

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

**ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600**

UMI[®]

**CHALLENGING THE CANON: A HISTORY OF U.S. LATINA LITERATURE
ANTHOLOGIES, 1980-2000.**

by

Beatriz Rivera

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian
Literatures in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy, The City University of New York.**

2003

UMI Number: 3074677

**Copyright 2003 by
Rivera, Beatriz**

All rights reserved.

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3074677

**Copyright 2003 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.**

**ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346**

© 2003

BEATRIZ RIVERA

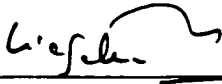
All Rights Reserved

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.


10.4.2002
Date


Chair of Examining Committee

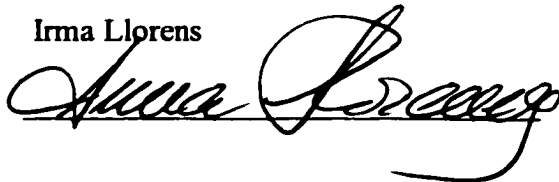
10.4.2002
Date


Executive Officer

Susana Reisz



Irma Llorens



Jose Muñoz



Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract**CHALLENGING THE CANON: A HISTORY OF U.S. LATINA LITERATURE
ANTHOLOGIES, 1980-2000**

by

Beatriz Rivera**Adviser: Professor Susana Reisz**

Although U.S. Latinas, particularly Chicanas, had a literary tradition prior to 1980, their voices were seldom, if ever, heard. One had to go to great lengths to find a copy of a work written by a Latina. To put it mildly, no one wanted to publish them. Then suddenly, in 1980, Dexter Fisher included Chicanas in her anthology entitled The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the United States that was published by Houghton Mifflin, a huge mainstream publisher. A year later, two Latinas, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, compiled the well-known anthology entitled This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, an anthology that was to pave the way for all future Latina writings. Those two anthologies, that have no authors in common although they were published practically at the same time, are my point of departure.

From there, I analyzed the many anthologies that followed. My work was multilateral. I situated the anthologies in a particular decade or even year, and tried to determine what

the Latina writer's situation was at that specific moment in time. I also compared the anthologies, pointing out what authors or messages they had in common. Did a particular anthology present Latinas as victims? Did this other one underline their talent, their intellectual authority, their sexual preferences, or their place in the academy? Who was the anthology for? Who was the compiler? What was or were the compiler's intentions?

The introductions to the anthologies played a very important role in the shaping of this history since they always direct attention to trends. The choice of the name was obviously one of these trends. In the early eighties they were Latinas, then they became Hispanics, and now they are Latinas again. Much baggage comes with the choice of a name. The title of the anthologies also indicated a trend. There seemed to be much breaking and entering in the earliest titles, and quite a bit of serenity in the most recent ones.

A history does not necessarily have to be linear. I could very well have put the anthologies into categories, and placed them under rubrics such as: preservationist anthologies, feminist anthologies, or confessional anthologies, just to name a few examples. But I chose to proceed in chronological order instead. I felt most comfortable that way because this order allowed me to decipher trends such as those I mentioned above, as well as the history's rhythm and pace. Had I proceeded otherwise I would have been too busy sorting and categorizing to get a clear picture of the epoch.

I proceeded by dividing both the history and the corpus of anthologies into four parts: Background; Reflections on Minor and Minority Literature; Reflections on Many Feminisms; and The Canon and its Making. The earliest anthologies were analyzed in the section that focused on the background while those of the mid-eighties were seen in light of the concept of minor literature. This, certainly, does not mean that history had it that

tidy way. But it did seem to be a logical course. Latina writings situated themselves in opposition to the reigning white Feminism, so I chose to see them as examples of a minor literature before taking Feminist theory into account. I left the Canon for last so as to have the broadest picture before my eyes. However, these anthologies all challenged the canon, from the very beginning.

While shaping this history one of my important discoveries was that the crowning or the canonization does not come without dangers. There is a sigh of relief when a voice is at last being heard and then, at the same time, a sigh of disappointment, for the collar has been put around the wolf's neck, it has been tamed. Nonetheless, the literature remains, at least for the time being, a minor one and, in doing so, it should stay aware of Deleuze's and Guattari's three characteristics of a minor literature. These are: the deterritorialization of language, the political immediacy, and the collective value. While shaping this history I kept in mind the concept of minor literature, precisely as Deleuze and Guattari presented it.

I would like to thank Susana Reisz for having been such an excellent adviser. She is a remarkable woman, an outstanding professor, speaker, and writer. I would also like to thank Irma Llorens and José Muñoz for their insights. There never has been a better committee.

Finally, I wish to thank my husband, Charles Barnes, for his encouragement and throughout this whole project. He was the one who suggested that I embark on an adventure such as this one.

Challenging the Canon; A History of U.S. Latina Literature Anthologies, 1980-2000.

Table of Contents

Title Page.....	i
Copyright Page.....	ii
Approval Page.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	vii
Introduction and Methodology – On the Shaping of a History of U.S. Latina Literature Anthologies.....	1
-- Part One – Background.....	16
Chapter One – A Name By Any Other Name.....	17
Chapter Two – The Mexicans.....	22
Chapter Three – The Puerto Ricans.....	35
Chapter Four – The Cubans.....	47
Chapter Five – The Dominicans.....	54
Chapter Six – The Others.....	56
Chapter Seven – The Earliest Anthologies.....	58
-- Part Two – Reflections on Minor and Minority Literature.....	78
Chapter One – Definitions.....	80
Chapter Two – <u>Keeping the Spirit</u>.....	94
Chapter Three – <u>Cuentos</u>.....	101
Chapter Four – <u>Hispanic Women Write</u>.....	120
Chapter Five – <u>Nosotras</u>.....	133

Chapter Six – Critical Studies of Latina Literature and Their Relationship to the Anthologies.....	141
Chapter Seven – <u>Compañeras</u>	156
Chapter Eight – <u>Three Times a Woman</u>	160
-- Part Three – Reflections on Many Feminisms, Including Gender Studies.....	163
Chapter One – Feminist Criticism and Gender Studies: Definitions and Distinctions.....	167
Chapter Two – <u>Making Face, Making Soul</u>	173
Chapter Three – <u>Poetas Cubanas</u>	188
Chapter Four – <u>Chicana Lesbians</u>	191
Chapter Five – <u>Shattering the Myth</u>	195
Chapter Six – <u>The Sexuality of Latinas</u>	200
Chapter Seven – <u>Infinite Divisions</u>	208
Chapter Eight – <u>In Other Words</u>	224
Chapter Nine – <u>Hispanic, Female, and Young</u>	236
-- Part Four – The Canon and its Making.....	241
Chapter One – <u>Latina Women’s Voices from the Borderlands</u>	245
Chapter Two – <u>Daughters of the Fifth Sun</u>	252
Chapter Three – <u>Máscaras</u>	257
Chapter Four – <u>Florincanto, Sí</u>	264
Chapter Five – <u>Puro Teatro</u>	274
Conclusion – Into the 21 st Century.....	279
Chronological Bibliography of Latina Literature Anthologies.....	292

Journals.....	298
Bibliography.....	299

Introduction and Methodology

On the Shaping of a History of U.S. Latina Literature Anthologies

In 1980, Dexter Fisher, the director of English Programs at the Modern Language Association, chose to include Chicanas in her anthology entitled The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the United States. The term “Third World” was, by then, a quarter of a century old, since it had been used in the 1955 Bandung Conference of African and Asian nations to replace the pejorative term, “underdeveloped.”

The liberation movements of the sixties followed the Bandung Conference and, in an effort to keep up with the shifting times and mentalities, more and more universities opened Women’s Studies, Ethnic Studies and Black Studies departments. Shortly thereafter, another nomenclature began to surface, that of minority, a term that, according to Barbara Christian, implicitly dissociated ethnic peoples of color from the majority of the world who were people of color. “The term minority undercut the connotation of that multiuniverse and of the possibility of that strength in numbers that the phrase ‘Third World People’ had suggested.” (Christian 247)

The title of Dexter Fisher’s anthology contains both terms, minority and third. Its purpose was to demonstrate “not only that minority women have created and pursued a literary tradition of their own, but that their works represent some of the most exciting and creative innovations going on in contemporary literature.” (Fisher xxvii) Fisher chose to include women from several different minority groups such as American Indian, Black, and Asian American. She did not, however, include Latinas other than Chicanas.

To the best of my knowledge, only two anthologies dedicated solely to U.S. Latina writers had been published prior to 1980. In 1978, Scorpion, a Tucson, Arizona publisher,

published a collection called Siete Poetas which included authors such as Miriam Bornstein (who would appear later in Nosotras), Maya Islas, Inés Hernández Tovar (who would appear later in The Third Woman), Eliana Rivero (who would appear later in Nosotras and Woman of Her Word), Margarita Cota-Cardenas, and Lucia Sol. I would like to point out that instead of entitling the anthology Siete poetisas, Scorpion Press opted for poetas. I would also like to point out that this anthology does not have an editor. The short introduction is written in the first person plural and signed by Scorpion Press.

One year later, in 1979, Chicano Research Publications at the University of California, San Diego, had published an anthology entitled Requisa 32 – Colección de Cuentos. The editor was Rosaura Sánchez. This anthology, however, is not easily accessible. It has long gone out of print and can only be found in the library of the University of California at San Diego.

Never until 1980 had Latinas been included in any anthology of U.S. women's literature. Therefore, Latina scholars such as Eliana Ortega and Nancy Saporta Sternbach, considered Fisher's anthology to be the first example of their inclusion. The second example was This Bridge Called my Back; Writings by Radical Women of Color, which was published a year later. According to Barbara Christian This Bridge Called My Back "focused on similarities and differences among United States women of color," and "signaled growing alliances among writers in the different colored ethnic groups." (Christian 249)

Although Ortega's and Saporta Sternbach's essay entitled "At the Threshold of the Unnamed: Latina Literary Discourse in the Eighties" was published in 1989, This Bridge Called My Back and The Third Woman are the only anthologies the two Latina scholars

mention when they denounce what they consider to be the systematic exclusion of Latina voices.

“A revision of the most progressive anthologies and criticism in the last five years reveals a failure to include a Latina perspective. This systematic exclusion of a Latina voice makes it impossible even to begin to catalogue these anthologies.” (Ortega and Sternbach 4)

While these scholars are right in denouncing the systematic exclusion of Latinas, they do fail to mention that many other Latina anthologies besides The Third Woman and This Bridge Called My Back had already been published by 1989. Ortega and Sternbach do, however, mention many journals that published the works of Latinas, such as Revista Chicano Riqueña, Calyx, Third Woman, and Imagine: International Poetry Journal, just to name a few. (Ortega and Sternbach 19)

A total of 19 Chicanas were anthologized by Fisher. At that time their ages ranged from 84 (Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, born in 1896) to 23 (Victoria Moreno, born in Texas in 1957). No biographical information was available for two of the authors, Soledad Perez and Rosalie Otero Peralta, and all were alive at the time of publication, except one, Judy Lucero, who died at age 28 (but Fisher does not mention when).

Now we know that at exactly the same time that Fisher published her anthology, two Latinas, Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa were busy working on a project that was to become the landmark anthology entitled This Bridge Called my Back; Radical Writings by Women of Color. This anthology wasn't limited to Latinas either. Its many heartbreaks and purposes may be endless, but what matters for the time being is that it presents a new paradigm -- women of color -- and also that, this time it was Latinas

themselves who were anthologizing Latinas, as well as other minority women writers, for the university, for the general public, as well as for other women of color.

This Bridge contains neither the word minority nor third. The first part of the title suggests hard labor, since the back is being used as a bridge, and very often the back is a symbol of hard work; whereas the second part present radical women of color. They are therefore not just any women, but radical women. Their choice of the word radical is interesting. I suppose that they are using it as “extreme,” but it could very well be that they are also taking into consideration its other meaning that sends it back to roots and foundations.

“This Bridge Called My Back broke the cultural nationalist paradigm by centering Latinas among women of color and by bringing lesbian identity to the fore in Latina writing. The spate of pan-Latina anthologies that followed This Bridge, namely Cuentos; Bearing Witness/Sobreviviendo; In Other Words; Woman of Her Word; Nosotras: Latina Literature Today; Latina; Compañeras: Latina Lesbians; Infinite Divisions; the special issue of Third Woman on The Sexuality of Latinas; and Making Face, Making Soul: Haciendo Caras, has charted new directions for Latina feminist scholarship and theory.”
(The Latina Feminist Group 5)

Eight Latinas were included in This Bridge Called My Back: Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, Rosario Morales, Aurora Levins Morales, Mirtha Quintanales, Jo Carrillo, Judit Moschkovich, and Norma Alarcón, none of which were included in Fisher’s. This is indeed a strange coincidence or non-coincidence. Given that Fisher and Moraga and Anzaldúa were focusing on so few women, how in the world did these two anthologies manage to avoid each other’s authors?

Whatever the answer may be to that question, these anthologies can be considered a step in the right direction, a promise that there would perhaps be an end to the systematic exclusion of Latinas voices even from the progressive and feminist anthologies that Sternbach and Ortega allude to without, however, mentioning any names. (Ortega and Sternbach 4).

Now we have entered the 21st century, over ten years have elapsed since Ortega and Sternbach published the essay included in Breaking Boundaries. New voices have spoken, other voices have ceased to speak, and perhaps it is possible to begin to find or define a story or a history in these anthologies, or at least to look for one. For example, one of the many functions of anthologies devoted exclusively to women is, as Barbara Christian believes, to “confront us with the issue as to whether a community of women writers actually represent their community.” Another function is to “help us to assess our institutional stances, so that our sites in the academy keep pace with our intellectual questionings, our political developments.” (Christian 257-258) The Latina Feminist group adds that, in collaboration with other Latinas, Chicanas, “[...] contributed to rethinking feminism, women’s studies, Latino studies, and cultural studies in general.” (The Latina Feminist Group 5) Contributions and functions such as those mentioned above should be analyzed when time traveling from one anthology to the next.

There are many anthologies now, and they are reminiscent of those images that trick the eye. At first glance they only seem like a collection of multicolored dots or lines on a piece of paper, but if you focus, a distinct image slowly begins to appear before your eyes. Once this image is there it will unveil the picture, the flow, the fluidity of it all, as well as the gigantic waves that violently break time and again, from The Third Woman,

This Bridge, and Keeping the Spirit to anthologies published closer to the end of the twentieth century, such as Daughters of the Fifth Sun and Floricanto, Si!, and the most recent ones, born with the new century, such as Between the Heart and the Land and Telling to Live. The titles, already, speak quite differently.

My goal in shaping a history of Latina literature anthologies is not so much to make this literature known, or to de-marginalize it. There are no shouts of protest throughout this history, and absolutely no indignant questioning, I leave that to Anzaldúa and Moraga who do it so well. No call to upheaval or revolution either. Rather, this history is an effort to collect and analyze the anthologies we have, and see them in light of Deleuze's and Guattari's concept of minor literature, taking race and class into consideration, then in light of feminist theory, taking gender and sexualities into consideration, and finally in light of canon exclusion or exclusion, taking the desire to remain a free agent, as well as the desire for recognition, and even the world of big business into consideration.

If in the critical anthology Breaking Boundaries the "testimonios" are used to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Horno-Delgado, Ortega, Scott, and Stembach xiii), in this history it is the anthologies themselves that are charged with this mission.

But how do I proceed with this plethora of good goals and intentions?

My first problem, when attempting to see twenty years worth of anthologies from so many angles, was that of deciding where from to enter.

Keeping in mind that while still standing outside Kafka's monumental yet minor oeuvre Deleuze and Guattari decided to enter "by any point whatsoever; none matters more than another, and no entrance is more privileged even if it seems an impasse, a tight

passage, a siphon,” (Deleuze and Guattari 3) it was with great self-confidence that the first fast choice, or door, for this here adventure was labeled “minor literature.” It seemed an innocent and wise option and a proper beginning.

Unfortunately, this turned out to be a sort of trap door, for that road was so long and winding that it meandered too far away from the concrete aspect of this study, Latina writings and particularly minority literature anthologies as they relate to the canon, and how these anthologies have evolved in the last 20 years.

So I had to retrace my first steps all the way back to the beginning, and opt for a more modest and even what could be considered an insipid beginning, the background, so as not to lose touch with the life-saving yarn, at least not from the very start. Also, some minority groups become so obvious for those of us who know them that we often forget to describe them, and take way too much for granted. So I felt it necessary to rethink even the background.

From there I was able to connect to those other entrances and passageways, such as minor literature, race, class, feminist theory, women and writing, gender, sexuality, and the canon.

In the beginning, indeed, there was a word. A name.

In their study of Hispanics in the United States Moore and Pachón consider that we can get some idea of what Hispanics think of themselves by asking what they wish to be called. Do they want to be called Spanish? Mexican? Cuban? Chicano? “It is clear that these preferences change over time as the Hispanics themselves shift . . . each variant has a special historical root and special historical meaning.” (Moore and Pachón 12)

The anthologies used in this analysis of the background are The Third Woman, This Bridge Called My Back (both the English and the Spanish versions, which are somewhat different), and Breaking Boundaries. Thus I connected to the sexual, social, cultural, academic, linguistic, political and economical (not necessarily in that order), as well as to unanswerable questions having to do with an exploration of a doubly or even thrice minor literature.

As a matter of fact, we only have to take the list of anthologies from 1980 to 2000 to notice that in the 80's they were Latinas, or women of color (regardless of their race), that they became Hispanics in the mid 80's and early 90's, and that they have been Latinas again since then. This certainly says something about the spirit of specific times.

Moreover, the term is so recent that we can easily go back to the not so distant past when the term Latina was first used, or mis-used, either to sell a book, or in an anthology, or as a solution to some other word that critics, or professors or politicians had outgrown, and were eager to shed. This, in turn, indicates the way Latinas were anthologized and either introduced or not mentioned in the prefaces to the anthologies.

At this point we can either agree or disagree with Rachel Phillips when she states that the very category "woman poet" implies inferiority. Were it to be so, where does this leave the ethnic woman poet? She is the one who even has to deal with all the imperfections that come with being bilingual. She has no choice but to write like, "[...] "a dog digging a hole, a rat digging its burrow" (Deleuze and Guattari 18) and also to "make use of the polylingualism" of her own language,

"[...] to make a minor or intensive use of it, to oppose the oppressed quality of this language to its oppressive quality, to find points of nonculture or underdevelopment,

linguistic Third World zones by which a language can escape, as an animal enters into things, an assemblage comes into play.” (Deleuze and Guattari 27)

Deleuze’s and Guattari’s considerations take us into Part Two of this history where I touch upon the question of minor literature. The first and inane obvious question is: why pick a minor literature and dedicate so much time and thought to it, especially when there are so many other literatures out there? It goes without saying that some of the Latina writers that were published and anthologized in the second half of the 20th century -- and we know when the anthologizing of Latina literature began -- were at times included not so much because of their talent as writers, but because of something else, something extraneous, such as sex and heritage, or even politics, or sexual preference.

There are some aspects to this choice of literature – Latina literature -- that make it quite approachable, a sort of microcosm, a paradigm for perhaps other more inaccessible studies and histories of so-called minor literatures. The texts are there, they are relatively easy to find, and the study seems to have a beginning and perhaps even the vague beginning of an end or to something else. Lastly, the anthologies mirror the three characteristics of a minor literature enumerated by Deleuze and Guattari.

In their work entitled Kafka; pour une littérature mineure Deleuze and Guattari ask themselves: “[...] how to tear off from one’s own language a minor literature, capable of hollowing out language, or propelling it along a clear revolutionary line?” (Deleuze and Guattari 19) They then proceed to explain that the first characteristic of a minor literature is, “the deterritorialization of language.” (Deleuze and Guattari 18)

The other two characteristics are the “political immediacy” and the “collective machine of expression.” (Deleuze and Guattari 18)

One of the best reasons I can give to support my choice of literature, a minor literature, is that the anthologies do “fit” very well into Deleuze’s and Guattari’s characteristics.

It so happens that the anthologizing of Latina literature began as something political. Absolutely no one was publishing Latinas, not even the feminists. So one fine day Latinas such as Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa decided to knock the doors down and throw the house out the window. “Contesting their marginalization, Chicana lesbian writers took greater risks and opened up the exploration and celebration of women-centered sexuality, spirituality, and passion [...]” (The Latina Feminist Group 5)

The anthologies that I analyze while keeping in mind the concept of minor literature are those of the first half of the 1980’s, specifically: Keeping the Spirit, a 22-page chapbook published in 1982 and edited by Aleida Rodríguez, that has been out of print for many years now; Cuentos, published in 1983 and edited by Alma Gómez, Cherrie Moraga, and Mariana Romo-Carmona, also out of print; Woman of her Word Hispanic Women Write, originally published by Revista Chicano-Riqueña in 1983 and edited by Evangelina Vigil; and Nosotras: Latina Literature Today, a short anthology published in 1986 and edited by María del Carmen Boza, Beverly Silva, and Carmen Valle who all forewent publication in order to ensure editorial objectivity.

In Part Three of this history I touch upon the question of literature by women and feminine writing, as well as all that comes with this literature, namely the body, gender, sexuality. I also refer to the choice between: poetisa, poeta, poetess, and bring up the debate as to whether or not “woman writer” implies inferiority as well.

What happens, indeed, when we add an ethnic layer to that already “inferior” category? In the conclusion to her book entitled Alfonsina Storni: From Poetess to Poet Rachel Phillips adds -- after asserting that Alfonsina Storni is a minor poet -- that there is a myth to be destroyed, and that myth is that of the woman poet:

“... locked by complicity on the part of critics and readers into a false category of accomplishment. A few women stand among the world's great poets . . . None warrants attention because she is a woman, still less false evaluation according to some stunted canon of feminine achievement.” (Phillips 122)

Magdalena García Pinto is just as concerned with this issue. In her introduction to the complete poems of Delmira Agustini she analyzes some arguments elaborated by Latin American critics regarding “feminine” works and then proceeds to demonstrate how these critics succeeded in marginalizing women. She writes:

“Por lo general, se puede afirmar que la posición de la crítica con respecto a la producción literaria femenina es segregacionista, según lo atestiguan las antologías e historiografías del Modernismo en Hispanoamérica. Dos criterios son los que suelen aplicarse con más frecuencia: el de compartimientos estancos o el de exclusión.” (García Pinto 25-26)

Ms. García Pinto then uses José Olivio Jiménez's 1985 Antología crítica de la poesía modernista hispanoamericana as an example. In spite of having put forward an intelligent selection, Ms. García Pinto believes that Jiménez nevertheless succumbs to what she calls the criterio marginalizante precisely in the way that he introduces Agustini as a poet in his anthology. When García Pinto quotes Jiménez in her introduction to the complete works of Delmira Agustini she underlines the word Aparte. It is precisely with the word

Aparte that Jiménez introduces Delmira Agustini. According to Garcia Pinto this means that it is the works of men that shape the canon, and that only a minimal amount of works by women are simply mentioned. (Garcia Pinto 27)

This marginalization or this Aparte remains an issue throughout this history.

Since Latinas were part of the second wave of the feminist movement and stood in opposition against the first wave, I chose to read the anthologies of the second half of the decade of the eighties and of the early nineties in Part Three of this history dedicated to literature by women and the question of, or debate over, feminine writing. Even then, when it seemed as if women's problems were over, Latinas were feeling Garcia Pinto's underlined Aparte.

The anthologies that I analyze in Part Three are: Making Face, Making Soul, published in 1990 and edited by Gloria Anzaldúa; Poetas Cubanas en Nueva York, published in 1991 and edited by Felipe Lázaro; Chicana Lesbians: The Girls our Mothers Warned us About, also published in 1991 and edited by Carla Trujillo; Shattering the Myth: Plays by Hispanic Women, published in 1992 and edited by Linda Feyder; The Sexuality of Latinas, published in 1993 and edited by Norma Alarcón, Cherrie Moraga, and Ana Castillo; Infinite Divisions, also published in 1993 and edited by Tey Diana Rebolledo and Eliana Rivero; In Other Words – Literature by Latinas of the US, published in 1994 and edited by Roberta Fernández; and Hispanic, Female, and Young, also published in 1994 and edited by Phyllis Tashlik.

In Part Four, which roughly covers the period from the early nineties to the year 2000, I analyze the anthologies in light of the canon. This reading can be done from several different angles. We can see these anthologies as challenges or demands for inclusion in

the canon, or as forms of acceptance of Latina voices. This canonical acceptance may come through the inclusion in the anthology itself, through the use of these anthologies as tools in the classroom, or through the publication of the anthologies by mainstream publishers. This shows that there are different levels and different types of canon inclusion.

The canon and anthologies always seem to ride in tandem, and little does it matter if the shape and the make of the vehicle remain mysterious and vague. Actually one could even fall into that spiral of a question as to which came first. Are the Latinas included in an anthology because they belong to some sort of canon already, or are they canonized if they appear often enough in anthologies?

The anthologies I analyze in Part Four are: Latina: Women's Voices from the Borderlands, published in 1995 and edited by Lillian Castillo-Speed; Daughters of the Fifth Sun – A Collection of Latina Fiction and Poetry, published in 1996 and edited by Bryce Milligan; Máscara, published in 1997 and edited by Lucha Corpi; Floricante, Si! published in 1998 and edited by Bryce Milligan, Mary Milligan, and Angela de Hoyos; and Puro Teatro: A Latina Anthology, published in 2000 and edited by Alberto Sandoval Sánchez and Nancy Saporta Sternbach.

Since this is a history of anthologies I decided to approach it in a linear fashion. In other words, the anthologies I found were read and analyzed in chronological order. And since I just alluded to the anthologies I “found” I would like to make it clear that this was and continues to be the product of a constant search.

For many months I was discovering new anthologies every day. Now these discoveries have become rare, but nothing assures me that I have found them all. What I

wish to make clear is that I did not pick and choose a handful of anthologies, on the contrary, my goal was to find them all. Did I succeed? That is another question. Perhaps one or two eluded me. *Mea culpa*.

After having decided that I would read the anthologies in chronological order I arbitrarily divided this chunk of time into four unequal parts, beginning with the background, followed by the headings: Minor Literature, Feminist and Feminine Literature, and, lastly, the Canon.

I am by no means pretending that this is how it happened and that the earliest anthologies explored the background and the identity, that the concept of minor literature and of feminist theory can be applied to the middle ones, and that the latest ones challenged the canon. Every single one of them explores identity and background, every single one of them is an example of a minor literature and of writing by women, and every single one of them challenges the canon in its own way.

I simply chose to privilege each one of those headings at a specific moment in time. The order is mine but I do find logic to it. The background should come first, that is obvious. But why consider it a minor literature before seeing it as literature by women? The reason for this is that I believe Latinas were part of the second wave of American feminism and not of the first. In other words, they positioned themselves as a militant "ethnic" or "minority" group before they became militant women. As a matter of fact, an anthology such as This Bridge was a form of protest against what they considered to be the then reigning white feminism. This is why I chose to consider it a minor literature first.

As to the canon coming last, this, again, does not mean it wasn't always there. If I decided to wait until the end it was because we could see a clearer picture this way. The anthologies went from being published only by kitchen table presses to being published by mainstream publishers. This is a form of inclusion or of acceptance. I thought it best to wait for last to examine its implications. "How many styles or genres or literary movements, even very small ones, have only one single dream:" Deleuze and Guattari write. The dream is, "[...] to assume a major function in language, to offer themselves as a sort of state language." So here we come full circle for Deleuze and Guattari conclude with either an infinitive or an imperative phrase, "Create the opposite dream: know how to create a becoming-minor." (Deleuze and Guattari 27)

Lastly, since this is a history, I had to make it start and stop somewhere, if not I could have gone on forever. The problem with a modern history such as this one is, obviously, premature aging. But it cannot be helped. The best I can do, so as to age like a fine spirit, is to consider the anthologies of the 21st century in the conclusion. They point to new directions and also show that the fluidity of the present always has an impact on history. In other words, as time passes, so the past changes.

Part One – Background

As I already mentioned, I believe that the more we are into a subject the more we take certain aspects of it for granted. It all seems so obvious. Of course Hispanics or Latinos are not all the same, of course they come from here and there and everywhere, of course the choice of what to call them is problematic, of course they live with bilingual conflicts. Some live on the hyphen while others live on the border, yet others in huts, in condos, in lofty apartments, in bleak projects, or big houses, and they wouldn't trade it for just anything. It all seems so obvious, but it isn't, so I have chosen to rethink names and places here, and from whence it all came.

Chapter One -- A Name by any other Name.

I cannot say Hispanic, for there is now a panic over Hispanic as the Latina writer Himilce Novas says. Hispanic comes from España, and those ties were severed long ago. It also comes from Español, what was once, for some, the language of the enemy. But that does not concern us here, for we are studying Latinas, who opted for another language, and even new enemies.

To make matters worse, once Spain became a mere picture on the wall, the warped word “Hispanic” was adopted by gray, naïve bureaucrats who couldn’t care less, they just wanted to count Hispanics. It also became a label “the preferred one in Madison Avenue boardrooms, Capitol Hill press conferences, and newsrooms across the nation. Between 1982 and 1984, advertisers increased their spending on what they call the Hispanic market [. . .] they invented targeted strategies [. . .] such as Mattel’s Hispanic Barbie Doll . . .” (Gomez 665)

A well-received Latina writer, Sandra Cisneros, even refuses to let her work appear in anthologies that use the H word because she considers it to be a “repulsive slave name.” (Novas 4)

But do I dare say Latina? The editor of Más, a Spanish language entertainment magazine, Enrique Fernández, believes that Latino refers to an even older empire – the one that took over Spain. What’s more, as Gustavo Perez-Firmat so rightfully puts it: “You can dance rancheras, but how do you dance Latino? And if you drink a rum and Coke, it’s a Cuba Libre, not a Latino Libre.” (Novas 4)

I could also be grouping several ethnic or social groups and national origins as a single entity by opting for Latino instead. What's more, it is possible that by the time this here adventure is over, the word Latina will sound as bad as her tactless stepsister Hispanic.

In fact Latino is a good word. First and foremost, it does not come from Rome. So let's forget Latium, no need to analyze roots. It does not come from the Spanish either, nor from the English.

Latino is in fact a Spanglish word, "an English word with a Spanish pronunciation, and its signifier connotes and unites two linguistic and cultural referents." (Luis 279)

William Luis adds that the term Latino "refers to a specific yet changing reality. It has a specific origin but is often used and misused, sometimes to an extreme degree." (Luis 279)

William Luis subsequently explores the term's historical context in order to clarify some misconceptions, and traces the word back to the late 60's, when it first appeared in the Young Lords Party 13-Point Program and Platform.

While I was definitely not convinced when Moore and Pachón decided that we could group all Hispanics together, simply because Hispanics "have become a national minority." (Moore and Pachón 2) I am happy with the dynamic proportions William Luis has brought to the word Latino.

In an essay entitled "On the Nature of Latino Ethnicity" Felix Padilla attempts to understand Latinos as an ethnic group or "as a collective and emergent type of group form created out of the interethnic relations of at least two Spanish speaking groups." (Lopez 439) Padilla therefore analyzes, much like William Luis, Latinismo as a situational type of group identity and consciousness.

William Luis even takes it a step further when analyzing the issues of postmodernity and postcoloniality. The fact that the U.S. has one of the largest Hispanic populations in the world, and that its history includes histories of Hispanics, makes him come to the conclusion that the U.S. is in this respect also part of Spanish America.

William Luis defines Latino in his own way, so it reflects “the lives of those born or raised in the United States.” He believes his definition greatly differs from the one used by other scholars and by politicians.

“Whereas the general tendency is to use the terms Hispanic and Latino interchangeably, I prefer to be more specific about the words’ referenciality. Latino is a re-appropriation of the nomenclature Latin, as in Latin American. The usage of Latin in the U.S. context is meant to distinguish those who reside in Latin America from those who live in the United States.”

But Latins or Latinos growing up in North America inherit the culture of their parents and that of the United States. Therefore the definition William Luis proposes for Latino “is different from the broader term Hispanic, which refers to those born or raised in their parents’ country of origin.” (Luis x-xi)

William Luis then goes on to divide Hispanic and Latino literature into two categories. The first category, Hispanic, includes works by writers written in their native countries and later emigrated to the U.S. where they continued to write in their vernacular. As to Latino literature, it includes writers born or raised in the U.S. who for the main part speak English. “As a group, Latinos write an ethnic literature . . .” (Luis xi)

Of course, these boundaries are not always easy to maintain. But I will consider Latina writers to be women born or raised in the United States, of Latin American ancestry (I

mean the geographical place, without complicating the meanings of both Latin and American). And I will try to walk that fine boundary as much as possible, knowing well that boundaries should be maintained, then broken.

Although it is not my purpose here to compare sociological studies of Latinos with literature anthologies, I can't help it just this once. It is interesting to note that Moore and Pachón published their study in 1985, and called them Hispanics. I have already mentioned that that was the term of predilection at the time. But five years earlier, Moraga and Anzaldúa are already calling them by another name, women of color, a more radical name, the name that decides for a clean break. By this simple choice, the literature that cries from the heart, refuses to be erased, and demands an ear, a pen and a place is way ahead of the serious studies backed with tables, U.S. census figures, indexes, percentages, and more numbers.

In fact, one of the reasons the Name has often eluded the U.S. is the use of white and non-white for categories. Suddenly the neurotic number gatherers couldn't grab a hold of those Mexicans. So the Mexicans went from being "Other" in 1930, to "persons of Spanish mother tongue" in 1940, "white persons of Spanish surname in 1950 and 1960, "persons of both Spanish surname and Spanish mother tongue" in 1970.

"Then, in 1980, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and other Hispanics became a kind of 'super' ethnic group: they are listed along with other national descent groups, and they are also in a separate category, sometimes as a race . . . This confusion is a consequence of the bi-racialist assumption and a grudging and inconsistent acknowledgment that Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and other Hispanics are something other than a simple ethnic group." (Moore Pachón 3)

That is precisely what happens when one tries to put race, ethnicity, and that all-encompassing “Other” in one bag.

Speaking of “Other”, traditionally Latinas are divided into four groups: Chicanas, Puerto-Riqueñas, Cubanas, and Other Latinas. Lately, the Dominicanas have managed to shed that word “Other” and don a real name. So now that we have five groups we will begin with them and just keep on going, just to realize, once again, that dividing is even more difficult that it appears at first.

The textbooks and other studies usually begin with the Chicanos and Chicanas because they have been in the U.S. the longest. As a matter of fact, as Luis Valdez said, some Mexicans didn’t even come to the United States, the United States came to them.
(Valdez 11)

Chapter Two -- The Mexicans

Before the Mexican-American War of 1846, most of the land from Texas to Northern California was vaguely Mexican. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the U.S., Colonial Times to 1957, at that time there were (all these numbers are approximate) 5,000 Mexicans in Texas, 60,000 in New Mexico, 1,000 in Arizona, and 7,500 along the length of California.

Therefore, up until the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1846) ceded to the U.S. almost the entire modern Southwest, Mexicans were residing in what was then Mexican territory. After the American invasion, however, Mexicans were urged to choose either citizenship or exile. These are the Mexicans Valdez is referring to when he says that the United States came to them. For them there never was any migration whatsoever.

Other Mexicans did migrate, however, many in the aftermath of the Mexican revolution, and even more into the present because of economic hardship. "From 1910 to 1929, Texas was the most popular destination. Slowly, California became more attractive. Figures from 1960 to 1964 show 55.7% going to California and only 25.1% to Texas. Arizona took 5.7%, and New Mexico 2.5%. Recent trends show that California still takes a very high proportion, but some of the large midwestern cities, notably Chicago, are important goals. Very slowly the Chicanos were escaping their historical residence in the Border States and were becoming a national minority, not just an isolated regional group." (Moore and Pachón 26-27)

By delving into the past, one slowly discovers that not only is it difficult to group Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto-Ricans and "Others" together, but that the grouping of Mexicans alone is in itself quite problematic.

There are some Hispanos of New Mexico who are descendants of 16th century Spanish conquistadors, and who see themselves as quite different from other immigrants of Mexican origin. There are other Hispanos from northern California who descended from the original rancheros who held an enormous area who do not feel they have many ties with Chicanos from southern California. So one could easily begin dividing modern day Chicano groups. There are some from Chicago, many from California, yet others from Texas. In California there are the ones from northern California and the ones from southern California. Then in Texas you have South Texas and North Texas, and in South Texas you have different towns, and it just goes on and on.

Thus, it is just as difficult to classify Mexicanas and their writings.

According to Moore and Pachón the images of Mexican women in the U.S. were not quite as negative as those of their macho male counterparts. Reginald Horsman considers that the early explorers found the Mexican women to be “joyous, sociable, kind-hearted creatures.” (Moore and Pachón 219)

“The stereotype of exotic, receptive, Mexican women and lazy, inept Mexican men was to sink deep into American racial mythology.” (Moore and Pachón 237)

In later years the popular novels distinguished between the proud pureblood Castilian beauties of the upper class and the available, even sexually aggressive, half breed temptresses, who are attractive but of loose morals. (Moore and Pachón 5)

When we take a look at Dexter Fisher’s anthology we are very far away from any of these stereotypes. We already mentioned that the oldest Chicana included in this anthology was born in 1896 and that she was still alive at the time the anthology was published in 1980.

Fabiola Cabeza de Baca was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Part of her person complied with the traditional idea of the Latina, or Hispanic woman. Two of her main concerns were food and healing. Not only that but she began her career as a writer by writing several pamphlets on food preparation. In 1954 she published a memoir of pioneer life in New Mexico entitled We Fed them Cactus.

Of her background Cabeza de Baca says, “My Spanish ancestors were here before the pilgrims arrived in the east. The Spanish settlers for centuries kept their culture, traditions, religion, language. I am including these notes so that you may realize that we may not have the problems encountered by persons who may not have had the background which we have kept here through the centuries.” (Fisher 321)

What first stands out here is the use of the word Spanish, as an ethnic label, something that would practically be taboo today, for the simple reason that our times tend to forget that labels are dynamic and contextual.

“How they change and how they are used in a given situation, in turn, must be understood both in terms of internal and external pressures.” (Gomez 454) Gomez then quotes Michael Miller who writes that labels tend to be rooted in historical periods. “The identity is made up of what a person is born with . . .” (Gomez 454)

In this case, Fabiola Cabeza de Baca is born with and in New Mexico. There is no search for identity, she knows who she is, she says it and repeats it. She was born in and with the English language. But it is not a language she writes very well. It is quite difficult to understand her explanation why she has chosen leave these notes for posterity. “I am including these notes so that you may realize that we may not have the problems

encountered by persons who may not have had the background which we have kept there through the centuries,” Fabiola Cabeza de Baca writes. (Fisher 321)

The Third Woman may be the title of the anthology that includes Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, had these notes been found elsewhere one would have had to reach far to equate Cabeza de Baca with the notion of Third World and Third Woman. She is in fact European and she is striving to conserve her European or Spanish roots. Already she is using two languages, Spanish and English. The note begins with the words, “The women on the Llano and Ceja played a great part in the history of the land.” (Fisher 321) She then goes on to explain how the women had to obey their husbands whom they didn’t even choose, since this was done for them. The author is in no way rebelling against this, she is merely stating it, what is important are the traditions that need to be kept.

The art of healing was very important since there were no doctors around, and the knowledge of plants came from the Moors and was brought to New Mexico by the Spanish colonizers. This knowledge was a great source of comfort.

What is most important here is that here is a woman who seems totally traditional, and who is not really questioning anything, and who at the same time, is putting something down and affirming it. There is a certain pride in the way she uses words such as: women, curandera, grandmother, and wife of the patrón.

“The women in these isolated areas had to be resourceful in every way. They were their own doctors, dressmakers, tailors, and advisers.” (Fisher 322) There is a certain pride here, so much so that this could almost be radical writing, in Moraga’s sense of the word. However, she calls herself a woman of the Llano, of Spanish descent.

According to Dexter Fisher Fabiola Cabeza de Baca was one of the first Mexican American women writers to recognize that the spirit of a people resides in its folk beliefs and expressions. The folk beliefs, however, seemed to come more from Spain than from Mexico. In other words, they came from Spain, via Mexico.

The second oldest authors included in Dexter Fisher's anthology were both born in 1910, which means that they were 70 at the time they appeared in the anthology and would be (or are) 92 today.

The first one is Carmen Toscano who was born in Mexico City. The text included in this anthology is entitled La Llorona. Fisher does not explain, but this appears to be an excerpt from a play. What we see here are five women gossiping about La Llorona and not quite understanding why she suffers so much.

At the end of the text the first woman says, "[. . .] she must have suffered greatly [. . .] poor woman. Why can't she find any rest?" (Fisher 322) Perhaps Toscano is announcing here what Gloria Anzaldúa would write in two languages simultaneously in the Foreword to the Second Edition of This Bridge.

"Perhaps like me you are tired of suffering and talking about suffering, estás hasta el pescuezo de sufrimiento, de contar las lluvias de sangre pero no las lluvias de flores (English translation here—everything she writes in Spanish she translates into English). Like me you may be tired of making a tragedy of our lives. A abandonar ese auto-cannibalismo . . ." (Moraga and Anzaldúa no page number)

Toscano's contemporary is Josefina Niggli who was born in Monterrey, Mexico, and was living in North Carolina at the time the anthology was published. In the text included in this anthology, entitled "The Street of the Cañon" Niggli also turns to folklore and

legend. She reworks the folktale of the devil disguising himself as a young lover in order to court an innocent young beauty.

“Indeed, Niggli gently but ironically points out the folly of blind adherence to tradition. As one of the earlier Mexican American writers, Niggli is particularly important because she captures the complexity and diversity of her culture, opening the door to a literary realism that becomes the launching pad for contemporary Chicano literature.”

(Fisher 329)

This may be saying that the first Chicana voices to be heard, at least in the U.S. were more concerned with folklore and their roots, and how to maintain them while being wary and aware of the dangers they may represent. Even with La Llorona, suddenly it is as if suffering itself were a tradition, one to keep, as traditions should be kept, but also one to be questioned, and re-assimilated, in an almost Hegelian way, when Hegel refers to the *aufheben* – to conserve and to assimilate, almost to surpass.

In his essay Padilla quotes Anthony Smith who captures the function of historicism in terms of the meaning it gives to ethnicity. “[...] history furnished the vital clue to their identities, and historicism provided a framework of meaning to their distinctive characteristics. The historical and evolutionary framework has served the essential purpose of endowing with meaning and coherence what might otherwise easily be seen as unrelated pieces of cultural information and markers.” (Padilla 89-90)

History also began to be interpreted differently by these Mexican American writers who announced a new view of La Malinche by portraying her under a different light.

Sternbach notes that:

“In an act that places her within her historic and literary moment, Cherrie Moraga (like so many Chicana/o writers) draws upon, conjures, reinvents, and reinterprets Mexican myth and pre-Hispanic heritage. Like other Chicana writers of her generation [...] Moraga begins her own analysis by a contemporary Chicana application of the Malinche myth and its personal significance to her. While Moraga is not original in her desire to reassess Malinche [...] Malinche’s mythical presence has affirmed the fact that neither Mexicans or Chicanos [...] have made their peace with her. When Chicana writers began their reassessment, almost all of them spoke in counterpoint to Octavio Paz’s landmark essay “Los hijos de la Malinche,” calling themselves instead Las hijas de la Malinche.” (Sternbach 52)

Marcela Christine Lucero Trujillo, another author included in Fisher’s anthology, had also drawn upon, “The fact that some Chicanas view Doña Marina in a sympathetic manner in contrast to the portrayal of Mexican authors may mean that her redefinition may be a Chicana phenomenon.” (Fisher 324)

Lucero Trujillo belonged to the second oldest generation in Fisher’s anthology. Born in Colorado in 1933, she was approximately 43 years old at the time the anthology was published.

But before we move on to the second oldest generation in Fisher’s anthology, I would like to mention that the three oldest women in the anthology, Cabeza de Baca, Niggli, and Toscano, who are probably all dead today, were not yet Chicanas, because they belong to another period with other labels. Unfortunately, their voices have somewhat been erased with the passing of time. Their publications are out of print and they have not been

included in more modern anthologies. Only Niggli is included in the selected bibliography in the back of the critical anthology Breaking Boundaries.

The generation of Mexican women that followed was born in the 30's and the 40's, they were in their fifties and in their forties when they were published by Fisher, and they are the ones who explore the Chicana movement and attempt to better understand it as well as enlighten others.

At the time Fisher's anthology was published, Marcela Lucero-Trujillo, whom I quoted above, was living in Minnesota where she was an instructor of Chicano studies at the university. She is a professor and a poet, and Fisher includes her in the section called "Contexts" and well as in the section called "Poetry."

With Lucero Trujillo the tone is totally different. While with the other three writers there seem to be some shy attempts at a definition and affirmation, something seems to have happened suddenly. Lucero Trujillo is not only a Chicana, but also a Chicana scholar trying to understand and explain the Chicano phenomenon. She writes that the literary rebirth of the Chicanos in the 60's coincided with certain historical moments. The sixties seem to be the cornerstone here. With the Civil Rights Act, Cesar Chavez's farm workers' struggle, the inception of Chicano studies in departments, and the initiation of the national Chicano movement, something that was dormant, something that was already there, since it couldn't just have happened overnight, suddenly rises from its sleep.

Lucero Trujillo believes that in the early 60's the Chicanos were repeating the same concerns of the philosophers and political thinkers of the late 19th, such as José Martí, José Vasconcelos, and others. "That dilemma of being an American of this continent, but imbued and dominated by American language, culture and customs called for ethnic self-

introspection, which led to a recognition of autochthonous American elements.” (Fisher 325)

Fisher then adds that the leitmotif “Yo soy Chicano/a” predominated in much of the writings. “[. . .] however, as the militancy decreased, the self-affirmation diluted into an anguished question.” (Fisher 325)

Indeed, one of the poets included in Fisher’s anthology, Sylvia Alicia Gonzalez, born in Arizona in 1943, repeats “I am Chicana” 63 times in a poem entitled “Chicana Evolution.”

The poem is divided into three parts: the first part is entitled “Genesis and Original Sin”; the second is “In Search of the Messiahs of Nativism”; and the third is “Renacimiento según el Nuevo testamento”. The third part is written in Spanish and translated into English, and ends, not with the affirmation, I am Chicana, which, after a while, evens to anguish and dizzy the reader, but with the words “I AM WOMAN.” (Fisher 426)

It is with this poem that Fisher culminates his presentation of Chicana writers so that they be represented adequately and receive the critical attention they deserve.

In the Preface, Fisher acknowledges the Modern Language Association’s Commission on the Literatures and Languages of America for its work in redefining American literature by encouraging and promoting the study and teaching of America’s “neglected” literatures. (Fisher xxviii) The anthology was published by Houghton Mifflin Company, a huge, mainstream U.S. publisher.

In her essay included in Fisher’s anthology Lucero Trujillo writes that every Chicana’s life is a novel, “yet we have not read a contemporary Chicana feminist novel.

The Chicana has had to be a cultural schizophrenic in trying to please both the Chicano and the Anglo publishers, not to mention pleasing the readers . . .” (Fisher 330)

In the following paragraph she urges other Chicanas as well as her readers to:

“[...] examine closely the published works of Chicanas who have been selected for publication by male editors and publishers. We have to ask ourselves if we have been published because we have dealt with themes that reinforce the male ego. As urban professional Chicanas , we must reinterpret our pantheistic view of the world. Are we really the prototype of the long-suffering indigenous mother? Are we co-opting and neutralizing our emotions by writing what the publishers want to read?”

I will be examining the questions such as the one above in Section Four. These are, indeed, issues, often unsolvable, that emerge, when exploring minor literatures.

It is interesting to note also that Lucero Trujillo is way ahead of her times. She is already questioning the beginnings of recognition by the establishment. There is that doubt, the anguishing questions: Why was I published? Why am I being given some recognition? Could it be that I am saying exactly what they want to hear? Do I neatly fit into the folkloric costume of the third woman? Worse yet: Will I make everyone feel better this way? Make them feel that they've done their part and done their share of delving into the neglected?

Lucero-Trujillo concludes her essay by saying that although it may be somewhat premature to view the present literature of the Chicanas as a culmination of the Chicana experience, those Chicanas who have been writing and publishing for some time now are progressing steadily on the incline of their own apogee.

I want to make it clear that this overview of the Mexicans in no way pretends to give an overview of Mexican American or Chicano literature. Chicanas had already appeared in numerous Chicano anthologies when Dexter Fisher published this anthology in 1980 and several issue of literary reviews had been dedicated solely to Chicana literature. What concerns me more here, however, is not so much their being included in “coed” anthologies, as in all-female anthologies, and ultimately in all-female as well as all U.S. Latina anthologies, as well as the attempt to bring them out of their ethnic ghetto and into the general spotlight.

It is important to mention at this point that if these anthologies become too difficult to find they have lost their purpose. In the annotated bibliography of the anthologies at the end of this work I often mention which ones were as hidden as the treasure of the Sierra Madre.

Yet another Chicana included in Fisher’s anthology is Estela Portillo Trambley whom I will consider in more detail later. Born in 1936 in El Paso, Portillo Trambley has been the subject of numerous studies by Chicano/a scholars. She appeared in the first anthology of Chicano literature published in 1969 by Quinto Sol Publications in Berkeley and entitled El Espejo/The Mirror: Selected Chicano Literature. The editors were Romano V., Octavio I., and Herminio Rios C who, in 1973, published a critical study solely dedicated to Chicanas. Although Trambley’s success has never been commercial her name is often found in reading lists in Chicano Studies departments.

Another writer included is Guadalupe Valdés Fallis who was born in 1941 in El Paso and was teaching Spanish at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces when her work appeared in Fisher’s anthology. According to Fisher, “Recuerdo” the story included in the

anthology centers on the struggle that women must make to substitute independence for empty ritual, as does Trambley's "Pay the Criers." Here, we are less in a militant plane, than on an existential one. Indeed, the ethnic problematic is there, but it is treated quite differently, and there is an attempt to understand certain situation, rather than a cry to stand up and fight.

The four poets of the militant "Chicana" generation are: Inés Hernandez Tovar, Marina Rivera, Angela de Hoyos, and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas.

Inés Hernandez Tovar was also a professor at the time the anthology was published. Born in Texas in 1947, she was a professor of English and Chicano Studies in 1980. According to Fisher she speaks out against the imposed values of the Madison Avenue advertising world that would "Glamour-us out of existence." (Fisher 312)

I have to agree with Fisher when she writes that protest characterizes the poetry of the Chicanas in this anthology. Marina Rivera speaks of not being able to forgive. "The hatred of the small, brown child is the hardest to change, Chon." (Fisher 409) And Angela de Hoyos questions the "necessity of being white – the advisability of mail-order parents." ((Fisher 393) That same poem, entitled "The Final Laugh" ends with the words "O gluttonous omnipotent alien white world." Angela de Hoyos is one of the Chicanas here who is still quite active today, and has been anthologized continuously since then.

Fisher adds that there is also experimentation with language, and "the breaking away from established models to create a new linguistic space." (Fisher 312) Spanish and English are combined, allowing for new sounds and rhythms. Margarita Cota-Cárdenas translates many of her poems into English just to indicate the different shades and nuances between each language.

Ana Castillo and Lorna Dee Cervantes are among the younger writers included in this anthology, and whom I will take into further consideration later.

To resume, the 19 Chicanas included in Fisher's anthology are: Soledad Perez, Carmen Toscano, Victoria Moreno, Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, Marcela Christine Lucero Trujillo, Josefina Niggli, Rosalie Otero Peralta, Estela Portillo Trambley, Guadalupe Valdés Fallis, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Xelina, Ana Castillo, Angela de Hoyos, Judy Lucero, Margarita Cota-Cardenas, Marina Rivera, Carmen Tafolla, Inés Hernández Tovar, and Sylvia Alicia González.

Of those nineteen names, perhaps seven will continue to appear in anthologies and other publications into the 21st century. Fisher writes that, with a few exceptions, they "are products of the literary renaissance that occurred in the 1960's in conjunction with the civil rights and the farm workers struggle led by Cesar Chávez." (Fisher 309)

According to theorists Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne, Chicanas represented in 1985 the stage that they called Phase 4 of the process of reconstruction of the disciplines. They describe this fourth phase as "the study of women on their own terms." (Ortega and Sternbach 9)

Chapter Three -- The Puerto Ricans

The relationship of the United States with Puerto Rico began in the year 1898, at the end of the Spanish-American war, when Spain ceded Puerto Rico to the U.S. At first the island was in limbo, its inhabitants were neither U.S. citizens nor citizens of an independent nation. It wasn't until 1917 that the Jones Act granted Puerto Ricans citizenship, but this was not a cure-all, for the basic question of the future of this island nation remained.

As small as Puerto Rico is, the Puerto Ricans are not a single coherent group, and they never were so. In 1898 the mulattos welcomed the U.S. invasion, while the hacendados and comerciantes pushed for independence.

The 20th century saw various waves of immigration from the island. A handful of sugar cane workers went to Hawaii in 1900. By the year 1920 approximately 12,000 Puerto Ricans had immigrated; 53,000 in 1930; 90,000 in 1944; the entire population had quadrupled by 1950 and then tripled by 1960. (Moore and Pachón 33)

It should be noted that citizenship allowed Puerto Ricans to enter and exit the U.S. as they pleased. Being a mojado or an illegal alien is not one of their issues. But issues there are, as well as deep wounds and conflicts. There are racial problems, for example. And there are words such as "limbo" and "suspended" that always creep up. There is restlessness as well.

"As U.S. citizens the Puerto Ricans can return home, and this has given them a sense of intactness, of closeness to an ancient home, and of restlessness." (Moore and Pachón 35)

According to the theorists Marilyn Schuster and Susan Van Dyne Cubans would be at Phase 2 and Puerto Ricans at Phase 3 of the process of reconstruction of the disciplines mentioned above. The second phase being the “exceptional few”, the third being a “protest of existing paradigms”, and the first “a womanless literature.” (Ortega and Sternbach 9)

One cannot even begin to compare the number of studies dedicated to Chicano literature versus the number of studies dedicated to all the other Latino literatures. The scale definitely tips in the direction of Chicano literature.

Traditionally, Puerto Rican literature in the United States can be divided into two categories, according to William Luis.

“The first is composed by island writers who visited but did not stay in the United States and is written in Spanish and published abroad. The second, which is more recent, is written by Puerto Ricans either born or raised in the United States. Because most of these writers lived in New York City during the 1960’s and 1970’s, they identified themselves with the city and called themselves Puerto Rican New Yorkers or Nuyoricans . . .” (Luis 17)

One of the first Puerto Rican women to publish fiction in English was Nicholasa Mohr who, according to Luis, represents a side of the Nuyorican perspective. Her first novel, entitled Nilda, was published by Harper and Row in 1973. Unfortunately, because of the simplicity of her style, Mohr’s literature has been labeled children’s literature with eternal epoxy.

Mohr was not included in The Third Woman (for she is not a Chicana) or in This Bridge. She was, however, included in the critical anthology Breaking Boundaries.

where, in a Testimonio, she addresses the issue of the separation of the Puerto Rican writers in the U.S. from those in Puerto Rico. For Mohr, this separation is a separation that goes beyond language.

In Mohr's very interesting Testimonio she confesses that she is not an avid reader of the literature of Puerto Rico because she finds their work to be too obsessed with class and race, "thus narrowing their subject matter into regional and provincial material. Their commonly used baroque style of writing in Spanish seems to act as a filler rather than substance." Later on in that same Testimonio she adds, "There are few writers from Puerto Rico with whom I feel I can share a sense of camaraderie. Most of what I read lacks the universality that bonds the common human family, regardless of language, class, or geography." Then she concludes, "There is no pretense that going back will solve problems or bring equality and happiness. This is home. This is where we were born, raised, and where most of us will stay. Notwithstanding is my affection and concern for the people and the land of my parents . . ." (Mohr 114-116)

Two other Puerto Rican poets who were writing and publishing in the 70's but who were not included in This Bridge are Sandra Maria Esteves and Luz Maria Umpierre.

According to William Luis, Esteves expresses pride in being a Puerto Rican woman from El Barrio who accepts her traditional role and adds a new dimension to it. Umpierre, however, is critical of Esteves's view of women, believing that she did not go far enough. (Horno-Delgado 137)

William Luis concludes that although the two poets pertain to Puerto Rican culture, their awareness comes from the North American environment in general, and the women's movement in particular.

In her Testimonio in Breaking Boundaries Esteves writes a letter to Eliana Ortega, one of the editors, in which, just like Mohr, she speaks openly about being from the United states, from the Bronx, where she was born, lives, and will probably remain all her life. Then, in a poem dedicated to Julia de Burgos, entitled “A Julia y a Mi”, Esteves assumes what Yamila Azize Vargas considers to be a “heretical tone when she delivers a critical tribute to one of the most respected women poets in Puerto Rico, admired by Puerto Ricans, male and female alike.”

In reference to this Esteves poem Vargas adds that, “Although the poem shows admiration, influence, and identification with the life and work of Julia, it also questions and reproaches the desperation and defeatism that pervades her work [...] With the alternate use of Spanish and English, the poem achieves the illusion of a dialogue [...] Spanish is used to express admiration [...] English when formulating questions that, as the poem progresses, turn into critical statements.” (Azize Vargas 154-155)

According to Vargas, Esteves, like many other Puerto Rican writers living in New York, uses literature as a tool to defend her cultural roots. Esteves is one of many women writers who are fully cognizant of their literature, and also of the value of nostalgia. While to others home is a picture on the wall keeping them from fully committed to their new or not so new country, writers such as Esteves admit that the picture is pretty, but never forget what happens when you step inside the picture. This is what gives them so much insight as to who they are and the world around them.

Just as Moraga and other Chicana feminists redefine and retell the story of La Malinche, Puerto Rican poets such as Esteves recover the historical figure of Anacaona, an Indian woman poet who, according to Ortega, takes Esteves and other poets back to a

pre-Hispanic origin, a mother origin, an Afro-Antillean or Borinquen origin. Once again, they remain aware of the pitfalls of this return, which remains an intellectual one. In other words, these poets are so cognizant of a certain reality around them that it even allows them to play with nostalgia.

In "A la mujer borinqueña" Esteves writes:

" . . . I do not complain about nursing my children

because I determine the direction of their values

I am the mother of a new age of warriors," (Ortega 128)

Ortega ties this back to the Anacaonian mother theme, the Anacaonian mother being in direct contact with her people and her motherland and expresses herself in a communal voice.

This approach, however, does not suit feminists such as Luz Maria Umpierre who, according to Vargas, develop a critical feminine perspective that intends, above all, "to combat prevailing stereotypes, emphasize different forms of behavior, and destroy myths that have traditionally dominated the education of Latina women." In other words, Umpierre criticizes Esteves for not having gone far enough, or for having, finally, kept women in their place. Just as Esteves questions Julia de Burgos, Umpierre writes a poem "In Response" in answer to another poem by Esteves, which criticizes Maria Cristina, the model presented in Esteves's poem. This is all quite reminiscent of Sor Juana's own Respuesta.

It is another model that Umpierre defends in her poem "In Response":

"My name is not María Cristina

I am a Puerto Rican woman born in another barrio . . .

I speak, I think,
 I express myself in any voice,
 In any tone, in any language that conveys
 My house within
 The only way to fight oppression is through resistance:
 I do complain
 I will complain.” (Azize Vargas 158)

Yet another Puerto Rican poet of Mohr’s, Esteves’s and Umpierre’s generation not included in the anthologies is Judith Ortiz Cofer who, according to William Luis, expresses herself in a language that is more polished and mainstream. Cofer was not included in This Bridge although she had already had work published by 1980.

The two Puerto Rican women anthologized in the original version of This Bridge are Rosario Morales and Aurora Levins Morales, a mother and a daughter.

One of Rosario Morales’s texts included in This Bridge is entitled “I am what I am.” This text is a perfect example of what Eliana Ortega and Nancy Sternbach mean when they write that although conventional readings of minority literature tend to emphasize the search for identity, Latina writers tend to self affirm and self define themselves constantly. “If there is a search in this writing, we contend that it must be defined as a search for the expression or the articulation of that identity . . .” (Ortega and Sternbach 3) In other words, if there is a search for identity it does not imply that it is a search for something lost or misplaced or simply not there. The identity is there and the search appears to be a search for ways to affirm it.

Thus, Rosario Morales begins by writing:

“I am what I am and I am U.S. American I haven’t wanted to say it because if I did you’d take away the Puerto Rican but now I say go to hell . . . I am what I am I am Puerto Rican I am U.S. American I am New York Manhattan and the Bronx . . . I am Boricua as boricuas come from the isle of Manhattan and I croon Carlos Gardel tangoes in my sleep and Afro-Cuban beats in my blood” (Morales 14)

Also in that text Morales describes her tangled roots, the Yiddish she spoke, as well as the Queen’s English that she got from the BBC while she was living in the mountains of Puerto Rico in her early twenties. The text ends with, “I am what I am and I’m naturalized Jewish-American wasp is foreign and new but Jewish-American is old-show familiar schmata familiar .” (Morales 14-15)

Indeed, through this prose poem, with the rebellious punctuation Morales is affirming what she is and looking for ways to express it. The repetition of the I am what I am is reminiscent of the Chicana’s call to emancipation and self-affirmation through the I am Chicana.

Another of Morales’s texts included in This Bridge is entitled “We’re all in the same Boat.” Once again, Morales begins by identifying herself. “I am not white. I am not middle class. I am white skinned and Puerto Rican. I was born into the working class and married into the middle class. I object to the label . . .” (Morales 91)

This time, instead of a nationalistic self-affirmation and definition, Morales is striving toward a more socio-economic definition, and facing the problems that come with the labeling. She is opposed to the label white and middle class because they exclude her working class side. She then affirms that color and class don’t define people or politics. She then proceeds to express her anger at Puerto Rican and other Latin American activist

women because she believes they have been sexist and supported the macho line. This text was written in 1979. At this point we can definitely see a unity in the U.S. Puerto Rican Latina writings, and some recurrent themes, that in many ways are already beginning to differ from the Chicana themes. I underlined “U.S. Puerto Rican Latina” because it is problematic. It goes without saying that all Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens. This means that they are all U.S. I simply wish to distinguish those born and raised on the island and using primarily the Spanish language, from those either born or raised in the U.S. and using the Spanish language primarily.

While Morales was born in New York in 1930 and raised in The Bronx and Spanish Harlem, her daughter Aurora’s experience is totally other. Both, however, instead of writing about the “connection”, whatever that may be, or the connection implied by the bridge in the title, prefer to write about separation.

In a text entitled “...And even Fidel can’t change that” Aurora Levins Morales describes the point of terror, “the New York Puerto Rican.” While her mother was born in the Bronx, Aurora was born deep in the countryside of Puerto Rico and lived there until she turned 13. While the Barrio was home for mother, for the daughter it was the fear of racist violence that clipped her mother’s tongue of all its open vowels “into crisp, imitation British.” While the daughter was growing up, on the other hand, she fought battles to prove she was Puerto Rican not “una Americanita”.

“ [...] but I stayed on the safe side of that line: Caribbean Island, not Portah Ricah; exotic tropical blossom, not spic – living halfway in the skin and separating myself from the dark, bad city kids in Nueva York.” (Levins Morales 53)

Now what is it that Fidel can’t change?

Aurora chances upon that phrase in a 1979 Cuban film. An older woman is shouting at a younger one that God made men and women different and even Fidel can't change that. Aurora chances upon this while another phrase keeps ringing in her ear, "In the third generation the daughters are free." (Levins Morales 53-54)

The problem is, indeed, that everyone can be first generation, or second, or third.

Lourdes Rojas believes that in her essay "And even Fidel can't change that" Levins Morales stresses the Latina need to examine and redefine the mother-daughter relationship, which she considers crucial to any "significant transformation of the role of women in Latina and Latin American cultures." Rojas then proceeds to quote Levins Morales who writes, "The relationship between mother and daughter stands at the center of what I fear most in our culture. Heal that wound and we change the world." (Rojas 167)

Although the idea of the relationship as a wound is not elaborated, in "Getting Home Alive" both mother and daughter embark on what Rojas believes to be a multifaceted process of re-creating their own stories.

In my explorations I found no anthologies of Puerto Rican women living and writing in the U.S. (Puerto Ricans as U.S. Latinas) published around the same time as This Bridge or prior to it. As far as I know this is the first instance where the voices of Puerto Rican women living and writing in the U.S. are being included in an anthology. All the more interesting is that instead of being heard for the first time as women poets, poetisas, or writers of beautiful or sentimental verse, as they would undoubtedly be back home, they are presented as radical women of color. It is as if a step or several steps that lead to liberation had been skipped over.

In other words, these Puerto Rican women did not begin by affirming themselves as feminists or feminines, rather they began by positioning themselves as radicals.

The feminists had been around for some time, and some battles had been fought, if not won. Schuster and Van Dyne would place Puerto Rican women, at the time This Bridge was published in Phase 3 of the process of reconstruction of the disciplines, a “protest of existing paradigms characterized by anger and a desire for social justice.” (Ortega and Sternbach 9)

In 1988 the San Francisco-based publisher Aunt Lute published an anthology of short stories by contemporary Puerto Rican women. It was entitled Reclaiming Medusa and it showcased the work of five Puerto Rican women: Rosario Ferré, Carmen Lugo Filippi, Mayra Montero, Carmen Valle, and Ana Lydia Vega.

I chose not to add Reclaiming Medusa to the list of U.S. Latina literature anthologies. I place it with anthologies such as Margaret Randall’s Breaking the Silences that I consider in the next chapter. Both those editors, and many others like them (Delia Poey, for example with Out of the Mirrored Garden), present the work of Latin American women, not of U.S. Latinas, in their anthologies.

Obviously, nothing is written in stone and, as we have seen and will continue to see, one can be a little bit from here and a little bit from there. Life on the border and life on the hyphen just go to prove it. Nonetheless, although some of the women presented in this anthology subsequently appeared in U.S. Latina anthologies, they remain Latin American as far as I am concerned. First of all, in spite of the effort of one of them to write in English in order to sell more books, these women all have Spanish as their first language. The anthology, in fact, was translated from the Spanish.

Secondly, the situations they deal with in their texts are not those that concern Latinas. They are middle class ones. One only has to read the quote in the beginning of the anthology to agree. Virginia Woolf's famous words that everyone loves to quote speak for the upper and middle class woman writer "[...] give her a room of her own and five hundred a year [...]" Latinas were less concerned with having a room of their own than of having a little corner of the kitchen table on which to write.

Later on, in her introduction, Diana Velez, the editor and translator affirms several times that we're looking at contemporary Puerto Rico. The writing collected in this anthology "all fit squarely in the tradition of feminine prose, of course. But it also forms part of a national literary canon, that of contemporary Puerto Rican prose writers."

(Reclaiming Medusa iv)

Although Velez later speaks of triple oppression, race, class, and gender, my opinion is that all the women in this anthology are only affected by one, that of gender. Race and class for them, are not issues, as they are for Latinas. Or perhaps I am being too vague. Here's a concrete example. One of the writers, Rosario Ferré, belongs to a family that has ruled and practically owned the island for a century. The issues put forward by the women in This Bridge Called My Back were not those of the princess daughters of the rich and powerful who had chosen to marry a selfish man. I am not saying that these are not important issues, but they are different.

But my effort here is not so much to prove that Reclaiming Medusa if this or that. What is more interesting is the fact that there can be a debate, and even a heated argument. Some could affirm that these women are U.S. Latinas since Puerto Rico does belong to the U.S. Others could stand up and yell that they are strictly Puerto Ricans.

Juan Flores sees several phases to Puerto Rican literature in the United states and the authors in *Reclaiming Medusa* are not in any of these phases.

Flores is of the opinion that the Nuyoricans culminate and synthesize all the earlier phases. With the Nuyoricans, indeed, “[...] the Puerto Rican community in the United States has arrived at a modality of literary expression corresponding to its position as a non-assimilating colonial minority. The most obvious mark of this new literature emanating from the community is the language: the switch from Spanish to English and bilingual writing.” (Flores 65).

A few paragraphs later Flores couldn't express it more clearly: “Like Mexican-American and other minority literatures, it cannot be understood and assessed on the basis of a strict English language conceptualization of American literature, or of literary practice in general.” (Flores 65) Indeed, a great majority of these texts require knowledge of both Spanish and English, and this seems to be a whole new dimensions to the minority literatures being produced by Latinas in particular, and Latinos in general.

Chapter Four -- The Cubans

Although the United States was the victor in the Spanish-American War of 1898, Cuba became a so-called independent nation four years later. Cubans did, however, immigrate into the U.S. before Castro's 1959 revolution.

By 1930 there were approximately 19,000 Cubans in the U.S., and 79,000 by 1960. The number just kept increasing. There were 273,000 Cubans in the U.S. in 1973 as a result of the second wave of immigration. The third wave came in 1980 with the Mariel boatlift, approximately 118,000 Cubans then entered U.S. territory.

While the first wave was 94% white and well educated, the second wave was 80% white, and less educated, and the third wave was 60% white and even less educated. (Moore and Pachón 36) Perhaps Moore and Pachón are simply trying to say that education was better before Castro, and slowly deteriorated afterward.

Unlike other waves of immigrants the first Cuban immigrants came for ideological reasons and not because of economic hardship.

In the late 70's and early 80's very few Cuban writers were writing in English, and even fewer women writers. The playwright Dolores Prida wrote and produced plays such as Beautiful Señoritas in the 70's, but she is one of those exceptional few. Indeed, were Schuster and Van Dyne to determine a phase in the process of reconstruction for U.S. Cuban women writers, they would surely have situated them in Phase 2 in the late seventies and early eighties, this phase being that of "the exceptional few." Phase 1 being "a womanless literature."

It is important to note that I am dubbing The Third Woman and This Bridge the earliest anthologies. As early as 1970, an anthology of Cuban "poetesses" was published

in Miami, by Ediciones Universal. It included five poetesses who all wrote in Spanish. This is not one of the early anthologies being studied here because these women could not yet be called Latinas. They were simply poetesses or “poetisas” writing in the United States.

If I keep repeating that politically incorrect word, “poetess”, it is just to show that it was still being used, in Miami in all innocence, in 1970, barely ten years before Moraga and Anzaldúa decided to put forth their radical women of color. The title of the 1970 anthology is precisely, Cinco Poetisas Cubanas. These poetisas are: Pura del Prado, Mercedes Garcia Tudurí, Rita Geada, Ana Rosa Núñez, and Teresa Maria Rojas. The editor of this collection is Angel Aparicio Laurencio who was a professor of literature at Redlands University in California at the time. The anthology was published within a specific collection in Ediciones Universal called Espejo de Paciencia, undoubtedly what every good poetess should be.

Although I consider this to be a very early anthology of Cuban women, not of U.S. Latinas, for reasons that I will expatiate upon, Cinco Poetisas does merit some examination.

In his introduction the editor begins by saying that too much has been written concerning the Cuban revolution in the past few years and that the first, second and third rate intellectuals who had visited the island, invited by the socialist government, now think they are experts on the topic.

Now the reason the editor begins by mentioning these pseudo-intellectuals is that they have affirmed that socialist Cuba has a new generation of poets, a generation that is revolutionary in its soul and its spirit. Laurencio believes that one only has to peruse this

Communist poetry to become aware of the fact that it is nothing but vulgar and intellectually submissive rubbish. Laurencio even takes it a step further and writes, “no son otra cosa que untuosos lamebotas de sátrapas impíos e inhumanos.” (Laurencio in *Spoetisas* 8) Not even Moraga and Anzadúa dared write anything like that.

Immediately, Laurencio puts us right in the middle of the political, in this case a political conflict. One of the reasons for this anthology is precisely to say that Cuban poetry of the revolution “no es otra cosa que arte de evasión, arte escapista, arte no comprometido,” and that the poet of the revolution is in fact a “papagayo de una ideología totalitaria.” (Laurencio 8-9)

Laurencio then adds that while there is much ado over these “revolucionarios de tocador”, there is much silence when it comes to the independent poets who do not accept the socialist ideology, who have, however, continued with their work in exile.

“Compárese con seriedad y sin chauvinismo lo escrito dentro de Cuba y lo escrito en el destierro y se comprobará lo que venimos afirmando,” Laurencio writes before introducing the five poetesses who, in what he considers to be a quiet and artistic way, have let loose the reins of their pain.

Unfortunately, the editor does not mention any names, so we do not have anyone with whom to compare these poetesses. We will later, though, but for the time being I want to linger on that sticky pink word poetess. When it comes time to introduce each one of his chosen few to the reader Laurencio writes that Mercedes García Tudurí is so full of intimacy, so delicate, so spiritual, so traditional and modern at the same time. As to Pura del Prado, she is “vestida de llanto.” Then there’s Rita Geda with her nostalgia, who is walking between the stars searching for palm tress and sunsets. There’s Teresa Maria

Rojas who also evokes the palm tress, worries about the peasants, and agonizes over her motherland held in chains. Finally, there is Ana Rosa Núñez who sings with tenderness and hope, and whose song becomes one of heart-rending lament for the blood of her brothers and for having lost the dawn.

Finally, before ranting against the poets of the revolution one more time, the editor concludes that these are, "Poetisas todas the cuerpo entero, de sangre y de corazón, Poetisas que llevan el verso en las entrañas, lleno de sentimiento, verdad, y tragedia." (Laurencio 11) Adjectives such as tender, and description such as these applied to women poets will be taken into consideration in Part Three of this study.

Twelve years after Angel Aparicio Laurencio published his Cinco Poetisas Margaret Randall would publish her own anthology of 20th century poetry by Cuban women entitled Breaking the Silences.

I do not consider Randall's anthology to be one of the early anthologies of U.S. Latinas either because it concentrates on women poets living in Cuba at the time. In fact, these are the poets that we can probably compare with the Cinco Poetisas.

Randall's anthology is quite extensive. It is divided into three parts to represent three generations of poets: Our Livings Mothers, Our Time has Come, and We Speak Another Language.

The first section contains older poets born in the beginning of the 20th century such as Dulce Maria Loynaz and Fina García Marruz. The second group is made up of mature poets who have found their voices but who, according to Randall are still young enough to be moving with this rapidly changing society. And the third section contains often very young poets who have been totally formed by the revolutionary ethic.

Randall states that her purpose in this book is to give a panorama of what she feels is happening in Cuban women's poetry today. "Since one of the main prerogatives of the anthologist is choice, I have chosen these poets who I consider, based on my own years of reading and writing poetry, to be the best. There are a number of women poets who could not be included but should nevertheless be mentioned." (Randall 26) These are: Dora Alonso, Thelvia Marín, Mercedes Santos Moray, Ana Nuñez Machín, Dulcila Canisares, Tania Diaz Castro, Ana Justina, Yvette Vián, Marisela Sánchez, and Magaly Landa. At times I wish every anthologist would mention the authors whom they chose to exclude.

This anthology only includes one woman writing out of an entirely different context, Lourdes Casal, a member of the Cuban exile community in the United States. "I have chosen Lourdes believing her to be among the most interesting and the most representative of these voices. But there are many other Cuban women writing and publishing outside the island." (Randall 24) Randall then mentions three of the poets included in Cinco Poetisas: Ana Rosa Núñez, Pura del Prado, and Rita Geada.

As far as U.S. Cuban women writers were concerned, however, no anthology had yet been dedicated solely to them. Nor had they appeared in any other anthology before This Bridge.

Moraga and Anzaldúa included one Cuban writer in their anthology.

Mirtha Quintanales was born in Cuba in 1949 and emigrated to the U.S. in 1962. At the time she appeared in This Bridge, that is to say eighteen years after her arrival in the U.S., Quintanales wrote that she was still struggling with the after-effects of the upheaval brought about by exile, and always wondering where is home. "As a Latina lesbian

feminist, I am one with all those whose existence is only possible through revolt.”

(Quintanales 249)

When considering Hispanic subgroups in the United States Eliana Rivero makes a distinction between native and migrated Hispanics. She then proceeds to put both Chicanos and Puerto Ricans in the first category and Cubans in the second. Afterward, she further divides the Cuban group into “exiles” and “ethnics”. Cuban women writers such as Ana Rosa Núñez, Hilda Perera, Rita Geada, Pura del Prado, Martha Padilla, and Belkis Cuza Male are situated in the exile category. Three of the writers she mentions were included in the 1970 anthology Cinco Poetisas Cubanas.

“Yet none of these names,” Rivero writes, “exemplify the transition from exile to ethnic minority member. Their texts often bespeak an existential alienation that denotes an inner struggle with roles and identities; nevertheless, they neither treat nor engage the U.S. experience.” (Rivero 191-192)

According to Rivero it was the Cuban writer born around 1940 who migrated to the United States who began to show a consciousness of change. “[...]this was frequently a feminist awareness that at times clashed with their middle-class values and conservative ideology. Sometimes a detail as subtle as a North American geographical name or an English song title would appear in their descriptions of daily happenings; or perhaps it was a flat statement about a house in the suburbs gladly given up to return to Cuba.” (Rivero 192)

Rivero mentions Maya Islas, Mireya Robles, Uva Clavijo. She fails to mention Mirtha Quintanales who appeared in This Bridge.

However, Rivero believes that it is with Lourdes Casal that Cuban women writers in the United States:

“[...] can fully claim their cultural dualism as immigrants [...] her life and works give witness to the first full-fledged step in the direction of becoming Cuban-Americans, in the best sense of that term. Ethnic name hyphenation implies a recognition of existential and socio-cultural hybridism, and Cuban women in the U.S. are, at present, involved in the process of recognizing themselves as such others . . .” (Rivero 195)

Rivero then comes to the conclusion, in this essay that was published in 1989, that Cuban-American women has barely begun establishing themselves in the multicultural U.S. literary scene.

Chapter Five -- The Dominicans

The chapters are getting shorter and shorter. That is because the Dominican women writers were so few that they were still labeled as “Other” in the late sixties and early seventies. To date they are one of the most recent groups of Latino/a authors to write in the United States.

Two important events affected the Dominican Republic and its authors: the Trujillo dictatorship and the U.S. invasion.

No Dominican women were included in the early anthologies we are considering in Part One of this study. Sandra Maria Esteves, however, is half Puerto Rican and half Dominican.

To the best of my knowledge no anthologies have yet been dedicated solely to U.S. Dominican women writers.

One of the Testimonios in Breaking Boundaries is written by Sherezada (Chiqui) Vicioso, a Dominican poet who first came to the United States in 1967, but who is not included in any of the early anthologies.

We shouldn't jump to the conclusion that Fisher and Moraga overlooked her, for it wasn't until 1977 that Vicioso began writing seriously after a trip to Cuba. Up until then she confesses that she had regarded literature as a hobby of the petite bourgeoisie. Her trip to Cuba, followed by a trip to Africa in 1978, changed all that. Vicioso began writing criticism in 1982 and published her second book in 1985.

Vicioso's intellectual and emotional path, however, resembles the one taken by Moraga and Anzaldúa in This Bridge. It was while studying in Brooklyn College that Vicioso realized that she was a Caribbean mulata and adopted the Black identity. She

then became a radical feminist but was put off by white feminism and people such as Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan.

There are still very few U.S. Dominican women writers, but one, Julia Alvarez, has gained much notoriety.

Chapter Six -- The Others

Although Moore and Pachón's study was published as late as 1985, they neglect to mention the "Other" Latinos, such as the Dominicans, the Central Americans, and some South Americans who were already in the U.S. at that time.

Central Americans have in fact been migrating into the U.S. for some time now. According to Ortega and Sternbach in their essay included in Breaking Boundaries, the other Latinos come from countries where U.S. supported military dictatorships forced their departure in the 70's. They believe that the majority of these women who write are from middle and upper middle class backgrounds.

The Chilean-born writer, Marjorie Agosín, whom I will consider in detail later, is one of these others. Examples such as Agosín's would make anyone wonder how marginal can one get. Not only is she a woman belonging to a particular ethnic group, like many Latinas. As a matter of fact, writing in the U.S. Agosín has to be included, as she is, with the Latinas. She does not, however, completely belong to the Latina "movement", at least not in its beginnings. In several poems that I will analyze later Agosín sees herself with no alternative but to stand up for her blue eyes and blond hair. The poetic voice confesses that she has no claim to a grandmother with braids making tortillas, but that she nevertheless has something to say.

Women writers such as Agosín were undoubtedly ostracized by certain Latina groups in the beginning since these movements stood in opposition to the white feminists and were basically blue collar.

In other cases, some Central American women of very humble origins have been included in anthologies published throughout the eighties.

Now the reason I have chosen to dedicate such a short chapter to the “others”, simply to say that they exist, is that it alludes to how fluid these headings are. Once a group exists, perhaps it seems so established that one believes it will be there forever. Such is not the case. William Luis insisted on the “temporary” aspect of some of these groups.

One day in the 21st century we could very well have a new group of women writers that categorically refuses to answer to the name Latina.

Last but not least, it is through this 2-page chapter that this history of Latina literature anthologies will begin to age.

Chapter Seven – The Earliest Anthologies

Ortega and Sternbach believe that the hostile climate for minority literatures in the late 70's gave way to a virtual explosion of Latina writings in the 80's. They then add that they have observed that the years of greatest political oppression have coincided with the greatest proliferation of women's writings. "One possible theory about the emergence of women into a public sphere during times of repression stems from the fact that in all instances, normative cultural life had been interrupted or destroyed. As outsiders to that public or cultural sphere, women perceived, and took advantage of, the fractures within the system and began to establish themselves . . ." (Ortega and Sternbach 10)

Ortega and Sternbach then go on to explain that by "Latina writing" they not only mean the literature of Chicanas and Puertorriqueñas but also that of those women who identify with their struggle. This literature will therefore depict but not limit itself to depicting "the reality, experiences, and everyday life of a people whose working class origin serves as a springboard to understanding cultural contexts." (Ortega and Sternbach 11)

Those cultural contexts are the ones defined by Alejo Carpentier, and the ones he considered central for an analysis of Latin American literature: racial, economic, ethnic, political, social, chronological, culinary, ideological, luminous, and stylistic. According to Sternbach and Ortega the Latina writers will prioritize within these contexts the lives of women such as themselves and celebrate what they call a matriarchal heritage. They then quote Lorna Dee Cervantes who writes that Latina discourse often pays tribute to a long line of female ancestors.

The anthologies I am using in this context are what I consider to be the earliest anthologies, The Third Woman, and This Bridge Called My Back. As I already mentioned, they do not limit themselves solely to Latina writers and cannot therefore be considered the first anthologies of U.S. Latina writers, simply the earliest, a step toward the first anthologies which I will examine in Part II of this study.

In spite of the fact that the editors of the two earliest anthologies had similar goals, to make minority women's voices heard, The Third Woman and This Bridge Called My Back seem to be worlds apart. As I already pointed out, but this merits mentioning again, they don't even have one single author in common.

The Third Woman is the classical, weighty, professional looking academic anthology. The cover is neat and clean, light green, darker green, and hints of red, with symbols pertaining to each of the minority cultures included in the anthology: a dragon, an eagle, a mask, a bird. The paper is of good quality and the presentation is quite professional. In the year 2001 it is still possible to order this anthology from Barnes & Noble.com or Amazon.com, but there are not many copies left. It remains, however, somewhat available.

In her preface Fisher begins by reminding us that a decade separates the women's movement from the present day (in that case 1980), and that minority women have yet to be represented adequately in anthologies. So it wasn't so much that women were not being represented, it was minority women. With this anthology Fisher therefore hopes to present the best of the literature written by minority women in the U.S.

"The volume may be used in introductory, multi-ethnic, or women's literature courses, as well as in survey courses in American literature." (Fisher xxvii)

This is obviously a first step in an effort to allow minority women to challenge the canon or canons.

If Fisher chose to exclude some authors, she explains that it is because their work is readily accessible in other places. It is too bad that she failed to mention the authors she chose to exclude, because it would have allowed me to make some parallels, and even determine if some of them appeared in This Bridge a year later.

In the General Introduction Fisher restates the purpose of her anthology. It is precisely to demonstrate that there is in fact a rich body of literature by minority women, and that it deserves our attention, not only because it exists but also because it can expand our imaginative powers and deepen our appreciation of language and genre. By “our” attention, “our” imaginative powers, and “our” appreciation, Fisher seems to be referring to that of the University.

Also in the General Introduction Fisher makes it clear that she has avoided “selecting only pieces that are exclusively political or feminist. Rather, the political statement of this book derives from its existence as the first major collection of literature by American-Indian, Afro-American [...] And although feminism informs a number of selections here, it is but one of the many subjects [...] addressed [...]” (Fisher xxx) Here is the explanation why the two anthologies have no authors in common.

In Chapter Two I examined in detail some of the women’s writings included in Fisher’s anthology in the light of Chicana identity and the beginnings of self-affirmation. So what I would like to do here, as I examine all the texts, is note that they were mostly written in the hostile climate of the 70’s and are a harbinger of the struggle and of the explosion of the 80’s. I would also like to return to the notion of “woman context” as

described by Ortega and Sternbach, for most of the literary texts written by Chicanas in The Third Woman do contain an extended family of women.

“When we speak of a family of women, we also imply a restructuring of the traditional patriarchal family. Since many of these women are from immigrant or exile families – a condition that often cause the split of a traditional nuclear family – the writers have often displaced a central patriarchal figure, replacing it with a woman-headed and woman-populated household.” (Ortega and Sternbach 12)

Such is the case for, in fact, only a few of the texts in The Third Woman. In that quote, Ortega and Sternbach are referring to the authors of the 80’s, but many authors included in Fisher’s anthology wrote before that time, since the anthology was published in 1980. So many of them will present a different situation. Some of the stories take place in Mexico, in a male dominated society, other stories take place at home, in Texas or New Mexico. In any case, in what has always been home, for these are not immigrant families.

By christening the anthology The Third Woman Fisher obviously intended its thread to be the woman context. What she also does, however, whether or not she intended it, is that in the structure she first shows the long line of female ancestors, then proceeds to put forward some texts that announce the beginning of the struggle, or the call to it. The presentation of Chicanas ends with poetry, Chicana poetry from the 70’s that was already a literature of protest.

The Chicana section is divided into three parts: Contexts; Traditions, Narratives and Fictions; and Poetry.

The five authors included in the first section are: Soledad Perez, Carmen Toscano, Victoria Moreno, Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, and Marcela Christine Lucero-Trujillo. The

first three texts, by Perez, Toscano, and Moreno, deal precisely with La Llorona. Here we are in the heart of this extended family of women. I already mentioned the reinterpretation of history, so I will not go into that again. What matters now is this new family being made as a result of this new reading, writing, and telling of history. Here is an ancestor, one of the mothers, La Llorona.

Immediately following those three texts is Cabeza de Baca's narrative that begins with the words, "The women on the llano . . ."

Lucero-Trujillo ends this Contexto section by analyzing the new interpretation of the Malinche myth and giving the background of the Chicana movement, a product of the late 70's.

The four authors included in the second section are: Josefina Niggli, Rosalie Otero Peralta, Estela Portillo Trambley, and Guadalupe Valdés Fallis.

In her story entitled "The Street of the Cañón" which I have already mentioned, Niggli reworks the legend of the devil disguising himself as a handsome man to come and court a lady. The difference here is that Sarita, who has just turned 18, although she accepts the handsome stranger's invitation to dance, and admits that she is somewhat taken by him, holds firm. She is not swept off her feet in spite of the fellow's charm. What's more, this is the only one of the five stories (two are by Trambley) that is not almost solely occupied by women. Sarita, in fact, does not even seem to have a mother and her party seems to be full of her father's men friends. She seems to hold her own as far as lack of confidence in men is concerned, but not as far as tradition and superstition, for they seem to have an iron grip on her. As a matter of fact, it is this blind adherence to tradition that keeps her on guard when the charming devil comes in disguise.

It is interesting to note that Niggli's story takes place in Mexico, precisely in a male dominated world, and that Niggli, born in 1910, was probably in her sixties at the time Chicanas began to affirm and define themselves.

Peralta's text, "Las Dos Hermanas," on the contrary, takes place completely in a woman context. The men are either dead or at their mistresses' houses. The two sisters of the title, Marcelina and Teresina, who live in the same town and near each other, are constantly sending each other small gifts of affection. Their messenger is none other than a child, Teresina's granddaughter and Marcelina's niece. We know nothing of the child's mother.

Here, life is a series of little tokens of love being sent back and forth, from loneliness to loneliness, until one day the child begins to understand how lonely and tragic life is, and begins, she herself, to send these tokens, or cariños.

"Recuerdo" by Valdés Fallis, can also be situated in this woman context since it deals with a mother, who once attempted to be free, trying this time to set her own daughter free. She will fail indeed, but the beginnings of the struggle are there, as well as the long line of female ancestors.

The two stories by Trambley demonstrate to what extent Fisher chose many of these voices less because of their condition as minority women than for their literary quality.

The story entitled "The Burning" is peopled by women, women who have a blind hatred and fear of their native past, so much so that they end up burning an Indian woman because she makes clay figurines for the purpose of healing. The only man in this story, a priest, implores this sad lot of female witch-hunters to have pity for the poor Indian woman.

In Trambley's other story, "Pay the Criers", the female ancestors, in this case, the dead mother, seem to have more power once they are dead than when they were alive. Instead of satisfying his mother-in-law's last wish, to go and pay the criers, Chucho went and spent the money she left at the brothel. This guilt is something both Chucho and Juana must contend with now, as well as with a rotting cadaver in their house, a cadaver that they can no longer afford to bury.

This satire presents woman in a different light. Both Juana and her mother seemed to have power over Chucho in spite of his philandering. There are hints of a male dominated world, but it seems very superficial. It is as if Juana and her mother had simply allowed Chucho to be childish, to be a boy, a boy whom they would always forgive. In the end, they were the ones who had the money and the power.

It is as if a door were being opened ajar, we get a glimpse of what this male dominated world is really about.

The 12 authors in the poetry section are: Lorna Dee Cervantes, Xelina, Ana Castillo, Angela de Hoyos, Judy Lucero, Victoria Moreno, Margarita Cota-Cárdenas, Marcela Christina Lucero-Trujillo, Marina Rivera, Carmen Tafolla, Inés Hernández Tovar, and Sylvia Alicia Gonzales.

I will not analyze all of them. I simply wish to stress that these poems were written in that hostile climate of the 70's and that they are mostly of protests in spite of Fisher's efforts to leave out literature that was either too feminist or too political. This is where it is the most surprising the This Bridge and The Third Woman never coincided in their choice of authors.

“The ultimate protest is against anonymity,” Fisher writes before adding that, “For some Chicanas, the very act of writing and publishing outside the mainstream of the literary establishment becomes a political statement.” (Fisher 312)

But what most characterizes, according to Fisher, the element of political and verbal dissent is the experimentation with language and the breaking away from established models to create a new linguistic space. As a matter of fact the word “breaking” or its consequences is often used in relation to Chicanas and other U.S. Latinas. Randall’s anthology is entitled Breaking the Silences. Then there is Breaking Boundaries, Shattering the Myth, just to name a few of the anthologies.

In the bibliography that follows the presentation of Chicana writers Fisher mentions 14 anthologies of Chicano literature, but not one of them is dedicated solely to Chicanas. There was, however, a periodical called Hembra, and published by the Center for Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. The other periodicals in the bibliography concerned Chicano literature written by both men and women. As far as critical studies are concerned, there is one published in 1975 by the Chicano studies department of the University of Minnesota, written by Marcela Trujillo Gaitán, and entitled Chicana Themes, Manita Poetry. The rest of Fisher’s bibliography focuses on the individual works of the Chicanas presented. They were all published in the 70’s except for Cabeza de Baca who was published in 1954, and Niggli, who had several works published by the University of North Carolina Press as well as Charles Scribner’s in the 30’s.

This Bridge Called my Back couldn’t be more different from The Third Woman. The colors on the cover are reminiscent of the flag of the former Soviet Union, yellow and

brick red. The art is quite simple, a pencil drawing of a woman on all fours, and the rest consists of big, yellow letters, the title, the subtitle, the names of the two editors, the name of the person who wrote the foreword.

I have before me the second edition of This Bridge, published by Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. The original publisher of this anthology was Persephone Press, a white women's press of Watertown, Massachusetts, that ceased operation in the spring of 1983. At that time, This Bridge Called my Back had already gone out of print, as it has now, in the year 2001. It is impossible to buy, and very hard to find. It was on the spring reserve 2001 at the CUNY Graduate Center, which means that it is still being "studied" or at least considered a little over two decades after publication. This is quite exceptional since as a rule anthologies do tend to age quickly.

This certainly says something about books that look academic and professional. At times This Bridge gives the impression of having been put together on a kitchen table, which it was.

Once again, This Bridge is not limited to Latinas, but instead of having individual parts dedicated to each one of the minority groups, they are all grouped together, as if the ethnic origin mattered less than the "radical writing". When Fisher opts for leaving out texts that are solely feminist or political, this is where the texts she left out are to be found.

As I already mentioned anthologies tend to die, they are deeply rooted in their times, a product of those times, and of the trends of those times, and therefore die out with them. They are replaced by other anthologies, and this explains why they are often difficult to find. This Bridge in a way is not really an anthology, it is a heartbeat, and it is a

testimony, and perhaps that explains why it is still being considered today in the university.

Not often does one encounter anthologies where the editor spills all her sadness, despair and doubts in the foreword. This did not seem to be merely a project for Cherrie Moraga, it was an adventure that changed her life. Let's begin with the title.

The complete title of this anthology is: This Bridge Called my Back, Writings by Radical Women of Color.

No comma separates "Back" from "Writings", the anthology simply has two titles, one that is given at the top, and "Writings by" below. "This Bridge..." could certainly be the title of a novel or of a chapbook. It is a title that is open for interpretation. The drawing of the woman on all fours on the cover makes the "bridge" literal. A woman is on all fours making her back a bridge. Initially, this appears to be a very submissive position, but chances are this is not what the editors intended, although they probably did want to play with that double effect.

"Voyager, there are no bridges, one builds them as one walks," writes Gloria Anzaldúa in her Foreword to the second edition. This same foreword begins with the words, "Perhaps like me you are tired of suffering [...]" Anzaldúa immediately urges her readers to let go of that suffering, and even to stop speaking until the world becomes luminous and active, enough with the passivity, "we can't afford to stop in the middle of the bridge with arms crossed."

The bridge can first of all be a simple symbol, life. Many poets have written about life as a bridge, life as a crossing over. It is a theme almost as overused as the moon.

But the bridge is also this project of Moraga's and Anzaldúa's, this revolutionary project. While Fisher simply strives to make the minority women known in the halls of academe, Moraga and Anzaldúa set out to change the world with an anthology.

"With This Bridge," Anzaldúa writes in the last paragraph of her foreword, "we have begun to come out of the shadows, we have begun to break with routines and oppressive customs and to discard taboos . . ." She then urges the women, "Mujeres" (this whole text is written both in English and in Spanish), not to allow the danger of the journey, or the vastness of the territory scare them . . . "there are no bridges, one builds them as one walks."

In the preface Moraga writes that this book is about physical and psychic struggle, and that, for the women in this book she will lay her body down. "In the dream, I am always met at the river," she concludes.

This book is also seen as a journey for the editors. Moraga describes how she traveled east to find it a publisher. "Such an anthology is in high demand these days. A book by radical women of color. The Left needs it, with its shaky and shabby record of commitment to women, period. Oh, yes, it can claim its attention to color issues [...] The feminist movement needs the book, too. But for different reasons. Do I dare speak of the boredom setting in among the white sector of the feminist movement? What was once a cutting edge, growing dull in the too easy solution to our problems of hunger of soul and stomach. The lesbian separatist utopia? No thank you, sisters." (Moraga xiii)

The approach is very different from Fisher's. While Fisher begins by saying that now that the feminist movement is well in place it is time to shine some light on the minority women, Moraga is already separating from the white feminist movement.

It is stunning to see that these voices that had not spoken until then did not begin by speaking in whispers when they did start to speak. It wasn't a simple trickle in the dam that became a big tear. No, this was an avalanche from the very beginning. When the Latina women began to be heard, they were not put in a cute little pink anthology entitled "Five Wonderful Chicana Poetesses Singing to Love and Beauty", or "The Best Love Stories Written by Latinas". That may have been possible ten or fifteen before, but in the late seventies, when the voices make themselves heard, they shout, and sometimes they even say bad words.

Although both Moraga and Anzaldúa came from Academe and expected their anthology to be read and perhaps even studied in the halls of Academe, the purpose of this anthology is other. The bridge unites and separates, and with this bridge they are taking a stand and separating from those who were supposedly on their side, the Left and the White Feminists. If Moraga believes that such an anthology is in high demand these days, it is because the Left and the White Feminists need it. Making these radical women known to the general public suddenly appears less urgent, much less urgent.

Moraga describes the pain of walking into a room filled with white women in order to talk about the issues that will be addressed in her project, This Bridge. "How can we – this time – not use our bodies to be thrown over a river of tormented history to bridge the gap? Barbara says last night: A bridge gets walked over. Yes, over and over again . . . I cannot continue to use my body to be walked over to make a connection." (Moraga xv)

In a way, the first title is Moraga's and Anzaldúa's story, the story of an anthology, and how it all began, in February of 1979, when Anzaldúa attended a women's retreat

north of San Francisco and felt humiliated because she was not white nor had she paid the \$150 fee to attend the workshop.

The original soliciting letter read: "We want to express to all women – especially to white middle-class women – the experiences which divide us as feminists; we want to examine incidents of intolerance, prejudices and denial of differences within the feminist movement. We intend to explore the causes and sources of, and solutions to these divisions. We want to create a definition that expands what feminist means to us."

(Moraga xvii)

Moraga later explains that she named this anthology "radical" because she wanted nothing short of a revolution. This revolution begins in the feminist movement and stems out.

It began as a reaction to the racism of white feminists, and later became an affirmation. This affirmation was that they were women of color, regardless of the color of their skin.

The second title -- Writings by Radical Women of Color -- is definitely the title to an anthology. It clearly states its purpose. At first it could appear that this anthology is limited to black radical women. For a while, "of color" was a euphemistic way of saying "black" when one wasn't supposed to say "black." Once "black" became acceptable and even the norm, "of color", sounded almost racist.

This is not however what Moraga and Anzaldúa wish to do with such a versatile word. With "of color" Moraga and Anzaldúa tried indeed to create a new category. Indeed, if Moraga and Anzaldúa had wanted to say "black" or whatever else, they would

have gladly just said it, there's no reason for them wanting to use a euphemism here.

Which would be a contradiction indeed.

In a footnote in the preface Moraga states that, "Throughout the text, the word colored will be used by the editors in referring to all Third World " peoples and people of color unless otherwise specified." (Moraga xv)

Suddenly "color" no longer points to a race, or the color of one's skin, here, color, becomes a place of origin, a state, even a state of mind, a bridge.

In an essay included in The Ethnic Canon, Barbara Christian explains that what she considers to be pivotal anthologies in the late seventies and eighties pointed to new frames for the studies of women's writings. For her This Bridge is one of these anthologies in that it focuses "on similarities and differences among United States women of color," and also "signaled growing alliances among writers in the different colored ethnic groups." (Christian 249)

Nearly ten years after This Bridge appeared Ortega and Sternbach dwell upon this of issue of women of color. They write, "Because they are perceived as 'women of color', they have appropriated this term in an act of self naming with little regard to their actual degree of mestizaje, for the term 'women of color' implies an identification with the working class." (Ortega and Sternbach 12) Ortega and Sternbach add that Moraga claims the rapprochement will be complete when South American women are also willing to say, "We are women of color".

In the bibliography in the back of This Bridge the editors include a text by Inés Hernández Tovar that appeared in Dexter Fisher's anthology. They do not, however, include the anthology itself. No anthologies of Latinas are listed in the bibliography.

Before I turn to the Spanish translation, or version, of This Bridge, I would like to point out the sexual aspect of this anthology, especially now that I have emphasized its political aspect.

Ortega and Sternbach write that, “Regardless of a Latina writer’s choice of heterosexual or lesbian relationships, more often than not a cultural conflict is epitomized in relationship to sexuality, especially for second generation Latinas who came to maturity during the so-called sexual revolution. The act of choosing and practicing her sexuality, and then writing about it, is often perceived as either an assimilation of the Anglo-Gringo way of life or a loss of Latina values and culture.” (Ortega and Sternbach 12)

Perhaps this begins to explain the raison d’être of Esta Puente Mi Espalda.

Eight years after This Bridge was published, Moraga still seemed to have unfinished business as far as it was concerned. The result was Esta puente, mi espalda.

“ . . . queremos señalar que al sumarnos al espíritu radical feminista de las escritoras de *Puente*, recuperamos la acepción femenina de *Puente* . . .” (Moraga and Castillo, Esta Puente 19)

Esta Puente has a green cover, yellow letters, and the same drawing of a woman on all fours. The only difference is that while the woman on all fours in The Bridge had both hands touching the floor, the one in Esta Puente is reaching out with one of her arms.

In the introductory pages, in the Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data, it says that Esta Puente, mi espalda is a “Translation and adaptation of: This Bridge called my Back.” This is the reason why I am disregarding the fact that it was published in 1988 and including it in this chapter dedicated to the earliest anthologies.

Anyway, so far so good, they say this is a translation. The problem is that one of the editors seems to have gotten dumped in the course of this translation. One would suppose that if Gloria Anzaldúa was one of the editors of This Bridge, she would still appear in the translation, whether or not she had anything to do with it. She doesn't. The only thing left of her in this "bridgette" of a bridge are two texts, one on page 157, and another on page 219, all the others were taken out.

The new editors are Cherrie Moraga and Ana Castillo, and the entire anthology was translated by Ana Castillo and Norma Alarcón into Spanish, so that it could reach Spanish speaking women. One of Alarcón's texts appeared in the original This Bridge, none of Castillo's. Castillo was, however, included in Fisher's anthology.

Several Latinas were included in Esta Puente that did not appear in This Bridge. They are: Sonia Rivera-Valdés, a Cuban-American woman born in 1938; Morena de Martinez, a Salvadoran who was living in a convent in northern California at the time Esta Puente was published; María Saucedo, a Chicana from Chicago who died in 1981; Elsa Granados, a young, Chicana concerned with rape and domestic violence; and a group of Watsonville activists interviewed by Ana Castillo.

Watsonville is a small town in northern California with a population that is over 50% Mexican and composed of peasants and laborers. In 1987 a packager named Esperanza Ruiz-Contreras started a strike that lasted for 18 months. In Esta Puente there is a photo of a huge crowd of these women workers celebrating their victory in the streets of Watsonville.

The Watsonville women interviewed by Ana Castillo are: Cruz Gómez, Gabriela Gutierrez, Shirley Munoz-Flores, and María Pérez. The interview itself was conducted in

1987 during a creative writing workshop. These women were teachers, activists, mothers, and militant feminists. The questions revolved around life in Mexico and the U.S., what being a woman meant in each one of those countries, work, struggling, the family, change, abuse, children, activism, and belonging to a community.

Once again, it is important to remember that Esta puente was intended for Spanish-speaking women. This meant that it was either destined for Central and South America, or for the women in the U.S. who still preferred to read in Spanish.

At this point I can easily affirm that Cherrie Moraga was at the forefront of radical Latina literature and Latina literature anthologies. According to Sternbach it was during the 70's that Chicana feminists such as Moraga (born in 1952) began to rail against the Anglo-American feminist circles for their condescension, lack of sensitivity, and for choosing an agenda for all women.

A poem by Marcela Lucero-Trujillo (included in Fisher's anthology) entitled "No More Cookies Please" directly addresses this issue.

"WASP liberationist
 you invited me
 token minority
 but your abortion ideology
 failed to integrate me.
 Over cookies and tea, you sidled up to me
 And said
 Sisterhood is powerful
 I said

Bullshit and allmotherful” (Lucero-Trujillo 402)

With the emergence of this anti-white-feminist movement we also learned, according to Sternbach, that sexuality was not a unilateral agenda for the women of color, or not always prioritized as it was with white feminists. “Rather, we began to see that it had to be viewed concurrently with other issues such as class, ethnicity, cultural norms, traditions, and the paramount position of the family.” (Sternbach 51)

For the reason mentioned above Sternbach believes Moraga’s is a timely and important work. In her introduction to Loving in the War Years Moraga tells us that her purpose is not merely artistic or literary, but rather political, as Sternbach puts it. Sternbach adds that Moraga witnesses, acts upon, and judges the confluence of the two social movements that inform her discourse: the women’s movement, and the Chicano movement.

Now that we are in the middle of the political and the sexual we can turn to the glossary at the beginning of Esta Puente. The purpose of this page-long list of words is to allow the Spanish-speaking compañeras to grasp some of the cultural nuances or references.

There are only 12 words in the glossary: anglo; closet (armario) salir del; Chicana; derechos civiles; familia nuclear; gay; heterosexismo; homofobia; identidad; internalización de la opresión; lo personal es político; mujer que se identifica con la mujer.

Five of these terms have to do with homosexuality, so they speak for themselves. Three of them have to do with cultural or national identity, and another three have to do with politics.

The two most interesting terms are “familia nuclear” which is defined as a North American concept with the family being composed of a mother, a father, and children; and “Lo personal es político” which is the only one that is really interesting when one is concentrating solely on literature and turning away from propaganda and what not. In fact, it is “Lo personal es político” that will lead us to part two of this study where we will take into consideration the subject of minor literature.

In fact, it is this “Lo personal es lo político” that will now function as a bridge, a bridge that goes from protest and political activism to literature. The texts presented in these “radical” feminists’ anthologies were not so much chosen because of their literary quality as for what they contained, a message and demands for justice, a loud cry from the heart: don’t erase me! The literary quality, although present at times, is definitely in the back burner.

Latina literature, consequently, did not emerge as a feminist literature first because. Latinas such as Moraga and Anzaldúa felt they had been rejected by the reigning white feminists and soon realized that if they were to be heard they had to find some other way. They therefore began as radical women of color, not simply as women. Their literature did not emerge as “feminine” literature either, in the sense that there were never any U.S. Latina “poetisas.” This, however, does not mean or imply that they did not position themselves as women. That affirmation was there from the onset. But these minority women did not begin their “once upon a time” by affirming that they were “feminines” (for lack of a better word) or sensitive ladies writing about love, suffering, nature and nostalgia in a pretty way. They were indeed women, and they had something to say as women, but nothing to say as poetesses. They began as radicals. It is as if a whole phase

had been omitted, an unnecessary phase at that, but a phase nonetheless. At the time they emerged there was no room for poetisas.

According to Sternbach and Ortega, “Latina feminist literature has unmasked the real meaning of such utterances as vive la différence. What appears to be a celebration of diversity is actually a celebration of what, for Michele Barrett, is division, oppression, inequality, internalized inferiority for women in contemporary capitalism. Like difference, the much-used concept of diversity also becomes a euphemism for racism when it is imposed by outsiders, as is evident in such rituals as Festivals of Diversity, in which women of color are exhibited as exotic dolls in native costume.”(Ortega and Sternbach 13)

These sexual and political factors are the bridge that will take us to Part Two of this exploration.

Section Two – Reflections on Minor and Minority Literature.

The anthologies I will be examining in this section are those of the decade of the eighties, they include: Manteniendo el Espíritu/Keeping the Spirit; Cuentos: Stories by Latinas; Woman of her Word, Hispanic Women Write; Nosotras: Latina Literature Today; Compañeras, Latina Lesbians; You Can't drown the Fire; and Three Times a Woman.

Roland Barthes often said that to say "I teach literature" was to utter a tautological statement, since literature is essentially what is taught. With this in mind, I will examine three scholarly books that deal with Latina writings and critical readings, all three written by Latina scholars and authors. They are Beyond Stereotypes, Contemporary Chicana Poetry, and the critical anthology Breaking Boundaries that I have often quoted. Knowing well that this is not a study of critics and their writings, I merely take these works into consideration insofar as they mark a transition. To critique an author is to attempt to pull a work out of a gray dust-covered marginality and bring it to the classroom.

I will try not to forget, however, that before they propose a concept of minor literature, Deleuze and Guattari begin by detaching Kafka from what the universities call Literature. According to Réda Bensmaïa this process permits a reversal. It allows them to enter into Kafka's work without being weighted down by the old categories of genres, types, modes, and style. "[...] instead of Kafka's work being related to some preexistent category or literary genre, it {the concept of minor literature} will henceforth serve as a rallying point or model for certain texts and bi-lingual writing practices that, until now, had to pass through a long purgatory before even being read, much less recognized." (Bensmaïa xiv)

At times it is as if this concept put forth by Deleuze and Guattari offered a shortcut. So the goal in this section is to see this emerging literature in the light of the concept of minor literature, and the publication of these scholarly books as a milestone in the evolution of the anthologies themselves.

A mere decade takes us from testimonial and confessional writings to works that are considered literature (with a small “l”) and analyzed in light of critical theory. The demarginalization and the crowning of the works of literary quality, however, are not altogether innocent moments and processes. I will take a look at the meandering road that goes from a simple text, to its abandonment and its challenging of the canon, and see what scholars such as Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Paula Gunn Allen, Gilles Deleuze, and Felix Guattari propose.

Chapter One – Definitions

As the etymon of minor implies, it's lesser. There's no way around it, and in fact it's as good a place as another to begin, at the bottom. The English word minor comes from the Latin comparative adjective, minor-minus, the lesser or smaller of two. According to the Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology it was first recorded in 1410 with that meaning. The general sense of less important, and not significant, was recorded in 1623. So, the next question that comes to mind is whether or not a minor literature is a less important and less significant literature.

It could be. And there wouldn't be anything wrong with that.

Nonetheless, the Oxford Latin dictionary defines the adjective not only as "lesser," but also as "smaller," and "younger."

Hopefully, therefore, the word minor will not become politically incorrect soon and will instead come to mean not only something of lesser importance and significance (which could very well be a necessary phase), but also something newer, younger, something in the process of becoming.

I consequently choose to leave the word minor with all the meanings considered above attached to it like barnacles. Let this minor literature here be all that. Let's opt to keep every single value judgment contained in the "little" word.

Surprisingly enough, the noun minority doesn't appear as negative or diminutive at first. When referring to a minority group, we are not necessarily implying that the group is less significant or important. But then again one never knows, for socially one tends to think that minorities are less privileged than majorities, so I will be ready for that

acceptance as well. What matters here is that a word containing such negative connotations as well as a promise of positive energy cannot but be a dynamic word.

In T. S. Eliot's collection of literary essays *On Poetry and Poets* there is an address entitled "What is Minor Poetry?" This is a suitable point of departure for this section, except that I will replace the word poetry by the word literature.

In spite of the fact that the title is a question, Eliot warns his readers or listeners in the very first sentence that he does not propose to offer a definition of minor poetry. To attempt to do so would be dangerous since one would then expect to settle who or what is major and who or what is minor. Moreover, no one would agree.

Deleuze and Guattari, on the contrary, have no problems attempting to answer the question "what is minor literature?" not so much by trying to determine who is minor, but rather by asking why something is considered minor, and by transforming the concept of minor literature into a category.

After promising his audience that he will definitely not answer the question Eliot proceeds to explain how the word minor can mean different things at different times and even different things at the same time. In any case, Eliot immediately urges his readers or listeners to dispel any derogatory association with that word and any notion that it is easier or less worthwhile to read minor literature or poetry. This remains quite a difficult task because however way you look at it, and so long as it is Eliot's theme, the word minor keeps its everlasting meaning, which we know so well.

We will have to wait for Deleuze and Guattari for the word minor to be invested with another brush-stroke of meaning. Once again, indeed, the attempt at a definition will cease, and the task becomes an approach.

The pour in Deleuze's and Guattari's Pour une littérature mineure, is not simply an apology, it is a new approach, almost a discovery. Then, when Kafka happens to be the figurehead, the world of lesser and greater suddenly turns upside down and minor is suddenly invested with an almost mathematical quality, in the Kantian sense that the negative number 20 is no lesser than the positive number 20, and no greater, just something else, a mirror image but not a tautological one, almost the Lacanian "je est un autre", another and the same. In other words, the term minor is stripped of its comparative meaning and becomes a new category.

In fact, "What is minor literature?" was not the real question for Eliot. At a given moment in his lecture he formulates the real questions, or the ones behind the anteed one that asks for a definition. Those new questions are: "What kinds of minor poetry are there?" and: "Why read it?"

In this history of anthologies, however, I am definitely less concerned with the "what?" than with the "why?" except if the "what?" cannot be avoided.

And indeed, why read minor literature with so many established voices out there? When a lifetime would not be enough to even skim the surface of the major? The first reaction to such a question is that if the world had only produced such staid traditionalist readers they would have become extinct long ago. Or we would only be reading Homer because everything else that follows is too minor.

The second reaction is that in the obstacle course that may lead to establishment or the crowning inclusion in the canon, when the writer is at home base and the die is first cast the numbers will never be high enough, and there is an inevitable move to a space or a condition called "minor". There may subsequently be a reason for an immediate second

or third turn, or there may never be another turn. Whatever the case may be the fact remains that it is necessarily is a space called minor that the piece must fall first. Here, indeed, minor is simply the quality of being younger.

In an effort to determine why one should bother reading minor literature, T. S. Eliot takes anthologies into consideration. This is how a speech dedicated to the question “What is minor?” became an exploration and an explanation of the uses and dangers of literary anthologies.

“ . . . because one association of the term ‘minor poetry’ makes it mean ‘the kind of poem that we only read in anthologies. And, incidentally, I am glad of the opportunity to say something about the uses of anthologies, because, if we understand their uses, we can also be guarded against their dangers.’” (Eliot, On Poetry and Poets 39)

Before I proceed any further I would like to dwell on the words “the kind of poem that we only read in anthologies.”

The reason I chose the concept of minor literature for Section Two, instead of something else, such as feminist theory and the canon, which follow, was precisely because of this. Since this is a history of anthologies, and therefore chronological, I consider that what comes after the earliest anthologies, where there is a lot of kicking and screaming and defining and self affirmation, are precisely these poems, or writings, that we only read in anthologies.

I have already admitted that my decision to pick a number of anthologies and study them under the heading Minor Literature was arbitrary. Nonetheless, one can bend the truth in one’s favor. Slowly an image of an emerging literature will appear as the

anthologies of the eighties are read in this section. What's more, this is where the history of anthologies dedicated solely to U.S. Latina writers begins

“Of course,” T.S. Eliot writes, “the primary values of anthologies lies in their being able to give pleasure: but, beyond this, they should serve several purposes.” (Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets* 40)

The first purpose is to give young unpublished writers a voice. According to Eliot anthologies such as these are valuable to both writers and readers. The writer can see himself in print and the reader may become aware of emerging voices.

Next to these anthologies of young emerging writers are those with the widest circulation, such as The Oxford Book of English Verse, that survey an entire literature. Eliot believes that anthologies such as these serve their purpose when they allow a reader to get acquainted with certain classic authors, but that their values is soon over, for “we do not go on reading anthologies for the selections from these poets.” (Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets* 41)

It goes without saying that I am not concerned with that type of anthology here. But, in Section Four of this study I will check and see if any U.S. Latina writers have been included in these mainstream and quasi-canonized anthologies, such as the Norton anthology. According to Eliot “mainstream” anthologies also help “introduce us to poets who are not very important, but whose work is what one happens to like.”

We are not there yet, and at this point, in the early 80's, Latinas are not there yet, for they are just beginning to get their own anthologies together, and not yet pining for the Norton Anthology of English Verse, only for eternal glory.

So the criterion here is simply that the anthology be exclusively of Latina writings. I begin with Cuentos, and Woman of her Word, and dub them the first ones, even if some anthologies of Chicana writers had already been published in the 70's.

I know at least of the existence of two such anthologies. Requisa 32 was published by the University of California in San Diego. Siete Poetas was published by a now defunct Tucson, Arizona-based publisher called Scorpion. Both these anthologies are extremely difficult if not impossible to find, even in this age of electronic availability.

There is a copy of Requisa 32 in the library of the University of California in San Diego, and there was one in the Library of Congress, but for some unknown reason, it is not available. Both anthologies, however, have lost their meaningfulness and usefulness. A busy, curious reader who is merely checking to see what these unknown voices have to say would certainly not go out of his way to get his hands on an anthology. Since they are presenting new texts they have to be the ones to find the readers and definitely cannot play a game of hide and seek with them.

And perhaps I can come to some kind of conclusion here. Anthologies have a life span. Like most other things animate and inanimate, they go out of style, lose their purpose with the years, and die.

Before returning to the subject of minor poets as those that we only read in anthologies, Eliot mentions another one of the multiple uses of anthologies. "[...] one which can only be served if the compiler is not only very well read, but a man of very sensitive taste. There are many poets who have been generally dull, but who have occasional flashes." (Eliot, On Poetry and Poets 43) At the end of that same paragraph Eliot concludes that anthologies are useful because no one has time to read everything.

Now we can return of the subject of minor literature as literature that is only read in anthologies. In examining these anthologies in subsequent chapters we will see what Eliot means when he states that there is more than one type of minor poet. Some of the women included in our anthologies will only appear in print once in their lifetime, others will appear two or three times, and yet others will go on and publish their own work, or had already done so at the time these anthologies were published.

In spite of the fact that Eliot promised not to give an answer to the question, "What is minor?" he did so, ultimately. We can keep this definition, and add it to our list that already contains the words lesser, smaller, and younger. Minor literature is literature that is only read in anthologies.

Deleuze and Guattari take this a step farther. As I already mentioned they have no qualms about trying to define minor literature right away, and they do.

A minor literature according to them has three characteristics. The first is that "... in its language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization." (Deleuze and Guattari 16) Deleuze and Guattari explain this first by stating that a minor literature does not come from a minor language, on the contrary, it is constructed within a major language, as are the writings I am concerned with here.

Deleuze and Guattari further explain that in Kafka's case there was an impossibility of not writing at all, as well as the impossibility of writing in German, and at the same time the impossibility of not writing in German.

It goes without saying that I am in no way trying to put Latina writings and Kafka at the same level, but I am trying to show how these characteristics put forth by Deleuze

and Guattari fit the Latina writings like a glove, when they are considered in light of the category of minor literature.

Once again, there is an impossibility of not writing and the proof is in the writing. That anthology of protest, that writing in This Bridge reminiscent of a heart that has just been torn out of a body and is being held up, still beating, to the sun or the moon, all that had to be said. Then there is the language, an impossibility of writing in Spanish, an impossibility of writing in English, and an impossibility of not writing in English because Spanish was out of the question. As a matter of fact, Moraga even tries to go against this impossibility of writing in Spanish and attempts to translate her anthology several years later, and fails. The impossibility of writing in English is also there, for oftentimes we are reading a cardboard language put together with old scotch tape and glue that's been left out to dry.

Deleuze and Guattari explain the impossibility of not writing, "Because national consciousness, uncertain or oppressed, necessarily exists by means of literature." (Deleuze and Guattari 16) This is where the radical aspect of the anthologies I have analyzed thus far comes into play.

Deleuze and Guattari then add, "The impossibility of writing other than in German is for the Prague Jews the feeling of an irreducible distance from their primitive Czech territoriality. And the impossibility of writing in German is the deterritorialization of the German population itself, an oppressive majority . . ." (Deleuze and Guattari 16)

Once again everything is fitting like the pieces of a puzzle. Deleuze and Guattari call this Prague German a paper language or an artificial language, a deterritorialized

German, “appropriate for strange and minor uses. (This can be compared in another context to what blacks in America today are able to do with the English language.)”

Here we have it, these are very comfortable parallels to work with.

I already mentioned in the preceding section that the second characteristic of minor literatures so defined by Deleuze and Guattari was that everything in them is political. Both scholars mentioned how everything in minor literatures is cramped and that this cramped space forces each individual intrigue to connect immediately to politics. When we take a look at the first anthologies that concern us here indeed, the voices are political, there is no individual, and even the most intimate, like sexual preference, immediately becomes part of a political program and takes on collective proportions.

And this takes us to the third characteristic: in minor literatures everything takes on a collective value. “Indeed,” Deleuze and Guattari write, “because talent isn’t abundant in a minor literature, there are no possibilities for an individual enunciation that would belong to this or that master and that could be separated from a collective enunciation. Indeed, scarcity of talent is in fact beneficial and allows the conception of something other than a literature of masters.”

Here we come full circle since we are brought back to anthologies and the roles they play where minor literatures are concerned. One of the most interesting aspects or perhaps the most interesting aspect of This Bridge, was indeed its voice, which, instead of being the voices of many individuals, is one collective voice. In plainer terms, it is a melting pot, not a salad. In the original version all the women included speak as one, and this in spite of the fact that they probably made no conscious effort to do so. In fact, they

probably would have failed if they had attempted to do put forth one voice through the voice of many, as This Bridge does.

In reference to Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari also write, “The second characteristic of minor literatures is that everything in them is political. In major literatures, in contrast, the individual concern (familial, martial, and so on) joins with other no less individual concerns, the social milieu serving as a mere environment or a background;” (Deleuze and Guattari 17)

The writings in the anthologies that I am analyzing in this section adapt very well to Deleuze’s and Guattari’s concept of minor literature. I believe these anthologies are an excellent opportunity to try their concept out. In fact they glorify minor literature in such a way that one cannot help but want to explore it.

“That is the glory of this sort of minor literature,” they write. “ – to be the revolutionary force for all literature.” (Deleuze and Guattari 19)

I feel these anthologies slowly trace the history of a minor literature. Then again, it could very well be that minor literatures do go through a process before they are considered minor literatures. Perhaps I am clinging here to the capital L notions. I would say that this process is one that goes from minor writing to minor literature. Writing, the act, can sometimes be a predecessor of literature, can’t it? But then again, can we get any younger than minor?

In the heart of their study Deleuze and Guattari ask themselves how many people today live in a language that is not their own. “Or no longer, or not yet, even know their own or know poorly the major language that they are forced to serve? This is the problem of immigrants, and especially of their children, the problem of minorities, the problems of

a minor literature [...]” It is hard to believe that they are not referring to our own topic, Latina literature. But immediately we understand why those questions and those affirmations fit so perfectly.

The reason is that Deleuze and Guattari believe that this is a problem for all of us as well: “how to tear a minor literature away from its own language, allowing it to challenge the language and making it follow a sober revolutionary path? How to become a nomad and an immigrant and a gypsy in relation to one’s own language? Kafka answers: steal the baby from its crib, walk the tightrope.” (Deleuze and Guattari 19)

The tightrope is much like a bridge.

Before I proceed to analyze the anthologies I would like to add that, in his explanation of this kind of literature that is only read in anthologies, Eliot also describes, “a small group of young writers, with certain affinities or regional sympathies between them,” who may “produce a volume together. Such groups frequently bind themselves together by formulating a set of principals or rules, to which nobody adheres; in course of time the group disintegrates, the feebler members vanish, and the stronger ones develop more individual styles.” (Eliot, On Poetry and Poets 40) This is something else that we will see in this history of anthologies.

According to Francisco Lomelí the Chicana writers did not organize as an interest group until the special issue dedicated to “Chicanas en la literatura y el arte” in the journal El Grito (1973). Lomelí then quotes Rita Sánchez who wrote that this marked what she termed a “breaking out of the silence”.

In his essay included in the first book length critical analysis of Chicana literature published, entitled Beyond Stereotypes (1985), Lomelí adds that until then Chicana

feminism had apparently gone unnoticed and the year 1973 “can perhaps be regarded as the key point of departure for contemporary writings by Chicana authors [...]”

A series of journals emerged thereafter, which I am not taking into consideration, for brevity’s sake, in this history of anthologies. What matter to me here, is that this literature is definitely emerging and that it can be seen in light of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s concepts, as well as of Eliot’s many precepts.

If Lomelf is right and it all began in 1973, then we would have to wait until 1978 for the first anthology of Chicana literature to appear, then until 1980 for The Third Woman, then until 1981, for Cherríe Moraga, the Latina anthologist of the early 80’s, to come along. Although many texts in these first anthologies are not specifically literature, the anthologies themselves are pointing to a minor literature.

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. traces the background of ethnic and minority studies and determines that the publication of Dexter Fisher’s volume Minority Language and Literature in 1977 by the MLA was among the first professional gestures of great importance to these movements. It was precisely the social and political movements within the academy in the 60’s that allowed ethnic literature to be published and minority anthologies to see the light of print.

In his essay included in Introduction to Scholarship, Gates delves into the terminology: ethnic, minority, mainstream, marginality. He explains that although we are all ethnics in America, initial uses of the term ethnic connoted of color or minority in terms of demographic data or political representation. “The implication of minority as “minor”, “less than,” or somehow non-central to major scholarship adheres to all these terms. Even margin-center terminologies, which proved initially enabling in the late

1970's and early 1980's, sometimes served to re-inscribe the isolated status of these emerging literatures." (Gates, Introduction to Scholarship 293)

Although Gates does not subsequently attempt to define or circumscribe the terms, he comes to the conclusion that all definitions of ethnic tradition are both tautological and essentialist. Such traditions, he believes, are defined not by texts, but by authors, and even more precisely by the ethnic descent of the authors. He then points out that the 70's style hermeneutics saw the death of the author and that the 80's style cultural politics brought the author back.

This is what we witnessed in reading the first anthologies and will continue to witness with these anthologies of the early 80's, the only difference is that slowly the interest groups are beginning to disintegrate, as Eliot warned us would happen, the feebler ones will vanish, the stronger ones will ultimately develop a more individual style.

Besides the elusive Siete Poetas published in 1978 and Requisa 32 published in 1979, the first three anthologies dedicated solely to Latinas were published in the early 80's. They were called Manteniendo el Espíritu/Keeping the Spirit published in 1982, Cuentos: Stories by Latinas, published in 1983, and Woman of her Word, Hispanic Women Write, also published in 1983.

Margaret Randall's anthology, Breaking the Silences, was published in 1982 but it was not dedicated to U.S. Latina writers. Perhaps several other anthologies of Chicana literature were published in the 70's, but I am not aware of their existence.

Of what I consider to be the first three anthologies Woman of her Word is the most accessible. The Houston publisher Arte Público Press has kept it in print. Although Cuentos has been out of print for some time now, it can be easily found in libraries. As to

Manteniendo el Espíritu, although it is in the New York Public Library it is kept in an Annex and is not readily available, that which, obviously, defeats its purpose.

In this context of minor literature I will also be analyzing **Nosotras: Latina Literature Today**, published in 1986; and **Compañeras: Latina Lesbians**, published in 1987, and **You can't drown the Fire**, published in 1988. Section Two will therefore take us *through 1989, since I consider the critical anthology that I have often quoted, Breaking Boundaries*, published in 1989, to be part of this section dedicated to the analysis of minor literature.

Chapter Two – Keeping the Spirit

I hesitated to include this chapbook and even more to begin this section with it, for the works included in do not pretend to be literature. Rather than pretending to be an anthology of literature Keeping the Spirit is an act, a project, and even a form of catharsis. Its main goal was to give women who normally didn't write but felt they had something to say the opportunity to be heard and published. However, this little book included only Latina voices, so I decided once and for all to include it here.

What first stands out with this a title such as Manteniendo el espíritu – Keeping the Spirit, is its bilingual nature. One has to believe that it was not intended for a general audience since such a long, rambling Spanish title before the English would certainly put off non-Spanish speakers. So the question that comes to mind is, indeed, since the voices speak in English and the title is in Spanish, who is this anthology for?

In this case I think the answer is fairly easy. This chapbook here is for the women who wrote it. At least that is what it was all about while it was being prepared. It is not for university professors, and it was not intended to land on a busy Board of Education meeting agenda to be discussed as possible summer reading. The editor simply wanted to allow a few women interested in writing to be given this opportunity. That is why I mentioned that there was something cathartic about this anthology.

As with all anthologies the next question is, is it readily available? While avid readers are always ready to search the dusty bottom shelves of bookstores or travel to the country's libraries to find a rare edition of some author, rarely does anyone go out his/her way to find an anthology. I have mentioned time and again that their purpose is to make

us familiar with authors we wouldn't necessarily know, either because they are young, or dead long ago, or the bearers of a new message, or even belong to a particular group, be it ethnic or other.

Keeping the Spirit is not readily available, and the reason undoubtedly is that it is a chapbook and not a book. It is only 22 pages long and has this hand-made quality to it. One can see immediately that Aleida Rodriguez, the editor, didn't have much money to work with. She mentions that this book was made possible through the New Moves Program of the Woman's Building in Los Angeles, which is in part funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The cover is a simple drawing by one of the nine authors in the anthology, Yreina Cervántez. It depicts two women, standing naked. One apparently comes from the ocean, since her lower body up to her waist seems to be submerged in the water. There are two seashells on her left foot, and one on her right. The palms of her hands are open and facing forward. Her arms are lifted. The humerus is perpendicular to the body, the ulnae are facing upward, toward a naïve lightning bolt. Her head is completely round and framed in an Amerindian motif. Her head consists of two circles, the white one slightly shifted away from the black one, reminiscent of the moon, a black moon either disappearing behind the sun, or emerging from behind it. Her eyes are closed, her breasts are heavy, and she adopts an attitude of total submission. On the other hand she is like a sleeping goddess, who is not afraid of anything and can therefore afford this total submission.

The woman standing next to her is more active. She too is naked and standing on her tiptoes, her eyes are wide open. She is holding one arm up as if she were waving. In this

hand there is a rose. She is in fact totally wrapped in a climbing branch covered with thorns. On her head there is a crown. Her hair falls down to her waist. Her other arm is facing down and it is the only part of her body that is free from the thorn branch. Other roses cover her chest, as does a big heart with an eye in the middle of it. There is yet another rose covering her genitals, one on her thigh, and one on her ankle.

On the upper right hand corner of the cover it says Keeping the Spirit. On the first page Manteniendo el Espíritu is printed in big bold letters on the upper right hand side, and Keeping the Spirit in smaller letters below, on the left hand side.

This is the first of a series of titles of anthologies that contain a verb in the present progressive. Margaret Randall's Breaking the Silences was to appear a year later, *Breaking Boundaries* in 1989, and Making Faces/Haciendo Caras in 1990, just to mention those that come to mind immediately.

In an essay entitled "The Plural Self: The Politization of Memory and Form" Jennifer Browdy de Hernández dedicates a section to "Ethnic acts and Ancestral memories". The titles of anthologies in the present progressive are reminiscent of these ethnic acts she writes about.

"Ethnic memory is carried forward not only in words, but also in acts, and these ethnic acts are often inscribed in ethnic autobiographies. The performance of the ethnic act links past and present, individual and collective, in a cycle of repetition and renewal." (Browdy de Hernandez 52)

This is precisely what these anthologies seem to be, an act, or ethnic acts. It is interesting to note that the drawing on the cover was done by one of the authors, who is not so much a writer, but a painter.

This chapbook itself is indeed an act, just like This Bridge before it was also an act.

In the spring of 1982 Aleida Rodriguez says she approached the Woman's Building with a proposal for a workshop for emerging Latina writers. She adds that she saw the need for a workshop such as this one from her one experience as a Latina writer. For years she had been giving readings to audiences of white women and wondering, "Where were the other women like me?" Rodriguez then realized that there was no support for Latinas in her community and that is why she was "floundering without a context, and often it was hard to keep my voice from just trailing off into silence." (Rodriguez, A. Introduction)

This chapbook was therefore the result of a ten-week intensive writing workshop designed to give Latinas "with little or no previous writing experience some degree of comfort with written self expression."

The anthology has therefore little or no literary pretensions, it merely strives to create a safe haven for emerging writers, or women who had only written their emotions on a kitchen table, to the smell of fried pork and cabbage, while the babies cried and the pots boiled. In this sense it is definitely an ethnic act, a collective act, a political act, and what matters is more this corpus emerging from it, the body emerging from the waves or the thorn bush, and not each writer herself.

In her analysis of the politization of memory and form Jennifer Browdy de Hernández finds that the ethnic writers draw on their ethnic heritages "in which the individual identity is subordinate to the collective identity, and this emphasis appears in their autobiographies, which fuse the Western autobiographical 'I' with the ethnic 'we'." (Browdy de Hernández 42)

The texts contained in Keeping the Spirit are all autobiographical, and they are indeed an effort to keep the spirit. Keeping the spirit may mean keeping the ethnic spirit alive, and also simply keeping some kind of morale up. They are, as Amritjit Singh writes when investigating the role of politics and memory in ethnic writing, “primarily concerned with the role of memory in the construction of ethnic identity, and the relationship between memory and writing – in the multiplicity of ways, for instance, in which individual memory rises out of, contradicts, selectively erases, and ultimately revises collective memory. They explore the many literary strategies that ethnic writers employ in response to the repression or erasure of their communal history.” (Singh, Memory 13)

The editor does not include herself in this chapbook, perhaps because she does not feel she is an emerging writer, but somewhat of an established one that wants to give others some shortcuts, so that they do not waste too much time losing the spirit and wondering about the futility of their act.

To the best of my knowledge none of the nine women included in the chapbook, however, is ever heard from again in other anthologies. They are: Yreina Cervántez, Norma Alicia Pino, Marilyn Cruz Rodriguez, Sibyl Venegas, Guadalupe Espinoza, Frances Salomé España, Zulma Durán, Anna Hernandez, and Vivian Varela. Most of them are Chicanas, but there are also some of Puerto Rican and Ecuadorian heritage. All of them were born in the United States and most of them were in their twenties and early thirties at the time of the publication of the chapbook.

As I mentioned before the texts in Keeping the Spirit are all autobiographical, and are a form of catharsis. In Marilyn Cruz Rodriguez’s piece entitled “Mom Story or Duck and Chicken Noodle” there are the shy beginnings of what Mikhail Bakhtin would call

“double voiced discourse”, a discourse which represents “a concentrated dialogue of two voices, two world views, two languages.” (Browdy de Hernández 41)

These two world views or languages are those of the mother and the daughter.

Although the daughter feels that she has somehow escaped the curse, and managed not to become a mater dolorosa like her mother, there is still some pain deep inside. The image tied to that pain is that of her dead pet duck. Her mother didn't know how to tell the young girl that the duck was dead, so opted to leave it next to the child's chicken soup.

There's the chicken soup, of course, an eternal symbol of the nurturing, and a dead duck next to it, something there to destroy the nurturing. According to Gayle Greene, instead of striving to forget that pain, it is very important that it be remembered.

“Women, especially, need to remember because forgetting is a major obstacle to change.” (Greene 296)

To this notion Amritjit Singh adds that for Gloria Anzaldúa “the self she constructs in her writing is an act of kneading, of uniting, and joining, which recalls individual and collective memory in the service of cultural pluralism.” (Singh, Memory 10)

Another example of this in is Zulma Durán's piece entitled “Carajo, que sí!” In this case, the daughter who refuses to forget wants to understand why at age 37 she has not yet been able to achieve success in a career or in her personal life. She knows why. It is because of the experience she had with “Tío” Joe, an experience that her parents have buried. Now, 29 years after that experience her father is the only one left, and because of this writing workshop, the author is ready to confront him, so as to have this experience exorcized in one way or another. It is vital for her that her father remember as well as

admit that she was raped by her uncle when she was eight years old, and that the family chose to sweep this under the carpet.

At the end of the piece, the father admits, indifferently, that indeed, it was “Una brutalidad” to have pardoned “Tío” Joe for what he did and having accepted him back in the family. But he seems to be saying this just so the middle-aged daughter will leave him alone and allow him to go home. A plurality of themes and grieves are brought forward here, particularly the theme of the violated woman.

Aleida Rodriguez, the editor, was born in 1952 in Havana Cuba, supposedly on a kitchen table. At the time of the Keeping the Spirit project, her work had been published in numerous small press magazines and anthologized in Lesbian Fiction An Anthology (Persephone Press, 1981) and Fiesta in Aztlán (Capra Press, 1982).

Once again I am playing with the hypothesis that the beginnings of this minor literature called Latina literature was not only once removed, but twice and three times removed. Not only did it come from a minority group sitting between two languages and constantly hesitating between the two, never wanting to opt for one and always leaving this choice vague and for another day. It also came from a group of women, radical women at that, and mostly gay women.

Chapter Three -- Cuentos

This title has the advantage of being shorter than Manteniendo el Espíritu and more accessible to non-Spanish speakers. As a matter of fact the cultural rift is not insurmountable. There is the word Stories immediately after Cuentos.

I'm lingering on this because in spite of the fact that many of these anthologists wanted to reach not only the U.S. Latinas, but also the South and Central American women, and used Spanish for this reason. At first intend their anthologies were not particularly interested in reaching the non-Spanish speakers. These non-Spanish speakers are, however, very important because if these writings are to become literature they should begin speaking to any group, not just, as they say in French, "prêcher aux convaincus."

Dexter Fisher took a step in this direction with her anthology, Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa did too with This Bridge.

Cuentos is in book form, it is not a chapbook, and thus we can say for sure that it is one of the first if not the first anthology in book form dedicated solely to Latinas from all different backgrounds. It was published in 1983.

That same year Revista Chicano-Riqueña published an issue dedicated solely to Latina writings entitled Woman of Her Word, Hispanic Women Write, which later became a book, and that is why I am including it here. I will examine the anthology Hispanic Women Write in a subsequent chapter.

The editors of Cuentos: Stories by Latinas are Alma Gómez, Cherríe Moraga, and Mariana Romo-Carmona. We already know Moraga from This Bridge, and it is

interesting to note that she appears to have been the anthologist of the eighties, a pioneer of some sort. Here is Moraga, two years after having published This Bridge, with this other project, Cuentos, quite different from This Bridge in fact. First of all, Cuentos lacks the personal nature of This Bridge. Cuentos is more an anthology, a real anthology, while This Bridge remains some kind of personal journey, a book of many voices that fuse into one.

Moraga was born in Los Angeles in 1952. At the time Cuentos was published she was living in Brooklyn, and had previously lived in Berkeley, San Francisco and Boston. In the same year she co-edited Cuentos a book-length collection of her own writings Loving in the War Years: Lo que nunca pasó por sus labios was published by South End Press. Bilingual titles were definitely trendy in the early eighties.

I will again quote Réda Bensmaïa who writes in the foreword to Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature:

“The concept of minor literature permits a reversal: instead of Kafka’s work being related to some pre-existing category or literary genre, it will henceforth serve as a rallying point or model for certain texts and bi-lingual writing practices that, until now, had to pass through a long purgatory before even being read, much less recognized.”

(Bensmaïa xiv)

The purgatory, however, seems inevitable, and at this point in the early eighties this is precisely where these anthologies seem to indicate that Latina writings are. Once again, this minor literature is bilingual, ethnic, political, feminist, gay. I am sinning by using the old well-worn categories, I know. They are simply cornerstones.

The second editor of Cuentos is Alma Gomez who was born in 1953 in New York's Lower East Side. In her brief bio at the end of Cuentos Gomez writes that her family history includes Puerto Rican parents who taught her that once you discover words you discover your history and that to speak a true word is to transform the world. Gomez worked as a part-time proposal writer, teacher and consultant at the time Cuentos was published, so we can say that she is relatively new to the world of literature.

The third editor of Cuentos is Mariana Romo-Carmona who was born in Santiago de Chile in 1952 and came to the US in 1966. At the time Cuentos was published she was a publisher at Kitchen Table Press, the publishers of *Cuentos*. In the biography at the end of Cuentos, Romo-Carmona says that she began to write late in life, which means in her late twenties. At the age of 12 she writes that she used to read children's stories on the radio in Chile. Years later she had her own radio program in Connecticut. I choose to point this out because in the introduction to Cuentos the three editors remind us of the oral tradition of cuentos told by mothers and grandmothers.

“For the most part, our lives and the lives of the women before us have never been fully told, except by word of mouth.” (Romo-Carmona vii)

In the following paragraph they state that they can no longer afford to keep their tradition oral because the way of life that once allowed them to keep telling and re-telling their tales is now falling apart. This way of life relied upon close family ties and generations of people living in the same town or barrio. The early eighties, indeed, were not conducive to generations staying in the same general vicinity, families were scattered, children grew up and left, never to return. Many simply wanted out, and a new life, and modern life made them aware of the fact that they could “out” if they chose to.

Thus the written word becomes necessary. “[...] we need una literatur(a) that testifies to our lives, provides acknowledgment of who we are: an exiled people, a migrant people, mujeres en lucha,” they add. The “mujeres en lucha” are carried over from This Bridge, but the intentions have slightly shifted.

While This Bridge was for the most part a call to arms and action, a cry from the heart, this here is a step toward literature, a step toward making an oral tradition literary. Women writers such as Sor Juana, Rosario Castellanos and Clarice Lispector are mentioned in the introduction. The editors feel they are their heirs, and that they come from this literary tradition. The Latinas in the U.S. however, not educated in Spanish are deprived of this literary legacy, since it appears that in the early eighties those women writers were virtually unknown in the U.S.

But the problems don't stop there.

“The question remains, however, to what extent can most Latin American women writers be considered our literary legacy when so many, like their male counterparts, are at least functionally middle class, ostensibly white, and write from a male-identified perspective. True, the woman writer in Latin America, as in the U.S., is constrained by her sex in terms of subject matter and recognition. Class, race and education, however, as it combines with sex, are much more critical in silencing the would-be Latina writer than discrimination on sex alone. As long as the Latin American woman tows the line of her brothers, there will be a place for her in their literary milieu.” (Moraga, Romo-Carmona and Gomez vii)

That was quite an extended quote but it is important in that it shows to what extent this emerging literature is rapidly growing aware of its situation and of its place. Also, that it

is part of the second wave of American feminism. Their Latin American half sisters or stepsisters are only once removed, as if that weren't enough. But they can play their brothers' game, they can be "poetisas", or write so-called feminine literature, which many of the great ones pretended to do, for they would have been silenced had they not. The Latinas, on the contrary, never go through that phase. In other words, the Latinas never had to hide behind a mask, like Sor Juana did, just so she would not be silenced. It is obvious, from the anthologies we have looked at that this emerging literature is not discreet, nor is it "feminine," tender, delicate, emotional, just as male anthologists such as Angel Aparicio Laurencio wanted their poetesses to be.

However, these Latinas do not give their Latin American stepsisters the benefit of the doubt. At times it seems that they brush them off as white bourgeois and forget that they paved the way for them. Could there have been anthologies such as This Bridge where women parade their political feelings and sexual preferences without Sor Juana? Without Delmira Agustini? Without Julia de Burgos and Maria de Zayas who only talked about love and marriage?

All this also makes the Latina movement unique. What we have here is not a group of women trying to carve themselves a niche in a man's world and tell the world that they also have the right to write, we have a feminist movement, a political movement, an ethnic movement, and a gay movement. Indeed, it appears that the first Latina anthologies contained essentially gay women of color. This does not mean that all the women in these anthologies were gay, or literally of color, it means rather that they sided and identified with this movement. Suddenly the sexual preference is deeply tied to the radical, to the political, and to color. The same goes for color. Not all the Latinas were

women of color, but that is where they had to dig for their identity. All the other doors were closed, they were not Latin American middle class and they were not New England blue blood feminists, they were not the daughters of Virginia Woolf either, not even distant relatives, or so it seems, race, politics, society, education separated them, infinitely.

The editors of Cuentos state over and over again that the Latino writer is considered non-white and a minority writer as such. Not only that but for many English is not even their native language.

With the foreword of Cuentos one quickly realizes that finally this anthology published in 1983 is a result of the Third World liberation movements of the sixties, it took this long to bring Latinas into the picture. As a matter of fact, the liberation movement itself had already died out by 1983. Sometimes these anthologies are reminiscent of light from stars that died ages ago.

Between This Bridge and Cuentos there is a river, and that river is cultural. Or there are two different rivers. While the river under This Bridge wanted to overflow and make big waves, flood the place, the river under Cuentos wants to flow into the ocean of literature.

The editors describe the intent of Cuentos. “[...] to mention the unmentionables, to capture some essential expression – without censors – that would be called Latina and Latina identified.” (Gómez, Moraga, Romo-Carmoma ix)

They add that most of the writers in this anthology are first generation writers, which means that their mothers couldn't have written their story, nor even helped them write it.

The reason they say “most” is that Rosario Morales and her daughter Aurora Levins Morales are included in this anthology. So Aurora is not a first generation writer.

Although Marcus Lee Hansen’s law regarding immigrants cannot be applied to Latinas, this is an interesting time to bring it up, since we are referring to 1st, 2nd, 3rd generation and mothers, daughters, and granddaughters. Basically, Hansen’s formulation is, “What the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember.” According to Singh complications arise when this formula is applied to diverse groups of immigrants, as well as to women. Feminist criticism even considers Hansen’s language to be patriarchal. After pointing this out Singh adds, “Hansen’s Law has now given way, in both literary and historical scholarship, to an acknowledgment of individual and collective subjectivities. We now recognize that what granddaughters might remember is often very different from what grandsons remember.” (Singh 9-10)

That means that nostalgia can take on different images, and the grandson’s desire for return is not necessarily an emotion experienced by the granddaughter, for this could mean returning to a way of life where they have no place as individuals, no rights, merely traditional patriarchal roles. This ties back with the importance of remembering.

“At bottom, we wanted to create a book that made feminist the connection between Latin American women here and in Latin America. We wanted to defunct the myth that only white people live en los estados unidos. We wanted latinoamericanas to recognize that there are Latinas here, too. But as Latinas in the U.S., our experience is different. Because living here means throwing in our lot with other people of color.” (Gómez, Moraga, Romo-Carmona ix)

The above-cited section of the foreword comes below a section entitled “La Política de Hacer Cuentos”. The editors repeat once again that they are going against the idea that privilege or social standing is necessary for good writing, and that they do not aspire to be more European or whiter, on the contrary. They claim and proclaim “La mezcla”, regardless of each authors degree of black, Indian or European blood.

The question of bilingualism is also discussed to some depth.

“In este libro, we wish to stretch la imaginación – help the reader become accustomed to seeing two languages in a book, learning to make sense of a thing by picking up snatches here, phrases there, listening and reading differently. Cuentos validates the use of spanglish and tex-mex. Mixing English and Spanish in our writing and talking is a legitimate and creative response to acculturation. It doesn’t mean that we are illiterate.” (Gómez, Moraga, Romo-Carmona xi)

The audience that this anthology is intended for is primarily the bi-cultural reader, other Latinas in the U.S. The editors hoped that some day the whole anthology could be translated into Spanish, so as to reach a Latin American audience.

Contrary to Fisher, the anthologists here, in spite of their literary pretensions, do not appear to be wanting to make Latinas known in academic circles or to wider non Spanish speaking audiences, which makes their task easier. In a way they are trying to convert the converted and are preaching to an already captive audience. So in a way the movement has taken a step backward and become more intimate as opposed to Dexter Fisher’s efforts in The Third Woman.

“What hurts is the discovery of the measure of our silence. How deep it runs. How many of us are indeed caught, unreconciled between two languages, two political poles, and suffer the insecurities of that straddling.” (Gómez, Moraga, Romo-Carmona xi)

As I already mentioned, the editors find that it is time to put the oral tradition on paper. If they fail to do so they risk a future of eternal silence. In many ways what they are doing here is mixing the oral tradition with a Western literary style, the story, the short story.

As a matter of fact, the title Cuentos, refers specifically to this oral tradition. Browdy de Hernández quotes Gloria Anzaldúa whose process of writing begins with a section on storytelling.

“I was familiar with cuentos – my grandmother told stories like the one about. . . My father told stories about . . . Nudge a Mexican and he or she will break out with a story. So, huddling under the covers, I made up stories for my sister night after night” (Browdy de Hernández 51)

Anzaldúa is one of the 23 Latina authors included in *Cuentos*. The others are: Gloria Liberman, Rocky Gámez, Helena Maria Viramontes, Luz Selenia Vásquez, Iris Zavala, Lake Sagaris, Cenen, Maria Carolina de Jesus, Alma Gomez, Amina Susan Ali, Luz Maria Umpierre, Miriam Diaz-Diocaretz, Mariana Romo-Carmona, Roberta Fernández, Rosario Morales, Cicera Fernández de Oliveira, Cherríe Moraga, Milagros Perez-Huth, Elva Perez-Treviño, Aleida Rodriguez, Sara Rosel, and Aurora Levins Morales.

The cover of this anthology is sober, black, with bright mustard colored letters and Aztec-like design. In the back, there is a quote from the black writer Alice Walker who

writes, "How I have longed to begin to know these Latinas. How can anyone have ever said we are not sisters? And writers?"

Before I analyze Cuentos in detail here are some are some brief remarks concerning this anthology.

The Latina writers are endorsed by their better-known black sisters.

We have already encountered some of the names included here, such as: Gloria Anzaldúa, obviously, Cherríe Moraga, Rosario Morales, and Aurora Levins Morales from This Bridge Called My Back.

Once again, none of the Latinas included in Fisher's anthology are included here.

Aleida Rodríguez, the editor of Keeping the Spirit, is one of the authors included in *Cuentos*.

There are several voices that had never been included in Latina anthologies.

There are two Brazilian voices: Cícera Fernández de Oliveria and Carolina Maria de Jesús, an older writer, born in 1913.

Compared to former anthologies where the scale always tipped in favor of Chicana voices, the majority of the voices in this anthology are Puerto Rican. These voices include:

Amina Susan Ali, a New York City born poet who fixed telephone equipment for a living. At the time of publication of Cuentos, she was 31 years old and her work had appeared in reviews such as Revista Chicano-Riqueña, Third Woman, Essence, and in the anthology Nuyorican Poetry. She had also read at the Nuyorican Poets Café.

Cenen, an African Puerto Rican, was also born in New York City.

Myrtha Chabrán, a Puerto Rican who migrated to California instead of New York. “Now that my sons are grown,” she writes in the biographical note in the back of the book, “I am trying to grow up to become a writer.” She was approximately 40 years old at the time this anthology was published.

Alma Gómez, one of the three editors of Cuentos, and Luz Selenia Vázquez, are both New York City born Puerto Ricans.

There is also Iris Zavala, a native of Ponce, Puerto Rico, who was living in Holland at the time of publication of this anthology, and Milagros Pérez Huth, a native of Humacao, Puerto Rico.

Finally, Luz Maria Umpierre, whom we will see included in anthologies from Cuentos on. Umpierre came from Academe, and had been published in quite a few literary reviews such as: Bilingual Review and Revista Chicano Riqueña. Third Woman Press had published a chapbook of her poetry.

There are four Chilean voices in the anthology: Myriam Díaz-Diocaretz, Gloria Liberman, Mariana Romo-Carmona, one of the three editors of Cuentos, and Lake Sagaris.

There are two Cubans: Sara Rosel, and Aleida Rodríguez, who was the editor of Keeping the Spirit.

The Chicanas included here, besides Cherríe Moraga, and Gloria Anzaldúa whom we have already mentioned, are: Roberta Fernández, Rocky Gámez, Elva Perez-Treviño, and Helena María Viramontes. The voices of many of these Chicanas will continue to be heard into the 21st century.

Cuentos is in many ways a milestone. This Bridge is a milestone too, but as we have already mentioned, it was not limited to Latinas.

Cuentos is divided into three parts that are labeled in Spanish: Uno, Dos, Tres.

The introduction to “Uno” begins with the line, “There is a level of passion we possess for which there is no legitimate outlet. “ This is quite reminiscent of This Bridge. As a matter of fact it has Moraga’s stamp on it. There is something in these Latinas, the unmentionable, that now has to be put on paper. The following line reads, “Feeling like we were born with too much inside of us and that should we decide to express ourselves in any deeply felt way, they will think us crazy, sick, or senile.” (Gómez, Moraga, Romo-Carmona 3)

No matter, they will express themselves anyway. The six writers included in this first section who “are possessed in opposition to the forces that deny their humanity” are either Puerto Rican or Chilean. They are still affirming themselves simply as persons, as humans, not as writers.

The difference is that instead of writing a hundred times lines such as, “I am Chicana”, or just throwing intimate self-affirmations on paper, the self-affirmation in Cuentos is literary, whether or not it was intended to be so. It can also be related to Bakhtin’s double-voiced discourse which represents a conscious duality of voices, two world views, and two languages. From the very beginning, in fact, this double-voiced discourse is present.

Gloria Liberman’s poem “La Confesión” that begins with the words, “Hoy me regalaron unas hermosas margaritas,” immediately puts the reader in this double voiced discourse. Little does it matter if the poetic voice is inside a bell jar, trapped, prisoner, in

an insane asylum, the other voice is ever present. And it is a multiple voice, it is the voice of her country, a country that is not mentioned, but a country that killed her brother, and also the voice of her family, and of the person she used to be before she ended up in this insane asylum. The other voice or voices come through loud and clear with lines such as, “Queríamos un mundo mejor,” and “Tienes que pensar en el futuro, darle una tierra más fértil a tus hijos.”

In Rocky Gámez’s story entitled “Doña Marchiana Garcia” this double voiced discourse takes place, as it does so often in “minority” literature, between the old and the new, between tradition and the future. It so happens that Doña Marciana Garcia, a midwife and a healer, feels threatened in many ways by Esperanza, who left town, went to the university, and came back as a nurse. “And here she was, doña Marciana Garcia, a white haired old woman who had spent a lifetime practicing healing and fearing God, now running away in fear of that five-pound wailing baby she had delivered only 23 short years before.” (Gámez 9)

The story offers no solutions. On the one hand there is Esperanza, whose name Doña Marciana finds beautiful, because it means hope. But it is also a name that leaves a bad taste in her mouth. The end of the story is left wide open for the reader to decide. Did Esperanza plot to kill Doña Marciana, or was it all a product of the old woman’s paranoia? It is with the everlasting conflict between novelty and tradition that this story ends.

Helena María Viramontes’s piece, for example, is a still life, with refined language, a search for expression, and an attempt to self-affirm in ways that are other than dizzying and repetitive. Viramontes’s tone, on the contrary, is sober.

“Do something, she says. If I had a penny for all the things I have done, all the little details I was responsible for but which amounted to nonsense, I would be rich. But I don’t have a thing to show for it. How can people believe that for years I’ve fought against motes of dust or dirt attracting floors or bleached white sheets to perfection when a few hours later the motes, the dirt, the stains return [...]” Here we have again the two world voices, the two world views, and the two languages of Bakhtin’s double-voiced discourse. In this case, the protagonists are the mother, who talks, and the daughter, who talks through the mother.

As Bakhtin writes, **“all words and forms are populated by intentions.”** (Bakhtin 293) This is the case with Viramontes’s piece, and this is indeed the plural self that Browdy de Hernández refers to when researching ethnic autobiographies.

“In ethnic autobiographies, the very form of the autobiography is already shot through with intention,” Browdy de Hernández writes. She then adds that in certain ethnic autobiographies there is a **“dialogue between their particular ethnic group and a dominant American culture, between the collective, typically ethnic use of memory and the individual, typically Western use of memory.”** (Browdy de Hernández 42)

Viramontes uses this double language in such a subtle way that it is hardly noticeable. The mother is seeing herself first through her daughter’s eyes, and then through Western culture’s eyes, not having enough to show for what she’s done, but she is so intensely aware of it that in many ways she has already assimilated these other voices and is in control of them.

With Luz Selenia Vasquez the double voiced discourse is in English and in Spanish. The story “Como el cristal al romperse” begins in Spanish. “A veces se despertaba con coraje, porque se levantaba con la bata mojada.”

The person awakening with the soiled nightgown is Carrera, a fragile old woman in hospital. It is through the Spanish language that her interiority and her humanity speak, whereas the nurses speak to her in English. “Carrera, I said strip, come on take off the nightgown. We haven’t got all day.”

Yet another double voiced discourse is taking place between the radio and the television. In vain Carrera tries to drown the noise from the television by turning the radio all the way up and listening to old love songs.

“Si quieres separar nuestro destino . . . ya nunca me verás . . . en tu camino.”

But the television ends up having the last word, and wins.

“All across the nation . . . Join the Pepsi generation . . . Here today, here to stay . . .” (Vasquez 24-30)

This double-voiced discourse is also suggested in the introduction to the first part of *Cuentos* when the editors feel the writers here will be considered insane or senile when they express their feelings.

The double-voiced discourse persists in “Dos”.

“In these stories the battle for identity is waged on several fronts: with self, family, friends, and the outer world. Particularly for the U.S. Latina, the rules and values we were taught by mami are often in sharp contrast to the norms of the dominant society.” (Gómez, Moraga, Romo-Carmona 49)

Alma Gomez's very short story, "El Sueño Perdido" takes place in what appears to be a waiting room, perhaps the waiting room to the doctor's office, where a few old people are sitting and waiting. Two of the people waiting are a mother and her daughter who are apparently used to this kind of waiting because they like to play a game while they are waiting. "We wait and play a game. There is a constant story I ask mami to tell me. I get something from it and ask her to tell me again and again."

Here, the memories of what it used to be, or what it didn't use to be, but the mother would have wanted it to be, contrast with this waiting room. Now there is nothing left, but to wait until their names are called. The daughter often stops the mother when she's changed the order of the story, and finally what this story amounts to is a piece of story that never gets told. The story of the lost dream ends with the phrase, "Some sort of soft drink has been spilled on a seat and throws back reflections."

Although none of the writers included in Cuentos are studied in what was probably the first book length critical analysis of U.S. Latina literature, *Beyond Stereotypes* published in 1985, Francisco Lomelí makes some interesting remarks that can be applied to these stories in Part Two as well as those that I will examine in Part Three.

Lomelí quotes Tomás Rivera who believed that the creation of community in Chicano/a stories did not become a literary production in and of itself because the writers after 1975, including Chicanas, aimed at reshaping the sort of archetypes that had been underrepresented in literature. Lomelí then writes that in this sense, "cultural setting acquires less importance, for what matters above all is the dynamics of conflict between the individual and external forces. Ethnicity is no longer the ultimate aim but instead becomes a natural component of those who participate in the action. A conscious

ideology of culture is now supplanted by the individual's circumstance as it becomes shaped and influenced by social agents." (Lomelí 34-35)

Helena Maria Viramontes's story in the second part of this anthology, entitled "Growing", presents the double voiced discourse and at the same time puts ethnicity in a back burner. Finally here the discourse is between the young and the younger, a girl of fourteen and her kids sister who has been sent by her dad to be her chaperone. At first the older sister feels resentment toward her younger sister but little by little this feeling changes, first to one of tenderness, and finally to pity, for the younger sister will soon become a young woman also. Finally, the older sister whispers in the younger sister's ear and urges her to enjoy being a young girl, "because you will never enjoy being a woman." (Viramontes 73)

Amina Susan Ali's troubling story, "Memories of Her", also puts ethnicity in the back burner then brings it back again. The double voiced discourse is there, between mother and daughter, although only the daughter speaks. Also present are the political and the feminist discourses. The memories here are of the mother who was trying to teach the daughter to be a martyr. "Contrary to popular belief, the Spanish Inquisition commenced the first time a Puerto Rican girl came home five minutes late. It was torture first, questioning later."

The story ends with the two lines, "I'm your mother!" – smack! "Don't you forget that! Did I really have to be reminded?"

Finally, Part Three (Tres) of Cuentos depicts "Latinas trying to break out of the limits our culture has set for us. The most severe restriction placed upon the Latina is in relation

to sexuality. This is the subject of most of these stories – the sexual politics of the Latina seeking to control her destiny.”

Cherrie Moraga and Aleida Rodríguez are two of the authors included in this section. I have picked their stories to analyze for they are representative of the sexual politics I have been writing about. We already know that Moraga was a pioneer in the 80's. After This Bridge, she goes on to have a couple of her own works published, as well as Cuentos, and later on Esta Puente and The Sexuality of Latinas.

Moraga's story "Pesadilla" begins with the phrase "There came the day when Cecilia began to think about color." The color she is thinking about is skin color. This deeply affects her, and she sees in every skin a particular shade. "And then one day, color moved in with her. Or, at least, that was how she thought of it when the going was the roughest between her and her love." (Moraga in Cuentos 182)

Throughout the story this light and dark bipolarity is ever present. Sternbach considers this to be a result of Moraga's identity. The product of a white father and a brown mother, to be a woman entailed reclaiming her mother's race. "It meant loving the Chicana in herself and in other women [...] and returning to the race of her mother through her love for other women – her Chicana lesbianism." (Sternbach 55)

In her story, Rodríguez, the editor of Keeping the Spirit, is also trying to understand as well as affirm her state of being a lesbian and a woman of color. Sara Rosel does the same in her story about a Cuban lesbian escaping from Castro's Cuba, who has, as her traveling companion, precisely the kind of person she is fleeing, an old woman who tells her that the only thing Castro did right was to throw all the tortilleras in jail.

Once again, this minor literature is appearing to be not only twice removed, but many times removed, by sexual preference, race, and language. It was not simply the product of a woman's liberation movement, at least not of a white woman's liberation movement, since they perceived themselves as women of color. Moreover, as a lesbian movement many of the issues that preoccupy their white feminist sisters do not concern them as deeply.

As far as language is concerned, the betrayal can be double or triple. Spanish was once the language of the enemy for those who identify with the women of color. The problem is that Chicanas such as Moraga confess that in spite of "being born between the legs of the best teacher" she must, according to Sternbach, call the Berlitz Language School in New York City in order to learn her mother tongue, or her mother's tongue. What Sternbach describes in her scholarly article could easily be the theme of a novel or short story. Here is this Chicana lesbian scholar and anthologist being given a sales pitch at Berlitz, and being assured that in no time at all, for a certain sum, she'll walk out of there being able to order a whole meal at a Latino restaurant, and even to hold a halfway decent conversation with a Spanish speaker. One can also imagine Moraga sitting there, in class, with these corporate types of the yuppie 80's, repeating after the teacher 101 verbs such as hablo, hablas, habla.

In any case, the "removal" just goes on and on.

"One of these attacks, no doubt, is the accusation that she does not belong and does not speak the language of her mother, even if she feels it in her bones." (Sternbach 59)
This begins to explain why Esta Puente saw the light of print.

Chapter Four – Hispanic Women Write

They are using the word Hispanic. But the year is, or was, 1983. And perhaps I am cheating by including this anthology now, instead of in 1987, when it was first published as a book and not as a special issue of the Revista Chicano-Riqueña. However, it existed as such in 1983, and it calls these women Hispanic, and here we have at last an anthology with three authors in common with Fisher's The Third Woman: Carmen Tafolla, Ana Castillo, and Angela de Hoyos. It also has two authors in common with *Cuentos*: Helena Maria Viramontes and Roberta Fernández. It has no authors in common with any of the other anthologies I have taken into consideration thus far.

A total of 22 authors are anthologized in Woman of Her Word, Hispanic Women Write: 15 Chicanas, 3 Puerto Ricans, 2 Cubans, and 2 Others. The Chicanas are: Sandra Cisneros, Carmen Tafolla, Ana Castillo, Angela de Hoyos, Evangelina Vigil (who is also the editor of this anthology), Yvonne Sapia, Pat Mora, Tawese, Cordelia Candelaria, Antonia Quintana Pigno, Naomi Lockwood Baretta, Silviana Wood, Helena Maria Viramontes, Mary Helen Ponce, and Roberta Fernández. The Puerto Ricans are: Sandra Maria Estevez, Judith Ortiz Cofer, and Nicholasa Mohr. The Cubans are: Eliana Rivero and Achy Obejas. The Others are: Marjorie Agosín (Chilean), and Rima de Valbona (Costa Rican).

And since we are examining these anthologies in light of the concept of minor literature, it is important to note that almost half of these women were teaching either English, Spanish literature or Chicano studies in a U.S. University at the time this anthology was published.

By 1983, many of these women, not only the ones in Hispanic Women Write, but also in Cuentos, and even This Bridge, were not only teaching but their works were appearing more and more frequently on course syllabi or reading lists. David Palumbo-Liu believes that in this sense, by this time the battle had in a way been won. However, his concern was that the complex material specificities of minority discourses could very well be erased as they are being incorporated into the general paradigm of liberal humanities.

It is as if once the concept of Literature with a capital “L” wants to replace that of minor literature, then minor literature risks losing what makes it great, if we read Deleuze and Guattari.

Palumbo-Liu adds that while certain texts deemed worthy of the ethnic experience are put forward, the critical and pedagogical discourses that present these texts to students and readers could “very well mimic and reproduce the ideological underpinnings of the dominant canon, adding material to it after a necessary hermeneutic operation elides contradictions and smoothes over the rough grain of history and politics [...]” (Palumbo-Liu 2)

That is a study onto itself but it is important to keep it in mind along with Elizabeth Fox-Genovese’s remarks on the political dimension of ethnic literature. Palumbo-Liu notes that Fox-Genovese rightly recognizes this political dimension and also warns us that this recognition can have the adverse effect of presuming that non-ethnic literature is apolitical.

The reason why Palumbo-Liu puts elicits all these concerns is to make us recognize that minority discourse, “once visible as a represented and representative object, can

indeed be stabilized and forced into a particular relationship with the hegemonic.”

(Palumbo-Liu 3)

He then proceeds to compare these minority discourses to an idiom. The nature of idioms is that of being incomprehensible or only partially understandable outside their domain. This is both their weakness and their strength, for it allows them to operate with relative autonomy from the mainstream code.

When brought out into the open the idioms gain and they lose, as do minority discourses. They gain currency within the dominant, according to Palumbo-Liu and at the same time lose their latitude as a counter discourse and an ability to designate a space outside the hegemonic.

These are some of the pitfalls and mortal dangers that come with the winning of battles. And however way we look at it, and no matter how critical or suspicious we are, some battles had been won by 1983, even if Evangelina Vigil, the editor of Hispanic Women Write didn't seem to think so.

In her introduction to this anthology Vigil writes that the literature being produced by Latina writers represents a source of human intelligence that is new to literary audiences. What stands out here is that in the beginning of her Introduction Vigil is not addressing the feelings, social background, color, sexual preferences, or political choices of the women she is anthologizing. What matters here is the literature and that it is a new literature of quality that is not destined for the oppressed, the humiliated and the poor, on the contrary, this here is a literature for literary audiences. For the first time I feel that the anthologist has a totally different audience in mind, a literary audience, an audience that should discover this new and emerging literature.

When Henry Louis Gates analyzes the background and the emergence of Black literature he describes a moment when scholars share a concern with the literariness of the works, “as they wrestled to make these texts a proper object of analysis within traditional departments of English.” (Gates Introduction to Scholarship 292)

The problem Gates sees with this is that minority discourse has fixed on a spatial vocabulary of margin and center, “and since the formation of the margin has moved to the center of literary history and theory, it is important now to rethink this cartography, for I believe the center-margin topography has started to exhaust its usefulness.” (Gates, Introduction to Scholarship 293) His aim therefore is to disrupt some of these comforting concepts of center-periphery power relations and yet to remain responsive to the differences.

This ties in very well with Vigil’s Introduction when, after having affirmed that what she is presenting is literature, she adds that, “Removed from the mainstream of American literature and barely emerging on the Hispanic literary scene, the creativity of Latina writers exists autonomously.” In other words, her main concern here is, once again, that this literature is removed from the mainstream of American literature. The women’s personal “removal” is now in the back burner, although it is still there.

Actually there seems to be some sort of conflict on the part of the critics and the anthologists, or they are at a specific turning point. The 80’s did indeed bring the author back, as well as the cry for social justice. The critics’ and anthologists’ urge to put these women forward as victims keeps on eating at them no matter hard they try to shed light on the literature itself and forget the rest. But it is as if they couldn’t help it. Vigil does the same.

The result is that a paragraph that begins with the two words “The literature” takes off on this winding road and wants to end up with “the double oppression that Latinas confront as women and as minorities in this country [...]”

Vigils then adds, “It is often that conflict brought on by social alienation that works as a catalyst for creativity.”

I am not saying there is anything wrong with reminding readers that Latinas have endured social alienation and discrimination. Furthermore, I suppose that someone who produces literature can also be a victim, a victim of rape, of incest, of discrimination. What I am saying is that it is sometimes difficult to concentrate on the two aspects. We are either dealing with a true confession or with a work of art. At this point and as far as Latina literature is concerned, there is still an effort to mix the vinegars with the oils. In other words, are we presenting people with their personal tragedies, or are we presenting literary works?

In her Introduction to the Critical Study of Latino literature entitled European Perspectives on Hispanic Literature of the United States Geneviève Fabre writes, “Critics have been first compelled to fight against certain current allegations: that Hispanic literatures in the United States are new and as such are still suffering from immaturity, coarseness of literary devices, lack of sophistication; that they are a by-product of the 1970’s political movements, therefore ephemeral and limited to propaganda and protest or condemned to be mostly documentary, testimonial or journalistic.” (Fabre 7)

Fabre then adds that the Hispanic voice can no longer be denied and that Latinos cannot be satisfied with a minority or sub literature status.

Henry Louis Gates addresses this by coming to the conclusion that the ritualized invocation of otherness is losing its capacity to engender new forms of knowledge and that the margin may have exhausted its strategic value. “We must prepare to forego the pleasures of ethnicist affirmation and routinized resentment in favor of rethinking the larger structures that constrain and enable our agency.” (Gates, Introduction to Scholarship 299)

It seems that in the mid 80's there is an effort to make this epistemological change, but the tension remains. The protest is still there, but the focus is more and more on the literariness, for Vigil keeps coming back to the quality of the texts she is about to present. As a matter of fact, the literary nature is already in the title of the anthology.

As usual, these titles are dual, they are either in English and Spanish, or describe an act and its explanation, or they are a statement and its explanation. Here, the title is all English, and dual. The first part of the title is Woman of her Word.

Vigil begins the second paragraph of her Introduction by writing that, “Latina writers often portray the woman as a symbol of spiritual strength, virtue and wisdom. As a persona in the literature, the Latina is a woman of her word – mujer de su palabra. In this role, the Latina is self-sacrificing to her family as a mother and wife.”

Obviously, there is a play on words with woman of her word. The Latina writer as a writer is a woman of her word. But to be a woman of her word means that a promise was made somewhere along the line, and that the woman who chose to make that promise is going to keep it. I think this is where Vigil's idea of the self-sacrificing Latina comes into play. On the one hand she is an artist and a writer, on the other she has made this commitment that she is going to keep since she is a woman of her word.

I have to say that the idea of her being self-sacrificing leaves me perplexed. We are bringing the victims back onto center stage, and somehow turning this into a virtue. There is something that is not rebellious here, and suddenly we are very far from This Bridge Called my Back and those radical writings.

Vigil then takes it one step further by explaining that in this self-sacrificing role the Latina conveys values to her family members “by way of example, and through the oral tradition, and, as such she represents a tie to the cultural past. The woman is portrayed as the sensitive one in the family who expresses love and teaches respect [...]”

I am dwelling upon this short Introduction because it leaves me quite puzzled. It is startling to have an Introduction such as this one where “woman” is suddenly being idealized when other introductions to other anthologies that preceded it were often a war cry against the white radical feminists. Now, the woman is being stripped of the whore stereotype and being given this “nice” and idealized role. Now she is the sensitive one, the one who loves and understands, the self-sacrificing giver of life, a virgin, a goddess, a mother.

For example, Vigil writes that most importantly woman is the giver of life and consequently knows pain, the pain of isolation, alienation, of giving life, of losing a child. This is a perfect example of the center-periphery cartography. At the center in this case would be the non-Latina world, so we are dealing with gender and ethnicity, at the periphery there is its contrary. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., however, contends that the margin is produced by the center and that the other is produced by the self or the same. He reminds us that we tend to forget that the position of the margin is an effect of the center rather than what he calls an autonomous agency of subversion. He then quotes Sneja

Gunew who writes that these minority writings have been in general homogenized, for the center is quite able to accommodate change, change which is safely contained.

To this Gates adds that the threat to the margin comes not from assimilation or from an attempt to strip it of its alterity, but rather from the center's attempt to preserve that alterity, and this results in the homogenization of the other as simply other.

Throughout her 10-page Introduction Vigil use this margin-center cartography to express the otherness and the tension. She also uses words that would probably make her feminist as well as her radical sisters somewhat uncomfortable, for there is definitely an idealized perception of women here.

Vigil writes of women learning social behavior from other women, from their elders, and acknowledging it with respect and love. Vigil also writes that, "Implicit in the literature is that women possess an extra-sensory capability of perceiving truth beyond the obvious." Girls seem to develop this "Instinctive talent", and therefore nothing can be concealed from a woman's "discerning eye."

It could very well be that the early 80's were a time to rethink the radicalism that had dominated since the 60's and 70's. Perhaps it was a time to start over again, as women, as feminists, and reconsider the same themes. This is the feeling I get when reading and re-reading this Introduction. Sometimes it is as if they were discovering a feminist movement again for the first time, especially when Vigil writes, "A number of assumptions which both men and women perpetuate are revealed throughout the literature." She then enumerates the assumptions: One – a woman must remain in her place; Two – A wife's place is the home; Three – Women must practice tolerance in their relationship with men; Four – Man has a basic distrust of women.

In her critical study of Chicana poetry published in 1985, Marta Ester Sánchez proposes a literary paradigm that takes into consideration both the gender and the ethnic identification. There are several options available for these writers. One of them is to see themselves as women. The second is to see themselves as members of a minority. The third option is that of poet, or writer. Sánchez then sets out to describe the tension that exists among these three identities or coordinates.

This could very well be where Vigil is attempting to put her writers, for it explains the tension and the constant crossing and re-crossing, going from literary quality to womaness, to race, to men, to sexual preference. Suddenly the ins and the outs become blurred. Who is in? Who is out?

Sánchez very well explains this when she writes that the identity “woman” has the counterpart “man”, that the ethnic identity, in this case Chicana, has the counterpart Chicano (we could say for the sake of this study that the “a” has the counterpart “o”). Finally, Sánchez explains that the identity of poet implies the contexts of English-American and, in her case, Mexican-Chicano traditions. If we must play with the outside and the inside, at least here we have a clearer picture of the different possibilities of centers and peripheries.

Vigil later concludes that, “The most significant revelation in this anthology is the vibrant imagination, talent and intelligence of Latina writers [...]” We are reminded at the end that what is about to be presented is, first and foremost, the writers.

The second part of the title of Vigil’s anthology is Hispanic Women Write. This second part adds something to Woman of her Word. Besides all the other promises the woman has made, she has also given her word, she writes. She has given her word that

she will write. Once again, we are in the presence of an act. The titles of all these anthologies either suggest or express acts. Never in the 80's do we have a title that suggests something like "the best poems by Latinas," or "the best stories." We are always in the presence of acts.

I mentioned that this anthology had three authors in common with Fisher's The Third Woman, Carmen Tafolla, Angela de Hoyos, and Ana Castillo. All three are in the poetry section of this anthology (the other sections being prose, criticism, and art). From now on both Angela de Hoyos and Ana Castillo will be included in just about every anthology of Latina literature. The two authors that Woman of her Word has in common with Cuentos are: Helena Maria Viramontes and Roberta Fernández. Fernández will herself be the editor of another anthology of Latina literature. Both these authors will also appear in just about every subsequent anthology of Latina/o literature. I remain guarded with the "just about" because I will be taking a look at some anthologies limited to very young Latina writers, or to emerging voices, or experimental voices, or coming out voices, or lesbian voices. It is only in very specific anthologies that we will not see those authors.

The three poems of Castillo's included here revolve around disillusionment and deception with the husband or the male. In the first poem "I Don't Want to Know" the poetic voice is menopausal and the husband has run off with a young woman. The second poem's title speaks for itself, "Not Just Because my Husband Said." And the third poem is entitled "The Antihero."

The poet does not appear to have yet reached what Rafael Perez-Torres considers to be the "second phase of poetic production" that works "toward the articulation of a cultural identity distinct and disengaged from dominant Euro-American traditions."

(Perez-Torres 296) When he comes to this conclusion Perez-Torres is referring to Cordelia Candelaria's division of Chicano poetry through the early 80's into three phases: "the first produced in the polemical poetry of el movimiento, the second moved toward defining a Chicano poetics, the third saw a flowering of Chicano poetry in a sophistication of style and technique . . ." (Perez-Torres 315)

Reading Castillo's poems in Woman of Her Word in light of these theories it is difficult to situate their phase. As a matter of fact, they seem to be poems of youth. Perez-Torres writes that Castillo's poetry that spans the period from the late 70's to the 90's "provides us with an opportunity to contrast how notions of mythic memory have changed as they are constructed and reinscribed within a changing Chicano cultural space."

This does not seem to be the case in poems included in Woman of Her Word. Where Marta Ester Sánchez to be analyzing Castillo's poems included in Woman of her Word in light of her paradigmatic triad, she would conclude that here Castillo is responding primarily as a woman to the dominant masculine society of the U.S.

As to Perez-Torres's views of Castillo's poetry, they seem to be diametrically opposed to Vigil's vision of a womanly bond. In his essay Perez-Torres quotes one of Castillo's poems that begins with the words, "Hard are the women of my family."

Perez-Torres then expatiates on that unfeminine adjective "hard". He then adds that they, "interiorize and manifest a schizophrenic subjectivity. They are hard to and on each other, mother and daughter, hard on all except 'sacred husbands' and 'the blessings of sons'. The antagonism of tension beneath a patriarchal order causes the women to turn hard against each other." (Perez-Torres 307)

Perhaps this is where Perez-Torres views and Vigil's choice of Castillo's poems meet. The three poems in *Woman of her Word* concern the male. "I don't want to know" begins with musings of the ex-husband and ends with "the corpse that was my son." (Castillo, Woman of her Word 39)

There are hints of this patriarchal order in Tafolla's poems as well. "You wear manhood like sunlight," she writes in the poem entitled "Casa".

"And mi vientre (maceta chiflada)/se hincha/queriendo, como las ciruelas/del árbol/cargar semilla/también." We have here a vision of a submissive female dying and begging to be fertilized by the male.

In The Third Woman Fisher quotes Tafolla who writes that her poetry is "portrait and voice. It is folk narrative and the voice within it are reflections of my barrio." Vigil writes that in another of Tafolla's poems "Woman-Hole" the poet utilizes the mother's womb as an all-encompassing symbol and source of knowledge.

It is more difficult to tie Angela de Hoyos' poems with this "feminine" side of the paradigmatic triad that Vigil wants to put forth. However, Vigil believes that in the poem entitled "Ten Dry Summers Ago" the speaker notes that her mother's ability to perform a pivotal dance is the miracle of life.

What is becoming obvious here is that anthologies are flexible, and that anthologists can do just about whatever they want with them. In other words, they can be slanted however way the anthologist chooses, so that the authors end up being bearers of the anthologist's ideals. By using the same authors, one anthologist may produce an anthology of protest, and another anthologist one may end up exalting the either feminine or female side of the world, or the courage of the working class.

In an essay included in Breaking Boundaries Mary Jane Treacy affirms that Vigil's poetic persona can no longer hope to find a Mexican-American in a geographical space and therefore has to develop a new sense of community based upon relationships that bind and that transform. Having constructed this community, Vigil then divides the world up between those that are in her community, and those who aren't. The problem, however, according to Treacy is that her community is so idealized "that it cannot easily tolerate the idea of injustice or flaw embedded within the culture. So even as Vigil's person brings to light the bonds that unite Mexican-Americans, she is also bound to silence those insights that might lead to a critique of women's position in the community." (Treacy 90)

That is precisely what stands out in Vigil's otherwise fine anthology. All the texts have been chosen in function of that ideology.

In other words, the anthologist can very well decide what position or what identity the authors will take, whether this be a female identity, an ethnic one, or a literary one. The ins and the outs are beginning to multiply. There are the authors who are in, and those who are out, and now there are the chosen identities, chosen either by the author or by the anthologist or, at the same time, both.

Chapter Five – Nosotras

Although a few special issues of literary journals were dedicated solely to Latina writings, we would have to wait until 1986 for the next anthology of Latina literature to appear. Nosotras/Latina Literature Today was published by the Bilingual Press, that was operating out of SUNY Binghamton at the time. The general editor of this press was, and still is, Gary Keller, who had already published two anthologies of U.S. Hispanic literature before dedicating one anthology solely to Latinas.

The editors of Nosotras are Maria del Carmen Boza, Beverly Silva, and Carmen Valle who, according to Keller, were already highly recognized authors in their own right who had foregone the publication of their own material in this anthology in order to ensure the editorial objectivity. This is a first, for, besides Dexter Fisher and Aleida Rodriguez, all the editors of anthologies I have studied here have knowingly and willingly included themselves in their anthologies. If Fisher did not do so it was because she was strictly an academic. As to Rodriguez, if she did not appear in her anthology Keeping the Spirit it was because she felt she did not belong there. Keeping the Spirit was a collection of writings by Latinas who did not usually write but felt the need or the desire to do so.

None of the other editors ever expressed any fears of compromising the editorial objectivity of their anthology by including themselves, on the contrary. Moreover, could we conceive This Bridge without Moraga's and Anzaldúa's writings? Of Cuentos without Moraga? And is Woman of her Word in any way compromised because Vigil included three of her own poems?

A new issue that seems to be at stake here is this editorial objectivity. It was never an issue before. Keller explains this concern in the preface to Nosotras by writing that, "The

editors had final authority in determining the material that would be included in the anthology, constrained only by the limitations on the number of pages available and the formal requirements of the anthology format.” (Keller 7)

One can conclude that with the limited space available the editors chose to avoid the quandary of having to choose between themselves and someone else. Moreover, with three editors and such limited space (under 100 pages) the editors risked taking up too much room in the anthology.

However, we should bear in mind that before this editorial objectivity became an issue, many writers chose to become anthologists so they could be included and have their own voices heard. Moraga and Anzaldúa certainly wanted to be heard and read.

Keller begins the preface to Nosotras mostly by praising the Bilingual Review Press and listing the other anthologies published by this press. He adds that these books have been in high demand for both college and high school courses and that many of the selections he had anthologized had been reprinted in high school and college textbooks.

Keller begins the second paragraph by affirming that Nosotras continues this editorial philosophy and that these contributions, present from all the major U.S. Hispanic groups, provide “a good index of the richness of themes, literary personae, and stylistic polyphonies being cultivated by Latina writers [...]”

The material for this anthology was solicited through several thousand printed announcements requesting contributions by Latinas. Both established writers and first timers were welcome, the one criterion being that of literary merit.

This short collection is divided into six categories: I. Mind’s Eye – centered around the imagination; II. Kin – centered on family relationships; III. Bad Vibes – expressing

painful personal experiences; IV. Sage – dealing with wisdom and insights; V.

Oppression – contains the political aspect of these writings; VI. Galanes – concerns the relationship with men.

Gone are the days when two anthologies of Latina literature could have absolutely no authors in common. With Nosotras we are beginning to see a family, and the names are beginning to become quite familiar.

Twenty-two authors are anthologized in Nosotras: 13 Chicanas, 4 Puerto Ricans, 4 Cubans, and one “Other”.

One of the 13 Chicanas in *Nosotras*, Ana Castillo, was anthologized in The Third Woman, Esta Puente (of which she was one of the editors), and Woman of Her Word. Another Chicana, Gloria Anzaldúa, was anthologized in This Bridge (of which she was one of the editors), and in Cuentos. Helena Maria Viramontes was anthologized in both Cuentos and Woman of her Word. As to Pat Mora, she was also included in Woman of her Word.

There seems to be a few Chicana voices in Nosotras that have not appeared in any of the other anthologies I have examined thus far: Andrea Teresa Arenas, Rosa Maria Arenas, Miriam Bornstein, Carolina Mata de Woodruff, Barbara Mujica, Marta Salinas, and Miriam de Uriarte. Miriam Bornstein, however, was included in a 1978 anthology of Latina literature, *Siete Poetas*.

The two remaining Chicanas, although they have not appeared in any of the anthologies I have studied, are nonetheless well known: Alma Villanueva and Maria Herrera-Sobek. I will return to them later.

The 4 Puerto Ricans are: Ina Cumpiano, Magaly Quiñones, and Diana Rivera (who haven't appeared in any other anthology studied here), Judith Ortiz Cofer (who was included in Woman of her Word),

The 4 Cubans are: Achy Obejas, Raquel Puig Zaldívar, Sonia Rivera Valdés (who was included in *Esta Puente*), and Eliana Rivero (who was included in Woman of her Word).

The "Other" is Marjorie Agosín, who was included in Woman of her Word.

It is with Woman of her Word and Nosotras that the Latinas literature anthologies have the greatest number of authors in common.

While some of the voices are beginning to be heard loud and clear, other voices, from The Third Woman, This Bridge, and Cuentos, are beginning to fade.

As Gary Keller affirmed, the one criterion here is literary quality. And even if there is a section dedicated to painful personal experiences and another to oppression, what is still of primary importance is the literary quality, and not so much the raw truth, or the call to stand up and fight for certain rights.

By examining these anthologies in light of the concept of minor literature, worse yet, by having arbitrarily decided to study the anthologies of the 80's under the rubric of "minor literature" I am reluctantly going in two separate directions. On the one hand as Réda Bensmaïa writes in her Introduction to Kafka, "Deleuze and Guattari begin by detaching Kafka from what the academic institution calls 'Literature'." Later on in that same paragraph she adds that, "Deleuze and Guattari do not simply say that Kafka was unconcerned with literature or that he was not a writer by occupation." (Bensmaïa xiv) That is one direction.

Then on the other hand, I feel I am doing just the contrary, making every effort in the world to “attach” it to literature and to prove that slowly but surely it is becoming literature.

But I shall keep these two diverging roads ahead of me, and travel both if need be, for, as paradoxical as it appears, they do meet once and again.

Before I stray too far away from the anthologies and drown in the theory I think that it is a good time to consider a paradox or an impossibility that Fabre pointed out in European Perspectives. She writes that Hispanics have been forced into ambiguous and contradictory strategies.

“On the one hand into assimilation and admittance into the literary canons, toward a struggle against discrimination and entrenchment into inferiority (minority or immigrant status); on the other hand toward recognition of their distinctive ethnic traits, acknowledgment of their right to be different, of their will to remain unassimilated and to create an original and new artistic expression.” (Fabre 11)

With this in mind, we can perhaps detach the Latinas from what the academic institutions call Literature, and then attach them back again for, by the time Nosotras is published in 1986, two book length works of criticism of Latinas have been published. As a matter of fact both were published a year prior to Nosotras. These works are: Beyond Stereotypes, The Critical Analysis of Chicana Literature, edited by Maria Herrera-Sobek, and Contemporary Chicana Poetry: A Critical Approach to an Emerging Literature, edited by Marta Esther Sánchez.

Beyond Stereotypes was published by the Bilingual Press, and Contemporary Chicana Poetry was published by the University of California at Berkeley. With these two works

Latina writers are beginning to shed their “critic-less” skins of trivialization, invisibility, and incomprehensibility that, according to Paula Gunn Allen, comes with the state of being critic-less.

“It seems evident that without a critical apparatus that enables a variety of literatures to be explored within their relevant contexts, the works of las desapareadas are doomed to obscurity.” (Gunn Allen 38) However, Allen immediately expresses concerns about the system being ethnically skewed toward the bourgeois male European.

Here, on the contrary, the two scholarly works addressing the works of Latinas are written by Latinas, Latina scholars, writers, critics. Now, the question is, are these scholars in the same trivial and invisible place as the writers they are treating?

Gunn Allen proposes that perhaps the best course is to begin anew, and to examine the literary output of American writers of whatever stripe and derive critical principles based on what is actually being rendered by the true experts, the writers themselves. “I am suggesting a critical system that is founded on the principle of inclusion rather than on that of exclusion, on actual human society and relationships rather than on textual relationships alone, a system that is soundly based on aesthetics . . .” (Gunn Allen 39)

Now back to the anthologies and the works of criticism. The anthology Nosotras and the critical work Beyond Stereotypes share the same publisher and were published one year apart. However, the only author included in Nosotras that is also critiqued in Beyond Stereotypes, is Alma Villanueva. Marta Esther Sánchez, the editor of Contemporary Chicana Poetry, also published in 1985, is the author of the essay included in the poetry section of *Beyond Stereotypes* entitled, “The Birthing of the poetic ‘I’ in Alma

Villanueva's , Mother, May I?" The essay will also be included in Contemporary Chicana Poetry.

The explanation for this could very well be that Nosotras was mostly concentrating on making new voices heard. The writers addressed in Beyond Stereotypes, being already established voices, since they were being critiqued, did not necessarily need to be included in an anthology. Villanueva, however, is not the only established voice in Nosotras.

As a matter of fact, and I am not straying too away from Beyond Stereotypes, merely concentrating on Villanueva for the moment, Sánchez places Villanueva at a particular moment or place of her paradigmatic triad. According to Sánchez Villanueva is the poet who responds primarily as a woman, as opposed to Lorna Dee Cervantes who responds as a Chicana and a poet, or to Lucha Corpi, who responds primarily as a Chicana. The fourth poet Sánchez analyzes is Bernice Zamora who shifts from one response to the other.

Now I can return to Nosotras and the women included in this anthology. As I already mentioned, it is literature and literary quality that is in the forefront. As in Woman of her Word, some of the texts presented may very well be about Latinas, but most importantly they are written by Latinas who are no longer being asked to present some kind of ethnic skit. They are merely being asked to write. Thus, Marjorie Agosín writes a poem about the penis, not a Hispanic penis, just a penis. This because she feels it's time to stop exalting the breasts.

“lancémonos al pene/pene como arruga, pene como cabeza inclinada . . . pene sacudido de orines/cansado de tanta salida y despedida/ pene como una presa al horno/o una sopa de pollos pelados.” (Agosín, Nosotras 58)

The Latina identity is there, but there does not seem to be that much of a need to repeat this identity over and over again. This mechanism of minority self-construction is absent in many of the texts presented.

It does not seem like this at first. I was half expecting this colorful, ethnic aspect to pop up with the first text in Nosotras, “All the green peppers of my Life” by Rosa Maria Arenas, and I was pleasantly surprised when this did not turn out to be a Latina cooking lesson. It was about green peppers, that’s all, just like Neruda wrote about onions and celery, not particularly about Chilean ones.

These pieces fit the paradigmatic triad put forth by Sánchez. In her story, “The Ripening” Lucía meets Jess. The Hispanic identity is there. It is in the accent on the “i” of Lucía. It is in the name. But that is where it is. The rest is about a woman who meets a man, and her sexual encounter with him.

I strongly agree with Sánchez when she writes that in Villanueva the relationship between her identities as a woman and as a poet are of harmony and integration, and that the relationship between her Chicana identity and her other two identities is one of juxtaposition. The same goes for Agosín. Finally the feminine and the poetic identities are what are mainly presented in both Nosotras and Woman of her Word.

Chapter Six – Three Critical Studies of Latina

Literature and their Relationship to the Anthologies.

I am mentioning these book length works of criticism because they allow us to see the writings in light of the concept of minor literature. It will also be interesting to compare what authors were being anthologized and what authors were being “studied”, and to determine if there were any discrepancies. It could very well be that the ones being anthologized were critic-less ones, or the other way around, that the ones being anthologized were, precisely, those being given the critical attention.

Beyond Stereotypes is divided into two parts: prose and poetry. The prose section contains four different essays.

In the first essay Francisco Lomelí concentrates on four Chicana novelists: Berta Omeles, Isabella Ríos, Gina Valdés, and Estela Portillo Trambley. Of these four, only one appeared in any of the anthologies I have analyzed, and that is Portillo Trambley who was anthologized by Dexter Fisher.

Later on in this same essay Lomelí, concerned that only a few Hispanic women distinguished themselves in prose before the mid 1970's, mentions Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, as an example. The only anthology where I have encountered Cabeza de Baca is, once again, Dexter Fisher's. Lomelí writes that:

“Her orientation is not geared to exposing social conditions as they should have been, but rather she glosses over past history as if to justify and accept it. Despite her attitude of social acquiescence, some critics prefer to categorize her as an isolated case both as a woman writer and as an assimilationist.” (Lomelí 33)

He concludes that she left only a mild legacy simply by having intrigued her readers with her work's title, We Fed Them Cactus.

Lomelí then adds that it is not until 1975 and 1976 that the first contemporary novels by Chicanas appear, Victuum by Isabella Ríos, and Come Down from the Mound by Berta Ornelas. He then quotes Marcela Trujillo who argues that although 1975 serves as a focus point in time for Chicana writers, the stage had already been set for Chicanas to focus on their particular feminist experience through the arts. Trujillo was also included in Fisher's anthology.

In the next essay entitled "The Female hero in Chicano Literature", Carmen Salazar Parr and Genevieve Ramirez analyze the works of Josefina Niggli, Estela Portillo Trambley, and Gina Valdés. The first two authors were included in Fisher's anthology. As to Valdés, I already mentioned that I have not yet encountered her in any of the anthologies I have analyzed thus far.

The third essay, entitled "Chicana Prose Writers: The Case of Gina Valdés and Sylvia Lizárraga", written by Rosaura Sánchez, once again concentrates on two Chicanas that have not been included in any of the anthologies I have mentioned to date.

In the fourth essay in the prose section Eliud Martínez analyzes Portillo Trambley's short works. I already mentioned that Portillo Trambley has only appeared in Fisher's anthology thus far.

I am dwelling on these critical studies because they are what put Latina literature, a minor literature, under the rubric of ethnic, cultural, and minority studies. If on the one hand I was trying to understand the concept of minor literature by detaching it from the literature taught in Academe, on the other hand I am also seeing literature, like Barthes,

as something that is taught. The earliest anthologies point toward this, and a history of anthologies takes us in that direction.

Henry Louis Gates defends these cultural or minority studies and their need by writing that in our society cultural tolerance will only come with cultural understanding. He then traces their origins back to the political movements within the academy of the 1960's and adds that among the first professional gestures of great importance to this movement was the publication by the MLA of Dexter Fisher's Minority Language and Literature in 1977. Fisher, we know, is the editor of The Third Woman, one of the anthologies I have studied here.

In an attempt to define ethnic tradition and ethnic studies, Gates comes to the conclusion that they are all tautological and essentialist. "We define such traditions not by texts, but by authors." (Gates, Introduction to Scholarship 293)

In this same vein, Paula Gunn Allen writes that she came of age in the 60's and was seriously burned out in the 70's. By 1972 she believes she understood several things, one of them was that if an issue concerned minorities the academy would not have a word to say. It wasn't until the late 80's that she began to envy graduate students in Ethnic Studies departments.

She then adds that:

"The most profoundly creative literature of the 20th century, the most profoundly literary literature, is, as it always has been, the literature of the desperadoes (and, in this case, desperadas). This body of work, literature that rides the borders of a variety of literary, cultural, and ideological realms, has not been adequately addressed by either

mainstream feminist scholarship or the preponderance of 'ethnic' or 'minority' scholarship." (Gunn Allen 305)

This is where border studies come into play, and the reason I have decided to stop and take a look at the first critical studies.

Gunn Allen considers Border Studies to be a relatively new field that resists definitions and seems determined to define itself. As I already said, in this endeavor here we first go in the opposite directions of Deleuze's and Guattari's idea of 'detachment' and return to it time and time again. Gunn Allen very aptly describes this process of living on the border, of crossing and re-crossing and of living in two separate and almost contradictory worlds.

It is precisely the work of women of color that rises out of these multiple worlds, and Gunn Allen believes that most of these women are aware of their connection to what she calls the dark grandmother of human wisdom. She explains that the Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa tells it plainly, "The woman in the shadows is drawn again into the world of womankind." (Gunn Allen 293)

Other writers may well have entered this shadow, but they named it something else, such as evil, or negation, whereas according to Gunn Allen the woman of color is well equipped to enter the dark center of the heart of the gynocosmos.

Jeanne Rosier Smith relates the works and the personae of these border writers with the notion of tricksters whom she defines as "the ubiquitous shape-shifters who dwell on borders, at crossroads and between worlds." (Rosier Smith 1) She then adds that "Between worlds, borderlands, border studies – this common emphasis on straddling

borders, or existing within or between them, evokes the trickster strategies many women of color are developing in their lives and their writings.” (Rosier Smith 1)

Just as Gunn Allen puts forward Anzaldúa as an example of this writer on the border, Rosier Smith does the same by affirming that perhaps Anzaldúa relates her sense of self to the trickster most explicitly by calling herself “a crossroads inhabited by whirlwinds” and a mestiza who copes with her tricksterlike position by developing a tolerance for contradiction and ambiguity, and by learning to juggle cultures and operating in a pluralistic mode. Suddenly ambivalence becomes something else.

Rosier Smith adds, and this puts her in the heart of what concerns us here, that the trickster has a gift for double-voiced discourse, as well as the ability to assume various masks. “Though they are not all bilingual in the traditional sense, each speaks several languages as they inhabit the various worlds of academia, modern popular culture, modern ethnic culture, and folk tradition.” (Rosier Smith 17-18)

The critical studies that began to appear in the mid 80’s along with new anthologies are precisely going to lead to these Border Studies. The issue here is that these women of color that we began to read in The Third Woman and in This Bridge, are now being taught in numerous departments in universities. Many of the editors of the anthologies we have studied are themselves either writers or critics or professors or all three.

The poetry section of Beyond Stereotypes contains only two essays. The first is by Tey Diana Rebolledo and is entitled “Walking the Thin Line: Humor in Chicana Literature.” The poets Rebolledo mentions and analyzes are: Lorna Dee Cervantes, who was anthologized in The Third Woman; Margarita Cota-Cárdenas, also anthologized in The Third Woman, Marina Rivera (The Third Woman), Bernice Zamora, and Chrisx.

Here again, we can tie the presence of humor in Chicana poets to the notion of tricksters in ethnic literature. Rebolledo believes that the study of minority women's humor has been almost totally ignored and explains this by saying that, in this case, the Chicana is thrice oppressed by virtue of being a woman, a minority, and because of her own ambivalence.

As the Chicana realizes her situation she is "hovering between laughing and crying." (Rebolledo 96) The instances of humor, consequently, take different forms, some are based on language, others on relationships, yet others on self parody. Rebolledo then quotes Bernice Zamora who writes, "You insult me/When you say I'm/Schizophrenic./My divisions are/Infinite." (Rebolledo 96). Later in 1993, Rebolledo will entitle her anthology of Chicana literature Infinite Divisions, which leads us back to the notion of borders and living between them.

The second essay, written by Marta Ester Sánchez, is entitled "The Birthing of the Poetic 'I' in Alma Villanueva's Mother, May I?" Villanueva was anthologized in Nosotras.

The conclusion I can draw here is that certain Chicanas were being "studied" in Academe in the mid 1980's, and that they were not necessarily the ones included in the anthologies of the time. Dexter Fisher seems to have found the "ones" that would later be critiqued.

Another critical study was that was also published in 1985 is Contemporary Chicana Poetry by Marta Ester Sánchez. The four poets analyzed by Sánchez are: Alma Villanueva, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Lucha Corpi, and Bernice Zamora.

I mentioned before that Sánchez proposes a new literary paradigm for analyzing these poets, a paradigm that had to do with their identities as poets, women, and ethnic others. Sánchez believes that a tension and play exists among the three identities that are the basic coordinates of the paradigm and argues that Chicana poetry is grounded on conflict.

Sánchez also seeks to identify the implied audiences of Chicana poetry. This can be applied to this study of anthologies. Sánchez writes, "I believe that an author's values, assumptions and attitudes presuppose, directly or indirectly, specific reading communities to whom they convey their message and that these readers or audiences are implied in the text, that is, are embedded in the language employed by the authors."

(Sánchez, M.E., Contemporary Chicana Poetry 21)

One of the main factors in determining the implied audience is, according to Sánchez, language choice. I have often dwelled on the language choice when it came to the titles of the anthologies, for a long rambling Spanish title implied a certain audience, whereas a title such as The Third Woman, implied another, broader audience. There is therefore an option of Spanish, of English, or of a combination of the two. The combination, in turn, can either be bilingual or interlingual. The introductions to This Bridge and Cuentos for example, are in English, then in Spanish, but the text of the introduction itself mixes the two languages. At the same time, some of the writers anthologized may write some pieces in English, some in Spanish, or some using a mixture of the two languages.

Moraga and Anzaldúa often expressed this regret of not catering more to Spanish speaking readers. Some of this regret could very well have come from the fact that Moraga did not speak Spanish and had to take a Spanish course at Berlitz.

The language conflict takes us back to the notion of the border. Rosier Smith draws on Mikhail Bakhtin's conception of dialogized heteroglossia, a diversity of points of view in conflict, or a series of interacting languages that represent a freeing of diverse voices from "the hegemony of a single and unitary language." (Rosier Smith 12) As various languages interact, single world views are decentralized.

In the 80's the only anthology dedicated solely to Latinas that only uses the English language in the title is Woman of Her Word. All the others opt for the two languages, usually Spanish first and English later. Two examples are Nosotras, Latina Literature Today and Cuentos, Stories by Latinas.

In addition to the choice of language Sánchez also looks at the compositional qualities of the language, the rhetorical force of the arguments, and literary codes and conventions that are derived either from English-American or Latino cultural contexts. Sánchez uses Villanueva as one of the examples, for Villanueva employs primarily an oral, colloquial language, whereas Bernice Zamora assumes educated, intellectual readers.

The same goes for the anthologies. This Bridge used a language of the heart that wanted to break all barriers. Cuentos mentioned an oral tradition that was being lost and should be conserved, therefore written. Woman of her Word is destined for literary audiences. Nosotras is even concerned with editorial objectivity.

Sometimes I am tempted to come to the conclusion that the anthologies are a speculum of the writings of the times, of the trends, the shifts, the directions. The next question, which will probably remain unanswered, at least for the time being, is, which came first?

The third work of criticism is Breaking Boundaries that I have often used throughout this study. It has the function of being both an anthology and a work of criticism. A critique of this work that appeared in the journal Hispania says that Breaking Boundaries mixes modes and breaks with academic distinctions by putting critical essays and writer's testimonies side by side.

Once again, we have a title that implies an act, and an act in the present progressive. This time we are breaking boundaries. There are all sorts of boundaries to break, and the first are those that confine, such as stereotypes. The will to be set free of these confining stereotypes is present throughout these Latina literature studies. The editors state that their goal is precisely what the title implies "to reevaluate the paradigmatic and often divisive categories set forth by the literary establishment" (these categories are political, economical, linguistic, academic, sexual, historical) and to make this literature "less than marginal." To do so they structure their work chronologically, beginning with Chicanas, and ending with the latest Latinas to have entered the U.S., the eternal "Others."

But boundaries are also borders. Homi Bhabha writes that, "It is the trope of our times to locate the question of culture in the realm of the beyond [...]" and later adds that, "Our existence today is marked by a tenebrous sense of survival, living on the borderlines of the present [...]" This beyond, however, is neither a new horizon, according to Bhabha, nor is it a leaving behind of the past. "For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the beyond." (Bhabha 1)

Finally Bhabha quotes Martin Heidegger who sums it up very well by defining a boundary as "not that at which something stops, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing." (Bhabha 1) This could very well be

one of the boundaries in Breaking Boundaries, no longer a fight for freedom, rather a step into a beyond. It is also this life on the hyphen, as described in border studies, finally a joyful crossing and re-crossing.

The “anthology is divided into four parts, with two “testimonios” or testimonies in the beginning of each chapter. The speaker or witness of these testimonies guarantees the events he/she narrates. The two Chicanas giving their “testimonios” are Denise Chávez and Helena Maria Viramontes (Nosotras). The two Puerto Ricans are Nicholasa Mohr and Sandra Maria Estevez (both were in Woman of her Word). The two Cubans are Dolores Prida and Eliana Rivero (Woman of her Word). Last but not least the two others are Bessy Reyna and Chiqui Vicioso.

Henry Louis Gates explores the problems that arise from the use of testimonios. He believes that expecting authors to be accountable spokespersons for their ethnic group could very well be unbearable for them, especially since they become vulnerable to the charge of betrayal if they shirk their duty. “These burdens of representation can too often lead to demands for ideological correctness in a author’s work . . .”, Gates writes. (Gates, Introduction to Scholarship 293)

Both of the Chicana “testimonios” concern growing up Chicana and choosing to become a writer. Chavez writes, “I grew up between and in the middle of two languages, Spanish and English, making my own as a defense [...] I really write according to what I hear – sometimes English, sometimes Spanish, sometimes both. As a writer I have tried to capture as clearly as I am able voices [...]” (Chavez 31)

As to Viramontes the object of her musings are the nopales her mother grew, cleaned, diced, and scrambled with eggs. "I have never been able to match her nopales but I have inherited her capacity for invention." (Viramontes, Breaking Boundaries 34)

Present throughout these two testimonios is a certain anxiety to form an identity and to explain a choice of vernacular language. Both writers insist that they write what they hear, that they shun grammar, that they are an exception, and that at the same time they represent the Chicana, and particularly the Chicana writer.

Ortega and Sternbach remind us that conventional readings of minority literatures in the U.S. have traditionally tended to emphasize each ethnic group's search for identity. They add that there is in fact no search for identity, since the identity is there. If a search there is it is a search of ways to express this identity. (Ortega and Sternbach)

Gates believes that something inevitable comes with constructing an identity, both at the margins and at the center. The inevitable involves exclusion and repudiation, for "self identity requires the homogeneity of the self identical. Ironically, then, the cultural mechanism of minority self-construction must replicate the mechanism responsible for rendering it marginal in the first place," Gates writes and then quotes Weimann who affirms that the process of making certain things one's own become inseparable from making other things alien. (Gates, Introduction to Scholarship)

Six essays follow the two Chicana testimonios. The authors critiqued are: Estela Portillo Trambley (The Third Woman), Cherríe Moraga (This Bridge, Cuentos), Sandra Cisneros (Woman of her Word), Cecile Pineda, Evangelina Vigil (Woman of her Word), and Ana Castillo (The Third Woman, Woman of her Word, Nosotras).

The two Puerto Ricans who give their testimonio are Nicholasa Mohr (Woman of her Word) and Sandra Maria Estevez (Woman of her Word). Again, both these testimonios deal with being a Puerto Rican woman writer in the United States and the choice of a language in which to write. Mohr even wonders if she has taken the English language by force, and then explains why she chose to do so. As to Estevez's testimonio it is in the form of a letter to one of the editors of Breaking Boundaries, Eliana Ortega.

Four essays follow those two testimonios. The first essay concentrates primarily on poets such as Sandra Maria Esteves (Woman of her Word) and Luz Maria Umpierre, whom I have already mentioned and who is also the subject of the second essay. Both those authors are also critiqued in the third essay. As to the fourth essays it analyzes the writings of Rosario Morales and Aurora Levins Morales whom we first encountered in This Bridge.

What is apparent here is this small concentration of authors, especially when compared to Chicanas. As a matter of fact although the editors try as best they can to allot each group a fairly equal amount of pages, the scale is always tipping on the side of the Chicanas. The Puerto Ricans are growing, but there are only a handful of them.

The same goes for the Cubans and for the Others. As Breaking Boundaries progresses the sections get shorter and shorter. There is only one testimonio in the Cuban section, and it is by Dolores Prida, a well-established playwright who hasn't been included in any of the anthologies I have analyzed to date. One of the two essays also concentrates on Prida, whereas the other essay, written by Eliana Rivero (Woman of her Word, Nosotras) mentions Achy Obejas (Woman of her Word, Nosotras) as a writer who exemplifies the transition from exile to ethnic minority member.

There are two testimonios and one essay in the section dedicated to the Others. The testimonios are by Bessy Reyna and Chiqui Vicioso, and the essay concentrates on Marjorie Agosín (Woman of her Word, Nosotras).

I would like to linger on this essay by Nina Scott since it begins by mentioning that eight of Agosín's poems were included in Nosotras. "The very fact that she figures there at all leads one to envision a rapprochement in the sometimes problematic relations between Latina writers and their Latin American counterparts." (Scott 235) Scott then proceeds to quote Agosín who writes that she leads a schizophrenic life because she lives in two countries (the U.S. and Chile) and with two different cultures.

Agosín is a good example of the dynamic aspect of the term Latina. It is a term that I tried to define and limit as much as possible for this work's sake, bearing in mind that since it is a product of the times it will invariable change with the times. In fact, the label takes on different meanings when it is applied to Chicanas, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and now to these Others, in turn labeled "Others" because there are not enough of them around.

In the beginning of this study I also tried to define a Latina writer as someone who wrote in English as opposed to Spanish, but as times change, so may the choice of language. Agosín writes exclusively in Spanish although she is a U.S. citizen and lives mainly in the U.S. Up to now what we have witnessed are writers adopting the language of the country they are raised in, in this case the United States. Agosín is an exception. Obviously exceptions threaten our definitions. We want them to be neat and tidy. Should we leave her out since she writes in Spanish?

Not at all. Agosín is definitely a Latina writer. Her exceptional character just goes to prove how fluid these definitions always are and that they should be accepted with all their fluidity. It could very well be that Agosín is announcing new times. Perhaps future Latina writers will begin to choose Spanish over English. It could also very well be that she is simply an exception and in that case our definition or definitions can easily and should readily incorporate her.

By identifying Latinas we are indeed including and excluding, however, this is an ongoing process, not something that is done once and for all. New Latinas will be constantly included with different conditions, and perhaps others will even be excluded, and probably are, although this stripping of a label is not something that is done for the public eye, it is a private, subtle act. As a matter of fact, one could wonder if the voices that fade, those that cease to be heard and to be included in the latest anthology, are not in fact being excluded.

In her essay on Agosín, Scott also takes into consideration the problem of class. Anthologies such as This Bridge identified with the third world, women of color and the working class. The editors of Cuentos doubted as to whether Latin American women could be considered their literary legacy since they were middle class and ostensibly white. One of the editors of Breaking Boundaries, Eliana Ortega, affirmed that what united the Latinas was that they saw themselves as women of color belonging to the working class.

Scott affirms that Agosín seems to typify the middle or upper class woman that Latinas refused to recognize as their own. She adds that although Agosín felt compelled to speak out on behalf of the working class, “there are those who would say that even this

desire to articulate the voice of another less privileged woman is an indication of elitism leaving writers, such as Agosín in a catch-22 situation.” (Scott 237)

Scott then recalls that at a 1982 conference Agosín came under verbal fire from some of the Latina writers who accused her of having nothing in common with minority writers because she was privileged and bourgeois. Besides this event there were also other manifestations of exclusion. Some of her early work was rejected by minority presses and journals. However, according to Scott the fact that she was included in Nosotras indicates that this type of rejection is diminishing. Agosín herself responds to this in a satirical poem, “Defensa de la Burguesa.”

“No fui reina del adobe. Nací en casa de cemento, con // un perímetro de jardín imaginado. No pasé hambre, ni // tuberculosis, no tuve piojos en mi dorado cabello.”
(Agosín, Brujas 30)

Chapter Seven – Compañeras.

It has become obvious that there are different types of anthologies. When deciding to compile an anthology an anthologist has a particular goal in mind. This goal could very well be, for example, to showcase what he or she considers to be the best poems or writings by young writers who have not yet had a publication of their own, or by established writers whom he/she considers to be the best and most significant examples of a generation. The possibilities are endless.

An anthology could focus on Chicanas born in Texas, on Puerto Ricans who have never been to the island, on Cubans of Chinese descent. It can also concentrate only on works by people who don't necessarily write, but who have something to communicate, such as victims of violent crimes, prison inmates, illegal aliens . . . These are the anthologies that are so specific that they put the literary quality in the back burner, the written word becomes merely a tool, a means of allowing a certain person with a certain experience to say something. Another anthologist, for some reason, could want only teenage writers, or writers from a certain social class, why not only red headed bourgeois? Or, in the case of Compañeras: Latina Lesbians, the anthologist seeks writers from a particular ethnic group with a specific sexual preference.

Anthologies such as these give primacy to the person. Suddenly we are no longer seeking texts, but specific people. In her Preface to Compañeras, Juanita Ramos mentions that her goal with this anthology is to help break the silence kept about Latina lesbians' lives, as well as to contribute to on-going discussions about what it means to be both Latina and lesbian.

Although Compañeras was first published in 1987, Ramos traces the motivations to edit this anthology back to 1977 when she joined several gay and lesbian organizations and painfully realized that Latino gay people were reluctant to join them. Ramos affirms that she stuck it out because she thought it was important that lesbian movements deal with racism and prejudice. An avid activist, she became one of the organizers for the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay rights which took place in 1979. Once the march was over, however, Ramos says she found herself caught in the middle. As a result of this she began to rethink her relationship with other feminists, as well as with her Latino brothers, always in search of a way to be more useful to Latina lesbians. An anthology seemed the perfect solution.

The next step was to find women willing to contribute to this project. This proved quite difficult for many women preferred to remain anonymous, and others were unsure about their writings. Some had kept journals, but this did not mean that they were ready to be published. This was at the origin of Ramos' decision to collect oral histories. A total of thirteen women contributed in this way to Compañeras.

Ramos then says that from the moment she decided to publish this anthology it was more than just a book for her, "it was a living tool." (Ramos xviii)

A total of 47 women from ten different countries are anthologized in Compañeras. I will not mention all their names because some just use their first names and others are writing under pen names. Of these 47 names only four are familiar: Gloria Anzaldúa, Cenen, Mirtha Quintanales, and Mariana Romo-Carmona.

At the time of publication the editor, Juanita Ramos, who describes herself as a Black Puerto-Rican lesbian feminist, was assistant professor of sociology, women's studies and Latin American studies at SUNY Binghamton.

Mariana Romo-Carmona, who describes herself as a Chilean lesbian writer, also uses the word tool in her Introduction to this anthology. After asking herself why Latina lesbians need to publish a book about their lives and trying to answer her own question, Romo Carmona comes to the conclusion that each time a woman speaks, a liberating process begins. "Compañeras becomes an instrument of unity, a political tool," she concludes. (Romo-Carmona, Compañeras xxi)

This anthology, therefore, rather than being an anthology of literature, is more like a tool, a political tool. At the end of her Introduction Romo-Carmona writes that the need to unite with other Latina lesbians is imperative, for this unity will allow them to struggle against inequality. ". . .as we unite with other Third World/People of Color to form a better world." (Romo-Carmona, Compañeras xxxi)

These words take us back to This Bridge Called by Back. As a matter of fact the presentation of Compañeras oddly resembles that of This Bridge, which was quite unique when it was published six years before. In both anthologies there is a Preface and an Introduction. The original is written in English, and followed by the Spanish version. Both anthologies are personal. In other words, there is not this need for editorial objectivity, as there was in Nosotras.

The editors of anthologies such as Compañeras and This Bridge are including other voices in something that is their baby, their creation. This Bridge was definitely Moraga's and Anzaldúa's baby. Although Anzaldúa is not one of the editors of Compañeras I

wonder to what extent she advised Ramos, for the presentation seems hers. With this English/Spanish preface/introduction and the editor speaking from her heart to the readers.

A year later Esta Puente mi Espalda would appear, again with that Moraga/Anzaldúa stamp, and in the next section of this study I will take into consideration another anthology edited by Anzaldúa, Making Faces, an anthology of this same feeling or type.

Chapter Eight – Three Times a Woman

This is a good anthology with which to close this section, for it contains that number three which seems to be attached to the women I am considering here. The three as a matter of fact seems to take on multiple meanings. It started out with The Third Woman, continued with Third World, and I am trying to show how they are three times removed.

In this case, and for me, this title, Three Times a Woman, is reminiscent of the Bob Dylan song, “Three Times a Lady.” But that is where it stops, in the music of the title. Three Times a Woman does not refer to women being women three times, in different ways, although it could. It is in fact an anthology that included only three women – this is the first and immediate sense of Three Times a Woman. Three times indeed, but each time a different woman. The three women are: Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Maria Herrera-Sobek, and Demetria Martínez.

The complete title of this anthology published in 1989 by the Bilingual Review Press, is Three Times a Woman, Chicana Poetry.

The preface is short. Not even a page and a half long, so there did not seem to be much of a need to tell readers about these three poets about to be presented. I have not encountered any of these three poets in any of the anthologies I have studied thus far. However, I am familiar with one of them, Maria Herrera-Sobek, the editor of the critical study of Chicana literature entitled Beyond Stereotypes, also published by the Bilingual Press.

In the first sentence of his preface Gary Keller, the director of the Bilingual Press, writes that, “Three Times a Woman is a collection of the works of Chicana poets, each occupying a distinct poetic domain, each her own special and personal geography.” He

then lists in what scholarly reviews they have been published as a whole (no anthologies) and affirms that for each of them this is the first full-length collection of their poetry.

A small paragraph and a small quote subsequently describes each one of the poets being presented. For Alicia Gaspar de Alba, for example, Keller mentions that she is from El Paso and that she cultivates a poetry of paradox – politically, psychosexually, esthetically. He quotes three lines from her poem “La Frontera” then proceeds to the next poet, Maria Herrera-Sobek who grew up in Texas, went to high school in Arizona, and was living, at the time of publication of this anthology, in southern California. For Gary Keller, Herrera-Sobek, the scholar, is now adding her own poetic voice to her scholarly works. He adds that her poetry is “suffused with memories that keep alive the dead, that, with the help of ars poetica, reorder lives and events that have been blown away.” This is followed by another short quote.

Finally, Demetria Martínez gets the longest paragraph since a few of her poems made the news when they were used as evidence against her in an effort to prove that she conspired to violate immigration laws.

The target audience of this anthology remains vague. Since the Preface is so terse, I get the impression that it is a vanity anthology of some sort, destined for those who already know these poets. There is hardly an attempt to make a curious reader who has no idea who these women are want to open the book and read their poetry. So this could very well be a book for the initiated.

Three Times a Woman is also a good anthology with which to close this section because it is a sort of bridge toward the next section that focuses on feminisms. Suddenly,

we encounter a title that is all in English, with an English play on words, and nothing alluding to ethnicity, merely to womanhood.

Part Three – Reflections on Many Feminisms and on Gender Studies

I ended the previous section with an anthology whose title contained the number three. The women I was considering seemed to reside in that suspended realm, the realm of color, of ethnicity, of eternal otherness. For well over a decade their state of being third or three times removed seemed to come before everything else. Being a writer seemed secondary even though, as Trinh T. Minh-ha writes, being merely a writer ensures a status of far greater weight than being a woman of color who writes ever does. (Minh-ha 6)

It would have been difficult, however, for an aspiring anthologist to have whetted a prospective publisher's appetite with a proposal whose sole ambition was to showcase writers, just writers. All the more so the curious browser in a bookstore, would he stop and consider spending money to purchase an anthology full of writers, only writers?

But we are not just talking about the marketing and the sales of books, I suppose.

Trinh T. Minh-ha adds that, "Imputing race or sex to the creative act has long been a means by which the literary establishment cheapens and discredits the achievements of non-mainstream women writers." (Minh-ha 6) At times I feel as if this is precisely what I am doing with this history of anthologies, taking a look at the instruments of this cheapening and denouncing them as discreetly as my temperament allows. Indeed, once an anthology's title no longer refers to literary quality and clamors sex, race, and otherness, it cannot but cheapen the creative act. The problem it is often the non-mainstream writers themselves, as well as the non-mainstream publishers who are playing the big bad wolf role called the literary establishment.

In this third section, the goal is to focus in feminisms of all kinds and to consider the anthologies in light of womanhood and of feminist theory. Indeed, I cannot perform a literary surgical act and separate the women from the other or the ethnic. They all come in one package. I can, however, look at them mainly from that angle.

Trinh T. Minh-ha also writes that, "no matter what position the woman of color decides to take, she will sooner or later find herself driven into situations where she is made to feel she must choose from among three conflicting identities. Writer of color? Woman writer? Or woman of color? Which comes first?" (Minh-ha 6) I have thus far focused on women of color and writers of color, now I will concentrate on women writers.

The anthologies to be analyzed here are those of the first half of the 1990's. Once again, the order is arbitrary, but let us keep in mind that in the 70's these anthologies of Latina literature were rarities, and that in the 80's they were still few and far between. This is not the case for the 90's where we will see a plethora of them, and that one of the reasons why I have split the 90's up in two.

Indeed, many anthologies were published in the 90's, anthologies of all types. Some concentrated on young Latinas, others pursued the gender and border movement, yet others focused on experimental fiction. Finally, very few, merely concentrated on literature written by women and even fewer, if any, concentrated only on literature, perhaps because it is difficult to sell writers, whether known or unknown, on merit alone. Our times always seem to beg for the personal. In any case, we will see how all these movements converge in the last decade of the 20th century when everyone was eager to come to some kind of "conclusion", be it to make way for new beginnings.

I will, however, focus on the feminine/feminist aspect, because it is at the center of this entire study. After all, I chose anthologies of Latina writings as opposed to anthologies of Latino writings in general.

Trinh T. Minh-ha asked the questions, questions that I will repeat over and over again in this section.

“Writing in the feminine. And on a colored sky. How do you inscribe difference without bursting into a series of euphoric narcissistic accounts of yourself and your own kind? Without indulging in a marketable romanticism or in a naïve whining about your condition? In other words, how do you forget without annihilating?” (Minh-ha 29)

It is in light of questions such as these that I will consider the anthologies of the nineties.

Lastly, I will attempt over and over again to apply feminist theory to the women of color, always bearing in mind Virginia Woolf’s famous suggestion or remark about women who wished to write. In Women and Writing Woolf writes that for a woman to write she needs a yearly stipend and a room of her own. For, “One cannot grow fine flowers in a thin soil.” (Woolf, Women and Writing 54)

Had the great majority of the women of color or third women had access to Woolf’s lines, I don’t think they would have dared pick up a pen. What it means is that only women of a certain social class can or have the right to write. Dogmatic statements such as Woolf’s were at the origin of anthologies such as This Bridge Called my Back. Even if they had not specifically read Woolf many of the women of color felt qualms about writing. Gloria Anzaldúa herself, one of the editors of This Bridge, asks herself, “Who gave us permission to perform the act of writing? Why does writing seem to unnatural for

me? . . . The voice recurs in me: Who am I, a poor Chicanita from the sticks to think I could write? How dared I even consider [...]" (Anzaldúa, This Bridge 166)

These qualms add a whole different light and color to applying feminist theory to the anthologies.

Chapter One – Feminist Criticism and Gender Studies:

Definitions and Distinctions

It has become clear that anthologies of Latina writings were not directly a product of the feminist movement, at least not of the first wave. If we step back and reconsider The Third Woman and This Bridge we realize that Fisher's project focused mainly on these women's ethnicity or thirdworldness, and that Anzaldúa's and Moraga's concentrated on the same, as well as on sexual and political choices and affirmations that announced a breaking away from white feminist theory and movements. As a matter of fact, I don't even know if I can speak of a breaking away, since it implies having been there, and Moraga's women were never there.

Had these anthologies been on reading lists in universities at the time they were published, these reading lists would have come from the Ethnic Studies departments or the Gender Studies Departments, not yet from Women's Studies, although they eventually ended up as required reading in many Women's Studies departments.

The feminist Naomi Schor makes the distinction between feminism and gender quite clear when she affirms that although gender studies evolved from feminist criticism and feminist studies were a form of gender studies the two cannot be collapsed together. The reason for this is that it would make both studies lose their specificity.

If gender studies did indeed evolve from feminist studies it seems that Latina literature skipped a beat for, from the onset, Anzaldúa and Moraga take a stand against the established feminism. The feminism they oppose and even abhor is not that of their Latina sisters, because that one simply does not exist, it is the white, established

feminism. The reason is fairly clear, there was not yet an organized Latina feminist movement in the late 70's and early 80's. As a matter of fact, one cannot say for sure if there was one in the 90's or even now, in the beginning of the 21st century.

Now the Latina radical women of color of the 80's did look toward the Black feminist movement, but remained unsatisfied and in need of their own cause. In this sense the Latina writings were a product of feminism, but only in this sense. In fact, the anthologies, at least the ones that left their mark, were a stand against white feminism.

Schor states that there are two chief axioms of feminist criticism. The first is that "all acts of language are grounded in the dense network of partial positions (sexual, class, racial) occupied by speaking subjects." The second is that "to claim to speak for all (women, feminists, literary critics) is to speak from a position of assumed mastery and false universality." (Schor 263) This position is precisely the one Schor as a feminist says she seeks to interrogate.

Schor then writes, "Because gender has proved to be the central and thus, simultaneously, the most powerful and most vulnerable category of analysis elaborated by feminism, I have chosen to organize my account of feminist and gender studies around the category of gender and its vicissitudes, with all the consequences such a choice entails." (Schor 263)

The first consequence of making gender the focus means, according to Schor, subsuming other categories of difference such as race and class under the category of gender. As to the second consequence, privileging gender means presenting a skewed view of a field up to then less concerned with sexual difference than with undoing centuries of persecution.

But let us go back to beginning and try to define some of these terms. Gender, for example, is quite a problematic little word. Webster's dictionary begins by its grammatical meaning and defines gender as "a grammatical category of nouns governing the form assumed by the words that modify or refer to them in languages of the Indo-European or Semitic families." This is surely not what gender studies in the halls of academe are all about, but the definition goes on.

"Natural gender corresponds to sex or lack of sex; animate beings are either masculine or feminine; inanimate beings are neuter." This is very straight forward, as is the definition of grammatical gender which "may have a partial correspondence to sex for animate beings, but sexless objects can be of any gender." Once again, this is not the topic of gender studies, but we are getting close and at least we know that gender studies are not about philologists in closets lifting up the garments of unruly nouns.

The second definition of gender in the dictionary is colloquial and only contains one word, "sex." The third definition is obsolete, "a kind, genus." This third definition of gender however, has been kept in languages such as Spanish and French. The word in French can be very trite, and not as politically weighty as in English. Quel genre d'homme préfères-tu? That question simply refers to "a kind" or "a type". It is a word used all the time, and does not even need to have a slightly scientific connotation, as does the Spanish "género".

All this to say that in English, once we are not referring to its grammatical meaning, the word gender is quite a weighty, and modern word, at least with modern connotations and consequences.

Schor puts forward Joan Scott's meaning of gender as a social category imposed on a sexed body, a definition that makes gender studies what they are. Schor then adds that the distinction between biology and culture constitutes the foundations of feminism. From there, Schor goes on to analyze Simone de Beauvoir, who deconstructs the womanizing of the female of the species, Virginia Woolf who announced the possibility of a woman's sentence, as well as Nancy Miller and Peggy Kamuf, who also believed in sex signature and the specificity of women's writings. Topics such as these will be subsequently treated in the analysis of the Latina anthologies of the 90's.

For now, and before I go on, I think it is important to distinguish once and for all *feminist studies from gender studies*. The best and most simple if not simplistic way to distinguish them without getting bogged down by the numerous debates is to agree for now that feminist studies are centered on the otherness of the female species and subsume race, class, and other differences. The discipline called Gender Studies, on the other hand, concentrates on "la difference," and subsumes femaleness. Being a female comes under the rubric of gender in this case, if and only if the state of being female implies an otherness. This explains why many stands have been taken against white feminism in gender movements. For those entering this new field, white feminism was not enough of a difference. What's more, feminism, let us call it classical feminism, if there is such a thing, was not specifically concerned with lesbian and gay studies, a very important aspect of gender studies.

Once again, gender studies are about otherness, and in many ways are closer to border studies than to feminist criticism whose essential debate is whether or not there exists a sexually differentiated textuality. While some feminist critics believe that the sexual

difference is socially constructed and that “there is no immutable, biological reason why women writers should write the double-voiced discourse to which they, like many dominated members of society (especially racial and sexual minorities), have traditionally resorted to gain critical recognition from the establishment while at the same time resisting and subverting it.” (Schor 267)

This brings us to a crossroads for, indeed, the idea of a multi-voiced discourse, so reminiscent of Bakhtin, leads us back to the concept of minor literature. At the same time we are reminded of projects such as This Bridge, Esta Puente, and Anzaldúa’s Making Face, Making Soul, that we will examine in the next chapter. Finally, the goal of these anthologies was indeed to be recognized by the establishment and at the same time to subvert it.

For the remainder of this chapter that aims at distinguishing gender studies from feminist criticism, let us remain at the heart of this essentialist versus the socially constructed woman-ness debate. Virginia Woolf did indeed speak of the possibility of a woman’s sentence, which would have a fluidity that a man’s sentence could not possibly have. Other critics referred to an “écriture féminine”, while Alice Walker even refers to Zora Neale Hurston as the mother through whom so many black women writers think. In this case Malinche would be the mother through whom many Chicanas think, and perhaps Anacaona the mother through whom the Puerto Rican women think (if they’ve ever heard of her), but what about the cultures that don’t necessarily have the privilege of such a handy mother figure? Have Cuban women writers no choice but to think through La Avellaneda, Shangó, or La Caridad del Cobre?

There came a moment when these debates reached what it known as the aporia in Greek, the point at which they can go no further, and it is likely that at that moment gender studies emerged and thus refashioned feminist criticism into what Schor considers to be “a less provincial, more culturally diverse, more heterogeneous critical approach.” It is at the moment she confronts it with gender studies that Schor finally puts forth a definition for feminism. It is not a methodology, nor is it a theory, rather “a radical and always political form of interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary critique” (Schor 270) With this definition, feminist studies and gender studies do converge. And that is all right, things that are divided do not necessarily have to remain apart, this movement of breaking away and converging merely speaks for (and of) their dynamic nature.

Chapter Two – Making Face, Making Soul

In 1990, Gloria Anzaldúa put together another anthology of women of color entitled Making Face, Making Soul, Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color. In her introduction to this 400-page compilation Anzaldúa writes that for years she waited for someone to continue where This Bridge left off.

“A book that would confront the Racism in the white women’s movement in a more thorough, personal, direct, empirical and theoretical way [...]A book that would explode the neat boundaries of the half dozen categories of marginality that define us and one that would unflinchingly bring us cara a cara with our own historias.” (Anzaldúa, Making Face xvi)

Anzaldúa then adds that she got tired of hearing students say that This Bridge was required in two or three of her women’s studies courses and of also of being (she, herself) a resource for teachers and students who asked her what texts by women of color they should read.

At the time Anzaldúa was seriously asking herself why other women of color weren’t being asked to come forward and speak their hearts, their intellects, and their minds. This was an occasion for them, at last, to be published, for we have to agree with Trinh T. Minh-ha when she writes that, “Accumulated unpublished writings do stink. They heap up before your eyes like despicable confessions that no one cares to hear, they sap your self confidence by incessantly reminding you of your failure to incorporate.”(Minh-ha 9)

I honestly believe that this was one of the foremost reasons why anthologies such as This Bridge were compiled. Now, Anzaldúa feels it is time to make way for new voices,

for ten years have elapsed, and the unpublished manuscripts are indeed beginning to stink. Getting published will allow these utterly “other” women to perhaps loathe themselves a little less.

The result is a huge anthology published by Aunt Lute Books, a small San Francisco press. As of the year 2001, Making Face still in print and readily available. Once again, the title is bilingual. This time the English precedes the Spanish that does not totally translate the English. While the English is Making Face, Making Soul, the Spanish is simply Haciendo Caras. Perhaps the Making soul is not necessary with the simple Haciendo Caras. The cover is purple and depicts three very ethnic women, perhaps one Hispanic, one Native American, and one black, holding burning candles. In the background is an ominous sky and a desert-like landscape.

According to Trinh T. Minh-ha, who is included in this anthology, a distinction has to be made between, “Write yourself, Write your body, and write about yourself, your body, your inner life, your fears, inhibitions, desires, and pleasures [...] The danger in going the woman’s way is precisely that we may stop midway and limit ourselves to a series of reactions [...]” (Minh-ha 29) I believe that this distinction is not made by many authors included in anthologies such as This Bridge, Esta Puente, Compañeras, and Making Face.

But let us return now to Making Face that seems to be more a product of gender or différence issues than of feminist criticism per se. Once again, this compilation is not limited to Latinas but I include it here because it was put together by a Latina and shows a continuity to this history I have decided to tell and perhaps even understand, a history of Latina anthologies.

The same names return in this 20-year family saga. And I say family because, like most families, this family here is not necessarily united.

First there were women, but women don't necessarily stand together since they do not all want the same things, nor should they. Or they do not think they want the same things because the mere fact of being women does not make them all the same. Then there were feminists, but as it turned out not all feminists turned out to have the same cause either. The feminists were of different colors. Some loved and hated men, others loved women and didn't really bother about men, and yet others simply loved themselves. Then there were the women of color who seem to be putting up a neatly unified front, but we know that is not so. When she went off and translated This Bridge into Esta Puente Moraga simply dropped Anzaldúa's name off the cover. There seemed to be trouble in paradise.

Now, what Anzaldúa is saying between the lines is that she is getting a bit tired of This Bridge. It seems to follow her around like a puppy. Ten years after This Bridge, the same women included there are still the ones being asked to present their research and writings. It certainly does say something for This Bridge, which is still required reading in some universities. Since it certainly is not required reading because of the literary quality of the texts included, there must be some other reason. That reason stemmed from the need to say something, or to yell it out loud. The editors of This Bridge seemed sick and tired of keeping silent, about what should not be said, because it meant a certain type of betrayal.

In one of her texts included in Making Face Anzaldúa who never sugarcoats anything says it loud and clear. At first she is talking to herself, out loud, so everyone can hear, "My Momma said, 'Never tell other people our business, never divulge family secrets.'

Chicano dirt you do not air out in front of white folks, nor lesbian dirty laundry in front of heterosexuals.” (Anzaldúa, Making Face 146)

Then Anzaldúa admits and confesses it in that same paragraph I quoted above. “But the fact is we are not united. (I’ve come to suspect that unity is another Anglo invention [...])”

Once again, we are analyzing an anthology that couldn’t care less about editorial objectivity. Things need to be said, that is all. There is no concern for objectivity. As a matter of fact Anzaldúa does not believe that distance and objectivity are major strategies for “the intellect needs the guts and adrenaline that horrific suffering and anger, evoked by some of the pieces, catapult us into.” (Anzaldúa, Making Face xviii)

What is quite interesting is that it is these highly subjective and emotional anthologies that are the required readings in universities, as opposed to the so-called objective clean ones that seem to have a relatively short life span. Not that the objective ones are not around. They are here, there, on someone’s bookshelf, for sale directly from the publisher who keeps them in print just in case . . . However, if they are ever recommended reading at a university, they are quickly replaced by newer anthologies. They are rarely required reading. Needless to say, they do not age very well.

The introduction to Making Face is short but extremely dense. Anzaldúa the writer and Anzaldúa the scholar meet and do things that are otherwise forbidden. You are not supposed to pour your heart out in an introduction, this is serious business for intellectuals, nor are you supposed to air your dirty laundry in front of your readers, they are only there to enjoy and learn, learn, learn.

All that is expected of you in a so-called serious anthology is to pat everyone in the back, say how great your authors are, why you chose to include them, how great your publisher is, and if you can even slip in a list of other publication and future publications everything will be for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Anzaldúa does not play by the rules. Her aim is not limited to having each one of the families of the authors included buy at least ten copies of the book.

“Making face” can mean grimacing, frowning, looking sad, putting on a face to scare someone. For Anzaldúa it also means making political subversive gestures, the one that says, “Get out of my face.” Now who are these gestures aimed at? At the establishment? At macho men? At white Anglo-Saxon Protestants? That would be too easy and even too predictable and too comfortable. It is aimed at the racism in the white women’s movement.

Anzaldúa adds that the face is the most naked and most vulnerable and exposed topography of the body. “Since white AngloAmerican racist ideology cannot take in our faces, it, too covers them up, blanks them out of its reality. To become less vulnerable to all these oppressors we have had to change faces . . .” (Anzaldúa, Making Face xv) Here is yet another coat of meaning for the term “making face.”

As to “interfacing” it means sewing a piece of strong material between two daintier pieces of fabric in order to give the finer fabric more support. For Anzaldúa the interfaces are between the masks and it is through the interfaces that they can thrust out and crack the masks. It is in this anthology, Anzaldúa says, that women of color crack the masks.

They will crack the masks by drawing more attention upon themselves and letting the world know that they feel no solidarity with the white feminists. On the contrary, these

women of color denounce their so-called sisters for having excluded them. For them, this exclusion has repercussions on the nature of women's studies that prevent a full understanding of gender and society. "The failure to explore fully the interplay of race, class, and gender has cost the field the ability to provide a broad and truly complex '[analysis of women's lives and of social organization. It has rendered feminist theory incomplete and incorrect.'" (Anzaldúa, Making Face 33)

It seems at times ironic that Section Three of this study, originally intended as an application of feminist theory to the Latina anthologies of the 90's, has suddenly become an exploration of a protest against feminist theory. Actually, there is no universal womanhood, as Evangelina Vigil seemed to be implying in her introduction to Woman of her Word.

Making Face is divided into seven sections with an average of twelve pieces in each section and a variable number of Latinas included in each one of them.

Section 1 is entitled "Still Trembles our Rage in the Face of Racism" and begins with a poem by Judith Ortiz Cofer, "What the Gypsy said to her Children", that was previously included in Woman of her Word.

The second piece is a poem by Lorna Dee Cervantes with a rambling title, "Poem for the Young White Man who asked me how I, and Intelligent Well-Read person [...] For Anzaldúa this poem offers a perfect example of what she calls the young man's selective reality, "the narrow spectrum of reality that human beings select or choose to perceive and/or what their culture selects for them to see." (Anzaldúa, Making Face xxi)

Such a tedious title, however, reminds me of what Trinh T. Minh-ha is referring to when she warns us against euphoric narcissistic accounts, marketable romanticism, and

naïve whining. We have encountered Cervantes in several Latina anthologies that have already been analyzed here, namely Fisher's The Third Woman.

In these two poems, that contain the concerns of ethnic women who identify with the women of color, the preoccupations have nothing to do with those of white feminism. The titles speak for themselves and their urgency has to do issues of color and of racial hatred. So do the last two pieces in Section 1, also written by Latinas, Maria Lugones, and Chela Sandoval. While Lugones explores ethnocentric racism, Sandoval reports on the third annual National Women's Studies Association Conference that took place in 1981. There are a total of 12 pieces in Section 1, four of them are by Latinas.

Section 2, entitled "Denial and Betrayal" contains 7 pieces by Latinas (out of 16 in total). Four of the Latinas that we encounter here have already been included in previous anthologies: Sandra Cisneros (Woman of her Word), Cherrie Moraga (This Bridge, Cuentos, Esta Puente, etc.), Bernice Zamora (the object of quite a few critical studies), and Gloria Anzaldúa (whom we are beginning to know quite well). The other three are relatively new voices: Canela Jaramillo, who was unaware of her Chicana roots until she graduated from high school; Laura Munther-Orabona, of Puerto-Rican Swedish descent, who was born in Puerto Rico but moved to Michigan at age two; and Edna Escamill, a social worker in the Santa Cruz, California area.

According to Anzaldúa Section 2 focuses on "how we combat Racism and sexism, and how we 'work through' internalized violence, how we attempt to decolonize ourselves . . ." (Anzaldúa, Making Face xvii)

Upon reading Naomi Schor who writes that most feminists in the United States would agree that rape is a defining issue of feminism, (Schor 272) we realize that Latina

anthologies, even if they try to promote a universal womanhood, are more a product of post feminism than of feminism itself. Rape remains a reality, but it is of another sort. It is not a rape of lust, if there is such a thing. We are no longer dealing with man and woman, and man suddenly, forcefully on top. Here, it is the Racist who commits the rape. The women here are less concerned with the sexual connotations of rape than with the racists ones. They feel threatened by white, and white has several faces, at times it is even called "whitewoman". As a matter of fact it is more often whitewoman than whiteman, in any case he is not evoked as often.

Anzaldúa even goes as far as to write sentences such as, "The people who practice Racism (always with a capital 'R') – everyone who is white in the U.S. – are victims of their own white ideology and are impoverished by it."(Anzaldúa, Making Face xix) The word "impoverished" is Anzaldúa's, and this white computer I have does not like it. The computer does not know the word, so the computer must be another one of the master's tools that Audre Lorde comments on when she wrote in a piece included in This Bridge Called my Back that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."

All this means that is you are not a woman of color you are the enemy working toward the woman of color's erasure. At times it is even difficult to tell what color is sufficient enough, or bright enough, or matte enough. Anzaldúa sees Racism everywhere.

"Racism is especially rampant in places and people that produce knowledge," Anzaldúa writes in the introduction to Making Face. There are even tactics that the Racists – everyone who is white in the U.S. – use to avoid confronting racism. One of these tactics involves writing about native peoples. Anzaldúa alludes to a white woman

writer named Lynn Andrews who “rips off people of color, examining native spirituality and myth with a white collectors mentality.” (Anzaldúa, Making Face xxi)

Under a rubric entitled “Just how Ethnic Are You?” Anzaldúa treats the subject of rape in a way that differs quite a bit from the way it is seen by white feminism. Here we are dealing with what Anzaldúa calls the rape of the colored by the white, and this rape, obviously is not only physical. The white rapists are also “depositing” their perspectives, their language, and their values in the colored people’s bodies. Furthermore the word “other” becomes a verb allowing the white rapists to continue “othering people.”

This otherness or this process of making other is contagious in a way, for it penetrates the ranks and makes the Others begin “othering people” themselves. With incredible sincerity Anzaldúa writes:

“We shun the white-looking Indian, the high yellow black woman, the Asian with the white lover, the native woman who brings her white girlfriend to the pow wow, the Chicana who doesn’t speak Spanish, the academic, the uneducated [...] Para que sea legal she must pass the ethnic legitimacy text we have devised. And it is exactly our internalized whiteness that definitely wants boundary lines [...]” (Anzaldúa, Making Face 143)

The hatred and the self hatred seem infinite. Anzaldúa believes that the hatred that was once cast on the oppressors is now being flung at women of their own race. All this because they are seeing the world and their experiences through white eyes.

The only possible solution, for Anzaldúa, is to change the perspective, and to stop seeing the world through white eyes. She concludes her essay as well as Section 2 of this

anthology by writing, “It is time that we broke out of the invisible white frame and stood on the ground of our own ethnic being.” (Anzaldúa, Making Face 148)

Section 3, entitled “(De)Colonized Selves: Finding Hope Through Horror/Turning the Path Around: Strategies for Growth”, has only one Latina, Aleticia Tijerina. In her “Note on Oppression and Violence” that was previously published in Compañeras, Latina Lesbians Tijerina describes her hatred of the blue-eyed, brown haired white girl while she was incarcerated on four felony charges. Although she acknowledges this and later pretends to choose a path of love, these statements of hatred and accusation of others are difficult to bear after what happened on September 11, 2001. I might have tolerated it before, I do not anymore. Self-pity may lead people to commit crimes in the name of blame. At times this anthology is too full of self-pity.

Section 4, entitled “In Silence, Giving Tongue/ The Transformation of Silence into (An) Other Alphabet,” has seven Latinas (out of a total of 12 women). For Anzaldúa the gist of this section is how the woman of color metaphorically learns to sing her songs after having been silenced and repressed by the privileged. The Latinas included here are: Lorna Dee Cervantes and Pat Mora, whom we’ve encountered in several studies and anthologies thus far, as well as some new or relatively new voices: Carmen Morones, Lynda Marín, Elba Rosario Sánchez, Jewelle Gomez, and Catalina Ríos.

The majority of these texts do indeed address a problem with language, or how problems with language arise when one lives on the border. Here I am reminded of Deleuze and Guattari when they say that for Kafka there were multiple impossibilities. It was impossible for him to write in German, and at the same time impossible for him not

to write in German, and so on. This seems to be the case here, and perhaps this is what Anzaldúa alludes to when she talks of “giving tongue”.

Even the titles speak of this impossibility. The title of Carmen Morones’s poem is “Periquita”, little parrot. Sánchez’s poem is “Palabra de Mujer” – a woman’s word. One of Pat Mora’s poems is called “Unnatural Speech” and Catalina Ríos’s is “The Three Tongues.” In “Refugee Ship”, previously published by Revista Chicano-Riqueña Lorna Dee Cervantes writes, “Mama raised me without language/I’m orphaned from my Spanish name.” In “Her Rites of Passage” Lynda Marín remembers (and I say remembers because the piece seems confessional) her teenage years, and Tom Sweeting, who couldn’t pass Spanish without her help, then being raped by his best friend, and ending up with a venereal disease. The story ends with a loud scream.

Section 5, “Political Arts, Subversive Arts”, contains a very important Puerto Rican poet, Julia de Burgos, and two Latinas, Carmen Morones, and Helena Maria Viramontes, whose text included here, “Nopalitos” was previously published in the critical anthology Breaking Boundaries. This section focuses on the woman of color as a writer, an intellectual, and an artist.

As to Section 6, it focuses on Alliances, and contains only one text by a Latina named Papusa Molina. The title of the text is, “Recognizing, Accepting and Celebrating our Differences.” I am not dwelling on these texts, for I wish to concentrate mainly on the literary.

The last section of this anthology focuses on theory. A total of five Latinas are included here, out of eight essays in all. Four of the Latinas critics included here also happen to be creative writers. The only one who is not a creative writer is Tey Diana

Rebolledo who was a professor of Spanish at the University of New Mexico at the time her essay was published in this anthology.

The title of Rebolledo's essay is, "The Politics of Poetics: Or, What Am I, a Critic, Doing in This Text Anyhow?" In it she defines the role of the Chicana critics whose role to become facilitators, one who reproduces and makes known the texts of Chicana authors. Rebolledo adds that she finds it difficult to have male-oriented, French feminist, post structural, or any other faddish theory dictate what she finds in her literature. On the contrary, she far prefers to have this literature speak for itself. Finally, as a critic she has chosen to ignore texts she does not like and only consider those that she does like, knowing well that there is a danger here of excluding authors whose perspective she does not share, such as the perspective of sexual preference. Rebolledo's text previously appeared in a book of criticism published by Arte Público Press entitled Chicana Creativity and Criticism: Charting New Frontiers in American Literature.

The second work of criticism included here is an essay by Norma Alarcón entitled "The Theoretical Subject(s) of This Bridge Called my Back and Anglo-American Feminism." It is in this anthology that this essay appears in print for the first time. We have, however, already encountered Alarcón in several of the anthologies we have analyzed here. What is obvious with this essay that becomes all the more interesting because it analyzes an anthology, something that is not usually done, is that This Bridge is not just another anthology, it is a milestone. Furthermore, its impact was so strong, that in 1990 it still kept following Anzaldúa around, and no matter what efforts were made, no other anthology has replaced it as of yet. Moraga tried several others times, she even tried too hard with Esta Puente, to no avail. No one evens remotely mentions Esta Puente. And

here is Anzaldúa with this 440-page anthology, confessing that it is about time to move on to something other than This Bridge, but nevertheless including an essay on This Bridge in her mammoth anthology.

I hesitated as to whether I should analyze Alarcón's essay here or in the section dedicated to This Bridge and finally decided to consider it here since it deals with the impact that this anthology had on feminism. Some critics such as Teresa de Laurentis even believe that it contributed to a shift in feminist consciousness. Alarcón adds that it "problematized" as well as challenged Anglo-American feminism by including other categories such as race and class. Up to that moment, according to Alarcón it was impossible to include these categories because the Anglo-American feminists refused to acknowledge that it is possible to become a woman in different ways, "more complex than in simple opposition to men." (Alarcón 360)

This notion of becoming a woman is tied to Simone de Beauvoir's famous phrase in Le Deuxième Sexe, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman." According to Alarcón an affirmation such as this could even make her responsible, "for the creation of Anglo-American feminist theory's episteme: a highly self-conscious ruling class white western female subject locked in a struggle to the death with Man." (Alarcón 360)

With This Bridge, which demonstrates the differences between women of color and white feminists, what becomes obvious is that "one can become a woman in opposition to other women," as Diane Macdonell put it when adding race and class to feminist theory. This is what I have tried to say all along. For some reason, probably that of race and class, Latina literature anthologies did not emerge from an opposition to men, they were born from an opposition to other women, as well as to other aspects of the world around

them. In the preface to This Bridge the editors write, “We are the colored in a white feminist movement. We are the feminists among the people of our culture. We are often the lesbians among the straight.” Here we are, back to the trinity.

Another interesting aspect of inclusion/exclusion that Alarcón examined in her insightful essay, is the tendency to exclude women of color from theory, but to add their writings to course syllabi.

The other three Latinas in this final section 7 are Pat Mora, with a poem that plays with the prefix “bi”, Maria Lugones, who was also included in Section 1, and who here examines cross-cultural and cross-racial loving, and Gloria Anzaldúa.

Anzaldúa’s essay bears the bilingual title, “La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness.” In it she examines what she calls the struggle of borders, and asks herself to which she should answer.

“Because I, a mestiza/continually walk out of one culture/and into another,/because I am in all cultures at the same time,/alma entre dos mundos, tres, cuatro,/me zumba la cabeza con lo contradictorio.” (Anzaldúa, Making Face 377)

Here, I believe, is the heart of these relatively new or newly defined Border and Gender studies. In many ways Deleuze and Guattari describe this life on the border or life on the hyphen of difference when analyzing Kafka’s literature as a minor literature. The Latinas in anthologies such as Making Face take these same notions and word them differently because, as they themselves have realized, they do not possess the linguistic conventions.

We will see later on if the issues ever come close to those of the so-called white feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir and Virginia Woolf, or if this women's writing here will remain forever different, on the border, or straddled on the hyphen.

Chapter Three – Poetas Cubanas

The complete title of this anthology is Poetas Cubanas en Nueva York, Antología Breve. It was edited by Felipe Lázaro, and contains a prologue by Perla Rozencvaig of Barnard College-Columbia University. As a rule I prefer to concentrate only on anthologies published in the United States, but I would nevertheless like to dedicate a few pages to this very brief one published in Spain.

Once again, what we have here is a particular type of anthology closer to You Can't Drown the Fire, Breaking the Silences, and especially Cinco Poetisas Cubanas, than to This Bridge Called My Back or even The Third Woman.

When the critic Juan Bruce-Novoa mentioned that Tomás Rivera had told him that the Chicanos were the first people to have an anthology before they had a literature, I immediately thought of this Cuban literature in exile. So I soon came to the conclusion that the Cubans in exile, and particularly the Cuban women in exile, were the second people to have anthologies before they even have a literature.

It is mainly because of Tomás Rivera's remark to Bruce-Novoa that I included this anthology here. Also, I would again like to situate it in this other category I already mentioned. We are not dealing here with issues concerning women of color, or even border studies, or women in opposition to men or to other women. Cuban poets in New York are another island, definitely another island, and every few years there is a new anthology, with a new batch of women poets who refuse to be assimilated and continue to choose Spanish and Cuba, instead of English and the United States.

This anthology is bilingual, and this time it speaks of poetas, not poetisas. None of the five poets in Cinco Poetisas Cubanas (Section One) are included here. But, once again, five women poets have been chosen for an anthology. These five are: Magali Alabau, Alina Galliano, Lourdes Gil, Maya Islas, and Iraida Iturralde. They were all born between 1945 and 1954 and arrived in the United States either as children or young adults. José Olivio Jiménez points out that to express themselves they all chose the language of their mothers or “la lengua materna”, the maternal language.

Rozencaig adds that from their refusal to become culturally assimilated came texts full of images that allude to a distant center. Little does it matter to them if memory has transformed and even deformed this center, or if all they have left are a few scattered and faded childhood memories. This is what they work from, and this is the focus of their creativity.

In many ways this is the literature of a paradise lost that was never even had, therefore a literature of nostalgia. In their writings these women do not seem to want to make a point to other women or to men, they are not feminists, and they do not appear to be concerned in the least with class and racial issues. As a matter of fact, most would probably frown if someone asked them if they considered themselves to be women of color or if they identified with the women of color. Most would print “white” on the dotted line, and would even refuse to be called Latinas or Hispanics. But it is time for me to stop speaking for them.

Once again, the main focus is exile, and all it implies, even the risk of losing the language of choice. “Perhaps most painful about this exile is the impossibility of returning. This impossibility has left an indelible mark on the literary oeuvre of those

writing outside the island. The truly heartrending nature of their separation is demonstrably visible throughout the texts compiled in this anthology.” (Rozencaig 15)

For Elias Miguel Muñoz exile is a space created within one’s inner realm, and this is precisely what makes anthologies of exile stand so far apart from those whose aim is to break the doors down. I am not saying that these women don’t care one way or the other whether or not they are published or recognized, were that the case they wouldn’t even appear in an anthology. But there remains an intimate and almost private quality to these exile anthologies, particularly the Cuban ones, those that do not want to express exile as a Platonic idea or form, but as their own particular exile.

One of these days these anthologies will be interesting from an historical point of view, and also as far as minor literature is concerned. Once again, here is the paradox put forth by Deleuze and Guattari, it was impossible to write in one language, impossible not to write in it. I have seen that conflict with the English language, and here it is with the Spanish. For many of the Latinas that we have encountered in all these anthologies, it was impossible to write in English, impossible to write in Spanish, impossible not to write in English. For these Cuban poets it is impossible to write in Spanish, and also not to do so.

The mission of this bilingual anthology is two-fold according to Rozencaig: to bring to a “larger community of readers a sample of the new Cuban poetry written outside the island,” and also to confirm that in exile “there are vibrant voices of women ready to transform daily language into an authentic poetic voice.” (Rozencaig 18)

Chapter Four – Chicana Lesbians

The complete title of this anthology is: Chicana Lesbians, The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About. I suppose therefore that Chicana lesbians are the target audience or readers. It is implied in the possessive adjective “Our” and in the direct object pronoun “Us”. It is also implied in what the title itself says. If mothers warned their daughters about Chicana lesbians I conclude that these mothers are Chicana mothers for I cannot imagine mothers from anywhere else warning their daughters about Chicana lesbians. My mother certainly warned me about lesbians, but not Chicana ones.

I am not trying to sound cute here, I am merely stating that these titles are full of meaning, but that they often limit their potential readers by wanting to say too much and end up resembling vanity publications, something that an anthology can very well be. For we have not mentioned it until now, merely alluded to it. An anthology can be a gift, a way of presenting new authors, a way of starting a new movement, a form of protest, and also a vanity fair.

Chicana Lesbians was published in 1991 by Third Woman Press. The editor, Carla Trujillo, begins her short Introduction by stating that in 1987 Juanita Ramos published an anthology entitled Compañeras: Latina Lesbians, that she anxiously read from cover to cover. Ramos then confesses that she was borrowed at the end. “The problem was that since Latinas comprise a very diverse group, capturing them all in full context was virtually impossible. As a Chicana lesbian, I wanted to see more about the intricacies and specifics of lesbianism and our culture, our family, mixed-race relationships, and more. Compañeras had only teased me. Not only did I want more, I needed more.” (Trujillo ix)

Trujillo then asks herself who the Chicana lesbian is and quickly determines that she is someone trying to fit into two worlds. She is seen as an agent of the Anglos by her own people, a sort of Malinche since she has supposedly sold herself to them (Trujillo, however, does not mention Malinche), and not fully accepted by the Anglo camp either since she is not only a woman of color, but also a lesbian (I am surmising this since Trujillo does not make clear exactly what the other world is).

Trujillo expatiates on this Chicano world in which the Chicana lesbians do not fit since they refuse to need a man to form their own identities as women. (Trujillo ix) They also refuse to accept that what they are told is wrong is indeed wrong and therefore find themselves in direct conflict with the precepts of family and religions, pariahs of sorts. Trujillo sees a sort of dialectic here. She then affirms that it this dialectic is implied in the very nature of the title she gave her anthology. While the fathers impose the sexual conformity, the mothers whisper the warnings. Before she introduces some of the writers included in the anthology Trujillo asks herself how they manage to become the women their fathers fear and their mothers misunderstand.

After having presented the authors Trujillo concludes that this issue expresses the vitality of their existence, their strength, and the perseverance of their struggles. "It examines issues that are difficult to talk about, yet need to be discussed so that we may delve further into the process of our own self-definition and discovery." (Trujillo xii)

I therefore come to the conclusion that this anthology is not made for "others", it is a personal quest for better self understanding. Nowhere does Trujillo mention that she wishes these voices to be known to the general public, or that these texts have been chosen for their literary quality. When she describes Moraga's piece, for example,

Trujillo simply mentions that it addresses butch-femme in a topic not often brought up in the community: the high incidence of cancer among lesbians. Nowhere is she concerned with literary quality or with sharing these topics with outsiders. This anthology is a private club of sorts. On the back cover, however, there is a quote from the Chicana writer Sandra Cisneros who writes, "If you've ever been curious, been there, been voyeur, been tourist, or just plain under-informed, misinformed, or unaffirmed, here is a book to listen to and learn from."

Right above Cisneros's quote is a quote from Tey Diana Rebolledo who believes that this is one of the most significant collections of Chicana literature to appear in recent years and that it needs to be in everyone's library. These are the only attempts to bring it to a larger audience, but no mention of this in the editor's introduction.

Chicana Lesbians is divided into four parts: The Life; The Desire; The Color; The Struggle. A division such as that one could easily be applied to any Latina literature anthology. It deals with everyday existence, sexuality, ethnicity, and finally the political struggle.

Ten women are included in the first part. They are: Cherrie Moraga and Ana Castillo (whom we know quite well by now), Cathy Arellano (who wished to remain anonymous), several either relatively or entirely new voices, Carmen Abrego, Juanita Sánchez, Karen Delgadillo, Gina Montoya, Lidia Tirado White, Monica Palacios, and Ana Barreto.

Other texts of several of the authors mentioned above also appear among the fifteen texts presented in the second part, they are Arellano's, Castillo's, Moraga's Delgadillo's, and Abrego's. The other women included in this section are: Gloria Anzaldúa, and

several new voices, those of E. D. Hernández, Diane Gómez, and M. Alvarez. The abbreviated names make me believe they wish to remain anonymous.

The third part only has seven texts. Once again, Moraga, Barreto, and Sánchez are presented. The others are: Martha Barrera, Natashia López, Terri de la Peña, and Emma Perez. I do not recall having encountered any of those names in any of the anthologies I have read thus far.

The fourth part presents several essays written by ten different authors. Once again, we find Moraga, López, Hernández, Perez, and Barreto. The other five are: Marta Navarro, Marie-Elise Wheatwind, Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, Carla Trujillo (the editor), and Diane Alcalá.

Chapter Five – Shattering the Myth

There seems to be quite a bit of breaking and entering as far as our anthologies go. Two of them use the word “breaking” in the title, and now with this 250-page anthology published by Arte Público Press in 1992, we are “shattering.” What is being shattered here are myths and stereotypes “that continue to circumscribe the freedom of expression and life fulfillment for Hispanic women. Their plays, indeed, shatter myths and, in so doing, are creating a broader, freer space for women’s identity and cultural development.” (Feyder 5)

The complete title of this anthology is: Shattering the Myth: Plays by Hispanic Women. Note that either the publisher or the editor opted for the word Hispanic instead of Latina. Perhaps that in the early 90’s the term Latina was becoming too specific and that a broader term was needed. In any case, Linda Feyder does not mention the reasons for this choice of terminology in the introduction.

A total of six plays are included here written by six different Latinas, mostly Chicanas, if I am to judge and guess from the topics of the plays, since no bibliographical information at the end of the volume. They are: Cherrie Moraga (whom we should know quite well by now), Migdalia Cruz, Caridad Svich, Josefina Lopez, Diana Saézn, and Edit Villareal. Thus far, the only one of these authors that I have come across in the anthologies is Moraga.

These plays were all written between 1986 and 1991 and reflect what Feyder considers to be a new generation of Hispanic American women. Although their parents still hold strong cultural ties to their country of origin, they chose English, as opposed to Spanish. They continue, however, to live on that cultural hyphen. Not only do they stand

between two cultures and two languages, but they are also women, and women who identify with women of color.

“Central to the plays is the problematic relationship Hispanic women have to their inherited customs. To begin with, there is the family. The traditional role of women in the Hispanic family is to serve their male counterparts, whether father, husband, or son [...]” (Feyder 5)

I chose to quote the lines above because it seems to be precisely here, in this anthology, that women are affirming themselves in opposition to men, rather than in opposition to other women or the white feminist movement. There is mention of “women of color”, but the problems here seem to be more traditional, or more traditionally feminist. This is interesting because the U.S. Latina movement in its beginnings didn’t appear to be totally concerned with women’s relation to men, on the contrary, they considered this to be yet another learned reflex that needed some questioning.

So it has taken this long to shine the light on men, but it is time to do so, for how could a study concentrating on women fail to mention men? I do wish to keep in mind that it took this long, some things apparently had to be taken into consideration before, minor literatures, border studies, lesbian studies, white feminists, class, race, and what not. The men seemed to have fallen between the cracks somehow, but when reading through these plays I noticed the men always played a very important role in them. The men-women relationships that seemed to have been put in a cold back burner are in the forefront here. Just to give an example, Cherrie Moraga’s play is entitled “Shadow of a Man” and it does have to do with their absence, therefore their presence.

I have also avoided analyzing the previous anthologies in light of feminist theory, for they often seemed to be somewhere else, somewhere in a vague, revolutionary post-feminist place. From the beginning they questioned feminism, so up until now I have not used traditional feminist theory as a tool. Now it is time to do so.

Susana Reisz begins her critical study entitled Voces Sexuadas, by quoting Isabel Allende who writes that in South America (nuestro continente) men have been emotionally mutilated by machismo and women are starved for love. “Una frontera nos separa [...]” Reisz adds that the reasons for this extreme separation are not always sentimental. “Tampoco las consecuencias individuales y sociales, entre las que se cuentan la desigual ubicación de unas y otros en la jerarquía literaria y el distinto tipo de lucha por acceder a un lenguaje artístico propio.” (Reisz 15)

I lightly touched upon these issues in the beginning of this section when I took into consideration some feminists’ opinion that there was such a thing as a woman’s sentence, and that women’s style in writing was genetically different from men’s. Now what Reisz is saying here is that if women do put up a struggle it is in order to find their voice and their identity, and not so much to affirm that their sentence is sexually other. Their search, essentially, is one for expression.

Reisz, however, adds that there is also an effort to build an identity and that the voice that expresses this identity in their texts is like a “conflictivo dialogo entre lo que la sociedad afirma que soy y lo que yo, como sujeto individual y colectivo a la vez, afirmo ser.” Reisz 18) An effort such as this can be clearly seen in the theatre.

Reisz then explains that according to Bakhtin this construction of an identity requires a “round trip” of sorts between the subject’s interior and exterior. In order to identify

one's self as black, of color, lesbian, Latina, Hispanic, and what not, one must leave one's interiority and go towards an exteriority, and then again return to one's self, according to Reisz.

In Moraga's play this voyage can even be done a few times. In the beginning the women's interiority is somehow defined by the absentee men. Little by little they will talk through this, which is in a way a voyage out, and this coincides with the men leaving for good, leaving a house full of women, with all the interiority that a house full of women implies, a place where, according to Linda Feyder, women find solace in each other.

Caridad Svich's play entitled "Gleaning/Rebusca" could also be seen in light of this round trip paradigm. Two roommates in Florida, with very different personalities, talk and talk and talk, mostly about men and jobs and fulfillment. The way each one sees the other, or hears the other and reacts, masks this voyage out. Subsequently there is a return to one's self with a ready response.

Josefina López's play "Simply Maria or the American Dream" is peopled with conflicting voices inside Maria's mind. After a narrator announces, "The making of the Mexican girl," Girls 1,2, and 3 take turns telling Maria how she ought to be (nice, considerate, etc.), what she ought to like (dolls, kitchens, houses), what she should not do (enjoy sex, be independent, shame her society). Later on, when Maria's mother tells her she does not want her playing football with the boys, Maria argues that she is good at sports and better than some boys. "It doesn't look right," the mother says. "What will they say?" The three girls come back to say "Never shame your society, never, never, never." (López 125)

Finally, for Linda Feyder, these women “through dialogue, affirm their commitment to their oral history and, in the process, unveil the long-hidden Hispanic feminine discourse. They discover that Hispanic women have always been critical and rebellious of their social lot, always creative and subversive.” (Feyder 6)

Chapter Six – The Sexuality of Latinas

The origins of this anthology, published in 1993 by Third Woman Press, go back to 1984. At that time the three editors, whose names are quite familiar now, Cherrie Moraga, Ana Castillo, and Norma Alarcón, decided to forego the publication of a special lesbian issue because they considered (to my great surprise) that very few professional writers had actively pursued a lesbian political identity.

I expressed my surprise between parenthesis because, as I have often mentioned, I find that it was the politically visible Latina lesbian writers who came up with anthology projects, carried them through, kicked, screamed and broke the doors down when they had to. It is thanks to them that Latinas in general, or Hispanic women, began to be listened to and to be heard.

Had it not been for activists such as Moraga, Anzaldúa and Luzma Umpierre Latina voices would have barely produced a whisper in the early 80's. This whisper would have meant a few curio pages in a white feminist anthology, and then again, only the most colorful accented voices, the ones that according to their white sisters most vividly represented their condition and their race, the poncho, the tortillas, unwanted pregnancies, bare feet in the dust, the macho husband. In other words, the Latina voices would have remained stereotypical ones.

The editors' explanation is that Latinas who wish to pursue a political and literary lesbian identity usually go outside their own ethnic community in order to do so. I am not sure what they mean by that, but I will take their word for it. In any case, they decided to present, instead of a lesbian issue, the Latina voice "as an integral part of the Latina

experience – from the actively heterosexual, to the celibate, to the secretly sexual, to the politically visible lesbian.” (Alarcón, Castillo, Moraga, The Sexuality of Latinas 8)

Once this was established the editors discussed and attempted to decide what could be considered thematically sexual. Thus, like Michel Foucault, they made a distinction between sexuality and gender and agreed that the gender theme was more theoretical than the sex theme, and opted for the concrete sexual images.

“Clearly, it is impossible, in many instances, to avoid abstract conceptualization, especially with regard to work written in Spanish by middle class Latinas [...] we speak of a taboo among the burguesía where sexuality as an explicit theme was limited to the realm of theory or covert metaphor. Among the popular sector, however, sexuality has often been a brutal daily affair without record.” (Alarcón, Castillo, Moraga, The Sexuality of Latinas 8)

The editors add that their sexuality has been hidden and distorted within the sacred walls of the family and of the bedroom. In view of this, they considered submissions for this anthology slow to come. As a result, several pieces in this anthology are pseudonymous.

The editors conclude their short introduction by saying that they hope this book is not an isolated effort and that they look forward to other publications that view sexuality at the forefront “of the sociopolitical struggle of Latinas in all levels of society.”

In this anthology all levels of society are being taken into consideration, not just the working class. At this moment in time there seems to be an effort on the part of the Latina radical women of color to include and all kinds of women in their themes and their anthologies. Instead of speaking for all women, there is a growing effort to make all

voices heard, even that of the middle class Latina, the numerous Marjorie Agosíns and perhaps even the heterosexual women who failed to be included time and time again because they were white, blonde, had a little money, and even a room of their own.

Now different messages are being sent and are being heard, so this calls for a renewed approach to this literature.

“[...] pienso que vale la pena escuchar las voces de las escritoras de los ochenta y los noventa con el filtro perceptivo de la teoría feminista, pues con su ayuda se hace posible establecer conexiones significativas entre mensajes aparentemente muy dispares y restablecer una coherencia profunda allí donde no parece haberla.” (Reisz 20)

Reisz, who is referring to both Latin American and U.S. Latina writers, adds that the voices and the ideological intonations are very varied, “[...] desde la romantización del erotismo femenino hasta el exhibicionismo con alardes de conquista sexual.” (Reisz 20) This is just one of her examples of the contrast and variety.

I am not implying that this was not present before, or that Latinas were totally united before and that they are suddenly taking on new shapes, hues and sizes. The differences were always there. What remained uniform for a while was the presentation, especially as far as anthologies are concerned. Editors, very jealous of their theme and the political message they wished to get across, squeezed all U.S. Latinas under one rubric. For a while there were no wicked stepsisters and no foot was too large or too small for the glass slipper. But, with Making Face, it is obvious that this collective glass slipper gave many a foot a big oozing blister right in the middle of the ball.

Reisz believes that feminist theory should take a good look at all those individual projects, situate them historically, compare them, evaluate them, and draw both artistic

and political conclusions. This because according to Reisz writing as a woman is the result of a choice, a political choice, not of pure genetic hazard. Reisz even adds that the ways of expressing how one feels about belonging to the second sex are not only very varied, but they are not always a battle cry for change or revolt.

We are quite a distance away here from Virginia Woolf's feminine sentence and most of her ideas regarding women and writing.

Although Woolf believed that a woman could write exactly as she wished to write she went as far as to add that woman had many difficulties to face.

In an essay published in 1929 entitled "Women and Fiction" Woolf explains that one of these difficulties is of a technical order and involves the sentence itself.

"To begin with, there is the technical difficulty – so simple, apparently; in reality so baffling – that the very form of the sentence does not fit her. It is a sentence made by men; it is too loose, too heavy, too pompous for a woman's use. [...] And this a woman must make for herself, altering and adapting the current sentence until she writes one that takes the natural shape of her thought without crushing or distorting it." (Woolf, Women and Writing 48)

In this case one would definitely be born a woman. Furthermore, a woman writer would initially be condemned to use techniques that she would be genetically incapable of using, such as the sentence, that traditionally has a subject a verb, a predicate, a direct and/or indirect object.

In an effort to sum up the character of women's writing Woolf writes that it is courageous, sincere, and strives to keep up with what women feel. This could definitely be applied to the anthologies we have analyzed thus far. However, Woolf immediately

adds that this writing is not bitter and does not insist upon its femininity. She then repeats, "But at the same time a woman's book is not written as a man would write it." (Woolf, Women and Writing 50)

What seems more difficult to apply to the writing included in the anthologies of Latinas writings, and even those in The Sexuality of Latinas in particular, is this insistence of Woolf's that the writing is not bitter, that it expresses no anger and that the women are not pleading and protesting as they write. On the contrary, these seem to be the central motifs of the radical women of color who are now striving to include Latinas from all walks of life in an anthology such as The Sexuality of Latinas. Here, it is sexuality that unites them, not sexual preference, just sexuality and the fact they are sexual beings.

It came as quite a surprise that an anthology even partially edited by Moraga would have such a short introduction, but this could very well mean that the anthologies are becoming something else. What this something else is, however, I don't yet know and for the time being I will leave it as a loose end to be tied later.

The Sexuality of Latinas is divided into six sections: Poetry, Prose, Drama, Essays/Reviews, Art, and Bibliography.

Eight Latinas are included in the poetry section: Adela Alonso, Cordelia Candelaria, Sandra Cisneros, Rosina Conde, Lucha Corpi, Barbara Brinson Curiel, Luzma Umpierre, and Silviana Wood. We have encountered several of these names in other anthologies. Other names are new, and we must bear in mind that some are pseudonyms, according to what the editors said in the introduction.

Thirteen Latinas are included in the prose section: Adela Alonso, once again (all her bibliography says is that she was born in Mexico, lives in Central Texas, and that for her writing is like sex, scary and exciting.), Elvia Alvarado, Julia Alvarez, Gloria Anzaldúa, Denise Chavez, Claudia Colindres, Erlinda Gonzalez-Berry, Rosalee Gurrola, Arcelia Ponce, Sonia Rivera-Valdés, Victorie Alegría Rosales, Mary Siqueiros, and Carmen Tafolla.

Once again, we have encountered names such as Gloria Anzaldúa, Carmen Tafolla, and Sonia Rivera-Valdés from the very beginning from the very beginning. Other names such as Julia Alvarez are new but we will see them from now on in all U.S. Latinas anthologies. Once again, I am troubled by the fact that there are pseudonyms, and for some vague reason I now mistrust any name that I have not encountered before.

There is only one author in the drama section, Ana Maria Simo, whose name I see in an anthology for the first time.

There are seven names in the Essays/Reviews section: Peggy Job, Juanita Luna Lawhn, Yvonne Yarbrow Bejarano, Ana Castillo, Cherrie Moraga, Alvina Quintana, and Lourdes Torres.

I will overlook the art section since I am only concerned with literature here.

Finally, there is a bibliography section at the end, with one bibliography put together by Norma Alarcón (Chicana Writers and Critics in a Social Context: Toward a Contemporary Bibliography), and another by Peggy Job (Narradoras Mexicanas Contemporaneas, 1970-1987). Although both these bibliographies only concern Mexicans and Chicanas the anthology itself is not limited to Chicanas although Chicanas outnumber the two Cuban voices, the Dominican voice, and the Central American voice.

A very important question to ask here is: Under what rubric could we put an anthology entitled The Sexuality of Latinas? We now know for sure now that it is ethnic and minor literature with everything those two terms imply. But now that we have established and freely use those two categories, the next question is: Is this feminine literature or literature written by women?

Reisz notes that by using the term “feminine poetry” whenever there is something written by women we risk making the poetry in question trivial. Reisz adds that we can only describe or define feminine poetry within a certain social topography and a very precise historical context.

“Del planteo anterior se deriva que, en mi opinion, no tiene mucho sentido tratar de identificar recursos literarios que sean per se femeninos (o feministas) pero que si es epistemológicamente válido establecer conexiones causales entre ciertos procedimientos textuales, determinadas formaciones sociales y particulares momentos históricos.” (Reisz 25-26)

Later on Reisz notes that many women poets feel put down if and when their works are labeled “feminine”, or if someone wishes to include them in a strictly women’s anthology. The risk, obviously, when a woman describes herself as both a woman and a poet is that of ending up a “poetisa,” that horrible word.

Many, or perhaps all of the writers included in The Sexuality of Latinas do not seem to run the risk of being labeled “poetisas.” This, once again, because they never started out as poetisas, or as frail feminine emotional things who sang the beauty of love and of flowers. No one would have said about Moraga, Anzaldúa, Morales, Cisneros, just to name a few, that they had no biography until they wed, or until they lost their virginity, as

Clara Silva said of Delmira Agustini, la niña de Uruguay. “Puede decirse que hasta el día de su boda con Enrique Job Reyes [...] Delmira Agustini no tiene biografía, no tiene historia.” (Silva 24) And it wasn’t that Agustini was a poetisa or that she deserved that label, that was a product of the socio-historical times Reisz is referring to.

So these Latinas in The Sexuality of Latinas cannot be labeled poetisas. It is very interesting to note that most of the poetry is written in Spanish. The only two poets who write strictly in English are Cordelia Candelaria and Sandra Cisneros. The others are either strictly Spanish or Spanglish, which reduces the target audience of this anthology.

Many of the texts in the prose section were also either written in Spanish, translated from the Spanish, or in Spanglish, and could be considered “testimonios” because of their highly confessional nature.

In the Essays/Reviews section Peggy Job and Juanita Luna Lawhn concentrate on strictly Mexican themes. Yarbrow Bejarano describes the first meeting of Latin American and Caribbean lesbians that took place in 1987 in Mexico. Ana Castillo reviews the novel Rooster by Milcha Sanchez-Scott. Cherrie Moraga reviews Anzaldúa’s collection of fiction, poetry and essays, Borderlands, La Frontera; The New Mestiza, and Estela Portillo Trambley’s novel Trini. Alvina Quintana reviews The Mixquiahuala Letters by Ana Castillo, and Lourdes Torres reviews The Margarita Poems by Luz Maria Umpierre.

Chapter Seven – Infinite Divisions

Here is the poem by Bernice Zamora that gave this anthology its name:

**“You insult me
When you say I’m
Schizophrenic.
My divisions are
Infinite.” (Zamora 78)**

The poem is entitled “So Not To Be Mottled,” and implies that far from being split in two or three, or even four, as the schizophrenic is, the Chicana is split infinitely. There is no number to put to that split, and the poet says it with pride.

Infinite Divisions is a huge anthology, and the result of a project that took nearly ten years. It proves that Chicanas alone could easily fill 400 pages with samples of their literature. The editors, Tey Diana Rebolledo and Eliana Rivero, write that the pieces that comprise this anthology are 173 creative texts and 5 texts from the oral tradition. They count 52 authors, and 4 storytellers.

Once again, this anthology showcases only Chicana literature, and goes from its very beginnings all the way to its most recent trends.

I will not dwell upon Chapter One, no matter how interesting and important it is because we are going back too far in history. In the anthology The Third Woman, Dexter Fisher included Fabiola Cabeza de Baca, one of the writers that appear in section II of chapter one, “The Written Tradition,” section I being “The Oral Tradition.” Besides the oral histories told this chapters includes texts from Nina Otero-Warren, Fabiola Cabeza

de Baca, Cleofas Jaramillo, Carmen Celia Beltrán, Maria Esperanza Lopez de Padilla, and Esther Vernon Galindo. These foremothers of Chicana literature were writing in the United States between 1848 and 1960.

Infinite Divisions is the first anthology I have come across that wishes to encompass so much of the literary tradition, and that goes so far back. The editors explain that as this book began to take shape they realized that they were coming across many texts that the general reader would not normally have access to, texts that could easily be lost were they not to be preserved in a context such as this one. This is therefore one of the goals of this anthology, the preserve written texts and oral histories that could easily be lost.

In the preface Rebolledo and Rivero address the problems that come with the compiling of an anthology. The first question or problem, indeed, is that of deciding whom to include and whom to leave out, for an anthology, just like the canon, necessarily has to draw a line between the inside and the outside. Next there is the question of the message or vision of the anthology. Only the best? The best of the best? The most significant? Then, of course, there's the problem of deciding who's the best, the worst, the most significant, or even the fairest of them all. The editors even wondered if including some authors and not others would create some kind of canon of Chicana literature. Was this desirable?

“And as Chicana writers begin to enjoy more mainstream attention, there is also some suspicion ascribed to the anthologizer. Are we appropriating the writers? We also asked ourselves that question; but still the collective vision won out.” (Rebolledo, Rivero, Infinite Divisions xx) Thus, they decided to include better known as well as lesser known

writers. One of the results was that of unearthing writers of the 1880's, a project onto itself.

When the problem of deciding on the criteria for the text selection itself surfaced, the editors made a decision to search out texts that could be called feminist. For them, a feminist text is one that shows women's strengths. This strength manifests itself mainly through survival, be it of difficult or violent situations and relationships. This feminist approach to these texts will allow us to read this anthology in light of feminist theory.

It goes without saying that the gender and border theories that we have considered before always take into account the feminist theory. However, while the focus before was on the border, the hyphen, and the gender studies, I wish to concentrate on the feminist approach here, and this is a good occasion to do so since the editors expressly sought out feminist texts.

The definition they give of a feminist text is very concrete and will allow me to focus my attention even better. I have noticed that I continually shift from one realm to another when considering these anthologies by minority women. It is so easy to go from the concept of minor literature, to ethnic studies, to life on the hyphen.

Finally, this anthology takes English readers into consideration, in that it adds footnotes for their sake, something we have not often seen before. If a text has originally been published in Spanish with no translation the editors add a translation. The footnotes are there for texts that present a mixture of both languages.

The Introduction to this anthology spans 500 years of the history of the Mexican people and the Mexican women in particular. It begins with the Conquest of New Spain by Hernán Cortez. It then describes the frontier days, the first settlements on the North

American continent, and the effects of the 1848 treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. After that came the years labeled as those of accommodation, assimilation, and survival. Those years take us into the 1920's. The editors consider the next thirty years to be those of a flowering of a literature of resistance that in a way culminate in the Chicano/Chicana Renaissance of the 60's and 70's.

It was during this Renaissance that the first anthologies of Chicano and Chicana literature were published. One of the first ones that included only Chicana texts appeared in September 1973. It was entitled Chicanas en la literatura y el arte: El Grito, and was edited by Estela Portillo Trambley.

Although many critics insist that Chicanas (in this particular case) are not in search of an identity, that, on the contrary, they affirm their identity time and again, we have to agree with Gloria Anzaldúa when she says that art is about identity and continually returns to this search for identity, even if the identity is affirmed time and again. This identity, precisely, has to do with the title of this anthology, Infinite Divisions, and involves cultural, ethnic, as well as sexual identity. I think I have dwelled on the cultural and ethnic identity in previous chapters so with this huge anthology I will only deal with the questions of gender and sexual identity.

Chapter 2, entitled "Self and Identity," presents 22 texts dealing with this topic, and 16 Chicanas, most of whom we have already encountered in previous anthologies: Bernice Zamora, Sandra Cisneros, Miriam Bornstein, Gloria Anzaldúa, Lorenza Calvillo-Craig, la Chrisx, Margarita Cota-Cardenas, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Sylvia Lizarraga, Rina García Rocha, Inés Hernández, Marina Rivera, Veronica Cunningham, Alma Villanueva, Ana Castillo, and Pat Mora. When studying subsequent chapters I will not go through an

entire list again, for one writer may appear in several chapters, so, for brevity's sake, I will only mention the ones who are not on this list.

“Chicana writers are painfully aware of the ancestral weight they carry on their shoulders, of the double-bind situation in which they must exist; that of being minority persons, members of a discriminated cultural group, and that of being women – a second class majority. At the same time, they are also – and very much so – female [...]” (Rebolledo, Rivero, Infinite Divisions 77) the editors write in the introduction to Chapter 2. They then quote La Chrisx who writes, “Soy mujer/soy señorita/soy ruca loca/soy mujeron/soy Santa/soy madre/soy Ms.” From this multiplicity that only concerns being a woman I conclude that the quest or the exploration of an identity becomes all the more complex. There are even infinite divisions to being a woman.

Three of the four Chicanas studied by Marta Ester Sánchez in her critical analysis of Chicana poetry are included in this first chapter: Alma Villanueva, Lorna Dee Cervantes, and Bernice Zamora. I mentioned sometime earlier that Sánchez's thesis is that Villanueva “responds primarily as a woman to the dominant masculine society in the United States. The relationship between her identities as woman and as poet is one of harmony and integration. In contrast a Chicana identity plays but a minor role in her poetic sensibility [...]” (Sánchez 8)

In this anthology, Villanueva's poem entitled “I Sing to Myself” ends with the words, “I/woman give birth:/and this time to/myself)” (Villanueva 104) And indeed, in this poem at least, being a Chicana seems secondary to her being a woman and to the relationship she has had with the men in her life, beginning by her father.

As far as Cervantes is concerned Sánchez believes that her identity as a woman is inextricably bound to her Chicana self. In her poem entitled "Oaxaca", Cervantes writes, "My name hangs about me like a loose tooth." The editors interpret this to mean that a Spanish name betray some Chicanas.

For Sánchez, Bernice Zamora is particularly problematic because, "she best exemplifies my hypothesis that Chicana poetry is a poetry of conflict and tension. Zamora's female consciousness enters into sharp conflict with her Chicana ethnic self. As the most conscious of these poets of the conflicting relationships implied by the two identities of woman and Chicana, Zamora reflects a shifting poetic consciousness: she responds either as a woman or as a Chicana, but seldom as both." (Sánchez 8)

Many of the Chicanas in this chapter do respond as both and do not seem to have any qualms about doing so. In her poem entitled "Taking of Name" Miriam Bornstein writes, "with the rosary of the good little Mexican woman/I carry my married name/I am/so and so/wife of so and so/mother of so and so/and at times I feel that I am only/a woman alone."

Chapter 3 of this anthology pursues the exploration of self but this time confronts it to the other. On the one hand there is the self definition, now there is the self as it is seen and influenced and even molded by the exterior, by relationships, by the mirror. In most of the texts in this chapter entitled "Self and Others" the other is usually another woman. It is quite interesting to see how absent the man is often from Chicanas' and Latinas concerns. This chapter, besides including many of the Chicanas who figured in the previous chapter also presents texts by: Teresa Palomo Acosta, Evangelina Vigil-Piñón,

Cordelia Candelaria, Xelina, Cherrie Moraga, Antonia Quintana Pigno, Helena Maria Viramontes, Irene Blea, Denise Chávez, Lucha Corpi, and Mary Helen Ponce.

What seems forever absent from these texts when the light of feminist theory is shed on them is whether or not one writes like a woman. The feminist problems seem much more urgent, and have more to do with practical and survival skills. Pat Mora's poem called "Plot" begins with the words, "I won't let him hit her. I won't/let him bruise her soft skin, her dark/brown eyes". (Mora 144) Here, we are quite a distance from the debate as to whether sex signature matters. These women's sex signs these poems, but the poems are not reflections on whether or not their being women had anything to do with the shape or color of their words. In "Plot" the urgency is all about virginity and what to do if you fail to yield that drop of blood on your wedding night. "[...] I'll beg her to use the ring/snapped from a Coke can. That's my wedding/gift for my daughter [...]" (Mora 144)

The poems ends with the solution:

"I'll arm my daughter with a ring./She'll slip it under her wedding mattress./When he sleeps she'll slit her finger./smear the sheet. She must use the ring./I don't want to split his throat." (Mora 144)

In her poem "Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway" Lorna Dee Cervantes describes this anguished lack of trust and security she feels. The poetic voice announces that they were a woman family composed of the grandmother, an innocent queen, the mother, a fearless warrior who wanted to be a princess instead, and the poetic self who could never decide and turned to books, became a scribe, an interpreter, a translator who pays the bills. Her mother warns her about being soft and counting on others. She listened and trusts only herself.

There is also the jealous and unforgiving mother. These feminist poems do not always present the victimized abuelitas either quilting or making tortillas or the abnegated mother with the good advice and unconditional love. In her poem entitled “Baby Doll” Rina Garcia Rocha writes that mothers can be jealous gods, just like husbands, unforgiving and demanding. It seems as if the poetic “I” waited very long for loving gentle words of approval from this fury of a mother, then realizes how senseless this was. How could one expect words of approval from jealous gods?

The feminism, therefore, is not just a confrontation with men and their victimization of women. Very often, the writers have to take a stand in opposition to their mothers and grandmothers, for they are the ones that affected them or stymied them the most.

Although Chapter 4 deals mainly with “Spaces” as its title implies I have chosen to try it in light of feminist theory and feminism because in their introduction to this chapter the editors mention public spaces and how women have entered them. “Another public space that symbolizes the emancipation of Chicanas – their freedom from traditional homes and societal values – is the cantina (bar, tavern). Much Chicana literature is written about what critic Maria Herrera-Sobek calls cantina culture. That is, Chicanas symbolically enter public spaces formerly reserved for, or inhabited only by, men. Herrera-Sobek sees this as the seizing of public space by women.” (Rebolledo, Rivera, Infinite Divisions 160) Once again, the debates and the problems are not at all middle class and theoretical.

In her poem “tavern taboo” Evangelina Vigil-Piñón writes, “I hate to sit at a table at some mistake joint/and be pssst at”. The feminism is all there. It is in the act of going to the joint and in being pissed at being pssst at.

The voices in spaces that we have not encountered in previous chapters are those of: Maria Herrera-Sobek, Patricia Preciado Martín, Carmen Tafolla, Barbara Brinson Curiel, Gina Valdés, and Angela de Hoyos. With all these names that have become so familiar I am tempted to come to the conclusion that by now there is definitely a canon of Chicana literature. Gone are the days when two anthologies would not have any names in common. Now there are fewer and fewer new names, as if it were time to exclude. Furthermore, not only are the same names coming back anthology after anthology, but also the same texts. I have encountered many of the texts included in this anthology in previous anthologies. Something in me wants to ask why.

Chapter 5 is entitled “Myths and Archetypes”. The names that have not appeared in previous chapters are: Beverly Sánchez Padilla, Erlinda Gonzalez Berry, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Adaljiza Sosa-Riddell, Naomi Quiñónez, Ana Montes, Inés Hernández, Estela Portillo Trambley, and Lydia Camarillo.

The archetypes presented here include the Virgin Mary, Coatlicue, Tonantzín, la Llorona, Malinche, the Virgen of Guadalupe, and Adelita the warrior woman. Their existence and their importance have very close ties with a quest for definition and identity. If there is a quest, this is the heart of it. These women of myth or of history present Chicanas with various options. It is up to them to decide with which one of these figures they will identify. Nothing prevents them from choosing more than one archetypes or role models. The virgin and the sinner, for example, or the warrior and the peacemaker. This is a way of absorbing contradictions

In Chapter 3 of Voces Sexuadas Susana Reisz quotes a few lines from Rosalia de Castro that indicate the tension that exists between a generic identity and an artistic one.

These lines are plaintive, they speak to the Virgin about those women who sing about doves and flowers. The poetic "I" has come to realize that she is not a "poetisa", and perhaps does not have a woman's soul. Reisz defines the stereotype of the "poetisa" as the hard working weaver who weaves rimes into emotional clichés.

With this kind of tension Reisz explains that many women poets in Latin America simply prefer to be called poets and not even have the "woman" attached to it. Some of them even refuse to be included in anthologies when the first and foremost criteria for the selection of texts are that they be written by women. This does not appear to be an issue for U.S. Latinas since their movement began as a radical feminist one and it was never a question of them being hard working weavers with feminine emotions who sang to the flowers and to the pigeons with tears in their poetic voice.

Reisz also mentions that Borges judged Storni's poetry to be "chillonería de comadrita". As far as Latinas are concerned I do not know of any canonical figures ever having stopped to say something nasty or politically incorrect about them. Our words to live by here are "if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything." Not many canonical figures have even mentioned Latinas. I'm not even sure they've even heard of them as something other than remote, and exotic, perhaps, in the best of scenarios.

It is when she is searching for a more dynamic concept of identity that Reisz reveals that instead of sympathizing with those who refuse to even be included in female anthologies she feels more for those who accept a marginal, devalued identity, at least temporarily, as a weapon, as a tool allowing them to struggle with or against the hierarchy.

“Por eso, aprecio a las escritoras que se ubican expresamente dentro de la feminidad – con todas las marcas de minusvalía que trae el membrete – y que, al mismo tiempo, son capaces de cuestionarla. Pienso, en efecto, que las que se ven a si mismas como mujeres y como escritoras [...] son las únicas que están en condiciones de ver el género como una categoría histórica modificable (y no como una esencia o un destino).” (Reisz 47)

Thus, it is quite possible to identify with the Virgin of Guadalupe, unselfishness, ideal motherhood, unconditional love, and not only see her as a symbol of failure as many Chicanas do according to the editors of Infinite Divisions.

Perhaps the poem in this chapter of Infinite Divisions that best exemplifies this freedom that Reisz defends is Lydia Camarillo’s “Mi Reflejo.”

“Who goes there?/ It is I/ [...] I have come to pay your dues./ I have come to free my people./ I am Malinche./ [...]”

The next stanza ends with the lines, “I have come to make you pay./ I have come to liberate my people;/the oppressed./Yo soy/Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz.” (Camarillo 268-270)

In the third stanza it is Frida Kahlo who was come to liberate the oppressed. The fifth stanza ends with the lines, “Yo soy Tonantzín,/la Virgen Morena,/I am la Virgen de Guadalupe.”

Finally the last liberator is called “mujer.”

I strongly agree with Reisz when she writes that the poet, the woman poet, can easily assimilate all that, even la poetisa, and should not place herself too high above being a woman.

Chapter 6 of this anthology is entitled “Writers on Language and Writing.” All the authors who appear here have already been mentioned, so I will not list the 17 names.

A very important aspect of this chapter is what it does not appear to include, and what it does not include is a preoccupation with being a woman and a writer.

The introduction to the chapter begins with a quote from Alma Villanueva, “it is my nature/as woman and poet/to give birth.” I feel comfortable thinking that as far as writing is concerned there does not seem to be a conflict or any particular aversion to being a woman and a poet. The main preoccupation is that of language, one that Latin American women would not have. A poet such as Blanca Varela does not have to ask herself what language she should, can, or has the right to write in (no pun intended). Spanish is hers. It is different for many Latinas, even those who grew up with the English language. This is yet another division they feel. English is their cultural language, but Spanish was often spoken at home, so it remains an emotional language of sorts. This makes it all the more difficult to pick a language once and for all and stick to it.

On the one hand, it feels as if the intellectual side could very well be “written” in the English language. But what about the screams and the shouts, and even the whispers? When Latinas explore language written on the page or question the significance of the literary act, the language dilemma is always present.

“As you can see, cultural schizophrenia set in early. At home I was pura Mejicana. At school I was an American citizen,” writes Alicia Gaspar de Alba.

Gloria Anzaldúa takes it one step further when she writes in a text entitled “Linguistic Terrorism” that those who grew up speaking Chicano Spanish have internalized the belief that it is poor Spanish. “Deslenguagas,” Anzaldúa writes, without a tongue, literally. “We

are those with the deficient Spanish. We are your linguistic nightmare, your linguistic aberration, your linguistic mestisaje, the subject of your burla [...] we speak an orphan tongue.” (Anzaldúa, Infinite Divisions 293)

Gustavo Perez-Firmat refers to this same type of linguistic no man’s land when he comes to the conclusion that now defunct actor Desi Arnaz, who played the role of Ricky Ricardo in the television series I Love Lucy, is a “nilingual.” As the years passed Desi’s Spanish got worse, and his English didn’t get any better.

In The History of Sexuality Michel Foucault writes that the question he would like to pose is not so much, “why are we repressed?” Rather, “Why do we say, with so much passion and so much resentment against our most recent past, against our present, and against ourselves, that we are repressed? By what spiral did we come to affirm that sex is negated?” (Foucault 9)

Obviously we are dealing with cultural conflicts here, when we refer to the Latinas dilemma and even feeling of rage as far as language is concerned. However, when Foucault asks himself and his readers why we burden ourselves with so much guilt for having once made sex a sin, I think his question encompasses all types of repression. Actually, it is more important than any answer. At times it feels as if this is at the heart of Latina discourse.

In her introduction to Hélène Cixous’ First Names of No One Susan Sellers writes that here writing is equated with desire “that can propel personne beyond the rule of opposition, aggression, and enslavement, beyond lack [...] it is in literature that the logic of repression and negativity may be circumvented.” (Sellers 27)

Chapter 7 of this anthology is entitled "Growing Up." The 13 writers included here have already appeared in previous chapters. In the course of this study this chapter interests me less as a recovery of the past than as a transition into womanhood. In the introduction to this chapter the editors quote Annis Pratt who claims that stories of development written by women have not been studied in depth because "women are never allowed the freedom for total self-realization, or perhaps it is because, for women, the consciousness of growing up has not been defined in as acutely sexual terms as can be found in books like Catcher in the Rye or Portnoy's Complaint." (Rebolledo, Rivero, Infinite Divisions 306)

Although I do not see white feminists as having to deal with a lack of freedom for self-realization or as disallowing themselves the use of certain sexual terms, this could very well be the case for some Latinas.

In her poem entitled "Pueblo, 1950" Bernice Zamora writes, "I remember you, Fred Montoya/You were the first vato to ever kiss me./I was twelve years old./My mother said shame on you./my teacher said shame on you, and/I said shame on me, and nobody/said a word to you."

Instead of focusing on becoming women, most of these growing up stories focus more on a sense of loss and of regret. There is also a deep feeling of nostalgia and anguish at the passing of time. The childhood remembered was not necessarily a happy one, but the thought that it will never return again inspires horror. In order to get this across the narrators or the poetic "I" often takes on the lost child's voice. At times it is as if they had not yet succeeded in becoming women, because that child simply will not let go.

In this particular chapter on growing I looked for the possibility of feminine writing as Sellers interprets that Cixous defines it “the potential to circumvent and reformulate existing structures through the inclusion of other experience.” (Sellers xxix)

Sellers adds that Cixous stresses that the inscription of the “rhythms and articulations of the mother’s body which continues to influence the adult self provides a link to the pre-symbolic union between self and m/other, and so affects the subjects relationship to language, the other, himself, and the world.” (Sellers xxix)

I found several writings relevant to Cixous’ conceptions in the last chapter of *Infinite Divisions*.

Chapter 8 is entitled “Celebrations”. In a way it brings all kinds of writings together, from the sublime to the ridiculous, as the editors note. It is in this chapter that the rituals of womanhood are included, as well as writings on femaleness and extreme joy.

The first poem included in this last chapter is entitled “My Poetry” and is by Sylvia Chacón. It begins with lines that could very well be considered feminine, or coming from a *poetisa*’s gentle hand. “My poetry sings of warmth, of flowers of poverty, of friendship, of endurance, of laughter [...] of rape, of innocence.” This poem ends with the lines, “and/I must gentle into myself/to fill the thirst/that sand will knot/and I must gentle/in a firmness/that will flower/springtime dawns/in snow.” This is the closest we have ever come to *écriture féminine* in the reading of all these anthologies.

In relation to this feminine writing Cixous also suggests that since woman does not situate herself in a struggle for power over the other, feminine writing could very well bring into existence new forms of relation, perception, and expression. Furthermore,

according to sellers feminine writing will also initiate changes in the social and political sphere challenging the patriarchal state.

Chapter Eight -- In Other Words

With this other huge anthology we can continue trying to read these Latina writings in light of feminist theory, particularly Cixous' notion of an écriture féminine.

Published in 1994 by Arte Público Press, In Other Words is a 500-page anthology that includes 45 Latina authors of all heritages. At this point, over a decade after the publication of This Bridge Called my Back and The Third Woman, there are very few new names to find in anthologies of Latina literature. If they appear here for the first time, it is probably because of their youth and not because editors have overlooked them until now. Almost all the writers included here have appeared in other anthologies of Latina literature.

In Other Words is divided into four parts: Poetry, Essay, Fiction, and Drama. The poetry section is by far the longest, since it takes up half the anthology. The authors included here are: Teresa Palomo Acosta, Marjorie Agosín, Rosemary Catacalos, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Lucha Corpi, Veronica Cunningham, Angela de Hoyos, Rhina Espaillat, Sandra Maria Esteves, Lourdes Gil, Carolina Hospital, Iraida Iturralde, Natashia López, Olga Elena Mattei, Pat Mora, Naomi Quiñónez, Nina Serrano, Carmen Tafolla, Luz Maria Umpierre, Gloria Vando, Anita Velez Mitchell, Cecilia Vicuña, Evangelina Vigil-Piñón, Alma Luz Villanueva, Marie Elise Wheatwind, and Bernice Zamora.

The essay section has only four authors: Gloria Anzaldúa, Roberta Fernández (the editor of this anthology), Cherrie Moraga, and Judith Ortiz Cofer.

The following authors are included in the fiction section: Elena Castedo, Lucha Corpi, Beatriz de la Garza, Margarita Engle, Paula Maria Espinosa, Roberta Fernández, Linda

Feyder, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Nora Glickman, Aurora Levins Morales, Graciela Limón, Nicholasa Mohr, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Mary Helen Ponce, Estela Portillo Trambley, Bessy Reyna, and Helena Maria Viramontes.

There is only one author in the drama section: Dolores Prida.

It is interesting to note that while the names of the authors are becoming very familiar, so are their writings. Helena Maria Viramontes' "The Moths" was already included in *Infinite Divisions*, as was Lucha Corpi's "Marina". I have also encountered Lorna Dee Cervantes' poem "For the young White Man Who Asked Me [...]" several times, as well as Roberta Fernandez's "Zulema", Trambley's "The Burning", and Prida's "Beautiful Señoritas."

At this point I have piled up too many anthologies to find all the connections, but they are quite interesting, especially as far as the inclusion of the same texts over and over again goes.

In Other Words has a Foreword by Jean Franco who was very happy to receive this anthology at a time when she was seriously wondering if she should agree with Octavio Paz who said literature was an art of the catacombs and a minority pursuit. Franco writes that reading this anthology made her realize how much was going on outside of mainstream publishing. She adds that "Latina" has become a marketable category and underlines how difficult this must have been.

But the struggle to be heard and published is not the only hurdle. Franco quotes Moraga who fears that Latinas will be writing more and more "through the filter of Anglo-American censors." Franco sees this as the fear of being mainstreamed, a fear that is relatively new for minority writers. It poses a whole new problem, and is certainly not

the problem of the authors who published their own chapbooks, put them together on a kitchen table, and hand sold them at sad, obscure literary events.

Now it seems that those who were merely colorful curiosities or loud radicals a decade earlier, are now being read by all sorts of readers.

In her Preface, Fernández states that this anthology is for both the general reader and university students. For her this is “the first anthology to bring together a broad spectrum of works by Latinas presently writing within the United States.” She then adds that it is inclusive rather than exclusive and seeks to acknowledge different perspectives on racial, ethnic, class, and gender issues.

The title of this anthology is multifaceted. The term in other words suggests another way of saying something, perhaps the same thing. It could also imply other words altogether, to say something else. The title cannot but play with the word other, in all the ways that these Latinas are other. Other words, in other words, can be the words of a woman, of a body, of a witch, of la Llorona, a hysteric, a sorceress.

When Hélène Cixous evokes the newly born woman I think of Latinas and other minority women. Sandra Gilbert writes that everything about this newly born woman is intense, and even hyperbolic. She is born of Flaubert, of Freud, of Kleist, of Shakespeare, of Aeschylus, just as Roberta Fernández explains that the Latina writer is born of the regional cultures of the United States, as well as Hispano-Arabic and Judeo-Western traditions, Afro-Hispanic and Afro-American traditions, and the ever-changing feminist agendas. They are the daughters of Juan Rulfo, Elena Poniatowska. Gabriel García Márquez, and also Alice Walker and Adrienne Rich.

They are the sorceress and the hysteric as Cixous sees them. "The sorceress, who in the end is able to dream nature and therefore conceive it, incarnates the reinscription of the traces of paganism that triumphant Christianity repressed. The hysteric, whose body is transformed into a theater for forgotten scenes, relives the past, bearing witness to a lost childhood that survives in suffering." (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 5)

In the following paragraph Cixous adds that the sorceress heals, against the church's canon. So I immediately think of the curandera. As to the hysteric she unties familiar bonds and causes disorder.

These images of women are present throughout the poems included in this anthology. Some of the poets, as a matter of fact, could be considered either hysterics or sorceresses. Catherine Clément notes that the hysteric weeps but the sorceress does not. "For the hysteric, pathos is the price of carnality; for the sorceress, irony is the privilege of marginality." (Clément xiii)

Marjorie Agosín, when she sings her breasts, her feet, and her red shoes, is definitely a sorceress. "My breasts,/ come loose,/ modeling their curves/ in skin,/ are the mirrors/ of your lips." (Agosín, In Other Words 17)

As to Rosemary Catacalos she portrays the hysteric in her poem entitled "A Vision of la Llorona." The poem ends with the lines, "Your mother, looking for the blood/ that will never dry,/ her only son." (Catacalos 36)

Lucha Corpi is definitely a sorceress with "Dark Romance" and "The Marina Poems." In "Dark Romance" there is a flavor of vanilla in the air, "Guadalupe was bathing in the river/ that Sunday, late,/ a promise of milk in her breasts,/ vanilla scent in her hair,/ cinnamon flavor in her eyes." (Corpi, In Other Words 51)

As to Marina/Malinche, she can be both the hysteric and the sorceress. She is the hysteric when she is identified with la Llorona, and when she is la chingada. She is the sorceress in Corpi's poems entitled "The Devil's Daughter."

"silenced, the ancient idol/shattered, her name/devoured by the wind in one deep growl/her name so like the salt depths of the sea -- /little remained. Only a half germinated seed." (Corpi, In Other Words 57)

Angela de Hoyos sings to "Tonantzín Morena". Tonantzín, precisely, is this crossing and re-crossing, the thrill of opposites that include even the hyphens that separate-unite them, creator-destroyer, lover-hater, mother-murderess, good-evil, order-disorder. Cixous notes that Marcel Mauss associates women with neurotics, exstatics, drifters, hawkers, jugglers, tumbler, and anything that is double. She then quotes Marcel Mauss who writes that, "The critical periods of their (the women's) life provoke surprises and apprehensions that give them a special position. In fact, it is exactly at puberty, during menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth, and after menopause, that the magical virtues of women reach their greatest intensity." (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 8)

Were the above to be true women's lives would always be at their greatest intensity, since Mauss does not seem to leave any woman's physical moment out. Even menopause is suddenly fraught with intensity.

Although the Mexican foremothers are excellent examples of the hysteric and the sorceress, these two womanly archetypes can also be found in other Latinas' writings. The Puerto-Rican-Dominican poet Sandra María Esteves sings to her "Sistas", all sorceresses, in her poem.

“Nina Simone, Celia Cruz, Billy Holiday, and Bessie/were all sistas growing up, keeping her company through only-child blues . . . /Aretha Franklin, La Lupe, Diana and the Supremes/stayed up nights at heartbreak hotel,/rappin’ real close moonshine doo-waps/” (Esteves 93)

The Cuban poet Lourdes Gil sings to la Llorona without even naming any names. The hysteric described by Cixous is the one who lives with her body in the past, “transforms it into a theatre for forgotten scenes, bears witness to a lost childhood that survives in suffering.” (Cixous 5)

Lourdes Gil’s poem entitled “A Stranger Came” begins with the lines, “Her sense of loss was like a chilling wind/across a hybrid landscape,/across the land she half-imagined years before, the corollary of her sleepless nights/” (Gil 102)

Another Cuban poet, Carolina Hospital, begins her poem “A Visit to West New York” with the lines, “The Virgin of Charity, in blue,/and her three fishermen rest/on the wooden dresser/I can hear salsa on/” (Hospital 109) The Virgin of Charity, better known as la Caridad del Cobre, the Charity of Copper, Charity because of her good deeds, and copper because of her dark color, performs miracles, and heals. She is also Yemayá, a laughing, teasing African saint.

The Virgin of Charity, just as Yemayá and Tonatzín, are all sorceresses, and for Michelet a sorceress is the bearer of the past invested with a challenging power. Perhaps a way of answering Foucault’s question as to why we burden ourselves so much today for having once repressed ourselves could be answered by Cixous. “Freud sees the power of the repressed working in the same way: anachronism has a specific power, one of shifting, disturbance, and change, limited to imaginary displacements. Everything occurs

as if past resistances persisted through signs and symptoms:" (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 9)

The second part of Cixous' and Clément's The Newly Born Woman begins with the lines, "Where is she? / Activity-passivity/ sun-moon/ culture-nature/ day-night/ father-mother/ head-heart /intelligible-palpable/ logos-pathos/ form, convex, step, advance, semen, progress./Mater, concave, ground – where steps are taken, holding-and dumping-ground./Man

Woman" (Cixous, Clément 63)

Sandra Gilbert believes that this second section, entitled "Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/ Forays", offers an apocalyptic vision. After reviewing the hierarchical oppositions mentioned in the quote, Cixous analyzes how female consciousness has been affected and even alienated by this duality and proposes a way out. Gilbert sees this way out also as an attack. It is through an exploration of female pleasure that woman can challenge these male-established dualities. This leads to a whole theory of bisexuality.

"Bisexuality – that is to say the location within oneself of the presence of both sexes, . . . the multiplication of the effects of desire's inscription on every part of the body and the other body."

"For historical reasons, at the present time it is woman who benefits from and opens up within this bisexuality beside itself, which does not annihilate differences but cheers them on, pursues them, adds more: in a certain way woman is bisexual . . ."

Several paragraphs later Cixous explains, "To say that woman is somehow bisexual is an apparently paradoxical way of displacing and reviving the question of difference. And therefore of writing as feminine or masculine."

These visions lead to her theory of feminine writing. "I will say, today: writing is woman's. That is not a provocation. It means that woman admits there is an other . . . Writing is the passageway, the entrance, the exit, the dwelling place of the other in me – the other that I am and am not, but that I feel passing, that makes me live . . ."

"This peopling gives neither rest nor security," Cixous adds, for it is much like being possessed, and, indeed, being possessed does not go without danger, and pain and loss, and even a price. Cixous then wonders, "But is that specifically feminine?" (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 84-87)

While being certain of the existence of an écriture féminine at the same time Cixous is opposed to a notion of sexual essence. "There is destiny no more than there is nature or essence as such." Rather, there are people caught in historico-cultural situations and limits. "It is impossible to predict what will become of sexual difference – in another time . . ." (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 83)

Gilbert sees Cixous' notion of feminine writing as fundamentally a political strategy, "designed to redress the wrongs of culture through a revalidation of the rights of nature."

Before I look at some of the texts in the anthology In Other Words in light of this écriture féminine I would like to mention that the title The Newly Born Woman barely gets across all the meanings that Cixous put into the French title. In French the title of this work is La jeune née, the newborn girl indeed, but there is a play with words and sounds. La jeune née may sound like La Genêt, a feminine version of that bad boy French writer, Jean Genêt. Cixous writes that what is inscribed under Genêt's name is "a text that divides itself, regroupes, remembers itself, is a proliferating, maternal femininity."

But that is not all, for La jeune née can also sound like "La je n'est". In other words, the feminine subject (la)(je) is not. It may also sound like "La je une nais", the feminine "I" is born. According to Gilbert both Clément and Cixous seek what has been set aside as not-the-subject. To do this, they become outlaws, like Genêt, and steal past Freud's blind spots, just as Luce Irigaray did in Speculum of the Other Woman.

At first when I was leafing through In Other Words I thought it may be difficult to determine what could be called écriture féminine, but little by little Cixous notion has begun to be more and more flowing, flexible, and even palpable.

When I read Cixous who writes that, "Her libido is cosmic, just as her unconscious is worldwide:" I think of a poem by Naomi Quiñones included in this anthology, and entitled "La Llorona". La Llorona, the hysteric, could very well be that worldwide unconscious.

"La madre bendita/ la mujer fuerte/ la puta madre/ la soldadera/ la India amorosa/
but who can understand/ that a woman sentences to death/ the child she brings/ into the
world/ la Llorona, the feminine/ haunts us if we fear her/" (Quiñones 156)

And when Cixous writes that woman's, "writing can only go on and on, without ever inscribing or distinguishing contours, daring these dizzying passages in other, fleeting and passionate dwellings . . ." (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 88-89) I think of yet another poem by Quiñónez included in the anthology In Other Words, this one entitled "Hesitations."

"I laugh/ a glass of wine/ between my legs/ dark, intensely burgundy,/ glows from
the warmth of my thighs."

Cixous continues with this vision of écriture féminine, “She alone dares and wants to know from within where she, the one excluded, has never ceased to hear what-comes-before-language reverberating. She lets the other tongue of a thousand tongues speak – the tongue, sound without barrier or death.” (Cixous, The Newly Born Woman 88-89)

In her poem entitled “Right in one language” Carmen Tafolla plays with these notions. Her agent tells her to write in one language, so she tries to render a clean, manicured line, to be paced, and spaced, and controlled, to restrain and to trim. Then she is certain that Chaucer must have felt like she does. The poem ends with the lines, “There are 2 many cariños to be/ created/ to stay within the lines,/ 2 many times/ when I want to tell you:/ There is room/ here/ for two/ tongues/ inside this/ kiss.”

There are many more examples of poems that sing with Cixous’ and Clément’s notions of écriture féminine. In fact, most of them could very well be seen in that light, regardless of their literary quality, because they are all part of this struggle of borders that Gloria Anzaldúa so aptly delves into.

“Because I am in all cultures at the same time,/ alma entre dos mundos, tres, cuatro,/ me zumba la cabeza con lo contradictorio./ Estoy norteadada por todas la voces que me hablan/ simultaneamente,” she writes in one of the essays included in this anthology.

It is only with shorter anthologies that I can delve into just about every interesting text at leisure, but, as I already mentioned, this is the longest anthology of Latina literature I have encountered to date. I also noted that just about all the names were familiar by now, and it could be considered a canonical anthology, in spite of its desire to be inclusive rather than exclusive.

In the desire to be inclusive there are many good intentions, and it must be good to want to be so, however, there must always be exclusion. It is not often that we can see clearly who has been excluded from an anthology, and why. In fact, I chanced upon an anthology of Latin American women writers where, in the introduction, the editor simply spoke about the authors she had chosen to exclude, with great regret. Usually, one does not bother to mention the absent ones. It would be interesting if an editor ever explained why such and such a name did not appear.

In spite of being huge, many names are not to be found in Roberta Fernández's anthology. I could name a few, such as, Ana Castillo, Sandra Cisneros, Julia Alvarez, Denise Chavez, those are the ones that come immediately to mind. One could wonder why they are not included. The main goal of In Other Words is surely not to make unknown voices available to the general public. On the contrary, most of the texts included had already been published elsewhere. So why were some very well known names excluded while others were excluded?

The answer is politics.

And money too, obviously.

At this point, and I am referring to the date of publication of this anthology, 1994, Latinas have become marketable. Literary agents have begun to see some kind of interest in them, besides the colorful blanket. A particular New York agent decided to take on the Latinas mentioned above, and whose names do not appear in this anthology. Most of these Latinas had in fact been discovered by Arte Público Press. Now when this New York agent took her new clients on, the New York agent decided that Arte Público Press

(who first gave them a chance to be heard) had cheated them all along, and that Arte Público Press should therefore be sued by each and every one of them.

It may appear as if I were straying away from the literary. But I am not. I would like to go back to what Jean Franco's comments in her foreword, and the dangers that go with being mainstreamed.

In her essay entitled "Art in America con Acento" Cherrie Moraga writes that, "Censorship is becoming increasingly institutionalized, not only through government programs, but through transnational corporate ownership of publishing houses, record companies, etc. Without a movement to foster and sustain our writing, we risk being swallowed up into the 'Decade of the Hispanic' that never happened. The fact that a few of us have made it and are doing better than we imagined has not altered the nature of the beast. He remains white and male and prefers profit over people." (Moraga, In Other Words, 304)

Moraga later adds that New York publishes Latinas' work on occasion, and thus allows them access to a national distribution small presses could not even dream of offering. "But I fear that my generation and the generation of young writers that follow will look solely to the Northeast for recognition. I fear that we may become accustomed to this very distorted reflection, and that we will find ourselves writing more and more in translation through the filter of Anglo-American censors."

It could not have been said in other words.

Chapter Nine – Hispanic, Female, and Young

I was puzzled when I first opened this anthology and saw some well-established names in it. An anthology with a title such as this one would be catering to an audience wishing to read entirely new voices. If the word “young” is in the title, it suggests quite young, certainly not “relatively” young, or middle aged. So how could they entitle an anthology Hispanic, Female, and Young, and then include some very well known names of Latina writers who weren’t necessarily all that young?

Then I jumped to the conclusion that this title wanted to give the curious, the feeling of a personal ad, something like “Hispanic, Female, and Young, looking for someone to listen to her words.” On the cover there are many shadows of monarch butterflies framing the head and torso of a young woman with big hair looking to one side and holding a yellow legal pad and a sharpened pencil. I was all the more puzzled by this image.

I would also like to point out that the word being used is Hispanic as opposed to Latina, but there is no mention of the reason for this choice in the introduction.

Last but not least, there is the term “female” in the title. I suppose that there was a reason for choosing “Hispanic and young” as opposed to “Latina and young”. The word Latina is already gender specific. Since Hispanic is not gender specific they had to put the word female right after it. Perhaps it was simply because the title would not then have had that threefold quality to it. As it is, the title flows. There is something fast about it.

Hispanic, Female, and Young, was published in 1995 by Arte Público Press, and compiled by Phyllis Tashlik, a public school teacher who was working with teenage writers at the time of publication of this anthology.

My first impressions proved to be totally erroneous after I perused the jacket. As it turned out the words Hispanic, female, and young were not put there to describe the seasoned prize winning authors included in the anthology, but rather a group of twelve eighth grade girls who met with Tashlik in a public school for an elective named “Las Mujeres Hispanas”, a “class designed to introduce Hispanic teenage girls to Hispanic female literature and to their own potential as writers.” (Tashlik 10) That particular situation, could possibly explain the choice of the term Hispanic as opposed to Latina. In all probability many of these girls were dealing with issues such as Hispanic-on-the-dotted-line, so Hispanic was the word of choice, whereas Latina was beginning by then to have far too many connotations.

The well-known or published Latina authors included in this anthology are: Judith Ortiz Cofer, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Carolina Hospital, Carmen Pursifull, Rosa Maria Arenas, Amina Susan Ali, Denise Alcalá, Margarita Engle, Roberta Fernández, Cristina González, Maria Elena Llano, Olga Mendell, Nicholasa Mohr, Pat Mora, Amina Muñoz, Evangelina Vigil Piñón, Rosa Elena Yzquierdo, and Elsa Zambosco. There are a few names here that I have not encountered in any of the anthologies I have read thus far, and other names and texts that I have already encountered several times.

Both of Amina Susan Ali’s texts included here were previously published in Cuentos: Stories by Latinas, and most of the other texts appeared in the now defunct The Americas Review.

This 217-page anthology is divided into nine chapters each devoted to different themes. Chapter 1 is entitled “Remembering our Culture”; Chapter 2: “Lo Mágico y la Realidad”; Chapter 3: La Familia”; Chapter 4: “Memories from Childhood”; Chapter 5: “Growing Up”; Chapter 6: “A Las Mujeres”; Chapter 7: “El Barrio”; Chapter 8: “Prejudice”; and Chapter 9, which is a series of interviews with noted Hispanic women, “Making It.”

Even those above-mentioned categories are becoming quite familiar.

By now it has become obvious that anthologies can be put in different categories. Not all anthologies of writings by women have the same goals in mind. Some are there to put forward a political message, others to present texts that would otherwise never be read, yet others exist so as to showcase the best texts.

In her study of Alfonsina Storni, Rachel Phillips notes that if we take a synchronic and sexist rather than diachronic view of literary history, and consider the women poets who are acknowledged as great, Storni does not figure among them. “. . . by any standard based on poetic achievement, Storni is a figure of minor importance,” (Phillips 121) Phillips writes before asking herself what is to be gained by reading the works of a minor poet.

“It is commonplace that in the work of minor poets the pervading spirit of the times is more clearly reflected than in their outstanding contemporaries.” (Phillips 121)

We have already seen that this is one of the roles that have been attributed to anthologies – to make the lesser voices heard. Phillips then adds that we should be rid of the myth of the woman poet locked into a false category of accomplishment.

Phillips is terse, and takes it straight to the point. There are indeed a few great women poets, and many who write well. “None warrants attention because she is a woman, still less false evaluation according to some stunted canon of feminine achievement.”

Anthologies such as Hispanic, Female, and Young publish voices that would not normally be heard, much less published, the criteria being, precisely, Hispanic, female, and young. Next to these voices it puts voices of a number of published poets, some better known or less minor than others. All this is quite reminiscent of two little words in an essay by the feminist Shoshana Feldman: “She? Who?”

When she undertakes a reading of a text by Balzac (Adieu) that deals with women and madness, in light of feminist theory, Feldman entitles one of the subsection “She? Who?” and points out that the women cannot explain, for they are mad, and cannot therefore understand the questions. This takes us back to Cixous’ notions of madness and women. Feldman then points out that the dichotomy Reason/Madness, as well as Speech/Silence, coincides with the dichotomy Men/Women, and that women are associated with both madness and sadness. Anthologies such as Hispanic, Female, and Young attempt to bring both the already published as well as the young unknown out of this silence.

“If, in our culture, the woman is by definition associated with madness her problem is how to break out of this (cultural) imposition of madness without taking up the critical and therapeutic positions of reason: how to avoid speaking both as mad and not mad. The challenge facing the woman today is nothing less than to re-invent language, to re-learn how to speak . . .” (Feldman 20)

Madness is a recurrent theme in the Latina texts, and the challenge is ever present. The best examples are to be found in the chapter entitled “The magic and the Real.” Carmen

Pursifull ends her poem entitled "The Poltergeist" with the lines, "The neighbors screamed in fear/ as Gertrude flew above the/ splintered glass high/ higher to the sky her broken/ neck tilting an angle of/ goodbye." (Pursifull 41)

The poem by Rosa Maria Arenas in the same chapter is also imbued with this madness and this challenge. "She said witches circling/ she saw herself/ outside broken./ She said witches/ muttering, circling/ She saw herself broken/ and they were putting her/ together, las brujas."

Anthologies such as Hispanic, Female, and Young also have the function of urging women, whether they be authors or not, to write. They urge them to write just as Cixous urges them to write. These anthologies call for women to write their selves. Cixous believes that women must write about women, "and bring women to writing from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies – for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement."

Cixous pursues this idea a little further and calling in a text entitled "The Laugh of the Medusa" that appeared in the anthology of literary theory entitled *Feminisms*. "Write, let no one hold you back, let nothing stop you: not man; not the imbecilic capitalist machinery, in which publishing houses are the crafty, obsequious relayers of imperatives handed down by an economy that works against us and off our backs; and not yourself. Smug-faced readers, managing editors, and big bosses don't like the true texts of women – female-sexed texts. That kind scares them." (Cixous, *Feminisms* 347-348)

Part Four – The Canon and its Making.

For me the word canon is a fascinating word with many branches and nooks and crannies. Webster's Dictionary defines it first as "a rule or law, a standard, a criterion," then "as the books of the Bible that are recognized by the church as inspired." Before it became a list of the most highly recognized authors and their works, the canon was a list or catalog of saints recognized by the church, as well as a rule of faith or discipline, as Webster's dictionary also defines it, especially a rule of faith enacted by a church council and ratified by the Pope in the Roman Catholic Church.

But that is not all. Webster's dictionary also says that when it is capitalized the word Canon is the portion of the mass between the Sanctus and the Lord's Prayer.

Back down to lower case it is also a size of type, four times as large as pica. In music a canon is a composition having voices or parts wherein each voice takes up the same melody, and all combine to make harmony. Last and not least, Webster's dictionary also says that this multifaceted word is one of the metal hoops at the top of a bell, by which it is hung. A canon is also a member of the chapter of a cathedral or collegiate church.

Something that is considered canonical belongs to the canon or scripture. As to the canonical hours, they comprise seven daily periods fixed by canon for prayer and devotion. The noun canonization is defined, also by Webster's dictionary, as the formal enrolling of a deceased and beatified person in the Roman Catholic canon, or calendar of saints. To canonize is to place in the canon or catalog of saints, to declare to be or regard as a saint, to sanction as being conformable to the canons, and, lastly, to glorify.

Robert Scholes takes the word even further back in time and points out that the English word canon descends from the Greek word kanna or reed, and kanon, straight rod, bar, ruler, severe critic. The word cane is also a descendant of kanna but, as Scholes points out, its history is much simpler than that of the word canon that has from ancient times been a repository of a complex set of meanings, mainly acquired by metaphorical extensions of the properties of canes, which are hollow or tubular grasses, some of which are regularly jointed (like bamboo), and some of which have flat, outside coverings. (Scholes 139)

Scholes adds that the reed's tubular channel leads to the association of the word canon with functions that involve forcing liquids or gasses through a pipe. From there he analyzes the Latin meaning of the word.

For Scholes when the word canon means not only a body of received texts, but a list of individuals, saints for that matter, it is an open, not closed system, since new saints can always be added to the list. Scholes believes that this distinction between an open and a closed system is important in current literary disputes over the canon, one side being for a relatively fixed canon, the other defending a relatively open one.

"The nature of the connection between the Christian canon and the literary canon is crucial to our understanding of the present disputes about canonization," (Scholes 141) Scholes writes before going on to analyze the nature of these disputes.

But what has this history of anthologies have to do with the canon, and why conclude this history with a reading of the anthologies in light of canonicity?

Alastair Fowler's distinction between three main types of literary canons, potential, accessible, and selective may very easily be applied to anthologies.

By potential Fowler is referring to all the literature out there, by accessible, to the literature to which readers can have relatively easy access, and by selective, to the accessible literature that trained readers find particularly worthy of attention. According to Alan Golding, Fowler's categories trace, precisely, the narrowing-down process of the selective canon. While some texts, and anthologies for that matter, are kept in print and remain quite accessible, others are relegated to dark, dusty corners of perhaps one library in the entire world. This is one of the main reasons why I have mentioned that it is important to know whether or not an anthology was accessible. The last thing anyone but myself would do is try to track down an anthology that has been out of print for years, whose publishers went broke eons ago, and vestiges of which only remain on either conscientious or outdated bibliographies. But I am moving too fast here and applying the selective category to anthologies simply because they are the object of my study. Otherwise, this would be unthinkable, simply because not that much thought is never given to anthologies.

What Golding explains in his own history of anthologies that one of the means by which the selective canon is formed and re-formed is through the poetry anthology. He then adds that an anthology can "reflect, expand, or redirect a period's canon." (Golding 279)

Thus far, I have been trying to see and to understand how these anthologies are a reflection of the times. I have also looked at them in light of different literary theories, feminist in particular. Now, what I wish to do here, while reading five different anthologies published between 1995 and 2000 is to see how they have affected the ethnic

canon, the feminist canon, and perhaps even this particular period's canon, bearing in mind that perhaps they haven't.

Chapter One – Latina Women’s Voices from the Borderlands

The main reason why I chose this anthology to begin this fourth and last section, on the canon, is because the Introduction begins with the phrase, “Latina literature is not new.” I feel quite a distance away from anthologies such as The Third Woman where Latinas were being presented as some kind of interesting oddity that merited at least some scholarly attention.

The title of this anthology published by Simon and Schuster in 1995 is Latina, whereas the subtitle is Women’s Voices from the Borderland. I mention this because at times it is difficult to get this across because there is no punctuation between “Latina” and “Women’s Voices”. It is also very important to note that this anthology was published by Simon and Schuster, a huge mainstream publisher. To the best of my knowledge no mainstream publisher had taken on the publication of an anthology dedicated solely to Latinas prior to 1995. The only publishers vaguely comparable are Routledge, who published Compañeras: Latina Lesbians. Besides that all the other presses who took this enterprise on for themselves were either university or small presses.

Now it is 1995 and Simon & Schuster has decided to spend some money on Latinas. The editor of this anthology is Lillian Castillo-Speed, an East L.A.-born Chicana who was director of the Chicano Studies Library and head of the three ethnic studies libraries at the University of California, Berkeley, at the time of publication of this anthology.

This quasi 300-page long anthology is divided into three parts: “The Past We Bring With Us”, “Our Land Our Lives”, and “Nuestra Política.” I interpret these three parts as representing the past, the present, and the future.

The Latinas includes in part one are: Ana Castillo, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Sandra Benítez, Cristina García, Aurora Levins Morales, Pat Mora, Patricia Preciado Martín, Patricia Blanco, Kathleen Ann González, and Arlene Mestas. Those in part two are: Judith Ortiz Cofer, Helena María Viramontes, Julia Alvarez, Reid Gómez, Denise Chávez, Lety Martínez Gonzalez, Patricia Zárate, Sandra Cisneros, Achy Obejas, Linda Macías Feyder, Marisella Veiga, Mary Helen Ponce, and Monica Palacios. Those in part three are: Cherrie Moraga, Margarita Engle, Inés Hernández Avila, Lucha Corpi, Gloria Anzaldúa, Esmeralda Santiago, Graciela Limón, Demetria Martinez, and Alma Luz Villanueva.

With a few exceptions, most of these names have already appeared many times in other Latina anthologies. So have the texts, as a matter of fact I am quite surprised to note that many of the same texts are published by different anthologies. I would have expected to see different texts each time, and only occasional repetitions. However, Barbara Herrnstein Smith writes that, "the repeated inclusion of a particular work in literary anthologies not only promotes the value of that work but goes some distance toward creating its value, as does its repeated appearance on reading lists or its frequent citation or quotation by professors, scholars, and academic critics." (Herrnstein Smith 29)

Up until I read what Herrnstein Smith had to say regarding the repeated inclusion of the same work I was under the impression that anthologies would, on the contrary, always make an effort to include different texts. Such does not appear to be the case. And I suppose that it is because anyone interested in Latina literature would buy one anthology, given a choice, probably the thickest one, or two anthologies at the most. No one goes out there and tries to purchase all the anthologies of Latina literature there ever

where. But if they did they would quickly find out that they are buying some texts twice or three times.

The progression is very interesting though, and anyone deciding to take a look at as many Latina anthologies as possible would notice that years, as they go by, inevitably leave some kind of canon in their path. This may not be the epoch's canon, but they certainly form part of some ethnic canon. At this point, with the repetition of some texts, this ethnic canon is indeed a list of both names and texts.

As I already mentioned, the Introduction to this anthology is very short. It simply states that Latina literature is not new, it has been widely anthologized, and published by university presses, small presses, and even major publishing houses. Why? The editor has a simple answer. Readers are intrigued by a literature that claims antecedents in Spanish language Latin American literature, in English language literature, in feminist literature, and in the emerging U.S. minority literatures.

In the second paragraph Castillo-Speed sees it necessary to make it clear that Latina literature is not a literature translated from the Spanish. She writes that Latinas "have taken the English language and have made it their own. It is more than just a combination of English and Spanish: it reflects the reality of women who live in two worlds." (Castillo-Speed 17-18) If Castillo-Speed feels compelled to explain something like this, then we may safely conclude that her target audience is relatively large, and also relatively new to Latina literature.

Castillo-Speed then goes on to explain that the essays and stories in this anthology are arranged into three sections that reflect different aspects of Latinas' lives. Then there are the few sentences that showcase a handful of the compiler's favorite authors, the real

finds. In this case Castillo-Speed mentions Ana Castillo, Cristina García, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Sandra Cisneros, Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, Lucha Corpi, and Julia Alvarez. A few other authors have very little said about them, and yet another few are not mentioned at all in this terse introduction. Finally the Introduction ends with the line, "We are Raquel's daughters, the ones who live in America."

Regretfully, I read the end first and then nearly went crazy trying to figure out who Raquel was. Was this some historical mother figure I had never heard about? I even searched for Rachel's story in the Bible. Then I realized that Raquel is simply the mother of one of the authors.

It is startling to see how much this introduction does not have. It does not clearly state whom it is intended for, although I surmised it, nor does it point out the criteria for selection. Why, indeed, were these particular texts chosen?

In his history of American poetry anthologies Alan Golding alludes to the complexity of the narrowing down process by which a selective canon is achieved. Obviously this process is barely underway as far as Latina literature is concerned. I am not saying that there hasn't been a narrowing down process, for there has to, even an anthology of the worst texts ever written would have to pick the "best" worst ones.

Golding then goes on to describe the conflicting principles of selection that have marked American poetry anthologies from their beginning and that we can easily apply here. These principles are those of preservation (which he considers to be the first step in canon formation), of evaluation, and then of a more limited preservation. These principles are conflicting because while preservation is inclusive, evaluation cannot but be exclusive.

Once again, even the preservation process has to have an element of exclusion if not we would have anthologies as big as phone books. Golding writes that the task of weighing historical inclusiveness against evaluation and exclusiveness is especially difficult.

I believe that this is precisely the task with which anthologists of Latina literature are faced with today. On the one hand there is this effort to preserve and showcase, on the other there is a risk of losing all credibility if being Latina becomes the only principle of selection. This is why I feel that at this point it is important for anthologists of Latina literature to clearly state their principles of selection.

For a while one of the principal uses of these anthologies was to build a sense of identity. This does not go without dangers. Golding writes that when poetry's function in America was to provide a national identity, "The poetry that stood the best chance of being collected and widely disseminated through anthologies offered comforting and homely truths and affirmed the culture's sense of self." (Golding 280)

One can argue that there is no problem with this, but the term "homely truths just does not sound good. I think that this is precisely what Cherrie Moraga is warning us about in her essay "Art in America con Acento." We have already encountered this text and we know quite well that Moraga never sugarcoats what she has to say so it is quite pleasant, and even fun, to quote her. She does indeed say what no one else even dares to think.

So in this essay Moraga reminds us that the majority of Chicano writers today are the product of an era of activism, "but as the Movement grew older and more established, it became neutralized by middle-aged and middle class concerns, as well as by a growing conservative trend in government."

Three paragraphs later Moraga adds that, "Censorship is becoming increasingly institutionalized, not only through government programs, but through transnational corporate ownership of publishing houses, record companies etc." (Moraga, Latina 216-217) Here, Moraga is alluding to what is at stake when a major publisher such as Simon & Schuster decides to publish an anthology of Latina literature. With a corporate giant such as this one it is not certain that the Latina writers can fulfill what Moraga considers to be their task – writing what no one is prepared to hear.

The decision to publish Latinas can very well make a corporate giant appear enlightened, diversity-hungry, and open-minded. But what is the product and what is the price to pay for the recognition? For Moraga the product is what she deems a "distorted reflection". She even writes in italics that, "An art that subscribes to integration into mainstream America is not Chicano art." (Moraga, Latina 218)

I will not try to determine whether or not this anthology published by Simon & Schuster renders this distorted reflection or succeeds in making banal and soft the texts in question, for I dare not eat that peach.

What I do dare to say is that as far as this anthology is concerned (and others also) there seems to be an effort to avoid value judgments, and even to steer clear away from the question of value and evaluation.

According to Barbara Herrnstein Smith efforts to tackle the questions of value and judgment have come primarily from feminist critics seeking to subject the canon to dramatic revaluation. "Although their efforts have been significant to that end, they have not, however, amounted as yet to the articulation of a well-developed noncanonical theory of value and evaluation." (Herrnstein Smith 11)

This noncanonical theory of value and evaluation is something that has yet to come, if it ever does come, for it might not necessarily do so. We might never dare. In her essay entitled “Contingencies of Value” Herrnstein Smith quotes Northrop Frye who writes that, “Milton is a more rewarding and suggestive poet to work with than Blackmore. But the more obvious this becomes, the less time he (the critic) will want to waste belaboring the point.” (Herrnstein Smith 12)

Herrnstein Smith notes that the function and even the value of Blackmore’s epic poem, “The Creation,” have been to stand as an instance of bad poetry. Immediately after that she states that this, “evades the more difficult and consequential questions of judgment posed by genuine evaluative diversity and conflict: questions that are posed, for example, by specific claims of value made for noncanonical works (such as modern texts, especially highly innovative ones, and such culturally exotic works as oral or tribal literature, popular literature, and “ethnic” literature) and also by judgments of literary value made by or on behalf of what might be called noncanonical or culturally exotic audiences.” (Herrnstein Smith 12)

These topics and debates could become all the more interesting were they to be taken inside the belly of the noncanonical beast. Just like the little Blackmore is put next to big Milton, and poor Edgar Guest next to Shakespeare, one tiny, obscure representative of an ethnic literature could be placed next to another less tiny one. Maybe Moraga and Anzaldúa will give us a selective/revised/exclusive anthology before they depart.

Chapter Two – Daughters of the Fifth Sun

In an essay entitled “The Making of the Modernist Canon” Hugh Kenner reminds us that Jorge Luis Borges once said that writers invent their predecessors. Thus far I have seen our Latinas play the roles of daughters often. They have been the daughters of la chingada, of Our Lady of Guadalupe, of Adelita the warrior woman, of Anacaona, and of Sor Juana, just to name a few. Here, they are the daughters of the fifth sun, but what is this fifth sun? Simply the present age, Bryce Milligan, one of the three editors of this anthology, explains. (The other two editors being Mary Guerrero Milligan and Angela de Hoyos)

“One sacred belief of the Aztec, the Maya, the Quiché, and other indigenous peoples of the Americas, ancient and modern, is that the universe has known five ages. The present age is known as the Fifth Sun, Quinto Sol.” (Milligan, Milligan, Hoyos 17)

So, here, in this anthology that Maria Hinojosa considers to be a groundbreaking book, they are the daughters of the fifth sun.

In her foreword Maria Hinojosa quickly explains why it is “groundbreaking.” With this anthology both Latinas and non-Latinas “alike now have an opportunity to see the breadth and history of a tradition of stories and poems that were once limited to sofas and kitchen tables.” (Hinojosa xiii) Before proceeding to describe her own experiences as a U.S. Latina Hinojosa affirms that this book gives voice to both the godmothers and the goddaughters. The rest of the foreword summarizes Hinojosa’s own experiences as a Latina. She was the last of four children and just a little baby when her family decided to pursue her father’s dream and move to America.

Although she didn't do much reading as a child, by the late 70's Hinojosa and her Latina friends had discovered the male Latin American writers. Finally she discovered Elena Poniatowska and one thing led to another. Before long she was reading Sor Juana, and she finally got to the contemporary women writers of Latin America such as Gioconda Belli and Isabel Allende.

Then one day Hinojosa recalls that a friend asked her if she had heard about Cherrie Moraga. "Cherrie is now one of the *madrinas*," Hinojosa explains, "but back when I read her she was the first U.S. Latina I had ever heard of who had been published." (Hinojosa xv)

Fifteen years have elapsed since *This Bridge Called my Back* was published, and we are still talking about Cherrie Moraga and her groundbreaking anthology. Hinojosa states the many ways in which she identifies with Moraga before making it very clear, that, however, she is not a lesbian. As a matter of fact she then adds that she sees herself in every one of the writers in this anthology. But before going on to give a few brief statements about a handful of the writers she continues talking about her own experiences as a Latina.

Finally Hinojosa quotes one of Ana Castillo's multi-layered sentences. It reminds her of the ones she used to write as a student, which came back from her teacher "with big red marks saying run-on sentence! Please rewrite! And with each rewrite I would silently convince myself that the teachers were right. That these kinds of sentences were wrong and bad. That I could not write in English. That this was not my language and never would be. But it's not so. English is the language of these writers," (Hinojosa xviii) Hinojosa affirms.

Since Hinojosa feels compelled to say that English is the language of these authors, the target audience for this anthology is not necessarily an initiated one. For the second time in 1995 a mainstream publishing company is showcasing Latinas. In his Introduction that immediately follows Hinojosa's brief Foreword, the three editors affirm that this book is unique. "Nineteen ninety-five marks the appearance of the first anthology of Latina writing to be issued by one of the major New York publishing houses." (Milligan, Milligan, Hoyos 1)

In the previous chapter I examined another anthology -- Latina Women's Voices from the Borderlands -- that was published that same year, by Simon and Schuster. Either the editors of Daughters were unaware of it, or Daughters came out in the spring and Latina Women's Voices in the fall. I believe it is timely to present these two anthologies in the fourth section that deals with canon inclusion/exclusion, because with these two anthologies, precisely, the editors are not only building a Latina canon, but also claiming inclusion to another, larger canon, the canon of American literature. Obviously this is not said right out, but it is often implied. The editors urge the reader to read on and discover what they have been missing thus far, not only stories and poems full of energy and imagination, but works of high craft.

"Until very recently," the editors write in the Introduction, "twentieth century academic literary criticism more often than not described ethnic American literature as parochial, politically driven, and generally as being only a generation or two removed from a living tradition -- all criticisms aimed, consciously or unconsciously, at somehow negating the validity of such writing as literature." So they are implicitly or explicitly laying claim to some kind of canon inclusion. They are stating that this is literature, but

that it has not, to date, been recognized as so. With this anthology its time seems to have come.

The editors add that Latinas have suffered more from invisibility than from criticism. With the publication of this anthology, invisibility visibly ceases to be the problem it once was. But the editors warns us not to come to the conclusion that the international acclaim that some Latinas have reached means that they have reached a level of acceptance on par with their mainstream peers. All but a few stars continue to be relegated to the obscurity of the small presses and literary magazines. The result is that only rarely do individual titles achieve noteworthy sales.

At times the canon and sales seem to mesh into each other. I will try not to confuse them, although there are times when they do seem to go hand in hand. One could easily argue that the canon is formed in the university. But what Latinas are taught in the university? The names that appear most often are Castillo, Cisneros, and Alvarez, precisely those with the best sales. So a bold line never separates the canon and sales.

For the rest of the introduction the editors retrace the history behind these Latinas in an effort to answer the question, "Did this literature evolve, or did it just spring fully grown from el vientre de la raza – the womb of the people?"

This anthology is not divided into sections of any kinds. We do not find here the traditional prose, poetry, essay, or past, present, future, division. The authors are not presented in alphabetical order either, which means that this anthology has some internal logical progression of its own, that the editors, however, do not elicit. I do not know what made them put one author before the other. In any case the majority of the authors showcased here are well known.

They are, in the order in which they appear: Denise Chávez, Pat Mora, Miriam Bornstein, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Rosemary Catacalos, Evangelina Vigil-Piñón, Enedina Cásarez Vásquez, Margarita Engle, Gloria Anzaldúa, Deborah Parédez, Lucha Corpi, Teresinka Pereira, Nicole Pollentier, Julia Alvarez, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Sheila Sánchez Hatch, Alma Luz Villanueva, Sandra Cisneros, Gloria Vando, Rosario Ferré, Marjorie Agosín, Angela de Hoyos (one of the three editors), Mireya Robles, Cecile Pineda, Bernice Zamora, Maya Islas, Carmen Tafolla, Eliana Suárez Rivero, Mary Guerrero Milligan (another one of the three editors), Inés Martínez, Cherrie Moraga, and Ana Castillo. A total of 32 authors.

Daughters of the Fifth Sun was available for quite a few years, but it is out of print at the present time. However, it is easily accessible in libraries.

Chapter Three – Máscaras

One question that comes to mind in this fourth section, where the Latina literature anthologies are to be considered in light canon formation, is whether or not Latinas have a claim to inclusion in the canon of American literature. Another question has to do with deciding if this claim has been acknowledged.

We can easily agree with Arnold Krupat when he writes in his essay entitled “Native American Literature and the Canon” that the canon is established primarily by the professorate. Most, if not all, of the compilers of Latina anthologies I have come across thus far belong to academe.

In this analysis of the anthology Máscaras, published in 1997 by Third Woman Press, and compiled by the writer and teacher Lucha Corpi, I would like to apply Krupat’s essay to Latina literature. While reading Krupat I realized that I could very often replace “Indian literature” with “Latina literature” and end up with as insightful an essay.

Máscaras is a 200-page anthology that is still in print and quite accessible. On the back cover it there is a black and white passport-like photo of Corpi smiling and three little paragraphs next to it praising this work. The first paragraph says that this anthology “brings together some of the most talented contemporary Latina writers in the United States.” Now the reason I quote the back cover is that the word “talent” is used, a word that thus far has been used quite sparingly.

The last paragraph says that this anthology is a “major contribution to making known the growing body of Latina’s work and their claim to an integral belonging to the cultural heritage of the Americas and the United States.” Now the reason why I am quoting this particular paragraph is that it uses the words “major” and “claim.” To date there has been

much clamor, but not much claim. Moreover, those two little words are intimately related to canonical issues.

I dwell on those three little paragraphs because the introduction to this anthology is not even a page and a half long and does not answer most of the questions I now have when I open an anthology. Corpi does, however, state that the aim of this anthology is to open up new avenues toward an appreciation of Latinas' work and to provide a greater understanding of their literature and its diversity. Corpi therefore invited the fifteen authors included here to write about what they considered to be the most crucial aspect of their work.

The fifteen authors are: Judith Ortiz Cofer, Bernice Zamora, Alma Luz Villanueva, Cecile Pineda, Roberta Fernández, Marjorie Agosín, Mary Helen Ponce, Sandra Cisneros, Helena Maria Viramontes, Gloria Vando, Ana Castillo, Angela de Hoyos, Naomi Quiñones, Cherrie Moraga, and Julia Alvarez, in that order. They are not arranged alphabetically, or chronologically, or even thematically. Corpi writes that she let her intuition guide her to what she believes to be an organic ordering.

In reference to Native American literature Krupat writes that to admire it and urge its inclusion in the canon would mean to question those Euro-centric texts of the canon as well as the authority of the text in general,

"[...] and thus to propose a revision not only of the literary but of the social order. For the canon, like all cultural production, is never an innocent selection of the best that has been thought and said; rather, it is the institutionalization of those particular verbal artifacts that appear best to convey and sustain the dominant social order." (Krupat 310)

I am applying these notions to the anthology Máscaras because the small press that published it is precisely making claims to the inclusion of these Latinas in the Latin American as well as the United States literary canon. They can claim both for they have a foot in each one of the two worlds.

Krupat adds that Native American literature may have approached the margins of the canon, "as American society has marginally begun to approach the possibility of racial and sexual equality." (Krupat 311) I can affirm that the same applies for Latina literature.

But let's now read some of the essays included in Máscaras alongside all this theory.

The title of Judith Ortiz Cofer's essay is a question, "And Are You a Latina Writer?" Yet another question that can be found within the essay is, "Where does your work belong in the American literature canon?" Cofer replies that she is glad to have to consider that question at all. "I feel that I risk hubris in addressing it. I believe that the work of Latina writers, myself included, belongs, if it is judged worthy enough, alongside the work of other American writers whose work reflect the concerns of women experiencing our time." (Cofer 14)

It goes without saying that this is a very delicate question to ask an author, or "of" an author. Finally what Cofer says here is that her work belongs with other works on the margins of the American canon, but what else could she say without risking hubris indeed? The most important aspect here is the question finally, and she says so, since she is glad to have to consider the question.

Bernice Zamora takes us back to what Krupat was saying relative to the canon, "Literary history, like social history, is being reconsidered in our educational system, I

know, but not quickly enough to effect valuable change or to offset the lateral shifts defined as change.” (Zamora, Máscaras 30)

Could that possibly mean that if change does not come quickly enough it will no longer be valuable change?

For Krupat what the pedagogical canon includes from the past and from the present ratifies the present and legitimates the past. He does not mention how time, interferes or affect this process, although in his study of Native American literatures in the canon he begins describing the attitudes during the frontier days and ends with the 60's and the 70's.

What Krupat also refers to are “authoritative” anthologies. I have not seen that adjective applied to any of the anthologies that have been taken into consideration in this study. Apparently the first authoritative volume of Native American verse goes back to 1918, a date that makes me hesitate. I am well aware that many of the Mexican writers were here long before, but in reading Krupat's essay I have noticed that the road taken by the native American literatures has been long, and perhaps even congested.

Reading all these Latina literature anthologies in a space of a year or so has made me come to the conclusion that things are happening fast, but perhaps this is just a sensory illusion. My subject has put me in the heart of the matter, and since I have been considering this matter with such attention, perhaps I simply have the impression that it is vibrant and flowing. When I read Krupat's essay I feel that the Native American literatures are still in their canonical beginnings. This probably also goes for the Latina literatures, so Zamora could be right, things are not moving quickly enough. At the same

time, could they? Doesn't the literature in question have to mature? Can one really demand instant glorification?

Zamora adds that,

“Our creative literature is far superior to what critics have perceived it as having – no traits or characteristics at all unusual in the standard refrain. At best, our critics are paying submissive attention to a literature they clearly do not comprehend. I believe this accounts, too, for the dramatic loss of interest on the part of Chicano and Chicana students to pursue, more vigorously, writing as a career.” (Zamora 32)

Personally I think that Zamora is going too fast and coming to either hasty or emotional conclusions. It is too easy to say that if the critics don't like us it is because they do not understand us. This would mean that everyone deserves to be canonized, and that only the misunderstood fail to appear on the glorious list.

I am beginning to swim in dangerous waters here. These waters are within and they are without. What is all this growing interest in Latina literature and its claims to inclusion in the pedagogical canon? Is it simply a trend or a political tactic? John Guillory writes in a very insightful essay that we refuse to think of the literary work for some extrinsic reason,

“[...] such a possibility can be conceived only as propaganda or censorship [...] When I say, then, that it seems unlikely that the formation of canons is wholly removed from the field of ideological conflict, not much is being asserted [...] If it were possible to form a canon of texts with the easy assurance that only the best literature survives, such a canon would have a structure and genealogy like that of aristocracy in its idealized form [...]” Guillory, Canons 338)

What if, on the other hand, some are making claims to inclusion just because the political circumstances are ripe, but the texts themselves, however, are not?

Zamora concludes that her first task will be to commit herself “to the touchy subject of escaping literary criticism’s mandated limitations, linguistic for example.” (Zamora 33)

I am not taking sides, but what could these linguistic limitations be? Could she be referring, simply, to good English?

If that is the case other Latina authors do not seem to feel these same limitations. “My fetish with English – good, proper English – was also drilled into me at home. My older siblings, especially my sisters, spoke good English, taking care to enunciate each word,” writes Mary Helen Ponce.

In the following paragraph Ponce adds, “English was the language in which I absorbed knowledge. English was the language of fun!”

I am quoting those particular passages from Máscaras because it is one of the first times I have heard the English language praised, and even loved. It is also one of the first times I have come across a concern for good English. Up until now most of the texts have expressed what English could not say, because it was the outside language, almost that of the enemy, as opposed to Spanish, the language of the soul and of the body.

English, however, is very important when one is claiming inclusion to the canon of American literature. How could it be any other way?

The title of this anthology is Máscaras. Once again, we have a Spanish title for an anthology that presents English language texts. The target audience is therefore a bilingual or Hispanophile one. Máscaras means masks. On the cover there is a woman

dressed in black leather, smoking a cigarette and wearing one of those old, theatre masks. We know that “persona” means mask. We also know that the French personne means “no one.”

There is also a possible play on words or fun being had with the word máscaras. Were it not for that acute accent on the “a” someone who speaks no Spanish at all could read it as “mascaras”, a beauty product that promises long, thick eyelashes, and therefore a valuable addition to every woman’s makeup bag. Mascara is usually black, or dark blue, and it is precisely this darkness added to the viscous tarry texture that transforms meaningless eyelashes. Part of the secret is making them darker. The mask on the cover of this anthology, however, is black, and it has long, white eyelashes.

Chapter Four – Floricanto, Si!

In his introduction to this anthology Bryce Milligan remarks that, “there is a Penguin anthology on just about every topic of interest to some group of readers somewhere on the planet. It says a lot that this is the first Penguin anthology devoted to Latina literature in the United States.” (Milligan, *Floricanto* xxxiv)

Had David Palumbo-Liu read the lines above he would have interpreted Penguin’s decision to publish this Latina poetry as a “call for diversity” or a “championing of diversity.” Lately, our society seems to have been hearing this call loud and clear, and certainly heeding to it, for diversity seems to be heralded everywhere.

Everything about it, we hear, or we are told, is good. This is not altogether a new call, however, for both Milligan and Palumbo-Liu trace it back to the racial unrest of the 60’s that made institutions want to accommodate and even neutralize certain race questions and problems. Palumbo-Liu adds that Cameron McCarthy argued that multi-cultural education was a kind of truce.

All this makes the ever-present call to diversity what Palumbo-Liu would consider to be a symptom of a larger phenomenon, a way of managing a crisis.

Although the roots of this call to diversity go back or down to the 60’s, Palumbo-Liu traces them all the way up (since we are speaking of roots) to the early late 80’s and early 90’s. It was in 1989 that the Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole at the time made a few statements concerning America’s workforce that would be seeing more and more minority groups and women. Palumbo-Liu therefore concludes, “it is also clear that the

call for diversity was implicated within the program for creating an efficient workforce by way of creating a positive climate for workers. The gains made in these areas – affirmative action, Head Start Programs, and so on – can be put to work in a number of ways.” (Palumbo-Liu 8)

I may be slightly straying away from Floricanto, Si! but I believe it is very important to understand what it means to have Penguin agree to publish an anthology of Latina poetry. It is by no means innocent, for the call to diversity is not innocent. Canons, therefore, must be considered within precise historical moments, and how they serve the cultural politics of the time.

Palumbo-Liu even adds that the reading of ethnic literature “can be seen to set a stage for the performance of difference – race relations are made manageable and students are able to relate to diverse and highly differentiated experiences by reducing differences to individual encounters via ethnic texts [...] The point of such readings of ethnic literature is therefore to ‘understand’ difference as a general phenomenon and subsume it under other categories that do not radically obstruct the smooth functioning of social apparatuses.” (Palumbo-Liu 11)

But let us return to the anthology before I completely ruin the party and the good feeling that comes with starting to believe that there is such a thing as intellectually and racially generous big companies such as Penguin, because they are eager to publish Latina poetry.

Floricanto, Si! A Collection of Latina Poetry was published by Penguin Books in 1998, and edited by Bryce Milligan, Mary Guerrero Milligan, and Angela de Hoyos. Although the roots of the title are Mexican, and refer to the Spanish equivalent of the

Nanuatl word for poetry (xochicuicatl), Latinas of many origins are included here, a total of 47.

Up to now I have listed all the names included in the anthologies I am taking into consideration, so here are the 47 names, listed in alphabetical order, as they are presented, they do indeed begin to trace a canon of Latina literature: Teresa Palomo Acosta, Marjorie Agosín, Julia Alvarez, Gloria Anzaldúa, Miriam Bornstein, Gianninna Braschi, Norma Cantú, Ana Castillo, Rosemary Catacalos, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Lisa Chávez, Sandra Cisneros, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Lucha Corpi, Silvia Curbelo, Angela de Hoyos, Rosario Ferré, Alicia Galván, Victoria Garcia-Galaviz, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Celeste Guzmán, Sheila Sánchez Hatch, Maya Islas, Maria Limón, Rita Magdaleno, Demetria Martinez, Pat Mora, Elvia Padilla, Anabella Paiz, Deborah Parédez, Teresinka Pereira, Cecile Pineda, Pina Pipino, Nicole Pollentier, Beatriz Rivera, Eliana Suárez Rivero, Carmen Gimenez Roselló, Beverly Sanchez- Padilla, Raquel Valle Senties, Carmen Tafolla, Sheila Ortiz Taylor, Gina Valdés, Gloria Vando, Enedina Cásarez Vásquez, Evangelina Vigil-Piñón, Alma Luz Villanueva, and Bernice Zamora.

The great majority of these names should be familiar by now. Very few of them did not appear in either Latina: Women's Voices from the Borderlands, Daughters of the Fifth Sun, Máscaras, In Other Words, or Infinite Divisions.

In his introduction Bryce Milligan affirms that the criteria for inclusion were aesthetic quality and cultural depth. It was in three stages that either the poems or the authors were selected: certain poems were chosen for their historical or aesthetic value, some authors were formally invited to submit, and finally other poems were chosen as a product of an open call for submissions.

As far as the cultural depth is concerned I cannot help but continue to read this introduction in light of Palumbo-Liu's own introduction to The Ethnic Canon. It is important because he attempts to take the sentimental blindfold away. One immediately assumes that ethnic texts are authentic representations of a specific group. For Palumbo-Liu such a reading produces a mystified understanding of difference. And if they are now a critical "part of what constitutes the American literary canon, legitimizing liberal education's general claim to diversity and openness, then the positioning of the study of ethnic literature becomes a crucial question not only for literary studies but for the reading of race and ethnicity in the United States." (Palumbo-Liu 14)

Milligan also underlines the importance of diversity by writing, "The question is often raised why anthologies like this one gather a single group of writers – Latinas, in this case – if the result of the gathering is to emphasize diversity within the group. One answer is simple: for the most part, Latina poetry is simply not available at the average American bookstore." I am not sure in what way Milligan answers his own question but a few lines later he adds that the mainstream views Latino writers as exotic and therefore appealing to a defined market.

"The market is made narrower when gender is added to the equation. The nails are firmly in the coffin when these double minority writers are writing poetry, the least lucrative of all literary genres. Thus Latina poetry, unless it comes from a writer whose reputation has been previously established [...]" (Milligan, Floricante xxii) With statements such as those Milligan is indeed bringing to the surface various issues that have to do directly with canon formation, and exclusion.

We keep on turning, like hungry sharks, around the canon with a capital “C”, without ever touching it altogether, or getting a big chunk out of it. Nothing to fret about, however, this is normal. Making the canon the theme of this fourth and last section does not go without its difficulties. My attempt here is not to read texts in light of canon inclusion/exclusion, nor to try to guess who will be in and who will not, nor to even compare the quality of the work of different Latina writers (I dare not eat that peach), but to try to see how the anthologists refer to the canon in their introductions, and the many allusions that exist in reference to it.

First of all, Milligan mentions that many Latina authors are not to be found in the average bookstore. This is certainly reminiscent of the question: what is to be preserved and what is not? It is also reminiscent of Eliot in his address on minor poetry when he defines minor poetry, not so much as failed or lesser poetry, but as poetry that is only to be read in an anthology. Milligan is, however, forgetting that as far as poetry is concerned every poet belongs to a double or triple minority, this concern or “place” does not only belong to Latinas. There can be no call to arms, all poets regardless of race, color, or creed, are in the same boat.

The poetry in Floriscanto, Si! is not divided according to themes, nor are there chapters, of headlines such as: Chicanas, Cubanas, and what not. The poets are presented in alphabetical order, the most insipid of orders as Roland Barthes once wrote. The themes are present nonetheless, and they are the eternal ones.

First of all there is the question of identity. Thus far I have not considered it in its relation to the canon. But the relation is nonetheless there, as we will see. Whether this be a search for identity or an affirmation of it, or an effort to self-name, one has to have a

name in order to be added to a list. Milligan, precisely, introduces this theme of the name after having asked the question: What constitutes Latina-ness?

Milligan mentions that one Latina writer included in this anthology, Ana Castillo, has taken a scholarly interest in the matter of identity. She describes herself as mestiza/Mexic Amerindian and affirms that the terms Latina or Hispanic can neither be summarized nor neatly categorized. According to Milligan, Castillo is in a sense defining identity by exclusion, "I am she who does not appear, Castillo writes, "in canonical American literature, in American media, on the cover of American fashion magazines." (Castillo, Floricanto xxv)

Perhaps canonical American literature knows political correctness and affirmative action, the American media does too, once in a while. Fashion magazines, however, ignore affirmative action. One can stake no claims. I ignore if Castillo wants this "I" to be collective or individual. If it is collective she is wrong. Castillo's face does not appear on the cover of American fashion magazines, but other Latinas' faces and bodies do. Beauty has its own canon, and just because Castillo does not appear on that list does not imply that all Latinas are excluded from it. Unfortunately, she who does not appear on the cover of fashion magazines does not belong there. It is as simple as that and does not go any deeper. In fact, many Latina faces can be seen on the cover of fashion magazines.

It would be a lucky thing to be able to define identity by exclusion. Not appearing, being hated, being considered as a threat. If the poetry does not appear it couldn't possibly be because it is no good. The same goes for the face. Every face can have its claim to beauty. The ones left out can declare themselves all the more beautiful for it.

Self-definition and self-naming both focus on identity issues. The identity issues or problems, in turn, make it necessary to choose predecessors. Milligan quotes one of the authors, Beverly Sánchez-Padilla who writes, "An identity problem is obvious," in her poem entitled "Mali."

"Mali", of course, refers to Malintzín, or Malinche and the poem asks who this woman was. The mother? The whore? The traitor? The violated? Who is the predecessor? The next question is, should they listen to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and think of her as a mother or as a victim? Sor Juana, in turn, is another predecessor, as is Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the numerous Aztec goddesses.

Other issues concerning Latina writers, issues that we have covered in many preceding chapters include: bilingualism, the choice of a language in which to write, love, sexuality, homosexuality, family, politics, human rights, racism, and living on the hyphen or the border.

Milligan concludes his introduction to this anthology by writing, "Floricanto, Si! celebrates the individual, diverse voices of this group because within this amazing multiplicity we find a new poetic sensibility emerging from a still-evolving mestiza consciousness. We are watching an ancient nebula birth new stars."

Everything is new and emerging, yet it also seems to reach far back in time, to its predecessors. It claims inclusion and demands attention. "On what ship did you arrive/ eating apple pie/ attempting to nail fifty stars/ in the hearts of your Latino students?/ The trade is made: linguistic examples/ for bells and glass beads of assimilation,/ the promise of the American dream on a diploma." That is how Miriam Bornstein's poem entitled "To a Linguist Studying Discourse Strategies of Bilingual/Bicultural Students" begins.

The promise of the American dream can also be to be included in an anthology where the differences are affirmed and yelled out, and there is the assurance that it is being read and that it is subverting the readers. John Guillory reminds us that what the new poet threatens is disorder, and every new poet is probably convinced that this threat is his or her precious wild card.

Floricanto, Si! is the second to the last anthology I will be taking into consideration, it will soon bring this study to a close. In another way, it does bring it to a close because it is the last anthology published by a mainstream publisher that I will be taking into consideration. I think we have seen how small presses differ from their larger counterparts. The last anthology I will be reading was published by a university press, so some of the issues involving the canon and canonization will be slightly different.

In fact, very few anthologies of Latina literature were published by mainstream publishers, so I think this is a good opportunity to consider what comes with anthologizing and conceptualizing a collection.

Rarely does anyone delve into what I would call a theory of anthologies. I have looked far and wide and found very few reflections on these handy gift and survey books. In an essay included in The Ethnic Canon Barbara Christian delves into what so-called ethnic or minority anthologies are about. For her their making is fraught with both possibilities and contradictions. "Anthologies are often the mode by which categories such as racial, ethnic, regional, linguistic, gendered, and political affiliations take on visibility," Christian writes before adding that, "It is important, particularly now, to think about what these differentiated constructs signify in this age of official multiculturalism." (Christian 244)

Although Christian concentrates on the shaping of an anthology of Caribbean women writers, many of her considerations can be applied to the shaping of Latina anthologies. Christian finds it “exhilarating” that Caribbean women can be so “variously characterized,” and even makes reference to a “multiplicity of selves.”

However, Christian then wonders to what extent these categories liberate the voices in the women in question. “Is there a false unity camouflaging dominance and subordination for various groups of women writers depending on the category within which they are studied?” (Christian 244)

In other words, does it make a big difference if an editor decides to have an anthology of Black women, as opposed to ones of lesbians, or as opposed to one of Black lesbians, or of republicans, or of right wing native American lesbians? I think it does, for in wanting to showcase something in particular the slant is there, each and every time. An anthologist wishes to point out that something exists, something that not enough readers seem to be aware of.

Subsequently, Christian wonders to what extent anthologies reproduce modes of exclusion or dominance. “Who are the users and the used, the communicators, the consumers, the audience?” (Christian 244)

In order to deal with questions such as these Christian focuses on anthologies such as This Bridge Called My Back and Infinite Divisions and comes to the conclusion that there are two different group of anthologies. One group she calls the “Metropolitic frame” in which the ethnic writers are included in a frame wider than that of their specific identity. In this group she places Anzaldúa’s Infinite Divisions. The second group she calls “Placed and Displaced Caribbeans.” She does not place any of the anthologies I

have studies here in this group, mainly because she is more concerned with the English speaking Caribbean. She does, however, put in this second group an anthology entitled Green Cane and Juicy Flotsam edited by two Latinas, Lizabeth Paravisini and Carmen Estevez. The reason I have not included that anthology in our list is that in spite of having been edited by two Latinas it is not an anthology of U.S. Latinas.

Christian defines her second group "Placed and Misplaced" as the one that includes anthologies generated by varying concepts of what it means to be a Caribbean woman. Although Floriscanto, Si! is in no way limited to Caribbean women, it could be placed in this second category or group, in that it attempts to put forward this multiplicity, this diversity, and this plurality of selves.

Chapter Five -- Puro Teatro

This is the last anthology I will be reading here. At first I was slightly disappointed that I would be ending this journey with an anthology dedicated solely to the theatre. Not that I have anything against the theatre, but it often comes in last, after novels, short stories, testimonies, poetry and essays, and by last I mean last in importance. But then I remembered Aristotle, who had so much to say about the art of imitation, and discovered soon after that he had a sister named Arimneste who either failed to talk, or was not allowed to do so, or both.

In an essay included in Canons, Lawrence Lipking writes that if Arimneste had read the Poetics, “[...] her one chance for self-recognition would have come in Chapter 15 with the description of good and appropriate characters.” Lipking then quotes the Stagirite who believed that, “A character may be brave, but it is not appropriate for a woman to be brave or clever.”

Arimneste’s silence, however, could be considered a rare piece of good fortune, according to Lipking, at least for her younger sisters, daughters, and granddaughters because, “No dead hand of tradition grips feminist literary theory. Its time is the present.” (Lipking 86-87)

This relative newness does nevertheless come with some problems, one of them being, according to Lipking, that feminist literary critics know no mothers. Up to now we have delved on the subject of mothers and how Latinas, in their search or affirmation of an identity, felt compelled to name and point to their predecessors. Since in many ways creative works are poetics in themselves, one could be led to believe that Latina feminist

criticism is not motherless. Would they agree with Lipking when he affirms that a well-grounded woman's poetics remains to be written?

Questions such as these, that broaden the whole subject and make it look to new beginnings, make ending with the theatre quite timely. Aristotle's Poetics aimed at defining tragedy and comedy, and his sister failed to speak because mythos was barred to women.

Now we have this puro teatro with no theory that transcends not only disciplines but also the social order. The theatre requires all kinds of people, from famous playwrights to marginal backstage personnel. In their introduction to Puro Teatro the editors tell how most if not all the Latinas in this anthology moved from their marginal positions backstage and "altered the face of ethnic theatre in this country."

Puro Teatro was published The University of Arizona Press and edited by Alberto Sandoval-Sánchez and Nancy Saporta Sternbach (Breaking Boundaries). It features twenty contributors: Dolores Prida, Cherrie Moraga (Shattering the Myth), Elaine Romero, Alicia Mena, Silviana Wood, Janis Astor del Valle, Yareli Arizmendi, Wilma Bonet, Amparo García crow, Monica Palacios, Laura Esparza, Maria Mar, Diane Rodriguez, Caridad Svich (Shattering the Myth), Susana Tubert, Edit Villareal (Shattering the Myth), Migdalia Cruz (Shattering the Myth), Hilary Blecher, Carmelita Tropicana, and Uzi Parnes.

I chose to indicate which of the contributors here also appeared in Shattering the Myth since Shattering the Myth is the only other anthology of plays I have analyzed here. Just a reminder, six plays were featured in Shattering the Myth, four out of the six authors appear in Puro Teatro.

After all the anthologies we've read and all the names we have seen again and again, there seem to be new names in Puro Teatro. Once again, this is probably due to the fact that theatre tends to be put to one side, and is not given as much attention as other disciplines. Names that may be new here for me could very well be familiar to the theatre buffs.

The title is in Spanish. In fact the whole presentation would probably not appeal to someone who knows nothing about Latinas or Hispanic in general. The words "puro" and "teatro" are not household words like enchilada or sombrero that someone who knows no Spanish can grasp. As to the cover, someone not knowing what it refers to could find it irreverent. For me it is a parody of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and of all Virgins with a capital "V", for it could also be the Cuban Caridad del Cobre. Anyway, here is this "ethnic" looking Virgin wearing a bikini made of roses, her arms akimbo, standing in front of what appears to be a Mayan stele, being held up by a diminutive woman who is half Monarch butterfly. There is a red velvet curtain in the background and a deliberate search for bad taste. The words Puro Teatro are in bold black with a yellow background. The anthology is over 400 pages long.

The introduction is quite short (3 ½ pages) but up to the point. It begins by describing how Latinas have managed to move forward in the theatre, from marginal backstage positions, to an adolescent voice, and now to a voice all their own. This anthology, however, instead of calling attention to ethnicity seeks to address these playwrights as women in order to show how, "once gender inflected, theatrical representations centering on women's issues began to emerge. Thus, when read together, Latina plays form a

corpus of work with its own patterns and traits, common to each play but vastly different from plays written by men.” (Sandoval Sánchez, Sternbach xii)

In the following paragraph the editors explain why they chose the term *Latina* as opposed to *Hispanic* or other terms.

Two criteria informed the editors’ decisions when it came deciding which plays to include. First of all the plays had to have both artistic and literary merit. Secondly, they had to “represent a broad cross-section of themes, nationalities, issues, ethnicities, and concerns, without compromising dramatic excellence.” (Sandoval Sánchez, Sternbach xii) Thus, different types of representations are included here, from full-length plays to vignettes and one-woman shows.

The editors also affirm that although they tried to be as inclusive as possible *Latina* theatre is comprised of many more voices than the ones included here.

Typically, theatrical productions go from page to stage, the editors of this anthology hope that by showcasing these pieces they will go from the page to the stage, as they already have, and then back to the stage. They use that word that so many scholars analyzing issues having to do with the canon use, the word “accessibility.”

The editors hope that accessibility to these plays will benefit communities, actors, actresses, students, teachers, and theatres.

Now to the question, whom is this anthology intended for? The editors, who champion multiculturalism and diversity, reply: for everyone. That is quite a wager. As I already mentioned, the title of the anthology is in Spanish.

As to the title of the first full-length play showcased here, it is “*Botánica*.” Such a word might not necessarily grasp “everyone.”

In the previous chapter I delved into the issue of diversity and how it is tied to the canon. An anthology such as this one is a champion of diversity. One simply has to peruse the back cover. Just some of the words that stand out are: new, dynamic, diversified, broad range, variety.

Conclusion

Into the Twenty-First Century

I do not know about the history of anthologies in general. I do not know about the first anthology there ever was, as I do not know about the first woman, or the first Maria. But I could dream something up, and imagine, for instance, that they began as gifts books. It could very well be that the very first anthology was a gift. This gift that contained, perhaps, the most beautiful poems in the world, with a ribbon tied around them. Thus the lucky recipient would not have to be bogged down with thirty or forty books, or with a whole library. All she needed was in the palm of her hand (I'm also surmising that the first recipient was a she). Here they are, the most beautiful poems, neatly bound in leather and gold. That is how I see the first anthology, a gift for her, and then for all.

It goes without saying that things got complicated right away. We keep the Trojan horse and Pandora's box in our collective subconscious. It wasn't that anthologies were evil, but who was to decide which were the best poems or the best pieces of prose? This involved too many things already. On the one hand it depended on the compiler's personal taste, as well as on his or her ego. In order to compile there must be some kind of self assurance. The compiler has to be in a position to announce that five or ten poems were the most beautiful. (I have no doubt that in the beginning all the titles to anthologies were in the superlative.) This means that the compiler had good taste and was capable of making value judgments.

But that is not where this stops. Another even more important issue is that the compiler could very well not even like any of the poems or pieces chosen, and simply

have chosen them in order to please the recipient. Now that I opened that can of worms, I prefer to put the lid back on as neatly as possible and hide the thing somewhere.

Anyway, soon after having received too many pretty books containing pretty poems I suppose that the recipients began to take it all for granted. There was undoubtedly a first ungrateful recipient who yawned and, from that day on, superlatives were no longer good enough.

So the trend changed, as it always does. It was no longer fashionable to simply entitle an anthology "The Best of This" or "The Best of That." Suddenly compilers, in their eagerness to please, had no choice but to become more creative.

It wasn't enough to offer the best, one had to offer something new and perhaps even unheard of. Before long anthologies had to continually surpass themselves. This is how I would explain the appearance of those anthologies of women's writings that have existed since the nineteenth century. Poems written by women didn't even have to be the best, it was enough that they were written by women. In those times that was perhaps odd enough.

But soon after that it wasn't enough just to be a woman to be included in an anthology. Some women even protested and ended up refusing to be included in so-called women's anthologies. They would not have any part of such a sexist project. Women's anthologies put women in a cultural ghetto, at best. In order to get a piece of writing published you didn't have to write well, all you had to do was simply be a woman.

I suppose they were wrong in coming to that hasty conclusion. Being a woman was not enough, no matter how obvious that appeared. No matter how inclusive they pretend

to be, anthologies are by nature exclusive. Even the worst has to have a selective club and keep other “worsts” out.

So the sixties came and the anthologies themselves became more and more “specialized.” Although the presentation and the sales pitch changed, their role did not. We know that T.S. Eliot stopped to consider their role way before the 60’s, or what we have dubbed the decade of social unrest, came along, and that this role has not changed much. Many anthologies still present relatively new authors whose work does not warrant a whole volume. Many others present authors from a specific group. The specificity of the group may and does vary, it can be ethnic, gender related, political, or be tied to sexual preference. That is not all-inclusive, the possibilities are endless. We could have an anthology of victims’ writings, of cancer patients’, of battered women’s writings, of black battered women’s’ writings, of Asian bisexual battered women’s’ writings, and so on.

From what appears to be such an innocent raison d’être, that is, a gift, anthologies soon evolve and end up playing this pivotal role that in turn allows canons, whatever canons these be, to be less stagnant. They keep canons on their toes.

“I am impressed, first of all, by what anthologies can do,” writes Barbara Christian in her essay included in The Ethnic Canon. “Anthologies do chart a field, as the cultural nationalist anthologies of the sixties, and the women’s anthologies of the seventies demonstrate.” (Christian 256)

It happened just like that as far as the Latina anthologies were concerned, with a little time gap. The cultural nationalist anthologies such as This Bridge Called My Back, Cuentos, Compañeras; Latina Lesbians, Making Face Making Soul, and The Sexuality of

Latinas came throughout the 80's. The women's anthologies such as Hispanic Women Write, Nosotras, and In Other Words either trailed behind them closely or happened practically at the same time. They even seemed to take turns now and then. The only difference being that the women's anthologies are still being published today and the cultural nationalist ones are more dated now and have been replaced by what I would call "living on the border" anthologies.

Another of Barbara Christian's interesting remarks relative to anthologies is that "they are not fixed in stone, as revisionist women of color anthologies exemplify. Anthologies as an intersection of many identities do develop, change, revise themselves. Obviously, the process of anthologizing is worth it for those of us in new fields." (Christian 256) This Bridge Called My Back appearing several years later as Esta Puente is a meaningful example of this, as is Moraga's and Anzaldúa's constant return to an anthologizing project. At times they seem haunted by This Bridge and always saw the necessity to revise it. This, however, is more the exception than the rule. Rarely do anthologies become "classics." The Norton anthology is without a doubt a classic, but as far as Latina literature is concerned This Bridge is the one and only example of a classic. Most of the others have come and gone. What is interesting is that Moraga and Anzaldúa never became mainstream as some of the women they anthologized did.

Most of the anthologies, instead of revising themselves usually serve a new field. In this task they either do or fail to do their job, and then disappear to be replaced by other anthologies. If canons are to change and if they are to have a life span, anthologies are their best friends and their worst enemies, simultaneously. They are a canon's best friend

because they either call or don't call for revisions, and their worst enemies for exactly the same reason.

Barbara Christian is also struck by the limitations of anthologies. "Is there a false unity camouflaging dominance and subordination?" she asks herself. "Do anthologies reproduce exclusion or dominance?" Exclusion? It can't be avoided. Dominance? We touched upon the subject.

Who are the anthologists and to whom do they answer? I have mentioned that Moraga never became mainstream. Her work was never published by one of those big "houses". Incidentally, Moraga often asked herself those questions. She even asked them of herself. She went as far as to doubt her own anthologies, particularly This Bridge.

"Anthologies can appear to be comprehensive when they are not, since specific historical moments affect their shaping. Thus it is important for the anthologist to indicate her/his frame, limits, purposes, so as not to mislead the teacher or the reader," Barbara Christian adds before affirming that academic scholars have a tendency to create what she calls "overarching paradigms."

Examples of such paradigms are: Diaspora, Women of Color, Postcolonialism. Just about every anthologist we have taken into consideration in this study belonged to Academe, many were writers themselves who also belonged to Academe. So they had to answer to some higher power, at least the one that would publish their anthology. Whether it they were dealing with a small publishing company, or with a larger one, the anthologists had to come up with some sort of project and even "force it", just as a scientist oftentimes forces nature in order to make a hypothesis work.

It goes both ways though, for anthologies, in turn, affect the trends in the publishing world. The problem Barbara Christina finds with this is that as a certain literature becomes trendy or acceptable, “the past literature of that group becomes the norm for study, and few examples of that group’s contemporary literature, its contemporary utterances, appear in anthologies.”

There is no way around it, once a literature is called literature, a canon is formed. But it is not a question of what comes first, literature, anthology, canon. One cannot be without some other. For an anthology to be there must be text and the choosing of these texts is the making of a canon, for a canon to be there must be texts, and exclusion of other texts.

When Barbara Christian regrets that fewer and fewer contemporary texts are included in anthologies she is simply stating the obvious, they are not part of a canon. In most Latina anthologies, however, at least a few new names get included each time around. Clubs cannot survive without new members. Even the Norton anthology includes new texts, namely texts that have paid their dues elsewhere. In other words, some anthologies such as the Norton anthology seem so glorious that they should be canonized themselves.

As fields grow they question themselves and call for new paradigms.

Postcolonialism, for example, is fluid. So is racial identity, for times keep changing, and the oppressed of today could very well be tomorrow’s oppressors. At times old paradigms are taught in Ethnic Studies departments. Here is yet another function of anthologies, to call attention to changing trends. I suppose that at a given moment when many feminist anthologists were published there was a semblance of unity in the feminist movement.

Anthologies such as This Bridge compiled on a kitchen table kicked and screamed and did everything possible in order to be heard.

I do not believe that the more established anthologies would or could have a similar function. Their function is to showcase the best. By the time they compile their texts the value judgment has been made. Now value judgments have to have a pretension of eternity. A value judgment would be of no value at all if it were simply temporary. An anthologist would not dare say, for example, "I picked these texts because they are good today, but probably will not be so tomorrow," or, "I picked these texts because a particular segment of the population will be interested in purchasing them."

Every time there is evaluation and judgment of value, a new canon is formed. Since new literatures question the canon there will always be a resistance to them. And we should beware of any publication by a big house pretending to present us with something radically different. By the time texts reach the mainstream they have been rendered manageable.

With each new anthology compiled on a kitchen table there is a new claim of value made by noncanonical works. These noncanonical works, however, didn't come out of nowhere. Barbara Herrnstein Smith traces their long valuational history that began with the authors visions and revisions. Smith considers the work we receive to be a sort of abandonment. One could correct and revise ad vitam aeternam, but one decides to stop at a given moment, for any reason whatsoever. From there, if the text is a new one, there are many roads it can take, one of the being small presses and marginal anthologies.

"Those who are in position to edit anthologies and prepare reading lists are obviously those who occupy positions of some cultural power; and their acts of

evaluation – represented in what they exclude as well as in what they include – constitute not merely recommendations of value [...] but also determinants of value.” (Herrnstein Smith 30) Since they will exclude what they consider to be inferior literature their inclusion will contain, according to Smith, a certain definition of literature.

But that is just a moment in time. The text must also withstand the test of time, as well as serve the establishment’s interests. But even the test of time should be regarded with some suspicion. Herrnstein Smith does not believe that Homer’s endurance is necessarily due to his value but more to the continuity of the circulation of his texts.

“Repeatedly cited and recited, translated, taught, and imitated, and thoroughly enmeshed in the network of intertextuality that continuously constitutes the high culture of the orthodoxly educated population of the West, that highly variable entity we refer to as Homer recurrently enters our experience [...] and thus can perform a large number of various functions for us and obviously has performed them for many of us over a good bit of the history of our culture.” (Herrnstein Smith 34-35)

Herrnstein Smith then reminds us that many people in the world are not, or choose not to be, among the orthodoxly educated population of the West. This is proof enough for her that there is in fact no universal value.

But this makes us reach an unbearable aporia, so we have to retrace our footsteps. If there is no universal standard of literary quality, there is at least a social and political one, there is no doubting that. The role of anthologies is either to revise or to rethink those social and political standards.

I could have proceeded differently in this history of anthologies. I did not necessarily have to read them in chronological order. I did not have to arbitrarily divide them into

four tidy little groups and then pin headings such as Feminism or Minor Literature to those groups. I could have divided my corpus of anthologies into three different groups: potential, accessible, selective. Had I proceeded this way my history would have resembled Alan Golding's "History of American Poetry Anthologies".

Golding, instead of presenting the American poetry anthologies one after the other in the order they were published, divides them into preservationist, historicizing and moralizing, selective, and revisionist anthologies.

I do not, however, regret my decision. I still believe that the best way to have presented these two decades worth of anthologies was in chronological order, however insipid that order may be.

It is still too early to tell whether or not these anthologies have reshaped the canon or simply kept ethnic women writers on the outside. Twenty years may seem like a relatively long time when one is living or waiting, they are short as far as history and literature are concerned. One thing is certain, and it is that the goals and motives of these anthologies changed and evolved over the years, as did the readership. Yet another certitude is that these anthologies painted their own picture of the end of the 20th century and are also painting one of the beginnings of the 21st.

Speaking of time, I am suddenly reminded of another arbitrary decision I took when I had to put a beginning and an end to this history. The beginning was fairly straightforward, at least that was one of my axioms, and I began as close to the beginning as I wished to but, indeed, the end was nowhere in sight. I could have gone on forever and thus avoided aging or even died an operatic death. The minute a new anthology was published I could have added it to my list and analyzed it in light of something or other.

But I had to stop somewhere and 2000 seemed like a nice round figure. Time has obviously not stopped since then. In February of 2002, the majority of those involved in putting together This Bridge Called My Back met in Berkeley to celebrate the 20th anniversary of its publication. At that time they agreed to reprint the anthology. Whether or not it will be revised is another question. We could very well end up with another Esta Puente.

Twenty-year reunions such as the one I just mentioned and particularly the decision to reprint This Bridge just go to show that there is a constant threat in undertaking a project as contemporary as this one. Not only is the risk of aging out there in some vague future, it is a day-to-day struggle. My affirmation that This Bridge is out of print will soon be null and void, and proof that I am not keeping up with my times (provided that they reprint this anthology without any revisions, which I doubt).

Another risk involved is that of purposely leaving out the most recently published anthologies. Not so long ago when I was presenting my own creative works at the University of Delaware someone told me that a new anthology of Latina literature had just been published. My first reaction was: I don't want to hear about it.

But I did finally look into it so in this conclusion I would like to mention two anthologies of the 21st century, especially since they possibly announce new directions. These two anthologies are: Between the Heart and the Land and Telling to Live.

Between the Heart and the Land is an anthology that showcases 30 Latina poets from the Midwest. This definitely points to new directions since none of these thirty poets have appeared in any of the anthologies I took into consideration in this history. Up until now, while analyzing one anthology after the other in this history, I witnessed what I would

consider to be the formation of a Latina literary canon. Suddenly, a new anthology appears with none of the old names. What does this mean? Does it mean that they just sprang up out of nowhere? Does it mean that no one knew about them? Or does it mean that there was in fact an exclusive insider's club, and that this anthology here is a sign of the times? New women could very well be deciding, just as Moraga did in 1981, to knock the door down and be heard, no matter what.

What I especially see here is the emergence of a new otherness, of new "others."

"While the literary voices of U.S. Puerto Rican poets and fiction writers on the East and of their Chicano/a counterparts on the West Coast have been anthologized, duly canonized and even mainstreamed by the Anglo literary market, very little is heard about Latino/a writers and poets in the Midwest." (Aparicio x)

Aparicio then adds in her foreword to this anthology that this absence of Midwestern writers surprises her since the *Americas Review* emerged in the 1970's in Gary, Indiana. "Thus, the history of Latino/a literary production in the Midwestern the ways in which this region [...] informs and contextualizes these voices is a topic that waits to be examined." (Aparicio x)

The editors add that, "[...] aside from a few incredibly gifted and very famous Latina writers who grew up and began their careers in the Midwest, most of the Latinas published repeatedly have been from the East and West Coasts or the Southwest." (Cárdenas xiii)

Once again, what we are witnessing here could very well be a harbinger of newness and otherness.

On another note, The Latina Feminist Group, a group of 18 women whose names we have encountered in many anthologies, (or who have already edited many of the anthologies we took into consideration), which recently edited the anthology of testimonios entitled Telling to Live, began to meet nearly ten years ago, in 1993, “[...] to discuss our concerns as Latina feminists in higher education and to consider possibilities for doing collaborative work.” (The Latina Feminist Group 1)

They add that this “book of papelititos” grew out of the stories they told each other as they got to know each other and realized that they had the papelitos guardados in common. “Stepping out of the roles expected of Latina women in the academy and in our communities, we bring to life our papeles and render our testimonios [...]” (The Latina Feminist Group 1)

The testimonio, which we previously encountered in Breaking Boundaries, is considered a means of bearing witness to what could otherwise fall into oblivion, childhood memories, pain, joy, roads taken and others not taken. What we have before us are these testimonios written by a group of 18 women who all hold doctorates from U.S. universities and who decided to create their own “[...] testimonio process, in which the personal and private became profoundly political.” (The Latina Feminist Group 13) I am lingering on this because, although they consider themselves to be in the tradition of This Bridge Called My Back, these testimonios are not battle cries for freedom, they are, instead, as Aurora Levins Morales (one of the women in this group) so rightfully put it, “genealogies of empowerment.” (The Latina Feminist Group 13)

At this point what these anthologies are saying in regard to Latina writers is that they are ready and willing to be here to stay and to change the world. Time will tell whether or

not they do so. It does not really matter either way. We tend to give eternity universal value perhaps only because we can't quite get our minds around it. What matters more, and it is something that Deleuze and Guattari saw in minor literature, is the question of, "How to become the nomad and the immigrant and the tzigan of one's own language?"

They are working on it.

Chronological Bibliography of Latina Literature Anthologies.

Here is a chronological bibliography of the anthologies I found in the course of my research. I chose to annotate only the anthologies that I did not analyze in detail in the previous chapters.

1970 -- Cinco poetisas cubanas, 1935-1969. Angel Aparicio Laurencio, ed. Miami: Ediciones Universal.

The women poets included in this anthology are: Mercedes Garcia Tuduri, b. 1904; Maria Teresa Rojas; Pura del Prado; Rita Geade; and Ana Rosa Núñez. All of them write in Spanish, and culturally they should be considered as Cuban women living in the U.S. rather than as U.S. Latinas. In other words, we cannot say that Cuban Latinas began to be anthologized in 1970. This is just a continuation of a tradition of anthologizing “poetisas”. It is important to take into consideration that the word “poetisa” was still being used in 1970, by a certain generation. Another important fact concerning this anthology is that the editor seemed to be angry at the time of its publication. One of its main objectives is to prove that the only real Cuban poetry is being written outside the island and that everything written in the island is rubbish, to put it lightly.

1978 – Siete Poetas. Miriam Bornstein, ed. Tucson: Scorpion.

This is one of the first, if not the first, anthology dedicated solely to U.S. Latina literature. It is not limited to Chicana authors either. The authors are: Miriam Bornstein (later in Nosotras), Maya Islas, Inés Hernández Tovar (later in The Third Woman), Eliana

Rivero (Later in Nosotras, Woman of Her Word), Margarita Cota-Cárdenas, Mireya Robles, and Lucia Sol. We should note that instead of entitling the anthology Siete poetisas, the editors opted for poetas.

1979 -- Requisa 32 – Colección de Cuentos. Rosaura Sánchez, ed. La Jolla: Chicano Research Publications, University of California, San Diego.

I have found this bibliographic annotation in Breaking Boundaries, and in several other publications. The anthology is only available through the University of California, San Diego. There are no copies in the New York Public library or in the Library of Congress.

1980 -- The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the United States. Dexter Fisher, ed. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

1981 -- This Bridge Called My Back: Radical Writings by Women of Color. Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa, eds. Watertown, Mass: Persephone Press.

1982 -- Manteniendo el espíritu – Keeping the Spirit. Aleida Rodriguez, ed. Los Angeles: Latinas Unidas, 1982.

1982 -- Breaking the Silences. Margaret Randall, ed. Vancouver: Pulp Press.

With one exception, Lourdes Casal, this anthology only included Cuban women poets living in Cuba. It is divided into three parts, for three generation of poets, the mothers, the daughters, and the very young voices that came out of the revolutionary ethic. The 8 poets in the first section "Our Living Mothers" are: Dulce Maria Loynaz, Mirta Aguirre, Digidora Alonso, Fina Garcia Marruz, Carilda Oliver Labra, Rafaela

Chacón Nardi, Cleva Solís, and Teresita Fernández. The 8 poets in the second section “Our Time has Come” are: Georgina Herrera, Lourdes Casal, Magaly Sánchez, Nancy Morejón, Minerva Salado, Milagros González, Lina de Fera, and Excilia Saldaña. The 9 poets included in the last section are: Albis Torres, Mirta Yáñez, Yolanda Ulloa, Enid Vián, Soleida Ríos, Reina Maria Rodriguez, Zaida del Río, Marilyn Bobes, and Chelly Lima. I am including this anthology in this list because I think it is interesting to compare it to other anthologies of Cuban women poets living in the U.S.

1983 -- Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. Alma Gomez, Cherrie Moraga, Mariana Romo-Carmona, eds. New York: Kitchen Table.

1983 -- Woman of her Word – Hispanic Women Write. Evangelina Vigil, ed. Houston: Revista Chicano-Riqueña.

1986 -- Nosotras: Latina Literature Today. Maria del Carmen Boza, Beverly Silva, Carmen Valle, eds. Binghamton, NY: Bilingual Review Press.

1987 -- Compañeras, Latina Lesbians: An Anthology. Juanita Ramos, ed. New York. Latina Lesbian History Project.

1988 -- Esta Puente, Mi Espalda. Voces de Mujeres Tercermundistas en los Estados Unidos. Cherrie Moraga and Ana Castillo, eds. San Francisco: Ism Press.

1988 -- You Can't Drown the Fire: Latin American Women Writing in Exile. Alicia Partnoy, ed. Pittsburgh: Cleis Press.

I did not dedicate a chapter to this anthology because, with one or two exceptions, none of the authors included in this anthology could be considered U.S. Latinas. The 35 women included in this anthology are: Rigoberta Menchú, Alaide Foppa, Julia Esquivel,

Caly Domitila Cane'K, Alenka Bermudez Mallol, and Carmen Batsche, all from Guatemala; Mercédez Sosa, Irene Martinez, Luisa Valenzuela, Alicia Dujovne Ortiz, Marta Traba, Griselda Gambaro, and Etelvina Astrada, all from Argentina; Ana Guadalupe Martinez, America Sosa, Gloria Bonilla, Marta Benavides, Claribel Alegría, Pastora, Jacinta Escudos, and Reyna Hernández, all from El Salvador; Marjorie Agosín, Isabel Morel Letelier, Cecilia Vicuña, and Veronica de Negri, all from Chile; Domitila Barrios de Chungara from Bolivia; Maria Tila Uribe, Clara Nieto de Ponce de León, Laura Restrepo, and Olga Behar from Colombia; Cristina Peri Rossi, Maria Gravina Telechea, and Clara Pirtiz, from Uruguay; and Dolly Filartiga from Paraguay.

- 1988 – Las Mujeres Hablan: An Anthology of Nuevo Mexicana Writers. Tey Diana Rebolledo and Erlinda Gonzalez-Berry, eds. Albuquerque: El Norte Publications.
- 1988 – Reclaiming Medusa: Short Stories by Contemporary Puerto Rican Women. Diana Velez, ed. San Francisco: Aunt Lute.
- 1989 – Breaking Boundaries: Latina Writings and Critical Readings. Asunción Horno Delgado, Eliana Ortega, Nina M. Scott, and Nancy Saporta Sternbach, eds. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- 1989 – Three Times a Woman: Chicana Poetry. Alicia Gaspar de Alba, Tempe: Bilingual Press.
- 1989 – Landscapes of a New Land. Short Fiction by Latin American Women. Marjorie Agosín, ed. New York: White Pine Press, 1989.
- 1990 – Making Face, Making Soul. Haciendo Caras. Gloria Anzaldúa, ed. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

- 1991 -- Poetas cubanas en Nueva York: Antología breve. Felipe Lázaro, ed. Madrid: Betania.
- 1991 -- Chicana Lesbians: The Girls our Mothers Warned us About. Carla Trujillo, ed. Berkeley: Third Woman.
- 1992 -- Shattering the Myth: Plays by Hispanic Women. Linda Feyder, ed. Houston: Arte Público.
- 1993 -- The Sexuality of Latinas. Norma Alarcón, Cherie Moraga, Ana Castillo, eds. Bloomington: Third Woman Press.
- 1993 -- Infinite Divisions. Tey Diana Rebolledo and Eliana Rivero, eds. Tucson, University of Arizona Press.
- 1993 -- Linking Roots: Writing by Six Women with Distinct Ethnic Heritages. Bryce Milligan, ed. San Antonio: M & A Editions.
- 1994 -- In Other Words – Literature by Latinas of the US. Roberta Fernández, ed. Houston: Arte Público.
- 1994 -- Hispanic, Female, and Young, an Anthology. Phyllis Tashlik, ed. Houston: Piñata Books.
- 1995 -- Latina: Women's Voices from the Borderlands. Lillian Castillo-Speed, ed. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- 1995 -- A Dream of Light and Shadow: Portraits of Latin American Women Writers. Marjorie Agosín, ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press
- 1996 -- Daughters of the Fifth Sun – A Collection of Latina Fiction and Poetry. Bryce Milligan, Mary Guerrero Milligan, Angela de Hoyos, eds. New York: Riverhead Books.

- 1996 – Out of the Mirrored Garden. Delia Poey, ed. New York: Anchor.
- 1997 -- Máscaras. Lucha Corpi, ed. Berkeley: Third Woman Press.
- 1998 -- Floricanto, Si! A Collection of Latina Poetry. Bryce Milligan, Mary Milligan, Angela de Hoyos, eds. New York: Penguin Books.
- 2000 -- Puro teatro: a Latina Anthology. Alberto Sandoval Sanchez, Nancy Saporta Stembach, eds. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- 2001 – Telling To Live. The Latina Feminist Group, eds. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Journals

This list has not the pretense of being all-inclusive, just a few journals that have dedicated entire issues to Latina writings and Latina literary theory.

--- El Grito. This journal was launched by Quinto Sol, the first Chicano press. In 1973 El Grito devoted an entire issue to the creative expression of Chicanas, Chicanas en la literatura y el arte.

--- The Americas Review (formerly Revista Chicano-Riqueña). University of Houston, Houston, Texas. In 1983 The Americas Review devoted an entire issues to Latina literature, Woman of her Word.

--- Calyx. An Oregon-based feminist journal that published in 1984 an issue called "Bearing Witness/Sobreviviendo: An Anthology of Writing and Art by Native American Latina Women."

Bibliography of Works Cited or Consulted.

“How shall I ever find the grains of truth embedded in all this mass of paper, I asked myself, and in despair began running my eye up and down the long list of titles. Even the names of the books gave me food for thought. Sex and its nature might well attract doctors and biologists; but what was surprising and difficult of explanation was the fact that sex – woman, that is to say – also attracts agreeable essayists, light-fingered novelists, young men who have taken the M.A. degree; men who have taken no degree; men who have no apparent qualification save that they are not women. Some of these books were, on the face of it, frivolous and facetious; but many, on the other hand, were serious and prophetic, moral and hortatory. Merely to read the titles suggested innumerable schoolmasters [...].”

From Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own

Abalos, David T. Latinos in the United States. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986.

Adams, Clementina. Common Threads: Themes in Afro-Hispanic Women's Literature. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1998.

Agosín, Marjorie. A Dream of Light and Shadow: Portraits of Latin American Women Writers. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995

---, “Defensa de la burguesa.” Brujas y algo más/Witches and Other Things. Pittsburgh: Latin American Review Press, 1986.

- , "Ritual of my Breasts." "My Feet." In Other Words – Literature by Latinas of the US. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- , ed. Landscapes of a New Land. Short Fiction by Latin American Women. New York: White Pine Press, 1989.
- , "Pene." Nosotras: Latina Literature Today. Eds. Maria del Carmen Boza, Beverly Silva, Carmen Valle.
- Agustini, Delmira. Poesías completas. Madrid: Cátedra, 1993.
- Alarcón, Norma, ed. Bibliography of Hispanic Women Writers. Bloomington: Chicano-Riqueño Studies, 1980.
- Alarcón, Norma, and Cherrie Moraga, Ana Castillo, eds. The Sexuality of Latinas. Bloomington: Third Woman Press, 1993
- Alarcón, Norma. "The Theoretical Subject(s) of This Bridge Called My Back and Anglo-American Feminism." Making Face, Making Soul. Ed. Gloria Anzaldúa.
- , "The Sardonic Powers of the Erotic in the Work of Ana Castillo." Breaking Boundaries. Ed. Asunción Horno Delgado et al.
- Altieri, Charles. "An Idea and ideal of a Literary Canon." Canons. Ed. Von Hallberg.
- Alurista, et al, eds. Festival de Flor y Canto: An Anthology of Chicano Literature. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1976.
- Alzaga, Florinda. La Avellaneda: Intensidad y Vanguardia. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1997.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria ed. This Bridge Called My Back: Radical Writings by Women of Color. Watertown, Mass.: Persephone Press, 1981.

- , ed. Making Face, Making Soul. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. "Linguistic Terrorism." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Aparicio, Frances R. "Foreword." Between the Heart and the Land. Eds. Brenda Cárdenas, and Johanny Vázquez Paz.
- Baker, Houston, ed. Three American Literatures: Essays in Chicano, Native and Asian Literature. New York: MLA, 1982.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. The Dialogic Imagination. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.
- Barthes, Roland. Le degré zéro de l'écriture. Paris: Seuil, 1972.
- , The Pleasure of the Text. New York: Hill and Wang, 1975.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. Le deuxième sexe. Paris: Gallimard, 1974.
- Belsey, Catherine, and Jane Moore. The Feminist Reader. New York: Blackwell, 1989.
- Benamou, Michel, and Jerome Rothenberg, eds. Ethnopoetics. Boston: Alcheringa, 1976.
- Bensmaïa, Réda. "Foreword." Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature. By Gilles Deleuze and Francois Guattari.
- Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
- , Nation and Narration. London and New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Bornstein, Miriam. "To a Linguist Studying Discourse Strategies of Bilingual/Bicultural Students". Floriscanto, Si! Ed. Bryce Milligan et al.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. Ce que parler veut dire: L'économie des échanges linguistiques. Paris: Fayard, 1981.
- Boza, Maria del Carmen, and Beverly Silva, Carmen Valle. Nosotras: Latina Literature

Today. Binghamton, NY: Bilingual Review Press: 1986.

Browdy de Hernández, Jennifer. "The Plural Self: The Politization of Memory and Form in Three American Ethnic Autobiographies." Memory and Cultural Politics. Eds. Amritjit Singh et al.

Bruce-Novoa, Juan. "Canonical and Non-Canonical Texts" The Americas Review (1986).

---, Chicano Authors: Inquiry by Interview. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980.

Calderón, Hector, and José David Saldívar, eds. Criticism in the Borderlands: Studies in Chicano Literature, Culture, and Ideology. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.

Calvet, Louis-Jean. Linguistique et colonialisme: petit traité de glottophagie. Paris: Payot, 1974.

Camarillo, Lydia. "Mi Reflejo." Infinite Divisions. Eds Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.

Candelaria, Cordelia. Chicano Poetry: A Critical Introduction. Westport: Greenwood, 1986.

Cardeba, Brenda, and Johanny Vázquez Paz, eds. Between the Heart and the Land. Chicago: March/Abrazo Press, 2001.

Carlyle, Thomas. Complete Works of Thomas Carlyle. New York: Collier & Son, 1901.

Castillo, Ana. "Ixtacihuatl Died in Vain." Floriscanto, Si! Eds. Bryce Milligan, Mary Guerrero Milligan, Angela de Hoyos.

---, and Norma Alarcón, Cherrie Moraga, eds. The Sexuality of Latinas. Bloomington: Third Woman Press, 1993.

Castillo, Ana. "I don't Want to Know." Woman of her Word. Ed. Evangelina Vigil.

- Castillo-Speed, Lillian, ed. Latina: Women's Voices from the Borderlands. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.
- Castro-Klarén, Sara, and Sylvia Molloy, Beatriz Sarlo, eds. Women's Writing in Latin America. Boulder: Westview, 1991.
- Catacalos, Rosemary. "A Vision of La Llorona." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Cervantes, Lorna Dee. "Poem for the Young White Man Who Asked Me how I [...]." Making Face, Making Soul. Ed. Gloria Anzaldúa.
- , "Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Chacón, Sylvia. "My Poetry." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Chavez, Denise. "Heat and Rain." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Asunción Horno-Delgado, Nancy Saporta Sternbach, Nina M. Scott, Eliana Rivero.
- Christian, Barbara. "The Case of Shaping an Anthology of Caribbean Women Writers." The Ethnic Canon. Ed. Davis Palumbo-Liu.
- Cixous, Hélène, and Catherine Clément. The Newly Born Woman. Betsy Wing, trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- Cixous, Helene. The Hélène Cixous Reader. Susan Sellers, ed. London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
- , "The Laugh of the Medusa." Feminisms. Eds. Robyn Warhol and Diane Price Herndl.
- Clément, Catherine, and Hélène Cixous. The Newly Born Woman. Betsy Wing, trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- Cofer, Judith Ortiz. "And Are You a Latina Writer?" Máscaras. Ed. Lucha Corpi.

- Corpi, Lucha, ed. Máscaras. Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1997.
- , "Dark Romance." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- , "The Marina Poems." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- , "The Devil's Daughter." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Culler, Jonathan. "Reading as a Woman." Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982.
- De Beer, Gabriella. Contemporary Mexican Women Writers: Five Voices. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996.
- De Certeau, Michel. Hétérologies. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- De Toro, Fernando, and Alfonso de Toro, eds. Borders and Margins: Post-Colonialism and Post-Modernism. Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1995.
- Del Castillo, Adelaida, ed. Between Borders: Essays in Mexicana/Chicana History. California: Floricanto Press, 1990.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Francois. Kafka: Pour une littérature mineure. Paris: Minuit, 1975.
- , Kafka; Toward a Minor Literature. Dana Polan, trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- Delgado, Josefina. Alfonsina Storni: una biografía. Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1990.
- Derrida, Jacques. L'écriture de la différence. Paris: Seuil, 1967.
- Donne, John. The Complete English Poems. New York, London: Penguin Classics, 1986.
- Dobrovsky, Serge, and Tzvetan Todorov, eds. L'enseignement de la littérature. Paris: Seuil, 1971.

- Dwyer, Carlota Cárdenas de, ed. Chicano Voices. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975.
- Eagleton, Terry. Literary Theory An Introduction. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Eliot, T. S. Selected Essays. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1950.
- , On Poetry and Poets. London, Boston: Faber and Faber, 1957.
- , The Sacred Wood. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1957.
- , To Criticize the Critic. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1965.
- Esteves, Sandra Maria. "Sistas." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- , "Open Letter to Eliana." Breaking Boundaries. Ed., Asunción Horno-Delgado.
- Fabre, Geneviève. European Perspectives on Hispanic Literature in the United States. Houston: Arte Público, 1988.
- Felman, Shoshana. "Women and Madness: The Critical Fallacy." Feminisms. Eds. Robyn Warhol, and Diane Price Herndl.
- Fernández, Roberta, ed. In Other Words – Literature by Latinas of the US. Houston: Arte Público, 1994.
- Ferraro, Thomas. Ethnic Passages: Literary Immigrants in 20th Century America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Feyder, Linda, ed. Shattering The Myth: Plays by Hispanic Women. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1992.
- Fisher, Dexter, ed. Minority Language and Literature: Retrospective and Perspective. New York: MLA, 1977.
- , The Third Woman: Minority Women Writers of the US. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1980.

- Flores, Juan. "Puerto Rican Literature in the U.S.: Stages and Perspectives." Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage. Eds. Ramón Gutierrez and Gennaro Padilla.
- Flynn, Elizabeth, ed. Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.
- Foucault, Michel. The History of Sexuality. New York: Vintage, 1990.
- Franco, Jean. "Foreword." In Other Words – Literature by Latinas of the U.S. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Froula, Christine. "When Eve reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- Frye, Northrop. Anatomy of Criticism. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957.
- Gámez, Rocky. "Doña Marchina Garcia." Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. Eds. Alma Gomez, Cherrie Moraga, Mariana Romo-Carmona.
- Garcia Pinto, ed. Delmira Agustini: Poesías Completas. Madrid: Cátedra, 1993.
- Gaspar de Alba, Alicia, ed. Three Times a Woman: Chicana Poetry. Tempe: Bilingual Press, 1989.
- , "Making Tortillas." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Gates, Henry Louis, ed.. "Race", Writing, Difference. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- , Reading Black, Reading Feminist: A Critical Anthology. New York: Meridian, 1990.
- , Black Literature and Literary Theory. New York: Methuen, 1984.
- , "Ethnic and Minority Studies." Introduction to Scholarship. Ed. Joseph Gibaldi.
- Gibaldi, Joseph, ed. Introduction to Scholarship. New York: Modern Language

- Association, 1992.
- Gil, Lourdes. "A Stranger Came." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Gilbert, Sandra and Susan Gubar. The Madwoman in the Attic. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1984.
- Gilbert, Sandra. "Introduction." The Newly Born Woman. By Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément.
- Golding, Alan C. "A History of American Poetry Anthologies." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- Gómez, Alma, and Cherrie Moraga, Mariana Romo-Carmona, eds. Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. New York: Kitchen Table, 1983.
- Gómez, Ala. "El Sueño perdido." Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. Eds. Alma Gómez et al.
- Gomez, Laura. "The Birth of the Hispanic Generation" in Latinos in the U.S. Ed. Lopez.
- Greene, Gayle. "Feminist Fiction and the uses of memory." Signs 16, no. 2 (1991).
- Greene, Gayle, and Coppelia Kahn, eds. Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism. New York : Methurn, 1985.
- Gubar, Susan and Gilbert, Sandra. The Madwoman in the Attic. New Haven and London: Yale University press, 1984.
- Guillory, John. "The Ideology of Canon Formation: T.S. Eliot and Cleanth Brooks." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- , "Canon, Syllabus, List: A note on the Pedagogic Imaginary." Transition 1.2 (1991).
- , "Canonical and non-Canonical: A Critique of the Current Debate." ELH 54 (1987).
- Gunn Allen, Paula. "Border Studies: The Intersection of Gender and Color." The Ethnic

- Canon. Ed. David Palumbo-Liu.
- Gutierrez, Ramón, and Genaro Padilla, eds. Recovering the U. S. Hispanic Literary Heritage. Houston, Texas: Arte Público Press, 1993.
- Harlow, Barbara, ed. Resistance Literature. New York: Methuen, 1987.
- Harris, Marie, ed. A Gift of Tongues: Critical Challenges in Contemporary American Poetry. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987.
- Herndl, Diane Price, and Robyn Warhol, eds. Feminisms. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1997.
- Herrera-Sobek, María. The Mexican Corrido. A Feminist Analysis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- , "La Casa/The House." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- , ed. Beyond Stereotypes: The Critical Analysis of Chicana Literature. Binghamton, N.Y.: Bilingual Press, 1985.
- , ed. Chicana Creativity and Criticism: Charting New Frontiers in American Literature. Houston: Arte Público, 1988.
- Herrnstein Smith, Barbara. "Contingencies of Value." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- Hinojosa, Maria. "Foreword." Daughters of the Fifth Sun. Eds. Bryce Milligan, Mary Guerrero Milligan, Angela de Hoyos.
- Horno-Delgado, Asunción, and Nancy Saporta Sternbach, Nina M. Scott, Eliana Rivero. Breaking Boundaries: Latina Writings and Critical Readings. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989.
- Horno-Delgado, Asunción. "Señores, don't leibol me please!!!: ya soy Luz Maria Umpierre." Breaking Boundaries. Ed., Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.

- Horsman, Reginald. Race and Manifest Destiny. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Hospital, Carolina. "A Visit to West New York." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Hoyos, Angela de, and Bryce Milligan, Mary Guerrero Milligan, eds. Daughters of the Fifth Sun. New York: Riverhead Books, 1996.
- Hoyos, Angela de. "Tonantzín Morena." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Irigaray, Luce. Speculum of the Other Woman. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- , The Sex which is not One. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- JanMohamed, Abdul R., and David Lloyd, eds. The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- Kafka, Phillipa. Saddling la Gringa: Gatekeeping in Literature by Contemporary Latina Writers. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000.
- Kamuf, Peggy. "Writing like a Woman." Women and Language in Literature and Society. Ed. Sally McConnell-Ginet, Ruth Borker, Nelly Furman. New York: Praeger, 1980.
- Kauffman, Linda, ed. Feminism and Institutions: Dialogues on Feminist Theory. New York: Blackwell, 1989.
- , ed. Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism. New York: Blackwell, 1989.
- Keller, Gary. "Preface." Nosotras: Latina Literature Today." Eds. Maria del Carmen Boza et al.
- , "Preface." Three Times a Woman: Chicana Poetry.

- Kenner, High. "The Making of the Modernist Canon." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg. ---, ed. T. S. Eliot: A Collection of Critical Essays. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1962.
- Kevane, Bridget. Latina Self Portraits: Interviews with Contemporary Women Writers. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000.
- Krupat, Arnold. "Native American Literature and the Canon." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- Lagos, Ramiro. Mujeres poetas de hispanoamérica: movimientos, surgencias, insurgencias. Bogotá: Ediciones Centro de Estudios Poéticos Hispánicos: Tercer Mundo, 1986.
- Laurencio, Angel Aparicio. Cinco poetisas cubanas. Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1970.
- Lawrence, Karen, ed. Decolonizing Tradition: New Views of 20th Century "British" Literary Canons. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992.
- Lázaro, Felipe. Poetas cubanas en Nueva York: antología breve. Madrid: Betania, 1991.
- Levins Morales, Aurora. "And Even Fidel Can't Change That!" This Bridge Called my Back. Eds. Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldúa.
- Lindenberger, Herbert. The History in Literature: On Value, Genre, Institutions. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.
- Lipking, Lawrence. "Aristotle's Sister: A Poetics of Abandonment." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- Lomelí, Francisco. "Chicana Novelists in the Process of Creating Fictive Voices." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed. Maria Herrera-Sobek.
- Lopez, Antoinette Sedillo, ed. Latinos in the United States. Vol. 1. New York: Garland,

1995.

López, Josefina. "Simply Maria, or The American Dream" Shattering the Myth. Ed. Linda Feyder.

Luis, William. Dance Between Two Cultures. Nashville and London: Vanderbilt University Press, 1997.

Lucero-Trujillo, Marcela. "No More Cookies Please." The Third Woman. Ed. Dexter Fisher.

MacDonnell, Diane. Theories of Discourse: An Introduction. New York: Blackwell, 1986.

Madsen, Deborah, ed. Post-Colonial Literature: Expanding the Canon. Virginia: Pluto Press, 1999.

Marcus, Jane, ed. New Feminist Essays on Virginia Woolf. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981.

Marden, Herbert. Feminism and Art: A Study of Virginia Woolf. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Martinez, Eliud. "Personal Vision in the Short Stories of Estela Portillo Trambley." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed. Maria Herrera Sobek.

Mazziotti Gillan, Maria, ed. Et al. Growing Up Ethnic in America: Contemporary Fiction about Learning to be American. New York: Penguin, 1999.

McCracken, Ellen. New Latina Narrative: the Feminine Space of Postmodern Ethnicity. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999.

Miller, Beth, ed. Women in Hispanic Literature: Icons and Fallen Idols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983.

- Miller, Nancy K. Subject to Change: Reading Feminist Criticism. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.
- , ed. The Poetics of Gender. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.
- Millett, Kate. Sexual Politics. Garden City: Doubleday, 1970.
- Milligan, Bryce, and Mary Guerrero Milligan, Angela de Hoyos, eds. Daughters of the Fifth Sun – A Collection of Latina Fiction and Poetry. New York: Riverhead, 1995.
- Milligan, Mary Guerrero, and Bryce Milligan, Angela de Hoyos, eds. Daughters of the Fifth Sun – A Collection of Latina Fiction and Poetry. New York: Riverhead, 1995.
- Minh-ha, Trinh T. Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.
- Mohr, Eugene, ed. The Nuyorican Experience: Literature of the Puerto-Rican Minority. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982.
- Moi, Toril. Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory. New York: Methuen, 1985.
- Moore, Joan, and Harry Pachón. Hispanics in the United States. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1985.
- Mora, Pat. "Plot." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Moraga, Cherríe, and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds. This Bridge Called my Back, Radical Writings by Women of Color. Massachusetts: Persephone Press, 1981.
- , This Bridge Called my Back, Radical Writings by Women of Color. New York: Kitchen Table, 1983.
- Moraga, Cherríe, and Alma Gómez, Mariana Romo-Carmona, eds. Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. New York: Kitchen Table, 1983.

- Moraga, Cherrie, and Ana Castillo, et al., eds. The Sexuality of Latinas. Bloomington: Third Woman Press, 1993.
- Moraga, Cherrie. "Pesadilla." Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. Eds. Alma Gómez et al.
- , "Art in America con Acento." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- , "Art in America con Acento." Latina: Women's Voices from the Borderlands. Ed. Lillian Castillo-Speed.
- Morales, Rosario. "I Am What I Am" This Bridge Called My Back. Eds. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa.
- Novas, Himilce. Everything You Need to Know About Latino History. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1998.
- Ohmann, Richard M. "The Shaping of a Canon: US Fiction 1960-1976." Canons. Ed. Robert Von Hallberg.
- Ortega, Eliana and Asunción Horno-Delgado et al., eds. Breaking Boundaries: Latina Writings and Critical Readings. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989.
- Ortega, Eliana. "At the Threshold of the Unnamed: Latina Literary Discourse in the Eighties." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- , "Poetic Discourse of the Puerto Rican Woman in the US.: New Voices of Anacaonian Liberation." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- Ortega, Philip D., ed. We are Chicanos: An Anthology of Mexican-American Literature. New York: Washington Square press, 1973.
- Padilla, Felix. "On the Nature of Latino Ethnicity" in Latinos in the U.S. Lopez, ed.
- Palumbo-Liu, David, ed. The Ethnic Canon: Histories, Institutions and Interventions. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

- Paré, Francois. Exiguity: Reflections on the Margins of Literature. Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997.
- Paredes, Américo, and Raymundo Paredes, eds. Mexican-American Authors. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972.
- Partnoy, Alicia, ed. You Can't Drown the Fire.
- Peck, David. American Ethnic Literatures: Native American, Afro-American, Chicano/Latino, and Asian American Writers and their Backgrounds: An Annotated Bibliography. Pasadena: Salem Press, 1992.
- Perez Firmat, Gustavo, ed. Do the Americas have a Common Literature? North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Perez-Torres, Rafael. "Feathering the Serpent: Chicano "Mythic" Memory." Memory and Cultural Politics. Eds. Amritjit Singh et al.
- Phillips, Rachel. Alfonsina Storni From Poetess to Poet. London: Tamesis, 1975.
- Ponce, Mary Helen. "On Language." Máscaras. Ed. Lucha Corpi.
- Pratt, Annis. Quoted in Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Pursifull, Carmen. "The Poltergeist." Hispanic, Female, and Young. Ed. Phillis Tashlik.
- Quiñones, Naomi. "La Llorona." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- , "Hesitations." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Quintanales, Mirta. "I Come with no Illusions." This Bridge Called my Back. Eds. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa.
- Ramirez, Genevieve, and Carmen Salazar Parr. "The Female Hero in Chicano Literature." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed., Maria Herrera Sobek.
- Ramos, Juanita, ed. Compañeras, Latina Lesbians: An Anthology. New York: Latina

- Lesbian Historical Project, 1987.
- Reisz, Susana. Voces sexuadas. Género y poesía en hispanoamérica. Lleida: Universidad de Lleida, 1996.
- Rebolledo, Tey Diana, and Eliana Rivero, eds. Infinite Divisions. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993.
- Rebolledo, Tey Diana. "Walking the Thin Line: Humor in Chicana Literature." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed. Maria Herrera Sobek. ---, Infinite Divisions.
- Ribeiro, Alvaro. Tradition in Transition: Women Writers, Marginal Texts, and the 18th Century Canon. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Rios, Herminio and Octavio Ignacio Romano- V, eds. Chicanas en la literatura y el arte. Berkeley: Quinto Sol, 1973.
- Rivero, Eliana, and Tey Diana Rebolledo, eds. Infinite Divisions. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993.
- Rivero, Eliana, and Tey Diana Rebolledo, eds. Infinite Divisions. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993.
- Rivero, Eliana., "From Immigrants to Ethnics: Cuban Women Writers in the U.S." Breaking Boundaries. Eds., Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- Rodriguez, Aleida, ed. Manteniendo el espíritu – Keeping the Spirit. Los Angeles: Latinas Unidas, 1982.
- Rodriguez, Barbara. Autobiographical Inscriptions: Form, Personhood, and the American Woman Writer of Color. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Rojas, Lourdes. "Latinas at the Crossroads: An Affirmation of Life in Rosario Morales

- and Aurora Levins Morales Getting Home Alive." Breaking Boundaries. Ed., Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- Romano-V, et al eds. El Espejo/The Mirror: Selected Chicano Literature. Berkeley: Quinto Sol Publications, 1969.
- Romo-Carmona, and Cherrie Moraga, Alma Gómez, eds. Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. New York: Kitchen Table, 1983.
- Romo-Carmona, Mariana. "Introduction." Compañeras: Latina Lesbians. Ed. Juanita Ramos.
- Rosenman, Ellen Bayuk. A Room of One's Own: Women Writers and the Politics of Creativity. New York: Twayne, 1995.
- Rosier- Smith, Jeanne. Writing Tricksters: Mythic Gambols in American Ethnic Literatures. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.
- Rozencvaig, Perla. "Introduction." Poetas cubanas en NY.
- Ruoff, A. LaVonne Brown, and Jerry W. Ward, eds. Redefining American Literary History. New York: MLA, 1990.
- Salazar Parr, Carmen, and Genevieve Ramirez. "The Female Hero in Chicano Literature." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed. Maria Herrera Sobek.
- Saldívar, José David. The Dialectics of our America: Genealogy, Cultural Critique, and Literary History. Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.
- Salinas, Luis Omar, ed. From the Barrio: A Chicano Anthology. San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1973.
- Sánchez, Marta Ester. Contemporary Chicana Poetry: A Critical Approach to an Emerging Literature. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

- , "The Birthing of the Poetic "I" in Alma Villanueva's Mother, May I?: The Search for a Feminine Identity." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed. Maria Herrera Sobek.
- Sánchez, Rosaura." Chicana Prose Writers: The Case of Gina Valdés and Sylvia Lizárraga." Beyond Stereotypes. Ed. Maria Herrera Sobek.
- Sánchez-Padilla, Beverly. "Mali." Floricanto, Si! Ed. Bryce Milligan et al.
- Sandoval Sanchez, and Sternbach. Puro Teatro.
- Scholes, Robert. "Canonicity and Textuality" in Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures. Joseph Gibaldi, ed.
- Schor, Naomi. "Feminist and Gender Studies" in Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures. Joseph Gibaldi, ed.
- Schuster, Marilyn, Susan Van Dyne. "Stages of Curriculum Transformation," in Women's Place in the Academy: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum. New Jersey: Rowman and Allanheld, 1985.
- Scott, Nina M., and Asunción Horno Delgado et al, eds. Breaking Boundaries. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989.
- Scott, Nina M. "Marjorie Agosín as Latina Writer." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Horno-Delgado et al.
- Sellers, Susan, ed. The Helene Cixous Reader. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Silva, Clara, ed. Delmira Agustini Poesías Completas. Madrid: Cátedra, 1993.
- Singh, Amritjit, ed. Memory and Cultural Politics: New Approaches to American Ethnic Literatures. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996.
- , Postcolonial Theory and the US: Race, Ethnicity, and Literature. Jackson: University of Mississippi, 2000.

- Smith, Paul Julian. The Body Hispanic: Gender and Sexuality in Spanish and Spanish American Literature. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Solloris, Werner. The Invention of Ethnicity. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Sommer, Doris. Proceed with Caution when engaged by minority writing in the Americas. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Sommers, Joseph. "From the Critical Premise to the Product: Critical Modes and their Applications to a Chicano Literary Text." The New Scholar 6 (1977).
- Spender, Dale, ed. Feminist Theorists. Three Centuries of Key Women Thinkers. New York: Pantheon, 1983.
- Stembach, Nancy Saporta, and Asunción Horno-Delgado, Eliana Rivero, Nina M. Scott, eds. Breaking Boundaries. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989.
- Stembach, Nancy Saporta. "At the Threshold of the Unnamed: Latina Literary Discourse in the Eighties." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- , "A Deep Racial Memory of Love: The Chicana Feminism of Cherrie Moraga." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- Tafolla, Carmen. "Right in One Language." In Other Words. Ed. Roberta Fernández.
- Tashlik, Phyllis, ed. Hispanic, Female, and Young. Houston: Piñata Books, 1994.
- The Latina Feminist Group, eds. Telling to Live: Latina Feminist Testimonios. Durham and London: Duke University press, 2001.
- Treacy, Mary Jane. "The Ties that Bind: Women and Community in Evangelina Vigil's Thirty and Seen a Lot." Breaking Boundaries. Eds. Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- Trujillo, Carla, ed. Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About. Berkeley: Third Woman, 1991.

- Unger, Leonard, ed. T. S. Eliot: A Selected Critique. New York: Russell & Russell, 1966.
- Valdez, Luis. "Introduction" in Fiesta in Aztlán: Anthology of Chicano Poetry. Toni Empringham, ed. Santa Barbara: Capra Press, 1981.
- Vargas, Yamila Azize. "A Commentary on the Works of Three Puerto Rican Women Poets in New York." Breaking Boundaries. Eds., Asunción Horno-Delgado et al.
- Vasquez, Luz Selenia. "Como el crystal al romperse." Cuentos; Stories by Latinas. Eds. Cherrie Moraga, Alma Gomez, Mariana Romo-Carmona.
- Vigil, Evangelina, ed. Woman of Her Word – Hispanic Women Write. Houston: Arte Público Press, 1987
- ,ed. Woman of Her Word – Hispanic Women Write. Houston: Revista Chicano – Riqueña, 1983.
- Vigil, Evangelina. "Tavern Taboo." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.
- Villanueva, Alma. "I Sing to Myself." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo and Eliana Rivero.
- Viramontes, Helena Maria. "Growing." Cuentos: Stories by Latinas. Eds. Alma Gómez et al.
- Von Hallberg, Robert, ed. Canons. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Woolf, Virginia. Women and Writing. Michèle Barrett, ed. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979.
- , A Room of One's Own. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1957.
- Walas, Guillermina. Entre dos Américas – Narrativas de Latinas en los 90's. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000.

Warhol, Robyn, and Diane Price Herndl, eds. Feminisms. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997.

Willez, Michael Lee. The Debt to Minority Literature: Images of Change and Action in Recent White Literature. Lincoln, Neb.: 1973.

Zamora, Bernice. "So Not To Be Mottled." Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.

---, "'Pueblo, 1950.'" Infinite Divisions. Eds. Tey Diana Rebolledo, Eliana Rivero.

---, "Silence at Bay." Mascaras. Ed. Lucha Corpi.

Zaneti, Susana. "Prologue" in Alfonsina Storni. Antología Poética. Buenos Aires, Losada, 1983.