WHY AM I SO BROWN?
for Raquel Guerrero

A question Chicanitas sometimes ask
while others wonder: Why is the sky blue?
or the grass so green?

God made you brown, mi’ja,
color bronce - color of your raza, your people
connecting you to your raíces, your roots
your story/historia
as you begin moving towards your future.

God made you brown, mi’ja,
color bronce, beautiful/strong,
reminding you of the goodness
de tu mamá, de tus abuelas, your grandmothers
y tus antepasados, your ancestors.

God made you brown, mi’ja,
to wear as a crown, for you are royalty -
la raza nueva - the people of the sun.
It is the color of Chicana women -
leaders/madres of Chicano warriors
luchando por la paz y la dignidad
de la justicia de la nación Aztlán!

God wants you to understand ... brown
is not a color ... it is:
a state of being, a very human texture
alive and full of song, celebrating -
dancing to the new world
which is for everyone ...

Finally, mi’ja,
God made you brown
because it is one of HER favorite colors!

1986/1993