

**MEXICAN IDENTITY OF THE 21ST
CENTURY THROUGH THE WORKS
OF FERNANDA MELCHOR**



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Overview

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Research questions

- How does machismo culture affect male and female characters in Melchor's works?
 - How is Mexican identity reflected in the language used by the male characters?
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Research Purpose

This project aims to examine the internalization of social constructs and the *mexicanismos* (Mexican vernacular) used by male characters in the text. This internalization and use of language are part of a bridge that exists between the acts of thinking, saying and doing that lead to the formation of the violent identity of male characters in Melchor's novels.

Literature Review

MEXICANISMOS (MEXICANISMS) AS A REFLECTION OF MEXICANNESS (LA MEXICANIDAD)

- National traumas and “national unity” (Monsiváis)
- Origin of gender roles
- Verbal expression of traditionalist ideals: Mexicanisms*

* Mexican vernacular: A set of voices, locutions, expressions and meanings that characterize the speech of Mexico that distance the Mexican variant from other variants of Spanish (Parada Valdés).



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Literature Review

MACHISMO IN MEXICO

- Gender stereotypes
- Sexist and misogynistic cultural ideas
- The perpetuity and development of machismo
 - Traditional roles
 - Family nucleus
 - Taboos
 - Symbolic violence



Mural "Cortés y La Malinche" by José Clemente Orozco

Literature Review

MEXICAN FEMINISM AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT



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History of Mexican feminism

- Education rights [end of the 19th century]
- Suffragettes [1953]
- Femicides [Cd. Juárez 1993]
- "Ni Una Más" (not one more) movement [2012-present]

Literature Review

FEMALE MEXICAN AUTHORS

The label or general idea that literature written by women is "light" (Sefchovich 225)

- Protests
 - Feminism
 - Denunciation



Illustration by Antonia Santolaya for the book "La mujer del porvenir"

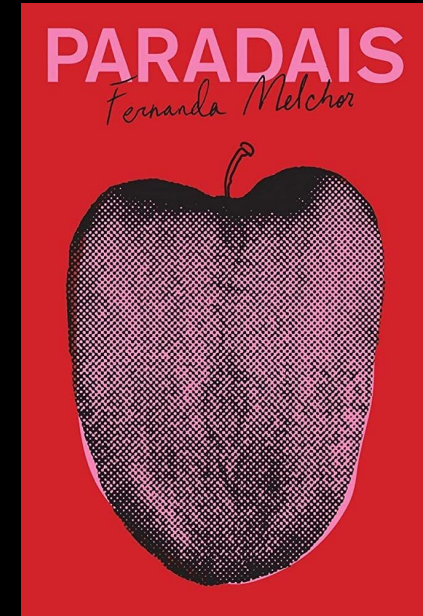
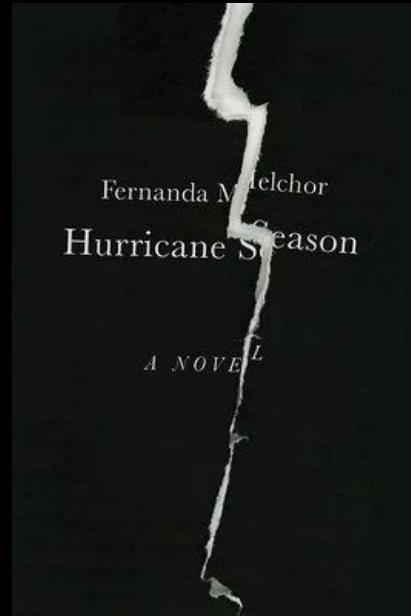
Author Biography

FERNANDA MELCHOR



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Born in Veracruz, Mexico (1982). Melchor earned her bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Veracruz and a master's degree in aesthetics and art from the Meritorious Autonomous University of Puebla.



Recurring themes: machismo, drug trafficking, sexuality, violence, prostitution and addictions.

Methodology

Hurricane Season (2017)

Brando and Luisimi

Paradais (2021)

Polo and Franco

- Internalization
 - To think
 - To say
 - To do



Analysis

INTERNALIZATION

Hurricane Season (2017): Brando and Luismi

Paradais (2021): Polo and Franco

- Family nucleus
 - The absence of the father and the “*mucha madre*” (being excessively cared for by your mother)
 - Family values
- Social circle
 - Direct and indirect social pressure to be a “macho man”
- Symbolic violence - Pornography



Analysis

TO THINK

- Mental representation of internalization
- Mexicanisms are used in the description of the victims
- Misogyny, objectification and transphobia.

“he despised that slut’s airs and graces...that she was nothing but a whore, a gold digger who thought that going around handing out her husband’s spare change somehow made her more respectable?
... **The fucking queen bee***” (“Paradis” 24-25)

“the Witch deserved it: for being a dirty fag, for being a cunt and a bully. No one was going to miss that cocksucking Witch”
 (“Hurricane” 148)

*The translation of this sentence does not reflect the severity of what’s being said in Spanish: *“La muy hija de la chingada”*



Analysis

TO SAY

- Linguistic selection
- Machismo represented in orality

“How would you convince her?... Maybe it’s not a question of convincing her, right? ...If I kill her after, she won’t be able to tell anymore it was me...force her to strip...I’ll take care of that, and in the meantime you can raid the place” (“Paradis” 80-84)

“the plan was to go to her place and ask for a loan, or straight up lift it if we can; you know what they say, Luisimi, they say some guy once found a coin under the leg of a piece of furniture” (“Hurricane” 185)*

“Let’s go get that money...let’s go over to the Witch’s” (Hurricane” 187)*

*These translations do not reflect the severity of what’s being said in Spanish.



Analysis

TO DO

- Widespread violence
- Femicide and Trans-femicide

“what was he doing fucking wasting time like that! Why didn’t he hurry up and fuck her so they could get out of there?”
 (“Paradis”107)

“the shot that rang out from the stairwell and which sent the witch tumbling head over heels to the ground” (“Paradis” 107)

“Brando told Luismi that they’d better take her somewhere else, throw her in the woods to make it harder to find her”
 (“Hurricane”192)

“with the full force of his body he thrust the knife into the Witch’s throat, once, twice, and one more for luck”
 (“Hurricane” 193)



Results

CULTURE: MACHO SYSTEM IN MEXICO

- Violence
- Femicides
- Complaint
- Impunity
- Perpetuity



Conclusion

NATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY

- The Inheritance and practice of machismo:
 - Traditional values
 - Linguistic selection
 - Complicity
 - Culture of *valemadrismo* (indifference)



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QUESTIONS?



Da sinistra. Abito di
mousseline, tulle piumato
e charity rebrod, tessuti
Carnic, tulle beige
di mousseline con bordi
di charity e ricami di
crystal, tessuto Sandro,
entrambi Valentino
Couture, Furrucci di maglia
luxe, Gianfranco Ferré
Collezione Evening
Abito a broccato Tote da
Jouy e camicia
di voile, Christiane Paris.

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