

## *i yearn*

**RICARDO SÁNCHEZ**

i yearn this morning  
what i've yearned  
since i left

almost a year ago . . .

it is hollow  
this  
being away  
from everyday life  
in the barrios  
of my homeland . . .  
all those cities  
like el paso, los angeles,  
albuquerque,  
denver, san antonio  
(off into chicano  
infinitem!):

i yearn  
to hear spanish  
spoken in caló—  
that special way

chicanos roll their  
tongues  
to form  
words  
which dart or glide;

i yearn  
for foods  
that have character  
and strength—the kind  
that assail yet caress  
you with the zest of life;

more than anything,  
i yearn, my people,  
for the warmth of you  
greeting me with "¿qué tal,  
hermano?"<sup>1</sup>  
and the knowing that you  
mean it  
when you tell me that you love  
the fact that we exist . . .