



The Influence of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in Frida Kahlo y Lila Downs.

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AGENDA

- I. The Importance of the Study
- II. Research Questions
- III. Feminist Principles Sor Juana Ines
- IV. Biography of Sor Juana Ines
- V. The feminism of Sor Juana Ines of the sixteenth century through her literature.
 - A. A summary of the literary texts, and feminist fragments in her work.
 - B. Analysis of her poems and literary works: *Hombres Necios, La Respuesta and Los Empeños de Una Casa.*
- VI. Biography of Frida Kahlo
 - A. Analysis of her diary
- VII. Biography of Lila Downs
 - A. Analysis of lyric texts of her songs.
- VIII. The influence and connection of Mexican feminism between Sor Juana Ines, Frida Kahlo and Downs.
 - A. Analysis of how they have influenced for a modern feminism through their works.
- IX. Conclusion
- X. Bibliography

The Importance of the Study

- To understand the feminist framework and ideals that are presented by Sor Juana Ines in her work.
- Take in consideration her influence in the Mexican culture through the centuries like it is seen in the work of Frida Kahlo and Lila Downs.

Research Questions

1. How can the influences of the literary work from the 16th century done by Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz be seen in other Mexican women from the 20th and 21st century like Frida Kahlo and Lila Downs in their poetry and lyrics?
2. How can you see connections between the work presented by these women and their interest in being heard in a man lead world?

Methodology

- Analyze “Foolish men”, *Sor Filotea*, *The Response*, *The House of Trails* written by Sor Juana and use them as a reference for the principles of feminists.
- Thus connect between them the influence that she brings to the memories and lyrics of Kahlo and Downs.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz



Source: Academy of American Poets

- Born on November 12, 1651 in San Miguel de Nepantla, México.
- Died on April 17, 1695 in Ciudad de México, México.
- Her name as a child Juana de Asbaje
- Daughter of a Spanish soldier and of a Mexican creole.
- Known as a writer, nun, and intellectual as well as considered the most important figure of Hispanic American baroque literature.
- She was always a very bright girl and her passion for learning began at a very young age leading her to catch the attention of the New Spain Viceroy.
- She was called “décima musa” and “fénix mexicana”.

Sor Juana's Feminist Principles

Fundamental examples in which she is the first influential women of feminist ideas

→ Her struggle to continue attending school

- ◆ Her immense interest in education, and the simple fact of continuing with her education. Even going as far as to dress as a man to enroll in university events shows her courage and character as a woman.

→ Her legacy through her work.

- ◆ Literary work with which she leaves reflected her thoughts, complaints and laments of the world in which she thinks is unfair to women. In certain works she offers a description of values about women, or how women are valued or seen in their time. (Feminas 8)

→ Her character and way of responding

- ◆ This value demonstrates the constant determination to overcome the opposite of the social norms that were set for a woman by men, and puts it as an influence on the foundations of the feminist frame of reference. (Lemus)

Letter to Sor Filotea, The Response

- A response to Obispo Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz.
- He considered it unpleasant to continue with his studies, or simply with his subjects of letters and sciences, he reminds her of her place, and most of all he reminded her of the religious rules and laws in which a woman must behave. Sor Juana, instead of listening, or taking note of the warnings, decides to write this "letter" where she defends herself and denounces the prejudices in which women should not live.

Letter to Sor Filotea, The Response

“Si Aristóteles hubiera guisado, mucho más hubiera escrito.”

“If Aristotle had cooked, he would have written much more.”

- Sor Juana The Response

Sor Juana's The Response to the Letter is a clear example of her strong command of rhetorical writing. Instead of lending ears to censorship, she writes a biography that goes beyond in constructing an intellectual modern subject"(*Feminas* 7)

“Hombres necios” / *Foolish Men*

In the poem , “Hombres necios”, written in 1689, the most famous and important phrase comes from the following stanza,

**“Hombres necios que acusáis
a la mujer sin razón,
sin ver que sois la ocasión
de lo mismo que culpáis”**

**“You foolish men who lay
the guilt on women,
not seeing you’re the cause
of the very thing you blame”**

"Sor Juana's famous Redondillas stanzas are widely known and lauded as her early poetry that best exemplifies the Tenth Muse's bold feminism". (***Lemus 21***)

The House of Trails



The character of Doña Leonor was and continues to be a direct connection to what many academics think is what Sor Juana would have liked to say. In general, the work offers great importance to gender roles in which women should represent with the characters of Ana and Doña Leonora.

Frida Kahlo



- Very important Mexican painter from the 1900's.
- Born on 1907 in Coyoacán, México
- Illness, infidelity, infertility
- Her husband Diego Rivera was always a great influence on her
- Her opinion of the retrograde system of Mexico and the American capitalism of the early century always led her to stand out.
- She is now recognized as an image of feminism since it was her way of living and excelling
- She was very proud of her culture and her indigenous image was a very important part of her being

Letter to Diego Rivera



Source: My art my life, autobiography

Letter to Diego Rivera:

Don't think I'll forget this. It's not time. You didn't comprehend what I am, I am love, I am pleasure, I am essence, I am an idiot, I am an alcoholic, I am tenacious, I am an artist. I simply am. And what are you, what must I do amongst your offenses? Continue to believe your foolishness and accept you're a god? You are a god pretending to be a pagan god. Keep your disgusting life, you are shit.

-Frida Kahlo



Letter to Diego Rivera

- It is an example of the way in which she identifies herself as a woman and excels in the usual terms in which women are generally classified as.
- Male Gaze: a western feminist epistemology that, can be connected and referenced in the works of Frida. The idea of depicting, the world of the woman through a male perspective.
- Brought up in 1975 by Laura Mulvey.
- Frida looks at herself through Diego's eyes.

- Artist, actress, and singer of the 21st Century who is recognized as a carrier of Mexican culture, especially the indigenous culture of Mexico
- Born on September 19, 1968 in Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca. She was the daughter of a mixed Oaxacan mother and her father was an American anthropologist and professor.
- She came to live in the two countries of Mexico and the United States and is considered a Mexican-American.
- Composer of songs. Written on social problems such as migration, politics and more than anything the empowerment and representation of Mexican women.

Lila Downs



“Envidia” / “Envy”

Lila Downs

I don't sell out like you /
actually you do / you owe me /
all my years, my best ones you
stole from me / where did they
go? / where did our dreams
from yesterday go?

“Envidia” / “Envy”

Lila Downs

Response to a person

Tropes and rhetorical figures as irony because the two as in the response of Sor Juana ironically answer before the men who want to knock them down, she replies saying that he is envious.



They say I am dangerous / that I
am painful / because I want to
live like this / they say I am
substantial / stubborn and
beautiful / I can't continue this
like this.



Peligrosa

Lila Downs



“Peligrosa” / “Dangerous Woman”

Why do they think strong women are dangerous?”

-“It’s about the admiration for women that have an enormous and grand strength” and the “perception that us women are dangerous.” (Lila Downs The New York Times)

They are women

- The importance of Sor Juana Ines goes beyond the history that represents her, her literary texts left us and opened us, and continue to open the doors to new understandings. Although she unknowingly from the sixteenth century already had ideals with which in the twentieth century identified it as fundamental in the recognition of feminist frames of reference.
- Dangerous, women to who?

- The three women fight, in three different centuries, the same norms, and are put before women or before themselves.



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