

LATINO? HISPANIC?

THE MEXICAN CONFUSION OF IDENTITY

The definitions that I saw in the videos were the following:

LATINO: Southern Europeans

HISPANIC: Spaniards or people original of Spain.

These videos presented an argument about Hispanic heritage and the wrong use of "Latino." In one of the videos it was stated that we, people from Mexico, central and South America must call ourselves Nican Tlaca. I am proud of my indigenous and cultural heritage; however, it is impossible to deny that we have Hispanic influence in our new culture. We are not Aztecs, Mixtec, Zapotecs or Chichimec anymore. I understand that the European (especially the Spaniards in Mexico) came and destroyed amazing cultures. But we are the product of that process of conquest and colony. Let's put things in this way: imagine that a child is the son of a man that raped a woman. Of course the son and the mother would feel anger against that abusive man, but we can't deny that the child is the son of that man. The mother could only use her last name for the child and even say to him that he has no father. But we know that in reality he was the son of that man. I know it is a cruel example, but it is a similar situation that happens in our country and culture.

I strongly believe that we are perceptions. We have our own perception about ourselves, but that perception is not always the same for other people. I consider myself Mexican. Why? It is simple. I was born in Mexico. I grew up in Mexico. I understand and practice Mexican culture. I have the Catholic religion, which was the traditional official religion for Mexicans. I follow the Mexican traditions. I am not in my home country because I came here looking for a better future for my family. I consider myself a Mexican in exile. Now, in this country people are classified in other ways, which is according to their own perception. People in this country consider that all the people that have some Hispanic heritage (blood, language, or culture) are Hispanic or Latino. Then, under their perception, I can be one of them.

Is that a problem of identity? No. I know that I am Mexican. And I know who the rulers of this country are. I agree with the second video which makes the claim that the creators of this classification didn't have a sufficiently big brain to assimilate that there are more than just Hispanic or Latino people on the rest of the continent. So I don't want to be the cause of a brain stroke for that people. I decided to accept that in their perception I am going to be classified in the general box of "Hispanic" or "Latino," but my brain, which works a little better, understands that I am Mexican. So I am Mexican and proud to be. The Mexican culture is a mixture of indigenous heritage with Spanish heritage even though some people don't like this. I am proud of my indigenous heritage and conscious about some Spanish elements that were adopted for the mestizo people who created the Mexican culture. So I am not Latino, and I am not Hispanic. Of course I am not Spaniard, but I am not indigenous either. I am Mexican.