

Las Adelitas

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Role played by Las Adelitas during the Mexican Revolution Mexican women largely lived under the shadows of men prior to the revolution. The Constitution and the Mexican Civil Code that were passed by the government in 1857 and 1884 respectively, laid numerous restrictions for the women in Mexico almost giving them an unequal status compared to men. They were denied their basic rights to citizenship which prevented them from casting votes, selling property, and even to work as teachers or lawyers and lead their lives completely dependent on the men. They were only expected to take care of the affairs of the family and serve the Catholic Church. Their lives were controlled largely by either their fathers or husbands and other caretaker. The Mexican Revolution which began in the year 1911 and lasted up to 1920 was primarily against the presidency led by the governor of Mexico, Porfirio Diaz, as his rule was marked by violence and corruption while the common man and peasants lost their lands and were left with no means to support themselves. It was during this revolution the women folk also emerged from the confines of their homes and participated in the revolution to fight for their own causes (Jandura; Fernandez).

Women shed their traditional image and dependency on men by becoming soldiers during the revolution. The various groups who opposed the rule of Diaz enrolled women in to their army. While some of the women soldiers fought for various reforms such as agrarian in order to provide better relief for the peasants, some others enrolled in the army to support their men or in other cases women entered the revolution in order to avenge the death of their dear ones and to improve their economic status. Women who worked as soldiers supported the men in their daily routine tasks in addition to

supporting them in the battlefield. The men were in fact able to perform better with the support from the women as they were able to pursue their military responsibilities without any hindrance. In return for their participation women were rewarded with equality and freedom from attachment to their homes. They also gained economic freedom and were no longer bound by any societal or cultural norms that existed prior to the revolution. They also enjoyed their sexual freedom and engaged in sexual relations with men irrespective of their marital status.

However, despite their abilities to work on par with men in the battlefield this transformation was not tolerated by men who wanted to remain the stronger force among the two genders. Thus these women soldiers were largely portrayed romantically with emphasis on their sexuality rather than their bravery and other skills. The beauty and feats of women soldiers who participated in the revolution were described in love ballads or corridos.

However, these songs lay greater emphasis on the beauty and desirability of the women instead of their accomplishments in the battlefield. The term La Adelita came from one of these songs in which the woman is described as an immortal beauty and desirability by men with a few lines in praise of her valor. Thus adelitas became a more common term associated with women soldiers but it undermined their true courageous and valiant characteristic. Women continued to be seen as mere objects of desire by the men who were threatened by the abilities to serve even in the battlefield and the image of adelitas is based on this notion. Media also played a role in overlooking and undermining the strong role played by women during the revolution.

However the true contribution of women as brave and courageous soldiers

will forever be etched in history (Fernandez).

Works Cited

1. Fernandez, Delia. "From Soldadera to Adelita: The Depiction of Women in the Mexican Revolution." *McNair Scholars Journal*. Jan. 2009. Web. 28 March 2013.
2. Jandura, Tereza. "Revolutionary Mexican Women." N. d. Web. 28 March 2013. <http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/mcbride/ws200/mex-jand.htm>