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Perpetual Displacement
Cross-Cultural Relations
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My senior thesis has gained fundamental inspiration from an education gained on the constructs of Long Civil Rights Movements (LCRM). The concept of a LCRM has been birthed from a historical sector of academia with the intentions of unveiling truth in history using methods of expanding and exploring trajectories which have often been unjustly abbreviated, colonially subjugated, and wholly exclusive to minority narratives. My thesis will bear witness to, and give an acknowledgement of, the architecture of apparatus which constructs Mexican-American communities. This matrix of multiplicity takes to the forms of the political, the sociocultural, the workforce, the education, the socioeconomic, and the class and caste systems of a Mexican-American community. However, while I believe that such a network is not dependent upon a singular factor, it is possible to be internalized and perpetuated through an individual experience. It is here that I would like to introduce the use of orality to discuss communal histories. I will do this through work such as, Dancing with the Devil (1994) an anthropological study on Mexican-American folklore written by José E. Limon, with a focus upon the presence and pertinence of orality within communities. This is also seen in fictional works, such as Victor Villaseñoir's Rain of Gold (1991) which creates a foundation for the novel in the non-fictional stories of Villaseñoir's own parents. The
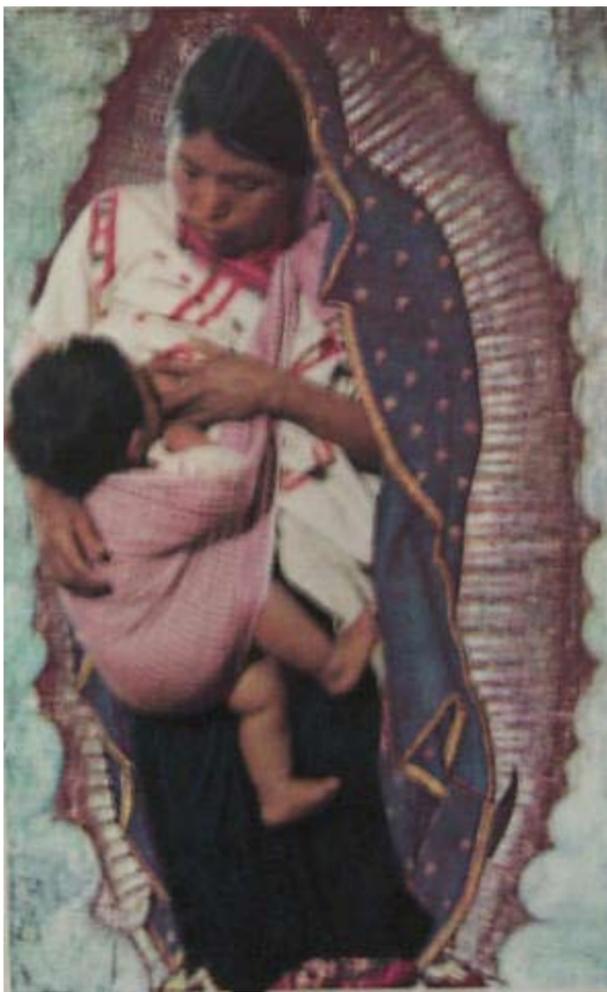
Madre Mestiza by Yolanda Lopez

sense of orality links itself to an idea of lineage before language, the need for stories so that a story can be told; these stories make up a collective history for Mexican-Americans and in doing so reinvent the entirety of such communities' historical trajectories. Orality, perhaps unlike text, must operate within an intimate context, and is often generationally maintained using narratives of past, present, and future to exist, which is suggestive to the framework I will use for the construct of my thesis. However, what happens when there is no knowledge of past? How then can there be a present, or even the idea of a future?

It is with these questions that I locate myself within my thesis. In the attempt to understand space and place within a greater context of collective and personal history, I have situated myself as occupying not only the voice of a third generation, but that of a third identity, one which is whole in it's lack of wholeness. In the attempt to explain such a phenomenon I will be using the works of Donna Haraway, particularly, A Manifesto for Cyborgs (1990), within which she establishes the theory of the cyborg to be illustrative of an interdisciplinary exploration of those who are multiply displaced. The relation of a Mexican-American identity to that of a cyborg identity has been illuminated through the work of Chela Sandoval in a Methodology of the Oppressed (2000). Using these writings to understand my personal involvement within a greater history of Mexican-American communities, I believe will allow for the development of an alternative narrative which operates using the methodology of LCRM to explain and expand both internal and external trajectories, as well as individual and collective complexities.

The primary struggle of my thesis is to understand, and perhaps continually return to, an idea of perpetual displacement. While the fragility in declaring an invalidity within history seems futile, I wish to begin working from a place of re-envisioned history, one which depends upon my personal narrative as much a communal narrative. In the attempt to delineate such total confusion, it seems there is the possibility of clarity.