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Alternative Mappings of Belonging: *Non son de aquí* by María do Cebreiro
and *Rasgado* by Lila Zemborain

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In a brief poem from the book *Non son de aquí*, by Galician poet María do Cebreiro, the poet writes: ‘nada temos / sen a conciencia exacta / de que sempre estaremos / a punto de marchar’ (2008: 26). *Non son de aquí* is shaped by the physical experience of motion and displacement, as the poetic speaker constantly shifts location inside and outside Galicia, bordering at times on a sense of alienation. This sense of alienation, however, seems liberating, freeing the poetic speaker to experience, in detachment, a new sense of belonging. *Rasgado* (2006), by Argentinean poet Lila Zemborain, also reveals a preoccupation with belonging and alienation. As a sort of poetic diary written in response to the World Trade Center attack in New York City on 11 September 2001, Zemborain’s book tracks the steps of a poetic speaker intent on re-defining the terms of her relationship with a city both alien and familiar. This article examines the nomadic experience of the poetic speakers in both poetry collections as the occasion for a re-articulation of the concept of belonging. Re-formulating the terms of belonging—to a city, to a nation, to a geographical space—can lead to the creation of new, alternate mappings that expose and question stationary notions of gender, of space, and of gender in space.

Henri Lefebvre’s triad—perceived space, conceived space, and lived space—makes it possible to argue that, in the act of wandering and physically responding to space (‘perceived space’), the speakers in *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí* experience and negotiate a new ‘lived space’. By extension, acquired, internalized modes of conceiving and representing space (‘conceived space’) are in turn interrogated, unveiling an unfamiliar topography to the walker/speaker (1991: 40). In *Rasgado*, the urban landscape after 9/11 is almost unrecognizable, making it imperative for the speaker to re-

appropriate a physical space whose coordinates need to be learned anew. Zemborain herself refers to the experience of writing this book as being prompted by the urge to bear witness, to record her and others' experience of a city buried in dust, 'a forbidden, sacred space', she says, 'a kind of cemetery'¹. It becomes clear from Zemborain's own reflections on the process of writing *Rasgado* that the personal stakes are higher for her in this book than in the rest of her production. Dedicated to Zemborain's son, who was at school near the towers on 9/11, *Rasgado* constitutes the poet's attempt to show him that art can help one survive and endure trauma. At the same time, the book can also be read as her own effort to come to terms with a post 9/11 New York City, a city she had known closely for sixteen years. Having arrived in 1985 for personal and professional reasons, and probably on account of this, Zemborain tends to think of herself mostly as an Argentinean temporarily residing in the United States. Nevertheless, the tragedy of 9/11 undoubtedly confronts her with feelings of nostalgia for a city not necessarily associated with homeland yet bound up inextricably with her sense of belonging².

The poetic speaker in *Rasgado* experiences a need for the city to be revived, dug out of the dust and brought back to signify again, yet the meanings attached to it will now inevitably be altogether different. The eerie atmosphere of post 9/11 New York City pervades every corner of the daily routines that compose the speaker's everyday life, her quotidian existence. As will be seen later, several of the poems in the book literally take the subject on the exact same walks and itineraries she engaged in before the attack, enabling her to leave her footprints on the dusty surface of the city now lying underneath.

¹ Personal interview conducted with the author.

² Information gathered from various conversations with the author in the process of revising the translation of her book into English.

What used to be immediate and familiar now becomes alien and alienating, prompting a journey of recognition ‘con las clásicas paradas para apreciar / mejor el panorama que ahora se contiene con vallas / policiales y agentes apostados’ (Zemborain 2006: 59). The typical stops of a guided city tour now become the signposts to watch out for in an attempt to find some comforting familiarity amidst the rubble. Recognizing the city once again, even from the distant vantage point of a tourist, yields no satisfactory results but instead an overwhelming sense of estrangement.

The defamiliarization of the ordinary and everyday is also present in María do Cebreiro’s book. ‘O confuso é o próximo’, the speaker declares in the poem ‘Lisboa, 2006’, the only one in the book to carry a year in its title. This poem explicitly situates Galicia as the spatial centre of the collection as the poetic speaker quotes somebody else saying ‘Morrera tanta gente, / lá na Espanha’, to which she curtly responds ‘Galicia non é España’, thus at least temporarily rooting herself in Galician soil (María do Cebreiro 2008: 39-40). The speaker in *Non son de aquí* frequently departs from Santiago de Compostela to roam around Galicia, Portugal, and Spain, and, to a much lesser extent, around other places in Europe. Accordingly, the city of Santiago, at times more easily discernible than at others, alternates in this book with places further removed, literally and figuratively. Departure, and possible return, is most conspicuously present in the title ‘Volverás a Santiago algunha vez?’ introducing a poem where the idea of a fixed homeland is questioned, as further analysis will demonstrate. The speaker’s displacement across physical and geographical frontiers is accompanied in *Non son de aquí* by the uncanny feeling that ‘o próximo’—Santiago and Galicia, has become alien. This feeling is made all the more intense by the fact that *Non son de aquí*, like the rest of María do

Cebreiro's work, is written in Galician, a language closely associated with collective efforts to develop a national conscience. Nonetheless, language does not necessarily strengthen the connection with the national community; instead, it problematizes such connection, an issue that I will return to later in the article. Belonging in María do Cebreiro's text is re-signified through detachment and uprootedness.

It is relevant to mention that, even though María do Cebreiro's poetry does not seem interested in making a political statement—'Pero a experiencia díxome: / loita por non facer / un poema moral' (2008: 71), the speaker confesses—the ongoing debate around the idea of a Galician nation is an underlying presence in *Non son de aquí*. The physical landscape is re-appropriated in this poetry collection by a speaker that purposefully distances herself from political speeches and almost betrays them. I am borrowing this word—'to betray'/'traizoar'—from María do Cebreiro herself, who admits: 'As veces, ao escribir, somos conscientes de estar traizoando a lingua, o pasado, a nación' (2003: 171). The Galician poet reveals in her critical work an interest in a poetic production that, while readdressing the relationship between the subject and nature, landscape, and the environment, also manages to account for 'the social experiences of displacement, migrations or exile (abroad or within state borders)' (María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar 2009: 240). Much like the poetic speaker described above, María do Cebreiro herself is Galician, although, like the speaker, she has left Galicia on multiple occasions for personal or professional reasons. Interestingly enough, the poem opening *Non son de aquí* bears the title 'Bangor', a city in northern Wales where the poet was Writer in Residence during the academic year 2007-2008. The poet's residence overseas thus inaugurates the poetry collection both literally and figuratively.

Non son de aquí distances itself from the idea of a Galician collective identity contained within the physical boundaries of the Galician landscape. Instead, María do Cebreiro's book embraces 'a love in and of displacement', as Helena Miguélez-Carballeira suitably remarks in her prologue to the English translation (2010: 13). From the title itself, María do Cebreiro insinuates the presence of a lyrical subject willfully in transit, drifting across boundaries aimlessly, so to speak, without an apparent obvious destination. This lack of belonging, underscored by the negative form of the verb 'to be' in the title, is nevertheless, as has already been suggested, paradoxically rooted in Santiago and Galicia, even if at times only via absence and negation. Not only are Santiago and Galicia deictically present through the word 'aquí', but they are also alluded to through various specific spatial references, some of which serve as titles to the poems. Among the most prominent of these, we find 'García Rodríguez'—in reference to Central Térmica de As Pontes de García Rodríguez, the largest power plant in Spain, and 'Avenida Castelao s/n'—address of the Facultade de Filoloxía of Universidade de Santiago de Compostela. From the 'here' of Santiago and Galicia, the speaker moves to and through other spaces/places also present in the book through very specific references: 'Madrid', 'Bangor', 'Lisboa', 'Granada', 'Amsterdam'. The uprootedness announced in the title is confirmed through the proliferation of places that also fail, like Santiago and Galicia, to bind the speaker to a sense of home or origin. 'Non son de aquí' cannot be superseded by its affirmative counterpart; instead, it is as if the speaker ceaselessly affirmed: 'Non son de alí tampouco'.

Unlike Santiago and Galicia in *Non son de aquí*, the city of New York is never explicitly mentioned in *Rasgado*, though it hovers ominously in the background like the

towers, no longer there yet tangibly present. The city is otherwise present in Zemborain's book through allusions like 'la ciudad fantasmagórica de pelli' (2006: 60), in reference to César Pelli, the Argentinean architect responsible for designing the World Financial Center next to the disappeared World Trade Center. In addition, as in the case of Santiago and Galicia in María do Cebreiro's book, scattered spatial references throughout Zemborain's book enable the reader to identify the phantasmagoric metropolis.

Washington Square, St. Peter's Church, the corner of Greenwich Street and Chambers, all punctuate the speaker's itinerary around the city in ruins, still retaining some of their value as familiar landmarks. This itinerary minutely locates the cardinal points that can help anchor the city as something more real, less ghost-like—'y hacia el sur se acerca / el río, pero al oeste sigue la debacle'. Furthermore, she starts and finishes her trajectory at the same juncture, right at the school playground where her son is/was in danger, at the corner of Greenwich and Chambers, 'circunvalación del área destruida' (Zemborain 2006: 59-60). The journey eventually yields a vision of New York City that, however disheartening and daunting, allows for new paths to be charted, or else, for unfamiliar ways of walking the once familiar, well-trodden paths pre-9/11.

The speaker's journey in *Rasgado* is reminiscent of that one described by Michel de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, where the scholar opposes the view of Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center to that of walkers, 'the ordinary practitioners of the city'. These walkers, 'whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it' 'make use of spaces that cannot be seen', de Certeau argues. The theorist recuperates these 'blind' everyday practices of walkers to argue in favor of their capacity of resistance against totalizing,

panoptic power. These practices ‘compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces’ that in turn bring forth ‘a *migrational*, or metaphorical, city [that] thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city’ (De Certeau 1984: 93). It is precisely this migrational, metaphorical city that the poetic speaker recreates in Zemborain’s book, setting in motion a new lived space against the conceived space of plans, maps, and tour guides.

De Certeau equates discourse and pedestrian practices, arguing that the act of walking has, like speech, an ‘enunciative’ function: ‘it is a process of *appropriation* of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language); it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting-out of language); and it implies *relations* among differentiated positions’ (1984: 97-8). As in the case of a speech act, walking as a space of enunciation allows the walker to actualize different possibilities, making diverse selections, re-arranging elements, taking some spaces up and abandoning others, improvising, and even inventing new spatial configurations. Walking prompts and enables the passer-by to create new meanings out of spaces, to search for a ‘proper’ meaning that is ‘merely the fiction produced by a use that is also particular’, as particular as the ‘figures of walking’ that ‘divert and displace meaning in the direction of equivocality’, giving shape to the ‘metaphorical city’ (De Certeau 1984: 100). Walking New York City yet once again, the speaker in Zemborain’s book writes/speaks a new urban spatial configuration, against the grain of proper official renderings and against the grain of her own memory of that space.

De Certeau moves on to describe the rhetoric of walking as ‘the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper’. ‘The moving about that the city multiplies and

concentrates’, he reasons, ‘makes the city itself an immense social experience of lacking a place’ (1984: 103). *Rasgado* stages the rhetoric of walking outlined in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, as the poetic speaker walks the absent city creating in her path another, migrational city that she can claim as her own. Phrases like ‘dio lugar a’ or ‘cediendo el espacio a’ abound in Zemborain’s collection, and bear testimony to the changes in the physiognomy of the city. In the proem³ inhabited by Lorenzo, the son in danger to whom the book is dedicated, the phrase ‘en su lugar’ is repeated ad infinitum, in multiple possible combinations with ‘Lorenzo’, ‘los árboles’, ‘la escuela’, ‘la plaza’ (Zemborain 2006: 15-6). Soon enough, it becomes obvious that ‘the trees’, ‘the school’, ‘the square’ of this first poem are no longer ‘in their place’, that the space/location of the catastrophe has been altered so drastically that it is necessary to re-construct it, re-appropriating it, so as to “ganarle la / partida al juego de las sombras” (Zemborain 2006: 21).

Circumnavigating the wreck, the speaker is faced once and again with the overwhelming feeling of being on a guided tour—‘una sensación de recorrido turístico me apabulla’ (Zemborain 2006: 59). The lyrical subject in Zemborain’s collection feels at the mercy of the elements, out in the open, without solace or protection against the menace of absolute destruction.

The image of the wind, particularly in the poem closing the diaristic sequence, speaks to the sensation of desolation pervading the landscape. Almost involuntarily, the poetic speaker arrives a year later at the scene of the tragedy, where the wind and the

³ I use the term ‘proem’ in the sense of preface or preamble, following the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, to refer to the poem opening the collection, which does not belong to any of the three sections into which the book is organized: ‘hexágono’, ‘célula’, ‘catálisis’, and, unlike the poems in these sections, does not bear a title. As the analysis shows, the uneasy relationship of the poetic speaker with surrounding space is already prefigured in this introductory poem.

river delineate the contours of the solemn ceremony. The very first lines of the last poem—‘11 de septiembre 2002’—read: ‘pero aquí hoy el viento, la ceremonia, mis pasos / me conducen a un derrotero de fantasmas / deambulando entre el río y las torres’. The wind nails down the space—‘aquí’—and time—‘hoy’—in the real, tangible, and concrete reality of the physical landscape from which it is impossible to escape. Suddenly, at a ‘crossroads’, ‘se levanta un viento / fuerte que será deleznado por los periodistas, por / todos aquellos que hablarán del viento y de él no / quedará nada más que una palabra’. With her hands in the wind, the wind that ‘terrifies’ ‘con su furia o con su frío’, the speaker in *Rasgado* braves ‘el espacio del vacío’, ‘el lugar de privilegio’ (Zemborain 2006: 113-4). It is a wind that is ‘penetrating every crevice of ground zero, destabilizing the dust’⁴, as Zemborain herself describes it in an interview, and by virtue of its all-enveloping nature, it is a wind that deterritorializes, erasing physical boundaries.

Open spaces traversed by an unnamable wind also appear prominently in María do Cebreiro’s poetry collection, again associated with the idea of an absence and loss that is all-encompassing. Towards the end of the first section of ‘Bangor’, the speaker in *Non son de aquí* confesses: ‘Pero eu quedei pensando / nos hábitos do vento’, and the section immediately following starts with this reflection: ‘Perdemos o que é noso, / nin un paso máis lonxe / que esta chuvia’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 11). The lyrical subject in María do Cebreiro’s book deliberately inscribes herself into that vast, open space, criss-crossed by unrelenting winds. The poem ‘A Coruña’ provides one of the clearest examples of such a gesture:

Había tanto vento

⁴ Personal interview conducted with the author.

que perdín
a memoria.
A terra está
partida
en dúas
metades.
Habitamos
a beira
desolada.
Mais podemos
dicir:
amamos
o deserto. (María do Cebreiro 2008: 27)

The wind sweeping over the landscape in this poem is reminiscent of that one swaying the pine trees in the first stanzas of ‘Os Pinos’, also the title of the Galician national anthem. The presence of the ‘wind’ alongside the ‘rain’ in María do Cebreiro’s book undeniably evokes common traits of the landscape and weather of the Galician region. Nevertheless, unlike most Galician poetry of the nineteenth century, María do Cebreiro’s poem is far from resorting to a description of landscape that serves to embody a ‘common ground for the nation’ (2010: 88).

The wind in *Non son de aquí* leads to a loss of memory, to a feeling of dispossession of one’s own country that results in a confident embrace of the desert, the place without borders par excellence. It is a wind that unsettles any sense of belonging

attached to an idealized conception of place, any feeling of allegiance to a nation. ‘As nacións sen estado teñen vento’ is the line that closes the first poem of the book— ‘Bangor’—which started with the speaker’s heart in the ‘wrong place’, wondering about the wind’s habits: ‘Non esquezas traer o corazón. / Pero eu quedei pensando / nos hábitos do vento’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 11-3). The nomad speaker that welcomes the loss brought about by the deterritorializing wind in the first poem and affirms a plural love of the desert reappears in the figure of the fugitive in ‘Valdavara (Cruzul)’. What brings this fugitive close to the nomad subject of the earlier poems is the fact that the possibility of return is not precluded; the fugitive is indeed a nomad as well. The ‘fuxido / que andou por entre as covas / mais tamén o fuxido / que tivo que aprender a retornar’ in ‘Valdavara (Cruzul)’ (63) is also in turn evocative of the ‘I’ that confesses: ‘Eu sempre me fuguei’ in ‘Biscaia (a Lei do Pai)’, a poem brimming with references to ‘patria’ (54). In fact, flight through the frontiers and borders of the homeland lies at the foundation of the lyrical subject’s existence: ‘Aquela costureira, / a muller máis bonita / dos Ancares / quedou coxa e volveu, / casou co meu avó / e agora escribo’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 63). Neither comfortable insider nor true and absolute outsider, the speaker in *Non son de aquí* defies such binaries.

Such a defiance of binaries is replicated in the movement of the verses themselves, which alternate in length between very short, almost choppy lines, and longer ones, as if prey to a swaying movement of expansion and contraction that refuses to be moored in either one extreme. Even within a poem like ‘Amarante’, it is possible to perceive such a movement as the lines shift back and forth between five, four, and three syllables. The idea of contraction is already announced in the epigraph—‘*Hai unha*

contracción da terra e da humidade que chamamos trigo’—and later taken up by the speaker to refer to lack of action, to stasis: ‘En cada contracción / hai un fondo / de espera’. However, the binary action/inaction is soon upset as the image of a bridge undermines any static notion of an origin: ‘non quero máis orixe / que esta ponte’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 14-7). Origin is instead associated with an in-between two possible locations, not fixed either on one end or on the other. Similarly, the sense of fluidity brought about by the frequent repetition of the /s/ sound in the collection is oftentimes arrested by the equally frequent use of negative adverbs and phrases, of which the book’s title constitutes the first example. As before, verses never completely align exclusively with either one of the two poles in the opposition, but rather contract—through negation—and expand—through fluidity—ceaselessly.

Noncompliance with the binary insider/outsider in *Non son de aquí* underlies the idea of ‘home’, ‘itself one of the most persistent symbols of the notion of belonging’, as María do Cebreiro herself states in her analysis of the figure of the spectre (2009: 232). Home in María do Cebreiro’s poetry collection is typically a house without walls, crossed by winds, exposed to the elements. Ironically, it is in the poem entitled ‘Do íntimo’ where a speaker in the third person opens the door only to find that ‘todas as paredes / se desgastan / e que a madeira / acaba por ceder’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 51). ‘Do íntimo’ is also the title of a section in the book *Follas novas* (1880) by Rosalía de Castro, an emblematic figure for the revitalization of Galician language, literature and culture. Furthermore, Rosalía de Castro’s book is suffused with the nostalgia or ‘saudade’ that comes from having left the homeland behind. The poem ‘Estranxeira na súa patria’ of the section in question reads: ‘estranxeira na súa patria, / que, sin lar nin arrimo, / sentada na

baranda contempnaba /cál brilaban os lumes fuxitivos’ (Rosalía de Castro 1958: 15).

Ironically, in *Non son de aquí*, the house in Seixas, Lugo or Becerreá, with ‘o comedor / fechado e panos / case sempre / sobre os mobles’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 47) does not offer ‘arrimo’ either, does not provide the shelter and protection typically associated with one’s sense of being at or coming back home. Instead, the home foregrounded in María do Cebreiro’s collection is a home paradoxically associated with the freedom that comes from the certainty that we are always ‘a punto de marchar’, an idea introduced at the beginning of this article.

The distinction between inside and outside, near and far, is befuddled in these poems that defy containment within borders. In the poem ‘Do íntimo’ mentioned above, the first few lines—‘Dende fóra describe, / mostra as cousas. / Dende fóra / detense no interior. / Hai que marchar / ben lonxe para ver’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 51)—echo the epigraph by Elizabeth Barrett Browning opening the book: ‘[poets] should have eyes to near things as comprehensively / as if afar they took their point of sight, / and distant things as intimately deep / as if they touched them’⁵ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 9). Distance and detachment can indeed predate any sense of belonging; from afar it is possible to see things up close, to reclaim them as one’s own. As the epigraph insinuates, this act of reclamation or of re-possession is carried out primarily via touch. Accordingly, alongside allusions to distance and displacement in the book, we find a proliferation of terms related to touch and tactility, and among these the recurrence of the word ‘hands’ as that which enables one to recognize and re-appropriate something or somebody. The

⁵ The attribution of the quote to British poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning is present only in the English translation *I am not from here* (2010).

poem ‘Amarante’ has a telling allusion to hands in close proximity to yet another reference to Rosalía de Castro’s book *Follas novas*:

Sabes cal era a cousa
que máis brillaba
ao lonxe?
Estaba na túa man,
non era o meu olor,
brillaba tanto
como o canto
das follas

de Rosalía de Castro. (María do Cebreiro 2008: 17)

The thing shining in the distance, reminiscent of the ‘lumes fuxitivos’ of Rosalía de Castro’s poem cited above, sparks the speaker’s desire to remain ‘prendida’ ‘no oco das túas mans, / húmido e quente’ of the poem ‘Volverás a Santiago algunha vez?’, a poem where the speaker strives to make sense out of loss, desire, dreams, antagonism and empathy (María do Cebreiro 2008: 20).

The nearness and distance that come from one’s love or hate of a person or place defines belonging in *Non son de aquí*, and the very first poem sets this in motion as the speaker reveals: ‘Un pouco máis ao norte, / pecho as mans. / El tocábame os dedos’, a confession complemented by its counterpart on the next page: ‘Ao norte do que nunca imaxinei / hai un home deitado. / Pecha as mans. / Vou tocándolle os dedos / un a un’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 11-2). Throughout the collection, touch conduces to true knowledge of the other, very often at the expense of sight. The ‘I’ in ‘Hospital de San

Roque' acknowledges this as she states: 'O dia que remate / sentaremos no banco / que mellor me coñece / e volverás dicir: / non necesito os ollos / para verte'. This is an 'I' whose body is coterminous with other bodies—animal, human, organic—much like Deleuze and Guattari's *Body without Organs*, a concept to which we will return later. In the same poem, the speaker states 'No meu cabelo, arxila', and concludes: 'sobre a terra vermella / dos teus brazos. [. . .] Amaremos o chan tal como é' (María do Cebreiro 2008: 29-30). The body coextensive with other bodies is also the body of the nomad, unmarked and unlocatable.

María do Cebreiro's verses in *Non son de aquí* are propelled by a movement in and out, across and beyond locales that eerily give shape to a home(land) paradoxically untranslatable into rootedness and permanence. Like the wind, this home(land) cannot be named; it escapes linguistic and physical containment: 'Ao vento, que non para, / han querer / darlle un nome / de lugar: / por bonito que sexa, / unha traizón' (María do Cebreiro 2008: 16). Language betrays the speaker in more than one sense. The daughter in the poem 'Rúa da Agriña' wonders if she has in fact become alienated, disregarding her father's words of caution:

No recreo
a súa filla
falaba
en castelán.

'Non pretenderás ser
unha alienada?'

Eu aínda

me pregunto
se a súa profecía
se cumpriu. (Cebreiro 2008: 24-5).

As has already been suggested, language in *Non son de aquí* fails to embody a collective identity for the nation, leading the speaker to wonder in the lines above if this failure equates alienation from one's own country. Such failure is also represented in the book through the occasional intrusion of both English and Spanish. Significantly enough, one of these instances occurs in relation to one's appropriation of the land through touch: 'Take my hand, / take my hand, / this land is made for you' (María do Cebreiro 2008: 54). Betraying one's language equates betraying one's origins, an act that can eventually enable the speakers in both poetry collections to open up to a life without borders, to an existence without containment.

Language betrays the speaker in Zemborain's *Rasgado*, for whom articulating absence and loss in one's mother language becomes an unattainable goal. In this book, the linearity of language that would allow for a logical sequence of cause and consequence has been pulverized, like the physical space. Thus, the migrational city that the speaker is bound to recreate through her numerous journeys around New York City is in turn mirrored in a migrational language, English. It is impossible for the speaker in *Rasgado* to 'hilar en los papeles relaciones / que se anexan, ya que un quiebre en la estructura / se ha instalado separando de manera atroz la / sucesión de la secuencia y consecuencia' (Zemborain 2006: 47). Faced with the disruption of the logical sequence, a disruption also present in the pauses breaking up the lines in each poem, she ominously

concludes: ‘Cada palabra es / espectro literal de lo que fue, decir vacío’ (Zemborain 2006: 67).

As in *Non son de aquí*, in *Rasgado* home(land) cannot be named, and the speaker has to resort to an alien(ating) language in order to be able to say: ‘house no longer feasible for / understanding, house no longer feasible for love’ (Zemborain 2006: 37). The house in Zemborain’s book does not provide shelter or protection either. The lyrical subject makes numerous attempts to find some respite from exterior chaos through the daily routines normally performed almost automatically, only to find that those domestic routines have also been usurped by the hostile exterior: ‘El humor del detergente en / la ropa que se lava y seca según tecnologías / apropiadas ahora aterra aún más que la trincheta’ (Zemborain 2006: 21). The ‘trincheta’ is a cutting instrument—a box cutter—easily found among supplies at home, yet in *Rasgado* it inevitably refers us readers to the purported weapon of the hijackers and to the enormous ‘grieta’ that has fractured the blue skies. That ‘big fissure in the sky’—a recurring motif throughout the book—becomes, according to Zemborain, the image that describes ‘the sensation of life being torn apart’⁶. The fissure is installed inside, and fractured routines act as ineluctable reminders of the torn sky outside, ‘el cielo celeste del otoño todo / rasgado’ of the poem inhabited by Lorenzo (Zemborain 2006: 15).

The sounds /s/ and /r/ prevail most conspicuously in the opening and closing poems of Zemborain’s collection, and, less boldly though not less forcefully, throughout the rest of the book. As in the case of *Non son de aquí*, the sound /s/ signals fluidity, an image sustained by the persistent presence of the river and its recurring glow

⁶ Personal interview conducted with the author.

‘autorizando a la distancia el magne- / tismo de dos enormes baterías’ (Zemborain 2006: 25). The sound /r/ resonates in words like ‘desgarro’, ‘derrumbe’, ‘torres’, and, above all, ‘rasgado’, as in the line ‘cielo celeste del otoño todo rasgado’ that populates the proem inaugurating the collection. Fluid movement is also arrested in this poetry collection, as the flow of the verses—evocative of Zemborain’s previous collection, *Malvas orquideas del mar* (2004)—is put to a halt by the ‘grieta’ that has torn asunder daily existence. As the distinction between the domestic interior and the hostile exterior gets blurred, so is the binary movement/paralysis, or action/inaction. This binary is also overcome as the careful chronology established by the poems’ titles is undermined by numerous references to the stoppage of time brought about by the towers’ collapse, ‘porque la / sucesión queda abolida y el instante domina esa / parte de eternidad que mantiene un cuerpo / vivo’ (Zemborain 2006: 75). Movement forward and stasis converge throughout *Rasgado* in phrases like ‘tiempo detenido y avanzando lento hacia el zenit’, or ‘el fluido impenetrable / del tiempo detenido’, defying any possibility of separation or distinction between the two (Zemborain 2006: 45, 53).

The speaker in *Rasgado* is in transit between physical spaces, never anchored, never at home, and also ‘in transit between the languages’, much like the ‘polyglot’ that Rosi Braidotti considers to be ‘a variation on the theme of nomadic consciousness’ (1994: 12). The blurring of boundaries between inside and outside in María do Cebreiro’s and Lila Zemborain’s collections echo Braidotti’s definition of nomadism as ‘not fluidity without borders but rather an acute awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries’ (1994: 36). Braidotti’s nomad, if anything, has a heightened awareness of place; however, this awareness is not synonymous with appropriation. The nomad speakers in *Rasgado* and

Non son de aquí construct a sense of belonging via dispossession, disowning, distance. “The nomad’s relationship to the earth”, according to Braidotti, ‘is one of transitory attachment and cyclical frequentation’ (1994: 25). This act of deterritorialization characterizing the nomad’s relationship to earth in Braidotti’s theory of nomadic subjects is also an apt representation of María do Cebreiro’s gesture in the poem titled ‘Un souto (Compostela)’.

María do Cebreiro’s title to the poem evokes the Galician landscape and a possible sense of belonging to that landscape. As if to reinforce this evocation, the epigraph provided is the first stanza of a ‘cantiga de amigo’ by Xohan Airas, Galician-Portuguese medieval poet active under the reigns of Alfonso X of Castille and Afonso III of Portugal. Rather than exalting and celebrating nature and landscape in the manner of the lyrical poetry sung by minstrels and troubadours in medieval Galicia, ‘Un souto’ is traversed by the idea of freedom announced on the very first line: “‘Quero que sexas libre’” (María do Cebreiro 2008: 58). Moreover, the freedom promised seems to be derived from distance and separation, which soon become the poem’s motifs. Addressing once more an interlocutor through the use of the second person, the speaker promises: ‘ven onda min, direiche / todo o que significa / separarse’. The ‘orixe da memoria’ is not bound to the land since ‘Antes non había terra’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 59). The incipient sense of belonging insinuated at the beginning is therefore rapidly disarticulated to give in to uprootedness and displacement, as the poem concludes with the speaker accepting that ‘Onda ti, que non teño, / onda ti medran raíces’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 59). Roots and origins grow elsewhere, and the poem ends reiterating a question that

appeared as title of a previous poem already mentioned: ‘Volverás a Santiago / algunha vez?’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 60).

Home(land) in María do Cebreiro’s poetry collection seems always to be located somewhere else. Consequently, there is no nostalgia attached to a fixed space, to a stable foundation. Instead, it is as if the speaker’s eyes were always directed beyond frontiers, at a non-place, ‘como se fosen faros / para o mar dunha costa que aínda non foi posible’. The poem titled ‘Volverás a Santiago algunha vez?’ begins and ends with a command that once again demands physical displacement. ‘Ti lévame a onde vaias’ on the first line is replaced in the very last line by ‘Lévame á casa’, thus suggesting the idea of a home that is always and forever in transit (María do Cebreiro 2008: 20). Transitoriness also defines the experience of the speaker in Zemborain’s *Rasgado*, for whom the space where home is located can only be described as ‘los restos de un país en el que vivo’. Like *Non son de aquí*, *Rasgado* does not directly address the political context surrounding 9/11; however, as in the case of María do Cebreiro’s book, the political atmosphere surrounding the aftermath of the attack acts as backdrop to the speaker’s itineraries around the city. It is this political atmosphere that leads the speaker to conclude the poem ‘11 de mayo 2002’ with the words: ‘en los restos de un país en / el que vivo: para alguien yo soy el enemigo’ (Zemborain 2006: 99). Her drive towards a re-appropriation of the city can be said to be traversed by political forces as she is positioned as an alien other whose presence is seen as threatening by the patriotic discourse surrounding 9/11.

In response to her ‘precarious’ sense of belonging, the speaker in Zemborain’s poetic diary subscribes to ‘la ética del agua’, aware that ‘el basamento y el muelle durará / cierto tiempo sin que la tormenta se lo lleve en su / precariedad de arena y vendavales’

(Zemborain 2006: 111). Like the speaker in *Non son de aquí*, she embraces fluidity, nonfixity, non-attachment, as the one and only means of survival. Like Braidotti's 'nomad', both speakers have 'relinquished all idea, desire, or nostalgia for fixity' (1994: 22). For them, belonging to a place does not entail ownership, it is rather negotiated as ceaseless movement without any set point of departure or clear destination. In her analysis of Chus Pato's eco-poetry, María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar mentions the poet's 'political and poetic use of the concept of nomadism' as a form of resistance, and links it to the concept of the 'horde' developed by French theorists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Even though Pato's eco-poetry is responding to different social and political forces, thinking of nomadism in these terms can help further our understanding of the resistance present in the two collections in question here. Deleuze and Guattari equate the horde with the war machine and oppose it to the State apparatus (Deleuze and Guattari 2010: 4). The barbarian as migrant or nomadic subject resists the State apparatus as centre. The nomadic subjects in *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí* also resist, like the barbarian horde, any idealized or essentialist—or 'organized' and 'vertical' in Deleuze and Guattari's terminology—conception of place as centre. As has been noted before, (place of) origin is represented instead as unfixed, unstable, mobile, and unanchored.

The resistance that María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar perceives in Pato's poetry, pointing as it does towards the mobility with absolute freedom of the barbarian horde, embodies 'a dialectical relationship between travel and territoriality' (2010: 90, 83). In likewise manner, travel in both poetry collections leads to a deterritorialization that has the potential to re-define notions of belonging. In *Non son de aquí*, deterritorialized mobility leads to an interrogation of Galician identity essentialism; in *Rasgado*

travelling a currently unfamiliar yet once familiar territory results in questioning the opposition between insider and outsider, between friend and foe. Binaries are unsettled in the two books in a manner that recalls the unsettling of the binary periphery/centre at work in the dynamic between the barbarian horde and the empire. In fact, it is no longer possible to speak of a binary, but rather of a continuum, a rizhome, that which ‘has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo*. [. . .] Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 25). These questions are useless as well for the poetic speakers in *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí*. If they ever ask themselves where they are heading or where they are coming from, they soon accept the impossibility of finding viable answers, and they find this knowledge to be liberating.

The journeys undertaken in *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí* resemble de Certeau’s pedestrian practices without a specific origin or destination, the ‘manifold story made out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces’ without author or spectator. In Lila Zemborain’s book, the lack of capitalization and final periods signals to a ‘rhizomatic’ movement without beginning or end, and the impossibility of closure is all the more evident in the figure of the sleepwalker waiting at the end: ‘mientras el secreto silencio del sonámbulo / queda allí como dormido, quieto y esperando’ (2006: 114). ‘Waiting for what? I really don’t know’⁷, confesses Zemborain in an interview. In spite of the chronology present in the titles of the poems making up Zemborain’s poetic diary, time is suspended precisely because there is neither a clear beginning nor a clear end. María do Cebreiro’s analysis of the temporal dimension of resistance in the poetry of Chus Pato is

⁷ Personal interview conducted with the author.

once again useful for understanding the perception of time as it relates to space in the two poetry collections in question.

In her article on the concept of resistance in contemporary Galician culture, María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar borrows Deleuze's conceptualization of 'resistance' as a 'contraction' rather than an 'act' or, in Guattari's terms, as a 'pure passion . . . that preserves the before in the after'. The Galician critic and poet moves on to explain that 'conserving the before in the after means being loyal simultaneously to the past and to the future'. This is for her a suitable description of Pato's poetics of resistance, whose 'fortune resides in the fact that it is a faithful image of the terrain without being completely unfaithful to the rootlessness which involves the discovery of a—sometimes irretrievable—distance between subject and world'. To the idea of resistance as passion that preserves the before in the after, she opposes a nostalgia for the past that inevitably carries the risk of paralysis (Rábade Villar 2010: 91). *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí* escape any sense of longing for the past as the speakers travel paths that defy any idea of a voyage as starting and finishing somewhere. Both are simultaneously loyal to the past and to the future as they recognize and come to terms with the fact that any recollection of a past time or place is elusive, unstable, and, at best, as flitting as the present and as uncertain as the future. The speakers/wanderers in the two collections are faithful to the rootlessness derived from the distance between subject and world, and indeed seek that distance. Still, their land/terrain is overwhelmingly present in their meanderings.

Conserving 'the before in the after' also means not privileging any one 'version' of a place over another. The New York city that the speaker in *Rasgado* used to be familiar with is now gone; however, in a sense, it was never there. As the British

geographer Doreen Massey explains, ‘to fix on one moment, on one period, by which to characterize the ever-shifting medley of social relations which have taken place in that location . . . is to make a claim about a particular moment in time-space as having a verity which others do not’ (1994a: 116). The speaker’s need to recreate and rename the city in Zemborain’s book is a need all city-dwellers have at all times, since the city they think they know is also an illusion, as it is falsely congealed at a particular moment in time and space that bears no more relevance than any other particular moment. The representation of origin as a ‘bridge’ in María do Cebreiro’s poem ‘Amarante’ speaks of this conflation of before and after, of the suspension of time/space that wards off the paralyzing risks of nostalgia:

pero eu non son
de aquí,
non teño
descendencia,
non quero máis orixe
que esta ponte
até que nos sosteña
e cando caia
teñamos a nobreza
de marchar
sobre os restos,
saibamos despedirnos,
que sexa tan fermoso

como nunca. (María do Cebreiro 2008: 17)

The speaker in ‘Amarante’ accepts separation and affirms uprootedness—‘non son / de aquí / non teño / descendencia’—through a gesture that resists both nostalgia and stasis.

In *Space, Place, and Gender*, Doreen Massey argues in favor of a notion of place that stresses its unfixed, contested, multiple, and dynamic nature. She critiques arguments, policies, and movements that establish an unproblematical relation to one’s place relying on ‘notions—of a recourse to a past, of a seamless coherence of character, of an apparently comforting bounded enclosure’. These notions, in Massey’s opinion, are intrinsically false and misleading (1994b: 168). The critic’s insistence on developing an anti-essentialist approach to the way we think about place is intertwined with an attempt to disentangle the intricate connections of place with gender. Massey argues strongly for a correlation between the prevalence of notions of place rooted in nostalgia and stasis and the fact that space, as opposed to time, is typically coded as feminine. She elaborates upon this correlation by stating that ‘the construction of “home” as a woman’s place has [. . .] carried into those views of place itself as a source of stability, reliability and authenticity’. ‘Such views of place’, she concludes, ‘reverberate with nostalgia for something lost’ and ‘are coded female’ (Massey 1994b: 180). Home and homeland—present both as ‘patria’ and as ‘terra’ in *Non son de aquí*—are concepts interrogated by the speakers in both collections, as neither of them feels that they belong to a place that truly belongs to them. In interrogating these concepts, they rescue the sense of belonging to a place from stasis, passivity, and nostalgia.

‘Los restos de un país en el que vivo’ is Zemborain’s way of describing a temporary and precarious home(land) (2006: 99), a detachment that almost becomes

rejection in María do Cebreiro's last poem, as the line that serves as title categorically states: 'E ela non quixo a terra'. The speaker's refusal to choose homeland in this poem comes in response to the interlocutor's warning: 'El dixo: non hai terra / se estás lonxe' (María do Cebreiro 2008: 72). It is distance that the speaker opts for, since from afar it is possible to see things intimately, as if you touched them, as the epigraph by Elizabeth Barrett Browning insinuates. From afar—'Eu sempre me fuguei'—the speaker in *Non son de aquí* can look at motherland in less idealistic terms: 'Patria, non son teus ollos / de avelá nin de mel' (María do Cebreiro 2008: 54). As home and homeland—traditionally coded as feminine—are destabilized, gender is also in turn dislocated and subjectivity, like physical location, becomes unstable. The physical displacement of the subject in *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí* is mirrored by a shifting of pronouns from the first to the second to the third person. The 'nomadic style' of the speakers, quoting once again Braidotti, 'without predetermined destinations or lost homelands', results in an interrogation of subjectivity that ties in with notions of belonging to a place, a country, a nation (1994: 25).

The presence of an implied interlocutor already alluded to in some of the quotes from *Non son de aquí* is symptom of 'una dislocación . . . un doble espacio o espacio fracturado que es el de los sujetos separados de la interlocución: el *yo* que se autopresenta, el *tú* virtual al que se interpela', as Gonzalo Abril summarizes in his study of the poetics of space in Eloísa Otero (2009: 184). There is in María do Cebreiro's book a dislocation of subjectivity that parallels the dislocation of place. It is not unusual to find poems that act as the re-enactment of a conversation, and others where the interlocutor joins the speaker through the use of the first person plural pronoun. A further and even

more profound dislocation occurs when, even in those poems that appear to be most conspicuously personal, the ‘I’ gives way to a ‘she’ that has the semblance of a double. ‘Biscaia (a Lei do Pai)’ starts in the third person—‘Ela sempre imaxina / que seu pai / inocula venenos’—to change into the first person as the lyrical subject evokes homeland in these terms:

Dende pequena busco
o meu xardín:
un valo que pintaron
de amarelo,
as roseiras silvestres
que non pican.

A miña idea de patria. (María do Cebreiro 2008: 52).

Re-imagining homeland elsewhere, or inside oneself, or proliferating into multiple locations, entails also re-imagining one’s own sense of place or location, and along with it, one’s sense of belonging or attachment to a larger, more collective, subjectivity. The dislocation of subjectivity present through the use of pronouns is also present, in the last lines of this poem, through the use of an estranged language: ‘Take my hand, / take my hand, / this land is made for you’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 54).

The use of an alien(ating) language in *Rasgado* also suggests a dislocation of subjectivity—‘what is this compulsion to write in english?’ (Zemborain 2006: 43), and this dislocation is manifest as well in the shift back and forth between the first and the third person. In the poem titled ‘15 de septiembre 2001’, the confusion of boundaries between the hostile exterior and the domestic interior is replicated in the use of pronouns,

as the speaker's emotionally charged experience of reality is conveyed through the third person, conflating through this gesture her own experience and that of others. The poem lists a series of sensations and emotions she experiences as she goes through the daily motions of doing laundry, cooking dinner, cleaning dishes:

bajar los ojos para borrar lo que se instala
de improviso cuando ve caer la lluvia o las risas la
distraen con desacierto; siguiendo los preceptos de
un cansancio secular habla de las cosas cercanas
como si fueran otras las urgencias (Zemborain 2006: 21)

Estranged from her familiar surroundings, the lyrical subject in this poem is compelled to re-imagine nearby things, to distance herself from the true horror still visible in the dust covering everything outside. However, it is not in any sense an out-of-body experience, quite the opposite. Pain and intense weariness—‘un cansancio secular’—have seeped into her body, spreading everywhere, so that ‘no / hay forma de estancar el dolor en una sola zona, / sin que se esparza por etapas’ (Zemborain 2006: 21).

The experience of speaking/walking New York City anew is an embodied experience; the subject becomes a body registering the sights and sounds that translate in bodily terms what seems untranslatable into either English or Spanish. Zemborain herself sums up this experience in these terms: ‘my body became a wanderer of the city, trying to describe through its landscape the human loss’⁸. In *Rasgado*, the exterior is installed within the house and within the body. The fissure in the blue sky is also torn membranes and tissues, which now bear the inscription of tragedy. ‘Ephemeral / bodies’, ‘bodies

⁸ Personal interview conducted with the author.

already / trembling with sharks' (Zemborain 2006: 41, 43), the collapsed bodies crushed by the towers, alternate with the speaker's own body, 'la masa de mi cuerpo' (Zemborain 2006: 49) represented as glands, neurons, secretions, endorphins:

de pronto un circuito se instala, una conexión se
establece, una dureza se aliviana, se rasgan los
velos de la pena, y se materializa en la inquietud
una presencia, endorfinas, endorfinas, opiáceos
que el cerebro emite entre las aguas, endorfinas,
droga humana que el cuerpo distribuye en
anestesia, en visiones que oxigenan la mirada (Zemborain 2006: 81)

The body has itself become landscape— 'nudo entero el cuerpo, nudo / entero, roca, árbol añoso enraizado en las / digitaciones del miedo' (Zemborain 2006: 33)—and the devastation and desolation of ground zero can only be fully grasped in bodily terms: 'la / constancia que queda en las entrañas cuando a / una mujer le quitan los ovarios y el útero' (Zemborain 2006: 96). In relation to the figure of the sleepwalker waiting that closes the book, Zemborain reflects: 'It's a waiting that shows in a way the permanence of the event inside the body'⁹. The distinction between subject and object, interior and exterior, is erased, and the speaker comes to terms with the space around her almost exclusively through her embodiment, via her corporeality.

The sense of belonging as an embodied experience is an appropriate manner for the nomad to relate to land and landscape since, as Rosi Braidotti suggests, 'rethinking the bodily roots of subjectivity is the starting point for the epistemological project of

⁹ Personal interview conducted with the author.

nomadism'¹⁰ (1994: 3-4). In María do Cebreiro's *Non son de aquí*, landscape has also become internalized, and the speaker carries it with her wherever she goes: 'Eu non me perdería / nin cos ollos pechados, / pero prefilo abrilos / para verte' (2008: 57). The lines closing the whole collection reinforce this idea, this time including the 'tú':

E por cada experiencia,
unha marca na pel.
Pero invisible.
Mírame, non a ves?
Podes pechar os ollos,
non se vai.
Podo non verte máis,
levarte dentro. (María do Cebreiro 2008: 73-4).

Even with one's eyes closed, it is possible to see the mark on the skin, even with one's eyes closed, it is possible to experience home(land). The relationship subject/object, interior/exterior is blurred once more. In *Non son de aquí*, the speaker's body is a bare body, without clothes, much like the house without walls mentioned earlier, exposed to the elements, and it bleeds: 'Pero tras das costuras, / fíos soltos reúnen / o que sanga', an

¹⁰ Despite the differences between Braidotti's and Deleuze and Guattari's concept of nomadism, I am here using their approaches complementarily, and emphasizing those elements of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy that Braidotti herself re-appropriates for her own project, namely, the figure of the rhizome and the affirmation of the body's corporeality via the Body without Organs, a concept which has also nourished Elizabeth Grosz's philosophical thinking around bodies. Even though Braidotti has expressed her skepticism about the political risks implicit in the concept of 'becoming-woman', she argues that 'the various feminist figurations of a new female subjectivity gain by intersecting with Deleuze's project of transforming the very image we have of thinking, and with his new vision of subjectivity as an intensive, multiple, and discontinuous process of interrelations' (1994b: 162).

image that acts as a continuation of that one in the earlier poem ‘Volverás a Santiago
alguna vez?’: ‘onde o corpo distingue / só as costuras da roupa e vai por dentro espido /
como antes de nacer’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 59, 20). As has been suggested earlier,
the speaker’s body in this collection is a body continuous with other bodies—animal,
human, organic—and also a body that remains in radical materiality, as evidenced by the
proliferation of images of tact and tactility (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 161).

Tact and tactility also occupy a preeminent place in Zemborain’s book, mainly in
connection to images of dryness and thirst provoked by the excess of ‘polvo’ and ‘ceniza’
covering it all. This dryness—‘aspereza’—very often evokes the absolute materiality of
the body shaping the speaker’s subjectivity alluded to earlier. In ‘11 de marzo 2002 (de
noche)’, the poetic speaker wonders about the fate of all the ‘destroyed’ bodies in the
wake of 9/11 with these words: ‘la aspereza de / toda esta materia vital vagabundeando
sorprendida / por las calles’. Nevertheless, the body is not completely annihilated in
Rasgado, it is not deprived of all substance either. On the contrary, much like Deleuze
and Guattari’s *Body without Organs*, devoid of any organization, no longer an organism,
it is now instead a ‘connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities’
(Deleuze and Guattari 161). The ‘instability of the broken flesh’ becomes ‘una sustancia
pegada / a la otra, todo un ligamento; ya no es la materia lo / que duele, es toda esa
maraña de energía que no / sabe si hacia arriba, hacia abajo, hacia dónde o / hacia qué’
(Zemborain 2006: 37, 73). ‘Flesh’, a word repeated in various combinations, seems to
translate more efficiently the radical materiality of the body than ‘carne’. Alongside
‘flesh’, words like ‘masa’, ‘materia’, ‘sustancia’, insist throughout Zemborain’s poetic

diary. The body is no longer ordered, hierarchized, delimited; it has become one with its surroundings, ‘las ramas anegadas de pellejos’ (Zemborain 2006: 57).

The poetic speakers in *Rasgado* and *Non son de aquí* eventually recuperate a sense of belonging through their embodied location in physical space, ‘pois aquilo que pasa por un corpo, até a fin, / iso ten o sentido dunha restitución’ (María do Cebreiro 2008: 70). Nonetheless, the body in the two collections, as a Body without Organs, is ‘not a scene, a place, or even a support upon which something comes to pass’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 153). The restitution in question displaces any notion of embodiment anchored in an interior/exterior binarism or rooted in a mind/body polarization. Elizabeth Grosz opposes ‘a “mechanics of solids,” which works in fundamental complicity with Cartesian dualism and the metaphysics of realism and self-identity that it supports’, to women’s corporeality ‘inscribed as a mode of seepage’. The metaphysics of realism is for the theorist ‘dualist not simply in terms of presuming and establishing an opposition between mind and body but in binarizing existence with the distinction between subject and object, thus implicitly (and at times explicitly) coding women on the side of body and object’ (Grosz 1994: 203-4). María do Cebreiro’s and Zemborain’s poetry collections instill a corporeality that moves beyond these binary polarizations, as distinctions between inside and outside, interior and exterior, subject and landscape, speaker and home(land) are disrupted. In so doing, both books enact a resistance, via nomadism, against the essentialist notion of belonging that derives either from the affirmation of a collective national identity or from a geopolitical separation between insiders and outsiders.

In their acute awareness of the fluidity of boundaries between here and there, between home and elsewhere, the speakers in Cebreiro's and Zemborain's books do not just confuse notions of female subjectivity moored on the side of body and object. Most importantly, they befuddle gender as it is inscribed in space through resisting the essentializing codification of home as woman that produces a sense of belonging rooted in nostalgia and stasis. Instead, the emphasis in these two collections lies in the incessant travel and movement across spaces that brings about a deliberate resistance against a rigid conception of place, a gesture akin to Braidotti's notion of nomadic consciousness. This derritorializing act, this 'awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries', is associated for María do Cebreiro with a sense of freedom that is not necessarily political. In an interview about her book *Fogar impronunciabile*, the critic and poet confesses: 'Siempre he encontrado más interesante una cierta rebeldía con respecto al sentimiento de arraigo que la afirmación identitaria' (María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar 2011). In the pages preceding the text of *Rasgado*, Lila Zemborain calls her poetic diary 'un libro celebratorio' (2006: 10), a celebration derived from the liberating recreation of New York City as 'relationships and intersections of [. . .] exoduses that intertwine and create a [. . .] fabric [. . .] placed under the sign of what ought to be, ultimately, the place but is only a name, a City', quoting de Certeau one last time (1984: 103). It would be tempting to think of María do Cebreiro merely as an 'insider' writing about Galicia, her centre, in Galician, and of Lila Zemborain as an 'outsider' witnessing from the margins the aftermath of 9/11. Nonetheless, the categories themselves of 'insider' and 'outsider' are interrogated and both Galicia and New York lose univocity to become instead the

intersection of multiple trajectories that generate alternate mappings of gender, of space, and of gender in space.

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