Mexicanidad

Stephen defines Mexicanidad simply as “Mexicanness” (2002: 54) and notes that the Virgin of Guadalupe is a symbol of Mexicanidad, the first “Marian devotion in Mexico that was not strictly local.” The Virgin of Guadalupe is a symbol of Mexicanidad because she represents passivity and liberation, as well as the “options she offers for framing women’s sexuality” (Stephen 2002: 54). Mexicanidad can be defined as national Mexican identity. This notion might seem unchanging or static, but many scholars of Mexican culture emphasize the extent to which national identity, and specifically Mexican national identity, is a constantly changing and fluid concept. The Mexican Revolution and the Chicano Movement in the United States, as well as various social movements and relationships with other countries, especially the United States, have had a profound impact on the idea of mexicanidad (McCaughan 1999). It is also influenced by the past – “[i]ndigenous communities, for example, are reclaiming pre-colonial/pre-national concepts and practices as foundational elements of a future society” (McCaughan 1999: 60). Developing ideas about sexuality also play into mexicanidad – conservative groups in Mexico who feel threatened by these changing, increasingly liberal ideas sometimes defend their opinions by claiming they are part of “essential aspects of Mexican life…sexuality-related matters…take on enormous symbolic meaning as indicators of a kind of corruption of mexicanidad…that conservative groups see as extending beyond the domain of sexuality” (Carrillo 2007).

REFERENCES

Stephen, L.

McCaughan, Edward J.

Carrillo, Hector