

BOOK REVIEW

Contesting the Historiography of the Chicano Movement with Marginalized Movidas

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Chicana Movidas : New Narratives of Activism and Feminism in the Movement Era. By editors Dionne Espinoza, María Eugenia Cotera, and Maylei Blackwell. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2018. Pp. 467. \$35.00 (paper).

Chicanas Movidas: New Narratives of Activism and Feminism in the Movement Era, edited by Dionne Espinoza, María Eugenia Cotera, and Maylei Blackwell, is an exceptional labor of love. Chicanas have been yearning for and came at a time when we needed to be reminded of the oppression our comadres tackled, as we would soon face our own during a global pandemic. Centering the term “movidas” as both a submerged and undercover activity of unrecognized leaders, this volume uses various archives of resistance to bring out the women of color praxis created and used within the actions that largely defined the political and Chicano Movement narratives of the global 1960s and 1970s (2-3). Chicanas developed and deployed various political and cultural praxes to dispute multiple fronts of struggles, identifying and challenging the marginalization of their communities by revealing intersectional oppressions and transcending the existing boundaries of Chicano studies, feminist theory, and queer theory to construct a new mode of resistance—Chicana feminist studies (3). Using testimonios and interviews, institutional and community-based archival research, and personal collections, writings from graduate students to tenured professors demonstrate the ways these Chicanas incorporated new methodologies, theories, and art expression, and developed

organizational spaces, methods, and alliances to shift the focus on male-focused activism to the overlooked movidas executed across various physical and metaphorical spaces.

This anthology is organized into four essay sections mapping the intersecting and overlapping sites of struggles and resistance of movidas—“Hallway Movidas” (the hidden actors and their moves within the margins of political and institution spaces), “Home-Making Movidas” (creating a space and longevity for Chicana feminism), “Movidas of Crossing” (crossing borders and forging alliances), and “Memory Movidas” (the recovery of counter-memories) (12). The contributors analyzed Chicanas’ personal “herstories” and intersectional experiences that gave rise to the multifaceted politics and activism across local, national, and international stages. “Hallway Movidas” highlights the day-to-day movidas happening in hallways after public events to link the Chicanas’ oppositional consciousness with tackling their oppression and exclusion and determining how to expand the Chicano movement and women’s movement agendas to broaden social change (15). “Home-Making Movidas” focuses on the invisible labor of Chicanas within the Chicano movement and the labor they embarked on to create new physical and metaphorical spaces (homes) for themselves, their activism, and their communities through creative and critical modes of theatre, writing, art, filmmaking, performing and singing. The section “Movidas of Crossing” alludes to Chicanas moving “between, beyond, and across multiple borders, including those of nationalisms, cultures, social movements, nation-states, histories, languages, and group identities, to make common cause with others who shared their social justice goals” (21) by tracing the complexities of Chicana/Third World identification within the U.S. borders. The last section of “Memory Movidas” recovers first-wave Mexican feminism memory and activism to construct a political identity that helped shift the role of

women from myth to reality when creating new spaces for their expressions. Throughout these sections, we witness the elements of activism and alliance building, and the essays serve as a testament to Chicanas' perseverance over oppression, understanding their involvement and activism would initiate an entire movement and methodology that would send ripples throughout the U.S. and beyond.

Chicana Movidas achieves several important accomplishments. It (re) introduces scholars, teachers, and students in interdisciplinary and traditional fields to movidas that link the activism of an earlier generation of Chicana thinkers with contemporary Chicana feminist thought. Throughout the chapters we recognize and cheer for familiar names and texts and see how well-known Chicanas created a constellation of movidas often while sharing space. The volume also encourages us to correct the feminist and Chicano historical imaginaries that have dominated our understanding of the movement era, and invites us to reimagine the archive, its meaning, and our scholarly relation to it (11). Most importantly, it notably expands the historiography of the Chicano movement several ways: 1) it shifts the focus of the entire, linear movement to individual, interconnected movidas, 2) it looks at activism beyond the spatial U.S. Southwest/Aztlán, and 3) it disputes the temporal frame of the Chicano movement, largely understood from the late 1960s to 1975, by showing an earlier formation of a Chicana feminist movement. The collection encourages us to read archives against the grain to uncover other movidas and for us to carry this substantial labor of love as we seek to create our own movidas and expand on the legacy of Chicana activism for current and future muxeres.

