tions, and mainly within a conservative and right-wing government, are important tensions and challenges for La Ruta. The armed confrontation and the extreme militarization led by governmental policies of security, as well as the involvement of the State agents in human rights violations against women, keep threatening this process. Furthermore, gaining recognition from this government of La Ruta's non-violent action and political position continues to pose difficult challenges to achieving peace in the region, particularly where these peace initiatives, human rights activism, and social movements are disqualified by the military, government representatives, and politicians. There are also challenges and tensions inside the movement and with relation to other women's organizations and political processes. Currently, there is consensus about the need to stop war and change women's subordination; however, women's organization can not represent or speak on behalf of all Colombian women, and women's and feminist movements appear fragmented (Sanchez 2004).

La Ruta, as a feminist movement, has a history of struggles, a compendium of theoretical research, networks, alliances, and regional and local processes (Sanchez 2004). At the same time, La Ruta faces new realities, new questions, and new strategies in the context of war, of economic globalization, and State reforms. These new realities create new challenges and tensions including dialogue with the State and the comprehension of the State's role in the situation of violence against women; the production of knowledge and new political and social practices and discourses; overcoming fragmentation; the tension between the national and local interests inside organizations and women's groups; the recognition of women's authority; and the theoretical and practical relation between feminism, pacifism, and resistances. These are challenges and tensions La Ruta is commit-

ted to overcoming in its struggle to achieve peace and equity in the lives of women in Colombia.

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Patience Wheatley

Towards Light

The ovum in darkness

explodes and
tumbles
from hair to hair

to the narrows
full of flailing sperm
all perishing

but one

: bliss, as
mermaid-merman
loses first a tail
then identity

: a wriggling ball of cells
endlessly dividing
in perfect unity
juicy like a mulberry

: flowers from a
brain stem become
buds sprouting
organs, limbs

: movement
quiet
unfolding
swelling the sky's sphere
moves the little universe
towards that

beat, beat, beat
above

Patience Wheatley's poetry appears earlier in this volume.