Mexico,
I look for you all day in the streets of Oaxaca.
The children run to me, laughing,
spinning me blind and silly.
They call to me in words of another language.
My brown body searches the streets
for the dye that will color my thoughts.

But Mexico gags,
¡Esputa!
on this bland pochaseed.

I didn't ask to be brought up tonta!
My name hangs about me like a loose tooth.
Old women know my secret,
"Es la culpa de los antepasados."
Blame it on the old ones.
They give me a name
that fights me.

From Emplumada by Lorna Dee Cervantes, Published by University of Pittsburgh Press. (1981)