

Chicano literature: An overview

Pandurang S Athawale

Asst. Prof., Dept. of English, Nehru Maha. Ner (Pt.), Dist. Yavatmal, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

Chicano literature, the term refers to people of Mexican ancestry, the permanent residents in the U.S. for an extended period. As a part of writing Chicano literature is relatively young, having taken shape in the generation or so after the conclusion of the Mexican war in 1848.

The important period in the history of the Mexican Southwest in 1848, when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended two years of warfare between Mexico and the U.S. and ratified the relinquishment of nearly half of Mexico's land. A good deal of literary energy was expended in chronicling the American surpassed of the southwest. In the earlier time, the outcome of historical and personal narratives was complemented by a barrage of poetry. It developed various form of literature.

By 1900, Mexican American literature had forced as an important part of the literary culture of the U.S. After World War II it accelerated the movement into large cities. The major task now before Chicano and Chicana writers was ethnic identity.

Keywords: chicano/a, indigenous, chicanismo, latino/a, ethnicity, spanglish

Introduction

As per the census of 2004 the latino/a is the largest minority of the U.S. with 41.3 million in habitants, in account for approximately 14% of the national total. As the information, the said group has more than doubled since 1980 because of its high birth rate and immigration. It is around 25 million are of Mexican descent.

A Mexican-American or Chicano /a is an individual of Mexican origin that lives in the U.S. During the last decades it produced cultural production, particularly literature. About 50 percent of the Hispanics in the U.S. have large Hispanic populations, include Texas, New York, Illinois, and Florida, where hundreds of, thousands of Cubans fleeing the Castro Regime have settled. There are so many Cuban American in Miami that the Miami Herald, the city's largest newspaper.

The term Hispanic was coined by the federal government in the 1970s to refer to the people who were born in any of the Spanish-Speaking countries of the Americas or those who could trace their ancestry to Spain or former Spanish territories. These represent social, political and emotional experiences.

Chicano Literature and Its History

Historically, Chicano literature dated, to same time after the Mexican-American war beginning in the era of 1848. It came in practice from many different genres i.e. narrative, poetry and drama.

It mainly focuses on themes of identity discrimination, culture, and history, ethnicity, focusing on the Mexican-American experiences or Chicano culture in U.S. It is chiefly associated with the social and cultural claims of the Chicano movement. The most important themes include the experience of migration, and the situation of relation between two languages. It is generally written in either English or Spanish or Mixture of the two: Spanglish.

In political point of view, Chicano culture focused on the quest of the border and the ways the Chicanos struggle and cross the border.

The major contributions are of the feminists in the literature such as Gloria Anzaldua and Cherrie Moraga. The main publication in 2003 authored by Alisa Valdes-Rodriguez's *The Dirty Girls social club*. The chief figures in Chicano literature are Rudolfo Anya, Sabine R. Ulibarri, Rodolfo Gonzales, Rafael C. Castillo, Sandra Cisneros, Oscar Zeta Acosta, Rolando Hinojosa, etc.

There are some social aspects of Chicano. Militant Chicanos regardless of their generational status and tend to connect themselves culturally to the indigenous peoples of North America and generally to a nation of Aztlan with cultural aspects the term Chicano is used to describe artistically as musical movements that emerged from the Chicano movement. In literary sense road to "Corky" Gonzale's "Yo Soy Joaquin" is one of the first examples of Chicano poetry, while Jose Antonio Villarreal's *Pocho* is widely famous as Chicano first novels. Richard Vasquez's *Chicano*, was the first novel about Mexican American released by the publisher, Doubleday, 1970. Chicano literature also addresses the themes in the visual arts, murals and graphics arts. Lalo Guerrero was called the father of Chicano music. Then they developed their pop-music and rock also.

Chicano nationalism is the pro-indigenist ethnic nationalist ideology of Chicanos. In the Era of 1950s and 1960s violence and discrimination against Mexican Americans generally of lower class and visible Amerindian ancestry increased. In many areas of life, Mexican-Americans were rejected for example; signs with the phrase "No Dogs or Mexicans" were posted, and also excluded from white society. Some members raised a question for assimilation. But at the same time, they have a sense of ethnic consciousness calling themselves "Chicanos" as a symbol of ethnic pride. Then it developed Chicano nationalism. It was enhanced by a geographical proximity of the United States and Mexico.

Chicanismo is the ideology behind the Chicano movement. It has a number of factors for the liberties of Mexican-Americans. It was shaped by a number of intellectuals and influential

activists to create a strong sense of self- identity. They have their own movement called Chicano movement of the 1960s also called the Chicano Civil Rights movement for achieving the goal of Mexican-American empowerment. It encompassed the section of restoration of land grants, farm workers rights, enhancing education, awakening about political rights, and awareness of collective history. It also addressed discrimination in public and private institutions. Nowadays in the 20th century, Mexican-American formed organizations for protection from discrimination, the League of United Latin American citizens (1929).

There are major epicenters of the Chicano movement as Albuquerque, Chicago, Corpus Christi, Dallas, Delano Los Angeles, Denver, Phoenix, El Paso, San Diego etc.

Chicana literature is generally emerged during the Chicano /a movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It is a work by Mexican-American women writers dating back to the 19th century. There have been ethnicity a veritable factor in the struggle in for all Chicana writer. Literature by and about Chicanas has particularly since the 1990s.

Conclusion:

Thus, the early Chicano literature reflects a similar socio-political agenda with an emphasis on the recuperation of historical memory. This, later production is characterized by individualistic and self-critical voices for opening the boundaries and contribute to the creation for multi-faceted work.

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