feminist Movement through these two symbols reveals the intricacies of how a feminist consciousness arose, known as the ‘Nueva Chicana’, within the movement and its challenging of traditional gender roles through the ‘Ideal Chicana’, the traditional family, and the cultural nationalist ideals of the movement. Through the perspective of these cultural symbols, a novel understanding of the movement can be explored, linking together a contested aspect of the movement, the Mexican-American cultural narrative that has long deemed feminist understandings as marginal and unimportant.

1.1 Aim and Research Question

The aim of this research project is to examine the progression and evolution of meanings attributed to these cultural symbols and how they have been developed within and potentially impacted understandings of the Chicana Feminist Movement. This paper will extend the exploration into feminist social movements by examining the development of the Chicana Feminist Movement through a feminist genealogical approach that will explore the colonized history of the movement, and its development to and within its prime time during the 1960s to 1980s. This investigation aims to answer:

Through a feminist genealogical analysis, how have cultural symbols developed and impacted the Chicana Feminist Movement?

1. How, and in what ways, have these cultural symbols meaning and cultural significance changed over time?

2. Have their interpretations been altered specifically for and by the Chicana Feminist Movement? In what ways?
 - a. How have the cultural symbolizations of La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe impacted the formation and development of Chicana feminist identities, the Ideal Chicana and Nueva Chicana?
 - b. How have the cultural symbolizations of La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe impacted the contested cultural nationalist and loyalist debates that occurred against the Chicana Feminist Movement?

2. Previous Research

The field of Chicana Studies is a growing subset of both Cultural and Gender Studies. Due to multiple works, the Chicana Feminist Movement has been expanded and developed over the last several decades. Especially in regards to multiracial and women of color feminisms, the Chicana Feminist Movement, especially La Chicana as a complex ethnic identity, have become growing topic areas with literature such as Zavella, Arredondo, Hurtado, Klahn & Najera-Ramirez (2003), *Chicana Feminisms: A Critical Reader*. Zavella et al (2003), as an anthological work, reveals the complexity of Chicana identities, including the Chicana Feminist Movement; a unique women of color feminist movement with individual origins and developments. Overall, this work introduces the contested histories and understandings relating to La Chicana/Chicano identities. A similar theme is apparent in a precedent work, Baca Zinn (1982), *Mexican-American Women in the Social Sciences*, in which she revisits several scholars who focus on challenging the reductive notion of Chicanas, arguing these works have “demonstrated that, like women in all social categories, Chicanas can be active, adaptive human beings despite their subordination” (p. 260).

A defining theme, introduced by many Chicana scholars or scholars on Chicana identities, has been established by many previous works. Chicana identities and histories have long been reductive of their true and complex history; subjugating their place and action within Chicano/a history. This is further established with the work of Alarcón (1990), *Chicana Feminism: In the Tracks of the Native Woman*. Alarcón (1990) begins to uncover the contested history of Chicano/a culture, arguing that Chicanas have long been ignored as pertinent history agents. She

initiates this argument, revealing the complex historical reclamation of the ‘Mexican-American’ and ‘Chicano/a’ terminology for the ethnic race of mestizo people through a recognition of Chicana feminism and its development. Herrera and Lizcano (1974) *La Mujer Chicana*, furthers this argumentation as well. As an early publication by Chicana feminists, it serves as an introductory piece to the conflicting pieces of history and the various figures pertinent to the history that led to developing Chicana identities, including the development of the Chicana Feminist Movement.

It is also important to introduce works that include the Chicana Feminist Movement, but more so the gender, class and racial dynamics of Chicanas’ lives during the 20th century such as Ruíz (1998) *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican-American Women in Twentieth-century America*. As the first in depth study of Chicana women during the 20th century, Ruíz (2008) reveals the intricacies of Chicana lives during this period of war, revolution and colonialism for the Chicano/a people. Dicochea’s (2004) work, *Recrafting La Causa in Chicana Movement Discourse*, introduces the large variety of Chicana works on the Chicana Feminist Movement, challenging the assumption that Chicana women have played no significant role in the development of the Chicano movement and overall Chicana/o history. Baseline works such as these continue to spread the message that Chicana/Chicano history is largely misunderstood, misrepresented and in need of re-interpretation.

There are several other works who focus on the Chicana Feminist Movement at large, but are intermixed with discussions on La Malinche, La Virgen de Guadalupe, and other important cultural symbols of Chicano/Mexican-American culture. Works by and about Anzaldúa are part of the growing subset of literature that focus and mention the changing understandings of cultural symbols such as La Virgen de Guadalupe and La Malinche. Works like, *Entrevistas/Interviews Gloria E. Anzaldúa* and *Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro: Rewriting Identity, Spirituality, Reality* include Anzaldúa’s changing perceptions on another important cultural symbol, La Llorona [the wailing woman]² (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2000; 2015). There has been a growing subsection of Chicana Studies that focuses on the emancipation and reinterpretation of various cultural symbols and figures central to understanding Mexican-

² La Llorona was originally considered for this thesis project, but due to limited page space only two cultural symbols were chosen for the analysis. La Llorona, however, is also considered a pertinent cultural symbol of Mexican-American/Chicano culture.

American/Chicano culture. Cotera's (1976) *Diosa y Hembra* [Goddess and Female] is considered the first attempt at revealing the Chicana female history within Mexican pre-Columbian history up to the 1960s and 1970s of the Chicano Movement. The work of Gaspar de Alba (2014), and Luziris (2011), and Carbonell (1999) are examples of modern works that have extended Cotera's (1976) initial aims. Works like Gaspar de Alba (2014) focus on the 'bad women' archetype and stereotypes perpetuated within Chicano/Mexican-American literature and broader culture. Gaspar de Alba (2014) reveals how various female symbols have been turned into 'bad woman' of Mexican-American culture, including the salient symbols of La Malinche, La Virgen de Guadalupe, and most importantly La Llorona. Works such as Carbonell (1999) have extended this analysis by applying understandings of the developing Chicana Feminist Movement to the cultural symbolization of another important symbol, Coatlicue. These works all hold the commonality in revealing that symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe are not only important to understanding the Chicana Feminist Movement, and broader Mexican-American culture, but that they will continue to live on as symbols throughout the creation of future Chicana generations.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Cultural Theory

One of the important voices of culture theory, Stuart Hall (1994), voiced one of many argumentations of culture theory such as 'cultural identity'. Cultural identity can be understood through two understandings that constitute it as both a single, one "shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self' ... which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common", but also as identities with histories that "undergo constant transformation" (ibid, p. 223). Far from being eternally fixed in some "essentialized past, they are subject to continuous 'play' of history, culture and power" (p. 225). Hall's (1994) theoretical perspective forces an awareness of the multiplicities of *difference* and *similarity* when considering 'cultural identity'.

History and identity have a continual and at time unequal and mutual relationship that are "a set of unstable formations" that creates varying cultural identities at different points of time, location, and contexts (Hall, 1996/1999, p. 99). Specifically, "cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture" (Hall, 1994, p. 226). This understanding can be utilized to

explore specified aspects of other cultural identities, asking challenging and contradictory questions that gain a sense of the minuscule details of varying differences and similarities that work to produce cultural identities. Hall's (1994) work helps situate the vast understandings of culture theory through a rooting in postcolonial studies when defining 'cultural identity'. It is this central understanding that will form the basis of culture theory being utilized in this paper.

Symbolizations within culture are pertinent components of culture theory that aid in understanding the complexities within various cultures. The work of Peterson (1990) lays a theoretical basis to symbols, arguing that culture can be viewed through "the symbolic products of group activity" which are used "to encode and convey various forms of information: knowledge, power, authority, effect, merit, beauty, and virtue" (p. 498). It is this basis that begs the questioning of how such symbols are produced, their meaning, and use within collectives (Peterson, 1990). It is through the theory of culture, that cultural symbols and their various histories, understandings, and re-understandings can begin to be explored, challenged and analyzed. Cultural symbols can serve as points of analysis, a basis that begins to reveal the complexity of identities, histories, and social movements. This broad introduction to cultural theory aids in guiding the situating of the specified theories of intersectionality and feminist postcolonialism, each with its own connections to cultural theory and its various modes of approaches.

3.2 Feminist Postcolonial Theory

Feminist postcolonial theory is a specified perspective of postcolonial theory that has been utilized by various influential feminist scholars (Mohanty, 2003 & 1997; Hesse-Biber, 2014, Creese and Frisby, 2011; Sandoval, 1991/2003). The roots of postcolonial theory lay in cultural theories, in which culture is treated as "an uneven, incomplete production of meaning and value" that only those who "have suffered the sentence of history—subjugation, domination, diaspora, displacement—that we learn our most enduring lessons for living and thinking" (Bhabha 1994/1999, p. 191). Postcolonial theory demands a reinterpretation of histories, allowing for subjected perspectives that have often been rendered invisible within dominant historical productions as the primary knowledge producers and challengers to historical understandings.

A feminist postcolonial approach acknowledges the colonial and imperial histories and power structures that have created intersecting and permeating systems of inequality for several communities. It is through a deconstruction of structures of power that space is created "in a

constructive maneuver for agency of subaltern and subjugated knowledges” (Anderson, Khan, and Reimer-Kirkham, 2011, p. 21). A feminist postcolonial approach emphasizes “accounting for vestiges of colonialism, including racialization and classism; recognizing shifting, hybrid identities for women; [and] tracking the influence of history and place” (ibid, p. 26). It is through a feminist postcolonial approach that indigenous knowledges, and the colonial structures that diminished them, can be excavated to prioritize silenced and ignored histories of the Chicana Feminist Movement.

Feminist postcolonial theory has been developed and refined by several key feminist scholars in which projects of situating ‘the other’ or ‘Third World women’ have been contested (Moraga and Anzaldúa, 2015; Mohanty, 2003; Sandoval, 1991/2003). Feminist postcolonial theory has been utilized as projects of decolonization to reveal the intricacies and specific subjectivities of various communities. Mohanty’s (2003) project of decolonization provides “a feminist, anti-racist, anticolonial, and anti-imperial epistemological framework” that situates ‘Third World feminisms’ as dual projects of critiquing hegemonic Western feminisms, and “the formulation of autonomous feminist concerns and strategies that are geographically, historically and culturally grounded” (Mohanty, 1984/2003, p. 17). The dual enactment of these projects forms the structure of a feminist postcolonial project, exhibiting the historical structures that have prolonged inaccuracies and generalizations of the Chicana Feminist Movement from an Anglo and Chicano male perspective. To do so would necessitate “beginning from the lives and interests of marginalized communities of women” where one is “able to access and make the workings of power visible—to read up the ladder of privilege” (Mohanty, 2003, p. 231). Through Sandoval’s (1991/2003) argumentation of “oppositional consciousness” another form of decolonial projects is introduced in which the construction of several ‘U.S. Third world feminists’ consciousness is understood through the idea that “the subject-citizen can learn to identify, develop, and control the means of ideology, that is, marshal the knowledge necessary to ‘break with ideology’ ...” (p. 76-77). These works mainly situate themselves as women of color feminists arguing for novel deconstructions of power and imperial structures that have shaped the subverted identities of many women of color feminists and marginalized communities.

Postcolonialism will be utilized in this paper as a form of acknowledging the colonial influences that have impacted Mexican-American/Chicana communities in the United States,

specifically the Chicana Feminist Movement³. My approach also aligns with Anderson et al's (2011) definition; a postcolonial approach centers around "a concern with historical and contemporary continuities of colonization and decolonization in specific places and specific times" (p.22). In addition, an intersectional analysis is also widely used as a theoretical addition as observed within other postcolonial scholars such as Mohanty (2003). Many women of color feminist works, such as Chicana works, Sandoval (1991/2003), within Lewis and Mills (2003) have been introduced through a postcolonial perspective rooted in intersectionality. This is an additional reason for utilizing a feminist postcolonial perspective that follows in the footsteps of other Chicana scholar postcolonial works.⁴ A feminist postcolonial approach will necessitate a re-examination of history, and the development and impact of power structures, beginning with the colonial roots of both La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe.

3.3 Theory of Intersectionality

An essential aspect of a feminist postcolonial approach is that of the acknowledgement of "recognizing intersectional oppressions, and listening to silenced voices" to begin to reveal the power structures at play (Lykes and Crosby, 2014, p. 153). The theory of intersectionality will also be applied in this feminist project, to appropriately apply a feminist postcolonial approach. The theory of intersectionality arose out of women of color feminist movements (Dill and Zambrana, 2009/2013), specifically by black feminists in their challenging of postmodern approaches through critical race theories such as Crenshaw (1989; 1991) and Collins (2009).

The central tenant of the theory of intersectionality is that there are "multiple axes of difference that constitute women's identities" (Hesse-Biber, 2014, p.42). Through this understanding many intersectional theoretical approaches have revealed the importance of identity constructions through "power relations with race and gender as sources of empowerment rather than of subjugation" (Frost and Elichao, 2014, p. 58). This is due to power relations, like feminist postcolonial theory, being a central aspect of analysis. Intersectionality offers novel ways of "challenging power relations within different dimensions of identity, and in their intertwinement" (Frost and Elichao, 2014, p. 43 & Yuval-Davis, 2006). The Chicana Feminist

³ The works I have used here each aid in constructing a postcolonial feminist approach rather than a feminist decolonial approach. The two are contested terms with no clearly set definitions given their varying uses throughout feminist literature.

⁴ There are differences between decolonial and postcolonial theoretical works, but I have chosen a postcolonial approach due to the major tenets of postcolonial work being centered on history being a continuously unstable structure, marginalized positions as the best producers of knowledge, and intersectionality being necessary to further a postcolonial approach.

Movement, like other women of color movements, necessitate an understanding of power relations through the axes of gender, race and class to begin to unveil the intricacies of the movement.

Intersectionality and Feminist Social Movements

There is a necessity in utilizing the theory of intersectionality when exploring women of color because “there was (and is) a need to account for multiple grounds of identity when consider[ing] how the social world is constructed” (Crenshaw, 1991). It is also essential to understand that an intersectional approach does not seek to privilege “one axis of difference over another” but instead recognizes that the overlapping and dynamic overlapping of axes of identities “places the site of power at the junction where the axes overlap and intertwine and enables the relations between the axes to be examined” (Frost and Elichaooff, 2014, p. 60 & Collins, 2009). This approach can aid in understanding the unique collective sense of identity that social movements create, specifying as well the disjunctured and individualized identities within. It is through the theory of intersectionality that the complexity of Chicana feminist identities, and the power dynamics that have constructed them, within the Chicana Feminist Movement can be understood.

Interconnected Discussions on Culture and Postcolonialism

Like a feminist postcolonial theoretical approach and feminist genealogy, history plays a critical role in intersectionality as a theoretical framework. Intersectionality plays a crucial role as a mechanism within a feminist genealogical approach, “as an analytic tool for transformation” (Lykes and Crosby, 2014, p. 153). History has been contested throughout various intersectional feminist works, revealing its contradictions, biases, and the necessity for multiple analyses to continue in regards to women of color feminist identities (Dill and Zambrana, 2009/2013; Collins 2009; Roth, 2004). An intersectional approach allows for the uniqueness of feminist women of color social movements to unveil their origins, developments and complex identities.

As part of a broader cultural analysis, the theory of intersectionality will be utilized to examine social movements, specifically the Chicana Feminist Movement. A unique relationship is present in the intersectional approach between culture and social movements, due to the view presented by Johnston and Klandermans (1996) in which “the individuals, groups and

organizations that form a movement process culture by adding, changing, reconstructing and reformulating” (p. 5). Through the theory of intersectionality, the specificity of the Chicana Feminist Movement and Mexican-American culture can be analyzed through the chosen cultural symbols of La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe. As was done in the work of Roth (2004), *Separate Roads to Feminism*, an intersectional theoretical approach will be utilized to understand the intricacies of the Chicana Feminist Movement, a culturally specific women of color feminist movement. Through an intersectional approach, all complexities that create the entirety of the movement can be dismantled and examined, each with equal worth and value. With this approach the unique intersection of culture theory, postcolonial theory and the theory of intersectionality can be applied upon the Chicana Feminist Movement and the unique cultural symbolizations of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe.

3.4 Theoretical Framework: Conclusion

An overarching cultural theory frames my approach to theory for this project, forming a central focus on the manners of constructions, developments and perpetuations of various cultural symbolizations. The theory of postcolonialism aids in specifying the broader cultural theory through understandings that all histories, subjectivities and identities are open to interpretation, rather necessitate it especially when considering the lives of marginalized communities. The theory of intersectionality, specifically in regards to social movements, extends both cultural and postcolonial theory, through the understanding that all identities, communities, and social movements are built through various axes of identity. These axes of identity are the sites in which power structures and dynamics can be analyzed, revealing the multilayered lives of women of color feminist movements such as the Chicana Feminist Movement.

4. Methodology

4.1 Feminist Genealogy

Poststructuralist and postmodernist thinking, through a feminist research practice, continually challenges the idea that there are normative and essentialized ideals, structures and power mechanisms. Specifically, “feminist postmodernism and poststructuralism seek to highlight the variations of women’s lives and identities and to ask how they are perceived and shaped, both by themselves and others” (Frost and Elichaooff, 2014, p. 42). It is within this mode

of thinking that a feminist genealogy is placed within, inviting the “exploration of diversity in womanhood,” seeking “out the multiple truths, viewpoints, and voices that describe the range of women’s experiences” (Frost and Elichaooff, 2014, p. 45). It is important to note the history of genealogies, given that they did not originate with feminist perspectives in mind. Rather, pivotal works by Foucault (1977), such as *Nietzsche, Genealogy and History*, reveal the changing ideals and aspects of genealogies stemming from the work of Nietzsche (Stone, 2005; Ferguson, 1991). Per Foucault’s argumentation, genealogy looks for “numberless beginnings whose faint traces and hints of color are readily seen by an historical eye” (Foucault, 1977 as cited in Ferguson, 1991, p. 331).

Unstable Knowledge and History: Re-memberings

A firm basis of feminist genealogies is initiated through Stone’s (2005) interpretation of Butler’s work as rooted in genealogical thought, revealing the necessity in continually changing interpretations and analyses, “Butler understands women to have a genealogy: to be located within a history of overlapping practices and reinterpretations of femininity” (p. 4). Within this continual interpretation is the assumption of “perpetual slippage and ‘resignification’ that forms the basis of a genealogical history in which “a practice— ‘a fixed form of action, a drama’—becomes subjected to repeated interpretations that impact upon its ‘meaning’, purpose and expectation”” (Stone, 2005, p. 5 & 7). It is through the works of Stone (2005) and Ferguson (1991), that one of the essential tenets of feminist genealogical work is in the changing *interpretations* and *re-interpretations* within and throughout history.

Power Dynamics and Structures

Another central tenant of practicing a feminist genealogy, is the focus on the changing and interweaving power dynamics that shape and evolve the changing re-interpretations of history. Ferguson (1991) extends this claim by arguing that through a genealogical approach, “the task is to deconstruct meaning claims in order to look for the modes of power they carry and to force open a space for the emergence of countermeanings.” (p. 324). Through challenging essentialized conceptualizations, analyses through ‘historicizing’ ‘difference’, ‘countermeanings’ and ‘deconstruction’ can begin to be utilized (Scott, 1988). Stone (2005) elucidates on this notion, arguing that Foucault extends Nietzsche’s thought on genealogy with “the idea that

power relations act directly on bodies, to reconstitute them, physically, in the image of power” (p. 9). This notion of power is also extended into Stone’s (2005) analysis of Butler’s theorizations found in her claim that “the body as fully historical” (p. 9).

To practice a feminist genealogy, this paper will follow on the methodological practices of Alexander and Mohanty (1997), Mohanty (2003), Kolenz, Benson & Wu (2017) and all other works mentioned so far in this chapter. Alexander and Mohanty (1997) make their claim clear in stating that genealogies “are not meant to suggest a frozen or embodied inheritance of domination and resistance, but an interested, conscious thinking and rethinking of history and historicity, a rethinking which has women’s autonomy and self-determination at its core” (p. xvi). The works mentioned have been chosen because of their focus on laying the claims that form the basis of a feminist genealogy, but works such as Kolenz et al (2017), Mohanty (2003), and Alexander and Mohanty (1997) specifically focus on the practice of feminist genealogies through the gaze of women of color feminisms, and by women of color feminists.

The Practice of a Feminist Genealogy

Following in the footsteps of an intellectual genealogy, as introduced by the work of Kolenz et al (2017), this paper will be analyzing the span of published materials on the Chicana Feminist Movement by authors, who either identify as Chicana feminists themselves or as women of color feminists. A specified focus will be placed on the changing conceptualizations and perspectives regarding both the Chicana Feminist Movement and the two cultural symbols. A focus on changing conceptualizations will be made given the feminist genealogical works introduced here, aligning in their claims that “words and texts have no fixed or intrinsic meanings,” (Scott, 1988, p. 35).

To summarize, a feminist genealogical methodology necessitates a focus on various facets of history: an examination of the changing variations in meanings and understandings and applications—questioning and reinterpreting all facets of history, knowledge and representations of those histories as seen in the changing symbolizations and representative understandings of the two cultural symbols to be analyzed. Another aspect is the deconstruction of domineering modes of power structures, as well as lending to the side of the marginalized by questioning the authorities of knowledge production. This methodology will necessitate a structured analysis in which a primary focus is placed on the mentioning’s and the surrounding contexts in which both

cultural symbols arise. This is specified because all analysis materials focus on the Chicana Feminist Movement, leaving the cultural symbols as the specified aspect of this thesis. Sections were initially left out that did not mention either symbol, but later revisited in my analysis process. It is also important to mention that, as a researcher, I have previously studied the Chicana Feminist Movement before. Many of the analysis materials I have chosen I have read more than once in the past few years. This aspect has strengthened my ability and confidence in maneuvering through many of these works, recognizing many of the concepts and histories being retold through each material.

4.2 Materials

In line with a feminist genealogy, the materials to be analyzed are those created as theoretical works on the Chicana Feminist Movement by authors who either identify as Chicana feminist themselves, Chicana scholars writing on the Chicana Feminist Movement or scholars identifying as multiracial or multicultural feminists (Roth, 2004). The materials to be analyzed in this project are materials that have been referenced prominently throughout various explorations of relevant literature. A focus on publication dates has been placed, selecting materials that are both highly referenced yet spaced out in their publication date to aid in building a time line from 1979 to 2011. This falls in line with a feminist genealogical practice, aiming to begin a deconstruction of the major conceptualizations of these works over the course of several decades. As an additional note, these works have all been chosen because they are also easily accessible; some potential analysis materials were disregarded due to the inability to access physically and financially.

Eight works have been reviewed with five books, and three articles. Each of the materials were read thoroughly before spending most of my time on the sections dedicated to the Chicana Feminist Movement. Since this thesis is centered on the two cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe, most time was then spent on tracing through the indexes of each material, searching for the mentioning and synonyms of both symbols.

Each work chosen has a primary focus on the Chicana Feminist Movement, but differ in varying ways per their specified focus and methodology. In this way, the materials chosen can be grouped into two themes. The first group are works that have centered on the Chicana Feminist Movement itself, retracing its development and revealing the central aspects of the movement. The first work is Roth (2004), *Separate Roads to Feminism*, arguing for the acceptance of various women of color feminisms, through a detailed glance into the creation and developing

facets of the Chicana Feminist Movement during the 1960s to 1980s. The works of García (1989), García (1997) and Blackwell (2011) solely focus on the Chicana Feminist Movement, yet offer varying specified focuses on the movement. As an article, García (1989) recounts the changing dynamics and facets of Chicana feminist discourse. García (1997) is an extensive anthology of Chicana feminist voices active before the creation and throughout the movement. Blackwell (2011) adds a specified feminist genealogical reflection on the movement, focusing on the changing renderings of history that the work of the Chicana Feminist Movement has had on Chicana/o history.

The second thematic grouping of the analysis materials are theoretical works that focus on Chicana identities, and Chicana feminists within an overall argumentation that Chicana history has not been told accurately. These works reveal varying perspectives as to how Chicana history led up to the creation of the Chicana Feminist Movement. Mirandé and Enríquez (1979) chronologically examines a re-telling of Chicana history from the Spanish conquest of the Aztec empire to the creation of the Chicana Feminist Movement. Alarcón (1981/2015) is also grouped in this theme due to her article solely focusing on the emancipation of La Malinche and her impact on Chicana identities. Anzaldúa's (1987) book, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, is a theoretical introduction to the 'new mestiza' conceptualization that begin to reveal Chicana identity as complex and multidimensional due to the clashing of multiple cultures. Moya's (2001) article, *Chicana Feminism and Postmodernist Theory*, provides a novel perspective in re-interpreting the cultural symbolization of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe.

There is more to be delved into, but for the sake of the length of this paper, I will limit my analysis materials. There is more to include, but I am cognizant of the limitations this also brings about in this acknowledgement. There are other works that have not been considered that could disprove my own argumentations, but this is the reasoning why this topic needs to be focused upon in future works.

4.3 Ethics and Reflection

The practice of reflexivity is an essential aspect in both a feminist genealogy and feminist postcolonial theoretical approach. Reflexivity, "particular the acknowledgment of outsider research privilege", is necessary to not fall into the long contested tendency to "essentialize community" (Mohanty, 2003). As a researcher, I am acknowledging my own 'outsider research

privilege' as a first-generation Mexican-American and Chicana woman. Though I identify as a Chicana, I did not become aware of this ethnic and feminist identifier until I first came across the study of the Chicana Feminist Movement about four years ago while completing my undergraduate degree. For this reason, I am in the unique positionality of being both within and outside the research topic. Many of the materials I have analyzed, specifically the cultural facets that are described I can directly relate to as a Mexican-American/Chicana woman raised by two immigrant parents from Mexico. But my upbringing has somewhat sheltered me from knowing my own history as a Chicana, and has been the primary reason behind my study of this topic. In the process of research and writing, I am uncovering my own Chicana history, and the Chicana history of all the Chicano/a men and women in my family.

As a researcher, my aim is not to essentialize or simply generalize my arguments on this topic to all Chicana feminists and women. To essentialize a community would only stifle their complexities and intricate individualities. That is why an extension of this research topic is needed to expand this specified area of research within the Chicana Feminist Movement. I am also aware, and must be cognizant of the limitations of my choice to focus on primarily the most referenced and what are the most influential works on the Chicana Feminist Movement. There is more to be revealed and told regarding the identities and histories that make up the Chicana Feminist Movement of the 1960s-1980s.

5. Analysis

5.1 The Silenced and Unacknowledged Histories of Chicanas: My Central Argument

The analysis materials analyzed have all revealed a central and enduring acknowledgment: Chicana history and perspectives have too long been ignored and silenced when creating and remembering Chicano/Mexican-American history (Mirandé & Enríquez, 1979; Alarcón, 1981; Anzaldúa, 1987; García, 1997; Moya, 2001; Blackwell, 2011). A review of history reveals that “there has been an acute absence of literature concerning the Chicana woman,” and thus “led people to believe that Chicanas have played no significant role in society...” (García, 1997, p. 113). García (1997) argues that it was this realization, their realization of the gaping spaces of history of the Chicanas that sparked the wide dissemination and creation of various Chicana newspapers and journals dedicated to creating sisterhood [La hermanidad] amongst Chicanas and revealing Chicana history that lacked throughout the

Mexican-American culture and education system (p. 114-115; Roth, 2004; Blackwell, 2011). Their lost history created an unknown space for their identities as Chicanas and the history that developed it. This lack of knowledge of their people and their ancestral women, Chicanas and Mexicanas [Mexican-American woman] created a thirst for knowledge in which a feminist consciousness was born with the rife inequalities they found in their lives as Chicanas within the Chicano movement. Many of the analysis materials situated themselves as “rewriting women into history and reformulating historical investigations using gender as a ‘useful category of historical analysis’” (Lerner, 1972 as cited in García, 1997, p. 10). A re-membering and re-understanding of Chicana history thus takes place. This argument is supported and strengthened with the work of Blackwell (2011) in which she argues, “Many of the histories of women of color are often told through, and thus structured by, the historiographic practices that have created silences about them.” (p. 6). The Chicana Feminist Movement took the steps forward in disseminating this ideal; no longer will their histories as women of color be silenced and ignored.

It is through the acknowledgment of Chicana history being silenced, ignored and unacknowledged that the rising of a Chicana feminist consciousness occurred. From this developing Chicana feminist consciousness, a challenging of various aspects of Chicanas’ lives began, specifically on the traditional gender roles of the Chicana, the traditional family, and the cultural nationalist debate used to de-legitimize the Chicana feminist debate within the Chicano Movement. This central argument is *how* the two cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe come into play, impacting the detailed and developing Chicana feminist consciousness raising progressions of the Chicana Feminist Movement within the 1960s-1980s period. This argument will be carried out in the remaining sections of this paper, revealing how the cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe were used to create a Chicana feminist consciousness and tackle specified aspects of Chicanas’ lives, developing the Chicana Feminist Movement as it has come to be known during the 1960s-1980s.

5.2 Chicana Feminist Consciousness Raising: A Re-Membering of La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe

Each of the analysis materials reveal a central commonality of the beginning of the Chicana Feminist Movement, the creation and progression of a Chicana feminist consciousness that sparked Chicana feminist actions. The rising Chicana feminist consciousness, however, did not appear in a simplistic fashion, rather it appeared in the various modes and understandings as

shown in both the publications of Chicana feminists themselves during the time, and by reflective pieces on the movement by Chicana scholars after the 1960s-1980s period. It is here that a feminist genealogy is necessary and pivotal in revealing the changing and evolving tendencies of a feminist movement. As noted by Marso (2010), “genealogical feminism forges bonds of solidarity in the present while keeping an eye trained on how understandings of the past and ideas about the future help to shape women's present goals” (pp. 265-266). A feminist genealogy demands for an intricate examination of the power dynamics and structures that have created the lived realities of women of color, necessitating that history is unstable and varying, leaving ground to produce ‘counter-histories’ and deconstructions. The rising of a feminist consciousness occurred within the Chicana Feminist Movement not only as Chicana feminists were beginning to realize their ignored and silenced histories as Chicanas, but also as they challenged these histories through the cultural symbols that until that point of time structured their lives as Chicanas within Mexican-American culture. It is through this that an intermixing occurs of a rising Chicana feminist consciousness through the dual reclamation and reinterpretation of La Malinche, and La Virgen de Guadalupe.

5.3 Challenging Traditional Chicana Gender Roles: the ‘Ideal Chicana’ and the Traditional Family Re-Interpreted

The rising of a Chicana feminist consciousness occurred through a reclamation and reinterpretation of the cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgin of Guadalupe through a specified tackling of the traditional Chicana gender roles, also known as the ‘Ideal Chicana’, and the traditional family model. As part of a rising feminist consciousness, came the ideological challenging’s of the traditional gender roles and traditional family structure of Chicanos/Mexican-Americans.

The traditional Chicana gender roles and the traditional family are understood through the direct challenging’s made by Chicana feminists as a rising Chicana feminist consciousness was observed. This is often referred to ‘the Ideal Woman’ or the ‘Ideal Chicana’ as a woman who was “faithful, passive and obedient”; who followed “traditional roles, such as seeking approval from males and being passive” (López, 1977/1997, p. 102 & 105). Chicana women were expected to submit under a ‘maternal role’ as explained by Rincón (1971/1997) in which “the role of the Mexican woman is one of subordination. She is expected to be submissive, faithful, devoted, and respectful to her husband and to take the major responsibility in rearing the

children” (p. 25). A domestic livelihood is the defining factor of the ‘Ideal Chicana’ but also a passivity in regards to men.

This is also extended through understandings of ‘la Nueva Chicana’ [New Chicana] as a direct challenging of the traditional gender roles of Chicanas. The ideal of the ‘New Chicana’ is one of a “new generation—third generation.” The Nueva Chicana involves rejecting and actively changing the stereotypical notion of Chicanas as “timid, submissive women that harbor unvented resentments” instead doing as they please to surge forward *La Raza* (Flores, 1975/1997, p. 96). It is an empowering position to be a Nueva Chicana, “You as a Chicana, are in a unique position of having two and possibly more diverse cultures at your fingertips. You can glean the best of each.” (ibid). The “new breed of Chicanas” are described as a limitless woman who is “reaching higher educational levels, opposing the Catholic Church such as challenging sexual taboos as well as the idea that all Catholic women must live out their lives as mothers” (Chavez, 1972/1997, p. 38). The recognition of their subsidiary role spurred the creation of a continually developing feminist consciousness that included within it *La Nueva Chicana*. Within *La Nueva Chicana* was the challenging of Chicana traditional gender roles and the traditional family that continued to marginalize the lives of many Chicana women.

Anzaldúa’s (1987) work extensively extends this intermixed notion of a rising feminist consciousness and reclamation of *La Malinche* and *Virgen de Guadalupe* through her conceptualizations of ‘la mestiza’, ‘the mestiza consciousness’, ‘the mestiza way’ and ‘border consciousness’. The ‘mestiza’ is a term conceptualized by Anzaldúa (1987) that illuminates the cultural clashes that the Chicano/a people undergo through their intermixed identities of Indian and Spanish blood (p. 22). She is actively taking part in a feminist genealogy of herself, of her own people by leaning on the side of the marginalized (Ferguson, 1991). The ‘mestiza way’ or ‘mestiza consciousness’ is an active reclamation of Chicanas, “a conscious rupture with all oppressive traditions of all cultures and religions...She reinterprets history and, using new symbols, she shapes new myths” (ibid, p. 82).

The ‘Ideal Chicana’ or the ‘Ideal Woman’ is further understood by the symbolization of *La Malinche* and *Virgen de Guadalupe*. An analysis of both of their symbolizations reveal the intricate detailing’s of forms of perpetuation that upheld the strict traditional gender roles of *La Chicana*. This is evident in Blackwell’s (2011) work in which she argues that “patriarchal roles are inscribed on women through figures such as the *Virgen of Guadalupe* and *Malinche*” (p. 98).

Specifically, a strict dichotomy is created between a good/bad woman and whore/virgin that directly constructs the 'Ideal Chicana'. Blackwell (2011) describes this dichotomy as a “cultural reinscription of the virgin/whore, good woman/bad woman dichotomy” that serve as binaries that “regulate and police women’s sexuality” (p. 98). This dichotomy is first observed in the work of Anzaldúa (1987) and continues the argumentation that a challenging of traditional gender roles of la Chicana is a facet of the rising Chicana feminist consciousness. The most important aspect in understanding the connection between feminist consciousness raising and the necessity of including both La Malinche and Virgin of Guadalupe are in Anzaldúa’s (1987) argumentation that the first step to reach this consciousness is by “unlearning the *puta/virgen* [whore/virgin] dichotomy and to see *Coatlapopeuh-Coatlicue* in the Mother, Guadalupe.” (p. 84). This is furthered with Anzaldúa’s claim that “we have become the quickening serpent movement” (p. 81). A direct connection is made with the new mestiza consciousness to both Virgen de Guadalupe and La Malinche. The serpent [sexual] qualities that are integral to understanding the history of La Virgen de Guadalupe, yet have been silenced and forgotten, are being reclaimed through the emergence of a Chicana feminist consciousness or the “new mestiza way”.

5.3.1 Sexuality and Motherhood: Challenges by La Virgen and La Malinche

An integral facet of Chicana womanhood is motherhood; considered the sole purpose and role of a Chicana woman. Anzaldúa (1987) directly reveals this in her argumentation that, “La gente chicana tiene tres madres [The Chicano people have three mothers] ...Guadalupe, the virgin mother who has not abandoned us, and La Chingada [Malinche], the raped mother whom we have abandoned...” (p. 30). This is shown in Moya’s (2001) claim that La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe have “shaped the boundaries of traditional Chicana womanhood” by identifying motherhood and its strict constrictions as one of the primary constructions of Chicana womanhood (p. 448). Though these two symbols further enhance the understanding of the traditional gender roles placed on Chicanas, they also serve as the basis in which Chicanas began to challenge and further create their feminist consciousness that negated the Ideal Chicana. Moya (2001) also argues that Chicana feminists chose to reclaim “positive feminist models” from history, and in so doing “they countered the tendency in the Chicano movement to celebrate icons of “traditional Chicana womanhood”” which is most evident in the symbolization of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe (p. 447).

La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe are considered, in this manner of analysis, as “rediscovered role models” who then challenge ideas of traditional Chicana womanhood by claiming that “a redefinition of the traditional family needs to occur for empowerment and colonized freedom for all Chicano/a people” (ibid, p. 448). They were ‘rediscovered role models’ who served to legitimize newfound understandings of their histories and symbolization. The specified terminology of ‘positive feminist models’ is also an important aspect to distinguish, revealing the positive reclamation that has been observed and perpetuated by developing Chicana feminist thought and Chicana feminist consciousness. Through a reclamation of both La Malinche and La Virgen de Guadalupe as “rediscovered” and “positive role models”, a challenging of the traditional Chicana gender roles of the ‘Ideal Chicana’ took place resulting in newfound knowledge that the symbols of La Malinche and La Virgen that were used to constrict and form a specified ‘motherhood’ and ‘womanhood’ expected of Chicanas is based in false historical accounts and information.

5.3.2 La Malinche: The Traitress Mother

Each analysis material revisits history to reveal detailed accounts that contradict the cultural symbolization La Malinche has been deemed by Mexican-American/Chicano culture. Mirandé and Enriquez (1979) sets off the continuous recognition carried on by all analysis materials in questioning “whether she warrants the labels of whore, unnatural mother, and traitress.” (p. 24). The solid factual history of La Malinche, that all works agree upon, is that La Malinche was originally born as Malinalli Tenepal (her Aztec name) and “was of noble lineage born into the family of rich and powerful *caciques* (chiefs)” (ibid, p. 30). Her mother was widowed, leaving Malinalli to be the sole heir, however, her mother remarried and gave birth to a son she then preferred to choose as the heir (Del Castillo, 1974/1997). Malinalli was then abandoned by her mother and given to a group of Mayan traders who then sold her as a slave to the Tabascans. The Tabascans then presented her as a gift to Cortés, the Spanish conquistador who brought down the Aztec empire (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979; Anzaldúa, 1987; Alarcón, 1981/2015; García, 1997). The history that forms the basis of La Malinche reveals a tragic story of abandonment and slavery.

However, her tragic history is not part of the mainstream cultural symbolization of La Malinche. Rather, she is only viewed as “an infamous emblem of female transgression and treachery. The basic historical facts that she mated with Cortés, produced a son, and aided him in

the conquest as his translator have been blurred by damning cultural judgments that label her a whore, the mother of a bastard race of *mestizos*, and a traitress to her country.” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 24). La Malinche is most well understood as the negative symbolization of the Chicana woman in regards to both sexuality and motherhood. This is due to La Malinche, an Aztec princess turned slave, being known as the origin of the mestizo and mixed-race Mexican people due to her enslavement to Cortés, the leader of the Spanish invasion of the Aztecs. She is often labeled as the “mother of the bastard race of mestizos”, the mixture of Spanish and Aztec blood (ibid).

From this historical context, La Malinche represents the negative aspects of Chicanas’ sexuality and motherhood. This is most evident in the negativity and bitterness that is evoked in remembering La Malinche and the mixing of Indian with Spanish blood due to it being “the humiliation of conquest by physical force” which is “heightened by the humiliation of sexual possession of Indian women by the Spaniards” (ibid). La Malinche is also remembered as a horrible mother, the origin of a traitress mother given the illegitimacy of her union with Cortés given that they were not married (ibid). Through this understanding, her synonymous naming as *La Chingada* [the violated mother/the raped mother/woman] is introduced. It is here that Chicanas continue to be compared to La Malinche because their ability to be virginal and ‘good mothers’. For Chicanas, its “cultural manifestation is that as members of the ‘tainted’ sex and as symbolic daughters of La Malinche, their sexuality, whatever its form, is stigmatized” (ibid, p. 28). Their sexuality as Chicanas can continue to betray their country and create illegitimate children; creating and perpetuating the rape narrative that surrounds La Malinche.

Though convincing in its ability to stigmatize sexuality and perpetuate a good mother narrative, this historical understanding of La Malinche is reclaimed and reinterpreted to reveal La Malinche in a positive light and not as the sole traitress and doom of the Aztec empire; this is evident in all analysis materials. One central defining component of the re-interpretation of La Malinche reveals a focus on her perspective within history. Del Castillo (1974/1997), for example, claims “it must have been a very painful, traumatic and confusing experience to have gone from the drastic transition of Aztec princess to Mayan slave” (p. 25). History furthers a focus on the marginalized, “...she was only eight years old when she was thrust into an alien environment among the Tabascans and barely fourteen when Cortés acquired her (Rodriguez, 1935 as cited in Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 25). This extends a vital aspect of a feminist

genealogy, “recognizing the political claims of those marginalized by the prevailing categories” by “inclining to the side of the powerless and marginal” to reach “a historical process of liberation” (Ferguson, 1991, p. 324, 335). A repositioning of history to the side of the marginalized, in this case Malinalli, reveals fascinating historical facts that would today result in horror and disgust; repainting her imaging as a ‘victim’ of slavery, rather than an active ‘whore’ and ruthless ‘traitress’ of the Aztecs.

A positive reclamation thus ensues within each analysis material stemming from the basic historical facts as introduced here, questioning the entirety of the knowledge base in which the ‘whore’ ‘traitress’ ‘mother of a bastard race’ symbolization is created by the Chicano/Mexican-American culture. Alarcón (1981/2015) argues for a total revival of La Malinche’s symbolization in which she is “recognized as a visionary and founder of a people” a “historical figure” (p. 181). Her placement within the creation of the Mexican nation needs to be rightfully placed, viewing La Malinche “as the remarkable woman she has been documented to be, by virtue of her personal character and attributes, and viewed as positively as she was in her own time.” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 29). She deserves to undergo a “new interpretation as a positive symbol for the mestizo” (NietoGomez, 1973/1997, p. 130). The reclaiming of La Malinche on the grounds of motherhood and sexuality is also proven through historical factuality as well. Mirandé and Enríquez (1979), Alarcón (1981) and García (1997) reveal that the intermixing of Spanish and Indian blood had already occurred *before* Malinalli was given to Cortés as a slave. There are factual pieces of evidence that prove there were already instances of Spanish men starting families with Indian women before Cortés was given Malinalli, thus revealing that La Malinche is not the *sole* individual responsible.

5.3.3 La Virgen de Guadalupe: Sexual Beginnings

La Virgen de Guadalupe serves as the positive model, the opposite of La Malinche in regards to sexuality and motherhood. If La Malinche was considered in a religious context she would be considered the opposite of La Virgen but also a “negative image of a woman and becomes a Mexican Eve” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 28). La Virgen de Guadalupe has come to symbolize the opposite as the good woman, the good mother, and the martyr of the Mexican people (Anzaldúa, 1987). She is the most important religious and national symbol of the Mexican people (ibid).

The primary impact of La Virgen can be understood through *marianismo* [veneration of the Virgin Mary], “*La Virgen*—under various titles, but especially as La Virgen de Guadalupe—has been the ultimate role model for the Chicano woman. Mary draws her worth and nobility from her relationship to her son, Jesus Christ. She is extolled as mother, as nurturer. She is praised for her endurance of pain and sorrow, her willingness to serve, and her role as teacher of her son’s word. She is Queen of the Church.” (NietoGomez, 1974/1997, p. 208).

This is furthered through the direct impact on Chicanas as women. “Some Chicanas are similarly praised as they emulate the sanctified example set by Mary. The woman par excellence is mother and wife. She is to love and support her husband and to nurture and teach her children. Thus, may she gain fulfillment as a woman” (ibid). Religion is the powerful force in which the symbolization and strict constrictions of ‘motherhood’ and ‘virginal purity’ are enforced on Chicana women through La Virgen de Guadalupe.

However, a re-historicizing and reinterpretation of La Virgen de Guadalupe reveals contradictory notions to her symbolization as the good mother, virgin, and martyr. Blackwell (2011) summarizes the complexity of her history by arguing that “as patron saint of Mexico” the Virgin of Guadalupe “is said to be a syncretism between the Virgin Mother [Virgin Mary] and the Mexican goddess Tonantzín; others believe she is a version of Coatlicue, the Aztec mother goddess” (p. 240). A focused and specified reinterpretation and re-historicizing of the Virgin of Guadalupe is explored most notably by Anzaldúa (1987). Anzaldúa (1987) reveals La Virgen to be a figure that began as a figure of sexuality and the balanced yet opposing forces of life and death, “*La Virgen de Guadalupe’s* Indian name is *Coatlalopeuh*. She is the central deity connecting us to our Indian ancestry” (p. 27). This is a stark comparison to her symbolization during the 1960s-1980s as “the chaste protective mother, the defender of the Mexican People” (ibid, p. 28). The changing symbolizations of La Virgen de Guadalupe occurred through the changing Aztec religious dynamics and the “religious upheaval” of the Catholic Church after the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs (ibid, p. 3).

Anzaldúa (1987) conducts a detailed re-historicizing of La Virgen by detailing the transitions of the various figures that make up the modern-day symbolization of La Virgen de Guadalupe. Her original Aztec root and mythology reveals she was once the figure *Coatlicue* (serpent skirt), and *Tonantsi* who represented sexuality and the dual forces of life and death; meant to represent

the ingrained beauty and flaws of life. Within the Aztec Empire and subsequent conquest by the Spanish, Tonantsi is stripped of her sexuality through the Spanish and Catholic Church, leaving her marked as the ‘mother’ and the ‘martyr’ of the Mexican people (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 36). Her sexuality, or serpent qualities, was pushed out by the Mexican culture and religious indoctrination through colonialism, forcing women to fear serpents and their symbolization of sexuality (ibid, p. 27).

The image of La Virgen is further complicated by deepening understandings of the religious upheaval and Spanish colonial conquest of the Aztec Empire. The colonial period of 1521-1821 marks the cultural upheaval of Mexican history in which all religious sites were destroyed and “the Christian Church became the hub of newly founded religious communities and Catholicism a primary mechanism of social control” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 34). Under the domination of a new religion, the symbol of La Virgen de Guadalupe was solidified. After the conquest, “the Spaniards and their Church continued to split *Tonantsi/Guadalupe*. They desexed *Guadalupe*, taking Coatloapeuh, the serpent/sexuality, out of her” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 27). It was here that the split was completed and the creation of the dichotomy was created by “making *La Virgen de Guadalupe/Virgen Maria* into chaste virgins and *Tlazolteotl/Coatlicue/la Chingada* into *putas* [whores]” (ibid). Through a re-historicizing of La Virgen, her multiple names and symbolizations are revealed that were once a whole and complicated woman that had both a sexual nature, but also represented the dueling complexities of life and death. Her symbolization as La Virgen simplifies her as a virgin and a ‘good mother’ that is not at all representative of her true and multidimensional nature.

A reclamation was made for La Virgen de Guadalupe as a symbol for the Chicana woman by Chicana feminists. But rather, a reclamation that was based in negating the Catholic religion that only served to constrict the abilities and roles of Chicana women (García, 1997). Religion, specifically the Catholic Church was agreed upon to be “an oppressive institution and they opposed any institutionalized religion” which also implied the symbolization of La Virgen (López, 1977/1997, p. 104). A reworking of La Virgen’s symbolization wasn’t revealed in support of Anzaldúa (1987) until Blackwell (2011) in which a reworking was conducted “signifying possibilities for La Virgen de Guadalupe around women’s agency, resistance, and sexuality...to even include the figure of the Virgin as a matrix of power, and desire or the vulva” (p. 118). This form of reinterpretation and cultural work is argued to be a kind of “retrofitted

memory”, the key conceptualization of Blackwell (2011), “because it changes the relationship Chicanas have as historical subjects to the sexed and gendered narratives of the past” (ibid). Blackwell (2011) claimed that the works of “Chicana feminists, was, then, to rework and resignify symbols and icons of female agency, thereby opening up new possibilities for women’s participation and leadership by creating an alternative feminist apparatus of interpellation...” (p. 118).

Blackwell (2011) introduces unique understandings of the Chicana feminist consciousness through the “awakening of racial consciousness” (p. 1). Specifically, it is “a form of counter memory that uses fragments of older histories that have been disjunctured by colonial practices of organizing historical knowledge or by masculinist renderings of history that disappear women’s political involvement in order to create space for women in historical traditions that erase them.” (ibid, p. 2). This is the specified method that in turn “creates new forms of consciousness” (ibid). Through this, Blackwell (2011) is extending past analytical materials, especially that of Anzaldúa’s ‘border consciousness’ and ‘mestiza consciousness’ that necessitates a reinterpretation of Chicanas’ positionality in history. As a reflective piece that looks back at the Chicana Feminist Movement, significant weight is given to Blackwell’s argumentation that summarizes the totality of the rising Chicana feminist consciousness in which both La Malinche and La Virgen were significantly part of; being reinterpreted and re-historicized as part of a developing Chicana feminist consciousness that reclaimed their ‘feminist symbols’ and chose to tackle their misguided history and traditional gender roles.

5.4 Challenging Cultural Nationalism, Machismo, and the Loyalist Debate

The cultural nationalist debate, or loyalist debate, was one of the key “ideological questions” of the Chicana Feminist Movement that ignited the continued development of a Chicana feminist consciousness (García, 1989, p. 221). The Chicano movement, specifically the movement active on university campuses, utilizes a cultural nationalist ideology that they believed strengthened Chicano/Mexican-American cultural and racial pride (Roth, 2004). This included a solidification of what Mexican-American/Chicano culture glorified which included *machismo*, and traditional gender roles (García, 1989, p. 223). However, Chicana’s active within the Chicano Movement began to realize the inherent contradictions of a cultural nationalist ideology. The most notable contradiction was the movement’s upholding of female cultural symbols, such as La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe, and expecting Chicana women to

uphold traditional gender roles. Specifically, “a cultural nationalist ideology perpetuated such stereotypical images of Chicanas as ‘good wives’ and ‘good mothers’” (García, 1989, p. 226). This is also explained by Moya (2001), “Chicano cultural nationalists had self-consciously taken up a series of Mexican cultural icons [La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe] in order to project an alternative and more affirming Mexicano/Chicano cultural reality” (p. 447). A perpetuation of misogynistic values and ideals was thus being reaffirmed by the cultural nationalist ideology within the Chicano movement that limited the opportunities for Chicana’s who wanted to be involved in more than subsidiary roles (Blackwell, 2011, p. 89). The cultural nationalist ideology within the Chicano Movement became the key aspect of the movement when faced with the rising Chicana feminist consciousness and creation of a Chicana Feminist Movement in 1969. The cultural nationalist ideology within the Chicano Movement created a contradictory space for Chicana women as explained by Moya (2001):

“As the designated reproducers of culture, Chicanas in the movement were under greater pressure to conform to more traditional models of conduct than were men. Thus, feminists were trying to break out of traditional roles as biological and cultural reproducers at the exact moment that Chicano nationalists were attempting to reinscribe them into those roles” (p. 448).

The creation of a Chicana Feminist Movement then generated attacks from the Chicano Movement, which also included Chicana women, who believed that a feminist ideology was not only Anglo-inspired but contradictory to the primacy of the racial identity of all Chicanos/as (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979; Roth, 2004; García, 1997; Blackwell, 2011). Specifically, the loyalists “maintained that such a matter [sexism] would best be resolved internally within the Chicano movement” (García, 1989, p. 225).

It began with consciousness and the rising sense of awareness that Chicanas noticed their subsidiary roles within the Chicano movement and the surrounding Mexican-American/Chicano culture “which led many Chicanas to initiate a process by which they could begin to resolve the inconsistencies between male/female roles.” (López, 1977/1997 p. 101). Resolving these inconsistencies then began part of a rising feminist consciousness or “feminist ‘awakening’ to the internal struggles within the cultural nationalist Chicano movement” which were specifically recognized to be the “sexism or *machismo*” which “contributed significantly to the formation of Chicana feminism” (García, 1997, p. 4-5). The loyalist and cultural nationalist argument that

sought to delegitimize and negate the development of the Chicana Feminist Movement created a space to challenge the cultural nationalist argument as well as the rife instances of *machismo* that were prevalent throughout the Chicano movement.

5.4.1 La Virgen and La Malinche: Counterarguments to the Cultural Nationalist Debate

A re-historicizing and reinterpretation of both La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe is a mechanism that began to form a Chicana feminist consciousness, but that also later served as a counterargument to the ensuing loyalist and cultural nationalist debate. The cultural nationalist ideology and loyalist debate are both intertwined, but become a central aspect of the re-membering of Chicana history, revealing that Chicano/a people as a community need to accept the argument that through a Chicana feminist re-membering of history, feminism has been a central aspect of Chicano/a history since the early 20th century. This is revealed through a re-historicizing and reclamation of both La Virgen and La Malinche, each revealing that their symbolization is perpetuating dangerous ideals that are too often considered the national imaginary and pride of the Chicano Movement and culture.

Mirandé and Enriquez (1979) recount a chronological order of Chicana history within Chicano/a history, arguing that precursors to the 1960s Chicana Feminist Movement are found in the 1910 Mexican Revolution, “a firm basis for the emergence of the contemporary Chicana feminist movement was laid during the early part of the century by Chicanas themselves” (p. 221)⁵. This was due to the change in power dynamics that were observed by Chicana’s during the Mexican Revolution as they “were fighting for liberation from Spanish rule over Mexico, but evolved to liberation from ‘masculine control’ [machismo]” (ibid, p. 202). The work of Mirandé and Enriquez (1979) reveals the origins of what is later termed as a ‘rising Chicana feminist consciousness’ through a reinterpretation of history and the broad and extensive inclusion of Chicanas’ within Chicano/a history, especially the 1910 Mexican Revolution.

As part of a rising Chicana feminist consciousness, various analysis materials reveal that by reexamining history and the involvement of Chicanas within Chicano/a history, feminism as a belief and practice has been a long held tradition that can be viewed within the developing

⁵ The Mexican Revolution of 1910 occurred in reaction to the enduring Porfirio dictatorship that stifled the opportunities for Mexican citizens who were limited by the policies that favored rich landowners. It has been considered a bloody revolution given the various warring factions that caused major upheaval for both the government and Mexican culture.

histories of Chicana women during the 20th century. It is not an adopted or inspired Anglo ideology, rather it has been evident in the actions of Chicana women long before the Chicano Movement, especially evident in the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Roth (2004) explains this by stating, “Chicana feminists countered these charges [Chicana feminists being anglicized and traitors to their Mexican-American culture] by arguing that Chicanas had historically always been ‘feminists’ as they struggled for the greater community, and that the traditional roles within the Chicano family needed to be remade to continue the struggle against Anglo domination” (p. 132). The Mexican Revolution of 1910 is argued to be “undoubtedly the most significant catalyst in the growth of Mexican-Chicana feminism” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979 p. 202). This discovery by Chicana feminists serves to aid in arguing against the loyalist view that Chicana feminism was an Anglo-inspired ideology and that Chicana women should follow in the footsteps of their Mexican-American/Chicano culture and be submissive and supporting women.

5.4.2 La Virgen de Guadalupe as a Perpetuation of Nationalist Discourses

An intricate connection is made between La Virgen de Guadalupe as a symbol of the Mexican-American/Chicano nation and culture, and the implied traditional gender roles of both Chicanos and Chicanas. Anzaldúa (1987) states “La Virgen de Guadalupe is the single most potent religious, political and culture image of the Chicano/mexicano” (p. 30). La Virgen as a symbol, however, has perpetuated strict gender roles for the Chicana woman to follow more strictly than Chicano men. This is evident in NietoGomez’s (1975/1997) essay that “Some Chicanas are similarly praised as they emulate the sanctified example set by [the Virgin] Mary. The woman par excellence is mother and wife... Thus, may she gain fulfillment as a woman. For a Chicana bent upon fulfillment of her personhood, this restricted perspective of her role as a woman is not only inadequate but crippling” (p. 222). Alexander and Mohanty (1997) brings forth a pivotal understanding to feminist postcolonial works, especially in relation to the policing of women’s bodies through nationalist discourses. This is evident in the use of La Virgen de Guadalupe’s symbolization as a nationalist symbol for the Mexican people. Alexander and Mohanty (1997) argue that “women’s bodies are disciplined in different ways... nationalist discourses, as guardians of culture and respectability...” (p. xxii). Within the loyalist and cultural nationalist debate, La Virgen becomes the site of contention due to her symbolization as the mother of the Mexican people, ‘Our Lady of Guadalupe’. Per the loyalist perspective, Chicana feminists were turning their backs on their culture and La Virgen’s symbolization for the

Mexican nation. A re-examination of Chicano/a history through a feminist perspective reveals otherwise.

Through a rising Chicana feminist consciousness, also came another counterargument to the loyalist debate: by adopting Chicana feminist beliefs, Chicanas were abandoning their Mexican culture and racial identity as Chicanas. A notable and dramatic slogan that was used within the Chicana Feminist Movement, “Our culture hell” begins to reveal the contradictions that Chicana feminists acknowledged with the traditional roles of La Chicana, such as the ‘Ideal Chicana’ that only marginalized their identities and opportunities within their own culture (García, 1989, p. 228). Roth (2004) reveals an integral aspect of the rising Chicana feminist movement as one that did not separate from their cultural roots or racial roots as Chicanas/Mexican-Americans but rather, as Roth (2004) argues, “the Chicana who was concerned about liberation must free herself from within her own culture but not from it” (Moreno, 1975 as cited in p. 144). Part of liberating Chicanas within their own culture, but not from it, was the act of acknowledging the “myth of virginity” that long policed Chicanas’ bodies into remaining pure and virginal, but also perpetuating a fear and degradation of female sexuality (Blackwell, 2011, p. 172). As argued by Blackwell (2011), the myth of virginity is deconstructed and acknowledged through the feminist consciousness raising efforts of Chicana feminists through print publications, conferences and group meetings.

From a Chicana feminist consciousness came an observation that began to dismantle the pride of *machismo* as a mechanism that was created by the prevailing colonial society that only served to continue to subvert *all* Chicanos and Chicanas. García’s (1997) anthology best explains this, “When Chicano men oppose the efforts of women to move against the oppression, they are actually opposing the struggle of every woman in this country aimed at changing a society in which Chicanos themselves are opposed...They are doing just what the white male rulers of this country have done” (Vidal, 1971/1997, p. 23). This is also supported by Martínez (1972/1997), “Sexism is a useful tool to the colonizer; the men are oppressed but they can beat and mistreat women, who thus serve as targets for a frustration that might otherwise become revolutionary” (p. 34). Part of this “culture hell” was the negation of the pride of *machismo* that was part of the ensuing cultural nationalist ideology and loyalist debate.

5.4.3 La Malinche and Precursors to Chicana Feminism

There is a similarity or a base of relation in which Chicana feminists could relate to La Malinche, viewing her once stigmatized role as an emancipatory one that is also complicated and not seen in wholehearted truth as their own role as Chicana feminists. This is the reasoning for the Chicana feminist focus on their Chicana history, revealing the *actualized* nature of the Chicana women within their history, who were feminists even before the terminology of ‘feminism’ began to be used within the United States. In this manner, La Malinche was further reclaimed as a ‘positive symbol’ and ‘role model’ for Chicana feminists (Moya, 2001).

The direct connection between La Malinche and Chicana feminists is clear through the derogatory terminology associated with La Malinche that have been popularized and used on Chicana feminists by the Chicano Movement and Chicanas who did not agree with a feminist movement. In connection to La Malinche or La Chingada, terms, such as ‘*vendidas*’ [sell outs], and ‘*malinchismo*’ or ‘*malinchistas*’ were “commonly used in Mexico today to denote selling out to foreigners” (Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979, p. 34). A negative connection was made between Chicanas who identified as feminists and La Malinche’s long and tragic history as a traitress of the Mexican nation. An uncovering of the source of their oppression is the key changing element of the rising Chicana feminist consciousness, a reaching for the actualized nature of their history as Chicana women. Uncovering their oppression includes revisiting Malinche’s historical context, revealing that her label as the sole reason for the fall of the Aztec Empire is false and misguided (ibid).

As Chicana feminists were being called derogatory terms such as *vendida* and *malinchistas*, a reclamation of La Malinche and overall feminist beliefs ensued. It had a productive effect “as it stimulated Chicanas into arguing for their place within the movement and making concrete political counterarguments defining their feminism” (Roth, 2004, p. 157). From this productive stimulation came the two main counterarguments used to justify Chicana feminist organizing: “the existence of the ‘historical Chicana feminist’ in Chicano and Mexican history, and the need to remake the family for struggle against Anglo domination” (ibid, p. 158). Chicana feminists, in this manner, not only produced historically-based counterarguments to the loyalist and cultural nationalist debate against feminism ideologies, but they essentially re-discovered La Malinche and other role models.

Blackwell (2011) extends this pivotal argument that is introduced in each analysis material. Specifically, she reclaims the ‘*vendida*’ [sellout/traitor] and ‘*agringadas*’ [race traitors] terminology that was often used as a derogatory term to refer to Malinche through her conceptualization of the “*vendida logic*” (p. 30). This was used to further delegitimize the Chicano movement’s dismissal of Chicana feminism. The ‘*vendida logic*’ was a “silencing mechanism used against dissident Chicana activists that labeled them as divisive or as sellouts to the movement due to their desire to include Chicana rights within the movement” (ibid). Blackwell (2011) breaks down this logic into its components that are revealed to encase the misogynistic, machismo logic of the Chicano movement that are limited in their knowledge and understanding of Chicana identities, claiming them to be “ignorant of the feminist history of Latin America and the ways that Chicana feminists took their inspiration from early-twentieth-century Mexican feminism and women’s revolutionary participation...” (ibid). La Malinche’s re-interpreted and re-historicized role in history aids in breaking down understandings of the loyalist debate that was often used against the development of a Chicana Feminist Movement. Even in Blackwell’s (2011) argumentation, the theme continues from the argument first being explained in the first work of this feminist genealogy, Mirandé and Enríquez (1979) and their statement that “Chicana feminists are seeking not only to redefine the role of La Malinche and to recognize her as a great woman but to uncover the source of their oppression. She is a positive symbol because ‘malinche’ has become identified with ‘vendido’, or ‘traitor—labels which Chicana feminist have also endured” (p. 241-242).

By revisiting history with a keen perspective on Chicana history, “they drew on historical role models in order to counter charges of the ‘outside’ nature of feminism; they used the theme of an indigenous Chicana and Mexican feminism to justify their struggle as feminists” (Roth, 2004, p. 159). Within this creation of counterarguments came the explicit focus on La Malinche, positively aligning themselves with her symbolizations as “the unfairly maligned sixteenth century Indian princess Malintzin (mother of the Mexican people) ... ‘Proving that her participation was “inherently feminist” (ibid). More importantly, these historical figures were “recast as feminist *and* indigenous Chicana figures (even if Mexicana rather than Chicana), such that women’s participation in the ongoing Chicano nationalist struggle had roots that could be found in pre-Columbian Mexican society, and that this participation was inherently feminist” (Cortera 1976a as cited in Roth, 2004, p. 160).

6. Conclusion

A feminist genealogy has only begun to reveal the intricacies and complexities of the lives of Chicana feminists and the re-membering and re-analyzation of the cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe. Both symbols analyzed here have played a vital role in the creation and development of a Chicana feminist consciousness, the beginning threads of the Chicana Feminist Movement. They were each reclaimed as ‘feminist symbols’ and ‘positive role models’ and used to tackle the misguided history and traditional gender roles of Chicana women. Chicana feminists not only produced historically-based counterarguments to the loyalist and cultural nationalist debate against feminism ideologies, but they essentially re-discovered La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe, cultural symbols that have been used for generations to constrict Chicana women into following within the good/bad woman and whore/virgin dichotomy.

Much has been expanded in understandings regarding all theories utilized in this project: cultural theory, feminist postcolonial theory, and the theory of intersectionality. This analysis has supported the expansive and broad nature of cultural theory, supporting Hall’s (1994) argumentation that the dynamic and continually changing nature of cultures include intricate identities with histories that “undergo constant transformation” (p. 223). A continual transformation has been observed through this analysis of the culture symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe, giving a glimpse into the maneuverings and mechanisms of Mexican-American/Chicano culture through the perspective of the developing Chicana Feminist Movement. La Malinche has revealed the reclaiming maneuvers made by several Chicana feminists, re-claiming Malinalli as an agent of history and change who was more than the ‘traitress’, ‘whore’ label that Chicano culture has bestowed upon her. La Virgen de Guadalupe as a complex-natured symbol that once upheld the symbolization of sexuality and life and death; a symbolization that has constricted Chicana women into a virgin/whore dichotomy.

This analysis has only just begun the discovery of the intricate identities of Chicana feminists, and their connection to the cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe. A feminist postcolonial approach with an intricate connection to the theory of intersectionality has supported a primary thematic thread within Chicana Studies focused on the Chicana Feminist Movement and the cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe: La Chicana as an ethnic identity and historical agent has been largely ignored and silenced when creating

broadened and detailed understandings of Chicano/a history. Intersecting axes of identity reveal the overpowering dominance of institutionalized sexism, and racism when a reinterpretation and re-membering of Chicana history is conducted. A feminist postcolonial reinterpretation is essential to understanding feminist social movements, unearthing the complexity of history and hegemonic modes of knowledge production that limit the marginalized: women of color.

For us to understand social movements, such as the complex nature of the Chicana Feminist Movement, it is essential to understand these symbols with these theories in conjunction with one another. These theories have aided in unveiling the necessity of multiple perspectives when re-membering history. The most important perspective being of those of the marginalized and subjugated in history, revealing, as has been shown here, intricate histories that deny the domineering stories of history. Chicanas have long been part of Chicano history, an argumentation that is detailed further when understanding the two cultural symbols analyzed here and their complex impact in creating and developing Chicana feminist consciousness and thus the Chicana Feminist Movement. Many Chicana feminists at the time were being bombarded by a multi-oppressional identity along gender, class, and racialized axes. The two cultural symbols aided in creating and establishing a developing Chicana feminist consciousness that was then used to tackle the multi-oppressional lives of many Chicana feminists. A challenging of traditional Chicana gender roles, the traditional family, and the cultural nationalist argumentation against a developing Chicana feminist movement occurred through the reinterpretation and reclamation of both symbols.

Like La Malinche, La Virgen de Guadalupe undergoes similar reclamation and reinterpretation projects throughout each of the analysis materials. However, it must be noted that the Virgin of Guadalupe, or 'Our Lady of Guadalupe' as she has come to also be known as, is minimally mentioned within the reclamations and re-memberings of history that are all visible within the analysis materials. This has been noticed in comparison to the reclamations and reinterpretations made in regards to La Malinche or Doña Marina. Instead, La Virgen de Guadalupe is implied to be discussed, rather than mentioned in the analysis materials when scholars mention motherhood, Catholic religion, and virginity. There is a silencing that is being observed of this symbol. Interestingly so, especially when considering that La Virgen de Guadalupe is repeatedly mentioned as the central figure of the Mexican/Chicano people (Anzaldúa, 1987; García, 1997; Mirandé and Enríquez, 1979). For this reason, a minimal

introduction has been presented here, thus necessitating extended research projects of this topic of the Chicana Feminist Movement.

There is much more to be analyzed and unearthed about the Chicana Feminist Movement of the 1960s-1980s, especially so for the modern developments and current standings of the Chicana movement. A modern analysis begs the questioning, how have the cultural symbols of La Malinche and Virgen de Guadalupe been developed since the Chicana Feminist Movement of the 1980s? Have reclamation and emancipation projects continued and been deepened to emancipate the symbols but also Chicana identities as well?

7. References

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