

3 Poems

By Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs

No longer insults

In the Americas
we grow against insults
We mestizos grow hiding the Indian
of our ancestors, digging him deep into our background
deep into the hole of racial forgetfulness

We grow hearing:
“Indios bravos”/ferocious Indians
No tiene la culpa el Indio, si no el que lo hace compadre*
“Indio terco”/ stubborn Indian
Indio bajado del cerro a palos**

Spanish sayings about Indians
have become obsolete
“The Indian in you came out”
No longer means that I’m enraged and intransigent.

I journeyed the Indian.
India came back in me.
I have no fear, I am American.

*It is not the Indian’s fault, but whosoever made him the godparent of his child, a compadre

** Indian brought down from the hills with beatings, alluding here to an ignorant person. Another variation is “a tamborazos”—being hit by a drumstick, deafening them by the sound of drums.

Ezell’s

The chickens run freely in India
I think, while I wait in line

You found me,
I found you
Mexican Indians, from Oaxaca, Veracruz, Guerrero,
take our orders
Eritreans, white men, urban Indians, you and I,
mentally drool on future indulgent delights,
buy African American styled chicken
you, a chicken-eating Fiji Indian
who writes poetry in colors,
who said to me
“We all have orange eyes”
You found me there,
to remind
the me next door,
that I could be found
eating chicken
by an Indian

¿Sari or Rebozo?

Our
fabric
could
cover
it
all,
or
lay
it
all
bare.