

INTRODUCTION



Women in the United States who are politically self-described as Chicana, mestiza in terms of race, Latina or Hispanic in regard to their Spanish-speaking heritage, and who number in the tens of millions in the United States, cannot be summarized nor neatly categorized. I have applied my ideas as broadly as possible, ever mindful that at the same time they are my own reflections. Because the critical essay format demands it, where possible I have attempted to corroborate some of my ideas with data from a variety of resources, from U.S. Census Bureau reports to ethnographic studies.

Mexican descendants in terms of genetic makeup and appearance range from white to black, with the majority falling within the La Raza rubric of *mestizaje*, that is, brown skinned and mixed race. Although México is overwhelmingly Catholic, there is a growing trend toward Protestantism. In addition, many people do not practice their religion. For the purposes of this book, the idea of formulating a Chicana identity (when Chicanas don't share race, religion, class, culture, and in some cases, nationality) seemed impossible. Such an identity must be based on common experiences but common experiences that demand a community so as to work toward change as a common goal. The issues discussed here center on women's social struggles, and I have tied in the spirituality that seems intrinsic to most women's sense of being.

Throughout the history of the United States, "I" as subject and object has been reserved for white authorship and readership. However, when I speak of *woman* within these pages, I speak very specifically of the women described above, unless otherwise indicated. (This also holds true for the use of the words *men*, *children*, *people*, and so on. I refer at all times to Chicanas and Chicanos/mexicanas and mexicanos unless otherwise specified.) I distinguish terms such as *Chicana*, *Xicanista*, *Mexican*, *Latina*, and *Hispanic* according to the context of the discussion. Within the confines of these pages, "I" and the mestiza/Mexic Amerindian woman's identity become universal. It is to that woman to whom I first and foremost address my thoughts. Traditionally, U.S. feminism has been controlled by those in power and those in power have been reticent, or have failed, to invite groups considered outsiders to be part of the conversation. Unfortunately, this is the case and will be so across society unless or until a major reconstruction of how we view resources and humanity takes place. Within the pages of this book, however, the subject(s) are not "Other," but are the center of the conversation.

When I embarked on the writing of the first edition of this book in the 1980s, that decade was

predicted by the media to be the decade of “the Hispanic.” This was due to the fast-growing population of Hispanics in the United States. While this did not exactly happen, the latter years of the 1980s did mark an unprecedented visibility for the U.S. Latina devoted to Letters. Until then, owing to a general view regarding our historical lack of formal education, money, and poor language skills, among other reasons, publishing companies did not see the U.S. Latina as a consumer in the book buying market. By the late eighties, however, U.S. women of color and immigrant writers of all stripes and colors were being published. Globalization was the game changer. All manner of international businesses began looking beyond traditional demographics for consumers. Furthermore, Latinas began to outnumber their male counterparts in higher education. An unprecedented generation of educated women wanted stories about themselves.

Assimilation into the fabric of the WASP American Dream had been the rule of thumb for all immigrants. A number of factors, such as affirmative action and diversity programs, the media focus in the eighties on decade of the Hispanic, and Asian immigration to the United States after the end of the Vietnam conflict, caused new interest on the part of white Americans in other ethnic groups. By the late 1980s, book buyers (still arguably mostly white and educated) were growing more interested in the stories of people outside their own experience. The growing Latino population was mostly from México, but because of the ramifications of U.S. intervention in Central America, people came from that region in rapid numbers too. The United States also received an increasing number of South American immigrants because of the dictatorships and political disruption in countries there. In 1980 an exodus from Cuba brought as many as 125,000 people to the United States. Puerto Ricans, whose island is a U.S. commonwealth, are not immigrants. “Migration and return migration mean that island and mainland identities have become mixed.” Then and now, Puerto Ricans are found to have the lowest income of all Hispanic groups in the United States.¹ Chicanos for the most part were also not immigrants. Many who identified themselves as Chicanas were activists working toward the fulfillment of the democratic promise of their country—the United States.

Opponents of the Chicano movement rejected many of its goals, which included seeking entrance into political, education, and civic arenas and a return of illegally appropriated lands in the Southwest. However some opponents may want to view Chicanos (those whose families resided in the Southwest at the time of the Mexican-American War), as well as the flow of Mexican labor since, as a source of ongoing surplus labor, to be curtailed or increased as needed by the neocolonial state.

Hispano natives of the Southwest are the only people, besides the Native Americans, who have a treaty with the United States. As with many of the treaties between Native Americans and the U.S. government, ours, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, has been largely violated. This appropriation of territory came as a result of what is known on this side of the border as the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). In México it is known as the North American Invasion. Again, we see that history depends on the chronicler. Following the Mexican-American War, most of the Mexicans living in the newly annexed territories expected the Spanish language to remain prevalent there. Perhaps current lawmakers in Southwestern states that vehemently defend English-only laws are not aware of different interpretations of the historical agreement between their government and México, or perhaps they don’t care about

the argument regarding the rights granted to the Hispano population left behind in Texas, New Mexico, Upper California, California, Arizona, and parts of Utah, Colorado, Nevada, and Wyoming after the U.S. invasion.

Early Chicana *feministas* have had, at best, a conflicted relationship with the United States. Their activism by necessity then and now includes seeking equal opportunities for their communities as much as for their gender. White women writers of the feminist movement, such as Kate Millett and Germaine Greer, made arguments that resounded throughout the West, regarding their rage against white, male-dominated society and claimed their right to be angry. “Woman” had for too long been forced into quiet complacency. In the 1960s, what was the purpose of the campus bra burning, after all, if not to demonstrate their militant refusal to be continually sexualized by male culture? Yet when feminists of color showed their intolerance of racism, they were accused by some as being “too” angry. Furthermore, feminists of color were expected to focus on struggles with which their entire ethnic community were dealing, such as racism and socioeconomic discrepancies. While Germaine Greer went on national television expressing her desire for women and “little” men—knowingly shocking the viewing audience—African American activist Angela Davis did not make public her lesbianism until the late 1980s. To claim a desire for women was regarded by activists of color as a betrayal or undermining the goals for justice on the basis of race.

Equally crucial was the fact that most renowned white feminists came from privileged backgrounds. Their place in society could not be excluded from their understanding of it. I would like to note that when I speak of “white feminists,” I do not limit myself to North Americans but to the international white feminist movement, including México and Latin America. Women of color activists addressed this and eventually, in the late eighties, this led to the First Voice concept. Like other ideas that aim for political correctness, First Voice sought to find ways for people who are systematically excluded from society to speak for themselves. The omission in most literature of the history and presence of millions who inhabited these lands long before European occupation forces us to read between the lines. If reading between the lines was what white feminists had to do with the “classics,” U.S. Mexic Amerindians/U.S. Latinas had to become excavators to begin their work as Xicanistas. Starved for affirmation about our legacies, we early feministas began to research our ancestry, becoming akin to archaeologists. These efforts were strenuous because indigenous perspectives were omitted from the material we were handed in our formal schooling.

People with Spanish accents have often been treated as if they are not very smart or educated, while on the other hand, people with European accents, especially British, have been assumed to be intellectually superior. Today, because of the rapid growth in Spanish-speaking viewers of the media, and the slight crossover of star Latin American journalists and celebrities with Spanish accents, this attitude has changed somewhat.

We are not the only people wronged by racism and conquest, whose records have been destroyed, who themselves, in fact, were nearly all annihilated. The black diaspora is a long, mournful wail reminding us of the inhumane history of greed. In México, too, there had been slavery and a slaughtering of millions of indigenous people. Latinos and Hispanos from the

United States, originally from the Southwest, share this legacy with the African American. Off the mainland United States, the Aleuts and Inuits north of us and the Polynesian ancestors of the native Hawaiians have also been stripped of their ways and Christianized.

Feminism was never a doctrine or an ideology that fit all. Arguing on behalf of a politic of *partial* inclusion in the reader, *Feminist Postcolonial Theory*, scholar Ien Ang puts it this way:

Feminism must stop conceiving itself as a nation, a “natura” political designation for all women . . . it will have to develop a self-conscious politics of partiality, and imagine itself as a limited political home, which does not absorb difference.²

However, today we are in a position to work toward affirmative action for other women. Learning about our *indigenismo* was a way of acceptance of oneself. More important, it showed us another way of seeing life and the world. The remaining indigenous communities south of the border and into Central and South America, however, are still oppressed. Their traditions, too, have long been threatened. Among Mexican immigrants in the United States, we now have indigenous people whose second language is Spanish. English is their third. Globalization has shaken the world.

Today intranational interests dictate the importation and exportation of goods. More than 80 percent of the world’s export manufacturing labor force are impoverished girls and women of color. Their health, safety, and earning rights are often unprotected. They are truly countryless women.

Although I descend from Mexic Amerindian lineage, I was born and raised in the inner city of Chicago, which meant I was alienated from my indigenous connection to the Americas. There was then in that city a large Mexican community. As a graduate student at the University of Chicago I was to prepare a final thesis entitled “The Idealization and Reality of the Mexican Indian Woman.” I researched and used documentation from two fields: imaginative literature and anthropology. Unfortunately, the writings of mestizos, criollos,³ Spaniards, and Anglos from the nineteenth century up to that time (1979) did not include much more than stereotypes. Since anthropology is traditionally based on the objectification of its subjects, I found at best ethnographic data that ultimately did not bring me closer to understanding how the Mexic Amerindian woman truly perceived herself. Furthermore, to my mind, the Mexic Amerindian woman had been gagged for hundreds of years. I not only refer to the literal silencing of the Mexican indigenous population, economically impoverished and therefore powerless and voiceless, but also the censorship that results from double sexism, being female and indigenous. In neither the creative literature nor the ethnographic documentation did I hear her speak for herself. Only in 1992, the quincentenary of European conquest, was the world delivered the voice of one Mesoamerican woman, the Maya Rigoberta Menchú, whose family was slaughtered in Guatemala’s land reform movement and who received the Nobel Peace Prize for her ongoing activism on behalf of her people’s human rights.

In graduate school, perceiving myself as a Mexic Amerindian woman, even if culturally far removed, I wrote the autobiographical poem “Entre primavera y otoño.” In poetry I found the freedom to speak both from my mind and heart. In this poem, I likened myself to the silenced indigenous woman of México. It begins:

La india carga su bandera
sobre su cara
manchada de sangre
sus cicatrices corren
como las carreteras viejas
de su tierra
y la india no se queja.⁴

The Indian woman carries her flag
over her face
blood stained
her scars run
like old roads
through her land
and the Indian woman does not complain.

Most Mexicans are mestizos and mestizas and by and large have some Mexic Amerindian blood ties. During the colonial period of México, a mestizo with money could buy his whiteness, thereby also purchasing the privileges reserved for criollos and Europeans. While mestizos came to comprise the majority in México, in the United States, genocide of the Native American was the preferred alternative for the Anglo for establishing a new nation.

In 1979 the first generation of college-educated Chicanas was in the making. Although I had no interest in pursuing a doctorate after receiving my master’s degree in social science (Latin American and Caribbean Studies), my informal investigations as a creative writer and my own analyses with regard to being Chicana continued to feed the search for my Mexic Amerindian woman sense of self. Something significant was also happening across the country. Like Reconquistadoras, Chicanas throughout the country, whether in isolation, in academic institutions, or in grassroots communities, were on the same track. It was the hundredth monkey effect—ideas whose time had come.⁵

A TREACHEROUS ROAD TOWARD INCLUSION

I began teaching college right after receiving my bachelor's degree in 1975 at the age of twenty-two. It was shortly thereafter that I was introduced to the writings of Paulo Freire, the renowned Brazilian educator who espoused a pragmatic teaching philosophy for the "masses." Along with a formal education, he proposed a raising of political consciousness, which would enable the Brazilian population, the majority of whom lived in poverty, to become empowered by understanding their social conditions. He called this consciousness raising process, *conscientización*. There is no single-word equivalent for this verb turned noun, and in the United States it was translated to consciousness raising. Like the internationally used term, *machismo*, *conscientización* transcended translation. Education as the road toward self-empowerment was not a new idea. Freire's ideas, however, resonated with Latinos.⁶ The majority of Freire's impoverished population in Brazil were mulattos, people of mixed European, indigenous, and African blood. In this country, too, the majority of the population that has traditionally been marginalized, who are poor and working class, are people of color.⁷

By the beginning of the next decade, however, many Latina activists, disenchanted, if not simply worn down, by male-dominated Latino politics, began to develop our own theories of oppression. Compounding our social dilemmas related to privilege and race were gender and sexuality. Feminism was not a term embraced by most women who might be inclined to define themselves as Chicanas and who, in practice, had goals and beliefs founded in feminist politics. By the nineties, most women of Mexican descent did not use the term *Chicana*, seeing it as an outdated expression weighed down by the particular radicalism of the seventies. The search for a term that would appeal to the majority of women of Mexican descent who were concerned with the social and political ramifications of living in a hierarchical society was frustrating. While people of Latino background widely use Hispanic or Latino today, these labels are restricted to ethnic identification alone.

In this text I have chosen the ethnic and racial definition of Mexic Amerindian to assert our indigenous blood and the cultural source, at least in part, of our spirituality. I also use interchangeably the term *mestiza*, which has been used among Mexican intellectuals as a point of reference regarding our social status since the Mexican colonial period. Mestizo in México took a positive spin from the philosopher José Vasconcelos in 1925. Borrowing from Darwin, whose ideas were popular at the time, Vasconcelos called the future people of México La Raza Cósmica. La Raza today is commonly used by Mexicans and Chicanos to embrace our mixture after the Conquest. This mixture includes, in addition to Indigenous and European, North and South African and Asian.

When analyzing culture and traditions, I may use *mexicana* for both Mexican nationals and women born in the United States. When discussing activism I often use *Chicana*. Finally, I employ the word, *Xicanisma*, a term that I invented in the first edition of this book to refer to the concept of Chicana feminism. It was a collapsing of two terms in the epoch of the "ism." Although discussions of Chicana feminism have been taken up by the academic community, where I believe it has fallen prey to theoretical abstractions, I hope that it can be rescued from the suffocating atmosphere of pedantry and carried out to our work places, social gatherings, kitchens, bedrooms, and the public sphere.

If the argument of postcolonial feminists of color is that inclusion politics don't work

because they seek to acculturate and do away with peoples' ways, a woman's personal guide to moving away from the exclusion she experiences may ultimately be pragmatic. Above all, Xicanisma seeks balance. The place to start is always with yourself.

Four to five thousand years ago, humanity began shifting away from the feminine principle. While all had masculine and feminine within, only the masculine was allowed to reign. Among those who identify as Chicano and Chicana, we have looked to our indigenous heritage in search of a possible feminine connection. All early societies seem to yield traces of Mother worship. The Aztec/Mexíca people did as well. Tonantzin, Mother Earth, was worshipped on hills and mountains. Iztaccihuátl, the volcano near Pueblo, was another version of Mother. The goddesses of the Mexíca pantheon were transformed into various facets—from being numinous to an earthly or male version. Like the Ixcuiname—the four sisters—sex goddesses—each represented a phase of the moon with its own significance.

However, it is imperative to understand that the Aztec Empire in the fourteenth century at the time of the Conquest was firmly entrenched in a phallocracy. By the Conquest, the militant Mexíca transformed Coatlicue (another version of the Mother) into a ghastly, hostile force. The death aspect of the dual power of Mother—fertility and death—had taken over. Around her neck a necklace of men's hearts and hands was symbolic of her insatiable thirst for human sacrifice. Let's keep in mind that that image of Coatlicue was created in the context of a war-oriented, conquest-driven imperialism. While Coatlicue, like all fierce goddesses of ancient cultures, is a favorite of feminists, historically speaking, here is the juncture where the creative power of woman became deliberately appropriated by a military power-driven empire. Woman in the flesh, thereafter, was subordinated.

A crucial distinction between labels we have been given by officials of the state and our own self-naming process is that only doing the latter serves us. The very act of self-definition is a rejection of colonization. To more accurately describe what we seek for ourselves perhaps we may turn to another female divinity of that era, Moyocoyotzin: She Who Invents Herself.

The Chicano/Latino movement of the late sixties to midseventies served as the catalyst for the Xicanista's sociopolitical perspective. In the following pages I have added to the Chicano/Latino movement theme an examination of how Catholicism has shaped our identity as well as our political activism. In the first and last chapters, I introduce and conclude my reflections along these lines. *El Movimiento*, influenced by Marxist-oriented ideology (which was overshadowed admittedly by nationalism), focused on our economic and class struggles as a people. While that socialist influence rightly understood the connections between institutionalized religion with a surplus-based society and therefore, rejected the church (at least on principle)—El Movimiento simultaneously confused spirituality with the church. In practice, the majority of activists did not give up Catholicism. Spirituality and institutionalized religion are not the same. Spirituality is an acutely personalized experience inherent in our daily lives.

Also, I suggest here that we have been forced into believing that we as women only existed to serve man under the guise of serving a Father God. Furthermore, our spirituality has been

thoroughly subverted by institutionalized religious customs. The key to that spiritual oppression has been the repression of our sexuality, primarily through the control of our reproductive ability and bodies. Woman's ability to give birth to a human being was acknowledged as sacred in the earliest traces of human history. What greater act may we as human beings perform if not that one of further replenishing the Earth that sustains us?

As male-dominated societies moved further away from woman as Creatrix, the human body and all that pertained to it came to be thought of as profane. How human sexuality has been repressed, distorted, and exploited both by the leftist ideology of El Movimiento and the Catholic Church are examined, specifically in [chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6](#), which take up our political activism and religious practices. These are "The Ancient Roots of *Machismo*"; "Saintly Mother and Soldier's Whore: The Leftist Catholic Paradigm"; "In the Beginning There Was Eva"; and "*La Macha*: Toward an Erotic Whole Self." Inasmuch as woman's religiosity directs her life, la Xicanista is creating a synthesis of inherited beliefs with her own instinctive motivations. In [chapter 7](#), an essay on our spirituality, "*Brujas and Curanderas: A Lived Spirituality*," I explore this topic with personal viewpoints. Spirituality that departed from institutionalized religion became very popular among conscientized women but is by no means practiced by the majority of women of Mexican background, who continue to adhere to Christianity.

Conscientización in México, as well as in the United States among Latino activists, usually meant a move toward some form of socialism. However, efforts at understanding socialism did not give women the kind of humanitarian restitution predicted by the designers of communist doctrine. We can cite the cases of the Soviet Union, Cuba, and China to show how women continued to struggle for equal social status after their respective social revolutions. We can look at current alarming numbers everywhere today regarding violence against girls and women to see that we are not in a postfeminist era. In the U.S. military, where women now stand shoulder to shoulder with men, the statistics of rapes of women are at critical rates.

In the Watsonville chapter I use the successful cannery strike of 1986 to demonstrate how the conscientización process can be activated through a specific social struggle. What I highlight in the account of the strike and with interviews of women activists of Watsonville is how conscientización did not fully recognize the depth of sexism that permeated not only dominant society but also the attitudes of political activists. In this edition, I have updated this account in view of globalization and its affects on workers worldwide.

Machismo is another important subject to investigate. As a writer who has been professionally introduced with the labels "Chicana" and "feminist," I am asked to define "machismo." Fair enough, but the label of feminist, a term ever misunderstood, also caused people to equate feminism with hating men. To stand up for the female gender was taken as an attack or the result of personal contempt for the opposite sex. Early Chicana feminists often looked no further than the Mexican Catholic Church when tracing the origins of machismo. Many were reluctant to acknowledge male supremacist practices of the Aztecs because of romantic ideas of pre-Conquest society, nationalist bias, or lack of information, but mostly because European culturicide rendered Mexíca practices ineffective to our lives. Today the Conquest remains the unhealed wound in the psyche of all mestizos.

But it seemed to me that the influences on our social behavior went way beyond the legacy

of Catholicism, Spanish culture, and our indigenous background. In the chapter, “Ancient Roots of Machismo,” I attempt an investigation into our Arabian heritage and make comparisons with the early North African clan practices (that have influenced Iberian, Mediterranean, and subsequently Latin American and Caribbean cultures because of Islamic conquests) and our own Mexican culture. In [chapter 8](#), “*Un Tapiz: The Poetics of Conscientización*,” I suggest that we look at our particular use of language to see how it perpetuates how we perceive ourselves. Breaking with traditional use of language allows us to move beyond the concepts and definitions we have for ourselves. I use three books in my examination, including one of my own. Two are memoirs and my own is fiction, written in the second person.

No role in relationship to the female has been viewed as more important than that of Mother. While the concept of Mother is idealized, Mother in society is denigrated. Early societies throughout the world depended on the harvests. Consequently, they yielded religious rites around fertility. Over the millennia, woman’s fertility, therefore her sexuality, was controlled by society and regulated by religion. While she is abandoned by society, woman as Mother continues to have the monolithic task of preserving the human race. In [chapter 9](#), entitled “Toward the Mother-Bond Principle,” I propose that by using Mother as our model to guide us in place of an abstract, amaterial, distant Father God (that all Christians are called to obey, if not to attempt to emulate in his incarnation as Jesus), it may be possible to have a vision of a truly nurturing society.

DREAMERS AND MAGICIANS, *BRUJAS Y CURANDERAS*

Ours is a formidable and undeniable legacy. Among our most ancient ancestors are the Olmecs, whose origins in the Americas predate 1000 BC and who “we might possibly call Magicians,” as Frederick Peterson refers to them in his book *Ancient México: An Introduction to the Pre-Hispanic Cultures*.⁸ The “Magicians” cultivated the use of rubber and tobacco and were masters of stonework. What was clear from the tremendous sculpture legacies left by the Olmecs was that theirs was a sophisticated, powerful, and mystical society. Frederick Peterson speculated regarding the religious beliefs system of the Olmecs that “coincidence of the dreams with actual happenings” may have given an individual (whose dreams seemed to prophesize occurrences) a reputation as an oracle with a privileged position in society.

More than two millennia later in Tenochtitlán, Moteuczoma called on the thousands of dreamers who were sharing the same premonition. The emperor relied heavily on mysticism and having received various ominous omens about the fall of his empire, also consulted with his greatest wizards and magicians. These, unable to advise Moteuczoma as to how to prevent what had already been divinely decreed, were imprisoned. But being magicians they mysteriously escaped. Moteuczoma avenged them by having their wives and children hung and their houses destroyed.⁹ Moteuczoma’s order to have the dreamers murdered en masse did not stop the landing of those alien ships that were already on their way with those whose intentions were to take whatever riches found at any cost.

Dreams may provide guidance. The recurrence with so many may not have been a sign of premonitory gifts but the fact that much of the populace knew their nation was in trouble. Moteuczoma knew that the dreamers and magicians were not responsible for the awaited demise of his kingdom but he murdered them out of his own sense of despair and because of his abuse of power, which had already been demonstrated in many other shameful ways. When the time came to act, it was Moteuczoma's fatalism that debilitated him and caused the end of the Mexíca world.

The dreamer, the poet, the visionary is banished at the point when her/his society becomes based on the denigration of life and the extinction of the spirit for the sake of phallogocratic aggrandizement and the accumulation of wealth by a militant elite. This is accompanied by a fierce sense of nationalism and "ethnic pride." However, our collective memories and present analysis may well hold the antidote to that profound sense of alienation many experience in a globalized economy where more people have more stuff than they ever had before that they don't need and yet there is more poverty and exclusion of humanity—if mostly because there are now more people. No culture or society today exists without Western influence. Ironically, an Islamic terrorist may be found wearing American labels. Moreover, those clothes were quite likely assembled in underdeveloped countries. It calls to mind the following excerpt of my poem, "While I Was Gone a War Began":

Who is the bad guy? Who is the last racist?
Who colonizes in the twenty-first century best:
The Mexican official over the Indian
Or the gringo ranchero over the Mexican illegal?¹⁰

Women inherited the fierce religious convictions brought by the Conquistadors during the Age of the Inquisition. Where they came to reign, death was the alternative to accepting the Catholic faith. At the time of the Conquest, the indigenous people of central México lived in a theocracy where all facets of their lives were also dictated by celestial forces through the rule of priests and kings. It is no wonder that women today, whether we adhere to Catholicism, have converted to another religion, lapsed in religious customs, or practice other rituals, nevertheless, are overwhelmingly (male) God fearing and adoring of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It is worthwhile revisiting the significance of the Mother, above all Mexican Mothers. In this edition I have included as an Afterword a keynote address I gave in 2012 at the Association for the Study of Women and Mythology in San Francisco, California. It is called "The Real and True Meaning of Our Blessed Lady of Guadalupe." My thesis respectfully moves away from the unconditional acceptance of Our Lady as the Virgin Mary as well as the story of her apparitions. Instead, I followed a thread that led me to the same stars that were observed by the Maya, Egyptians, Greeks, and the Sumerians, among others. As we work toward leading quality lives while sustaining our planet we may keep in mind that the Creatrix continues to nurture us all.

In the following pages I have revisited my reflections on the history of Chicana activism,

our spiritual practices, sexual attitudes, artistic ideology, labor struggles, and education-related battles. Without pretensions to producing empirical analyses, I continue to offer my thoughts to perhaps serve as reference work for future laborers in the vineyard. Lest all our dreams become self-fulfilling prophecies of doom, together we must form the vision that all dreamers share, tho' ever so briefly, as in the following pre-Conquest canto, which invokes the moon goddess:

So Coyolxauhqui left it said:
Soon we come out of the dream,
we only come to dream,
it isn't true, it isn't true
that we come to live on Earth.¹¹