

Women in latin america liberation

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



It will be absurd to narrate the history of Latin America without appreciating the significant role that women played towards the liberation of member states. There are different authors who have tried to justify this fact while others have given the real life of their story, and how they took an active role in the history of Latin America. Some of the women who remain heroes in this struggle include Rigoberta Menchu and her story which she narrates in I, Rigoberta Menchu: an Indian woman in Guatemala, Malintzin, an Indian woman in the conquest of Mexico, Evita who was the wife of Juan Peron among others.

In page 163 in I, Rigoberta Menchu, she reflects how she was involved in political activity in other communities as well as the contacts she made with the Ladinos. In (Menchu pg, 166), she narrates how the association between her and the Ladinos brought an awakening to revolutionary struggles and which was geared towards effective change and the need for liberation. On the other hand, she learnt on the need to solve their problems which included bringing the Indians and ladinos into an understanding (Menchu 167). In page (220), Rigoberta narrates how she abandoned her role in marriage and motherhood to take active role in political commitment. It is through this that she was able to organize women in Guatemala in fighting for their rights.

In chapter three of Malintzin's choices, an Indian woman in the conquest of Mexico, Camilla Townsend (55) states that Malintzin played a great role in the process of conquest. She was the link between foreign people in the camp and several people begun associating with her for translation.

Malintzin (Townsend 56) played a vital role in acting as a speaker for the

Spaniards. In chapter five, *Water Pouring Song* (pg 109), Townsend narrates the story of how, thanks to Malintzin, the Spaniards finally recorded victory in 1521. However, after being a useful member to the Spaniards, she was later killed after they realize that she was no longer useful to them (Townsend 148).

Bartolina Sisa is another example of the women heroine who mobilized more than 40, 000 Indians into marching forward against the Spanish resurgence. She was known as a rebel leader who was convinced that they were in a position to defeat the Spanish troops into being allowed the much yearned for independence. However, she never managed to make as her troops were seized and she was savagely tortured and left for dead through hanging. The women heroes mentioned here played a vital role in the independence of Latin America and some even refused to betray their own people when they were captured by the colonizers (Chasten, 88).

Other women who were involved in the struggle include Malitnzin and Eva Peron. Malitnzin was sold to merchants soon after her father died and as a result was taken to become a mistress of Cortes who appreciated her great role. She was instrumental in urging other Indian nations in joining the Spanish colony against the Aztecs who were considered as enemies of development. Eva Peron on the other hand was instrumental in helping her husband, Juan Peron in ascending to the presidency in 1946. She also started several foundations in present day Argentina which encouraged the education of women.

The Challenges faced by women in Latin American History

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There are several challenges that women faced in the struggle for Latin America and in its history. Some of these challenges included lack of effective communication, death of loved ones, bringing the various functional groups together as well as abandoning their families for the struggle. For instance, in *I, Rigoberta Menchu* (Page 38), Menchu reflects upon the death of her little brother in finca. As a result, she had a very difficult time in trying to communicate with the Indian people. It was a difficult time for her and which she took with so much courage and hope that one day peace will be accomplished. In page (87), Menchu explains how she was overcome with emotions following the death of her friend which happened through poisoning. The conflicts with the landowners and the creation of the CUC were the other challenges faced in the history of Latin America (Menchu, 102). Constant attack by the village army (pg 142) was another challenge that women had to encounter in the history of Latin America.

On the other hand, (Townsend 30), women had to encounter the quarrels with the traditional notion that depicted foreigners. For instance, an Indian woman trying to bring liberation in Mexico was unheard of and so Malintzin faced a greater challenge of having to cope with the rejection that all foreigners encountered. It was also a challenge to translate the various languages of the indigenous people and in some occasions, the translators were never looked upon as people who were effective, an example was Malintzin's role. Others rejected the role played by indigenous communities. In the final chapter, *the Concubine Speaks* (148), Townsend states that Malintzin had to cope with forced marriage and which resulted in her death.

It was very difficult for a woman to be involved in war as the ultimate repercussion was that if caught, they were raped before being subjected to cruel death. It was not easy for women to decide and join the struggle for liberation as they were subjected to rape cases. On the other hand, harsh climatic conditions subjected them to several diseases that at times led to the death of several others who never made it (Fraser, 148). The different diseases brought about by rape cases as well as the harsh climatic conditions were major challenges faced by women in their struggle to restore unity and independence in Latin America.

Major Changes of female experience overtime

The struggle for the liberation of Latin America brought several changes in the role of women in the society. Previously, and prior to the Latin America liberation, women were viewed as the inferior parties between the two sexes and their place was at home where they were to take care of the family. However their perception of the war changed all this and they felt as though they could have made and participated in the same way as men were participating in the war (Chasteen, 213). They were no longer to be seen as the inferior parties in this case and as a result they equalled men in their struggle for liberation.

Women were also seen as being able to take leadership position after their participation in the struggle. This is especially true after several women were seen as leading their countries to political stability especially in Peru and Argentina. Furthermore, women had demonstrated that they could have done the same job that their male counterparts were doing since they had

learnt the art through the assistance they had given to their husbands in the struggle (Chasten 246). Furthermore, it was an awakening call for all women around the world that not only men could have liberated their different countries, but they too had a role to play in the struggle.