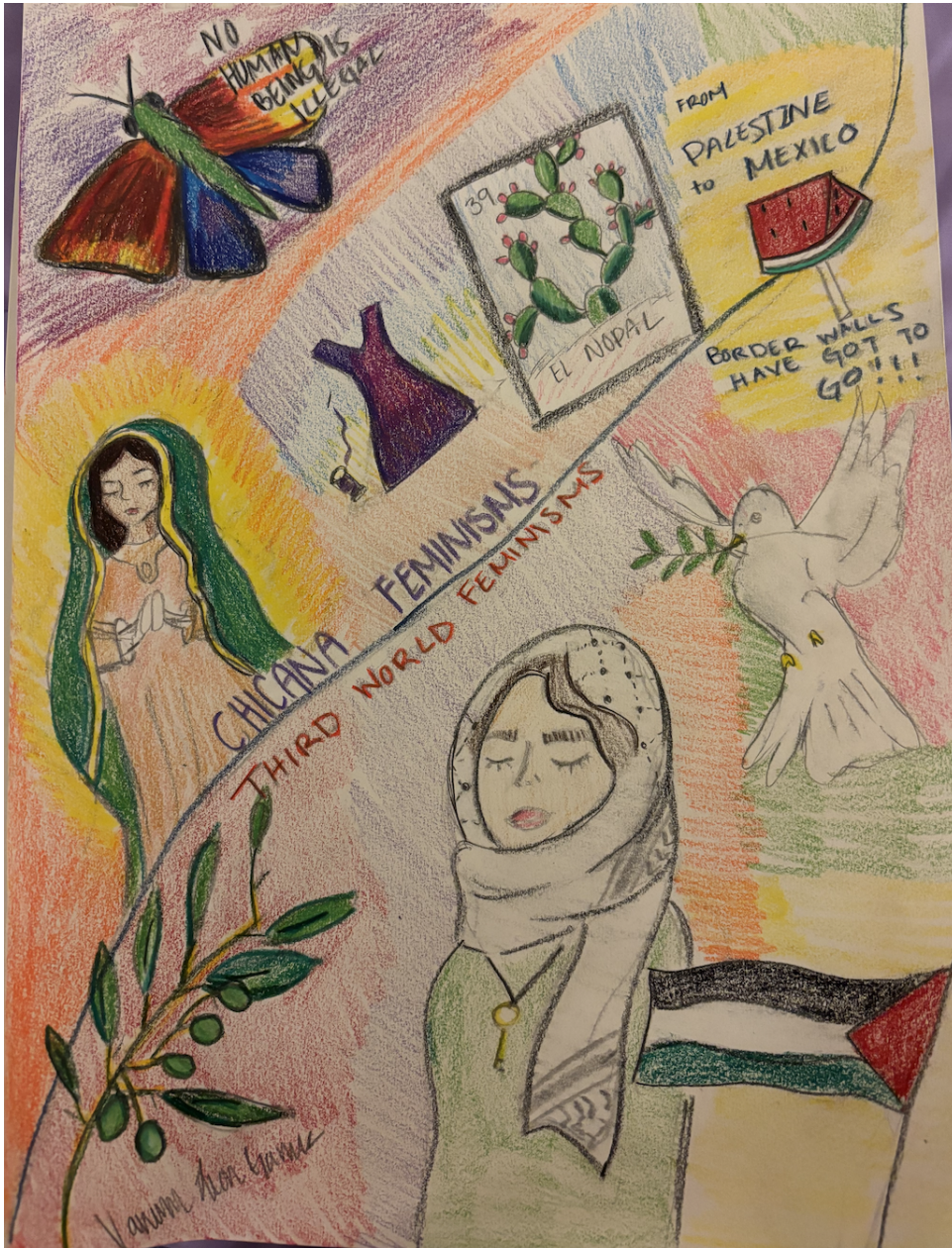


CRES: Reflection on Chicana and Third World Feminisms

This quarter, my first critical reflection paper focused on reproductive health and abortion rights in Mexico, while the second paper focused on gender-based violence in Palestine. So, this drawing reflects Chicana and Third-world Feminism and the importance of collective liberation.

- In this drawing, I pulled inspiration from symbols in my life as a Mexican-American who identifies as Chicana and artwork and symbols I've seen at protests, rallies, and circulating in the media.



Although I'm not the best at art, because I wanted this to be a reflective process, I thought it would be better to draw something that would be more of a form of self-care, which we established throughout the quarter!

On the Chicana feminism side, I have different symbols-pictures I will discuss, analyze, and relate to our course content.

A. Chicana Feminisms

- In my first critical reflection essay, I analyzed the decriminalization of abortion in Mexico and Latina women's fight for reproductive health care.
 - Mexico is a very patriarchal (Machista) country under the Catholic Church, so beginning to destigmatize sex, abortion, and contraception is huge in Latin America.

1. Symbol: La virgen de guadaulupe

- a. Gloria Anzaldua emphasizes the importance of symbols and stories within Chicana communities as La Virgen de Guadalupe doesn't only signify an important religious figure, but she “took upon herself the psychological and physical devastation of the conquered and oppressed Indio, she is our spiritual, political, and psychological symbol” and thus Guadalupe is a symbol of rebellion. In addition, “La gente Chicana tiene tres madres. All three are mediators: Guadalupe, the virgin mother who has not abandoned us; la Chingada (Malinche), the raped mother whom we have abandoned and la Llorona, the mother who seeks her lost children and is a combination of the other two” (p, 52). These stories help frame Chicana feminism and how we view women's roles within society.
- b. As for the catholic church, La Raza Unida talks about thinking critically about the institutions. When thinking about marriage, we need to acknowledge the role of religion in which the institutionalization of the Catholic Church has contributed to the harm within Latino communities when it comes to these traditional gender roles and also awareness surrounding oppressive systems. When thinking of the Church, we should be framing this space for community use, establishing communication with the “barrio, and implementing programs of awareness to the Chicano movement.”

2. Butterfly

- a. A symbol for women fighting for abortion and against femicide
- b. It is also used as a symbol for undocumented immigrants, as butterflies symbolize migration, and how butterflies migrate freely is how humans should also be able to navigate and travel through the world freely
 - i. There is also a sense of irony in believing human beings are illegal on land that was stolen and occupied

3. Dress

- a. It signifies the Garment industry and how Latinas are exploited within the labor force. This has personal significance to me as my mom was a maquiladora worker, not for dresses but for surgical gowns, so I know a lot about how these factories are oppressive and exploitative to the Mexican people. This relates to Gloria Anzaldua as she talks about how "mestizo workers are then caught between being treated as criminals and being able to eat" (p. 3)
- b. Additionally, La Raza Unida emphasizes the importance of Latinas having access to resources such as labor unions to fight exploitation and that they are deserving of equal pay/

4. El Nopal

- a. This is pulled from the Loteria game cards, loteria being a common family bingo-like game within Mexican communities. I chose the Nopal card specifically

because I am from Sonora, a borderland, a desert land. There are also common phrases within our communities, like “Tener el nopal en la frente” (having the cactus on your forehead), often used to call out Mexican-Americans for not embracing their culture; however, this also traces back to racist roots.

B. Third World Feminisms

- In my second critical essay, I focused on GBV for women in Palestine and the impacts of the Israeli Regime. During colonialism, war, and violence, women are often targeted and sexual violence becomes a strategy for colonization.

1. Palestinian woman

- a. Key around her neck.
 - i. During the Nakba of 1948, about ~750,000 Palestinians were displaced and forced out of their homes. The victims of that event or their now descendants have held onto their keys to their homes in hopes of one day going back, so it is a symbol of hope and resistance.
- b. The Keffiyeh is a symbol of resistance
 - i. Olive leaves resilience and strength
 - ii. Fishnet= connection between the Palestinian sailor and the sea since Palestinians experience an air, land, and sea blockade
 - iii. The Bold Lines = trade routes going through Palestine, a long, rich history of merchants' travel and cultural exchange.
 - iv. Simply wearing this carmen is a form of resistance
- c. Hijab/ Veil
 - i. As Chandra Mohanty analyzes, women who wear some form of veil within Muslim countries are always stereotyped by the West that the hijab imposes sexual control over these women (Mohanty, 2003, p. 33). To assume that the mere presence of a veil means that a person is oppressed and robbed of their sexuality is not only “analytically reductive but also proves quite useless when it comes to the elaboration of oppositional political strategy” (Mohanty, 2003, p.34).
 - ii. In the West, we tend to homogenize the experiences of Arab and Muslim women as passive victims of patriarchy without recognizing their unique identities, experiences, and historical/religious contexts.

2. Olive Trees

- a. Colonization is violent, immoral, and unjust, and the destroying of cultural land items and traditions is a way that Israel beats down the morale of the Palestinians. Over 800,000 olive trees have been destroyed, trees that were a vital source of food and were in Palestinian families for generations.
 - i. When we talk about indigenous people, we KNOW Palestinians are indigenous because native people would never bomb their sacred land, destroy their trees, or destroy the graves of their ancestors.

3. Dove

- a. In honor of all of the innocent people who have been brutally murdered and injured.

Collective Liberation;

1. Watermelon:

- a. I have a watermelon on the side; it is a Mexican candy called Rebanaditas that I've been seeing used on protest flyers to signify collective liberation. The Palestinians use watermelons because they share the same colors as their flags after it became illegal to fly their flags. This is significant because Chicana and Palestinian liberation are intertwined; at protests, there's a chant, "From Palestine to Mexico: these border walls have got to go." Sometimes, people don't understand the symbolism and significance of a wall, of a physical barrier to represent us vs. them. As Anzaldúa states, "Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish "us " from "them. "The US-Mexican border is "una herida abierta, where the third world grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scam forms, it hemorrhages again the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country—a border culture" (p. 9). When there is a physical barrier to separate human beings, it becomes a symbol of dehumanization.

2. Homogenization of Arabs and Latinos

- a. In the same way that the West categorizes all Muslims and Arabs, they categorize Latinos. All Latino immigrants suddenly become Mexican when, in recent years, it's no longer Mexicans crossing the border; instead, 80% of Latinos who are crossing the border now are Latinos from Central American countries. When we homogenize the stories and experiences of Latinos into one nation, one culture, and one religion without understanding the historical contexts or what that community is, it plays into the imperial power of dehumanization. Because all these communities are unique, there's a critical need for accurate and intentional intersectionality.

3. Conclusions:

- a. Overall, we have a collective responsibility in the West to highlight and center the voices of Palestinian women and stay away from the white Western discourse that critiques third-world feminism as it attempts to homogenize all Arabs. As well as centering Chicanas in their fight for liberation, we need to keep challenging these systems of colonialism because all of our oppressions intertwine. Israel has been involved in many Latin American civil wars where they've helped aid right-wing groups with weapons and have harmed our indigenous communities. Israel, as a settler power, isn't only impacting Palestine but Latin America, which is why it's so important to stand in solidarity and fight for collective liberation. The dismantling of the Israeli regime is a symbol of how the West will come crashing down, how