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***Mosaico feminista
Tejiendo conocimiento a través de las
culturas
Feminist Mosaic
Weaving Knowledge Across Cultures***

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Our Story: An Introduction

*All feminist anthologies have a story,
and the story behind this collection of essays
is a special one.*

*It was the Fall 2021; we were still immersed in the COVID-19 pandemic.
The future looked uncertain.*

*Like many educators, my dear colleagues,
I was teaching remotely, via Zoom.*

*Back then I was teaching my graduate seminar,
Feminist Theories.
As in previous semesters,
I had the privilege of meeting a group of talented students.*

*Our seminar was unique for more than one reason,
and connecting virtually did not compromise
the quality of our intellectual engagement.
It was an opportunity to explore ways to be creative.*

*The seminar included freewriting exercises.
It helped to connect in more than one way,
intellectually and at the human level.*

*I had never met any of my students in person,
and we never met in person during the semester,
except the last day of class.*

*Meeting in person was both special and surreal.
We made the decision collectively
and we kept the prescribed "social distance."*

*The last day of class was only the beginning of a professional journey.
I was proud of our freewriting exercises.
I commented that perhaps we could work on a volume together.*

*Reading each one of their final papers made me proud as a feminist.
I became aware of the richness and the potential of each essay.
I was excited.*

*A bilingual feminist anthology —English and Spanish— came to mind.
Why not?
Students expressed their enthusiastic interest.
They accepted the invitation to continue working on their papers for this anthology.*

*All the people who gave life to the seminar participated,
except for one student who unfortunately could not join us.
Their spirit has been with us all along.*

~ * ~

The contributors of this bilingual feminist anthology include scholars and professionals at different stages of our academic training, and from different disciplines and fields. Each one of us has family roots in a wide range of cultural histories and racial backgrounds, and from different parts of the world.

The following is a brief description of the intellectual exercise each one of the contributors engaged in to give life to each one of the chapters. This is us, by alphabetical order:

Alexis V. Bigelow engages intellectually with the inspirational legacy of Black women teachers and their revolutionary pedagogy of resistance in the United States. They have historically embraced moving dreams of freedom and creative activist interventions promoting—throughout a long journey of hard work and heartfelt commitment to social justice—the right to education and a life of dignity and respect in African American communities and their families.

Lani Both goes back in her imagination to her native Indonesia—the fourth-most populous nation on earth—to look closely at human trafficking in the 21st century, a cruel reality affecting the human rights of people living on the margins of an Asian nation with a painful and complex history of invasion and colonization and a sophisticated geographical landscape.

Parker Kirlew offers her honest reflections about the history of Black feminism in the United States by weaving her analysis with the influential presence and thought-provoking contributions of The Combahee River Collective, and in conversation with academic contributions that have expanded our understanding of complex gender relations socially organized in a racist U.S. society.

Mariagracia McLin Rodríguez revisits her native Peru to listen to Afro-Peruvian domestic workers and document their experiences of sexual harassment in the context of work; she shares the moving testimonies of women and looks closely at the legal system and the inefficient bureaucracy they need to decipher. The sensitive topic reveals the complex intersections of social inequality—race, gender, and class, among other—affecting the lives and well-being of a Black women in the South American nation.

Brenda Moreira Marques, born and raised in Brazil, watches the capitalist clock through a feminist lens to expose some of the intricate ways in which gender inequality has shaped women's experiences of time under patriarchy; she offers key reflections on concepts such as time poverty, radical care, and crip time, ultimately inviting us to be well-rested as an act of resistance in contemporary patriarchal cultures and nations.

Jessica Olson weaves her creative prose and critical feminist reflections to look at climate change through the lived experiences of people with disabilities in disaster situations, human beings who are no longer passive victims but rather the repository of knowledge and wisdom, human beings who can actively contribute to the difficult conversations we can no longer postpone about the catastrophic effects of sea-level rise, drought, hurricanes, wildfires, unexpected extreme weather conditions, among other 21st century tragedies.

Hnin Hnin Oo embraces Burma, the beloved homeland of her highly committed activist parents, to examine violence against women in the context of militarization and political conflict. The grotesque expression of gender inequality has unfolded within a complex history of invasion and colonization that has been surrounded, in the region and abroad, by a vibrant community of scholars and activists fervently reclaiming the most basic human rights of women in Southeast Asia.

Evalyn Stow opens the closet of traditional archival practices to expose some of the hidden truths about the ways in which heteronormativity has been institutionalized, erasing LGBTQ+ lives within these archives and other institutions housing historical records. She focuses on the experiences of lesbian women, the erasure of their lives as well as the community archives queer women have established, and creative interventions promoting social justice and change.

Katherin Patricia Tairo-Quispe listens closely to the lyrics of contemporary versions of "Valicha", the famous Peruvian love song, to unmask and examine the patriarchal forces that have distorted the original lyrics of the melodious composition. Misogyny has twisted but has not silenced Valicha; the popular song has become an anthem for many who sing it along—in Quechua and Spanish—to honor the majestic Indigenous lands of the Andes.

Alanna Uthgenannt offers a critical analysis of the social forces that have organized the experiences of inequality affecting the rights of women working in the restaurant industry, looking closely at possibilities for real change. The rich text offers insightful reflections about the socioeconomic exploitation of working-class women, labor unions, and labor movements, highlighting pathways promoting economic justice for restaurant workers.

Shannon Woods looks critically at school shootings, a cruel reality increasingly affecting contemporary U.S. society, and reflects about the post-tragedy cultures of consumption. She exposes the paradoxes and contradictions affecting the well-being of many working hard while grieving—in the midst of anger, frustration and pain—to make sense and transform an increasingly complex capitalist society.

And last, but not least, extraordinarily talented African American artist **Brianna Pippens** soon became a team member. She learned about the content of each contribution and captured with her special sensibility the spirit of each chapter and the cover. As she worked and shared her first drafts of each image, all of us were moved; each image went through revisions based on each contributor's recommendations. The images incorporated in this volume are the ones approved by each author. All of us will be forever grateful to her. *Gracias de corazón*, our heartfelt gratitude goes to you, dear Brianna.

The editor of this anthology finished reading the first version of each one of the above contributions, precisely when our beloved feminist ancestor bell hooks was in the process of transcending this material reality. As the oldest student in this feminist seminar, the editor modestly shares her inner journey of grief at that moment of collective sadness in our feminist communities, nationally and internationally. And as an educator who has embraced the idea of *ser enseñable*—meaning both, “teachable being” and “being teachable”—she explored and took into practice some pedagogical interventions while teaching a graduate seminar on feminism, via Zoom (see Appendix A).

Teaching feminist theories online in the Fall of 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, to a group of enthusiastic students embodying rich and diverse cultural and racial backgrounds, contrasting academic interests, and inspirational research projects be-

came a powerful motivation to publish this bilingual anthology. Although books and anthologies are translated and published from English to Spanish, and the other way around, we hope that this bilingual feminist anthology—with the same texts in both languages in one volume—will be of benefit to future readers. And finally, the inclusion of colorful and vibrant images is rooted in the possibility of engaging the visual dimension of our being so that can help us simultaneously embrace heart and reason—the quintessential *corazón con razón* of Gloria E. Anzaldúa—to explore and nurture our feminist imagination, individually and collectively. We hope this volume will be a source of knowledge as well as encouragement and solidarity to highly committed feminists working hard across multiple communities—academic, activist, and artistic spaces—in countries and regions where either English or Spanish, or both, are part of their everyday life struggles and dreams.

This anthology is our collective attempt to share our knowledge across disciplines and beyond borders. We hope that our feminist contributions will become borderless; sharing with a wider audience, in at least two languages, within and beyond academic spaces has special meaning. We truly hope it will be of benefit to future readers imagining and working hard to give life to more just nations and societies, all over the world.

Revised and finished on International Women's Day 2024
in Austin,
Texas, Tejas, Taysha
occupied Indigenous land.

Spring 2025

As we worked on the final stage of copyediting of this anthology, we noticed that some hyperlinks connecting readers to topics related to social inequality are no longer available online. This might reflect recent changes in the political and legal contexts in the United States in 2025, which have had an impact on the visibility and access to institutional information and resources related to these themes.

