Borders and Border Crossings on the 21st Century Spanish Stage: Renegotiating Identity and Belonging in Migrant Theater

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Abstract

This project explores the ways in which the border and border crossers are depicted on the contemporary Spanish stage. Drawing on scholarly ideas from a variety of disciplines, including concepts related to border studies, political geography, transnationalism, and hybridity and the third space, I analyze six theatrical works performed in Spain in the last two decades by playwrights Carla Guimarães de Andrade, Juan Diego Botto, Paco Bezerra, and Fermín Cabal and Amanda Rodríguez as well as theatrical companies Teatro sin papeles and Lucía Miranda's Cross Border Project. The dissertation aims to expand on the scholarship of migration literature in Spain and to highlight plays that move beyond the damaging tropes, stereotypes, and trite plotlines used in many Spanish immigration plays of the 1990s. The six plays studied here illustrate an important evolution, although nonlinear, of the representation of the migrant character and the migrant stories being told onstage. They make strides away from models of necropolitical theater and toward convivial theater, both defined by Jeffrey K. Coleman, in order to reflect more accurately the current multicultural and multiracial reality of Spain and the varied experiences of migrants as they enter and make a home in their new host country. *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última* (2013), *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros* (2018), *Maldita cocina* (2004), *Un trozo invisible de este mundo* (2014), *El señor Ye ama los dragones* (2015), and *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta* (2017) contain migrant characters who refuse to fall neatly within binary categories, who are neither to be feared nor pitied, who are neither fully Spanish nor fully Other. The characters' stories are complex and multifaceted and reflect more faithfully the hybrid identities of the real-life border crossers they depict. These plays, in their creation, content, structure, and performance, cross borders to navigate the in-between. In this interstitial space, the possibility arises to displace dominant and oppressive discourses, create new meaning,

and negotiate identities and senses of being, becoming, and belonging. The study of these contributions to Spain's repertoire of migration literature is invaluable because of how these artistic redefinitions of self and home can potentially reverberate out into local communities.

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I would also like to thank a number of other people who have impacted me during my time in higher education. I would never have applied to graduate programs in Spanish without the encouragement and support from my Baylor professors, including Jan Evans, Marian Ortuño,

Michael Thomas, Guillermo García-Corales, Karol Hardin, Linda McManness, Lizbeth Souza-Fuertes, and, finally, Paul Larson and Frieda Blackwell. My classes at UVA with David Gies, Anne Garland Mahler, Gustavo Pellón, Charlotte Rogers, Omar Velázquez-Mendoza, Eli Carter, and Fernando Valverde played an important role in molding me professionally, as did the classes I took or audited outside the department with Carmenita Higginbotham, Camilla Fojas, Karen James, and Elizabeth Hall. Others have contributed in meaningful ways to the formation of the educator that I am and hope to be, including Matthew Street, Kate Neff, and especially the inimitable Emily Scida, who has served as mentor and model of what language teaching can and should be. Ricardo Padrón has served as the Director of Graduate Studies for much of the last several years, and he and our wonderful Linda Newman have shown me time and time again immense kindness and patience that helped lead me to the completion of this project.

My journey to the topic of my dissertation was perhaps unconventional. I was unsure of where my schooling in Charlottesville would take me and was open to new avenues of research. In the Spring semester of my first year at UVA, I wrote about Botto's *Un trozo invisible de este mundo*, one of the plays that appears in this dissertation, for Dr. Mahler's class "The Global South Imaginary." Years later, when it came time to solidify my proposal, I knew I wanted to engage with a topic that I felt really mattered—not just a topic that would matter to me, as anything I found interesting would, but one that I could convince others to care about, that related to contemporary issues that my friends, coworkers, and family encountered, one that might have some type of universal appeal. I kept returning to the research I did that first spring, even in my personal life and free time. I spent several years in volunteer programs based in Waco and Charlottesville teaching English to Spanish-speaking immigrants to the US. I witnessed some of the difficulties of navigating the US's migration routes when my local

Charlottesville church, Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church, officially offered sanctuary to a woman with a strong case for asylum who was facing deportation. I performed in our department play *Cifras* about Spanish officials' and citizens' reactions to the political, legal, financial, and moral complications of rescuing hopeful migrants at sea. Eventually, thanks to all of these factors and the people that made them happen, it was settled: researching contemporary Spanish migration theater was how my personal and professional interests could intersect and enrich one another on a project about an issue that, without a doubt, mattered deeply to the world.

I spent time finding and reading as much Spanish theater from the 1990s, early 2000s, and 2010s about migration. The summer I taught with UVA in Valencia, I was able to spend some time in Madrid watching recorded performances housed at the Centro de Documentación of the Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música and had the opportunity to see Lucía Miranda's Cross Border Project's *Generación Global*, a work written and performed in the Conde Duque by migrant youths and their classmates from local high schools that, of course, revolved around their identities and self-expression. When the COVID-19 pandemic first began, the response of Spanish theaters and theatrical companies was to offer recordings of performances for the public to watch for free from the safety of their locked down homes. Because of this, I was able to view the filmed versions of Lucía Miranda's *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta*, Paco Bezerra's *El señor Ye ama los dragones*, and Teatro sin papeles's *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros*. Eventually these works and others made their way into the final project. As I read and wrote, Jeffrey K. Coleman and his colleagues kindly welcomed me to many virtual meetings of TRECE (Taller de Raza, Etnicidad y Ciudadanía en España), and these fruitful

conversations allowed me to further ground myself in important theories and concepts relevant to my topic. It is thanks to all of these experiences that my dissertation looks the way it does today.

Life is more than the four walls of a classroom or a couple hundred pages of a dissertation. I want now to thank the people in my life who have stood by me, laughed with me, cried with me, and walked through important life stages with me over the last decade. I am so grateful for the relationships I made with my fellow graduate students at Baylor and UVA, especially the cohorts with whom I entered both programs, including Kelsey, Abbey, Catherine, and Caroline. Lindsey, you had such an impact on who I became at Baylor and your love and care has stuck with me beyond the boundaries of Waco, TX. Additionally, Alexa has supported me in multiple spheres of my professional life over the years, Courtney has been a wonderful friend, confidante, and cheerleader, and, of course, Thallya provided emotional as well as logistical support that was indispensable to me. Thank you to my family for your offering of unconditional love throughout this process, to Ryan's family, especially Shari, for countless phone calls and demonstrations of support, and to Ryan, for sticking with me through years of challenges and difficult growth with patience and flexibility. Here's to brighter years ahead.

Introduction: Spanish (Im)migration in the 21st century and its Representations Onstage

> *The problem here is that the people we call voiceless oftentimes are not actually voiceless. Many of the voiceless are actually talking all the time. They are loud, if you get close enough to hear them, if you are capable of listening, if you are aware of what you cannot hear. The problem is that much of the world does not want to hear the voiceless or cannot hear them.*
> —*Viet Thanh Nguyen,* The Displaced

> *The act of making theater is the act of recognizing, affirming, extending, imagining, and re-affirming a community or, possibly, communities. Metaphorically at first, and then literally and tangibly, theater is the creation of newly shared space on Earth.*
> —*Peter Sellars, Foreword to Emma Cox's* Theatre and Migration

Migratory patterns around the world have changed drastically throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and the topic of immigration is omnipresent in conversations surrounding politics, economics, and public policy. As John Berger says, "Never before our time have so many people been uprooted. Emigration, forced or chosen, across national frontiers or from village to metropolis, is the quintessential experience of our time" (55). The movement across national borders is, according to Rob Shields, "perhaps one of the most distinctive features of modernities and globalization: ideas, materials and bodies traverse them" (541). However, the ease with which ideas, materials, and bodies move, and the welcoming they receive upon arrival, are not the same. Regardless of their official nomenclature, immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and other border-crossers face a number of bordering practices, receive varying degrees of inclusion and exclusion in the host nation, and experience significant impacts on their identity construction. As such a pervasive experience and contemporary sociopolitical concern, one can see easily why themes relating to migration would emerge in international literature, as these stories are demanding to be told and heard.

This dissertation seeks to highlight the recent theatrical works performed in Spain of playwrights Carla Guimarães de Andrade, Juan Diego Botto, Paco Bezerra, and Fermín Cabal and Amanda Rodríguez as well as theatrical companies that include Teatro sin papeles and Lucía Miranda's Cross Border Project. These plays from the last two decades differ from their predecessors that used migrant characters as plot devices or portrayed them simply as victims to be pitied who perish or barely survive in Spanish society. Instead, they make strides toward what Jeffrey Coleman describes as convivial theater, or plays that hold Spain "accountable to [its] multicultural and multiracial (present and) future" by "better reflect[ing] the realities of immigrants without relying on sensationalizing tropes that promote hegemonic whiteness and mere survivability for nonwhites" (*The Necropolitical* 15). The migrant characters in the six plays analyzed here reject flat representations or clean categorization of migrant experiences and have a multitude of possibilities open to them. They may escape death or undermine its finality, or they may find ways to thrive socially or economically in Spanish society, negotiating meaning and their identities and searching for a sense of belonging in their communities.

Although the so-called migration "crisis" is a worldwide phenomenon, the contemporary bordering and border-crossing practices in the European Union (EU) are of special interest. According to political geographer Reece Jones, in the decade before 2016 more than half of the world's border deaths "occurred at the edges of the EU" (16). On behalf of the International Organization of Migration (IOM), Philippe Fargues confirmed in 2017 that "Europe's Mediterranean border is by far the world's deadliest border," reporting that over 33,000 migrants[1] have perished or disappeared in the crossing, a figure that is likely underestimated (1).

[1] In this dissertation, I will primarily use "migrant" as an umbrella term for regular and irregular immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and others on the move or settled outside their country of birth, following the model of Roberto G. Gonzales et al. (7). Just as borders themselves are permeable, so are the boundaries of different legal statuses of migrants. David Moffette traces the history of Spain's legal

The extreme difficulties that await hopeful border-crossers into Europe contrast sharply with the EU's philosophy behind the Schengen Area.

Especially with the establishment of the Schengen Area in 1995, the dominant media narrative in the 1990s proclaimed the removal of borders throughout Europe. However, "[t]he reality is that EU borders were not removed . . . but simply moved to different locations" (Jones 17). The Schengen Area allows visa-free movement across Europe's twenty-six participating nations' internal, shared borders. While they label this area as "border-free," it is important to note that to join the Schengen Area, countries must fulfill several conditions, including taking "responsibility for controlling the external borders on behalf of other Schengen countries" and cooperating "with law enforcement agencies in other Schengen countries, to maintain a high level of security" (European Commission). Sociologist David Moffette highlights these seemingly contradicting border philosophies to understand the contemporary era: "Nowhere is this paradox more apparent than in the European Union (EU), a political entity founded on the complementary projects of creating an internal borderless space of circulation and of strengthening external borders" (3). The efforts to secure the EU's borders only intensified after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Matthew Longo notes that 9/11 caused "a rethinking of European policy toward collective border security . . . This has led to first steps toward the

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use of *extranjero* and *inmigrante* and the shifting categories of legal/regular and illegal/irregular migration, calling the terminology unstable (37). The Critical Refugee Studies Collective also emphasizes that refugees "can be self-identified and are often unrecognized within the limited definitions proffered by international and state laws, hence may be subsumed, in those instances, under other labels such as 'undocumented'" ("Critical Vocabularies"). Jones echoes this sentiment, adding that the official 1967 definition of the United Nations Convention on Refugees "excludes most people who move, because poverty and environmental changes are not included. The poor . . . are considered voluntary migrants" (20). For the purposes of this analysis, the term "migrant" is more inclusive of the variety of experiences of marginalized individuals who move that are being represented on the Spanish stage. This dissertation does not focus on the experiences of retired migrants, international students, or internal migrants, although these fall under the IOM's inclusivist definition of the term "migrant" ("Key Migration Terms").

centralized coordination of border control—referred to in this context as 'integrated border management' or joint border operations" (115). To ensure their external borders are secured, countries have increased the use of new enforcement technologies and militarization and securitization efforts, including agencies and systems such as Frontex, Eurosur, and the Sistema Integrado de Vigilancia Exterior (SIVE). For Jones, "The hardening of the border through new security practices is the source of the violence, not a response to it" (5). While free movement and a sense of community and belonging are fomented within the EU's Schengen Area, violence, restriction, and limited access await those on the outside, especially for poor, racialized, and other marginalized groups.

Europe receives migrants on three primary fronts: from the East across the Oder-Neisse line, from the north in the Baltic sea, and from the south in the Mediterranean. As the EU closes its shorter and less dangerous pathways to entrance, migrants more commonly travel longer and more treacherous routes, resulting in an increase in injury or death (Fargues 1). Jones elucidates the flawed logic behind Europe's preferred policy of deterrence:

> If the crossing is dangerous and thousands of people die en route, it will discourage others from trying to reach Europe. The first problem with this approach is that it assumes all migrants have the luxury of deciding whether or not to move. Many, if not most, do not have a choice. It also ignores that the trip has already been dangerous for over a decade, which appears to have had no impact on the decisions of later migrants to attempt the crossing. Indeed, more people are coming, not fewer. (24-25)

While the EU has made regular migration routes sparser, the irregular routes are still there, beckoning to hopeful migrants. Clandestine entry through Southern Europe's islands, mountain ranges, and long coastlines offer many their chance at stepping foot within the EU's external borders. It comes as no surprise, then, that Southern Europe, including Italy, Spain, and Greece, function as an "'entrance hall' to the EU" or "'waiting room' for many migrants who have as a destination the Northern EU countries" (Anthias and Lazaridis 3). The trick for many migrants is

to set foot on Spanish, Italian, or Grecian soil. Chapter One addresses in more detail the dangers migrants are willing to face for this chance and the methods used to cross the Mediterranean border, especially via the Central or Western Mediterranean Sea routes or over the border fences at Melilla and Ceuta, as well as the perilous journey across the Saharan Desert necessary for sub-Saharan African migrants.

The Southern European countries are also popular for many migrants because of the ability to gain access to the countries through the labor circuit. Floya Anthias and Gabriella Lazaridis note, "The growth of immigration has run parallel with the trend to the flexibilisation and casualisation of Southern European labour markets" (4). Hein de Haas, Stephen Castles, and Mark J. Miller trace the transition of the labor markets in Southern Europe through several phases. They explain that, in the mid-1970s to mid-1990s, service sectors experienced rapid growth due to the flexibilization of labor markets, economic deregulation, and other policies, and since the mid-1990s there has been an "opening up of a new 'labour frontier'" and "new source regions of migrants" (130). Traditionally made up of emigration countries, Southern Europe transitioned to a new status of net immigration as Southern European economies had and continue to have a high demand for flexible labor in fields such as agriculture, tourism, catering, construction, and domestic services, and a "large informal sector means that there is demand for migrant workers in certain low-paid, precarious jobs which are unattractive to locals" (Anthias and Lazaridis 4). Because of this need for migrant labor, there is, as Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson call it, "a legal production of illegality and a corresponding process of migrant inclusion through illegalization," shaping "the conditions under which border crossing is possible and actually practised and experienced" (67-68). The border, in this way, functions more as a sieve "filtering and selecting" according to "multiple and shifting scales, ratings and evaluations"

(Mezzadra and Neilson 68). The border does not so much block entrance and decide whom to keep out, but rather, a nation's borders and bordering practices decide whom to let in, under what circumstances, and to which social spaces, often according to how certain migrants may benefit the country's society and citizens.

The migrant does not leave the border behind after crossing the fence, wall, or sea. As Mezzadra and Neilson explain, "the image of the wall could not possibly explain the new processes of border construction" that have led to a "proliferation or multiplication of walls and borders of various kinds" (71). Once a migrant is within the destination country's territory, the border continues to act upon her in terms of social mobility and sense of belonging, often through mechanisms of social exclusion. Anthias and Lazaridis expound on this:

> Social exclusion is a term that includes within its ambit a wide range of social relations and outcomes related to inequality and disadvantage. At one level, social exclusion means lack of opportunities in terms of gaining access or *inclusion* within a range of arenas in society that determine life chances. On the other hand, it also depicts a range of hurdles or boundaries that set out to prevent groups from enjoying full rights to citizenship in its fullest sense. Social exclusion may be organized around class, gender or ethnic groupings, and there is always an intersection of all these dimensions and divisions for individuals. (2)

A migrant may also be differentially included within the host country's society depending on her country of origin, race, religion, and more. Mezzadra and Neilson define differential inclusion as "how inclusion in a sphere or realm can be subject to varying degrees of subordination, rule, discrimination and segmentation," and they note that seemingly benevolent programs of social inclusion may "also function as devices of hierarchization and control" (67). In this way, social exclusion and differential inclusion work in tandem, each dependent on the other.

This dissertation focuses mainly on the literary treatment of social exclusion and differential inclusion that occurs on racial or ethnic lines. This occurs on two fronts: from autochthonous Europeans who aspire to ascend to or prove their whiteness, and from other

migrants in an attempt to differentiate amongst themselves along the racial hierarchy. Dohra Ahmad comments on this phenomenon, in which "racism can become an assimilation ritual for non-Black immigrants: solidarity among new arrivals and local communities of color may exist but isn't guaranteed" (xxi). These social exclusion and differential inclusion processes can be exacerbated at Europe's Southern border and especially Spain, where "[a] few kilometers of sea . . . [are] the invisible rampart of fortress Europe where the European continent and the 'Third World' of Africa draw close and almost touch each other" (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 55). This physical closeness creates significant anxiety in those wishing to distance themselves from Africa and, as will be discussed shortly, approximate themselves to European whiteness.

Spain's current status as a net receiving country contrasts starkly with its history of the previous century. For the first two thirds of the twentieth century, the principal migratory patterns involved residents in rural areas moving into larger cities such as Madrid, Barcelona, and Bilbao (Andres-Suárez 9). After the Spanish Civil War, the ensuing exile of many Republicans and economic problems arising from Francoist autarky led to high emigration trends, especially to Latin America and other European countries (Fernández Soto and Checa y Olmos 8), and in the 1960s[2] many Spaniards left to find work in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, often encouraged to do so by the Spanish government (Andres-Suárez 10). In the 1970s and 1980s, Spain experienced what Russell King and Isabel Rodríguez-Melguizo deem the "migration turnaround" thanks to "a phased interplay of three distinct migration trends: the sharp decline in emigration after the mid-1970s; increased numbers of returning emigrants during the late 1970s and early 1980s; and the sharply rising influx of

[2] Fernández Soto and Checa y Olmos also note the importance of internal migration in the 1960s and 70s, as Spanish rural inhabitants moved to work in Madrid and the industrialized cities of Catalonia and Basque Country (8).

immigrants after the mid-1980s" (57). For example, due to an economic crisis in receiving European countries in 1973 and the death of Francisco Franco in 1975, emigration out of Spain reduced considerably and Spaniards abroad began to return home. The first poor laborers from Portugal and Africa started to settle in Spain in about 1970, and a developing tourist industry and better relations with Latin America made Spain a more desirable destination. In 1985, Spain enacted the Alien Law, or the Ley Orgánica de Extranjería 7/1985 as part of its petition to join the European Economic Community and the European Union. Although Moffette details the practices, policies, and problems that came before 1985, including police instructions in the early 1980s and precursor initiatives, this 1985 law marks, in many ways, a founding moment of current Spanish immigration policy.

Over just a fifteen-year period, Spain became a new center of immigration, and its status as such only continued to strengthen in subsequent years. In 2000, Spain had a total foreign population of 2%, but this increased to approximately 12% in 2011 (Martí Romero and Bruegel). The Programa Global de Regulación y Coordinación de la Extranjería y la Inmigración (Plan GRECO) showed that in 2001, 45.16% of foreign residents were from Europe, with the rest coming primarily from Morocco, Algeria, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Cuba, Perú, Colombia, China, and the Philippines (Andres-Suárez 13). The Instituto Nacional de Estadística reported that twenty years later in 2021, 7,322,408 members of the Spanish population were foreign-born, including 522,050 from Asian countries, especially China; 3,142,500 from the Caribbean and Central and South America, especially Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador; 660,836 from non-EU countries; 1,538,212 from EU countries; and 1,322,625 from African countries, especially Morocco ("Población"). Irene Andres-Suárez explains that while the totals from each region will continue to fluctuate, the motives of migrants' moves will stay consistent,

including: “explosión demográfica, precariedad económica y social, persecución política, deseo de mejorar, etc.” (15). With these ever-changing numbers and trends come ever-changing immigration laws and policies. Spain began its own reforms of the EU’s Migration and Asylum Law in 1994 and again in 1999 (Andres-Suárez 11), and established a new Ley de Extranjería in 2000 that was modified in 2003 and 2009, with new legislation or regulations from the EU or Spain almost every year.

The act of governing irregular migration is complex and multifactorial. Moffette identifies three sometimes complementary, sometimes contradictory dimensions of the migration policy agenda that Spanish society uses to help make sense of ever-shifting immigration laws and bordering practices: culturalization, labouralization, and securitization. He defines these as follows:

> Culturalization refers to a set of logics and practices intimately tied to the history of Spanish colonialism and the governing of migrants as cultural subjects. Labouralization refers to a set of logics and practices that attempt to steer labour migration flows and frame irregular migrants as workers who contribute to the national labour market. Securitization refers to a set of logics and practices focused on the defence of territorial sovereignty, blocking all migrants as potential threats. (7)

Depending on the year or political party, one dimension may be emphasized over another, but they all contribute to the understanding of “the positioning of irregular migrants in the national imaginary” (Moffette 73). While Chapter 1 analyzes plays that touch on the effects of securitization measures and Chapter 2’s works focus on migrant characters interacting with the labouralization branch, the culturalization dimension is woven throughout the textual corpus of the entire dissertation. This includes issues of racial governance, problems of integration, and preferential treatment for certain migrants over others depending on country of origin.

It was Spain’s integration into the EU in 1986 that signaled the changing of the tides of Spanish migration; the Spanish economy was accelerating and demand for labor increasing, and

the nation was now officially part of the larger (white) European community. Doll explains the impact these changes had on Spain's sense of self and, consequently, its cultural and racial identity:

> Después de un pasado de muchos españoles emigrando a otros países en busca de trabajo y mejores oportunidades, de repente en la década de 1980, los inmigrantes empezaban a llegar en números significantes. Otra vez, los españoles tenían que cuestionar lo que significaba ser español, porque la sociedad, que nunca era tan homogénea como Franco quería que apareciera, ahora entraba en cambios radicales. (17)

The Spanish population was undergoing, in some sense, an identity crisis, and had to redefine how and with what models they would align their national identity. Much of this re-alignment centered on race. Baltasar Fra-Molinero highlights the historic racialization by Northern European countries of Spain as a less-than-white or mingled nation due to its Moorish and Jewish populations, dating all the way back to the colonialism of the sixteenth century (147). Spain's desire to be more European led to (and revealed) an aspiration to approximate whiteness: "Spain's push for Europeanization (i.e., its entrance into the European Union [EU]) in the 1980s was not only a maneuver of political and economic integration but also an integration into whiteness, substantiated by entry into Europe's most exclusive supranational club" (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 4). Membership in this club has had its consequences. Liliana Suárez-Navaz succinctly explains, "The need to protect the new imagined community—a European ethos based on a common citizenship—promotes racist and xenophobic discourse" about African and other migrants (2). A strong desire to assert Spain's right to belong in this club has given rise to several tendencies to protect that status and the "self" from the racialized "Other."

Paradoxically, immigration of nonwhite populations into Spain is simultaneously perceived as a threat while it aids in its whitening project. According to Fra-Molinero, "Spain is white in as much as it receives nonwhite immigrants. Following this equation, the more

immigrants it receives, the whiter Spain becomes" (153). When "the Pyrenees moved south," the concept of citizenship underwent drastic changes, not just in legal terms "but as a dominant model of representation of belonging, both at the level of rights as well as through identity" (Suárez-Navaz 2). These changing demographics and power dynamics influence Spain's sense of self and how belongingness is defined. Who is welcomed into the Spanish community, and who is not, or who is more welcomed than others? Migrants from Latin America, Eastern Asia, North Africa, and especially sub-Saharan Africa, arriving via regular or irregular routes, heavily impact the construction of Spain's national identity and racial hierarchy.

With the boom in immigration to Spain has come a boom in literary works thematically focused on immigration in an attempt to make sense of these societal changes. Many authors desire to put into words migrants' experiences, both fictionalized or based in historical fact, to instill empathy in their audiences, promote a change in policy or public opinion, or provide their own cathartic release, among other reasons. Ahmad claims, "For migrants and nonmigrants alike, literature renders migrant lives comprehensible and familiar" (xv). Making these stories legible and understandable by a wider public and impacting public opinion and treatment of the Other are objectives toward which authors across all genres have worked. Agustín Cerezales's *Perros verdes* (1989) is one of the earlier well-known novels, but Eduardo Mendicutti's *Los novios búlgaros* (1993), Lorenzo Silva's *Algún día, cuando pueda llevarte a Varsovia* (1997), Dulce Chacón's *Háblame, musa de aquel varón* (1998), Andrés Sorel's *Las voces del Estrecho* (2000), Jorge M. Reverte's *Gálvez en la frontera* (2001), Gerardo Muñoz Lorente's *Ramito de hierbabuena* (2001), Miguel Navero's *Al calor del día* (2001), and others followed in the next decade.[3] More recently, *Hija del camino* (2019) by Lucía Asué Mbomío Rubio and *Y a pesar de*

[3] Scholars also mention Francisco Casavella's *El triunfo* (1990), Adolfo Hernández Lafuente's *Aguas de cristal, costas de ébano* (1999), Juan Bonilla's *Los príncipes nubios* (2003), Esther Bendahan's

todo, aquí estoy (2021) by Asaari Bibang are two examples of novels that tackle the theme of immigration and, more specifically, the experience and identity construction of the next generation, the children of previous immigrants or refugees.[4] Lourdes Ortiz's *Fátima de los naufragios* (1998), Nieves García Benito's *Por la vía de Tarifa* (1999), Luis del Val's *Cuentos del mediodía* (2000), and the anthology of microcuentos *Lavapiés. Microrrelatos* (2001) use the form of the short story to explore the topic of immigration.

In poetry, too, we see many collections emerging, including Francisco Zamora Loboch's *Memoria de laberintos* (1999), Juana Castro's *El extranjero* (2000), Bahia Mahmud Awah's *Versos refugiados* (2007), and Manuel Moya's award-winning *El sueño de Dakhla (Poemas de Umar Abass)* (2008), among others.[5] The Spanish Netflix drama *Adú* (2020),[6] directed by Salvador Calvo, dominated in the 2021 Premios Goya, and Atresmedia's successful crime drama series *Mar de plástico* (2015) brought issues of immigration in the greenhouse-covered region of Almería to a wide audience. Next-generation comic Quan Zhou Wu wrote *Gente de aquí, gente de allí: Ensayo gráfico sobre migrantes y españoles* (2020), an innovative graphic essay on racism, migration, and national and individual identity. Literature and other cultural productions, across all genres, explore what immigration has meant and continues to mean to Spain.

Theatrical productions are no exception to this trend. Despite Spain's relatively recent transformation into a receiving nation of immigrants, the topic of immigration has appeared abundantly in its theater in the past three decades. The most-studied plays that focus on

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Deshojando alcachofas (2005), José Ovejero's *Nunca pasa nada* (2007), and Carmen Jiménez's *Madre mía que estás en los infiernos* (2008) as novels of note.

[4] Although not novels, Moha Gerehou's *Qué hace un negro como tú* (2021) and Desirée Bela-Lobedde's *Ser mujer negra en España* wrestle with similar themes as well as racism in Spain, as Black residents are assumed to be Other and, thus, not Spanish.

[5] See Debra Faszer-McMahon's 2012 article on the topic.

[6] Other commonly studied films include *Las cartas de Alou* (1990), *Bwana* (1996), *Flores de otro mundo* (1999), and *Princesas* (2005).

immigration as a central theme are from the 1990s and early 2000s. The pioneering works include *La mirada del hombre oscuro* (1992)[7] and *Rey negro* (1996) by Ignacio del Moral, *La orilla rica* (1992) by Encarna de las Heras, *Maldita india* (1992) and the unperformed *Ahlán* (1995) by Jerónimo López Mozo, *Sudaca* (1995) by Miguel Murillo, *La falsa muerte de Jaro el negro* (1997) by Fernando Martín Iniesta, *Lista negra* (1999) by Yolanda Pallín, *Bazar* (1997) by David Planell, and *Animales nocturnos* (2003) by the inimitable Juan Mayorga.[8]

Since these early and influential examples, the plays treating or including the topic of immigration have become more and more varied. Alberto Miralles's *Patera. Réquiem* (2003) and Juan Pablo Vallejo's *Patera* (2004) still highlight the tragic experience of the migrant journey but begin to incorporate other perspectives, such as those of children, conflicted Guardia Civil agents and Spanish intellectuals, Latin American immigrants, gravediggers for those who die at sea, and the carpenters who make a business out of making the *pateras*. While much of the theatrical production about immigration is set in Madrid or an otherwise ambiguous metropolitan city, Carles Batlle's *Temptació* (2005) and Sergi Belbel's *Forasters* (2006) focus on immigrants in Catalonia, while Paco Bezerra's *Dentro de la tierra* (2007) touches on the theme in relation to agricultural work in Andalusia. Some works like Angélica Liddell's *Y los peces salieron a combatir contra los hombres* (2004) and Mar Gómez Glez's *Cifras* (2011) focus on the hypocrisy and cruelty of Spain as a receiving society, preferring to use the conspicuous silence of migrant characters to make their point. Marcelo Díaz's *Transit* (2011), Antonio Daniel García Orellana's *Ícaro* (2012), Paloma Pedrero's *Una guarida con luz* (2018) innovate further, incorporating the untranslated languages of multiple countries of origin or depending on body

[7] This play was adapted into the 1996 film *Bwana* by director Imanol Uribe.
[8] See Eileen Doll's study on *Los inmigrantes en la escena española contemporánea* or Concha Fernández Soto and Francisco Checa y Olmos's anthology *Los mares del Caronte: Diecisiete calas dramáticas sobre migraciones* for more on this subject.

language and dance to communicate the message to their audience members. Local theaters have also organized translations and adaptations of English or French plays on the subject, engaging in the developing, continent-wide conversation on immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, Europe's colonial legacy, and national identity. [9]

Regarding scholarship on the topic, Andres-Suárez notes that studies focusing on literary treatments of the first two migratory events of the twentieth century—that of migration from rural zones to cities and that of Spaniards to other European countries—are copious, and mentions the particular importance of José Rodríguez Richart's 1999 book on the topic, *Emigración española y creación literaria*. Andres-Suárez, Marco Kunz, and Inés D'Ors's book *La inmigración en la literatura española contemporánea* (2002) meant to fill the gap in scholarly work left by these earlier studies, and Kunz's chapter on "El drama de la inmigración" focuses specifically on theatrical production. In more recent years, the analyses provided by Eileen J. Doll, Jennifer Duprey, and Jeffrey K. Coleman have added to the scholarship. Doll has written extensively on Jerónimo López Mozo, Ignacio del Moral, José Moreno Arenas, and others. Her 2013 book *Los inmigrantes en la escena española contemporánea: buscando una nueva identidad española* gives an overview of thirty plays written and performed since 1989 and analyzes them according to four categories: the language of the migrant characters, the setting, technological effects like sound and lighting, and the positioning of the audience members. The book focuses on plays about the African migrant, and it highlights themes of Othering and how the playwrights subvert traditional stereotypes or perceptions of the immigrant in order to elicit a

[9] For example, see the 2010 performance in Alcalá de Henares of *Tombuctú, 52 días a camello* (2005), an adaptation of Ahmed Ghazali's work; the 2002 Madrid performance of *La mujer invisible*, an adaptation of Kay Adshead's *The Bogus Woman* (2001); and the 2019 adaptation of Bernard-Marie Koltès's older play *La nuit juste avant les forêts* (1977) in Madrid's Centro de Cultura Contemporánea Conde Duque.

reevaluation of society's treatment of these individuals and to interrogate how the representation of these Othered figures impacts the creation of a Spanish national identity.

Duprey's *The Aesthetics of the Ephemeral: Memory Theaters in Contemporary Barcelona* (2014) contains a chapter entitled "Immigration, Displacements, Actualities," which discusses "the complexities of immigration processes in a globalized world" as seen in Batlle's *Temptació* and Belbel's *Forasters* (2). Coleman has contributed articles examining the portrayal of immigration in Spanish theater by playwrights Paco Bezerra and Juan Diego Botto and, more broadly, how Spain in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has interacted with blackness and Black people through consumption and rejection. His 2020 book, *The Necropolitical Theater: Race and Immigration on the Contemporary Spanish Stage*, studies plays with immigrant characters of different countries of origin and how they are racialized and encounter different types of death in their representation onstage.

For many scholars, the potential power of theatrical works emerges not just from the text but in the gathering that occurs between cast and audience in the meeting place of the theater. As Jerzy Grotowski claims, "The core of the theatre is an encounter," and it is this encounter that leads to self-revelation (56). According to Fernández Soto and Checa y Olmos, "las grandes voces teatrales coinciden en que el teatro debe ser una rebelión en contra de los convencionalismos socioculturales y un espacio artístico de identidad y memoria para realizar el necesario encuentro entre seres humanos" (16). For Doll, "este espacio de contemplación y desdoblamiento" is crucial for the work needed to question and interrogate national identity and the conceptualization of the Other (277). The encounter, meeting, or gathering that occurs during a performance provides a unique opportunity for deeper reflection.

Theater is an especially apt method to communicate the specific anxieties, tragedies, and celebrations of the migrant community and experience. A 2005 issue of *Revista de la Asociación de Autores de Teatro* centered around "Inmigración y teatro," including explorations into the topic by Jesús Campo García, Fermín Cabal, Ignacio del Moral, Carla Guimarães, David Planell, Yolanda Pallín, and others, and proved the intense interest in this combination of subject matter and method. Another important characteristic of theater lies in the ties between drama and real life; Kunz expounds, "Basta hojear los periódicos para convencerse de que el drama . . . se ha convertido en una de las metáforas predilectas de la prensa para calificar los aspectos más tristes y funestos de la inmigración" (215). The theatrical genre is uniquely compatible with the desire to make legible representations of these contemporary odysseys.

Theater necessitates different types of boundary crossing. It is "transcultural y transfronteriza," with the power to open up "espacios enunciativos desde y a través de los márgenes" (Doll 16). Theater about migration allows for even more boundary crossing. As Doll explains, "A los receptores teatrales les hacía falta un espacio de reflexión para poder mejor entender al Otro. Este espacio escénico reside en las fronteras, en los umbrales del mundo del inmigrante, en la intersección entre la acción en escena y el patio de butacas" (276). She notes the power of distancing techniques, subversion of stereotypes, and metatheatrical moments to push into these metaphorical border spaces. Emma Cox also emphasizes the importance of the human body in the performance of theater: "Theatre about migration opens up bodily lexicons, as well as spatial syntaxes. Bodies on stage (or in the classroom, or on the street, or wherever else performance happens) actualise stories with a voice, accent, skin and history" (4). An actor's physical presence and audible voice brings depth and nuance to the literary text, demanding attention to the story being told. For Coleman, "The corporeal nature of theater creates a

microcosm of society by encapsulating its audience in a fabricated time and space, for theater, unlike other genres, cannot be stopped, nor can it be repeated" (*The Necropolitical* 6). This ephemeral nature of theater gives its message a sense of urgency and gravitas.

In the encounter between actors and spectators, in these in-between, border spaces, the act of imagining takes place. According to Cox, "theatre of migration pays attention to imagining the contact zone between those who arrive and those who lay claim to ownership or custodianship over a territory," but she also asks "who does the imagining?" (4-5). The audience members interpret and respond to a play about migration according to how they imagine this contact zone and how they relate to the story and the artists of the work. The question, "Is it by/about *them* or is it by/about *us*?" is an important one on which audience members must reflect, requiring an interrogation of their own identities (Cox 27). Who are we? Who are they? How are we defining those identity boundaries?

However, the intention to allow space for this act of imagining and reflecting is not always enough. As Coleman convincingly argues, many of the Spanish plays about migration, although hoping to humanize immigrants, have had unintended, negative consequences, such as reifying harmful patterns found in political and media realms. Although the migrant characters in the 2000s are more diverse, the Others of the pioneer plays of the 1990s are almost exclusively immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers from African countries (Fernández Soto and Checa y Olmos 14). As young, single, Black men, these characters' difference is visibly marked by their race. The earlier, widely-studied plays may denounce xenophobia, racism, hypocrisy, and prejudice on the surface, but they also heavily center the Spanish host society experience and perspective, "haciendo hincapié en otros aspectos de la convivencia social y de la condición del extranjero, como la violencia por parte de la cultura receptora, el rechazo del Otro y el abuso del

estatus precario del inmigrante" (Krpan, "'Historias rotas'" 525). Spectators are left to ponder how the migrant presence impacts the Spanish national identity, which was, according to Doll, and still is in flux; the migrant is important insofar as she relates to Spain (276). These plays were written and performed primarily for an autochthonous, white, Spanish audience; works by playwrights like del Moral and López Mozo intend to increase empathy for migrants or improve public opinion but do not necessarily challenge the division between self and Other. Furthermore, Doll explains that the migrant character may be partially or wholly silenced or even absent onstage:

> En algunas de las obras, una figura extranjera tiene una presencia ausente, o sea que nunca aparece de verdad, o está en el contexto o el texto, pero nunca en escena. En otros casos, aparece, pero no le han concedido una voz. Ejemplifica el estado de marginado de la figura, de su falta de voz política, social o económica en la sociedad. Normalmente esta figura simplemente sirve de testigo silencioso de la xenofobia de los otros personajes que, en ocasiones, niegan ser racistas. (222)

The audience members of these plays, according to Doll, notice and feel that silenced presence, hear the racist words spoken out loud, and must reconcile what they see onstage with the reality of contemporary Spanish society, a reflective process meant to encourage more positive reception of migrants from Spanish citizens (272). These techniques do not, however, make any advances toward privileging marginalized groups and their experiences or centering marginalized voices.

Similar approaches cast the migrant as either a plot device or a victim to be pitied, dying along the journey or just barely surviving. Migrant characters often experience death of some kind: social marginalization or neocolonial servitude, forced assimilation and erasure or ontological death, and physical death (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 5). These scripts of death promote hegemonic whiteness and disallow migrant characters from moving beyond mere survivability. For Coleman and others, Spanish theater can and should do more to challenge this

hegemony, to push spectators to think differently about society, and to reflect more accurately the current Spanish reality.

Doll optimistically views the plays of the 1990s and early 2000s as a first step; the next step would be "el protagonismo del inmigrante mismo" (276). Coleman is less optimistic that this next step will happen organically across the board. He elucidates, "Given the structures of access required to stage a play, it comes as no surprise that there are currently very few nonwhite Spanish playwrights that have been able to stage their perspectives" (*The Necropolitical* 7). Kunz laments, "Por el momento, sin embargo, la literatura de España está todavía tan alejada de una adecuada integración del pluralismo cultural como lo está su sociedad" (136). The long litany of plays about migration by white, Spanish authors leans heavily toward uses of stereotypes, sensationalized narratives, flat representations or simplified victimization of minority characters, and the tragic failures of migrants. These "plays intended to develop humanizing immigrant narratives have actually formed a canon that concenters around the failure and death of the immigrant," which reinforces the already established social and racial status quo (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 5). The hope is that Spanish theater soon will catch up to the reality of Spanish society in terms of representation. With more migrant participation in the production of theatrical texts and performances, this focus on death and other harmful tropes should dissipate.

Coleman is not the only one concerned with the low participation rate of the migrant population in Spanish theater. In 2010, Luis Medina wrote an article for *El País* titled "La inmigración, actor secundario en el teatro español: Un encuentro analiza el escaso peso de los extranjeros en la escena nacional," summarizing the conversation had at *El inmigrante en el teatro*. This international event was organized by the Teatro de la Abadía to discuss why the number of migrants participating in Spanish theater was so low, as "sujetos activos (los actores,

los directores, los escenógrafos o los autores)" and as "[sujetos] pasivos (los espectadores)," despite individuals of foreign nationalities making up 12% of the total population that year (Medina).[10] An advertisement for this conference explains:

> En otros países occidentales, donde la inmigración llegó antes, se ven cada vez más actores de otra procedencia en los teatros nacionales, hay compañías compuestas expresamente por inmigrantes (o la llamada 'segunda generación'), se ha fomentado la autoría no nativa y, aunque en ningún sitio la sala llega a ser un reflejo proporcional de la población que uno se encuentra por la calle, el público es bastante más heterogéneo que en España. ("Encuentro internacional")

The group gathered to organize initiatives that would promote more participation from the migrant community in authorship and performance aspects to put Spain on par with other Western countries. With a higher participation from migrant individuals, their stories could be told more authentically, with less of a focus on the autochthonous, white Spaniard or harmful stereotypes. More migrant authors and playwrights, migrant actors, and migrants working behind the scenes could allow Spanish theater to have a greater, more positive impact on the nation's image of itself and public opinion surrounding immigration as well as on migrants' sense of belonging in the Spanish community.

This dissertation hopes to contribute to a gap in the current scholarship by highlighting six plays written and performed in Spain in the last two decades that have moved beyond the preceding necropolitical theater models. Playwrights Juan Diego Botto, Fermín Cabal and Amanda Rodríguez, Lucía Miranda, Paco Bezerra, Carla Guimarães, and writers with the theatrical group Teatro sin papeles break with the patterns of their predecessors in a variety of ways. Guimarães and Botto are themselves immigrants, having emigrated out of Latin America and to Spain for educational and political reasons, respectively. Teatro sin papeles and Miranda's

[10] The evidence of this low level of participation was corroborated by research performed by the University of Alcalá's Laboratorio de Antropología social y cultural (LASC) (Fernández Soto and Checa y Olmos 15).

Cross Border Project are companies that involve migrants, their voices, and their stories at every step of the theatrical creation process.[11] The microcosms of Spanish society shown in Cabal and Rodríguez's and Bezerra's plays crumble at the foundation, either implying the need for or explicitly inviting a new order to be created. Some of these works are ensemble pieces, some tap into fantasy elements, and some take an historic event as their departure point. All of them make significant strides away from incorporating necropolitical tendencies, such as using migrant characters purely as plot devices, centering a white Spanish perspective, or relying on unquestioned stereotypes.

Instead, the playwrights in this dissertation use tried and true distancing techniques. For example, "presentan estereotipos para de inmediato subvertirlos, expresan toda o parte de la acción desde la perspectiva del Otro o interrumpen la magia dramática con momentos metateatrales para dirigirse directamente a los receptores" (Doll 276). They also apply more innovative and experimental techniques like textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy, as defined by Camilla Stevens. Their plays open up new spaces at "la frontera fantasmal entre dos culturas (o grupos étnicos), en la que existe el Otro, donde se puede negociar algo nuevo, algo que puede redefinir la cultura" (Doll 25). In order to explore this meaning that can be negotiated in these new spaces, the chapters lean heavily on Homi Bhabha's conceptualization of the third space and its relation to hybridity:

> For a willingness to descend into that alien territory [the Third Space] . . . may reveal that the theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an *inter*national culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the 'inter'—the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space—that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. (56)

[11] Other examples of theatrical companies that are intentionally making space for immigration as a topic and immigrants as actors, playwrights, and directors include José Sanchis Sinisterra's Nuevo Teatro Fronterizo and Paloma Pedrero's Caídos del cielo.

Jessica Elbert Decker and Dylan Winchock expand on this idea, noting that when the third space is opened up, "we can see identities for what they are: relational interactions and processes of mutual change and transformation" (7). In their creation, content, structure, and performance, the six plays analyzed in this dissertation cross borders to navigate the in-between. They subvert norms and expectations, attempt to give an accurate portrayal of contemporary Spanish society, and highlight migrants' agency and their dynamic, complex, hybridized identity construction process.

Chapter 1, "Creative Border Encounters: Rehearsing New Possibilities On the Move" focuses on Carla Guimarães's *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última* (2013) and Teatro sin papeles's *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros* (2018). Both of these plays are intimately connected to the migrant experience through their authors. Guimarães is herself an immigrant from Brazil, and the theatrical company Teatro sin papeles organized a series of workshops for migrants and allies to write the text that would turn into the fluid and adaptable *¡Boza!* Both of these works center African migrants, and in particular sub-Saharan migrants, and the routes they take across national borders and the internal borders they encounter once in Europe or Spain. This chapter pays special attention to the initial journey itself, when the migrant is neither here nor there. In this physical voyage, these migrants also undergo a journey of being and becoming. Guimarães's play is based on the death of Somalian Olympian Samia Yusuf Omar and the media coverage of her disappearance. It plays with the boundaries between realism and fantasy, comedy and tragedy. *¡Boza!* is an experiment in collective storytelling, drawing on the real-life experiences of many migrants living in Spain, melding them all into a purposefully messy whole. Guimarães and the participants of Teatro sin papeles challenge common discourses surrounding migration and the migrant as a figure to be feared or pitied, and their plays challenge

binaries to open up in-between spaces in the fabric of national belonging. Like the Teatro sin papeles's characters shouting "¡Boza!," meaning "victory" or "freedom," both plays demonstrate creative freedom and a victory over rigid literary norms.

In Chapter 2, "Migrants in the Labor Circuit: Everyday Movements of Resistance and Cooperation," the emphasis shifts to migrants who already have completed their initial journey and are trying to survive in their new home. For most of the first-generation migrants in Fermín Cabal and Amanda Rodríguez's *Maldita cocina* (2004) and Juan Diego Botto's *Un trozo invisible de este mundo* (2014), this survival is contingent upon their participation in the labor circuit, especially in the domestic workforce, hospitality industry, or construction. These plays demonstrate the reality that borders are elastic and sticky (Brems et al. 287). Borders are not left behind at Customs or the Mediterranean Sea but are rather carried on migrants' bodies in their daily lives as they commute, travel, and work to maintain Spanish society with their labor. Despite their essential services to preserve the way of life in their host country, these migrants encounter daily internal boundaries of limited social mobility, racism and other prejudice, and differential inclusion and access. The migrant characters in *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible* defy simple categorization, in part due to their use of mimicry and their negotiation of horizontal networks. Cabal and Rodríguez's and Botto's characters critique the status quo from Marc Augé's non-place and, through collaborative or destructive actions, resist the hegemonic narrative of what Spain is and should be.

Finally, Chapter 3, "Reimagining Migrancy: The Next Generation," spotlights the children of those who cross national borders. Whether called the second generation or the next generation, these characters in Paco Bezerra's *El señor Ye ama los dragones* (2015) and Lucía Miranda's *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta* (2017) are marked by their parents' more conventional border

crossings needed to arrive in Spain and their own daily, border-crossing activities within their communities. While all the plays in this dissertation lend themselves to hybridity, as defined by Bhabha and others, these final two take this feature to the extreme. Through their content, characters, and structure, these plays dive headfirst into hybridity in multiple ways: the hybridized identities of next generation characters, the hybrid, boundary-defying spaces of the setting, and the hybrid genres of the texts themselves. In the in-betweenness rampant in *El señor Ye* and *Fiesta*, the characters negotiate meaning, create new forms of belonging, and redefine what "home" is and what it should look like.

These six plays are a testament to the changing trend of immigrants' and refugees' active participation in Spanish theater at every level, as migrants become more and more involved, or at least visible, in the artistic creation and performance. In these works, especially those of the last chapter, we see progress toward Coleman's concept of convivial theater and the potential it has to reimagine Spanish national identity and racialized migrants' place in it. Jill Dolan argues that we must "[u]se the emotion theater inspires to move people to political action, to desire reconfigured social relations, to want to interact intimately with a local and a global community" (90). By representing new ways of being, becoming, and belonging, the works studied here contribute to the continuing redefinition of community, home, and individual as well as national identity, shifting the focus off of Spain and onto the migrants themselves.

Creative Border Encounters: Rehearsing New Possibilities On the Move

amo la europa del siglo veinti uno
por lo mucho que separe ce a mí
des
membrada y co sida
hecha de órga nos que se llaman países
como yo hecho de miembros de cadáv eres
europa en disección eres mi espejo
no tengo no mbre yo . . .
no sé en qué piensas cuando te seccionan
los al ambres de espi no
—Raquel Lanseros, "europa"

LARBI. ¿No fue verdad nuestro viaje?
IMAGEN DE LARBI. Lo hicimos, pero al avanzar
empujábamos la frontera, como si fuera una cinta elástica.
Nunca logramos dejarla a nuestras espaldas.
—Jerónimo López Mozo, Ahlán

For political geographer Reece Jones, there is great power in the act of movement: "By refusing to abide by a wall, map, property line, border, identity document, or legal regime, mobile people upset the state's schemes of exclusion, control, and violence. They do this simply by moving" (180). By this reasoning, when people decide to embark on a journey that will lead them across borders, they become revolutionary figures whose very movement disrupts border imperialism and state-sanctioned violence. This violence can be physical and emotional, as many migrants perish along the way and experience traumas that will impact them for years to come. Violence can also come through displacement, immobilization, criminalization, exploitation, and expulsion (Walia). Harsha Walia claims that "borders and the notions of belonging they engender are not simply demarcated by towering walls experienced equally by all; they rely on and reproduce racism within the spaces they establish." In the context of the European Union's borders, the violence of racism and a racialized social order is especially intense for black sub-Saharan migrants. Coleman notes, "In essence, black lives have not yet come to matter in Spain,

because they represent an ultimate Other" (*The Necropolitical* 117). The two plays analyzed in this chapter, Carla Guimarães's *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última* (2013) and Teatro sin papeles's *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros* (2018) depict black sub-Saharan protagonists as they travel north through their continent to Morocco or Libya, and, from there, across the Mediterranean. As the ultimate Others, they face many obstacles to their entry and after their entry into the EU.

The focus of these plays and their analysis is neither on the migrants' departure, nor their arrival, but rather finds fruitful opportunity for exploration in the in-between space of their journey. The content stays faithful to the migrants' experience, the factors pushing them from their homes, the routes they take, and how they are treated along the way. The plays also subvert stereotypes and challenge common discourses surrounding migrants, and their structure experiments with literary norms by crossing textual borders, participating in what Camilla Stevens calls in her analyses of border-crossing Dominican plays textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy (191). All of these physical and literary boundary crossings create interstitial and liminal spaces, in which the opening up of new possibilities can occur.

The distinguishing quality of these two plays in comparison to the others in this dissertation is that we see the beginning of the migrant's journey and the physical crossing of national borders. Migrants are on the move, and this motion is not confined solely to the act of departing one's own country's borders and entering those of the destination country, but involves the many different types of border crossings in between. As Robert M. Press explains, "the traditional way of studying migration—from the starting point and the ending point—misses a lot" (8). Gadi Benezer and Roger Zetter, Joris Schapendonk, and Julien Brachet also call for further study of the journey itself. These plays will demonstrate the power residing in the

migrants' border crossings, when they are neither here nor there, neither in Spain or Europe nor in their country of origin, but rather, somewhere in between. This journey across the border(s) is a journey through liminal space. As Nail elucidates, "The border is precisely 'between' states. Just as the cut made by a pair of scissors that divides a piece of paper is definitely not part of the paper, so the border, as a division, is not entirely contained by the territory, state, law, or economy that it divides" (*Theory* 2). "The 'in-betweenness' of the border is not a lack or absence" (Nail, *Theory* 3), but rather is a type of third space that allows for the creation and emergence of something new.

In order to better understand these scenes, which focus on migrants coming from sub-Saharan Africa, knowledge of current bordering practices and policies is important. This includes an understanding of the numerous physical boundaries involved in the sub-Saharan migrant's journey to cross into Europe. The migrant characters in these plays are attempting to cross into the EU by land, through Ceuta or Melilla, or by water on either the Central or Western Mediterranean routes. In 2016, Jones deemed the EU's border the world's deadliest: "Globally, more than half the deaths at borders in the past decade occurred at the edges of the EU, making it by far the most dangerous border crossing in the world" (16). In 2017, the United Nations and Philippe Fargues of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) confirmed the Mediterranean crossing into the EU as the world's most lethal border, especially after the EU deal that closed the less dangerous route from Turkey to Greece (UN News). Despite the sea's many perils and the EU's attempts at immigration-restricting policies, the Mediterranean Sea is also Europe's most porous border (Fargues and Bonfanti 2). The IOM estimates that more than 2.3 million migrants without a visa crossed the Mediterranean Sea to enter Europe between 1998

and 2017 (Fargues 8). Migrants keep coming, regardless of how dangerous the route is. As the oft-quoted Warshan Shire poem "Home" states:

> no one leaves home unless
> home is the mouth of a shark
> you only run for the border
> when you see the whole city running as well ("'Home' by Warsan Shire")

Although this is not true for all who choose to move, many sub-Saharan Africans, like the characters in this chapter's plays, are fleeing numerous push factors in their home nations. These range from limited livelihood opportunities, poor governance, and high unemployment to forced military conscription, political persecution, and war.

In 2018, in part due to Italy turning away NGO rescue ships, the Western Mediterranean route became more popular (BBC News). The crossing from Morocco to Spain via the Strait of Gibraltar is the shortest route at only fifteen kilometers. The short distance comes with a price, however. According to *El País* reporter Jesús Rodríguez, "the Strait gradually narrows to just eight miles across, a swirling torrent that separates Africa from Europe, and notorious for its treacherous currents and sudden storms." Any trip along the Western Mediterranean route could encounter strong winds, unpredictable storms, and significant ocean liner trade traffic.

Fewer deaths occurred along these Mediterranean routes before 1990, as routes for regular immigration were more readily accessible. North Africans could enter Spain freely until 1991, after which Spain implemented visa requirements for North African citizens. This new regulation only encouraged clandestine migration, and in some years exponentially so. Fargues notes that Spain, even after the creation of their Sistema de Vigilancia Exterior (SIVE) in 1999, realized that they could not stem the flow of irregular migration without help from bordering policies and practices at an earlier stage in the journey, such as Morocco (9). This has led to border externalization.

The EU's common practice of recruitment of non-European countries in their border-making practices is known as externalization. Jeff Crisp defines it as "measures taken by states in locations beyond their territorial borders to obstruct, deter or otherwise avert the arrival of refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants who do not have prior authorization to enter their intended country of destination." This extension of migration controls from receiving countries in the Global North into the neighboring or sending nations in the Global South can include practices such as the interception of boats in international waters, detention at offshore locations, military or police presence on the opposite side of border walls or fences, and other bilateral agreements. Externalizing policies attempt to create a buffer zone around the external borders, "by pre-empting people's ability to exercise their right to apply for asylum on that State's territory" (Lemberg-Pedersen, Whyte, and Chemlali 37). Even if a migrant has a legitimate, legally-defined reason to apply for asylum, if she cannot set foot in the EU, the latter's protection obligations are not activated. To thwart would-be asylum seekers and other migrants from entering its borders, the EU also has used satellites, information-sharing systems, and platforms such as Eurosur or Spain's SIVE, and, in 2005, they created the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex.

An important part of the externalization of the EU's and Spain's border occurs through Morocco's cooperation efforts, including a 2013 agreement between the EU and Morocco, a reform to their own system of immigration and asylum, contracts with Spain for border patrols, raids on migrant camps in surrounding areas such as Mount Gurugu,[12] and EU funding of a new Moroccan fence in 2015. Some of Frontex's early operations specifically targeted migration in

[12] Sometimes written as Gourougou.

Spain and Morocco. Since 2014, Morocco has received about 350 million euros from the EU and Spain for this cooperation (Edwards).

This collaboration is necessary because, in 1986, Spain's official entrance into the EU made Ceuta and Melilla targeted destinations[13] for those hoping to immigrate to the EU. These two enclaves on the African continent are territories that, although heavily disputed, are recognized by the EU as belonging to Spain. Spain began construction on a border wall in Melilla in 1993. Currently the fortified barriers include a trench and both Moroccan and Spanish fences. The "humanitarian fence" stands on the side closest to Spain, deemed thus for its lack of barbed wire (Jones 15). A 2019 "humane" overhaul on the border intended to increase security and efficiency while reducing injuries and deaths, moving from razor wire to surveillance technology (Edwards). Another common bordering practice is that, when razor wire is eliminated, fences are made taller and anti-climb obstacles are added. Melilla and Ceuta's other border technologies, those implemented and successful, failed, or promised, include motion-activated sensors and alarms, patrol officers and sentries, long-range thermal imaging cameras, fiberoptic communication and facial recognition systems,[14] automatic spotlights, drone surveillance, and chemical irritant sprays. Those that cross even these "humane" border fences face cuts, fractures, bruises, hospitalization, and death.

Melilla and Ceuta can be considered, in and of themselves, as liminal spaces; the border extends beyond the walls and fences and into the city. In some sense, the two cities are neither

[13] When travel to Ceuta, Melilla, or into the Spanish mainland is too difficult, some migrants attempt the more dangerous route from Mauritania to the Canary Islands. This has resulted in Spain setting up bilateral agreements with and providing surveillance equipment to Mauritania, Senegal, and Cape Verde (Akkerman 61).

[14] The facial recognition systems will even surveil day-laboring migrants after they have crossed the borders, as they are able to "track in real time all those entering into the city, registering those who overstay and flagging individuals on a watch list" (Edwards).

"here" nor "there," neither in Europe nor in Africa. From time to time, Morocco makes formal claims against Spain's occupation, especially at Ceuta, and Edwards notes that Melilla can become a type of "a holding cell; the administrative line between the city and the mainland, another border." The Comisión de Ayuda al Refugiado en Euskadi explains, "Ceuta and Melilla have become a sort of large internment centre, since many people cannot leave these cities while their expulsions are being processed" (17). Migrants may not be able to enter the Spanish mainland, and they may also face confinement at Ceuta and Melilla. According to Otero García and Tyszler, these "antechambers to the European continent" are "areas where detention is on the rise and its use hidden" (56). This confinement comes in the form of official detention centers, temporary accommodation centers for immigrants (CETI), police stations and gendarmerie premises, and even military trucks or airport waiting areas, and these practices may operate on the edge of legality due to unenforced governing laws or a lack of implementation decrees (Otero García and Tyszler 56). Migrant camps nearby the cities, such as on Mount Gurugu, also function as liminal spaces, as people wait for unknown periods of time as they try and try again to cross the fences. Moroccan authorities often conduct operations to clear these migrant camps, burning supplies and shelters. Migrants face the threat of capture and detention lasting a few hours or several days, sometimes without being charged, and they can then be bussed out to points farther away from the EU's borders (Otero García and Tyszler 56). These types of policies create a "regime of physical confinement" but also metaphorical confinement through social exclusion, isolation, and the lack of a clearly defined legal and labor status (Otero García and Tyszler 56).

The far-reaching consequences of EU bordering practices include supporting smuggling and criminal networks, legitimizing dictatorships and repressive regimes, undermining

development and stability in African countries, diverting funds from arguably worthier causes, and bolstering neocolonialism through paternalistic policies (Akkerman 34-38). Due to the externalization and militarization of the EU's and Spain's bordering practices, including surveillance and enforcement technologies, migration routes are made more difficult. However, as discussed, the commitment to a deterrence policy, as Jones explains, is ineffective: "the trip has already been dangerous for over a decade, which appears to have had no impact on the decisions of later migrants to attempt crossing. Indeed, more people are coming, not fewer" (25). The combination of more people and more danger leads to more deaths. Akkerman reveals that "the ratio of migrant deaths to arrivals to Europe via the Mediterranean was over five times as high in 2017 as it was in 2015" (34). The EU prefers to shift the blame for these deaths from the "hardening of the European Union's borders, the militarization of enforcement, and the lack of safe routes for migrants" onto smugglers and human traffickers (Jones 28). This practice hides the role played by the EU's immigration policies.[15] Another option is to blame the migrants for making the decision in the first place and putting themselves or their children in harm's way and at death's doorstep.

This absolution of the EU obscures the true violence of the border. The invisibility of the deaths at sea and in the desert worsens this obfuscation. Authorities recognize that all estimates of how many people die at sea or in the desert are nowhere near the true number. Lists compiled from groups like UNITED Against Racism and Gabriele Del Grande's Fortress Europe websites are not identical and depend on numbers reported by media sources. The IOM's publication *Fatal Journeys: Tracking Lives Lost during Migration* admits that while there is a lack of accurate estimates of deaths, there is more accurate data "about the arrival, interception, rescue,

[15] Interestingly, although smugglers sometimes appear in contemporary Spanish plays about migration, there are none in either of the plays in this chapter.

detention and deportation of migrants—statistics which can serve to justify funding and intensification of border control," preventing the creation and implementation of evidence-based solutions (Last and Spijkerboer 85). Deaths may not be reported accurately or consistently across different nations or sources, as proof relies on bodies found or on fellow migrant testimonies. Death is also not the only violence that migrants face, especially for those under 25 and traveling from sub-Saharan Africa. According to Haskins, 77% of migrant and refugee youths traveling to Europe via the Mediterranean "experience abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking" (8). *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última* and *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros* make visible many of these violences, as well as the migrants' resistance to them.

The analysis in this chapter seeks to demonstrate, among other things, how these two plays challenge common discourses surrounding migration, like the aforementioned discourse that exculpates the EU from any sense of accountability but also the "discursive dichotomy" that arises from casting the migrant as either a figure to fear or a figure to pity (Harrison 14). The plays in this chapter defy the invisibility of these deaths and transform the border, a space of violence, into a space for creation. Gloria Anzaldúa describes the US-Mexican border as "una herida abierta," which can also be said of Spain's borders (25). However, this open wound can also open up a third and liminal space where something new can arise.

Carla Guimarães, playwright of *La increíble historia*, has crossed borders herself. Born in 1975 in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, she immigrated to Spain in 2001 for school. A prolific writer, claiming Orlando Senna and Fermín Cabal as two of her major inspirations, she has written plays, a children's book, novels, translations, television series, and journalism for *El País*. Her doctoral dissertation, "El motivo de la inmigración en el teatro español (1996-2006)," for the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, studied the works of Ignacio del Moral, David Planell, Juan

Mayorga, Carles Batlle, Fermín Cabal and Amanda Rodríguez, Sergi Belbel, Juan Diego Botto, and more. Guimarães is, therefore, no stranger to the subject matter of migration. She studied in depth many of the important works on immigration preceding her own and has her own immigration story, although one from a place of relative privilege. She says that immigration is a topic that has stayed with her over the years and continues to grip her ("Sobre la obra").

Guimarães took the real story of Samia Yusuf Omar as inspiration for this play. Samia, born in Somalia, ran for her country in the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China and became famous for crossing the 200-meter sprint finish line in last place, almost ten seconds after her peers. A teammate confirmed that before the London Olympics in 2012, Samia had disappeared after departing Somalia with dreams of reaching Italy to continue her running career and find better opportunities for training. Guimarães explains, "La historia de Samia la siento como mía, aunque nuestras realidades sean muy distintas" ("Sobre la obra"). Her own immigrant experience informs the way she writes and represents her fictional version of Samia's story, hoping to move in between rhetorical binaries. Samia is neither a fear-inciting Other nor a pitiful victim.

La increíble historia came to fruition with the support of Sala Cuarta Pared's Espacio Teatral Contemporáneo, "un ámbito de investigación y desarrollo de nuevos lenguajes escénicos que ofrece a dramaturgos, directores e intérpretes un espacio y un tiempo en donde poder trabajar sin la presión de los resultados inmediatos y contando con los recursos adecuados para desarrollar los procesos de creación y producción" (Savirón). After participating in the "Laboratorio En Blanco" and "Espacio Vacío," playwright Guimarães and director María Folguera premiered the play in July 2013 in the Naves del Español in the Matadero de Madrid for the Festival Fringe. The play then moved to the Sala Cuarta Pared, and it was later nominated

for a Premio Max for Mejor Autoría Teatral. The cast[16] and artistic team of the production come from a variety of professional backgrounds, such as dance, hip hop, and comedy, as well as a variety of geographical origins. This diversity aided in the creation of a hybrid text and performance.

Guimarães intentionally strayed from a realist representation of Samia's story. The public had already heard this version of events through the media's recounting of her tragic death. What could Guimarães as playwright offer to audience members that they had not already seen in a news article? She reflects:

> Lo más normal sería retratar esta historia como un drama realista, la decisión de no hacerlo implica una búsqueda que nace de dos objetivos. El primero es intentar ofrecer al espectador algo más de lo que puede encontrar en la propia noticia de la prensa. En este caso la fábula abre un abanico de posibilidades, metáforas, reflexiones e imágenes y me permite escribir sin las ataduras de la realidad. El segundo objetivo parte de la creencia de que la comedia puede denunciar una realidad con la misma contundencia que un drama o una tragedia, a pesar de ser un género muchas veces denostado. ("Sobre la obra")

The opening of an *abanico*, or fan, of possibilities is a wonderful image representing the liminal, layered space that Guimarães's work attempts to explore, similar to the border that expands and is "increasingly layered" (Walia).

As this chapter will analyze, this play and its characters cross many types of borders. One of the boundaries the playwright hopes to traverse is that between the subject matter and a reticent audience. Guimarães explains, "Para llamar la atención de la sociedad sobre un evento real, quizás sea igualmente importante intentar llegar a aquel público que no es sensible al tema, que lo ignore o incluso que tenga una opinión contraria a la del autor. En esos casos, tanto la comedia como la fantasía pueden ayudar a romper una barrera inicial que quizás el drama realista o el teatro documento no consiga" ("Sobre la obra"). She uses humor as a way to reach a

[16] Anahí Beholi, the actress who plays Samia, also appears in *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta*, analyzed in Chapter 3.

wider audience, appealing to members of the public who are less familiar or sensitive to migration issues. Furthermore, she wants to leave behind the tendencies of Spanish theater to tackle themes like immigration or poverty with a focus on "culpabilidad y victimismo" (Savirón). The playfulness and unrestricted imagination of *La increíble historia* reject these binaries often associated with migrants' experiences.

On the website created for the play, Guimarães shares in a blog post that, following in the tradition of many of the previous playwrights writing on immigration in Spain, she chose an article as her departure point: "Un sueño olímpico ahogado en la patera," a 2012 article by J.J.M. in the Sports section of *El País*. This article, which announces the death of Samia, also dehumanizes her. The author refers to her in the title as "un sueño olímpico" [17] and again in the first sentence as "El sueño de la pista de atletismo." The article also reduces her to one aspect of her identity, of her status as athlete, and trivializes her death by stating, "La somalí Samia Yusuf Omar . . . ya no corre" (J.J.M.). Samia appears merely as a tragic figure to be pitied: "Samia, tan delgada frente a sus rivales olímpicas, sorprendidas por su falta de músculo." The article reports the news to capitalize on the tragedy and the spectacle of the migrant death. *La increíble historia* takes this story and pushes against the discursive dichotomy of migrant as a figure to be feared or pitied and subverts the finality of her death. The play is instead described in this way: "El proyecto nace como un auténtico desafío: contar la historia de Samia Yusuf desde la imaginación, la alegría y la vitalidad" (Savirón). Although the characters encounter death again and again, the major takeaway should instead be their vitality and vigor. A brief summary will help orient the discussion on how Guimarães managed this objective.

[17] Reinhard Kleist's 2015 graphic novel *An Olympic Dream: The Story of Samia Yusuf Omar* also refers to Samia with this phrasing.

La increíble historia opens on Guimarães's fictional Samia recounting her 2008 Olympic Games experience to her younger siblings as a bedtime story. She tells them about her race, what the Chinese people she met were like, how many meals she received during the Games, and her romantic crush Markus, an athlete from Sweden. She even shares about the many times she and Markus competed to see who could eat the most tiramisu, although Markus always won. That night, she dreams of Mo Farah, the great Somali-born British runner, as the two compete in a guitar battle in which Samia loses by a large margin. Upon waking, Samia then attempts to train with her coach Tura, despite many obstacles that arise, and later her coach decides to end their training relationship. This, along with another dream in which she competes with and loses harshly to Mo Farah in a race, leads to her decision to leave Somalia and her family to seek better opportunities in Europe. The audience follows her dangerous journey through the Saharan Desert and Mediterranean Sea with her fellow migrants. After an unexpected storm, Samia drowns. The play does not end there, however. Instead, a fisherman and his son search the waters for a champion. They fish Samia's would-be corpse out of the water. In an in-between state, neither alive nor fully dead, Samia competes against Mo Farah in the 98th annual tiramisu-eating contest in a pastoral Italian village. This time, Samia utterly trounces Mo Farah and sets a record for the competition, reveling in the love and affection of the crowd, Markus, and her family as they celebrate her victory. The lights dim after Samia, in an aside, reflects on how she has become a legend. As I will explain, the play constantly moves between worlds; it displays real struggles and migratory routes but imbues them with fantasy, and Samia easily hops back and forth between different diegetic spaces and crosses oneiric boundaries.

Much of Samia's story occurs in her home country as she struggles to train, spends time with her siblings, and finally decides to head to Europe. These scenes of the play demonstrate

what life looks like for the fictional version of Samia and her family, revealing several motivations for migrating. In the scene "La carrera de los obstáculos," Samia saves up her energy while training for the coming obstacles. The hurdles of this race over which Samia literally leaps appear as complications within her country of Somalia rather than actual hurdles used on a racing track. Samia, the radio announcer, and her couch Tura treat them as if they are a daily occurrence, expected and built into the training process. They explain,

> LOCUTOR. Aprovecho para preguntarte, Tura, ¿cuándo se estableció que el primer obstáculo serían los soldados?
> TURA. En el año 1991, cuando empezó la guerra civil. Desde entonces este es el primer gran obstáculo que tiene que superar un atleta somalí.
> LOCUTOR. ¿Actuará Samia de manera diferente si los soldados son del ejército o de la milicia?
> TURA. Desde hace años el comité olímpico africano quiere reglamentar este obstáculo, pero por ahora usamos cualquier tipo de militar. Cualquier soldado es un obstáculo. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 17).

Their description of the armed conflict of Somalia's civil war is tongue-in-cheek, making it out to be a part of the race that the Olympic committee weighs in on and regulates. In reality, the real Samia explained to the BBC at the 2008 Olympics that the army or militia often blocked off streets and impeded her training (J.J.M.).

Her next obstacle involves the religious fundamentalists who deem it inappropriate that women should be athletes and instead prescribe strict gender roles. The radio presenter and Tura discuss the situation:

> LOCUTOR. Atención, atención… Me acaban de pasar la primera estadística de la carrera que dice que Somalia es el quinto peor país del mundo para ser mujer.
> TURA. Me sorprende, yo pensé que éramos el primero.
> LOCUTOR. Aún no, Tura, pero estamos haciendo todos los esfuerzos para conseguirlo y creo que vamos por buen camino. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 18).

Again, this obstacle was mentioned in the *El País* article. Samia reported, "Los somalíes tradicionales creen que las mujeres que practican deporte o a las que les gusta la música están

corruptas" (J.J.M.). Guimarães's play shows fictional Samia enjoying both sport and many types of music throughout its scenes.

The final obstacle is hunger. Guimarães's stage directions note, "Vemos a un grupo de famélicos que se acerca al centro del escenario. Murmullan el estribillo de la canción 'Ay pena, penita, pena'" (*La increíble historia* 19). Tura and Samia's strategy to overcome this obstacle is "engañar al hambre," and Samia shows a piece of bread to the group and throws it as far away as possible to leave her pathway free. In the scene that follows, Samia returns home where the audience members continue to see the effects of poverty and hunger on Samia, her single mother, and her siblings. This entire scene follows closely the *El País* article on her death, which mentions death threats and physical shoving, "las carreteras bloqueadas que impedían los entrenamientos," "[el] padre muerto por un proyectil," and the poverty and hunger faced by Samia's family (J.J.M.).

It is not until the fifth scene that Samia's physical migration journey officially begins. Samia narrates her own actions, explaining that she has boarded a boat, along with "otros pasajeros, oriundos de diferentes países de África," such as Ethiopia and Uganda, although she also incorrectly mentions the European country of Romania (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 49). Her fellow passengers include a pregnant woman wearing a hijab, another woman wearing a turban, and a man with a Fútbol Club Barcelona hat. None of them have names. One of the other travelers has attempted the journey to Europe twice before. She is moving through the border circuit, as theorized by Thomas Nail: "Migrants *cross* the border. But the border is a junction: a vehicle of harnessed flows. The border acts as a sieve or filter, as it allows capital and the global elite to move freely but, like a yoke, catches the global poor" (*The Figure* 31). Her movements

have been harnessed and redirected by the enforcement apparatus each time. She will try to cross again with Samia's group.

Samia then acts as narrator to explain that the boat's journey, strangely, begins in the desert. She says, "El viaje empieza por el desierto, llano y árido. Un sinfín de tierra quemada que termina en el mar" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 50). Each passenger has a job: the pregnant woman keeps the beat with a drum for the two rowers and Samia sits at the bow with binoculars.

This journey is, of course, far-fetched. It is impossible to travel an arid desert via boat. However, this strange paradoxical combination, within Guimarães's fictional context, allows for an emphasis on the dangers of this trek every step of the way. Richard Danziger from the IOM estimates that the number of deaths in the Saharan desert "has to be at least double those who die in the Mediterranean. But we really have no evidence of that, it's just an assumption. We just don't know" (qtd. in Miles and Nebehay). The reasons for these fatalities are known and numerous: vehicle accidents, a lack of preparation, dehydration, exhaustion and injuries, sickness, banditry, smugglers, or traffickers (Horwood 125). In Guimarães's play, the characters encounter danger in the shape of a literal minefield, perhaps insinuating the figurative minefield of perils awaiting sub-Saharan migrants in the desert.

Facing these many dangers together, the migrants in this play, previously strangers, band together. This creation of a new, spontaneous network stays true to what the experience looks like for many contemporary African migrants heading to Libya. Press notes that the group he studied typically "fended for themselves, making new contacts and new networks. Often this was not a strategy planned in advance and using established networks: it was more typically spontaneous, taking advantage of opportunities when they arose, relying on new contacts or networks" (10). Although the networks themselves are realistic, the obstacles Guimarães's

characters encounter on their journey are increasingly less verisimilar. The characters row their boat past the desert's landmines. This part of the desert has become a sort of graveyard, as Viajera 2 says that one of the three dinghy boats of her last trip did not make it past the mines and "se quedó aquí" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 53). They manage to get through the mines by tearing out pages from Samia's copy of Mao's *The Little Red Book*, crumpling them into balls, and throwing them in different directions to set off the explosions and guide them along a safe pathway. The group then runs into their next desert threat: Hannibal and Al-Saadi, two of the sons of the deposed Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi.

In 2018, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that Libya was still the departure point for a majority of African migrants headed to Europe on the Central Mediterranean route, mostly destined for Italy (4). Akkerman details the changing political and social landscape of Libya and its relationship with the EU and externalization efforts since 1999. The overthrow of Gaddafi in 2011 led to civil war and violence, which complicated anti-migration cooperation efforts. Horwood explains that "many sub-Saharan migrants see the post-revolution chaos in Libya as an opportune time to make the sea crossing from the Libyan coast, given the less stringent monitoring of the borders and coastline" (124). This does not by any means make their border crossing easier. According to Press, "Given the history of slavery in Africa, both internal and international, it is a painful irony today that many African migrants heading to Italy become temporary slaves along the way, held for ransom, imprisoned, bought and sold for profit" (16). Guimarães's Samia and other characters encounter Gaddafi's sons in this context of conflict and chaos.

Al-Saadi and Hannibal function as illegitimate toll collectors, ready to exploit further the travelers fleeing previous exploitation in their home countries. Hannibal explains, "Si quieres

pasar al mar, tenéis que pagarnos un peaje," and when asked about the legality of this operation, his brother brushes off the concern by exclaiming, "Que manía tiene la gente con la legalidad… No es legal, es lo que hay" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 60). Despite putting her characters in this precarious position in the criminal underworld, Guimarães undermines the seriousness of the situation by inventing her own absurd imitations of the historical Gaddafi sons. The lighting of the scene flashes like they are in a discotheque in the desert, and she describes the men as dressed like members of the Jackson 5, "con pantalones de campana y el pelo afro," dancing and singing to "Blame It on the Boogie" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 55). These characters represent a great danger for the migrants by invoking the conflict and political instability of a post-Gaddafi Libya and the extralegal actors that emerged to exploit migrants' situations. Their dress and demeanor, however, make a mockery of them.

The humor and levity continue throughout the scene. Press details the common practice of bargaining and negotiating in the desert: "Migrants negotiate—or perhaps the word is simply *survive*— complex payments in the desert, forced to use cell phones as desert ATMs to wring out of supportive friends and families back home enough ransom money to continue their journeys and not be killed" (16). In the play, the brothers set the original toll at one million dollars, and the conversation that follows is a type of parodical inversion of the negotiation process:

> SAMIA. Pues nosotros no tenemos todo ese dinero.
> HANNIBAL. ¿Cuánto tienes?
> SAMIA. (*hurgándose los bolsillos*) Pues… Entre todos, como mucho, cinco dólares…
> AL-SAADI. Lo siento, no podéis pasar.
> HANNIBAL. No lo toméis mal, no es nada personal.
> AL-SAADI. O nos dais un millón y medio o no cruzáis al mar.
> VIAJERO 3. ¡Pero si era un millón!
> HANNIBAL. Dos millones y no se habla más.
> VIAJERO 1. No tenemos ni medio, ni uno, ni dos millones. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 61)

The toll absurdly increases as the conversation continues despite the fact that the travelers cannot pay the original minimum required. The only reason the Gaddafi brothers allow the group to pass is because one of them, Viajera 2, lies about having buried money in the minefield. She tricks them, in part by tapping into the discursive dichotomy. She casts her fellow travelers as figures to fear. She whispers to the Gaddafi brothers, "Lo he dejado escondido, ya sabes, no me puedo fiar de esa gente que va en patera. (*cuchicheando a los Gaddafis*) Son todos unos ladrones y maleantes…" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 62). She leads them to their deaths by explosion and then buries them in the sand, where their corpses will lie along with the many bodies of migrants before them.

Samia and the others assume Viajera 2 has died, as well. They admire her bravery and renew their determination in the face of her sacrifice: "Nuestra hermana no se sacrificó en vano" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 65). The stage directions note, "Samia quita la barrera de peaje de escena" (65), and the protagonist's action of literally moving this physical barrier marks another border the group has crossed on their journey, neither in their home country nor at their destination, but in the "in-between." With much effort, they push their small boat, finally, into the Mediterranean Sea to the sounds of waves and seagulls. Amid the silliness of the preceding action with the Gaddafi brothers, a truth emerges:

> SAMIA. Era un plan demasiado arriesgado…
> VIAJERO 1. ¿Por qué lo ha hecho?
> VIAJERO 3. Por que [*sic*] no quedaba otra. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 64)

The plan was too risky, but they had no other option. It was the only way. This is the claim consistently made by those that oppose the current state of border imperialism and wish to challenge the discourse that migrants' deaths are their own fault for choosing to move in the first place. As Jones explains, "The logic behind this position is that . . . If the crossing is dangerous

and thousands of people die en route, it will discourage others from trying to reach Europe. The first problem with this approach is that it assumes all migrants have the luxury of deciding whether or not to move. Many, if not most, do not have a choice." (24-25). For many, the risky option is the only option.

The mourning of the boat's passengers is immediately juxtaposed with the dramatic irony of Viajera 2's situation; she is alive and well, yelling to get their attention. Their doleful singing of "Don't worry, be happy" drowns out her screams. "Don't worry, be happy" is not useful advice on the treacherous waters of the Mediterranean. The next scene brings with it more danger, introduced by "un sonido aterrador . . . [que p]arece ser el gruñido de un monstruo gigantesco, el grito feroz de una bestia" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 67). Their boat starts to tremble and almost capsizes as an ocean liner approaches, "[que] parece abrir la boca para tragarlos. Tiene los dientes afilados" (69). This scene, too, mixes reality with fantasy. The Gibraltar Strait is the world's second busiest shipping lane; in 2014, there were 110,000 vessels moving oil, gas, and other trade items (Rodríguez). The Strait is full of tankers and container vessels, not to mention ships from naval bases, heading in and out of the Mediterranean waters that Guimarães's characters now navigate. The ocean liner in *La increíble historia* never manages to destroy their rowboat, however, because two pirates arrive and somehow manage to chase it away.

The pirates help the migrants, but require something in return. Reminiscent of the smugglers and bandits of the desert, Samia responds to the pirates' demand with fear, "Mejor darles algo, no parecen ser el tipo de gente que se tome bien las negativas" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 73). When the sea brigands insist that they want more, one of the migrants, overconfident after the successful interaction with the Gaddafi brothers, starts yelling, "¿Y si no

os damos más que pasa, eh? ¿Qué vais a hacer? ¿Qué vais a hacer? ¿Qué van a hacer los terribles piratas malos del Mediterráneo?" to which one of the pillaging pirates responds with a silent action: "con extrema naturalidad, atraviesa al Viajero 3 con su espada. Los demás viajeros gritan horrorizados" (74). With another touch of humor, Viajero 3 notes, "Mierda, no había pensado en eso… (*y se cae*)," and his body is thrown into the sea (75). After striking a deal with the pirates, Samia and Viajera 1 are able to continue their journey, but the rest of the crossing of the hazardous Mediterranean creates more challenges.

The farther the women row out to sea, the more precarious their situation becomes. Because smugglers do not expect to see their boats again once they have departed the African shore, they are old, poorly designed and of low quality, supplied with little fuel, failing to consider the need for shade, life jackets, navigation tools, or food and water (Jones 26; Boghani). Hypothermia, heat stroke, starvation, and drowning await many of the sea travelers. Samia and Viajera 1 are, unsurprisingly, exhausted and have to rest. Suddenly, the voice of a presenter is heard through Samia's radio, and he then appears onstage to present the situation: "Cuando dejó Somalia, Samia jamás se imaginó que iba a ser tan complicado llegar a Europa. Ahora mismo, su patera está parada en medio del Mediterráneo, en una zona de calma. No hay viento, ni tierra a la vista. La embarcación no parece ir a ninguna parte" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 77). In a confusion of diegetic space, the Locutor, sitting at a table with Samia's old coach, interviews Samia. He notes that the women are running out of food and, according to him, Samia is malnourished and faints at times. He then notifies his imagined listeners that Viajera 1 has died in her sleep. Samia, panicked now, realizes that she desperately needs water. The audience members ask themselves, "Has the interview been only a hallucination resulting from her dehydration?" Samia can no longer stand, and she prays desperately for rain.

And rain it does. Sudden changes in weather are common along the Central Mediterranean route (Stein). In a cruel twist of fate, however, the storm is too strong. The stage directions describe, "La oscuridad aumenta. Los truenos, que parecían anunciar un milagro, se convierten en una amenaza. La lluvia se hace más fuerte y se convierte en tempestad. Samia mira al cielo, ahora asustada. . . . Las olas mueven la patera con extremada fuerza" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 81). After a final flash of lightning, boom of thunder, and blackout, the audience finds out from a news broadcast that Samia has been presumed dead; she has disappeared and drowned at sea. As Coleman notes, "the Spanish stage creates an environment that consistently facilitates the death" of black migrants (*The Necropolitical* 14). The fictional Samia, like her real-life counterpart, dies in the sea, and one might argue, as Coleman does in his studies of other migration plays, that the "inability to survive the play connotes a morbid message about Spanish relations to blackness, which is consumed for the sake of provoking emotional responses regarding the humanity of blackness and simultaneously rejected out of fear" (*The Necropolitical* 14). Although "Frontex has estimated that one out of every four people who attempt to enter Europe by boat dies en route" (Jones 26), Guimarães has three of the four original passengers perish in the journey, their bodies buried in the dark waters of the Mediterranean. The remaining traveler was abandoned in the unforgiving desert, left to fend for herself under harsh conditions.

However, this play does not end with Samia's death. A new and different possibility emerges. The ninth and final scene reveals Samia's fate. A reader initially might interpret the scene's title, "El Mar Negro," as the Black Sea, the Mediterranean's northeast neighbor, but the contents quickly disprove this assumption. Two fishermen in shadows appear. The father informs his son of how this sea used to be:

PESCADOR. Sabes, hijo, el mar no siempre fue así como lo ves. Hubo un tiempo en que fue azul.

HIJO. ¿Azul?

PESCADOR. Azul como los ojos de tu madre, que Dios la tenga en gloria. Azul como el cielo sobre nuestras cabezas. . . . Pero fueron tantos los cayucos que venían desde África y que han naufragado en el mar. Tantos los hombres, mujeres y niños que cayeran en estas aguas que, poco a poco, el azul fue despareciendo. El agua, los peces… todo desapareció. Y el mar se convirtió en eso que ves. En lugar del agua salada hay miles y miles de hombres mujeres y niños negros. Por eso le llaman el Mar Negro. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 83)

The stage lights illuminate the set: "Se puede ver que el mar es negro. Algunos brazos de hombres y mujeres tocan el barco, emulando olas" (83). The Mediterranean has been called "a maritime graveyard" (Stefano Argenziano qtd. in Boghani), but this graveyard is full of corpses that move like the undead.

The men reveal that they are fishing for a young, skinny, and hungry champion. They eventually find Samia, and the stage directions admit, "No está viva ni muerta, parece en estado de trance, sonámbula" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 85). Other migrant writers, such as Vietnamese American Vu Hoang Tran, have conceptualized the "ghost-like contours of the refugee": "Like a ghost, her state of being—to others and even to herself—is ambiguous" (Tran 155). Pulitzer-prize winning author and Vietnamese refugee Viet Thanh Nguyen also conceives of refugees as "the zombies of the world, the undead who rise from dying states to march or swim toward our borders in endless waves" ("The Hidden Scars"). In a similar vein, this fictional version of Samia has left war-torn Somalia behind and will arrive to Europe's shores undead, a zombie-like figure.

As she begins to awake, the fisherman welcomes her to Europe. After a black out, the characters appear in a stadium full of spectators, and Samia prepares herself for a small Italian village's tiramisu-eating competition against Mo Farah. The latter represents "la Villa de Arriba," as he comes from England, and Samia represents "la Villa de Abajo." This time, she

beats Mo Farah decisively, setting a new record for this fantastical competition and even eating the leftovers on his plate. She celebrates her victory, and the Swiss boy she met in the last Olympic games presents her with her medal. They kiss, and her siblings run onstage. The celebration is noisy, full of excitement, and awe-inspiring. According to Vu Tran, refugees' specter-like state allows them to "be mythologized" (154). Samia experiences this, and in a final soliloquy announces, "Y aunque estaba agotada, delirante, sedienta, sin aire, me di cuenta de que acababa de nacer una leyenda" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 90). Her incredible story has led her to a victory of sorts. Not alive and not dead, in this in-between state, she finally defeats Mo Farah, receives acclaim, and celebrates her epic journey.

Guimarães's use of humor and her insistence on staying in the in-between spaces, between dreaming and waking or fantasy and realism, allow for a third space to emerge in which meaning can be negotiated. Stevens explores formal experimentation in transnational Dominican plays, arguing that it suggests "new forms of political and artistic belonging" (186). Stevens's ideas are applicable here. First and foremost, the play experiments with form by being metatheatrically self-aware. In the first scene, Samia's siblings beg her to continue her bedtime story, and Samia replies, "Vale, pero solo hasta el final de la segunda escena del primer acto y ni una línea más" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 10). Later, at precisely the halfway point of the play, Samia narrates, "Ella entra en el barco segura de que su historia acaba de empezar, aunque todos sabemos que ya va casi por la mitad" (49). These metatheatrical winks and moments of self-reflexive awareness create a sense of playfulness despite the serious nature of the topic of migration. Additionally, the play's textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy, as conceptualized by Stevens, are apparent through the characters' fluid movement between

diegetic spaces and transformations into new roles as the plot develops, the use of intertextual references, and the mixture of genre conventions.

Not only do Samia and her companions cross the national borders of several countries, but they also cross the boundaries between different diegetic spaces. For example, when Samia recounts her experiences at the previous Olympic Games to her siblings, she mentions her friend Markus, who appears in his own spotlight at the back of the stage. Traditionally, this spotlight would mark the bounds of Markus's reality onstage; he would enact his parts of Samia's flashbacks from within these illuminated borders. However, when her siblings realize she has romantic feelings for Markus and begin to tease her, Samia crosses the visually demarcated spaces of present and past, home and Beijing: "Samia corre hacia Markus y le tapa los oídos" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 8). The interaction continues to cross back and forth between these distinct diegetic spaces:

> SAMIA. Si os calláis os lo juro que os cuento un secreto, un secreto muy gordo.
> (*Los hermanos paran de cantar y hacen un silencio repentino. La miran, ansiosos por descubrir el secreto. Markus también está atento.*)
> SAMIA. Al despedirnos, Markus y yo juramos que nos veríamos otra vez en las olimpiadas de Londres…
> (*Samia y Markus emulan su recuerdo de la despedida. Los dos se cogen de las manos y se miran en los ojos. Samia le pregunta:*)
> SAMIA. ¿Nos veremos otra vez en Londres?
> (*Markus le responde con una frase muy larga en un idioma inventado que podría ser sueco.)*
> HERMANA 2. ¡¿Qué ha dicho?!
> SAMIA. Que sí. (8)

Markus listens and shows interest in the conversation occurring in Samia's home, in the present. Samia interacts with both her siblings and Markus, although the latter's invented language makes clear that he is merely Samia's imperfect recollection of him and not a faithful representation of past-Markus. Regardless, Samia's siblings hear the memory of Markus's answer. In these

interdiegetic interactions, the logic of the play's setting is temporally and geographically disrupted.

In addition to diegetic spaces, the characters also cross boundaries into new roles, new characters or identities. This transgression of convention is most apparent in the fifth scene. Samia begins to narrate the beginning of her journey to Europe, as if it were another bedtime story for the children. Samia and her siblings continue to dance between diegetic spaces; at times they are in their home, sending off their sister, and at other times they physically interact with the boat on which she travels the desert.

> SAMIA. Esta misma mañana coge todos sus ahorros y se compra una plaza en un barco que va de camino a Libia y de ahí al viejo continente.
> (*Los hermanos empujan la proa de un pequeño barquito de madera hacia el centro del escenario.*) (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 48)

When asked the name of her boat, "Samia piensa unos segundos y tiene una idea," calling it the Titanic (48). Her brother, in response, "coge una tiza y escribe en la proa 'Titanic'" (48). Samia continues to narrate her own experience, and she even changes the current reality of her home by narrating the story differently:

> SAMIA. La chica les dice a sus hermanos que les quiere, que les va a echar mucho, muchísimo de menos, que enviará noticias en cuanto llegue a Europa y promete regresar muy pronto.
> (*Samia abraza a sus hermanos, que empiezan a llorar.*)
> HERMANA 1. No te vayas, Samia...
> HERMANA 2. ¿Qué haremos sin ti?
> SAMIA. Los hermanos no lloran al despedirse de la chica, pues saben que ha tomado una buena decisión y quieren apoyarla.
> (*Los hermanos se secan las lágrimas inmediatamente.*)
> SAMIA. Le desean todo lo mejor en su viaje.
> HERMANA 1. Te deseamos todo lo mejor en tu viaje, Samia. (48-49)

The siblings are able to exert power over the space of the boat but must act according to Samia's narration in the space of their home. This confuses the play's sense of reality. At one point, Samia forgets to narrate her travel companions into being until her sister reminds her to do so:

"Perdón que se me olvidaba… (*Samia hace una seña y los hermanos empiezan a cambiarse de ropa*)" (49). In the course of a few lines, her siblings fully transition into Viajera 1, Viajera 2, and Viajero 3, aided by the addition of identifying items of clothing. Meanwhile, Samia narrates her story in the third person before shifting back into Samia-the-character: "La chica, emocionada, segundos después de partir, se levanta en la proa, abre los brazos como el cristo ese de Río y grita . . . ¡Soy la reina del mundo!" (50). This metatheatrical migrancy, or, as Stevens describes it, the "moving from one role to another" (191), is seen clearly as the protagonist of this play comfortably shifts into the role of her own narrator and as her castmates morph into different roles as needed.

Furthermore, the transformation of her siblings into her travel companions is never fully complete. Vestiges of her siblings "peep through" the new characters of the travelers (Stevens 196). One example of this is the siblings' and travelers' tendency to repeat themselves and argue in circles. In the fourth scene, the children discuss what will change if Samia leaves:

> SAMIA. ¿Quién va cuidar de mamá?
> HERMANA 2. Nosotros.
> SAMIA. ¿Y quién va cuidar de vosotros?
> HERMANA 2. Mamá.
> SAMIA. ¿Pero quién va cuidar de mamá?
> HERMANA 2. Nosotros.
> SAMIA. Ya, pero ¿y quién va cuidar de vosotros?
> HERMANA 2. Mamá.
> SAMIA. ¿Pero quién va cuidar de mamá?
> HERMANA 2. Nosotros.
> SAMIA. Ya, pero ¿y quién va cuidar de vosotros?
> HERMANA 2. Pues mamá.
> SAMIA. ¿Y quién... Ay, ¡déjalo! (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 41)

This silly habit is mirrored in the fifth scene, and a later scene is also reminiscent of this repetitive and circular reasoning. The migrants are all comparing their life experiences to see who has suffered more. They quarrel:

VIAJERA 1. Afortunada tú. Yo vivía en casa de mis tíos, ambos mis padres están muertos y tuve que trabajar desde los seis para poder tener algo de comer.
VIAJERA 2. Afortunada tú. Yo vivía en un orfanato, nunca supe si tenía padres y me hacían trabajar limpiando botas, aunque nunca me pagaron.
VIAJERO 3. Afortunada tú. Yo vivía en las calles, mis padres se han suicidado y tuve que comer sus cuerpos para seguir vivo.
VIAJERA 1. Afortunado tú que al menos tuviste carne para comer. Yo solo comía harina de yuca.
VIAJERA 2. Afortunada tú que tenías harina, yo un día me comí una de las botas que limpiaba.
VIAJERO 3. Afortunada tú que tenías un trabajo limpiando botas, yo era esclavo de una fábrica de Nike.
VIAJERA 1. Afortunado tú que eras esclavo, yo...
SAMIA. ¡Basta ya! ¡Ya he entendido! ¡Somos todos unos afortunados! (51-52)

This argument in which each person tries to one-up the previous is childlike precisely because traces of the children are peeping through their new visages as adult travelers.

The work's metatheatrical migrancy is combined with textual migration to continue exploring liminal spaces of identity and belonging. The many intertextual references in *La increíble historia* are one technique of textual migration, and for Stevens, "Incorporating intertexts creates a constant shift in style and tone *within* the play" (191). The first scene's title is "¿Los últimos serán los primeros?" subverting the well-known Biblical affirmation by turning it into a question. As previously mentioned, Samia names her dinghy boat full of migrants "Titanic," both ironic due to its unimpressive build and foreboding for what it portends for its passengers. *Titanic* is not the only movie referenced; Samia's trainer Tura, characterized as a calm, Zen teacher who speaks in mysterious proverbs, invokes the practices of Mr. Miyagi from *Karate Kid*. Hot off her loss in Beijing, Samia trains hard for the next Olympics, and Tura, calling her "Samia San," gives her two sponges after her practice race with the instructions, "Concéntrate, Samia, tenemos que seguir el entrenamiento. Repite conmigo: dar cera, pulir cera" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 21). These movie references add layers to the text and to its sense of self-awareness.

The strongest example of intertextuality occurs in the scene "Los piratas." The pirates that scare off the ocean liner only communicate by reciting stanzas from Spain's renowned Romanticism-era poet José de Espronceda's "Canción del pirata." The play presents the dialogue between the migrants and the pirates as a conversation between people who speak different languages. The stage directions note, "La viajera 1 se acerca al pirata e intenta hablarle, como una extranjera que no conoce su lengua. Hace gestos exagerados y muy mímicos," and later Viajero 3 exclaims, "Hablan en Espronceda, yo tampoco les entiendo" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 71; 72). The verses are not superfluous, but apply directly to the conversation, and the migrants attempt to interpret their responses. The pirates recite,

> Navega, velero mío
> sin temor,
> que ni enemigo navío
> ni tormenta, ni bonanza
> tu rumbo a torcer alcanza,
> ni a sujetar tu valor. (72)

One of the migrants interprets these verses and explains, "Creo que dice que nos vayamos sin temor a nada" (72). They then attempt to discern where to go next on their journey to Europe:

> VIAJERO 1. Perdón otra vez, eh, mister pirata. Es que nos hemos perdido un poco. Estamos lost, ¿entiende? Alguno de ustedes podría decirnos donde estamos, eh, where we are, y hacia donde está Europa, Eu-ro-pa.
> PIRATA 2. y va el capitán pirata,
> cantando alegre en la popa,
> Asia a un lado, al otro Europa,
> y allá a su frente Estambul
> SAMIA. Ha dicho que por allí.
> VIAJERO 3. Eso yo he entendido. (72)

This intertextuality attempts to fold neatly into the logic of the play, passing off the poetry as another language that leads to challenges in communication between the two groups. Gail Bulman, scholar of Latin American theater, writes that intertextuality "creates a literary game that highlights both texts, thus uncovering new artistic meanings" and "moves these dramatic

texts beyond dialogue, and establishes multiple dialogues with the past, present and future, with other cultures, with other nations" (27). Guimarães's play interacts with Spain's past poetic tradition, the contemporary United States film industry, and the Bible. Stevens argues that because "intertextuality helps imagine multiple models of literature, nation, and identity," it is "a fitting literary strategy for expressing the hybridity and cosmopolitanism of minor transnational collectivities" (193). Each intertextual reference creates little fractures that open up the fabric of the text to further possibilities of meaning and suggestions of new ways of being.

These fractures also occur with every boundary crossing between fantasy and realism and the dream world and waking world. As discussed, Guimarães has based her play on a real event. While many elements, mentioned previously, remain faithful to the situation in Somalia and the experience of migrants on their cross-continent journey, the playwright combines these realistic details with fantasy. As I have explained, the obstacle course through which she runs during training is imbued with fantasy, but afterwards, Samia returns home to the hunger and mundanity of her everyday life. She plays "Veo, veo," or "I spy," with her siblings, a common game played amongst children. Instead of spying things in their immediate vicinity, objects around their house, the siblings encourage Samia to get on her brother's shoulders so she can see far beyond Somalia. She sees all the way to Europe. Her "I spy" description is an accurate portrayal of Europe's pull factors for migrants, or the many perceived advantages it has to offer newcomers:

> SAMIA. ¡Veo, veo!
> HERMANOS. ¿Qué ves?
> SAMIA. Veo cajeros automáticos...
> HERMANOS. ¡Cajeros automáticos!
> SAMIA. ¡Veo, veo!
> HERMANOS. ¿Qué ves?
> SAMIA. Trenes de alta velocidad, playas nudistas, niños con móviles, Realities de MTV...
> HERMANOS. ¡MTV!

(*Los hermanos empiezan a hacer la base de un rap y Samia rapea lo que ve. La escena se convierte en un videoclip.*)
SAMIA. Veo, veo.
HERMANOS. Hermana, ¿qué ves?
SAMIA. Una cosita.
HERMANOS. ¿Y qué cosita es?
SAMIA. Miles de copas de vino
Peñita super moderna
Psicólogos argentinos
Y donaciones de esperma
SAMIA. Veo, veo.
HERMANOS. Hermana, ¿qué ves?
SAMIA. Una cosita.
HERMANOS. ¿Y qué cosita es?
SAMIA. Café descafeinado
Cerveza sin alcohol
Dulces no azucarados
Carne sin colesterol. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 37-39)

The household game becomes an imaginative exploration of what Europe will be like, which turns into an MTV-worthy rap based on the lyrics of "Veo, veo." This rap continues until Samia sees not only all the way into Europe, countries away, but also into the future. She spies the Olympic Games, to take place in London in 2012. The play frequently fluctuates in this way, moving back and forth between levels of verisimilitude.

The status of the play's reality is confused even more by the inclusion of Samia's dream sequences and the framing device of the bedtime story. In the first scene, as Samia relates her Olympic Games story to her siblings, she begins to drift off and says, "Tenía cuatro años por delante hasta olimpiadas de Londres. Durante todo ese tiempo solo un nombre daba vueltas a su cabeza. Mo Farah, Mo Farah, Mo Farah…" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 11). Her repetition of Mo Farah's name provides an audible bridge into her dream sequence. Her voice becomes many:

(*Escuchamos voces que gritan entusiasmadas:*)
VOCES. ¡Mo Farah, Mo Farah, Mo Farah! (12)

In her dream, Samia competes in a battle of the bands-like competition with Mo Farah. Their rock and roll concert then fades back into the waking world of Samia's home. When Samia should be awaking for her training, her siblings and she are still sleeping, "hablan en sueños," repeating lines they have said in the previous scene (13). The stage directions announce, "De pronto suena una alarma y la radio se enciende. Escuchamos una canción y la voz de un LOCUTOR" (14). Samia stays in the in-between state between sleep and wakefulness, and the Locutor gives the time and weather report but also talks directly to Samia. The Locutor's status is thus confused. Is the voice truly that of a radio host in Somalia, or is he a part of Samia's dream or imagination, or does he belong to both worlds?

In Samia's second dream sequence, this blurring between slumber and wakefulness continues. Samia races Mo Farah in this dream. As she inches closer to Mo Farah and closer to consciousness, the soundscapes of her dream and her real life blend:

> (*Consigue avanzar unos pasos y está a punto de ultrapasarle cuando, de pronto, suenan las campanadas de un reloj: el Big Ben. Mo Farah se detiene en seco y Samia se cae al suelo con el susto.*)
> MO FARAH. Perdón, tengo que irme.
> SAMIA. ¡¿Qué haces?!
> MO FARAH. Son las cinco, es la hora del té. (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 44-45)

The next scene promptly begins with, "Las campanadas del reloj se convierten en la alarma de un despertador" (45). Samia, feeling convinced after her dream of the appropriate action to take, announces that she is going to Europe. Her brother and sisters also find it unclear whether they are still dreaming or if they are awake:

> (*Los hermanos despiertan asustados. La hermana 1 grita como si estuviese en una película de terror. Su grito dura largos segundos.*)
> HERMANA 1. ¡Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!
> (*Los hermanos la miran, más asustados todavía. Ella se da cuenta.*)
> HERMANA 1. (*ahogada*) Lo siento... Tuve una pesadilla terrible. Samia se iba a Europa...
> SAMIA. ¡Que sí, que me voy a Europa! (45)

With this blurring, the audience members may begin to doubt if any of the events of the play are real or if they are all an elaborate dream sequence. This confusion continues until the final scene when a drowned Samia "parece en estado de trance, sonámbula" (85). Is Samia's whole journey, from the trip through the desert in a boat, to interactions with the Gaddafi brothers, to her escape from pirates, all a dream? People have, after all, referred to her as "un sueño olímpico." Nguyen, in his 2016 *New York Times* article "The Hidden Scars All Refugees Carry," echoes these sentiments in relaying his own experience: "My memories of becoming a refugee are fragments of a dream, hallucinatory and unreliable." The dream-like quality of the migrant experience is not uncommon, and the oneiric quality of the play contributes to making Samia's fate more ambiguous, her death less final.

The framing device of the bedtime story amplifies this same confusion. Samia establishes this device in the first scene as she performs a long monologue detailing her experience in Beijing. She ends her tale, saying, "Esta fue mi humilde participación en la carrera de 200 metros en las Olimpiadas de Pekín. Y aunque esté agotada, delirante, sedienta, sin aire, me doy cuenta de que acaba de nacer una leyenda. (*y sonríe*) Esta es la increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última" (Guimarães, *La increíble historia* 4). The other side of the stage illuminates, and the audience members see her siblings listening intently to Samia. As siblings often do, they beg Samia in multiple instances to continue her bedtime story:

> HERMANO. ¿Y cómo sigue la historia, Samia?
> HERMANA 2. ¡Sí! ¡¿Cómo sigue?!
> HERMANA 1. ¿Qué le pasa a la chica que llegó la última?
> SAMIA. Ya es hora de dormir. Mañana tengo que despertar muy temprano. (10)

Later, Samia feels torn between leaving her family behind and heading to Europe, and her siblings try to convince her to leave. She sends them off to bed. Her brother claims that he will step into her shoes, to fill her role, including the role of storyteller:

HERMANO. Estaremos bien, te lo juro. Yo cuidaré a mamá y a las niñas. Incluso les contaré historias antes de dormir...
(*Samia les arropa, silenciosa. Los hermanos se dejan arropar, disconformes.*)
HERMANO. Como la de la increíble historia de la chica que se fue a Europa, entrenó mucho, se reencontró con el sueco y al fin ganó una medalla.
(*Samia lo mira con reprobación. Y apaga la luz.*)
OFF SAMIA. Buenas noches.
OFF HERMANO. Tengo que trabajar un poco el título, es cierto, pero te garantizo que la historia es muy buena, buenísima... Empieza en érase una vez y de ahí vamos a una enorme pista de entrenamiento de atletismo... (*y bosteza*). (42-43)

Samia's original bedtime story began on the track, and the scene immediately following her brother's prologue occurs on a race track, during Samia's dream race with Mo Farah. This leads to several questions. What really follows these bedtime story introductions? Could Samia's wild, far-fetched journey be a part of her bedtime story or her brother's imitation? As previously mentioned, Samia often shifts between the roles of character and narrator of her own journey's story. Several threads weave in and out of the play, ideas that are recurrent, catchphrases that are repeated, or music that is used. Like oral storytelling techniques, these methods capture the attention of the listener and call their memory back to an earlier part of the tale. The final example of this is, of course, Samia's last line. This statement imitates almost exactly her line from the first scene, but Samia uses the imperfect tense instead of the present subjunctive and changes the final words: "Y aunque estaba agotada, delirante, sedienta, sin aire, me di cuenta de que acababa de nacer una leyenda. (*y sonríe*) Esta es la increíble historia de la chica que se comió todo el plato de tiramisú" (90). She ends this part of her story in the same way that she ended her original bedtime story, and everyone gets their happy ending.

This final scene begs the question: does Guimarães's play fall into the category of necropolitical theater? In 2020, Coleman wrote, "From a theatrical standpoint, there has yet to be a Spanish immigration play that displays a story of black survival" (*The Necropolitical* 117). On the surface level, Samia and all of her other Black travel companions die. According to Coleman,

"necropolitics implies that sovereignty depends on the death of the unwanted Other and the survival of those who are desired citizens" (*The Necropolitical* 104). None of these migrants are desired, so none of them make it; Samia only arrives in Europe in her zombie-like state after she has been deemed desirable by the fisherman. However, I would argue that Guimarães's play does more; it tries to break open new possibilities even when surrounded by death. The real woman who inspired this play died, but Guimarães chooses to play with her characters' deaths. The play as a whole is full of vitality and humor and the characters are incredibly animated. Through the blurring of what is real, what is fantasy, what is a dream, and if it is all just a bedtime story, Guimarães subverts the finality and gravity of Samia's demise. She not only reaches Europe, her destination, but she emerges victorious in a competition. She survives and thrives, although in an unexpected way. Guimarães's protagonist forever inhabits multiple border zones, participating in what border theorist Thomas Nail describes as "the fuzzy zone-like phenomenon of inclusive disjunction that many theorists have identified as neither/nor, or both/and" (*Theory* 3). *La increíble historia* thus rejects the dichotomous view of migrants, opting for the liminal space of hybridity and the potential for new definitions of belonging.

Another recent play of Black survival and hybridity is *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros*. The theatrical company Teatro sin papeles officially began in 2018 with a group of people from six different nationalities, based out of Madrid (salametaforas). Spouses Raquel Pérez and Mamadou Simakha[18] had met Moisés Mato in 2015, and the three of them began conversations about a project that involved giving theatrical formation to people who had migrated and creating a play in which migrants were scriptwriters, actors, and directors. The participants took courses and learned about different theatrical methodologies and techniques,

[18] Sometimes referred to as Mahamadou Simakha.

including Augusto Boal's Forum Theater, basing themselves in a pedagogy of listening.[19] In 2016, the group began a series of workshops, or "dramaturgias migrantes," which led to the first performance the company produced, *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros*. Mato served as the director for this project. Some of their other recent projects include a joint venture with Teatro del Abrazo called *Bajo el mismo sol* (2020); *Las latinas son…* (2020) about Latin American women migrants; *El sueño es vida* (2021), taking its inspiration from several literary classics; and a presentation of "Escuela política migrante: Ni paternalismo, ni victimismo" (2021). The company performed[20] *¡Boza!* in the Sala Metáforas, in several Madrid community centers and schools, and traveled to places like Valencia and Ceuta. They also organized online synchronous viewings, via YouTube, of a recording of *¡Boza!* during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The goal of Teatro sin papeles has been to "hacer política en los escenarios" (Pérez) as well as to point toward a utopia without borders (Mato). According to Pérez,

> Todas y todos queríamos reflejar en nuestra obra que otra forma de vivir la realidad migratoria era posible, empezando por poner nombres y apellidos a las historias, siguiendo por abrir nuestras casas y nuestros brazos para reconocernos en ellos como hermanos, como parte de la misma familia humana, y así, darnos cuenta de que quizás nosotros, 'los blancos', 'los europeos'… también les necesitábamos a ellas y ellos . . . Y que el compartir la vida nos podría enriquecer de una manera que nunca habríamos imaginado.

The project has allowed and encouraged the participants to dream of alternatives, other possibilities of what borders, movement, and life could look like. Many of the participants are migrants themselves. As the novelist Nguyen reflects on his own work, "I remember all these things because if I did not remember them and write them down then perhaps they could all

[19] See, for example, Reggio Emilia.
[20] Some performances were organized so their funds would go to other causes, such as Proyecto Balimayá, a nonprofit organization that welcomes migrants in Madrid.

disappear" ("Introduction" 14). There is something powerful in the act of telling these stories, real stories from real migrants, and committing them to collective memory. Furthermore, the Teatro sin papeles gives them a space to perform "active citizenship" as understood by Alborz Ghandehari:

> "[A]ctive citizenship" is not to be confused with official forms of citizenship and documentation. Rather, it is a movement in which people, regardless of their status, take part in activities to enrich their community. . . . Such community organizing brings people of diverse backgrounds together, and is therefore an alternative to the forces that tear communities apart and force them to go on the move in the first place.

Working together through these workshops and in this theatrical company, many individuals can find healing and connection with the community in their new home, carving out space for themselves and enriching the space of those around them.

The title of the play, *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros*, highlights a word from the Fula or Fulani language from countries in West and Central Africa, centering in this small way a non-European, non-white experience. The word means freedom, success, or victory (Sclafani). It refers more specifically to the cry of freedom uttered by Central and West African migrants who have successfully crossed from Morocco into Spain, "el primer grito que lanza cualquier persona tras atravesar esos muros de la miseria blanca, el grito de la esperanza, el grito de la libertad" (Pérez). During the play's duration, the actors yell "¡Boza!" at the end of each act.

The play is divided into three sections: "El viaje," "El encuentro," and "Nosotros." Although the text calls them "acts," they are not acts in the traditional sense, as the characters of "El viaje" are not those of "El Encuentro," and in "Nosotros" the actors speak as themselves and tell the audience about their own lives. Although the sections do not connect in a narrative sense, they are connected thematically and organized to tell a migrant story. The "El viaje" section contains five scenes that depict several components of what a sub-Saharan migrant might

experience in their journey north, including "El entierro," the burial of a loved one; "El desierto," the dangerous crossing of the desert and its impact on migrants' health; "El monte Gurugú," a window into a migrant camp near Melilla and a police raid; "La patera," depicting the perilous journey across the Mediterranean but also the power of hope and faith; and "La valla," the long-awaited success of traversing the intense border fences at Melilla. The section ends with the characters yelling, "¡¡¡BOZAAAAAA!!!" and dancing to music from the djembe.

As the Presentador explains to the audience at the beginning of "El encuentro," this second section aims to depict how the migrant's journey does not end at the border, but rather the border follows them into different spaces and creates more barriers for them to cross. Scenes include "En la asociación," "En la Administración," "Oficina de Correos," "Encuentro con la Policía," "En el transporte público" and "En el metro," as well as two scenes that depict how stereotypes and racist or paternalistic behavior can impact those who have migrated. This act also ends with a final shout of "¡¡¡BOZAAAAAAAAA!!!"

The final act "Nosotros" changes depending on the cast of each individual performance, as the actors share with the audience about their own experiences. The play's published version includes stories from Simakha from Mali, Hassan and David from Cameroon, Reme from Madrid, Camila from Colombia, and many others who sometimes share from where they came and for how many years they have been in Spain, but sometimes prefer to share other facets of their lives, like how they became involved in this theatrical group, their activist work, and the values or beliefs they hold dearest. This final section also ends with a collective shout, this time a bit longer: "Y RECUERDA: '¡MUCHA GENTE PEQUEÑA, EN LUGARES PEQUEÑOS, HACIENDO COSAS PEQUEÑAS, PODEMOS CAMBIAR EL MUNDO!'

¡¡¡BOZAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!" The ending reminds us of the multiplicity of experiences and stories that make up this play and emphasize the importance of the collective, of community.

While *La increíble historia* told a chronological narrative centering on one protagonist, *¡Boza!* is different. There is not one simple story being told here, but many. The play begins with a significant degree of uncertainty. The audience members witness a funeral, but there is little context or exposition provided. Where are the characters? Who is the person that has died? What happened? The scene answers none of these questions specifically. In fact, at first there is no scripted dialogue, only drums and singing. The characters carry the deceased and lay him on the ground before lining up to contribute a handful of dirt on the grave. The stage directions explain, "Mientras cogen tierra y cubren con ella al muerto, van gritando a coro: Nos quitan la libertad…y yo entierro a mis muertos. Alguien inventa una guerra…y yo entierro a mis muertos. Nos roban nuestra riqueza…y yo entierro a mis muertos. Nos quitan el pan…y yo entierro a mis muertos. Talan nuestros árboles…y yo entierro a mis muertos" (1.1). Immediately, this play unabashedly draws the connection between contemporary migration and European legacies of colonization. Walia details a brief history of Europe's sins against the African continent:

> An uninterrupted trajectory of imperialism and capitalism is undeniable, from the formal colonial period to Cold War-era destabilizations, such as the assassination of Patrice Lumumba and the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah, to forced structural adjustment policies and neoliberal privatization in the 1980s and 1990s, the establishment of the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), land grabs and free trade plunder, and current policies of border externalization.

The Black men in this scene sing their collective grievances. They never explicitly mention the subject of each of the sentences, but it is obvious that this chorus challenges the selective amnesia of Europe and its role in the state of affairs of many African countries and the dangers of migrant routes. The characters in this first scene are divested of their individuality; they are stand-ins for everyone who has lost a loved one as a result of what Walia describes as "European

complicity in creating displacement through colonial conquest, land theft, slavery, capitalist extraction, labor exploitation, and war profiteering." The dead person stands in for each individual that has died either in their home country due to neocolonial practices or on the perilous journey to a new country.

The transition to the next scene is abrupt. The stage directions explain, "Uno a uno, cogen la mochila, se despiden de los demás y salen corriendo. Los demás les despiden y a continuación cogen sus mochilas y salen corriendo detrás" (Teatro sin papeles 1.2). This suggests that the funeral of the first scene means to represent the possible impetuses for the individual to migrate, whether this is war, poverty, or political instability, and the following scenes will depict what their migration journey looks like. One moment, the funeral attendees are emotionally invested in the mourning ritual, and the next, they grab their backpacks and start running. The stage directions emphasize how difficult the journey across the desert is: "Corren durante un largo rato. Cada vez más cansados. Cada vez con más miedo y angustia" (Teatro sin papeles 1.2). One man almost dies from dehydration, but the others decide to stay with him. In the third scene, it will become clear that these characters are not the same as those at the funeral and that they are strangers to one another. Even so, in solidarity they stay with their ill travel mate and seek sanctuary in Mount Gurugu.

This setting is one of waiting; the characters are stuck in a sort of limbo. Mount Gurugu is a mountain on the northern coast of Morocco between Melilla and Nador. It used to be a common refuge for migrants, especially those from sub-Saharan Africa. Charlotte Gibson-McDonald reported in 2013 on the dozens of Cameroonians there: "Most are young men who found it impossible to start a life in one of the poorest countries in the world, where life expectancy is 52 and the average monthly wage is about £68." The total number of people

trapped waiting in Gurugu and the other Moroccan forests is unknown, but Melilla charity workers estimate it to be in the thousands (Gibson-McDonald). Acting in the role of "Europe's watchdog," Moroccan authorities carry out raids and searches in the migrants' makeshift camps (No Borders Morocco 228). In one February 2015 operation alone, they arrested and detained a thousand migrants in Gurugu forest and burned the camp there, completely destroying it. Since then, few live at Mount Gurugu, as most have had to move to forests further away from the border.

The characters' conversation at their camp in Mount Gurugu reveals that they come from a variety of countries, including Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon, and that they have been hiding in these migrant camps for varying periods of time, from five days to five years. The motivating factors of their migration and consequent presence at Mount Gurugu are varied, as well. Makelele hopes to become a soccer player in Europe, Denzel says he aims to study in France but is actually a political refugee, Daniel or, as he calls himself, "Free Boy" wants a better future, and Adama's goal is to get a job and send money to his mother and sister. From Mount Gurugu they can see the border fences at Melilla, but they inhabit this liminal space that is set apart from both Spain and Morocco, neither here nor there, a transient space of uncertainty as new migrants flow in and out, waiting for their next opportunity to cross the border fences or for the next raid. Sure enough, at the end of the scene, the stage directions note, "llega la policía marroquí o guardia civil española," as the practices of border militarization and externalization make unclear and irrelevant who the enforcers are (Teatro sin papeles 1.3).

More than a place of waiting, however, Mount Gurugu is also a place of networking and organizing. Although transient and forever changing, the camps create a sense of community where migrants come together "in order to organize their passage over the fences of Melilla" (No

Borders Morocco 232). According to Press, "Along the way, the migrants, as they move through dangerous crossings, forge new networks, often ad hoc" (22). The importance of these impromptu relationships formed on the journey and in the camps is evident in *¡Boza!*, as is the sense of uncertainty about whom they can trust. The men in this scene depict the rael-life understanding that sometimes migrant networks help, and "sometimes they prove to be false and cause more problems" (Press 22). Daniel does not introduce himself with his real name, nor does Denzel admit his real reason for leaving his country. Adama tells half-truths to his campmates: "Yo solo llevo cinco días aquí y echo de menos a mi madre. Estoy muy preocupado y no sé cómo hablar con ella. Tengo mucho miedo. Y no me va a llegar el dinero. Solo tengo 20 €" (Teatro sin papeles 1.3). While much of his confession and the sentiments expressed may be true, an actor at the back of the stage, outside of the diegetic space of the scene, holds up a sign to the audience that reads "En realidad…tiene 600 €" (Teatro sin papeles 1.3). Similarly, when Makelele scoffs at the idea of fear, proclaiming, "¡Hay que ser valiente! Aquí no hay sitio para debiluchos," the actor in the back raises another poster to reveal, "En realidad… está muerto de miedo" (Teatro sin papeles 1.3). This group bands together, takes care of one another, but also holds each other at a distance, keeping some secrets for themselves for their own safety.

After the raid, another abrupt transition takes its audience members to the open sea. This move breaks with the audience's expectations. A logical move from Mount Gurugu would be to the Melilla fences, visible from the migrant camps. Instead, the actors group together and with their body positions form what is visually legible to the audience as a small boat: "Entre todos generan el espacio de una patera en medio de la noche" (Teatro sin papeles 1.4). Several of the characters begin to row as Acompañante 1 and Acompañante 2 tell the audience the story of one of the passengers, Mamadou. This scene also emphasizes the importance of solidarity and the

relationships formed on the journey, even without the use of dialogue between the passengers. Acompañante 1 narrates the thoughts of Mamadou: "y supo que no estaba recorriendo solo el viaje, que pasara lo que pasara, Dios nunca le dejaría solo, ni las palabras de su querida madre" (Teatro sin papeles 1.4). Mamadou is not alone, surrounded by his ad hoc community, demonstrated aurally as all of the passengers begin to say the word "mother" in many different languages. Acompañante 2 then passes a handful of water to Acompañante 1, who passes it along to each of the other travelers. This strange act of sharing reinforces a collective sense of hope, a feeling that "todo irá bien" (Teatro sin papeles 1.4).

From the sounds and sights of the sea, the play moves backwards, physically, temporally, or both, to the border fence between Morocco and Spain. The actors use their bodies to form, instead of a boat, the fence: "Varios actores con máscaras blancas sujetan barras metálicas en el proscenio" (Teatro sin papeles 1.5).[21] The play does not explain what happened to those in the dinghy boat of the previous scene or whether this is a completely different set of migrants. The audience members are immersed suddenly into an atmosphere of urgency and boiling chaos. The migrants are coordinating how they will jump the fences together. According to Edwards, migrants have begun to participate in mass crossings to overwhelm border guards so that some of them have success in reaching European soil. Locutor 1 appears at the front of the stage and, with a microphone, narrates important background information on the Melilla border. Like the host of a television or news program, Locutor 1 gives the history of the fences and a current description of its engineering and different technologies, including spotlights, alarms, and video monitoring. The character also personifies the border: "Una frontera diseñada para que solo el aire pueda pasar…con el permiso del acero. . . . La valla tiene ojos y oídos" (Teatro sin papeles

[21] The fence characters literally have black skin and white masks, reminiscent of the title of Frantz Fanon's seminal work.

1.5). This description of the walls' hostile surveillance is made more powerful by the performers acting as the border itself, with their literal eyes and ears. In the recording made available for online viewing in 2021, the fence actors watch the migrants through the holes in their white masks with unnervingly blank facial expressions, and they also constantly shift their metallic bars so the migrants have to strategize how to time their movements to get through this moving obstacle course. The border is alive, surveilling and then trapping one of the migrant characters who attempts to cross over it.

Similar to the previous scene, "La valla" instills a sense of hope rather than despair in the face of so much adversity. Locutora 2 contributes to the broadcast a description of Mamouro, a 23-year old immigrant from Mali who is attempting to cross the border for the eighth time over four years. He has run out of money but is convinced that today he will finally successfully enter Europe, "porque no existe ningún muro capaz de contener los sueños" (Teatro sin papeles 1.5). He and the others make it over the fences, ending the first act with their collective shouts of victory, dancing, and djembe music, in pure celebration of this incredible feat.

Despite this triumphant revelry, these new Spanish immigrants do not leave the border behind them in Melilla. The second act, "El encuentro," is all about how the border is sticky or elastic. According to Nail, "the border is not only in between the inside and outside of two territories, states, and so on, it is also in between the inside and the inside itself: it is a division within society" (*Theory* 5). Chapter 2 will continue to analyze "the territorial, political, juridical, and economic forms of social division" that migrants encounter within the physical boundaries of their new country (Nail, *Theory* 16), but the ten scenes of *¡Boza!*'s second act serve as an introduction to these ideas. In each of the settings of these scenes, the audience members watch as the migrant characters interact with different bordering practices within Spain. Doll notes that

borders are elastic constructions and asks, "¿Dónde está la frontera entre África y España? ¿Dónde está la frontera entre el *yo* español y el Otro inmigrante?" ("Los inmigrantes africanos" 23). The migrants in this act push against this elastic border as they attempt to acquire proper documentation or otherwise go through their daily lives.

The second act begins with a "Presentador" breaking the fourth wall to speak with the audience. The character announces, "Pero el camino no ha terminado aún; tras nuestra llegada a la península, la lucha continúa. Por ejemplo, el tema de papeles y oficinas es una auténtica locura…" (Teatro sin papeles 2.1). The topic of trying to get the correct paperwork to reside and work legally in Spain takes up three of the act's scenes. Serigne appears in María's "asociación" office first. Not only does María mispronounce his name repeatedly, but she also claims that she is unable to help him acquire his papers. Instead she flippantly remarks, "¡Ay, Serrín! Esto es como la pescadilla que se muerde la cola. Si no tienes trabajo, no tienes papeles; y si no tienes papeles, no tienes trabajo. . . . Pero ya sabes…cuando tengas contrato vuelves por aquí, ¿vale?" (Teatro sin papeles 2.2). In the next scene, an unnamed African immigrant arrives at another office, where the employee is immediately hostile to him. Their conversation is as follows:

> FUNCIONARIO/A. ¡A ver esos papeles! ¡Y además me traes los que no son! Es el formulario 9, y tú me traes el 8. ¡Anda, vete a imprimirlo de nuevo! (*y le tira los papeles*) ¡Estos negros!
> AFRICANO. (*recogiendo los papeles*) Le traigo el 8 y me pide el 9, le traigo el 9 y me pide el 10, el 11, el 12…
> *El africano grita. Los demás grita con él.* (Teatro sin papeles 2.3)

Both of these characters attempt to do everything by the book, attending meetings and filling out paperwork so they can legally reside and work in Spain, but the legal system creates barriers almost impossible to cross. The circular reasoning of María and the ongoing carousel of different documents trap these migrants in a sort of legal immobility.

This bureaucratic frustration is not uncommon. “Borders, walls, and documents limit movement between state territories,” says Jones (7). The red tape is just another border that migrants must traverse. Specifically regarding asylum paperwork, Saeed Kamali Dehgahn reported in 2017 on the ever-increasing backlog in the Spanish system: “Those seeking asylum in Spain can wait anything from six months to two years to receive a decision.” Jones corroborates this, explaining that “the number seeking asylum [in the United States and European Union] exceeds these new quotas by a factor of ten. For many migrants, this means dropping out of the asylum process and choosing to live without documents on the streets of Europe” (22). Without clear pathways to legal residence or citizenship, many migrants will choose alternative routes, as we have seen already.

The final scenes of the second act of *¡Boza!* explore other methods of social expulsion. As Nail remarks in *The Figure of the Migrant*, “In certain cases, some migrants may decide to move, but they are not free to determine the social conditions of their movement or the degree to which they may be expelled from certain social orders” (34). Even with proper documentation, some migrants or even Black Spanish citizens will face internal barriers in interactions with the police. The police checkpoint is, in many ways, “the new border wall” (Nail, *Theory* 115). The stage directions and dialogue make clear that the police officers in “Encuentro con la Policía” are looking for a Black man to detain. Upon finding one, they search his bags and demand his proper documentation, despite his protests that he is Spanish and is on his way to school for an exam. Security guards on the metro in the eighth scene also target Black passengers, and the white passengers feel safer with this arrangement. “Miran con complicidad al guardia de seguridad,” and the officer intimidates the Black passenger until he leaves (Teatro sin papeles 2.8). During these encounters with police, security, and informational checkpoints, the attitudes of many

autochthonous Spanish civilians are on display. They expel the Black people with whom they interact from their social circles through the use of discrimination, stereotypes, and paternalism.

The content of *¡Boza!* is a faithful representation of the multiplicity of sub-Saharan migrant experiences, and it challenges common notions surrounding immigrants and migration. The play has a strong counterdiscursive function against the discourses and stereotypes Ahmad enumerates, including "prevailing notions that all migrants are eager to leave their home countries; that migration is optional; that migration is permanent and unidirectional; that it automatically leads to a better life; and that the ultimate goal of migration is to assimilate to a new place" (xviii). Each of the migrants the audience sees has a different story, a different reason for leaving. Their new life in Spain is not a perfect paradise, either, as they run into difficulties both legally and socially. They deal with near impossible paperwork, racist employees and police officers, and good-intentioned Spaniards who look at them with pity. When a character named Adama recounts his backstory, "todos cambian de actitud y expresan pena. Durante su relato todos aparentan sentirse afligidos por lo que oyen," and when he finishes they surround him, hug him, and repeat the same word: "pobre" (Teatro sin papeles 2.10). "¡BOZA!" is the migrants' victory cry in all situations, from triumph over the wall to over paternalistic social interactions. They yearn to become a part of their Spanish communities, but not if it is through a process of assimilation that devalues, disrespects, or erases all of who they are. They would prefer that their daily border crossing practices create something new in these communities.

The structure of the play adds to this discussion of what it means to be a migrant and what it means to belong. Just as the play's title, *¡Boza!*, is about literal freedom, so the theatrical company advocates for creative freedom. For director Mato, "esta experiencia me obliga a deshacer de nuevo el andamiaje teatral construido a lo largo de décadas," and he and his team

choose instead to cross the borders of theatrical convention. *¡Boza!*'s unconventional, fragmented structure and choppy transitions between scenes, abrupt shifts in tone and style, and metatheatrical techniques contribute to the opening up of the contact zones that borders create so that new possibilities may emerge. The audience members easily follow the main ideas of each scene and the overarching message is clear, but the play itself enacts a "restless search for form from one piece to the next," a phrase borrowed from Stevens' work (191). It defies categorization, experimenting with different ways to tell its stories.

As discussed, the characters in each and every scene are different. The funeral attendees in the first scene are not the same men that huddle together on Mount Gurugu, as the latter are strangers to one another, originating from different countries and having arrived at vastly different times. The migrant who travels in the dinghy boat is not the same man as the one who jumps the Melilla fences with his companions, and the migrant characters who appear in the second act all have different names and backgrounds, as well. There is little continuity of each character's journey as the actors participate in, again borrowing from Stevens, "the metatheatrical trying on of different personas" and cultivate "hybrid identities that embody multiple identifications" (191). The Teatro sin papeles group has opted for a more fragmented plotline.

The play's fragmentation is further emphasized in some of the scene changes. In all of the second act, for example, the transitions from scene to scene are almost violent, at least in the aural sense. *¡Boza!*'s stage directions describe, "Serigne grita y con él todos los demás" (2.2), "El africano grita. Los demás grita con él" (2.3), "Christian grita. Los demás grita con él" (2.4), and "Mamadou grita, los demás grita con él" (2.5). These sudden screams fracture the fabric of the scene. Each Black migrant goes unheard by their white scene partners, but they are joined in

their yells of frustration by other Black characters at the back of the stage, blurring diegetic spaces. These screams are loud and audibly impact the audience members, who are taken aback each time.

The shift in tone and style from the fourth to the fifth scene of the first act is also a good example of this fracturing. In the 2021 recording of *¡Boza!*, "La patera" occurs under blue lighting. The scene is almost lullaby-like, as one character constantly moves water to imitate the sound of the waves and the Acompañantes narrate the action of the scene with descriptive imagery and figurative language:

> ACOMPAÑANTE 1. Era una noche oscura y profunda. Las olas acunaban la barca en la que Mamadou viajaba. El agua le salpicaba en la cara. El miedo le rugía en las entrañas y le recordaba que a pesar de todo aún seguía vivo. Sin embargo, sentía el murmullo de la muerte arrullándole al oído... y la impotencia le invadía por dentro, ¿qué será de mi familia?, ¿por qué tanta injusticia?
> Sin embargo, en ese preciso momento el cielo se abrió.
> ACOMPAÑANTE 2. (*levanta la cabeza, se aparta el pelo de la cara*) Confía.
> ACOMPAÑANTE 1. ... y una luz brillante le iluminó la cara... y entonces sintió una profunda paz, y supo que no estaba recorriendo solo el viaje, que pasara lo que pasara, Dios nunca le dejaría solo, ni las palabras de su querida madre. (Teatro sin papeles 1.4)

The personification of the waves, fear, and death and the alliteration of phrases like "murmullo de la muerte" or "profunda paz" add to the poetic quality of this scene. Along with the aforementioned sense of hope and solidarity that occurs through the chorus of "madres" and the sharing of water, this scene has a calming effect, putting the audience members at ease.

In the recording of *¡Boza!*, however, this peace is incredibly short-lived. The blue lights do not have time to change back to white and the actors have not broken yet their boat formation before threads of the following scene begin to peak through. The men crouch down, and one begins to give instructions and signal to the others the plan to jump the Melilla border. Urgent whispers suddenly become chaotic yells and djembe music begins as the group of migrants

rushes toward the border in an attempt to cross. Now with white lighting, other Black actors, acting as the fence itself, enter the stage and form the barrier in front of the hopeful migrants as two white actors play Locutor 1 and Locutora 2. These are narrators like the Acompañantes of the previous scene, but they abandon all sense of the poetic. With their microphone, they act as news correspondents, prosaically reporting on the walls and their security measures. The sentences are remarkably shorter, creating a staccato effect that contrasts with the fluid, complex sentences of the previous scene: "Es un complejo de alambradas metálicas. Su razón de ser: dificultar la inmigración irregular. Hace 20 años que existe. 33 millones de euros costó en el año 98 la primera valla" (Teatro sin papeles 1.5). In the recording, this staccato reporting is accentuated by the clicking sounds of the metallic bars of the fence in motion. The fence stands ready to trap and cut the migrants that attempt to cross it.

In *Theory of the Border*, Nail emphasizes the fracturing power of borders, comparing borders to "motors: the mobile cutting blades of society" (7), or to the cuts made by scissors (2). *¡Boza!* acts as if it has been cut up into pieces, divided into neat sections and standalone scenes. Just as the "border is an absolutely positive and continuous process of multiplication by division—the more it divides social space the more it multiplies it," so do these narrative divisions multiply the expressive capacity of the play (Nail, *The Theory* 3). The individual's story goes nowhere, brusquely cut off at each scene change. The plot moves transversally, intersecting a parallel migrant experience at a different moment of their journey. Each individual story goes nowhere, but, simultaneously, the collective story goes everywhere.

Certain metatheatrical gestures create further ruptures even within scenes. In the third scene of the first act, an actor stands at the back of the stage and holds up a sign to announce the new setting of Mount Gurugu. This more conventional use of a sign quickly distorts into a

metatheatrical device. The signs interact with the dialogue occurring in the scene, calling out characters' lies and correcting information to give the audience members a more accurate understanding of their backgrounds. The characters are lying to one another about their names, reasons for traveling, how much money they have, and more, but the sign holder reveals the truth behind their heads, as if winking at the audience. In the 2021 recording, the group replaced the sign technique with an actor who would interrupt the scene by clapping. These claps froze the action of the scene while the actor made his intervention, and the final clap would restart the action as if nothing had happened, like a filmmaker's clapperboard. This character was aware of the spectators' presence and communicated directly with them.

Characters continue this breaking of the fourth wall in a verbal manner in the second act. The autochthonous characters María, Funcionario/a, and Ana all make small asides during their scenes. They break from the reality of their conversation with the migrant men to comment, "¡Qué guay soy!" "¡Qué chulo que soy!" and "¡Qué maja que soy!" to the audience members (2.2; 2.3; 2.4). These asides are also small fissures in the fabric of the scenes because they contrast so starkly with what is really happening in the scene. María, the Funcionario/a, and Ana are refusing to help the migrants, rejecting any potential ally relationship. Their asides are ridiculous and show an extreme lack of self-awareness. Like the sign holder in Mount Gurugu, these characters are basically winking at the audience members, as if they were in on the joke. Coleman claims, "Through the use of metatheater, spectators become active bystanders, if not participants, in the social exclusion" seen onstage (*The Necropolitical* 100), and this play demonstrates this technique. The audience members become complicit in the construction of more internal borders.

The borders between genres are also blurred. Similar to *La increíble historia*, it is unclear the type of reality in which *¡Boza!* occurs. While most of the scenes represent an authentic representation of what it is like to cross national borders or live undocumented in Spain, in the second act, the scenes become progressively more absurd. Scenes 2 through 4, apart from the Spanish workers' ironic asides, seem realistic, but the social interaction in the fifth scene shifts away from this verisimilitude. Mamadou's conversation with the post office worker is as follows:

> MAMADOU. Mire, envié una carta certificada hace dos semanas, y aún no ha llegado y tampoco sé dónde está.
> FUNCIONARIO/A (*dirigiéndose a Marta*) Mira, le dices a tu amigo que tiene que preguntarlo en la ventanilla Nº 2.
> MAMADOU. Disculpe, hablo español, ¡eh!, entiendo todo perfectamente.
> FUNCIONARIO/A. (*dirigiéndose a Mamadou*) ¡Ah, vale! (*dirigiéndose a Marta*) Le dices a tu amigo que en la ventanilla Nº 2. (Teatro sin papeles 2.5)

Mamadou's ability to communicate and function within Spanish society almost completely breaks down. Although Mamadou can speak fluent Spanish, the post office worker refuses to enter into conversation with him and only speaks to his fellow Spaniard Marta. This situation, while still possible in real life, is more extreme than what was seen in the previous office interactions.

This exaggeration continues in the sixth scene. A group of Black men use their chairs at the back of the stage to hide from the police officers. The scene continues:

> *De vez en cuando [los africanos] asomarán la cabeza para ver lo que está pasando en escena.*
> *Dos policías en la calle. Están de servicio. Parece que buscan a alguien. Van mirando a quien pasa:*
> POLICÍAS. blanco... blanco... blanco...
> A*parece un africano.*
> POLICÍAS. ¡Negro! ¡Negro! (2.6)

In the filmed recording of the play, the actors play up the humor in this scene. The police officers especially exaggerate their movements and lines, becoming caricatures of themselves. This scene distances itself from realism, but, because of this distancing, it more accurately portrays how Black migrants may feel when they are targeted in the streets based on their skin color.

The metro scene does not even need scripted dialogue to communicate the feeling that the way Black people, especially migrants, are treated in Spanish society is absurd. In the filmed version of *¡Boza!*, the song "Cotton Pickin' Carmen" by Pee Wee Hunt plays in the background. This upbeat jazz song serves as the soundtrack for the vignettes on the metro. The characters enter and exit the metro car with exaggerated gestures and facial expressions and, in some cases, Charlie Chaplin-like choreographed body movements. The techniques are reminiscent of those used in silent films. The characters at times make unscripted conversation, but their facial expressions and body movements convey the majority of the meaning.

In the following scene, the play turns away from physical humor. The Presentador returns to talk directly to and teach the audience something. The didactic nature of this speech in Scene 9 and the previous ones in Scenes 1 and 7 contribute to the overall confusion of this work's genre and the question of whether it is real or fictional. Is the Presentador part of the play, another character? Or, is he part of our world, acting like the show's host? In a similar vein, "Nosotros" is classified as an act in the text and is meant to provide a space where the actors can be themselves and tell their own lived experiences. In a colloquium hosted about the play, actor Thimbo Samb explained that "todo lo que realmente estamos viendo en la obra es algo que hemos vivido. . . . y poder hacer esta obra es como una terapia" ("BOZA-Coloquio" 00:06:56-00:07:09). The play proclaims to belong to the Black migrants that constitute the theatrical company. It is fluid and can change depending on the actors of a particular performance. The

published version of the work notes that "El texto es siempre dinámico y no recoge todos los elementos de la puesta en escena" (Teatro sin papeles). In this way, *¡Boza!* as text rejects notions of stability or staying within certain parameters. The performance follows the pattern of other transnational plays as it "crosses the invisible wall between the stage and the auditorium" through metatheatrical techniques and self-reflexive moments and "transgresses the border between fiction and reality" (Stevens 193). *¡Boza!* willingly blurs textual boundaries just as its characters transgress territorial, political, and juridical boundaries.

Although, as discussed, the play is fractured, the fragments make up a cohesive whole. In addition, some threads tie the disparate scenes together, weaving in and out of the entire textual fabric. A man named Mamadou appears in "La patera" and "Oficina de Correos," and Mamadou Simahka is listed as part of the theatrical company at the end of the text. The name Adama is present in "El monte Gurugú," "Relatos de los viajes," as well as on the cast list. Music ties the play together even more effectively. The djembe is a traditional and well-known drum originating from the Mandingue people of West Africa. According to *¡Boza!*'s text, the first thing the audience hears is this West African percussion instrument, and in its recording the drum stays upstage center throughout the entire performance, another example of how this play literally and figuratively centers the experiences and identities of sub-Saharan African migrants. The drumming that starts the first scene returns in the last scene of the act, when Mamouro and his companions successfully jump the fence and utter their victory cry: "Gritan alegres. Suena la música del djembé. Bailan" (Teatro sin papeles 1.5). The music ties together two scenes of profound emotion, of both grief and joy. In the second act, the djembe's use expands to guide the characters through each scene transition. "Presentación" changes to "En la asociación" through the following process: "Música djembé. Salen todos a escena con sillas. Todos los cambios se

realizarán moviéndose por escena al ritmo de la música con las sillas colocadas en diferentes posiciones según se vaya indicando" (Teatro sin papeles 2.1). The second scene transitions into the third scene in a similar way, as "Todos bailan en círculo con las sillas al ritmo de la música del djembé" (Teatro sin papeles 2.3), a ritual that repeats itself in the fourth and fifth scenes. The music helps glue the fractured pieces of this play together, providing a rhythm along which the scenes may flow.

The music brings joy and excitement to the scenes, despite the oft-serious content matter. The Black men respond to border violence and social exclusion with undefeatable joy, with dancing and silliness, moving to the beat of their own drum between scenes. They depend on humor as one of the most important tools to communicate their stories, even when recounting tragic situations. As Samb notes, "No es un humor que te partes de risa y luego te vas a casa tranquilamente. No" ("BOZA-Coloquio" 00:12:49-00:12:56). Their humor demands participation from the play's spectators, but it also rejects the discursive dichotomy of migrant as a figure either to fear or to pity.

The tenth scene of the second act, "Relatos de viajes," rejects this dichotomy outright. A white woman and a Black man recount to their listeners their travel stories, one of tourism and one of migration. In both, the storytellers cheat death. The white woman survives an infection in her ankle, while the Black man, Adama, escapes potential death due to his sexual orientation. He relates to his listeners,

> Ser homosexual en Guinea es mucho peor que haber cometido un delito. Sin embargo, yo no podía engañarme: era quien soy, y vivir en contra de lo que me nacía dentro, como años atrás había intentado, hubiera sido una auténtica pesadilla.... así que decidí unirme a otras personas que pensaban como yo y luchar para que las personas homosexuales fueran respetadas como cualquier otro ser humano. Esto casi me costó la muerte. En una de las últimas manifestaciones a las que asistí recibí una paliza que me dejó al borde de la muerte... y es entonces cuando decidí emprender mi viaje... no quería ser... no quería ser

> un estorbo para mi familia y mucho menos que su vida estuviera en juego por defender la mía...
> Así que decidí huir, lo más lejos posible... siempre con un sueño en la mente: seguir estudiando y convertirme en un abogado para luchar allá donde esté por la igualdad de todos los seres humanos. (Teatro sin papeles 2.10)

Adama has cheated death. His story is one of survival. This in itself, along with the survival stories of all the other scenes, is important. In *¡Boza!*, unlike in so many of its predecessors on the Spanish stage, Blackness is not equated with death. However, the white characters still want to cast Adama in the role of a figure to pity. According to the stage directions, "Al terminar todos aplauden emocionados. Se levantan y le abrazan repitiendo sin parar la palabra: 'pobre,'" a completely different response than the one they gave the white woman after her tale (Teatro sin papeles 2.10). A frustrated Adama responds with, "¡Basta ya de paternalismo, por favor!" (2.10). He refuses to be cast in the pitiful, childlike role. Migrants are not either figures to fear or to pity; this binary classification is inadequate. *¡Boza!*'s characters' stories and its textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy open space up between the dichotomous choices, within the border itself, the liminal third space, to explore its potential and "ensayar posibilidades" (Mato).

Both *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última* and *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros* are based on real people and real events. As Viet Thanh Nguyen says, "I remember my displacement so that I can feel for those now displaced. I remember the injustice of displacement so that I can imagine my writing as attempting to perform some justice for those compelled to move" ("Introduction" 18). Similarly, these plays remember through their performance the stories of and injustices experienced by those who have been displaced. They also challenge the common discourses surrounding migration, like the migrant as a figure to fear or to pity, or that migrants' deaths and suffering are their own fault for choosing to move. By focusing on the journey, the neither here nor there, the plays in this chapter rupture binaries that

try to categorize their migrant characters. The migrants belong neither to their home country, nor their desired host country, are not a fearful Other nor a pitiful victim. Instead, they inhabit the in-between, crossing multiple national borders and textual boundaries, vivaciously reveling in liminal space with laughter, music, and joy. For Tran, "that space between what is real and imaginary is ultimately where the refugee resides" (155). The plays of Teatro sin papeles and Guimarães, through their subject matter and formal experimentation, destabilize fixed notions of identity and decenter what it means to belong to a community. The migrant characters' different methods of movement, along with the playwrights, actors, and theatrical teams' creative liberty, provide space for brainstorming future possibilities and imagining new ways of living and belonging to Spanish society.

Migrants in the Labor Circuit: Everyday Movements of Resistance

Inmigrantes, indocumentados, ilegales,
inadmitidos, pateros, moros y negratas.
Pero yo me llamo mucho más:
Alí.
—Alberto Miralles, Patera. Réquiem

El asunto migratorio no es un tema tangencial al
resto de los problemas que padece un país: es una forma
de radiografiarlo, es la foto más precisa de su situación,
porque lo que se esconde detrás de la migración es el
latido de la desigualdad.
—Juan Diego Botto, Invisibles

Whether by land, air, or sea, through regular or irregular routes, an individual who crosses national borders undergoes profound changes in terms of their senses of identity, belonging, and home. Borders are not just lines drawn in the sand, a specific, physical demarcation that can be transgressed and left behind. Instead, borders are elastic. Borders are sticky (Brems et al. 287), and migrants carry the border on their bodies and in their daily lives (de Genova 6). This chapter analyzes two plays, *Maldita cocina* (2004) by Fermín Cabal and Amanda Rodríguez and *Un trozo invisible de este mundo* (2012) by Juan Diego Botto, and how they represent primarily first-generation immigrants to Spain in their daily lives: their navigation of the labor circuit, their interaction with contemporary bordering practices, their finding and creating spaces of belonging, and their learning to honor the hybridity of their identities.

Chapter 1's migrant characters originated primarily from Sub-Saharan Africa. This chapter's plays include migrant characters from a wide variety of places, including Morocco, Romania, Poland, and various Latin American countries. In an overview of recent trends of migration and mobility within the European Union, Andrew Geddes et al. state:

> [W]e see the centrality of intra-European migration with substantial movement from Romania. In movement from Ecuador and Colombia, we see the continued resonance of colonial, historical and linguistic ties. . . . The Romanian and Moroccan populations are

> likely to be labour migrants working in sectors such as agriculture, tourism and domestic employment, with gendered distinctions, as female migrants are more likely to be employed in sectors such as domestic work, while male migrants toil in sectors such as construction. (23-25)

These trends are reflected in Cabal and Rodríguez's and Botto's plays. *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible de este mundo* use labor as a lens through which to view migrants' experiences. Unlike Chapter 1's focus on migrants during their journey and arrival, or Chapter 3's focus on the next generation and how migrancy is experienced by youth, this chapter hones in on first-generation migrant adults in their daily lives as they settle into their communities, often through their jobs.

Migrant participation in the labor market is fraught with further encounters with borders. A border wall may control and direct migration through its composition of rocks, metal, or wood and surveillance towers and patrols, but the border regime extends far beyond any wall or fence. According to Étienne Balibar, "The borders of new sociopolitical entities, in which an attempt is being made to preserve all the functions of the sovereignty of the state, are no longer entirely situated at the outer limit of territories; they are dispersed a little everywhere, wherever the movement of information, people, and things is happening and is controlled—for example, in cosmopolitan cities" (15-16). Borders manifest within the official state boundaries, perhaps most notably in the (b)ordering of the labor circuit. As Nail points out:

> The border is also a yoke or filter that allows some migrants to pass through with only minor inconvenience, others to obtain work under illegal and exploitive conditions, and others still to be caught and held for years in detention centers without charges. On the other side of the border, migrant labor flows are then harnessed through work junctions into a vehicle for production, profit, and social subordination. (*Theory* 28)

The migrants in *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible* have been "allowed" to permeate the national borders so they could enter the labor circuit and provide a valuable service to the maintaining of Spanish society and its cities. As low-level, often undocumented laborers, they

inhabit a strange in-between space where they are both welcome and unwelcome. N. Michelle Murray elucidates this seeming contradiction: "Spain, Italy, and France are the European nations that employ the most domestic workers, proving that immigrants may be 'welcome,' yet they are positioned in labor regimes that perpetuate their marginalization" (207). Both desirable and undesirable, the migrants are "harnessed by a labor junction, which aims to extract as much movement from the migrants as possible. Employers and the economy can extract more if the migrants have no status than if the migrants are legal, through the suppression of unions, threat of deportation, reduced wages, and dangerous work conditions" (Nail, *Theory* 30-31). Both plays spotlight this marginalization of and extraction from migrant characters.

This exploitation of labor is important to this dissertation because it also impacts the migrants' sense of identity, belonging, and home. In the reproductive labor force, including cleaning and maintenance, invisibility and precariousness are common, especially for migrant women domestic workers (Murray 207). Because their job justifies their presence in the host country, migrant laborers' identities may get wrapped around their work function. In the "indefinite labor circuit" (Nail, *The Figure* 32), migrants may "find themselves reduced to the labor they can provide" (Ahmad xxv). As Mahamet Timera notes, the work itself is often "degrading unskilled manual labour at the bottom of the professional ladder, synonymous with self-effacement as citizens in the public domain," which can lead to a negation of one's social status and the demeaning of one's identity or sense of self (152). In the plays analyzed here, places of work thus become the arena in which these migrant characters suffer but resist this phenomenon, asserting their dignity and unique identities and experiences.

Migration studies often analyze the importance of place, as a physical environment, and space, or "practiced place," including human practices, relations, and perceptions (de Certeau

117). Where the migrant characters of Cabal and Rodríguez and Botto live and work speaks to the real-life experiences of migrants in Spain and how they practice place. Patricia Ehrkamp and Helga Leitner note the significance of

> how space is deeply implicated in public and political discourse about immigration; how migrants create new symbolic spaces of belonging in sometimes hostile host societies; how migrants transform material spaces and places in contemporary cities into sites and stakes of struggles for rights and citizenship; and how transnational social spaces emerge as migrants express their political identities and commitments across national borders. (1591)

What is noteworthy about the plays in this chapter is the migrants are often transforming and creating these spaces of belonging out of *non*-places.

In their choices of setting, these playwrights experiment with the concept of Marc Augé's non-place. Augé believes that "some experience of non-place . . . is today an essential component of all social existence" (97). Typical examples of non-places include airports, train stations, shopping malls, global hotel chains, or other "spaces of communication, circulation and consumption" (Augé xxii). Augé draws the connection between non-places and migration many times in his book theorizing the term; migrants often move through and inhabit in-between, fleeting, temporary spaces. A true non-place, although it never exists in pure form, is not relational, historical, or concerned with identity, and instead can be characterized by transience and anonymity. *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible* play with this definition through the use of the kitchen, a *locutorio*, a hostel, or an airport baggage carousel. The migrant characters, living and moving through these locations, support Augé's notion that "[p]erhaps the reason why immigrants worry settled people so much (and often so abstractly) is that they expose the relative nature of certainties inscribed in the soil" (97). By asserting their identities and making connections with other marginalized individuals in these supposedly anonymous, non-relational settings, these characters disrupt the status quo and the predominant narrative of a white,

European Spain. As non-places are challenged and opened up, what we may conceptualize as third spaces arise that displace traditional histories and structures of authority, or, as Bhabha would describe them, "the great metropolitan narratives of progress and law and order" (218). In these third spaces, migrants are able to rewrite or renegotiate their identities and a sense of belonging to Spanish society.

In sum, migrants who have already crossed the Spanish national border may live seemingly static lives, but they are in many ways still in motion, still crossing boundaries. As Nail emphasizes, "the daily life of most migrants includes the continual social motions of commuting, traveling, working, and actively maintaining the material conditions of extensive motions in general (such as construction workers, janitors, or maids)" (*The Figure* 30-1). In Cabal and Rodríguez's and Botto's plays, the characters include restaurant employees, a construction worker, and a domestic worker, among others, who are engaged in these daily social motions. Both plays are, in a way, anarchist, as Simon Springer describes the term. They attempt to reinvent "the everyday through a desire to create new forms of organization," moving away from top-down structures and toward horizontal networks of solidarity, and demonstrate "a strategy of breaking the bonds of coercion and the chains of exploitation by encompassing an infinite number of everyday acts of resistance and cooperation" (Springer 252, 254). Their everyday behaviors challenge any neat, binary categorization and tear open the fabric of the state's ordering system of bordering practices.

Maldita cocina sets up this state order to have it, over the course of the text and performance, crumble into pieces. The idea for this play arose from José Luis Alonso de Santos's previous drama school project that adapted Arnold Wesker's 1957 play *The Kitchen* to a Spanish context. Cabal and Rodríguez chose a different route; they rewrote the play instead of merely

adapting it. According to Cabal, "el resultado tiene que ver con la obra original lo mismo que las Meninas de Picasso con las de Velázquez" (qtd in Villar 285). They wrote the play for the theatrical group of TAI Escuela Universitaria de Artes y Espectáculos, and its debut coincided with the Festival de La Alternativa. *Maldita cocina* premiered February 25, 2004 in the Lavapiés neighborhood in the Sala Triángulo, one of the most well-known alternative theaters in Madrid, renamed and transformed in 2013 into the Teatro del Barrio (Fanjul).

With its 2004 debut, *Maldita cocina* falls outside the temporal pattern of the other plays chosen for analysis in this dissertation. However, thematically, it fits in well with the other works, and because it is an ensemble play, it shares structural components and other techniques with both *¡Boza!* and *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta*. It also offers an indispensable perspective into bordering practices and border crosser identities precisely because of its early publication and performance year.

The years after 2000 marked a major shift in migratory patterns in Spain. In its 2013 International Migration Report, the United Nations explained that Spain was second place in top net immigration countries between 2000 and 2010, behind only the United States after having ascended from sixth place in the previous decade (13). This dramatic increase had significant consequences for policy, public opinion, and the integration and welcoming of migrants. As Coleman explains:

> Racial anxiety hit a climactic point in Spain as the immigration rate climbed throughout the early 2000s . . . One example of this anxiety is the revisions made to the national immigration law in 2000. The revised law (Ley Orgánica 4 [2000]) sharply diminished foreigners' rights, particularly regarding welfare state benefits (education, housing, etc.). The shift in immigration policy reflected national xenophobia that had been exacerbated as the number of immigrants grew exponentially. (*The Necropolitical* 11)

Cabal and Rodríguez's play thus allows an important glimpse into the shift since the first boom of the Spanish immigration play in the 1990s, including examples such as *La mirada del hombre*

oscuro (1992), *La orilla rica* (1992), and *Sudaca* (1995). According to Coleman, "That year [2004], African migrants made up 25 percent of immigrants, 77 percent of whom were Moroccan" (*The Necropolitical* 48). This rapid growth in the number of Moroccan and other potentially Muslim immigrants arriving at Spain's borders reflects the reality of the "[i]nstability in the Middle East brought about by the War on Terror (since 2003) and renewed imperial designs in the region," which "unleashed a refugee crisis" (Murray 205). Not only had the quantity of migrants to Spain increased, but the demographics had shifted.

Performed first in February of 2004, *Maldita cocina* also offers a fascinating insight into the social hierarchy of immigrants in a post-9/11 but pre-11-M world. The 11-M, or March 11, 2004, train bombings in Madrid would fuel xenophobic attitudes specifically toward Muslim migrants in the years that followed. The March attacks "marked a turning point for Spain" and muddied the waters for representation of Muslim characters in Spanish theater in the decade to come (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 46). As Coleman explains:

> There is . . . a clear distinction between plays written before and after 11-M. Those written before the 2004 terrorist attack in Madrid depict Muslim characters as belonging to one of two dichotomous groups: those who have recently arrived from Morocco and those who have already established themselves in Spain and wish to quietly integrate into Spanish society. Plays written after 11-M, on the other hand, portray these characters as suspected villains who are guilty until proven innocent. (*The Necropolitical* 48)

Maldita cocina demonstrates how Muslims were considered an impossible Spanish subject even before radical Islamic terrorism hit home for Spaniards, but it avoids the totalizing representation and intense phobia of Muslim characters of post-11-M counterparts. It contributes fruitfully to this dissertation because it offers a glimpse into the unique historically-situated Spanish Maurophobia rather than the generalized Islamophobia that ran and runs rampant in many Western countries due to political and social responses to radical Islamic terrorism.

Furthermore, despite being an older play, *Maldita cocina* has received little attention from scholars. Cabal and Rodríguez's play is merely mentioned in Francisco Gutiérrez Carbajo's 2012 chapter "La utopía y la emigración en el teatro español contemporáneo," Ivana Krpan's 2015 article "La alteridad en el teatro español contemporáneo" and 2018 article "Historias rotas," Domingo Pujante González's "La migración africana en la dramaturgia femenina actual," and Coleman's 2020 *The Necropolitical Theater*. Phyllis Zatlin's 2004 article "Madrid in March 2004: From Days of Mourning to Standing Room Only" gives details on performances of several plays including *Maldita cocina* in the aftermath of the March 11th terrorist attacks. Carla Guimarães's 2008 thesis *El motivo de la inmigración en el teatro español (1996-2006)* offers the most in-depth, yet still brief, analysis of the work. I argue that *Maldita cocina* is much more nuanced than these previous studies suggest, and that through its characters and structure, intertextual references, and use and destruction of the kitchen as non-place, the play presents a much more open and negotiable conclusion to its conflict.

The structural approaches toward the theme of immigration in the plays by Botto and Cabal and Rodríguez are in many ways opposite, but they also complement each other in their representation of first-generation immigrants' experiences as they adjust and try to integrate into the host society primarily through their labor. Five monologues make up *Un trozo invisible*, each involving only one visible and audible actor. As I will discuss, these slower-paced vignettes allow for a deep contemplation of the experiences the characters relay to the audience. One gleans great meaning from their one-sided conversations, thoughts spoken aloud, and intentional movements. On the other hand, frenetic action pushes forward the busy two-act plotline of *Maldita cocina*. The characters are hardly developed, and the audience member sees only glimpses of their lives. Each storyline weaves in and out of other characters' narratives, and

unlike in *Un trozo invisible*, the spectator only superficially gets to know the personality, hopes, and dreams of each character. However, the migrant characters of both of these plays have crossed Spain's national border and entered into the country's labor circuit. As Guimarães notes, "uno de los sectores en que se puede notar la fuerte presencia de la mano de obra inmigrante, además de la construcción y del servicio doméstico, es la hostelería" (*El motivo* 158). *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible* are excellent companions to foment a discussion of migrant labor, as the latter features immigrant characters who work as construction and domestic workers, and the former spotlights the hospitality industry through doña María Teresa's restaurant.

Cabal and Rodríguez's play suggests an astounding twenty-one-person cast[22] to create the chaotic environment of doña María Teresa's popular Madrid restaurant. The characters include cleaners, cooks, dishwashers, chefs, and waiters, many of whom are immigrants, whose experiences illustrate clearly the aim of the labor circuit "to reproduce an economy of disempowered migrant labor that props up the empowered labor and wages of citizens," or, in this case, restaurant owner doña María Teresa. (Nail, *Theory* 31). The migrant workers' countries of origin make up a large part of the commentary and conflict surrounding them. Berta is from Chile, Fátima and Said are Muslim and, based on Said's comments, probably from Morocco, Pedro is from Poland, Nadya is Romanian, and Clara is from an unnamed South American country. This play also touches on the topic of internal migration in a way the other plays analyzed in this dissertation have not. Aleyda, the newest hire, has migrated to the city from

[22] In the theatrical group TAI's performance, only nineteen actors made up the cast. Cabal and Rodríguez, in a 2007 interview with Carla Guimarães, noted that some of the male characters in the script were changed to women for the performance to accommodate the group's actors (Guimarães, *El motivo* 307). These changes illustrate the fluid nature of this work about migrants and their fluid movements. Additionally, as the playwrights explained, the gender change of some of the characters "termina por demostrar una mayor presencia femenina en el mundo laboral, diferente del universo masculino de la obra original [de Wesker]" (Guimarães, *El motivo* 307).

Soria to find work, Carmen has come to Madrid to find her boyfriend, and judging by her orthographically demarcated speech in the text, Ana is from Andalucía. As Cabal describes, "Mezclados andaluces con norteafricanos, gente de muchas partes del mundo, el espectador se encontrará con un pequeño espejito donde ve reflejada al resto de la sociedad" (qtd in Villar 284). Cabal and Rodríguez seek to portray an accurate reflection of not only a day in the life of restaurant workers, with all of its detailed sensory elements, but also the social reality of Madrid, with all of its classism, racism, prejudices, poverty, violence, and other injustices.

In its effort to paint a realistic portrait of a day in a Madrid kitchen, the play weaves the many characters' stories in and out of one another while the daily tasks of restaurant management and service interrupt their conversations. The first act introduces the characters and their basic background information. It begins as any day opening a restaurant would, with the cleaners preparing the kitchen for the arrival of the cooks and other employees. The kitchen is rife with conflict of all types as the staff tries to prepare the menu for the day. The act ends with the lunch rush, described as "la batalla" (Cabal and Rodríguez 109). The waiters enter and exit the stage in rapid succession, shouting out orders as the cooks shout their responses, and all turns to chaos as the kitchen runs out of key menu items and stand-in waiter Fátima crumbles under the pressure. The second act begins with the calm before the next storm, as the workers nap, sing, play cards, and relax in anticipation of the next meal. In this act, however, we never make it to the dinner hour. The staff members have a long discussion about their dreams, including their daydreams or musings of the future as well as their nightmares. Pedro becomes increasingly upset due to an unfortunate sequence of events: the other characters ridicule his dream of owning an aquarium, second chef Eva punishes him for giving two steaks to a hungry and houseless drug addict named Loli, and newly-pregnant Mónica ends her extramarital affair with Pedro for the

umpteenth but final time to return to her husband. In his grief and anger, Pedro begins a fight that turns into a kitchen-wide brawl, leaving their workplace destroyed. Everyone, save doña María Teresa and employee Carmen, leaves. The final two contemplate the devastation in an oddly hopeful manner as the lights dim.

The play ends with a choral version of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" rising over the voices of the two women. Similarly, the whole play has a choral aspect, as it is an ensemble piece. Most of the characters are flat and undeveloped; they change little from the first page to the last. Many critics, including Guimarães and Villar, consider the troubled love story between Mónica and Pedro as the central plotline of *Maldita cocina*, as their counterparts' love story is in Wesker's *The Kitchen* (1957). However, I argue that this is a moment where Cabal and Rodríguez's adaptation departs from the original. Pedro and Mónica's story is one of many that make up the tapestry of relations, dreams, and heartache of this Madrid workplace. Their drama is primarily fodder for gossip and the discriminatory comments of their coworkers and the last spark to fuel the flame for the climax. Pedro does not wreck the kitchen alone; his damage is augmented by that of colleagues Cipri, Max, Nadya, Fátima, Said, and Wendolyne. The whole play, including the demolition of the kitchen, is a group effort with no true protagonist.

This summary makes it clear that the structure of *Maldita cocina* is more traditionally linear than many of the more temporally fractured plays analyzed in this dissertation. There are no flashbacks, no soliloquies given in the spotlight, no imagined or fantasy sequences. It obeys the classical theatrical unities of time and place. The stage always portrays the kitchen behind the restaurant, with no set changes needed, and the time that passes during the play itself mirrors the time it would realistically take for these events to occur in real life. In the 2004 performance, the actors even peeled and grated real potatoes and carrots in the preparation of their dishes (Zatlin,

"Madrid" 48). It is as if the audience member has walked directly into the kitchen to observe the workers on the job.

However, this dedication to realism during the performance actually causes confusion, as what happens on the stage sometimes merges with what happens in reality, blurring the boundary between both. Zatlin notes in her description of the 2004 performance that the theater was small and incredibly packed, perhaps unintentionally but undoubtedly aiding in the creation of an ambience of a crowded, hectic kitchen, and that spectators continued to enter the auditorium even after the performance had begun, "coming through a door also used by the actors" ("Madrid" 47). This confusion between the stage and reality, actor and spectator, occurs throughout the performance: "Downstage right is a door leading directly to the street. This entrance is also put to use, allowing spectators and passers-by outside to glimpse one another. Not only do the cooks occasionally go out, but at one point a woman wanders in, looking for a handout. It takes a moment for the spectators to realize that she is another member of the cast," portraying the character Loli (Zatlin, "Madrid" 48). The border between reality and fiction is unstable because of how the performance space is used.

Although the playwrights follow the unities of time and place, they disregard completely the unity of action. As discussed, there is no real protagonist or centralized plotline. Instead, countless threads and subplots weave together chaotically to make up the whole. For example, in one moment, when Clara reprimands the group for collecting signatures on a request to reinstate their fired coworkers, Violeta and Wendolyne arrive and ask what the fuss is about (Cabal and Rodríguez 90). They discuss the letter and decide to sign while Said simultaneously puts on music and Fátima dances for her secret boyfriend Cipri, and, shortly after, Mónica's arrival starts a separate interaction with Pedro. This causes an exchange between Pedro and Cipri about the

former's failing relationship which Max interrupts, and Mónica reenters the stage from the dressing room while Nadya and Carmen enter from the dining area, all having different conversations. In the script, none of these lines overlap, and no one is noted to be speaking over anyone else, so the audience member's attention is drawn quickly from character to character, across the stage and back. Like a production of *Noises Off* but with less slapstick humor, *Maldita cocina*'s characters enter and exit with a nauseating velocity, weaving their way through different discussions, revealing only bits and pieces that must be put together for the full story. With each side interaction, more information is revealed about the characters and their subplots. The principal action of the play is thus fractured again and again by the intertwining, intersecting stories, repeated interruptions, and splintered expositional dialogue.

Although the play is not fractured temporally, as all events proceed in a linear fashion, it is fractured in tone. The stark contrast between the way the first act ends and the second act begins is jarring. After a lot of yelling, high emotions, and a collision between Fátima and Nadya, Act One ends with this final interaction:

> [*Fátima se pone a quejarse en árabe. Said la insulta en árabe*.]
> SAID. Cállate, idiota, te dije que no te metieras.
> CARMEN. ¡Por el amor de Dios, Cipri, me falta un entrecot!
> CIPRI. ¿No te es igual una pastilla de jabón?
> MÓNICA. Mi entrecot, Cipri…
> WENDOL. ¡Mi ensalada!
> [*Fátima grita en árabe algo*.]
> NADYA. ¡Mis emperadores!
> MAX. ¡Que no hay emperador, coño!
> [*Oscuro de golpe*.] (Cabal and Rodríguez 116)

The chaos ceases abruptly with the blackout. The second act begins with none of this tension. According to the stage directions, "La cocina en penumbra. Tendida sobre una de las mesas, medio cubierta por un mantel, dormita Fátima. Del vestuario de las mujeres viene una canción. Violeta toca la guitarra y Wendolyne, Mónica y Aleyda la acompañan. A veces dejan la canción

y oímos, lejanas, sus risas. Del comedor vienen las voces de Cipri, Pedro y Giorgy, que juegan a las cartas" (117). The coworkers are getting along and enjoying themselves, seemingly at total peace. This leads into an abstract and contemplative conversation about their dreams, which is the major thread that weaves in and out of the rest of the act. In this way, *Maldita cocina* creates fractures that allow for "the opening up of things that are said to have been closed" (Smith, "Migrancy" 245). Cabal and Rodríguez's play does not use experimental structural techniques like the other plays in this dissertation to create textual fractures or to cross textual borders, but in-between spaces arise out of the stark shifts in tone, intercalated storylines, and performative confusion of fiction and reality.

Another textual migration technique involves the use of intertextual references. As noted in Chapter 1, intertextuality is an appropriate literary technique to express hybridity, and each intertextual reference fractures the fabric of the text to open it out to new meanings. Doña María Teresa compares Pedro and Mónica's fraught relationship to that of "los capuletos," referencing Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (Cabal and Rodríguez 96). When discussing government corruption, Eva calls the culprits "Alí Babá y los cuarenta ladrones," which prompts a humorous moment in which Fátima, who does not understand the cultural reference in this context, asks, "¿Quién es Alí Babá? ¿Por qué siempre los árabes tienen culpa de todo?" (105). There are later references to the Bible and its Valley of Tears and "el Tenorio" (130, 131). The most impactful intertextual quality of this work is, of course, its use of Wesker's *The Kitchen* as source material. The details Cabal and Rodríguez choose to keep or change reveal a great deal about how the playwrights conceptualize what migrancy looks like in Spain.

The theme of immigration plays an important role in both *The Kitchen* and *Maldita cocina*. Wesker's employees come from Germany, Ireland, Cyprus, and possibly Greece and

France based on languages used and references made. The migrant characters in *Maldita cocina* arrived from Romania, Latin America, and Morocco, representing more faithfully the mix of migrants in current day Spain and the complex social relations that arise. The Spanish version borrows many character names and traits as well as major plot points from the original. For example, Max remains Max in both versions, and they are both alcoholics who drink on the job. Peter is Pedro, Bertha is Berta, Anne becomes Ana, and waiters Monique, Winnie, and Violet change to Mónica, Wendolyne, and Violeta, respectively. While no one has the name "Cipri" in the original, the word Cypriot or "Cipro" are mentioned several times in Wesker's play because a few characters, including Gaston, Cipri's counterpart in Wesker's version, are from Cyprus. In Spanish, Cipri is often short for Cipriano, meaning "from Cyprus." Although Cabal and Rodríguez's play does not suggest that Cipri is from a country other than Spain, Wesker's influence peeks through the literary fabric of *Maldita cocina* via his name. Regarding the plot, both plays involve soup that has gone sour, a toxic relationship that leads to a pregnancy and a tumultuous breakup, a "tramp" or "yonqui" in need of a meal, and more. In these moments, the curtain is pulled back to reveal cheekily the intertextuality of this play. Wesker's version often peeks through the plot of *Maldita cocina*, and, for the purpose of this analysis, it is worth noticing what has stayed the same and what the Spanish playwrights have modified. I will make note of these choices throughout the rest of the chapter.

Before analyzing the individual characters and their border-crossing practices, this chapter must consider the play's setting, the damned kitchen. Thematically, the kitchen is an apt choice for the topic of immigration and multiculturalism. The kitchen is a melting pot in multiple senses of the word. Many critics describe the conflicts that arise in the play with cooking terminology. They talk of "conflictos que hierven" (Guimarães, *El motivo* 160), of work and

emotional tensions that mix together like ingredients (Villar 284). Villán says in his article in *El Mundo*, "Un restaurante. Y una cocina. El plato mejor condimentado no es el que se sirve a los clientes; es el que se macera en la olla a presión que es cada empleado del restaurante: los conflictos laborales y el hervor racista, la fiebre del amor y el sexo, la soledad y el miedo. En ese fuego se cuece el desastre y la violencia irremediable" (287). This kitchen is exactly that: a pot in which these complex interpersonal relations are steeped and marinated in racism, xenophobia, and poor work conditions until conflict boils over. The kitchen is also a cultural melting pot; it is racially and ethnically a diverse workplace, with employees from different backgrounds and experiences.

I argue that this kitchen is also, in many ways, a non-place. In the kitchen, the employees spend their time waiting. It is a transient space; characters repeat variations of "no es la hora" and having to wait (Cabal and Rodríguez 75). The real action of the restaurant occurs across a threshold, in the dining area that the audience does not see, where the waiters interact with the customers.[23] It is important to note that all the official waiters are white women and almost all are autochthonous Spaniards. Only white-passing and professionally dressed coworkers are meant to be seen and heard by the customers.[24] Beyond the restaurant's doors and onto the streets of Madrid, the characters have full lives, pasts, families, and complex identities, but

[23] This threshold between kitchen and dining room is one of the starkest frontiers depicted in the play, as only certain characters ever cross it. In the 2004 performance, the entry to the dining room is downstage left, set apart from the many upstage entrances and exits to other parts of the kitchen and the downstage right exit to the street

[24] This rule is true with one notable exception: Fátima. She is normally a dishwasher but, on this day, fills in for an absent coworker, and it does not go well. In the 2004 performance, every time she walks back into the kitchen she appears even more hysterical, losing her grip more and more until she finally, as the text indicates, crashes into Nadya and drops all her plates (Cabal and Rodríguez 115). As a nonwhite, Muslim immigrant, her ability to safely cross this boundary is not guaranteed. Her many movements across this frontier does, however, temporarily disrupt the status quo. Fátima's role as a destabilizer will be analyzed at length later in this chapter.

within the kitchen, they are reduced to stereotypes and facades of their real selves. Cipri shouts, "Otro día más en este agujero" (75). The kitchen is a hole, a void, in which, just as Augé describes about the non-place, their "time [is] divided between passivity, anxiety and, despite everything hope or, at the very least, expectation" (xxii). For Augé, place and non-place are "opposite polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten" (64). When the group destroys the kitchen at the end of the play, they leave open the possibility of rewriting their identities.

The Madrid restaurant's kitchen should also be analyzed according to the (b)ordering practices that occur within it that illustrate clearly the kinopower of the border, especially its labor circuit. Nail explains, "The movement of the migrant's labor pulls the vehicle along under the yoke of the capitalist," often under illegal or exploitative conditions (*Theory* 31). The conditions of doña María Teresa's restaurant are, indeed, exploitative. The employees are barely getting by financially, the restaurant is understaffed, and the boss is manipulative.

The employees' economic status becomes clear to audience members when they try to take advantage of food on the verge of expiring. Throughout the play, a recurring workplace conflict involves employees who ask to take food home or abscond with items to feed their family members so no food goes to waste. One fish in particular causes a fuss when Aleyda reveals Ceci has taken it without permission. Aleyda asks Clara, the first chef, "¿La tiro a la basura? Porque está hecha una pena," Clara orders them to prepare it anyway with a sauce, and Ceci hisses, "Vale, es verdad, la cogí, pero porque olía ya mal y en vez de tirarla a la basura me la llevé para mi Jenny" (Cabal and Rodríguez 79). Ceci is furious with her new coworker for causing her to lose a meal for her daughter. She is not the only one who tries to get around the

rule prohibiting employees from taking food home. Berta admits to taking some sea bass, hoping her act would go unnoticed as the fish had started to smell and was not originally on the day's menu, and the previous night Carmen ate the soup for dinner (Cabal and Rodríguez 82, 94). The employees are desperate for a free meal and willing to eat suboptimal and potentially expired items. These examples demonstrate the poverty that is rampant among these low-wage employees.

The low wages are made worse by inadequate coverage. One of the cleaners is absent, early in the day Clara fires two other cleaners, and not enough waiters have shown up to work the lunch hour. Fátima laments, "Que cada día somos menos, más trabajo y misma paga" (Cabal and Rodríguez 82). Wendolyne breaks down and shouts, "¡Y nosotras no tenemos cuatro manos! ¡Estamos desbordadas, comprendes? ¡Somos las que más trabajamos y las que menos cobramos! ¡Y encima tenemos que poner buena cara! ¡Simpatía, elegancia, muchas gracias señor, ha sido muy amable tocándome el culo…! ¡Estoy harta, harta!" (Cabal and Rodríguez 93-4). The employees feel overworked, which augments the stress and emotional tension of their workplace.

Doña María Teresa aggravates these poor conditions with her behavior toward her workers. She cares only for her profit and the subordination of her employees. To protest the firing of their coworkers, several characters write and sign a collective statement. This letter causes quite the scandal among the employees and their supervisors when doña María Teresa finally reads it. In response to the petition, she manipulates the staff by saying she will rehire one of the cleaners if the others can decide which one to invite back. When they cannot choose which coworker to keep and which to abandon, the owner feigns benevolence, saying, "Voy a romper esta carta. Vamos todos a hacer como si empezara el día. Vamos a darnos otra oportunidad. . . . Empezamos de cero. Hoy no ha pasado nada. Todo olvidado" (Cabal and Rodríguez 98). She,

rather insincerely, calls for unity and says that they are a team but there must be obedience to authority figures. Masterfully, these manipulation tactics allow her to ignore her staff's attempt at informal unionization and to place unity and order above her workers' legitimate complaints and concerns.

However, this moment of doña María Teresa's success is fleeting. The control she desires is tenuous as the (b)ordering practices that previously have worked begin to break down. It is here that Cabal and Rodríguez's play strays from Wesker's version, and this alteration highlights that the border's labor circuit is in peril. A supposed site of state control, doña María Teresa's restaurant is completely out of control. The labor circuit's power is subverted in a powerful way.

Wesker's kitchen uses similar tactics to promote poor working conditions. Several workers are absent, others are filling in for positions for which they are not prepared, they suffer staffing issues during a busy season, interpersonal conflict is rampant, restaurant goers have complained about the sour soup, the quantity of food prepared is valued over its quality, and although owner Marango claims to pay them well, employees constantly lament their low pay and chafe under their boss's authority. However, at the end of the day, the kitchen functions as designed and the pitiable conditions are manageable. Peter encourages new employee Kevin by saying, "We all said we wouldn't last the day, but tell me—what is there a man can't get used to? Nothing! You just forget where you are and you say 'it's a job'" (Wesker 47). In one version of Wesker's play, the stage directions describe the setting in this way: "The ovens hum. The sounds of clash, rattle, and chopping on boards are an orchestrated kitchen symphony. The movement of CHEFS and waitresses are the slow part of a choreography that will grow into a dazzling 'ballet' by the end of the first act" (Wesker 31). The work environment is frenzied but normal, or at least normalized. Wesker's play also ends with the destruction of the kitchen, but Peter is the only

employee who breaks the mold. Everyone else deals with the stress of the day, and they try to stop Peter's rampage. The kitchen is also not completely destroyed. Peter breaks the gas lead which causes it to be unusable, but the place itself remains intact save a few plates and crockery. At least for the time being, the exploitative conditions of the labor circuit in this play seem sustainable. Although chaotic, things would have continued as normal had Peter not had a personal breakdown.

In contrast, Cabal and Rodríguez's play demonstrates clearly and immediately that the state of affairs in doña María Teresa's kitchen is not manageable. Marango is comfortable with his financial success, but doña María Teresa's employee Rolando reveals her restaurant is quickly failing: "El restaurante va mal, estamos en números rojos desde hace más de un año" (Cabal and Rodríguez 87). Just as in the original, in *Maldita cocina*, audience members witness innumerable menu changes, poor quality food, staffing issues, intense interpersonal problems, employees suffering on the job from alcoholism and eating disorders, and racism and microaggressions that cause chaos, but it is immediately apparent that doña María Teresa's workplace is fraying at the seams. The first two characters onstage lament that their coworker Juani is absent. The ensuing conversation about how to divide up the labor needed to prepare for the day reveals obvious issues with authority and that the hierarchy of the kitchen is unstable. Tere and Ceci argue back and forth about what to do, and Tere remarks, "A mí no me des órdenes" and later, "el tema es que se cree que porque lleve más tiempo tiene derecho a mandarme y ya estoy harta… ¡A mí no me presiona nadie!" (Cabal and Rodríguez 71, 72). They exchange threats that turn into a full-blown physical conflict: "Comienzan a pelear" (Cabal and Rodríguez 72). It is important to note that Peter's counterpart Pedro is not the only violent person in this kitchen, as evidenced by this altercation.

As more characters arrive for the day, their conversations reveal more issues with the kitchen and their employment there. The cleaners have no bleach with which to clean the kitchen, and later the employees discover there is no toilet paper. Aleyda slips on the wet floor and falls. Tere and Ceci start a second fight, grabbing hair and using mops as their weapon of choice (Cabal and Rodríguez 73, 77). Clara, as first chef, is the cleaners' boss, but they do not respect her and instead curse at her and call her a slur: "Sudaca de mierda" (Cabal and Rodríguez 79). Clara's response is to fire both of the women, worsening the understaffing of the restaurant right before the lunch rush.

While Marango's employees worry about dissatisfied customers eating sour soup and the white sauce's odor, doña María Teresa's workers deal with sour soup complaints but also fear that expired food may make customers ill. The walk-in freezer is broken, which caused some of the fish to thaw overnight for the second time, putting consumers at risk of food poisoning. Giorgy notes, "esa cámara es de antes de la guerra… A ver si convencéis a la vieja para que la cambie. Un día vamos a tener un problema…" (Cabal and Rodríguez 75). The expiring fish causes two menu changes back-to-back, as the workers decide between cooking them anyway in a sauce to cover the taste and smell or throwing them in the trash. A third menu changes occurs in the midst of the lunch chaos when they run out of a main dish. The long lunch scene is full of arguing, rising exhaustion, misunderstandings, collisions, and crying. All of these factors show that this particular place of work is in total disarray and will ultimately fail. Doña María Teresa is unwilling to contribute to productive and safe work conditions for her employees, and they are stretched too thin. In this way, Cabal and Rodríguez's play subverts the power of the border's labor circuit. While many of the realities of migrant workers' labor experiences are accurately

reflected in this play, the playwrights push this kitchen so far that its structures are on the precipice of collapse.

Before examining this collapse and what it suggests for the characters, I want to look at the other borders at play within the kitchen. Walia explains, "Borders are not fixed or static lines; they are productive regimes concurrently generated by and producing social relations of dominance." Beyond the labor circuit, one can easily see the internal frontier enforced by social exclusion and differential inclusion and these relations of dominance. As explained in the Introduction, social exclusion involves hurdles to the enjoyment of full rights to citizenship for certain groups as determined by class, gender, or ethnicity. The workers in this Madrid restaurant may challenge the labor hierarchy at every turn, flouting the authority of the first and second chefs and refusing to take orders from anyone, but the social and racial hierarchy remains and determines much of the kitchen's interpersonal dynamics. These invisible border regimes continue to order their lives.

This kitchen is a precarious place to work, but especially so for the immigrants. Although the immigrant employees are included within the territory of Spain and within the walls of the kitchen, they are "expelled from certain social mobility and services" (Nail, *The Theory* 41). There are multiple instances of Othering of the immigrant characters from Latin America, Eastern Europe, and North Africa, and their inclusion in Spanish society is "subject to varying degrees of subordination, rule, discrimination and segmentation" (Mezzadra and Neilson 67). They experience a differential inclusion, which, according to Mezzadra and Neilson, involves "the submission of migratory subjects to different and ever more highly calibrated parameters that purport to measure their worthiness and suitability to enter certain political spaces: education, health, religion, language, savings and readiness to 'integrate' figure prominently in

these systems, alongside classical economic criteria such as labour skills" (69).[25] Cabal and Rodríguez's migrant characters receive differentiated treatment depending on their origin country, race, religion, and other categories and suffer oppression on two fronts. They experience discrimination from the white Spaniards as well as from other migrant workers, demonstrating Dohra Ahmad's point that "racism can become an assimilation ritual for non-Black immigrants: solidarity among new arrivals and local communities of color may exist but isn't guaranteed" (xxi). The white, native-born Spaniards exert control over their migrant coworkers through racial discrimination and microaggressions, and on many occasions the migrants themselves approximate whiteness by putting down other migrants, mimicking the language and attitudes of the dominant culture to gain access to its power. Thus, the characters from Latin America, Eastern Europe, and North Africa experience the "sticky" border differently, and textual references to their race, previous education, religion, and language help reveal why.

This play includes a diverse array of immigrants from different host countries rather than focusing on those from a particular region, as many other plays do. Coleman notes in his book, "All Spanish immigration plays focus on nonwhite immigrants. If white immigrants appear at all, they are never central figures," which seems accurate when looking at the literature as a whole (*The Necropolitical* 119). However, he specifically mentions *Maldita cocina* , stating that "the Eastern European immigrants have small, secondary roles" (*The Necropolitical* 119). I do not think this is a fair evaluation of Cabal and Rodríguez's play. Nadya and Pedro are both migrant workers from eastern European countries that were not, at the time of the play's publication and performance, official members of the European Union. Nadya, a Romanian immigrant, has a

[25] Flesler comments on this phenomenon in Spain specifically, noting that "in Spain today there is a clear stratification of immigrants, so that policies and narratives of exclusion do not apply in the same way to all foreigners" (4).

secondary role, and her comments and actions are only integral to the play insofar as they make up the detailed tapestry of the ensemble piece. As previously discussed, however, many view Pedro as the protagonist of the play. While I view his role as more nuanced, this Polish immigrant's significance is undeniable. He can hardly be considered secondary, as his actions and insights set in motion the lead-up to the climax.

The inclusion of these two white immigrant characters is noteworthy because of how they contribute to the depiction of the social realities of migrants in Spain. I will analyze the special case of Pedro at length later in this chapter, as his slippery identity subverts the expectations for an educated, white, Eastern European immigrant. Nadya serves as a signpost to mark what these expectations look like in a typical case. As Coleman explains,

> Despite being the largest regional demographic of immigrants to Spain, European citizens (especially from the United Kingdom, Romania, and Germany) have integrated into Spanish society as 'expats' rather than 'immigrants.' The linguistic distinction facilitates the integration of culturally disparate peoples into Spanish society based on the latter's aspiration for whiteness, which 'elevates' Spain closer to its European neighbors" (*The Necropolitical* 4).

Nadya jumps enthusiastically into her place at the top of this immigrant stratification, capitalizing on Spain's desire for ascension into European whiteness. She brags about how desirable she is to Spanish men and the power that their desires give her. She claims that she has no need for dreams because she is idolized as is: "Y yo soy su diosa" (Cabal and Rodríguez 123). She also mimics the language of the dominant culture, that of the autochthonous Spanish society, by lashing out at other migrants when they complain of cultural differences. She affirms her level of social inclusion by distancing herself from other migrants, approximating herself to Spanishness. She reprimands Berta and Clara, Latin American immigrants, "Es que estoy harta de oíros hablar mal de los españoles. Sólo sabéis quejaros, y no os gusta trabajar. Y luego, a los del Este también nos discriminan por culpa vuestra. No agradecéis la oportunidad que los

españoles os están dando, y aprovecháis para robar y traer las drogas… Vosotras teníais que estar besando los pies de los españoles" (Cabal and Rodríguez 108). Mimicking the typical complaints made by xenophobic Spaniards, she accuses the migrant workers of not being grateful for the opportunity, of not being willing to work hard, and of infecting Spanish society with drugs or other crimes. She is the blueprint for a white immigrant, enjoying the inclusion and privileges that she has received and actively participating in the exclusion of other, lower migrants to assert that dominance.

Clara and Berta, although not white Europeans, enjoy some level of social inclusion, as well. These Latin American women working in the Spanish hospitality industry accurately reflect a current reality for Spain. In 2006, on behalf of the United Nations, Trinidad L. Vicente Torrado reported that the autochthonous Spanish population tended to value and accept most highly Latin American immigrants for the perceived ability to integrate most easily, "dados los vínculos históricos y la mayor semejanza cultural, lingüística, religiosa, etc." (3). The shared language, sense of *hispanidad*, and shared cultural markers "make them a more desirable migrant group" (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 18). Furthermore, a higher percentage of Latin American women immigrants come to Spain than their male counterparts, and this feminized labor force works primarily in the home, care services, restaurants, hotels, and cafés (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 18-19). Although these women are more included than other non-European migrant groups, Coleman argues that they often suffer from a "zombie status in which these women are physically alive but socially dead as a result of their status" (*The Necropolitical* 19). Clara is an excellent example of this phenomenon. As first chef she has reached a high level of authority, but she does not receive the respect that should go along with her position. Instead, she endures a great deal of discrimination in the kitchen because of her immigrant status. Clara

studied cooking for three years in New York, qualifying her for the job she has, but the employees disrespect her opinions and decisions many times throughout the play. Ceci calls her "Sudaca de mierda" under her breath and, more surprisingly, has the audacity to repeat it when confronted: "He dicho sudaca de mierda. ¿Se lo repito?" (Cabal and Rodríguez 79). When Clara deems the stinking, potentially spoiled fish acceptable for consumption, Eva comments that she has ruined her sense of smell with cocaine use: "Clara se tira mucho el rollo, pero de olfato nada. Claro, todo el día con la farlopa…" (84). Clara's educational background and linguistic and cultural markers have given her preferential access to the labor market, but daily she undergoes many small, metaphorical deaths in the social sphere.

Descending the migrant hierarchy, the North African Muslim characters Said and Fátima are of particular interest. They stand out in part because they are unique to Cabal and Rodríguez's adaptation, as there is no North African character in Wesker's play. The Spanish playwrights intentionally added Said and Fátima to *Maldita cocina* to explore aspects unique to the Spanish migrant panorama. According to Flesler, "The hierarchy of acceptance corresponds, more or less, to a scheme in which Europeans, both from EU countries and not, are at the top of the list, followed by Latin Americans, then Sub-Saharan Africans, with North Africans at the bottom," although other scholars switch the last two groups (4). She also explains, "Statistics show that they [North Africans] are the ones afforded the least preference in facilitating their permanence in Spain, and those who earn the lowest level of acceptance as neighbors" (Flesler 2). North African immigrants fall lower in this social stratification because they are inextricably tied to Spain's past, and their presence, as Sara Ahmed describes, reopens past encounters (55). Coleman emphasizes the historical importance of the view of the "Moor" as enemy:

> The antagonistic dynamic between Spain and North Africa is centuries old, persisting through the reimagining of the Reconquista in which Spaniards again must resist the

> 'invasion' of the nation by the Moors, now understood to be immigrants from Morocco and other North African nations. . . . The growing size of this migrant community simply incites and entrenches Maurophobia as if the 'invasion' of 711 were slowly coming to fruition again. (84-5).

This fear of an invasion stirs up many anxieties in autochthonous Spaniards, whose public and political discourses claim that "the cultural 'otherness' and the unwillingness of transnational migrants to assimilate into the receiving society not only threaten to dilute national cultures, but also foster a host of closely associated social ills—for example, unemployment, welfare abuse, crime, and ghettoization" (Ehrkamp and Leitner 1592). A focus on the treatment Said and Fátima receive in the kitchen will evidence their (in)ability to integrate and their place within the hierarchy of acceptance. Doña María Teresa's restaurant is, in this way, a microcosm for Spain as a whole; despite depending on their labor, the work environment is unwelcoming toward Said and Fátima, who experience erasure, microaggressions, and outright racism.

On several occasions, Said and Fátima experience unintentional but harmful slights, behaviors and attitudes that perpetuate their marginalization. One microaggression occurs during staff lunch. When the employees congregate to enjoy their communal lunch, Said and Fátima suffer an experience that threatens their sense of belonging. Not only does Rolando steal Said's seat at the table, but the food has been prepared without Said and Fátima in mind. Said notices in horror, "¡Le habéis echado jalufo a la salsa de los spaghetti!" (Cabal and Rodríguez 102). The staff had prepared two different sauces, but newly arrived Aleyda mixed them together, not realizing the consequences. Said and Fátima are unsure if they should partake in the meal since it has been cooked with pork, and their coworkers' only proposed solution is to take out the meat pieces. Said and Fátima have to make a choice to stand firm in their convictions or to let it go this time and not make such a scene: "North African characters are constantly reminded and made aware of their Otherness. This social barrier results in the need to erase parts of their

identity—whether that is their mother language, religion, or sexuality—as a way of obtaining Spanishness" (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 14). Coleman explains that this pressure to erase parts of their identities threatens an ontological death.

Fátima is erased even by her romantic partner. As a Muslim woman, Fátima is both desired and undesirable. Cipri secretly dates Fátima but makes many racist comments about darker-skinned immigrants throughout the play. He treats her lovingly behind closed doors, but physical affection with a Muslim immigrant woman must be kept for when they are alone. Keeping her exclusively to the private space allows Cipri to take comfort in the erasure of her otherness. As the saying goes, "Out of sight, out of mind:" if her cultural and racial differences are out of sight of their coworkers, he does not have to think about or confront them. This practice becomes obvious when Fátima kisses him in the kitchen. Cipri panics:

> CIPRI. ¿Pero qué haces?
> FÁTIMA. En casa no te importa.
> CIPRI. En casa estamos solos, nena… (Cabal and Rodríguez 86)

His racist and xenophobic beliefs about African immigrants cause him to feel shame about his own relationship, so he erases it in public.

Another point of erasure occurs when Giorgy makes an assumption about Said's border-crossing journey, unintentionally offending him. He asks, "Tú, Said, también debes soñar con el mar. Seguro que te da pesadillas. Porque viniste en una patera, ¿no?" to which Said responds, "Yo vine en un camión" (Cabal and Rodríguez 120). Assumptions and comments like these flatten Said's individual identity, erasing his unique experiences to force him to conform to the stereotypical image of a Moroccan immigrant.

These Muslim characters experience direct and intentional discrimination, as well. Said receives the brunt of it. Cipri accuses Said of being unable to write, Pedro, a fellow immigrant,

yells at him, "Así va tu puto país. Sois todos retrasados mentales," and the houseless drug addict calls him "moro mierda" (Cabal and Rodríguez 97, 117, 127). Cipri is particularly hostile toward Said, as if targeting Said could compensate for his relationship with Fátima and ease his cognitive dissonance. In one scene, the tension between them is obvious:

> CIPRI. Mohamed, deja que la chica haga lo que quiera que este es un país libre.
> SAID. Primero no llamo Mohamed, segundo no soy español, tercero, ¡no me hables!
> CIPRI. Putos extranjeros que venís a joder la marrana. (Cabal and Rodríguez 88).

Cipri makes an outright racist comment toward Said but also calls him Mohamed, as he repeatedly does throughout the play. Said and the drug addict Loli know each other, but the latter also calls him by the wrong name, "Mustafá," on purpose. By taking his name from him and referring to him only with monikers they associate with a stereotypical Muslim man, these characters force Said to undergo further erasure. Said fights back to assert his identity each time: "No gusta que llames Mohamed. . . . Said llama Said" (Cabal and Rodríguez 80). However, these are constant reminders that he does not belong.

Maldita cocina, filled with migrant characters, highlights the complexity of the border. These migrants physically have crossed Spain's national border, but they have not managed to escape it. After all, "people do not leave borders behind at State territorial edges. Borders, in a figurative sense, may be 'sticky'" (Brems et al. 287). The migrant encounters different forms of the border every day, inciting the need to engage in daily, border-crossing practices. These transgressions break up the border, creating a liminal, third space of contradiction and ambiguity that allows for the negotiation of a new sense of identity and belonging, a process seen in this play.

Specifically, the identities of individuals like Said and Fátima are hybridized due to the numerous, daily border-crossing practices in which they partake, which open spaces of

contradiction and ambiguity. For example, Fátima's identity is unstable, an instability also reinforced by her temporary work as a waiter. As mentioned, she is both undesirable as the "Moor," but desirable as a woman. At many points in the play, Fátima feels conflicted about how she should behave as the Muslim parts of her identity intersect with her womanhood. Said frequently demands that she behave according to particular standards to which he does not even hold himself. He often surveils her body, both what she does with it and how much of it is visible. Said tries to control her actions, too, telling her, "Una chica maroco no firma, pero hace lo que quieras," and in reference to the pig meat in the staff lunch he says, "Said come mierda si es necesario, pero tú mujer árabe no avergüences…" (Cabal and Rodríguez 88, 102). Peggy Levitt comments on this "complex web of gender relations," noting, "Messages regarding appropriate public and private behaviour in the homeland and the receiving context are sometimes difficult to reconcile" (1229). For this reason, Fátima is confused about where she stands, what her role is, and what she can and cannot do. The interstitial spaces opened up by migrant hybridity are obvious in the conversations between the two Moroccan characters. Fátima is torn between multiple parts of her identity, and she often asks for permission or advice before proceeding with a task. She struggles to negotiate space for her identity as both a Muslim and Spanish woman.

Cipri, on occasion, tries to defend Fátima's rights as an inhabitant of Spain, increasing her cultural proximity to his own Spanishness. However, moments like these only increase the confusion of the immigrant/citizen binary even more. In an example we have just seen, Said says that a Moroccan girl would not sign the petition drafted by the other employees, to which Cipri responds by speaking up on Fátima's behalf and crying in frustration, "Putos extranjeros que venís a joder la marrana" (Cabal and Rodríguez 88). Berta from Chile then objects to being

lumped in with all foreigners; Cipri unsuccessfully attempts to amend his statement and says, "Bueno, solo los de raza oscura… ¡Ay! Perdona Fátima" (88). In the course of defending Fátima, he has also insulted her. Cipri and his autochthonous Spanish coworkers want so badly to classify the immigrants in Spain into neat categories, but the presence of immigrant peers, friends, and significant others complicates this process.

As demonstrated, Said, as a Muslim man, is the migrant who suffers the most discrimination in this play. He has been, borrowing a phrase from Sara Ahmed, "designated as *stranger than other others*" (6). His place at the bottom of the hierarchy is due to Spanish Muslims' classification as impossible subjects (Moffette 70). Muslim immigrants' "cultural traditions are seen as 'Islamic,' and therefore incompatible with the supposedly democratic, modern, secular values of Western Europe" (Flesler 5).[26] The presence of Muslim immigrants in Spain forces the confrontation with a deeply held anxiety about whether they are really guest or host in Spanish territory: "If Spaniards have difficulty in welcoming Moroccan immigrants, it is because they perceive them not only as guests but also as hosts who have come to reclaim what is theirs" (Flesler 9). With their mere presence, Muslim migrants are unsettling and disruptive.

Fittingly, Said is the character who most frequently unsettles and disrupts the national discourse through mocking mimicry. He often uses humor to cut away at the predominant cultural narrative of what constitutes Spanish identity and who is the Other. For example, when the dishwashers realize they will have to help with other jobs since they are short staffed, Giorgy comments, "Joder, Said, ya estamos jodidos," to which Said responds, tongue-in-cheek but honestly, "Said no problema, moros siempre estar jodidos" (Cabal and Rodríguez 80). He

[26] Flesler notes the irony of this perspective, stating that "'cultural closeness' stands in this case for Christianity and light skin, since there is no doubt that Morocco has much closer historical and cultural ties to Spain than the countries of Eastern Europe" (161).

blatantly refutes the stereotypical narrative that all migration leads to a better life (Ahmad xviii), highlighting how ridiculously untrue this idea is. He discusses how his dream has changed drastically: "Antes soñaba España. Imaginaba que estaba llena de tomates y de futbolistas. Ahora veo que tomates no hay y que futbolistas son todos extranjeros" (Cabal and Rodríguez 120). He flippantly undermines the narrative that Spain and Europe are a coveted paradise, a claim that often goes unquestioned, taken as truth.

One conversation in particular reveals the tension that Said's mimicry can cause. The autochthonous Spaniards are trying to shift the blame of society's current ills to immigrants. As the maître d' notes, "Hay que reconocer que en los últimos años ha aumentado notablemente la delincuencia. Y desde luego esto está relacionado con el problema de la inmigración," and Cipri confirms, "Hay mucho hijo puta suelto" (Cabal and Rodríguez 107). Latin American migrants Eva and Berta also participate in mimicry, parroting the language of the dominant society to put down their own immigrant groups:

> EVA. Las mafias colombianas de la droga dicen que son los peores.
> CIPRI. Pero las mafias no te roban por la calle.
> BERTA. Los mejores ladrones somos los chilenos. (Cabal and Rodríguez 107)

However, Said mimics the dominant discourse not to participate in it, to differentiate himself from the other Others, or to approximate whiteness. The hyperbolic nature of his mimicry is intentionally subversive. Wendolyne laments, "Sí, hija, que esto se está poniendo como Nueva York," to which Ana, forgetting Said is in the room, responds, "Es verdad, con tanto moro… ay, perdona Said, no lo digo por ti" (Cabal and Rodríguez 106). Said's comeback to this microaggression is to take on the role of the good, obedient immigrant, to a sarcastic extreme: "Yo sé que tú no dices por mí. Tú sabes Said moro bueno, Said lame culo de los españoles… No pone bombas en trenes… No peligro…" (107). He claims to take on the mantle of the good,

obedient immigrant, but his sarcasm lets the audience member know what he truly thinks of this concept.

Others join the conversation about New York, and Said repeatedly disrupts their dialogue, fracturing the prevailing discourse. At first, he plays along as if he had the same opinions as the dominant culture, referencing Ana's earlier complaint and reinforcing the connection between Muslim immigrants and riffraff. He even mimics his coworkers' syntax and word choice:

> CLARA. Los mejores restaurantes, los mejores cocineros del mundo, están en Nueva York.
> ANA. Y los mejores bancos. Y los mejores peluqueros.
> SAID. Y las mejores putas.
> ANA. Hijo, perdona, que lo he dicho sin querer…
> SAID. Y las mejores Torres Gemelas…
> ALEYDA. Pero si ya no están…
> SAID. ¿No están? Ohhhh, qué pérdida más grande… Said mucha pena… (107)

Said's feigned forgetfulness regarding the Twin Towers is an intentional act of subversion, reminding his coworkers that he, as a Muslim, is associated with terrorism. He destabilizes this narrative as his coworkers struggle with the tension between their preconceived notions of Muslim immigrants as a whole and their personal experience that tells them that Said is a good person and hard worker. Said's comments pressure his coworkers to confront their Maurophobia, and their subconscious associations and assumptions are forced into the spotlight. By using biting sarcasm, he disallows them to get away with their offhand comments and challenges their desire to produce "the fictionalized enemy," of the Muslim immigrant (Coleman*, The Necropolitical* 5). Throughout the play, Said simultaneously questions his Spanish coworkers' reliance on differentiation to define Spanish belongingness and proudly reinforces his own difference, the Muslim parts of his identity that do not have to be erased as a prerequisite of his belonging to Spanish society.

We return now to Pedro, who should represent the model immigrant but instead foments the destruction of the kitchen. Pedro is an interesting case study precisely because he deviates from the established pattern of immigrant integration and acceptance. This divergence destabilizes the normalized racial and social hierarchy in Spain. Originally from Poland,[27] he received an education in oceanography from Warsaw and dreams of running his own aquarium to nurture his passion for marine life. White, Eastern European immigrants, especially well-educated ones, theoretically should be the most welcomed, the ones that benefit most from their proximity to Europeanness and whiteness. Cabal and Rodríguez invert this expectation in Pedro, who feels like he fits in the least. Some coworkers describe him with animalistic and dehumanizing terms like "ese bestia, "orangután" and "Cromañón," which insinuate his inability to assimilate into this microcosm of Spanish society (Cabal and Rodríguez 75, 100, 127). Apart from these references, his workmates call him Pedro, Piter, Piotr, and sarcastically, "Sor Pedro de Calcuta" (129); his lack of a fixed name indicates his shifting and unrooted identity.

Pedro also represents the constant movement and border-crossing practices of migrants in that he is impossible to neatly categorize. Guimarães says, "El texto no es maniqueísta, no hace de los inmigrantes víctimas, ni de la sociedad española un verdugo, sino que nos enseña a ambos con bastante crudeza" (*El motivo* 159). This rejection of Manichean characteristics is especially evident in Pedro, who is a man of contradictions, neither fully good nor bad. He is emotionally volatile and physically violent, as evidenced by the black eye he gave his good friend Cipri (Cabal and Rodríguez 75). He is also generous and compassionate, as seen in his offering of two steaks to the impoverished Loli (129). He defends his decision to do so to his colleagues, refusing to back down from what, to him, seemed a simple but necessary kindness. He objects,

[27] In Wesker's version, Peter is German.

"Yo no soy el ogro de esta cocina" (130). Audience members cannot make of him neither a hero nor a villain, a victim nor a criminal. Pedro challenges the "discursive dichotomy" discussed in Chapter 1 (Harrison 14); one cannot decide whether to fear or pity him.

Pedro is not the real enemy. Rather, the employees are fighting against the institutional structures of Spanish society, policies and practices that uphold racism, xenophobia, and capitalism. The labor circuit has allowed and promoted low wages, high stress, and overworked schedules in this restaurant. It has quashed attempts at solidarity, as seen when doña María Teresa disregards the employees' letter and when Pedro is reprimanded and punished for giving someone in need a good meal. In the end, these exhausted employees will triumph over these conditions, fracturing the labor circuit and its (b)ordering power.

As previously discussed, Cabal and Rodríguez stray from Wesker's model in the lead-up to the kitchen's destruction. In Wesker's version, Peter, who operates as the play's protagonist and whose romantic relationship serves as a central storyline, acts alone to destroy the workplace. During the post-lunch break, he remarks that he "can't dream in a kitchen!" (Wesker 97). He is frustrated and lonely, ostracized from the others in the kitchen. Monique refuses to leave her husband for him, which is the final straw. The frenzied nature of Marango's kitchen was tenable; while certainly unhealthy, the practices and conditions of the restaurant were, in some sense, working as designed and the employees had ways to cope. Peter alone shuts down the kitchen by breaking the gas-lead, so the other employees walk out on their desperate employer Marango. As they leave, they condemn him with their facial expressions and silence. However, their departure is due to the lack of another choice; there is no more work to be done in a kitchen with no gas. Peter is the only one who reaches his breaking point, and he acts alone.

The sequence of events leading to *Maldita cocina*'s violent climax is different. Peter's parallel Pedro also hits his breaking point, but his relationship with Mónica is only one conflagrating factor, and, more importantly, his actions spark the actions of others. Within this ensemble and throughout the rest of the play, as Guimarães claims, "existe un claro problema de integración y comprensión mutua," including microaggressions, name-calling, scapegoating, and more (*El motivo* 160). The devastation of the kitchen is, however, a collective act. Despite all the interpersonal conflict, there is, paradoxically, a strong sense of solidarity, albeit fraught and imperfect, that, in the end, prevails. The sequence of events is as follows:

> Pedro tira los platos y cacharros que hay sobre la mesa de la derecha. Luego arranca una de las estanterías de la pared, llena de cacharros y cajas de alimentos y la tira al suelo con gran estrépito. Luego va hacia la otra mesa, donde trabajan las mujeres, que se retiran asustadas y la derriba de una patada. Said trata de impedírselo y cae con la mesa. Cipri intenta sujetarle y Max aprovecha para golpear a Pedro en la cabeza con una sartén. Pedro cae al suelo mientras Cipri sujeta a Max para impedir que le siga golpeando. Nadya ataca a Cipri por la espalda y le mete los dedos en los ojos. Fátima salta sobre Nadya y ruedan por el suelo enzarzadas en salvaje pelea. . . . Pedro se levanta, coge un cuchillo de cocina y corre hacia la puerta de la calle. . . . Pedro sale y tras él Said, Max, Eva, Clara, Berta y Ana. Wendolyne mira furiosa al maître y le arroja una vinajera en el traje. Sale corriendo hacia el comedor, perseguida por el maître. (132-3)

Said, Cipri, and Max at first try to stop Pedro, but their actions cause more damage. Then the infighting begins. Total chaos ensues as other tensions seen throughout the play finally explode into physical violence. Pedro just broke the dam, but the others follow his lead: Nadya attacks Cipri to protect Max, Fátima attacks Nadya to protect Cipri, and Wendolyne takes revenge on the maître by throwing the contents of the cruet onto him. Pedro exits to find Mónica, and a large group of the employees follow him without one last look at their place of work. They are moved by their care for one another, desiring to stop Pedro from making a horrible mistake and to protect Mónica. Those that have stayed behind also act in a strange sense of solidarity. Fátima

lovingly helps Cipri to his feet. Wendolyne, on the other hand, contentedly does her part to contribute to the destruction of the kitchen:

> [*Violeta recoge un plato*.]
> VIOLETA. Este se ha salvado.
> [*Wendol se lo quita de la mano y lo destroza de un golpe*.] (133)

Then she, Violeta, and Aleyda casually leave together. Everyone walks out, never looking back on their shared working space, unconcerned about the repercussions of the brawl. Lionnet and Shih postulate, "Critiquing the center, when it stands as an end in itself, seems only to enhance it; the center remains the focus and the main object of study" (3). Pedro and his coworkers do not just critique the center. They obliterate it.

They are free, however briefly, from the confines of the labor circuit and oppressive, dominant discourse. This is no better illustrated than by the change seen in Fátima and Cipri's relationship. Just a few hours ago, Cipri would not love Fátima in the open, refusing her public display of affection. Once the restaurant, as a site of state power, is undermined, Cipri's shame dissipates. The stage directions describe, "Fátima ayuda a incorporarse a Cipri, que se duele de los ojos. Se besan y salen hacia la calle, abrazados" (Cabal and Rodríguez 133). His love can now flourish with no restraints. He and Fátima are finally united. After their attempt at unity failed earlier in the day, the kitchen employees finally unite, in an odd sort of way, in their communal act of destruction.

The dismantling of the kitchen is, from the very beginning, inevitable, and everyone seems to recognize it. Pedro shouts, "¡Voy a hacer lo que tenía que haber hecho hace mucho tiempo!" (Cabal and Rodríguez 132). Gazing upon the damage, Wendolyne nonchalantly comments, "Te lo dije: algún día esto tenía que pasar" (133). Even doña María Teresa is not

surprised, differentiating her from Wesker's frantic and confused Marango. In the final moments of the play, she responds to the wreckage in this way:

> [*Salen [los empleados] y todo queda en silencio un par de segundos. Entra doña María Teresa. Contempla el destrozo con resignación. Por la puerta se escuchan las voces de la calle. Doña María Teresa coloca una banqueta y se sienta. Saca su boquilla y va a encender un cigarrillo. Entra Carmen, asustada al ver el panorama*.]
> CARMEN. Qué ha pasado?
> DMT. [*Tranquila*]. Lo que tenía que pasar. (134)

She resigns herself to this fate as if she has expected it all along. This strange little kitchen and all its constraints was destined to be blown wide open.

Interestingly, the hopeful sense of possibility of the liberated workers extends to doña María Teresa herself. Wesker's Marango stands in his kitchen, throwing a tantrum, screaming, "What more do you want? Tell me, what is there more?" (112). He repeats this final desperate question several more times as his employees regard him "accusingly" (Wesker 113). Doña María Teresa does not need to ask this question. Just as her employees have elaborate, hopeful dreams, so does doña María Teresa dream of more. She tells Carmen, "Yo, aunque parezca ridículo, aspiro a un mundo mejor… Ese mundo que cantan los artistas . . . Algún día llegará ese momento que soñaba Beethoven… en que los hombres llegarán a ser hermanos" (Cabal and Rodríguez 135). To reinforce this lofty ideal of a better world and a society of love and care, regardless of one's race or immigration status, she and Carmen sing Miguel Ríos's version of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy." The characters leave their audience members with these words of joy and kinship.

The metaphorical melting pot of the kitchen is destroyed. The kitchen acted as a communal space for this diverse group, so should the audience member view its ruination as tragic? Guimarães describes their place of employment as one of coexistence, "donde convivían" (*El motivo* 157). She continues: "La obra nos muestra a la inmigración y a la sociedad de acogida

de una manera cruda, con un final dramático simbolizado en la destrucción de la cocina, es decir, la destrucción del espacio compartido por esos personajes" (Guimarães, *El motivo* 161). As Villar notes, "El planteamiento, sin embargo, produce una reflexión" (284). The audience member must respond to the collective act of destruction, the employees' unified walkout, and the final singing of "Ode to Joy" by reflecting on whether or not the turmoil is really a tragedy. Mere multicultural and multiracial coexistence in this melting pot is not enough. An oppressive and toxic work environment has been destroyed, along with this non-place that flattened out their identities. Now each individual looks forward to something else. Although the play does not define whether this something else will be better or worse, Beethoven's song nods toward an optimistic future.

Juan Diego Botto's *Un trozo invisible de este mundo* also contains a series of multicultural and multiracial situations that often lead to conflict. It depicts a diverse range of first-generation migrant experiences. In five extended monologues, Botto allows his audience members to traverse the lives and experiences of five people, three of whom are immigrants who live and work in Spain. While *Maldita cocina*'s two acts depict the events of one day's work in chronological order, hearkening back to the classical theatrical unity of time, *Un trozo invisible*'s five pieces portray different characters, different places, and even different time periods, and their stories do not intersect. In this way, the structure is fractured, destabilizing any sense of a central narrative, and at times the characters themselves are fractured. The spectator observes the successes and failures of each migrant character in their attempts to negotiate borders and navigate their identities; this structure thus obliges the audience members to engage actively with the performance as they look for thematic commonalities between the five sections.

Botto, like Guimarães, is a migrant himself. His personal experience of migration involved exile from Argentina during the Dirty War. After his father's disappearance in 1977 under the Videla dictatorship, Botto and his mother and sister fled to Spain. As a Spanish-speaking migrant from one of Spain's former colonies, Botto certainly possessed a certain level of privilege and ease of access to Spanish society, but he still found the process of assimilation difficult. He explains, "[U]na parte de mí se quedó atrás, una parte de mí no se subió al avión aquel día de noviembre de 1978. Y esa parte no era solamente la ausencia de mi padre, . . . sino un fragmento de mi propia identidad, de mi propia esencia" ("De memoria" 14). He understands firsthand the ruptures in one's sense of identity that many migrants suffer in their border crossings and the need to reflect on and navigate these fractures. For him, writing *Un trozo invisible* was a continuation of his personal process of identity reconstruction.

The play debuted on October 4, 2012 in Las Naves del Matadero in Madrid, directed by Sergio Peris-Mencheta and produced by Producciones Cristina Rota, Botto's mother's company. In this performance, Botto, who won the Premio Pau i Justicia in 2017, interpreted four of the five roles, and Astrid Jones served as the actor for the third monologue, "Mujer." The play took the Premios Max by storm in 2014, becoming "la gran triunfadora" with four awards, including those of "Mejor espectáculo de teatro" and "Mejor autoría revelación" (Europa Press). According to the playwright himself, "[la obra] se convirtió en una obra de masas," surpassing his own expectations as well as those of his collaborators (Viñas).

Despite the play's success, critics have largely ignored the play and its contributions to transnational and migrant literary studies. Versions of two of the monologues, "Arquímedes" and "El privilegio de ser perro," appeared in Botto's 2005 play, *El privilegio de ser perro*. Coleman has written about this work and its performance, which starred Botto's undocumented cousin,

and which had its inspiration in a personal connection to the migrant labor circuit: "The impetus for the creation of this play was the perilous situation of Botto's cousin, Alejandro Botto, who had been living in Madrid without papers and was having a hard time finding steady employment . . . He often worked odd jobs, such as waiting tables, because no other work was available to him, and at a certain point, he was unemployed" ("Bracing for Impact" 72). It comes as no surprise that migrant workers and jobs take center stage in *Un trozo invisible*, as well, as Botto aims to represent authentic first-generation migrant experiences. This chapter explores how *Un trozo invisible* depicts the day-to-day realities of migrants settling into their communities and their quotidian border-crossing practices and how it advocates for more hybrid identities and the formation of lateral networks as methods of resistance.

Un trozo invisible includes the perspectives of five people in five monologues,[28] each one with a subtitle. "Arquímedes" is a unilateral conversation that takes place between a federal migration employee and an unspecified migrant from the African continent. The Migration officer explains condescendingly why this hopeful immigrant cannot and should not enter Spain. The second scene, "Locutorio," is about a working-class Argentine immigrant named Paulino who calls his wife from a *locutorio*, or a place full of phone booths for public use, similar to an internet café. The scene depicts the interactions between Paulino and the other (unseen and unheard) marginalized individuals in the *locutorio* as well as his friends and wife over the telephone. The third monologue, "Mujer," is a confession from beyond the grave. An unnamed sub-Saharan African woman relates to her son the story of what happened to her after her arrival

[28] Although only one actor is visible onstage for each scene, I designate the scenes as monologues instead of soliloquies, as the characters usually address a specific audience as they speak. For example, the Migration officer is speaking directly to a hopeful immigrant, and Paulino is in conversation with his wife over the phone and other immigrants using the public phones around him.

to Spain, including her death.[29] The fourth scene, "Turquito," breaks the play's established pattern, traveling back in time and across the Atlantic to Argentina during the Dirty War. The scene is constituted by the thoughts of a man, nicknamed "Turquito," who is captured in Buenos Aires and will be one of the disappeared. This scene establishes the reasons for migration of the character in the last scene, "El privilegio de ser perro." The man that concludes the work is an immigrant from Argentina and the nephew of Turquito, who migrates from Argentina to Spain and comes from a more educated background and belongs to a higher social class than Paulino.

Similar to the place/non-place of the Madrid restaurant kitchen in *Maldita cocina*, the places/non-places seen in *Un trozo invisible* are fundamental for the work's interpretation. In the individual monologues, characters navigate several locations that could be considered non-places, asserting their identities even in, as Augé calls them, society's "immense parentheses" (89). These scenes bear witness to the paradox of non-place. Augé explains that "a foreigner lost in a country he does not know (a 'passing stranger') can feel at home there only in the anonymity of motorways, service stations, big stores or hotel chains" (86). These migrant characters at times seek out non-places for safety or comfort and familiarity, and they also defy the supposed rules of the non-place by participating in identity construction and negotiation within them.[30] The man in "El privilegio," whom I will refer to as the Artist, passes through several conventional non-

[29] This monologue includes the telling of the death of a co-prisoner named Samba. As we saw with Guimarães's *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última*, this plot point is based on a real historical event that made national headlines: the case of Samba Martine, a Congolese woman who died in Spain's Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros due to medical negligence.

[30] For another Spanish play that interacts directly with Augé's concept of the non-place, challenges its definition, and highlights its inherent contradictions, see *El no-lugar* by Jesús Campos García. In this one-act play, the character of Marc Augé speaks with a security guard and a cashier who live in the shop window of their workplace. The character Augé notes, "Y es lo que me ha traído hasta aquí, que me gustaría contradecirme a mí mismo antes de que me contradigan los demás. . . . Que la cosa es más compleja y siempre es bueno matizar. . . . Un no-lugar, como este, puede ser un lugar identitario, dependiendo solo de cómo se relacionan las personas que lo habitan" (Campos García 12). I argue that this idea is at play in the place/non-place tension of the setting in *Un trozo invisible*.

places, or zones of transit, described in Augé's work as "fleeting, temporary and ephemeral" (63). The Artist notes, "Y pienso en un pasaje, y un aeropuerto y una gran vomitona en los baños del 747 y ver el océano que te separa cada vez más de tu casa y otro aeropuerto y una habitación de hotel y tachán" (Botto, "Un trozo" 193). He mentions a couple of hostels or boardinghouses through which he passes anonymously, feeling "semiinstalado" (Botto 200), but observes the relationships that are formed by others there. He desires anonymity, contemplating what it would be like to be a dog, to pass by unnoticed: "me encontré de nuevo deseando ser un perro para que la policía no me pidiera los papeles. Para poder pasar desapercibido, para que me bastara mear en una esquina para sentir que pertenecía, que estaba en mi terreno" (Botto 201). The anonymity afforded by non-places would, paradoxically, expand his sense of belonging.

The *locutorio*, as a space of communication, is also a non-place. In the confines of this telephone café, Paulino is both in Spain and in Argentina, and in neither, torn between the two. His "simultaneous embeddedness in more than one context," his transnational, border-crossing existence, places him in an in-between space (Levitt 1227). He is just another anonymous customer among the crowded room of other anonymous customers whose backstories he will never know. Yet, in this non-place, some of the most important moments of his identity construction occur as he converses with those he loves most, maintaining a sense of who he is.

The unnamed woman in "Mujer," whom I will refer to as Mujer, seeks out the big city, full of anonymous spaces of communication and transportation. She explains her desire, similar to that of the Artist: "Pensé que si tenía que estar sola lo mejor sería en un lugar donde pudiera pasar desapercibida. Me di cuenta de que la cosa era no existir. Ponerme entre paréntesis" (Botto, "Un trozo" 170). She ends up in a migrant detention center, a location that could have stripped her of her identity as she waited to either stay incarcerated, be deported, or return to society, and

where she initially refused to enter into relationship with the other detained women. It is here, however, that she realizes who she is and who she wants to be.

The most striking example of non-place is the background that Botto and his team chose for the 2012 performance: a baggage carousel sits centerstage, framed at the back by multiple, large suitcases, with red strobe lights typical of moving machinery flashing over the set as the carousel occasionally brings new suitcases toward the audience. The published play allows for flexibility in its staging; it has no description of a set design or stage directions. The theatrical team strayed from a realist set design. Instead of choosing an immigration office, a phone booth, a home, a detention center, or a hostel, the actors performed with this backdrop of an airport baggage claim. *Un trozo*'s predecessor *El privilegio* shared a similar setup: "El espacio escénico está constituido por una montaña de maletas. Creando un espacio abstracto que puede sugerir una terminal de aeropuerto" (Botto and Cossa 9). For Coleman, this "limited scenography and stage directions of the play draw in the spectator even closer to the actor," and the inclusion of suitcases alludes to the process of migration "without specifying the destination" ("Bracing for Impact" 75, 76). According to Sharon Feldman, these types of theatrical spaces, "barely defined, practically bare, lacking in distinguishing characteristics, have a provisional, tenuous, fleeting nature, whose very constitution, in a phenomenological sense, is always contingent upon the bodies, desires and anxieties that inhabit them" (378). *Un trozo invisible*'s tenuous setting thus depends on its characters, placing them and their stories and identity negotiation firmly in the spotlight.

The airport is one of the locations Augé explicitly mentions as a non-place. Feldman summarizes Augé's definition, conceptualizing the non-place as "zones of transit and transition, lacking in fixed identity, where one merely passes the time or watches time pass. They are

anonymous spaces characterized by the repetition and monotony that one associates with the everyday . . . By extension, those who travel through these generic, everyday spaces naturally take on a certain anonymity themselves" (378). While these things are true, "these crowded places where thousands of individual itineraries converged for a moment, unaware of one another" are also home to a sense "of the possibility of continuing adventure, the feeling that all there is to do is to 'see what happens'" (Augé 2). Airport experiences can be described as transient, but also full of expectation and anticipation. None of Botto's characters ever appear in an airport in the recounting of their stories, but the choice of an airport for their background represents symbolically these paradoxical feelings.

The airport setting is not just a passive backdrop, either. The actors' blocking interacts intricately with the suitcases and baggage carousel. Botto as the migration officer begins his scene wearing a headlamp and wielding a flashlight, taking several suitcases off the carousel and marking and organizing them accordingly. In other moments, the characters use the suitcases as a blackboard on which to draw or a chair on which to sit, and they walk or sit on the moving carousel. Mujer even finds props she needs in the contents of a suitcase. In the final scene, the Artist takes out his frustration on various suitcases, ripping them open and throwing them across the stage.

The suitcases are an important, intentional but flexible prop decision because of what they convey. The Critical Refugee Studies Collective include "Baggage/Luggage" in their list of Critical Vocabularies terms, and they define it in this way:

> Baggage for the refugee carries material and symbolic meaning. Combined with the physical luggage that refugees put together in their haste to escape violence, baggage represents the different forms of content that people try to fill and carry. For example, war is a baggage that refugees always have to carry. The refugee also becomes baggage for the nation-state. Baggage also simultaneously functions as trauma and resilience/survival. To be sure, baggage is ephemeral; it can be lost through movement

> without the possibility of retrieval. Yet, traces of the baggage and its contents remain. The baggage does not have to be full in order for it to be loaded, or visible for its impact to be felt. Baggage is also culturally specific so that it may signal the "missingness" in history and knowledge formation or represent the presence of refugee epistemologies. ("Critical Vocabularies")

This definition resonates with Botto's own story of hastily fleeing violence with his family and the metaphorical baggage he carries to this day of his father's disappearance and his family's abrupt exile from their home. Its double function as trauma and resilience/survival also makes the inclusion of suitcases a particularly apt choice for *Un trozo invisible*, which does not shy away from the paradoxes of the migrant experience. The scenes hold the tension between feelings of desperation and hope, acts of hostility and solidarity between migrants, senses of isolation and belonging, bordering practices and border crossings, anonymity and identity.

To understand how the characters navigate these tensions, resist their erasure, and negotiate new identities and belongingness in Spain, we must first analyze the processes of exclusion and differential inclusion at play. The opening scene, "Arquímedes," sets the stage clearly for what exclusion can look like. The audience members are thrown abruptly into the middle of a conversation between the migration officer and an African immigrant. With no greeting to start off their meeting, the audience members must put together on their own who the characters are and what their context is. This scene illustrates the elements of detainment and deportation of the border circuit. As Nail theorizes, the border circuit is made up of three movements:

> (1) Migrants *cross* the border. But the border is a junction: a vehicle of harnessed flows. The border acts as a sieve or filter, as it allows capital and the global elite to move freely but, like a yoke, catches the global poor. (2) A flow of migrants crosses the border (legally or illegally), and if the migrants have lost their status, they are *apprehended* by the drivers of the border junction— the Border Patrol. The flow of migrants might also cross and then be caught far from the border later on. . . . All immigration enforcement becomes "border enforcement." (3) The captured flow of migrants is harnessed to the enforcement apparatus and then turned or sent back across the border via *deportation*.

> The deported migrants are released and begin the cycle again. The border circuit is thus cross, apprehend, deport, cross (C-A-D-C). Each cycle in the circuit generates money, power, and prestige for immigration enforcement and justifies its reproduction and expansion. (*The Figure* 31)

The African immigrant, who goes unseen and unheard by the audience, has passed through the border's filter and has been caught up in this circuit; the migration officer will refuse him entrance to Spain and will send him home. Fittingly, at the end of the migration officer's diatribe, he shouts, "¡Que pase el siguiente!" signaling for the circuit to start anew (Botto, "Un trozo" 151). The officer "establishes an 'us versus them' dialectic" throughout his monologue, to a nauseating extreme (Coleman, "Bracing for Impact" 93). The character combines hyperbole, pseudoscience and pseudo-religion, misappropriated and misused quotes, the rewriting of recent and colonial history, a misguided claim that he loves diversity and difference, and more to make his point that the migrant cannot stay within the national borders. His arguments are both ridiculous and familiar, making the audience member uncomfortable while chuckling, offering a moment for critical reflection.

A major takeaway from this scene is the migration officer's dedication to order. Walia calls borders an ordering regime and explains that the border "is less about politics of movement per se and is better understood as a key method of imperial state formation, hierarchical social ordering, labor control, and xenophobic nationalism." Botto's character upholds this idea, as he states, "No es una cuestión personal, es una cuestión de orden," then continues, "Sabes, lo que sí me sorprende, personalmente digo, lo que no deja de llamarme la atención es la estupidez, la ignorancia, la indignidad que os empuja una y otra vez a despreciar lo obvio, subvertir el orden natural de las cosas y negar la perfecta construcción que hay detrás de todo" ("Un trozo" 144). The officer speaks of a plan, "un plan para establecer un orden en las cosas," and fears the chaos

and confusion that perverts the established equilibrium (145, 147). The scenes that follow will sow this chaos and confusion, disrupting the order this character so vehemently hopes to uphold.

Similar to *Maldita cocina*, many of the characters are included within certain parts of Spanish society, with limited mobility, due to their participation in the labor circuit. Their ability to produce useful items and services is what makes them so valuable, despite the migration officer in Arquímedes claiming otherwise, snarling, "A correr, a salir de vuestros países y venir a los nuestros a parasitar sin producir" (Botto, "Un trozo" 150). Labor migrants often congregate in cities where these services and products are most needed. Nail expounds,

> [E]very day our cities must be maintained, remade, built up, torn down, and cleaned. Our office buildings and homes are cleaned and maintained while we are away by an underground and largely invisible reproductive labor force disproportionately composed of migrants. What appears to be the relatively static place we call 'society' is constantly being modified through the cleaning and maintenance of labor. Without this labor, our cities, homes, and streets would be unusable. Yet these sorts of reproductive labor are often paid less and are less valorized than their 'productive' counterparts are. (*The Figure* 12-13)

The migrant characters in this play illustrate this perfectly. The man in "El privilegio," although by trade an artist, has had to work a number of menial jobs after his political exile from Argentina. He comments, "He vivido en tres países además del mío. He trabajado vendiendo pegatinas, vendiendo pendientes, pelando patatas y cebollas, pasando perros, limpiando retretes en una estación de autobuses, construyendo casas," and the Mexican men in his building work fourteen-hour days making and delivering pizzas (Botto, "Un trozo" 199, 194). In "Locutorio," Paulino has been in Spain for six years and works in construction, and the woman in "Mujer" moves through several labor spheres, including agricultural and domestic work. They all participate in "the economy of exhaustion" (Vergès).

Paulino repeatedly mentions how tired he is, and many comments reveal that work is not what it used to be. He explains to his wife, Ángela, "Sí, cansado. Ahora no es como antes, ahora

me tengo que levantar a las cuatro para estar a las cinco en la fila y hay días que consigo laburo y días que no, y te pagan la mitad que hace un año" (Botto, "Un trozo" 162). He reveals that his wife cleaned houses in Spain for a while for pitiful wages. She and some of Paulino's friends returned to their countries of origin after struggling to achieve sufficient economic success in Spain, while Paulino, on the other hand, is not sure when he will be able to go home because he never makes quite enough money as planned or desired. He gloomily admits, "Me da miedo enfermarme, un resfriado solo ya es mucha guita en remedios. Cada pequeña cosa es como que se va todo al carajo…" (165). The average labor migrant's position in society is so precarious, one minor setback or mistake is devastating.

Not only are the wages low, but the work conditions are hazardous. Paulino recounts the tragedy that befell his Ukrainian immigrant coworker:

> Ayer un compañero se cayó de la torre y casi se revienta la cabeza. No se mató de milagro, quince metros para abajo se calló [*sic*]. . . . Había estado tres días seguidos trabajando y se durmió caminando, se durmió caminando, ¿te podés creer? Cuando bajé pensé que me lo iba a encontrar hecho pedazos. Tenía todo roto, todo roto pero estaba vivo, un milagro. Te juro que me temblaba todo el cuerpo. . . . Lo mandaron para la casa al día siguiente, claro, ahí no lo pueden atender porque ellos no tienen guita y no tienen papeles… No, eso era antes, ahora yo [*sic*] no te atienden, ahora sin papeles no te atienden. Como entró por urgencias, viste, al principio sí, pero ahora no lo dejan quedarse en el hospital. (Botto, "Un trozo" 162-3)

In this story, Paulino reveals the wretched work conditions that push these men to their physical and emotional limits, but also the precarity of their position as laborers within Spanish society because of their limited access to healthcare and other services. As Walia notes, "Migrant workers are segregated from citizen workers in a divergent labor pool and are unable to access labor protections or public services." Another coworker, a Bolivian man named Rodríguez, was beaten horrifically by the police when arrested. However, "¡tuvo una suerte!" as the permanent injuries he sustained from this police beating led to an offer of financial compensation that

covered the cost of a car (Botto, "Un trozo" 163). Their employment and usefulness to Spanish society do not protect them from danger, on the job or in their personal lives, and especially from police or border enforcement officers.

Migrant laborers, exhausted though they are, often send the fruit of their labor across national borders to family and friends in their countries of origin. These remittances are an example of transnational practices, or "social actions such as visits, the sending of remittances, . . . phone conversations, emails and texting" and other activities that "actively make (or break) links between people and places" (Gardner 893). Steven Vertovec emphasizes the importance of these transnational connections, as they "affect migrants as never before with regard to practices of constructing, maintaining and negotiating collective identities" ("Transnationalism" 575). The characters in this play participate in these transnational practices; they are fundamentally changed by the way they interact or do not interact with their home countries, family members and friends, and places left behind.

"Locutorio" demonstrates clearly the difficulties that labor migrants encounter in their jobs and daily lives and as they interact transnationally, through remittances and communications. The scene is a fascinating artistic glimpse into the importance of "cheap calls" as studied by Vertovec. He elucidates:

> Everyday cheap international telephone calls account for one of the main sources of connection among a multiplicity of global social networks. For many of today's migrants, transnational connectivity through cheap telephone calls is at the heart of their lives. For migrants and their kin in distant parts of the world, telephone calls can only provide a kind of punctuated sociality that can heighten emotional strain as well as alleviate it. This mode of intermittent communication cannot bridge all the gaps of information and expression endemic to long-distance separation. Nevertheless, cheap international telephone calls join migrants and their significant others in ways that are deeply meaningful to people on both ends of the line. (Vertovec, "Cheap Calls" 223)

Paulino's family struggles to stay connected, but this scene makes it evident that the long-distance conversations are both painful and necessary for Paulino's sense of self. His computer is broken, so he heads to the phone café. There, surrounded by other migrants phoning home and struggling to maintain the privacy of his intimate conversations, he speaks with friends and his wife in Argentina, discussing the money he has sent her to spend on their dream project. With the money earned in Spain, Paulino and Ángela hope to construct a bar whose business will maintain their family. Paulino suffers from the stress of trying to settle these affairs transnationally. He has specific instructions he needs Ángela to follow and specific people she has to hire, but things do not go as planned across the Atlantic. Ángela, who used to be in Spain with her husband, has since returned home to take care of their son.[31] Paulino misses important family events, including his son's birthday, and is concerned his son may not even remember him. Despite the difficulty of communicating with his wife and the challenges that arise from sending all his wages away and living on nothing himself, he does his best to continue these transnational practices because of how integral to his identity they are.

Despite Paulino's tenuous situation, the audience member is still witness to his privileged access to Spanishness. As a Latin American migrant, he shares historical, cultural, and linguistic ties with Spaniards and has a proximity to the Spanish identity not enjoyed by others. As seen in the cases of some of the migrant workers in *Maldita cocina*, this privilege puts Paulino in a superior social position compared to other migrants, which he enforces by borrowing oppressive language and discriminating against more marginalized migrants based on their stereotypes.

[31] This dynamic is common for many migrants, as Levitt explains, "Migrants need non-migrants to care for young and old relatives who stay behind, to manage their affairs, compensate them for the decline in status which migrants experience in the countries they move to, and provide them with a social safety-net and set of connections if and when they need to return" (1230).

This is most clearly seen in Paulino's interaction with an East Asian immigrant in the phone café. Although Paulino shows solidarity with some of his migrant coworkers, such as when he and others contribute financially to the injured Ukrainian man's medical needs, this solidarity does not extend to every migrant in every context. He acknowledges, "Acá o nos cuidamos nosotros o no te cuida nadie," but this feeling does not include the East Asian woman he overhears on the phone. This woman speaks her native language to her loved ones, which makes her an immediate target for a distracted and frustrated Paulino. He incessantly refers to her as "una china," flattening the differences between people from East Asian countries, and yells at her to lower her voice. He insults her intelligence and assumes she does not speak or understand Spanish, although her (implied) responses to his comments suggest otherwise. His invectives become increasingly racist. He states, "Señora, no tiene que gritar para que la oigan en Pekín, la voz viaja por el cable," yells "¿Y usted por qué no se va un poco a la concha de su hermana?" snidely remarks, "Ahora no hablo con usted, Mao Zedong, tanta tecnología y no sabe manejar un teléfono," and finally screams, "Chancha, tercermundista, andate a escupir a la reputa que te parió" (Botto, "Un trozo" 159-160). He shows little solidarity with this woman, instead focusing on her differences. The more he distances himself from her, the greater proximity to white Europeanness he achieves. He notes in exasperation about the East Asian woman, "que se cree que el país es suyo," a common refrain amongst autochthonous Spaniards in reference to those migrants they view as invaders (159). He may be an immigrant also, but he speaks Spanish and shares a history with his host country. Paulino pushes the woman down the hierarchy, and it is obvious that he views himself as a superior, worthier migrant and inhabitant of Spain.

The third scene, "Mujer," includes similar elements to "Locutorio." In this scene, Mujer gives a speech to her son, telling him her migration story. It is a heartbreaking scene about a

mother who left her young child behind and the lie that we tell ourselves that there will always be more time. Mujer's first entrance into the labor circuit is through seasonal agricultural work. She picks fruit eight hours a day in greenhouses, probably in Almería. Here, Mujer encounters a woman named Zainab who has performed this work for three years and introduces Mujer to some of the dark realities of being a migrant in Spain. She explains the financial situation in which they live and work: "Ser pobre aquí es muy caro—me dijo—, te cobran por todo y es muy difícil ahorrar" (Botto, "Un trozo" 168). Zainab also introduces Mujer to another woman who is destitute and awaiting an improbable reunification with her child. Mujer observes a physical consequence of her labor, in this case prostitution: "se sujetaba una bolsa de agua caliente en el vientre para apagar el dolor de quince hombres al día" (169). Unfortunately, Zainab betrays Mujer, stealing all of her money in the night and disappearing, teaching the lesson that many are looking out for only their own best interests.

Mujer heads to the city as soon as she can and eventually finds a job in the domestic sphere. The previous scene has already primed the audience member for understanding the toll that this primarily woman-led industry takes, as Paulino emphasizes how little his wife made working in this sector. Mujer encounters even worse conditions that highlight her state of precarity. According to Françoise Vergès, Black and brown women "are allowed into private homes and workplaces. . . . For these workers, the special permit to enter is based both on the need for their work and on their invisibility. Women of color enter the gates of the city, of its controlled buildings, but they must do it as *phantoms*. Racialized women may circulate in the city, but only as an erased presence." The job involves cleaning the home and taking care of and teaching French to the couple's daughter, "perform[ing] the gendered labor of caring for others' families while forcibly separated from their own" (Walia). The wife explains upfront that the

shifts will be twelve hours long and admits they will not be able to pay her much at first and will not cover vacation or overtime. However, the wife says that she and her husband will help Mujer start the process of becoming a legal, documented worker in Spain. Mujer lives an hour and a half away from her new place of work by metro and bus, but the promise of papers entices her to commit to this household.

This autochthonous Spanish family takes advantage of Mujer and offers her only poor work conditions and exploitation. Seven months pass and the family never even pays Mujer. When she finally asks about her missing wages, the family immediately denounces her to immigration enforcement: "Al día siguiente de reclamar el dinero que me debían, había un coche de policía en la puerta. Me pidieron los papeles, yo les di lo que tenía. Me pusieron las esposas y me metieron en el coche. Al alejarme vi a la señora asomarse por la ventana" (Botto, "Un trozo" 172). Mujer then exits the labor circuit and transitions into the detention circuit. Nail theorizes the three labor circuits of border politics, including the border circuit, detention circuit, and labor circuit, all different sides of the same coin that work in tandem (*The Figure* 31-2). In the detention circuit, the following occurs:

> Instead of being quickly deported, they [migrants] are harnessed into a different junction—the prison, detention, or camp junction. The flow of migrants is expanded into the detention center. The detention center, as a junction, is also a vehicle that harnesses or extracts mobility from the migrants through their labor, their occupancy, and consumption of their own incarceration: food, water, clothing, medical care, and so on (this generates private profits that are heavily subsidized by the government). (Nail, *The Figure* 31)

Mujer is transferred from jail to jail, finally landing in "una especial que tienen aquí para los que no tenemos los papeles" (Botto, "Un trozo" 173). Six women stay in one cell with no access to a bathroom for long hours. There is inadequate healthcare and no interpreters for those who do not speak Spanish. A particularly sick woman, Samba, who has undergone family separation, ends

up dying a prolonged and horrible death because she is never diagnosed and treated properly. As Mujer explains, "Nunca volvió, murió a las seis horas. Tenía el sida. Tenía sida y durante veinte días le habían estado dando pomadas y pastillas para la depresión" (175). Mujer finally gains access to a lawyer, and he helps her to apply successfully for asylum, freeing her in only ten days. Mujer's monologue depicts plainly how the labor and detention circuits work together to control and order the movement of migrants.

Each of the scenes show the devastating effects of these circuits, but they also disrupt their (b)ordering power. Like Chapter 1's *¡Boza!*, *Un trozo invisible* possesses a strong counterdiscursive function, enacted through the stories it tells, its structure, and choices made during the 2012 performance. First and foremost, the migrants' stories subvert stereotypes and expectations "that all migrants are eager to leave their home countries; that migration is optional; that migration is permanent and unidirectional; that it automatically leads to a better life; and that the ultimate goal of migration is to assimilate to a new place" (Ahmad xviii). None of these characters is eager to leave their homes and loved ones behind, and being in Spain does not lead to a better quality of life. Mujer recounts to Zainab what her grandma used to tell her: "En Europa si trabajas duro consigues lo que quieres, decía. Hay grandes colegios y grandes hospitales y todo el mundo tiene trabajo. Allí no es como aquí que los políticos solo piensan en el dinero, para nada, allí no dejan que nadie se muera de hambre, o que le falten medicinas o que no tenga trabajo, todo el mundo trabaja y tiene casa" (Botto, "Un trozo" 168). Mujer's entire experience disproves this assumption that Europe is some type of paradise. Paulino's friends barrage him over the phone with questions about Santiago Bernabéu Stadium and whether he has crossed paths with Cristiano Ronaldo, and Paulino struggles to admit that he has not had the time, money, or opportunity even to attend a game. Regarding migration being optional or one-

way, the Artist, as political exile, was forced into migration involuntarily and abruptly,[32] and he attempted to return to Argentina, only to find his home too changed and the experience too painful. Paulino's wife immigrated to Spain but has returned home, and this is Paulino's plan, as well; their migration was always meant to be temporary. These migrant stories are complex and multidimensional and refuse to be restricted to such simple parameters.

Additionally, this play challenges and disrupts the anti-immigration discourse through metatheatrical migrancy and textual migration. The 2012 theatrical performance is rich in acting techniques used to fracture the play and unsettle audience expectations. According to Stevens, metatheatrical migrancy or the "the metatheatrical trying on of different personas" results "in hybrid identities that embody multiple identifications" (191). Botto himself played the immigration officer, Paulino, Turquito, and Turquito's nephew the Artist, migrating agilely between Spanish and Argentinean accents and different mannerisms for each of his personalities. For example, in "Turquito," Botto as actor wears white gauze wrapped around one hand as proof of his torture, but he performs the periodic lines of the military soldier in a deeper voice and gestures with his other hand in a black, leather glove. In "El privilegio," Botto also transforms into different personas, such as when he acts out the conversations between the Mexican workers from the Artist's hostel.

This migrating from one role to the other is especially noticeable in "Mujer." The actress, Astrid Jones, acts out entire scenes between Mujer and Zainab, her employer, her cellmates, and a man named Pablo so seamlessly, it feels as if there are two actors onstage. Jones switches between characters by giving each person a distinctive voice and sometimes speaking other

[32] While many consider economic migrants like Paulino and Mujer as voluntary migrants, other scholars like Reece Jones and Dohra Ahmad challenge this limiting notion. Their migration may be semivoluntary at best, and at worst, "migration is simply not a choice, but rather a matter of survival" (Ahmad xvii).

languages, with the use of gestures, and through the manipulation of her blue shawl. The shawl wrapped in a turban around her hair signals that she is her grandmother; folded, it transforms into the hot water bottle the prostitute uses to soothe her pain; draped over the shoulders, it changes Mujer into the Spanish wife who employs her; and it also becomes various props, like her handcuffs or a blanket.

At the end of Mujer's monologue, she falls in love with Pablo. The actress drapes the blue shawl around one shoulder, finds a jacket from the suitcases onstage to place on her other shoulder, and uses a pair of glasses to change back and forth between the roles of Mujer and Pablo, having a conversation and dancing with herself as both characters. This technique is an obvious example of metatheatrical migrancy, which, as Stevens elaborates in her work, causes "moments in which the characters flow from one identity into the next so quickly the traces of previous characters peep through" (196). The choices made for this performance of *Un trozo invisible* allow the characters to bleed into one another, blurring the boundaries between them. The actors cross borders into new identities, and these border crossings "open up fissures of transformative possibility" within the text (Young 192).

The characters are fractured just as the text itself is fractured. As discussed, the structure of this play is very different than that of *Maldita cocina*. There is no one, principal narrative told in chronological order, but the storyline is fissured by each of the five monologues that are different in nature, occur in different times and places, and are spoken by different characters. However, there is notable overlap, where threads from one scene will reappear woven into a future scene, blurring boundaries even more. This is especially obvious in "Arquímedes" and "El privilegio." The former is made up of a speech that, although logically-flawed, is well-organized and planned for a particular effect. In the latter, however, the Artist brings up the same ideas,

taking all of the immigration officer's main points and overturning them. He does so in a rambling manner, constantly going off on tangents and forgetting where he was going with a particular topic of discussion, chaotically moving from one anecdote or philosophical rumination to another.

The immigration officer's argument was already made ridiculous by its hyperbole and the humor that resulted from his extreme statements; the Artist continues in this venture. While the officer emphasizes the importance of the scientific rule of Archimedes and its supposed application to immigration, the Artist immediately dives into another common expression and notes, "Hay frases que parecen estar preñadas de razón y cordura. Frases que parece que se las puede poner bajo un microscopio, analizar científicamente y ver que su estructura es perfecta," but spends his monologue showing why these expressions do not hold up and are foolish and baseless (Botto, "Un trozo" 187). The officer also speaks of God's plan and design. The Artist laughs at this:

> Lo que digo es que el Destino, la energía, Dios, todas esas cosas son parapetos, escudos ante el sangrante dolor que nos rodea, ante la frustración nuestra de cada día. . . . Miren, dicen que en Panamá hace años fumigaban las plantaciones de la United Fruit Company mientras los campesinos trabajaban en ellas y a día de hoy los niños siguen naciendo con malformaciones. ¿Creen que eso responde a un plan divino? ¿Creen que existe eso que llaman justiciar universal? (196-7)

The refugee then appropriates an argument almost identical to that of the officer, taking on the words as if they were his own. He remarks, "Tú, un ser humano dispuesto a no robar, a no matar, a pagar tus impuestos y te dicen que para hacer eso tienes que tener un papel que te acredite como ser humano permisible. Lo contrario sería un caos. Todo el mundo vendría para acá. Los que somos de aquí no tendríamos más derechos que los que son de allá, nuestro mundo se llenaría de miseria" (199). This sounds familiar to the claims the officer made at the beginning of the play. However, he then responds aggressively, "Jódanse, señores. El mundo está lleno de

miseria, otra cosa es que no lo vean. . . . La Banca, acá, por ejemplo, hace un agujero de cien mil millones de euros and las arcas públicas que van a tener que sacar de la educación y la sanidad y ¿que yo trabaje aquí es un caos y trae miseria? Por favor, seamos serios" (199). He takes the rigidly organized speech of the immigration officer apart, piece by piece, and in a disorganized manner, embracing a certain natural chaos over order. The circular structure of the text of *Un trozo invisible* in this way powerfully criticizes and inverts the dominant discourse and allows for the redefinition of citizenship and belonging in Spain.

"Locutorio" also embraces this chaos and the productive disorientation that it provokes. In the 2012 performance, the end of "Arquímedes" audibly transitions into the next scene via a recording of multiple people chatting on the phone, all eventually talking over one another and in different languages. Furthermore, Botto, as the new character Paulino, no longer makes controlled movements, ordering the luggage and stopping and starting the carousel with his whistle as he did while performing as the migration officer. Rather, he walks along the carousel himself and trips on several of the suitcases. After the exaggerated first monologue, which purports to be an intellectual and sophisticated argument, the second monologue is made up of informal dialogue, although the audience members hear only one side. Paulino speaks over the phone with his friends and wife and has in-person dialogue with the *locutorio* employee and the East Asian customer. The conversation is choppy, tense, and chaotic; Paulino is often interrupted, in some cases he curses angrily, and there are many hilarious misunderstandings and miscommunications. Although there is humor in the ridiculous nature of some of the immigration officer's arguments, "Locutorio" relies on interactional humor. At times Paulino can barely get a word in edgewise, his wife thinks his insults to the East Asian woman are directed at her, he rants and raves about his wife's cousin whom he hates, and he is repeatedly put in

embarrassing situations. The intimate nature of some of his conversation with his wife contrasts starkly with the utter lack of privacy both on his end, in the *locutorio*, and on his wife's end, at a bar surrounded by friends. This section then leads into "Mujer," a scene which utilizes more poetic language, as if she were reciting an eloquent letter addressed to her son. The text thus migrates from monologue to monologue, traversing genre borders, taking on new characterizations depending on who is in the spotlight. The text of *Un trozo invisible* is intentionally unrooted, shifting between tones and styles.

The textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy used in *Un trozo invisible* demonstrate the power that movement and border crossing have. As Andrew Smith claims, "The rhetorical gesture in postcolonial literary theory is to celebrate the opening up of things that are said to have been closed, especially the protected arenas of national culture. It is often the migrant writer who is taken to be the figure of this new liberation, prising the lid from locked histories and self-centered stories" ("Migrancy" 245). Botto, a migrant writer, taps into the potential of theater to cultivate multiplicity and hybridity and to reject fixed, binary categories. The fractures in the fabric of the play leave open a third space for new negotiations of what it means to belong in Spanish communities. Whereas *Maldita cocina* keeps the audience members guessing as to what will come after the kitchen's destruction, wondering to what other possibilities might these transformative moments lead, *Un trozo invisible* clearly delineates suggestions for how to begin this process of identity reconstruction. I argue that the middle monologue, unexpectedly, is the key scene of the play.

Women are not seen or heard directly throughout the entire rest of Botto's play. The only woman who does speak aloud remains unnamed, and she neither begins nor concludes the performance, a fact that might normally relegate her to a lesser role. However, Botto distorts the

expectation that this woman will have the weakest voice by giving her his primary message. In Mujer's first line, she voices the title of the play itself: "Yo nunca recibí al nacer el papel que me daba la propiedad de un trozo invisible de este mundo" (Botto, "Un trozo" 167). She has the most character growth and, despite her death,[33] a happy ending.

Mujer is the character who recreates her identity most successfully, in part because of the solidarity she learns to foster and the horizontal networks she begins to create. This challenges the binary between center and periphery and undermines the importance of vertical power relationships. According to Lionnet and Shih, "More often than not, minority subjects identify themselves in opposition to a dominant discourse rather than vis-a-vis each other and other minority groups" (2). They critique the notion that the "minor's literary and political significance rests on its critical function within and against the major in a binary and vertical relationship," instead wishing to emphasize the significance of "minor-to-minor networks that circumvent the major altogether" (Lionnet and Shih 2, 8). Mujer begins her migration journey trapped within the confines of her relationship to white, European Spain, but after her experience in the detention center, she begins to "look sideways to lateral networks that are not readily apparent" (Lionnet and Shih 1). Her relationships with fellow migrants and other marginalized individuals transform her.

After her horrific experiences of betrayal, with Zainab and her Spanish employer, Mujer is submissive and despondent, cutting ties with those around her and preferring to isolate herself.

[33] In *Un trozo invisible*, the Black immigrant still dies. Coleman has much to say on the limited outcomes of Black migrants in Spanish theater, which is, as he describes, necropolitical. Spanish plays have consistently depicted death as the ultimate and only possible outcome for Black migrants. The scene "Mujer" follows in that tradition to an extent; the woman reaches a level of success at integrating into and enjoying a sense of belonging in Spanish society, but her belonging is temporary. However, Botto's play does deviate from the norm by having her death result from something unrelated to her migrant status or journey, namely, a sudden illness, and by giving her a brief but happy ending with Pablo, full of love, laughing, and dancing.

She ignores the cries of cellmate Samba, her compatriot, admitting to the audience, "Yo entendía todo lo que decía, pero no me acercaba porque no quería meterme en líos. . . . Yo cerré los ojos y me di la vuelta en la cama" (Botto, "Un trozo" 173). She prefers to maintain her vertical relationship with those in power and rejects the other migrants. One night her attitude changes, and she finds herself interpreting for Samba and consoling her with the help of another detained woman. She explains, "Aquello lo cambió todo para mí. Hijo mío, lo cambió todo" (175).

She does not falter in this conviction. She meets Pablo, an advocate for migrants, and is released from the detention center. She begins to work in Pablo's advocacy association: "Mi trabajo era ayudar a otros como yo para que no les pasara lo mismo que a mí. Fueron los mejores días. Por primera vez en mi vida hacía algo que me gustaba, algo que yo sentía que era útil, yo me sentía útil. Aquello era importante" (Botto, "Un trozo" 177). Despite how important migrant labor is in the domestic, agricultural, and other sectors, this is the first time she has felt truly useful. She now participates in the labor circuit on her own terms. She no longer works invisible jobs solely to prop up "the empowered labor and wages of citizens" (Nail, *Theory* 31). Instead, she invests in the relationships she has with other marginalized people, building lateral networks and new communities. Lionnet and Shih emphasize, "These solidarities point to ways of becoming more engaged with present and future promises of transformation through active participation in the production of local knowledges and global cultures" (21). Her actions increase the potential for alliance and meaningful community, but they also allow her to feel personal satisfaction and embrace a new, hybridized identity. The most important thing, for her, is that her son knows her story and continues the work of looking sideways, figuratively, and defining oneself according to horizontal relationships. She implores her son and, by extension,

the spectator, “Nunca te encierres, nunca te escondas, solos no podemos nada” (Botto, “Un trozo” 178). Her solidarity has been her great act of resistance, and she passes it along to her son.

At first glance, *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible* do not offer their migrant characters an optimistic view of their present or future realities. Bad things happen to Pedro, his coworkers, Paulino, Mujer, and the Artist, and their luck does not seem likely to change. The migrant characters suffer and struggle, as “all culture is an arena of struggle” (Smith, “Migrancy” 252). However, upon a deeper analysis and more careful reflection, the hope of these plays lies in their disruption of the everyday, elastic border and its ordering regimes. These characters break the binds that tie, tearing down the limits imposed upon them. Cabal and Rodríguez’s characters destroy their place of work, which has limited their identity construction and sense of belonging, and throw open the doors to the street to find something new, singing the promising lyrics of Beethoven’s Ode to Joy: “All men become brothers.” Paulino and Mujer support their fellow migrants in solidarity, although admittedly not perfectly or unconditionally, and their horizontal networks lay the groundwork for healthier relationships and community-building going forward. When the Artist contemplates the concept of infinity, totally limitless, “un espacio que contiene un espacio que contiene otro espacio y así sin final,” he asks, “Qué sentido puede tener medir lo inmedible” (Botto, “Un trozo” 188). They each look forward, defiantly, to their own type of infinity.

These plays lean into chaos and confusion, through their plot, characterization, structure, or genre, because of the fruit that disorientation can bear. Susan Martin-Márquez notes the impressive endurance of identity disorientation in Spain, so it is only fitting that the plays in this dissertation use different types of disorientation to meditate on “the ongoing and multifaceted ‘performance’ of national identity and community” (357). Chapter 3 will analyze two plays

about the children of first-generation migrants like those in *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible*, and how members of this "next generation" navigate their unique, hybridized positions in Spanish society and challenge traditional definitions of Spanish citizenship and belonging. Like their parents, the next generation is heavily influenced by movement; even if they themselves have never crossed a national border, they engage in border-crossing practices every day.

Reimagining Migrancy: The Next Generation

> *Fijaos, el primer registro de un chino en España fue por 1500 en el puerto de Sevilla, y hoy en día aún hay gente que se sorprende al conocer a uno.*
> —*Quan Zhou Wu,* Gente de aquí, gente de allí: Ensayo gráfico sobre migrantes y españoles

> *As soon as one becomes a migrant, home becomes a problem. If we attempt to pin down what home means, we can say that it is simultaneously a location, an idea (which may be consigned to memory) and a material and affective practice (of being 'at home', with people, things and behaviors). When local populations encounter migrants, certain convictions are triggered about who may be allowed to enact a 'homely' relationship with a place."*
> —*Emma Cox,* Theatre and Migration

In an article provocatively titled "Why Don't Anthropologists Like Children," Lawrence A. Hirschfeld argues on behalf of research centering the experiences of children, explaining that adults are not the only ones who create cultural worlds (614). This chapter focuses on these cultural worlds, constructed by the children of migrant parents, as seen in *El señor Ye ama los dragones* (2015) by Paco Bezerra and *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta* (2017) by Lucía Miranda. As discussed in the introduction, the influential works of Jerónimo López Mozo, Ignacio del Moral, Encarna de las Heras, Miguel Murillo, and others were part of the influx of plays in the 1990s that seized immigration as a central theme, signaling in theater the recent shift of Spain's political reality from a country primarily of emigration to a new host country. In the second and now third decades of the twenty-first century, as Raquel Vega-Durán notes, "Spain is at a moment of transition from being a country that hosts immigrants in search of a home to being a country where the sons and daughters of those immigrants strive to make their home" (222). This is true, at least, in the literary imaginary, as more authors are writing texts that explore the lives and identities of these children of migrant families and how their experiences may differ from

those of their parents. An analysis of two contemporary plays whose protagonists fit this category is, thus, apt and timely.

Scholars use a variety of terms to refer to these young people with complex relationships to migrancy. The so-called 1.5 generation, according to Philip Kelly and Cindy Maharaj, consists of those who arrive in the host country at the age of twelve or younger, but Vega-Durán includes these children in the category of second generation along with those who were born in the host country to parents who had migrated previously. Other scholars, including Mary Louise Seeberg and Elżbieta M. Goździak, Katy Gardner, and Mahamet Timera, problematize this terminology altogether, due to the lack of a clear definition or because it unnecessarily racializes these young people. It is, of course, important to question the categories used to define groups of people and emphasize the nuances of the identity creation of individuals from these groups.

The fact that some of the children of immigrants did not immigrate themselves does not mean that they will be accepted as truly or only from the country in which they were born—Spain for the purposes of this chapter—nor that they will feel one hundred percent Spanish. In fact, according to Spanish law, an individual born in Spain is not considered Spanish by origin unless one of their parents was also born in Spain. In a critique of the classification of these children as the second generation, Timera asks, "Are they going to be indefinitely associated with their foreign roots, making it impossible to extricate themselves from this heritage, perceived by some as a social burden and by others as cultural richness?" (147). For many of these young people, however, extricating themselves from their migrant heritage is neither possible nor desirable. Levitt notes, "Even if they rarely visit their ancestral homes or are not fluent in its language, they are often raised in settings that reference the homeland ideologically, materially and affectively each day" (1231). The country of emigration, its people, its language,

and its customs often interweave into the daily lives and practices of these individuals. Seeberg and Goździak criticize the second generation terminology because it "is inaccurate at best, and constitutive of ascribed migrancy and racialization at worst" (9). However, even when these young people are not immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers themselves, migrancy frequently makes up an important part of their daily lives. This chapter will refer to the children of the 1.5 and second generation as the next generation, following the model of Kelly and Maharaj, to be inclusive of the diverse perspectives and processes of identity construction of those who grew up in a transnational field, related in some way to migrancy.

Defining migrancy and migrant identities too narrowly would be foolish. Andrew Smith explains that migrancy "specifically refers to migration *not* as an act, but as a *condition* of human life" ("Migrancy" 257). Some of these children, through "home" visits, cross over the same national borders over which their parents traversed, and others partake in a number of other border-crossing activities through transnational practices such as remittances and written or digital communication with those still in the country of emigration. Yen Le Espiritu and Thom Tran take these literal examples of transnationalism and combine them with transnationalism at the symbolic level, in "imagined returns to the homeland (through selective memory, cultural rediscovery, and sentimental longings)," which they argue is most apparent in the lives of the second or next generation (369). The youth of migrant families are "raised in a transnational social field" (Levitt 1226). As they cross borders of all kinds, they begin to redefine what cultural and national belonging means. Timera cites the risk of children who experience high levels of assimilation at school to suffer from significant identity crises when they return to their homes where different dietary habits, religious practices, and other social norms prevail (150). However, the works studied in this chapter explore another option. Through symbolic

transnationalism, these young individuals imagine new possibilities for their identities, their place in the host country, and their futures.

Many common threads exist between the experiences of adult immigrants and those of their children in their relationships to both sending and receiving countries. The previous chapter focused on the experiences, decisions, and transnational practices of these adults, often single and childless or at least temporarily living according to that lifestyle due to having moved first. As Levitt explains, "Immigrant incorporation and enduring transnational practices are not antithetical but simultaneous processes that mutually inform each other," and these transnational acts, including the circulation of people, goods, money, ideas, and habits or customs, are not confined to the first generation but continue with the second generation, in different ways or with varying regularity (1225, 1226). The next generation deserves special attention precisely because of the way that their practices of migrancy, belonging, and identity construction differ from the parent generation. For the adult immigrant, the country of emigration can become a type of "paradise lost" contemplated with romantic nostalgia (Timera 149), wrapped up with the myth of return, the creation of the imagined homeland, and other forms of memory construction. A focus on the children of migrants often directs attention away from the past and romanticized nostalgia and points toward the future (Gardner 900). While migrant parents arrive in the host country with an already well-constructed identity, as they have already experienced socialization at home,[34] the most formative years of the next generation are spent in a transnational social field. "[A]s a direct result of shifting ethnic and national contexts," their identities are more malleable and fluid as are the expressions of these identities (Somerville 31). The next generation's members

[34] Timera notes that although this identity changes in the new country, it is primarily through adaptation and acculturation (149).

selectively assimilate the elements of the multiple cultural repertoires[35] upon which they draw depending on what the circumstances demand. As they manage the tensions and search for balance between the values and practices of their transnational fields, these young individuals create new cultural worlds, breaking into the in-between spaces, opening up conceptions of belonging and identity previously considered to be fixed.

This chapter seeks to explore the processes of identification that play out onstage rather than any particular identity outcome in *El señor Ye* and *Fiesta*. Kara Somerville claims, "Existing literature primarily focuses on identity outcomes and neglects to examine, in any sufficient detail, emotional attachments, and the ways these attachments are expressed. Static identity markers do not capture embeddedness in transnational social fields" (31). These theatrical representations do not strictly define the identities of certain next generation subsets; they do not focus on the identity outcomes or markers to categorize strictly or delineate the next generation migrant experience. After all, Somerville explains, "Converting identity construction of the second generation into a model of identity outcomes disempowers second generation migrants. It removes their agency to engage in processes of formulating and expressing fluctuating emotional attachments" (31). Rather, the characters in these plays are acting out explorations of complex and hybrid identities. These onstage expressions of identity allow for the characters and the audience members to reflect on processes of meaning-making and constructions of belonging. Bezerra and Miranda resist the temptation to universalize the migrant experience, focusing instead on fluctuating and flexible next generation characters "whose experiences of being 'outsiders' are distinct but homologous" (Smith, "Reading against the Postcolonial" 70).

[35] See Faist (243) and Levitt (1226).

In order to study the processes of identity construction of the children of migrant families, one must consider questions of place and space. In both of these plays, place and place-based experiences take center stage in the exploration of what being a part of the next generation means. Tahseen Shams explains, "As such, 'place,' as defined in terms of territorial borders, still matters for immigrants. This is a reason migration scholars continue to focus on states and place, studying how immigrants change the places from which they come and to which they go, and how simultaneously those places change the immigrants themselves" (15). More specifically, Kelly and Maharaj identify three spatialities that shape intergenerational socioeconomic outcomes and marginalization: place-based experiences at schools, in neighborhoods, and in cities; territory; and the transnationalism of migrant families. The apartment building in *El señor Ye*, serving as a microcosm of a city and described, in Cela-like fashion, as a beehive, as well as the school in *Fiesta*, indelibly inform the young characters' experiences, outcomes, and identities, as do their families' transnational practices with their home countries. This chapter repeatedly returns to these geographies of the next generation in order to explore the identity construction processes and the meaning-making these migrant youth undertake**.**

Francisco Jesús Becerra Rodríguez, or Paco Bezerra, is well known in Spain and several other European countries for plays such as *Grooming* (2008) and *Dentro de la tierra* (2008). *Dentro de la tierra*, winner of the Premio Nacional de Teatro Calderón de la Barca in 2007 and the Premio Nacional de Literatura Dramática in 2009, takes place in Bezerra's native Almería and its sea of greenhouses. It also examines immigration as a theme, but the migrant character stays on the sidelines in this play while the primary focus is on the corruption and greed of the greenhouse owners and their exploitation of both the land and migrant workers. Bezerra has experimented with immigration as a theme in other media, as well, as Spain Arts and Culture

commissioned him to film a short work for the Goethe-Institut's Plurality of Privacy Project in Five-Minute Plays in 2017, and the result was "@HOTMIGRANTS." Using mannequins with faces digitally projected onto their surfaces, futuristic props, mysterious lighting, and a number of other special effects, Bezerra's contribution presents a conversation between a mother and daughter about an Instagram account that features photos of attractive immigrants and the ethical considerations such an account raises.

El señor Ye ama los dragones, on the other hand, takes a different approach than *Dentro de la tierra* and "@HOTMIGRANTS," one that helps to center the voices of migrants and reestablish scripts of belonging in Spain. This play was born from a 2008 workshop taught by playwright Ahmed Ghazali called "La otra lengua" that challenged participants to write a scene in which their own language was confronted with another (Fernández Soto and Checa y Olmos 39). The resulting scene of this workshop, "La noche del dragón," led to the eventual publication in 2014 of the full play in *II Programa de Desarrollo de Dramaturgias Actuales del Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música* and its performance on March 18, 2015 in the Sala Max Aub of the Naves del Teatro Español in Madrid's Matadero Municipal under the direction of Luis Luque and with actresses Lola Casamayor, Gloria Muñoz, Chen Lu, and Huichi Chin. The play received eight Max Award nominations, including Mejor autoría teatral for Bezerra.

While Bezerra has enjoyed significant tangible success in the form of these awards, commissions, and international fame, *El señor Ye* brought him success of a different kind. For Bezerra, "El teatro ha de ser un reflejo de la sociedad en que vivimos, y creo que la literatura dramática no refleja la multiculturalidad madrileña ni invita a que esas nacionalidades pudieran subirse al escenario; no hay papeles para ellos" (qtd. in Bravo). He challenged himself, then, to

include dialogue in Mandarin and actors of East Asian descent in order to begin to fill in this gap in representation. In an interview, Bezerra revealed that the play attracted a significant number of audience members of Chinese or East Asian descent, people Bezerra claimed would not normally have attended the theater, and interviewer Coleman noted that "[t]his diversification of the theatre helps to ensure the survival of the art form by attracting a wider array of Spanish residents" ("Privileging" 4).

Beyond simple representation, this play is unique in that it moves beyond sensationalized stereotypes and other necropolitical tropes of failure, erasure, and death toward an example of what Coleman calls convivial theater (*The Necropolitical* 122). *El señor Ye* contributes to the creation of a theater that allows for cultural difference, explores the processes of identity construction, and destabilizes notions of Otherness by exploring the spatialities of place-based experiences in the characters' apartment building, territory as seen in power dynamics within the social space, and the transnationalism of its next generation character Xiaomei, as well as through the use of textual migration.

Bezerra divides *El señor Ye ama los dragones* into three acts that follow the structure of Dante's *Divina Commedia*: "Infierno," "Purgatorio," and "Paraíso." In the first act, Magdalena, the "presidenta" of the apartment building, has descended to the basement to investigate the identity of a mysterious and potentially nefarious individual. She tries to glean information from Xiaomei and her mother Señora Wang, two women of Chinese descent who live in the basement next to the storage units, as Magdalena suspects that the furtive figure has some involvement with the family and their illegal beer-selling business. Xiaomei offers to share with her what she knows if Magdalena invites her and her mother to her tenth-floor apartment to celebrate Señora Wang's birthday. Nervous, Magdalena visits her friend Amparo in her fifth-floor apartment in

"Purgatorio" to discuss the situation and ask her to come as her support to the birthday party. At the end of the act, the autochthonous Spanish women prepare for the arrival of their neighbors, who are seen ascending the staircase[36] and elevator for the first time. In the final act, Xiaomei exposes much more than the identity of the mysterious character lurking in the basement. As the women drink coffee and eat cake to celebrate Señora Wang, who does not speak or understand Spanish, Xiaomei reveals that over the years she has overheard racist jokes through the pipes, that she knows Magdalena committed a hit-and-run against Señora Wang years ago, and that Magdalena's husband is the mysterious person. He was fired four months ago but has been pretending otherwise out of shame, recently taking to hiding in the basement storage unit. Realizing the state of her financial crisis and on the verge of losing her home, Magdalena listens in horror as Xiaomei offers her a deal: Magdalena and her husband will live in the basement and help with the beer business while Xiaomei and her mother take over the tenth-floor apartment. Magdalena runs to the basement to find her husband having died by suicide in the storage unit, and the play ends as Xiaomei settles into her new home on the tenth floor.

The driving force for this play is Xiaomei, a woman who affirms her Spanish identity while acknowledging her Chinese heritage and flourishing in the richness of the Chinese culture. Some have interpreted this as asserting the Chinese identity and culture over the Spanish. For Rafael Fuentes the play is an allegory that foretells the failure of the West, "una *alegoría del choque entre Oriente y Occidente*, del poderoso avance planetario del Dragón chino" (emphasis in the original). For Coleman, the Oriental is privileged both in the play's narrative and structure, to the point that he believes the play demonstrates the "positioning of the Spanish below the Chinese" ("Privileging" 8). Because Xiaomei also goes by the name Estrella and is thus tied to

[36] The staircase and elevator are important visual components of the set that elicit questions of the possibility of social mobility, reminiscent of Antonio Buero Vallejo's *Historia de una escalera* (1949).

the concept of a star, "the notion of Xiaomei as a star . . . asserts Chinese cultural norms and work ethic as superior to those of Spain" (Coleman, "Privileging" 8). However, I find this interpretation too extreme. *El señor Ye* does not privilege the Chinese over the Spanish, but rather emphasizes the strengths of the next generation to draw on multiple cultural repertoires, as these expanded repertoires open up new pathways to social mobility. The play's plot moves forward due to the actions and knowledge of this next generation character, and Bezerra shows her navigating both her Spanishness and Chineseness with ease. Xiaomei negotiates her place in Spanish society by opening up this in-between space and flaunting her identity's hybridity. Bhabha explains, "we are always negotiating," and that negotiation should not be seen as mere compromise but can include subversion and transgression, as well (qtd. in Rutherford 216). Throughout *El señor Ye*, Bezerra's character transgresses numerous boundaries and subverts the status quo to create a new space where identities like hers—complex, flexible, unscripted—can be asserted.

Because these identities challenge traditional scripts of belonging, they can provoke feelings of discomfort in individuals lacking this type of hybridity. According to Bhabha, "The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (qtd. in Rutherford 211). The two white Spanish women in the play perceive this newness, the result of the transnational behaviors of Xiaomei, as threatening, and they react with anxiety toward the shifting dynamic they sense Xiaomei manipulating. Much of this anxiety comes from the subversion of the place-based norms and the challenges made to the territoriality of their building. The play begins with a strict hierarchy embedded in place: from the basement, to the fifth floor, to the tenth-floor penthouse.

The internal frontier at work in the building's community is readily apparent. Nail explains that the internal frontier is "where these people [migrants] are legally and politically expelled from certain social mobility and services even though they are 'included' in the territory" (*Theory* 41). Although Señora Wang's legal status is unclear, her daughter was born in Spain. However, Castles and Davidson explain that many people "have formal membership of the nation-state yet lack many of the rights that are meant to go with this. Porous boundaries and multiple identities undermine ideas of cultural belonging as a necessary accompaniment to political membership. There are increasing numbers of *citizens who do not belong*" (viii, emphasis in original). Xiaomei and her mother are included in the physical territory—they are able to live in Spain and in this building—, but they are made to feel as if they do not belong in this community. Their shabby home is surrounded by storage closets in the basement under poor conditions, where "una sola bombilla por pasillo ilumina el angustioso y lúgubre entramado de trasteros" (Bezerra 13). Unnamed policies, economic factors, or societal expectations have distanced Xiaomei and her mother from their autochthonous Spanish neighbors, in terms of their physical location in the building as well as their quality of life.

The building, repeatedly described as a beehive, functions as a microcosm of a city made up of various neighborhoods. Kelly and Maharaj view the neighborhood as an important place-based shaper of the educational and employment outcomes of immigrant youth (319). At the beginning of the play, each floor seems to dictate to what standard of living its inhabitants can aspire. Xiaomei and her mother live in the dingy and dark basement while working in their beer-selling business. On the fifth-floor, Amparo lives a comfortable but less-than-luxurious life: "La casa es pequeña, está desordenada y tiene una decoración bastante dudosa" (Bezerra 26). Her clothing and the layout of her apartment visually signal to the spectator that she is from a lower

socioeconomic class than Magdalena, whose sense of superiority is also reinforced by the conversation surrounding Amparo's daughter's struggle with drug addiction and Magdalena's fiercely judgmental comments on the subject. Magdalena, "una señora que va peinada como las reinas que de perfil figuran en las monedas," feels superior economically and morally as well as literally, residing above the others on the tenth floor in "Paraíso" (Bezerra 13). Her home is cleaner, more organized, decorated in a very traditional Spanish style, and has a Christmas tree "mejor decorado que el de Amparo" (Bezerra 40). The apartment building is thus divided along these hierarchical lines, and each family's outcomes are determined according to their "neighborhood" or floor.

The physical, vertical distance between Xiaomei's room and Magdalena's penthouse is a reminder of the different educational and employment outcomes expected for each of them. The Wang family's position in the basement coupled with Magdalena's visual discomfort and growing fear at navigating that space in the first scene immediately signal to the audience that the basement functions as a ghetto. Ayse S. Çaglar explains that "the ghetto as a secluded cultural enclave—or better to say, fear of ghettos—is the leading thematic image in representing the place and incorporation of immigrants in the city" (602). Magdalena is comfortable navigating the places from the lobby and higher, but as soon as she steps into the basement her fear is apparent: she is "agitada" and walks "como si fuera un insecto atrapado en un recipiente de cristal" (Bezerra 13). The play begins with the Chinese migrant family relegated to the basement in order to reproduce faithfully how autochthonous Spaniards imagine immigrants' spatiality. These assigned locations represent the status quo.

The importance to Magdalena of maintaining this social hierarchization, manifested in the architecture of the building, is obvious. When Xiaomei suggests that Magdalena invite the

two women upstairs to her apartment, a physical ascent that would signal a disruption in the social order, a visibly nervous Magdalena tries to negotiate a different location for their meeting. She asks, "El café, digo, ¿puede ser en otra parte o tiene que ser en mi casa?" (Bezerra 23). When that request fails she asks for permission to invite Amparo as moral support. Perhaps subconsciously, Magdalena realizes what allowing Xiaomei and her mother to the tenth floor will do. The current position of this migrant family limits their visibility in the building, but bringing them into the upper realm will force the other residents to reckon with the complexities of the presence of Xiaomei and her mother in this community.

Although the women's upward movement to the tenth floor is inevitable, audience members witness several other ways in which the building's architectural layout is used to establish and defend "Spanish" territory. As members of a nonwhite migrant family, Xiaomei and her mother are marginalized and racialized. There are many instances in which Magdalena and Amparo demonstrate certain strategies of the territorialization of racialized power that intend "to 'enforce', to perform whiteness as dominance, to compel submission, to punish those who refused to submit" (Delaney 225). Magdalena and Amparo's language frequently enforces whiteness and attempts to compel the submission of their Chinese neighbor and her daughter. Xiaomei and Señora Wang are literally and figuratively "las de abajo," also described as "ese par de cucarachas" scuttering across the floor, an image that further enforces their spatial relationship (Bezerra 31, 33). In the third act, Xiaomei shockingly tells her neighbors racist jokes and reveals that she learned these jokes as they traveled down the pipes and drains from other people in the building. These jokes compare Chinese people to "un plato lleno de mierda" and comment on stereotypes related to Chinese people eating dogs and not burying their dead: "A mi padre, por ejemplo, lo tenemos abajo sentado en una silla, dentro el congelador. . . . En el de la

comida, no, en otro. Tenemos tres: uno está lleno de verdura, el otro de perros que vamos recogiendo por la calle y en el tercero está mi padre" (Bezerra 46, 48). The architecture of the building reveals the mechanisms of social exclusion perpetrated by Magdalena, Amparo, and other residents, as their language travels from top to bottom to keep the Chinese women in their lowly position.

Magdalena also tries to enforce her power through intimidation. Aware that she wields certain political and social privileges over Xiaomei and her mother, Magdalena threatens to report what she suspects, with little proof, is their involvement with illegal activity. Her conversation with Xiaomei dances around the intimidation tactic of unnecessarily calling the police on a racial minority. It is as follows:

> XIAOMEI. Eso no es cierto. Nosotras no vendemos [cerveza] de forma ilegal ni damos asilo a nadie.
> MAGDALENA. ¿Y el desfile de chinos con mochila que empieza a subir y bajar las escaleras a partir de medianoche?
> XIAOMEI. Que yo sepa, subir y bajar escaleras no es delito ninguno.
> MAGDALENA. Ya, pero lo que hacen con lo que llevan dentro de las mochilas, sí.
> XIAOMEI. ¿Y qué sabe usted lo que llevan dentro de las mochilas?
> MAGDALENA. Eso que lo averigüe la Policía, que para eso está. (Bezerra 16-17)

Magdalena then invokes the supposed concern from their community, "niños y personas mayores que han empezado a tener miedo" (Bezerra 17), to further impose the internal frontier upon Xiaomei and her mother, keeping them marginalized and socially excluded. She casts them in the role of the migrant figure to be feared.

These mechanisms of exclusion are amplified by the apartment building's president's inequitable actions that she performs, seemingly, with impunity. The spectator discovers in "Purgatorio" that Magdalena has been involved in various illicit activities that reveal her racism, although Bezerra does not disclose many details. After a conversation about Amparo's daughter, Magdalena suddenly changes the subject and asks, "¿Tú crees que sospecharán algo de lo de las

heces y el agua?" to which Amparo responds, "¿De lo de las heces y el agua? No, no creo. Eso fue hace mucho. Pero de lo del coche y de lo de las pintadas, puede que sí, porque ahí todavía no llevabas la careta" (Bezerra 38). The phrase "lo del coche" probably refers to when Magdalena perpetrated a hit-and-run, crashing into Señora Wang in a crosswalk. Along with the other aforementioned crimes or sins necessitating the use of a face covering to mask her identity, this horrifying moral and legal transgression is another example of the confidence that Magdalena possesses in crossing boundaries of legality and the privilege she carries that allows her to do so. Her migrant neighbors are not, from her perspective, worthy of the same rights or considerations, due to their differential inclusion in Spanish society. Furthermore, one can see the utter hypocrisy of Magdalena. She threatened to call the police on Xiaomei and her mother for a suspected crime that does not hurt anyone, but she has been perpetrating worse crimes and actively putting others in danger. This demonstrates her faith in her comfortable position of power and privilege that she knows the Wang family does not share.

Magdalena's confidence is based in the assuredness that these two women are static figures with fixed identities, unable to move freely across boundaries. For her, they are Chinese, not Spanish; she sees them as unassimilable immigrants who do not and will not ever belong. Xiaomei herself is well aware of this perspective and how territory has been defined within the apartment building. The place-based experiences of exclusion she has undergone in her home have made her very cognizant of her cultural difference. She explains that the distance between her basement room and the rest of the building is even further than her neighbors realize: "del portal para arriba puede que sea enero, pero del portal para abajo estamos en el 4.711 y el año nuevo comienza dentro de tres semanas. . . . De su casa a la nuestra, en apariencia, apenas nos separan unos cuantos pisos, pero lo cierto es que estamos a más de 2.900 años de distancia"

(Bezerra 21). She comments, tongue-in-cheek, that it does not surprise her that Magdalena has taken eighteen years to visit Señora Wang's home for the first time; after all, 2,900 years of distance is an enormous cultural divide to cross. Keeping in mind that the apartment building is a microcosm of a Spanish city, the basement functions as a ghetto. To play with the idea that "ghettos are seen as the outcome of immigrants' refusal to integrate," Bezerra accentuates the Chinese[37] characteristics of Xiaomei's family's dress, language, and customs, suggesting an inability and lack of desire to fit in amongst their neighbors (Çaglar 604). He does this with the knowledge that this assumption will be challenged as the plot progresses; Xiaomei's transnationalism and access to multiple cultural repertoires repeatedly decenters the Spanish norm. Throughout the play, she subverts the notion of the fixity of identity and one's place in society, which is precisely what makes her character so revolutionary.

From her first appearance onstage, Xiaomei proudly asserts her cultural difference and hybrid identity with a fierce calmness that unnerves Magdalena. As soon as they come face to face, Magdalena's power is destabilized. In the performance directed by Luis Luque, Magdalena begins the conversation with her neighbor by speaking slowly and loudly, pointing frantically in her attempt to communicate with Xiaomei, assuming that she, like her mother, does not speak Spanish. In response to this, as the stage directions note, "Xiaomei se pronuncia en un perfecto castellano" (Bezerra 14). Not only does Xiaomei speak grammatically correct Spanish, but she also has an artful and seamless ability to use the language for persuasion and manipulation. When Magdalena, seemingly dumbfounded at this skill, asks her where she learned to speak Spanish so well, "Así, como si no fueses china," Xiaomei laughs at her, another affront to the

[37] Bezerra also highlights the very Spanish qualities of Magdalena's apartment. His stage directions note, "Tanto la estructura como la decoración del domicilio de MAGDALENA recuerda a la antigua forma de organizar el espacio de los hogares de los años cuarenta: un Cristo colgado de la pared, una banderita de España, tapetes de ganchillo y muebles estilo resentimiento" (40).

power dynamic (Bezerra 22). Xiaomei explains that she speaks as if she were not Chinese precisely because she is not Chinese. In dialogue that is reminiscent of but more limited than what we will see in *Fiesta*'s "Soy de" chants, the two continue:

> MAGDALENA. Y de dónde eres, entonces.
> XIAOMEI. De aquí.
> MAGDALENA. De aquí de dónde.
> XIAOMEI. De este sótano.
> MAGDALENA. Nadie es de un sótano. No digas tonterías.
> XIAOMEI. La gente es de donde nace y de donde ha vivido. Yo nací aquí y aquí me ve. De dónde quiere que sea. (Bezerra 22)

Xiaomei's linguistic prowess has surprised her neighbor. She is the racialized Other, so Magdalena cannot help but ask where she is *really* from, not even entertaining the possibility that Xiaomei is just as Spanish as she is. Magdalena is in denial and cannot accept that the fixed identity category in which she had classified Xiaomei does not work.

More importantly, with her exaggeratedly restricted answer, Xiaomei undermines Magdalena's question and the assumptions behind it. She does not proclaim that she is Chinese or Spanish, but rather that she is from the basement itself, where she was born and raised. Eeva Anttila et al. explain that "categorisation and labelling may be a way of locating people within a cognitive landscape," and that these labels often lead to processes of othering that "limit human potential and reduce the complexities of social reality into 'us and them'" (213). By refusing to answer adequately the question and by ridiculing Magdalena's attempt to categorize her, Xiaomei challenges traditional scripts of belonging. She refuses to be fixed in the cognitive landscape, maintaining her mobile status. In this moment and in the rest of the play, Xiaomei participates in the "unmooring [of identities that] envisages new notions of community, membership and entitlement" (Çaglar 609). She claims neither China nor Spain and asserts that

she can be from both or from neither, undermining previously conceived notions of group membership.

Xiaomei continues this subversion in "Paraíso" when she invades the queen bee's space, accuses her of a crime, and uses the language of her oppressors to tell racist jokes, all in order to destabilize further the power dynamic in the building. In the third act, Xiaomei and her mother ascend the staircase from their basement apartment to the tenth floor, where Magdalena lives and reluctantly awaits them for the tea party. Bezerra's stage directions explain, "[Señora Wang] se agarra del brazo de su hija y, peldaño a peldaño, comienzan a subir lentamente" (40). Their slow movement accentuates this symbolic act and encourages the audience to focus attention on the position of this duo, who, despite the mother's ailing condition, cannot even take the elevator until they reach the building's entrance hall on the main floor. Once the two have reached Magdalena's door, "XIAOMEI toca al timbre. Dentro, AMPARO y MAGDALENA miran el reloj, que marca los cinco. Silencio. MAGDALENA mira a AMPARO, que le hace una señal de aprobación y la primera camina hasta la puerta y abre" (Bezerra 41). All of this is done wordlessly, and this lack of dialogue emphasizes the physical movements within the space. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha notes the visual importance of stairs[38] and their symbolic meaning: "The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white" (5). This ascent further reinforces Xiaomei's next generation status and hybridized identity.

The staircase and the elevator are not static fixtures, but rather architectural elements of movement. Xiaomei navigates these architectural elements comfortably, leading her mother step-

[38] These comments reference Renée Green's *Sites of Genealogy* exhibit.

by-step across the building's boundaries as they traverse to the top floor, precisely because she can move between the two cultural identities with ease. Bhabha's observation on the importance of stairs is applicable here: "The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (5). Following this, Xiaomei's Chineseness is not made to be superior and her Spanishness does not decrease in importance; she navigates the interstitial, in-between spaces because of the hybridity resulting from both the Chinese and Spanish parts of her identity. Her movement upward from Infierno to Paraíso[39] and her ability to navigate comfortably both realms demonstrates her capacities for border-crossing. Borrowing again from Bhabha's language, I argue that Xiaomei's vertical crossing up the stairs and elevator "displays and displaces the binary logic through which identities of difference are often constructed" (5). She is neither Chinese nor Spanish, but something new.

Notions of movement and border-crossing manifest in the play's structure in addition to its plot and content. Jones ends his book *Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move* with this statement on the profound power of movement: "By refusing to abide by a wall, map, property line, border, identity document, or legal regime, mobile people upset the state's schemes of exclusion, control, and violence. They do this simply by moving" (180). As we have seen in previous chapters, many of the plays on immigration that have been published or performed in Spain in the last thirty years attempt to tap into this power, not only through their

[39] Renée Green said about her aforementioned exhibit, "I used architecture literally as a reference, using the attic, the boiler room, and the stairwell to make associations between certain binary divisions such as higher and lower and heaven and hell" (qtd. in Bhabha 5).

commentaries on the status and rights of those who migrate, but also in their literary structure through textual migration, defined by Stevens as "crossing textual borders" (191). *El señor Ye* is an exemplary model of textual migration, as Bezerra makes intertextual references to Dante Alighieri's *Divina Commedia* and the Chinese proverb about Lord Ye. Additionally, this work plays with the tension between being performed and being read, as many of Bezerra's stage directions beg for a reader due to their literary quality and descriptive words that cannot be faithfully represented on the stage. At the end of *El señor Ye*, Bezerra suggests, "Bien pudiera ser que, en la calle, MAGDALENA estuviera esperando a que salieran los espectadores para venderles latas de cerveza fría a un euro," creating confusion between fiction and reality by blending the play with real life with this metatheatrical technique (64). However, I will focus here on how Bezerra utilizes textual migration through playing with genre norms as he blurs the line between what is possible and what is not within the story's reality.

Bezerra's choice to blur the lines between genres in a play about migrant characters of Chinese descent is noteworthy. Most of the Spanish plays centering on migration in the last three decades focus on the experience of African migrants, especially those from Sub-Saharan Africa, and plays such as López-Mozo's *Ahlán* or Vallejo's *Patera* contain fantasy elements in the telling of their stories. Bezerra taps into this tradition of fantasy, but he employs it in a way that makes it unclear whether the play's events have rational explanations or are actually fantastical, emphasizing a sense of mystery. Interestingly, Andres-Suárez explains,

> Si bien la comunidad de inmigrantes africanos, suele provocar la desconfianza, la hostilidad y repulse de los españoles, la china, en cambio, aparece envuelta en un halo de misterio y curiosidad debido al desconocimiento profundo de su cultura y costumbres y a la tendencia bastante arraigada en los asiáticos a vivir en círculos estrechamente cerrados y a mantenerse, por un reflejo de supervivencia, al margen de la vida de los autóctonos. ("La inmigración en la cuentística española contemporánea" 338).

Bezerra's play would argue that immigrants from Asian countries such as China and their children also suffer suspicion and hostility from white, autochthonous Spaniards, as the conversation in "Paraíso" about racially motivated insults and jokes would imply. Furthermore, the structure of the play and the eventual physical ascent of Xiaomei and her mother seem to argue that, although they previously lived "al margen de la vida de los autóctonos," in the basement of their building with the storage closets, their placement in these margins has been assigned to them by Spanish society and is not a natural preference. Especially as the members of the next generation come into their own identities, they have the capability of moving into more privileged spaces, represented by Magdalena's tenth floor apartment. What does interest me about Andres-Suárez's quote, however, is the aura of mystery that emerges, she argues, from the relative unfamiliarity with Chinese culture and customs. This mystery, closely linked with curiosity, is exactly that upon which Bezerra is able to capitalize in this work. By basing *El señor Ye* on the interweaving of both Chinese and classic European cultures as well as suggestive fantasy elements, Bezerra amplifies the mystery of the furtive character seen in the basement and the reluctant curiosity that Magdalena and Amparo demonstrate toward the way of life of their downstairs neighbors.

This play constantly participates in the act of border-crossing between fantasy and realism, never clarifying to which genre it belongs. Through this binary-rejecting practice, the work allows itself to open up to further possibilities. The aforementioned transgressive transnationalism of its protagonist is mirrored in the transgression of genre; the textual hybridity unfixes the play as it suggests "possibilities for unfixing identities" (Robins and Aksoy 709). From the beginning of *El señor Ye*, Bezerra includes potential elements of mystery and magic, seen both in the text and the 2015 performance, to unsettle the reader or spectator and her

expectations. “Infierno” begins in the shadowy basement, where “una sola bombilla por pasillo ilumina el angustioso y lúgubre entramado de trasteros,” and when Magdalena knocks on the door to one of these storage rooms, “de repente, ésta se abre sola, pero detrás no hay nadie, sólo tinieblas” (13). According to these stage directions, Bezerra’s play immediately immerses his audience in a spooky, eerie atmosphere. Furthermore, the reason Magdalena has deigned to descend the stairwell of the apartment complex is precisely due to a mystery that she wants to solve: who is the mysterious figure that she has seen twice lurking in her building? Magdalena describes the figure “como una sombra que bajó corriendo las escaleras,” who disappears just as suddenly and mysteriously, “como si se lo hubiese tragado la tierra” (Bezerra 15). Although part of her believes that this character is someone to whom Xiaomei and her mother have given refuge, her descriptions of the figure make it obvious that the president of the apartment building is afraid of something potentially more sinister. The play sustains a tension between the desire to explain the situation according to rational thought and the feeling that something is amiss.

This tension does not faze Xiaomei, and she comfortably navigates this unstable space between fantasy and realism. Xiaomei chooses to capitalize on her neighbor’s fear, as demonstrated by her conversation in Mandarin with her mother that disorients and discomforts Magdalena, her deft manipulation of Magdalena to receive an invitation to her home on the tenth floor, and her decision to reveal only some information about the unknown figure. Her revelations to Magdalena serve to provoke more questions rather than answers, as she announces, “la persona por la que me pregunta, no es nadie de la calle, vive en este edificio y usted la conoce perfectamente . . . ¿Por qué cree, si no, que se envuelve en una manta y se tapa la cabeza con una bolsa?” (Bezerra 20). By the end of their conversation, Magdalena has had

enough and contracts a headache, unable to reconcile the enigmatic elements that are incongruous with her accepted reality.

Bezerra's stage directions continue to heighten the tension and suspense so that "Infierno" ends with even more uncertainty over whether this play represents faithfully our reality or whether its world is immersed in fantasy. The stage directions state:

> La luz de la bombilla del sótano parpadea. MAGDALENA se da la media vuelta para mirar qué ocurre y XIAOMEI cierra la puerta. MAGDALENA vuelve a girarse, pero allí ya no hay nadie. XIAOMEI y la SEÑORA WANG han desaparecido y ella ha vuelto a quedarse sola en el sótano, como al principio, en mitad de la penumbra. De repente, comienza a escucharse un sonido ancestral y telúrico, de cascabeles, viento y fuego, que, lejano, se aproxima como si fuera una nube gigantesca compuesta por millones de abejorros. Tras los abejorros, la letanía metálica de una marcha militar eléctrica. MAGDALENA se lleva las palmas de las manos a las orejas y, presionándolas con fuerza, se tapa los oídos. La bombilla estalla en mil pedazos y todo se queda a oscuras. (Bezerra 24-5)

Bezerra skillfully prompts the use of lighting and sound techniques and horror film tropes such as the flickering lightbulb to add to the mysterious environment. The strange, telluric sounds of fire and wind remind one of the title of this scene, "Infierno." The reference to a large cloud of bees echoes the mentions of this apartment building as an "edificio colmena" and of Magdalena as a queen bee or insect herself (Bezerra 11, 13), and it presages the mysterious cloud that covers the city in the next act. The entirety of "Infierno" straddles the line between realism and fantasy. Magdalena's concerns that Xiaomei is clandestinely selling beer, the plans set in motion to celebrate a birthday, and Señora Wang's generous offering of a can of ointment to cure Magdalena's headache are quotidian activities reminiscent of reality off stage. When these mundane details are combined with fantastical horror elements, the reader or spectator is left feeling unsure of the chronotope of the play and to what degree the setting is verisimilar. Thus far, the fluttering lights, creepy sounds, and surreptitious figure could have a rational explanation. After all, the characters are in the unkempt, neglected basement of a large building,

and the building's pipes and drains, noted later in the play to be effective carriers of sounds, could certainly be the source of the metallic litany. However, the lighting and sound effects insinuate something dark or supernatural.

It is precisely this uncertainty that keeps the audience's doubt alive throughout each act, imparting a sense of vertigo as the play vacillates across the boundary between genres. Xiaomei's suggestion that she and her mother ascend to the tenth floor coincides with a significant shift in the weather in the second act; the mysterious fog covering the city continues the blurring of the boundary between realism and fantasy. Bezerra plays on right-wing fears that immigrants will change the political, social, and economic environments of Spain by introducing the mysterious storm alongside news reports of recession, unemployment, and strikes. The television in Amparo's apartment announces, "Se puede afirmar que el paro ha conseguido su peor cifra . . . Superando, por primera vez en la historia, los seis millones doscientos mil parados" (Bezerra 28). The news report then informs the audience that 500 families have been evicted from their homes, the frequency of violence is increasing, there have been cuts in public education, offices have closed, and airport workers are on strike, all while Amparo lets Magdalena enter her apartment and informs her friend about the *turrón* she carries in her hand and the clothing she bought on sale: "Podías elegir dos y te llevabas uno. Distintos estampados, pero el mismo modelo. Ponía: dos al precio de uno" (Bezerra 29). The news channel interrupts the conversation between these two autochthonous Spanish women again and again, and the difference in tone between the harsh news and the banal notifications of Amparo is jarring and continues the process of disorienting audience expectations. The reporter's interjections decenter their voices, put their frivolous conversation about food, clothing, and sales in stark contrast with abysmal statistics and economic failure, and foreshadow a threat to the status quo. Magdalena,

bothered by the news, mutes the television, but, according to Bezerra's stage directions, "En la tele continúan viéndose imágenes sin sonido de antidisturbios, estaciones de tren abandonadas y comercios cerrados" (Bezerra 30). She is unable to silence completely these warning signs.

The news reveals that the city is covered with a metaphorical dark cloud of unemployment and recession as well as a literal but unexplained dark cloud. Magdalena eventually notices the phenomenon: "¿Oye, Amparo, ¿qué pasa ahí fuera? ¿Has visto eso? ¿Por qué no se ve nada?" (Bezerra 37). A fog has descended on the city and, according to the two women's descriptions, is of a reddish hue, like "una hoguera gigante" or "como si alguien le hubiese pegado fuego a la calle," and this fog that will last into the next week causes a darkness as black as tar to cover them (Bezerra 37). Not only is this a description of an abnormal meteorological event, but this long-lasting fog begins to give their world a supernatural shade. Amparo explains, "La calle parecía un cementerio y los faros de los coches las velas encendidas que les ponen en las tumbas a los muertos" (Bezerra 37). It seems to the audience as if the weather is rising up to protest the treatment Xiaomei and her mother have received and to destabilize and invert the power relations in place: "El Infierno adentrándose en la Tierra y el cielo con una venda en los ojos" (Bezerra 37). With this lugubrious tone and thematic elements of death and hell, one can expect Magdalena and Amparo to feel unnerved and anxious, coinciding with the anxiety produced by Xiaomei's demand to come up for cake.

As the action in the third act "Paraíso" develops, mysterious effects again come into play to increase the sense of uncertainty. As the group celebrates Xiaomei's mother's birthday by eating cake, the light suddenly goes out. The women sit awkwardly around the table dimly lit by candles, and Xiaomei finishes recounting the Chinese proverb of Lord Ye, noting that like Ye, Magdalena fears knowing the truth. When she finally admits that the mysterious figure is

Magdalena's husband, the truth is too much for her and Amparo to bear. The latter responds to Xiaomei's truth telling and offer of aid as if responding to a supernatural threat in a horror film, running wildly down the stairs and locking herself in her home, "y, sin aire, se queda pegada a ella [la puerta] mientras se repone" (Bezerra 62). Magdalena heads to the basement and knocks on the door to the storage room. The suspense continues to build as the door opens by itself and only shadows are visible. Bezerra writes, "En el cuartucho comienza a oírse un sonido ancestral y telúrico, de cascabeles, viento y fuego, muy parecido al que hacen las culebras o los abejorros cuando van en bandada," stage directions that echo those of the first act and increase suspicion that this play belong to the fantasy realm (62). She finds her husband, dead, and her scream bounces off the walls. The entire building disappears spontaneously in darkness except the tenth floor, where Xiaomei performs small, ordinary tasks in juxtaposition with the horror tropes of Amparo and Magdalena's reactions.

Is this play a realistic representation of the bordering and border-crossing practices experienced by an immigrant family, or are the events imbued with a sense of the fantastical? Bezerra's play never quite chooses a side. Magdalena's failure to open her mail and pay her bills explains away the mystery of the sudden loss of light. The mystery of the hooded figure has been solved, as well. However, the mystery of the fog remains. Is it a sign of an apocalyptic event? Is it part of a verisimilar storm that will pass? Or do Magdalena, Amparo, and the Wang family live in a reality distinct from the audience's? Bezerra does not answer this question but purposefully leaves it open-ended, effectively creating tension between genres and a sense of textual hybridity that unfixes the play and the identities of its characters. At the end of "Paraíso," the news channel has the last word rather than any of the principal characters. Xiaomei's actions, her *movement*, are what communicate her power more than her words. While the audience witnesses

the newly established norm of Xiaomei living on the tenth floor, taking down the Christmas tree and reorganizing the room to her liking, all the lights go out except for one lamp and the television set of that tenth floor penthouse, "que se encienden solos" (Bezerra 62). The fog is now called "este particular océano gris" (Bezerra 63). It is neither black nor white, but a mixture of the two, avoiding both extremes. Xiaomei and Magdalena have switched physical locations within the building, and this inversion is mirrored by the weather conditions: "muchos de nosotros hemos empezado a confundir las noches con los días y los días con las noches" (Bezerra 63). According to the news, the fog has caused much confusion and anxiety in the city's residents, creating a disorienting experience every time they go out. However, the hybrid, next generation Xiaomei is content and willing to navigate this confusion. The news repeats the idea, "tendremos que ir acostumbrándonose a la oscuridad," and the audience sees Xiaomei, already used to and comfortable with this darkness and her new, cozy home (Bezerra 63). In this newness, the open, third space that emerges from the rejection of the binary, Xiaomei's hybridized identity is welcome. She traverses physical boundaries and boundaries of genre with confidence. Spanish society cannot fix this next generation character in its cognitive landscape, as she prefers to move freely through the ambiguous, foggy, "océano gris." These ending moments suggest that Xiaomei will succeed in Spanish society, even as it transforms outside her window, thanks to her ability to tap into multiple cultural repertoires. Nonetheless, Bezerra ends the play with the word, "CONTINUARÁ…" leaving the conclusion open to further interpretation (64).

Some, like Fuentes, have interpreted this play from the perspective of seeing the Chinese culture and immigrants as a threat, with the inevitable "choque" between the East and the West

in mind. Others, like Coleman,[40] view it in a more optimistic light but support the possibility that Xiaomei comes out on top because her Chinese cultural repertoire is seen as superior. Xiaomei defends herself and positions herself well within the existing hierarchical structure of the apartment, but she does not force her way to the top with her superiority. She simply knows the elements of her cultures upon which she should draw depending on the circumstances, and despite the crimes that Magdalena has committed against her, she will happily work with Magdalena to keep her from experiencing homelessness. Magdalena's end is humiliating, of course, but she has brought this fate upon herself. Hybridity rejects the binary that terms like superior or inferior might suggest. Rajagopalan Radhakrishnan claims,

> And hybridity is heady stuff: transgressive in more than one direction, de-territorializing, and immanently *sui generis* in its mode of signification. With hybridity, anything is possible for the simple reason that hybridity is about making meaning without the repression of a pre-existing normativity or teleology: in the exhilarating a-nomie between 'having been deterritorialized' and 'awaiting to be reterritorialized' there is all manner of unprecedented 'becoming.'

Xiaomei's journey to the tenth floor is one of being and of becoming, of opening out expectations and remaking boundaries. Bezerra imitates his character's border crossings in the structure of the play, as he includes metatheatrical techniques and moves adeptly between genres of fantasy and realism. These movements, whether physical or conceptual, destabilize expectations and notions of identity and decenter what it means to be Spanish.

El señor Ye, according to Coleman, approaches the ideal of a "convivial theater" that asks the audience to think critically about race and to explore tensions in a more productive manner that faithfully upholds the current reality of Spain (*The Necropolitical* 122). The desires to

[40] As previously mentioned, Coleman states, "Symbolically, the notion of Xiaomei as a star not only positions her above the autochthonous characters, but also asserts Chinese cultural norms and work ethic as superior to those of Spain" ("Privileging" 8). He also notes, "Bezerra paints an image of Spain's not-so-distant future when racial minority groups such as the Chinese will rise to equal footing with, if not above, their white Spaniard compatriots" ("Privileging" 11).

promote authenticity, to tell a story of migration from the perspective of those to whom it belongs, and to increase access of marginalized individuals to the Spanish stage appear in Bezerra's play as well as Lucía Miranda's *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta*. This play aims to represent more authentically the experiences of autochthonous Spaniards, migrants, and the next generation. *Fiesta* follows Coleman's rules of convivial theater because it examines "the process of living" and "challenge[s] autochthonous characters on their prejudices, steer[s] clear of sensationalized stereotypes, and promote[s] the multicultural reality of Spain" (*The Necropolitical* 122). Miranda seeks to tell a story from the inside so as not to "other" the story and those to whom the story belongs. To do this, she employed a diverse cast of actors, allowing for significant representation onstage of minoritized communities. Furthermore, the script itself does not belong solely to Miranda. The text, created through a process called Verbatim,[41] is based on a series of interviews the playwright conducted in 2016 with teachers, students and their parents, and other staff members of an Instituto de Secundaria, as well as on material obtained in a documentary theatre workshop with teenagers.

Miranda asked each participant to provide the name they would like to be called in the event she used their material to create a character, and the participants also chose the songs that play an important role in the work. Miranda undertook a reorganization and selection process of this interview material to write her own cohesive story, but, as she explains, "Aproximadamente el 95% de la obra es una transcripción directa de esas entrevistas, el 5% está ficcionado o dialogado en base a las historias que me contaron" (19). This origin story for the text is important to Miranda, and she believes it to be fundamental for the audience to understand from where the text and stories come. She notes at the beginning of the written text that this information should

[41] See Díaz for more information about this technique.

be projected onto a screen for audience members to read: "es importante que el espectador sepa que lo que va a ver es real" (Miranda 19). The implication here is that perhaps audience members will feel more empathy and a stronger sense of urgency for change if they know that the characters and their stories are based in reality.

The playwright also remained faithful to the individuals' manners of speaking, including in the text indications for pauses in speech, longer silences, and accents. She even maintained mispronunciations of words by transcribing misspelled words or grammatically incorrect phrases and using line breaks, "en la manera poema orgánico de Anna Deavere Smith" to maintain the rhythm and to respect the character, as their words, speech, and voice form "parte de su identidad" (Miranda 19, 21). The actors used the audio recordings of the interviewees in order to practice their line delivery. The desire in this creation process is to stay faithful to a story that is not their own, to give the work more authenticity and authority to speak on a phenomenon that is affecting Spain and those who live there.

Irrespective of if the text is completely invented or transcribed word-for-word from interviews, what interests me here is the way in which this play explores issues of place-based experiences, territory, and transnationalism, and how it operates akin to Bhabha's third space to open up possibilities of identity construction and exploration for its next generation protagonists. Both in the opening and final scene, the student characters reject the idea that they have to be just one thing or from just one place. In Bhabhan terms, they deny "the essentialism of a prior given original or originary culture," and in their "Soy de" chant it is clear that they "see that all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity," as are their identities (qtd. in Rutherford 211). I argue that the in-between spaces they create and in which they move throughout the work "provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate

new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation" (Bhabha 2). The students experience marginalization and stigmatization at school and endure challenges of negotiating their many cultural repertoires in a society that wishes to fix their identities to a particular category. In this experience, they still are able to undergo a nuanced process of identification and celebrate their hybridity, which can be seen, in part, through the textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy of the play.

Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta is set during the 2015-2016 academic year and revolves around seven students in a remedial course with their teacher Antonio. Six of these students come from migrant families: Nate's mother is Guinean, Kamila's mother is Ecuadorian, Farah and Mustafá's families are Moroccan, Xirou's parents are Chinese, and Ionut has recently immigrated from Romania following his mother's move many years earlier. The central question of the play is "Who am I?" In an *ABC* article, Miranda expressed her desire for her audience to participate alongside the characters in the contemplation of how we construct our identities: "Me gustaría que cuando la gente salga del teatro se pregunte ¿cómo me construyo yo y qué es lo que me hace ser yo?" (qtd. in Díaz). In the first and last scenes, the characters dance and sing while making several "Soy de" statements, affirming the identities they have created for themselves. In the other twenty-two scenes, the action of the play switches between sequences occurring in the classroom and soliloquies by the migrant youth, the teachers, the parents, and Alma, a motherly office worker who often functions as a type of narrator, breaking the fourth wall to speak with the audience members. In the classroom setting, Antonio guides the students in planning for a multicultural presentation and party, in which the students must learn about and share the cultural traditions of the countries from which their parents have immigrated.

As previously discussed, one of Kelly and Maharaj's spatialities that impacts the outcomes for immigrant family youth involves place-based experiences in schools, neighborhoods, and cities. Thus, Miranda's choice to work with interviewees from a state-funded secondary school, one of the "place-based shapers of trajectories and ambitions," and to base her play around their stories was intentional and effective (Kelly and Maharaj 317). Schools are fundamental places of socialization that heavily influence the trajectories of next generation youth, and Timera calls them vectors of culture (150). In *Fiesta*, the school is a space where the cultural differences of the characters' diverse backgrounds come to a head and where the nation's complex political and economic issues play out, revealing consequences for migrant students' outcomes.

One can expect significant budget cuts to impact outcomes for all students, and especially those of the next generation. Miranda, when conducting her interviews in 2016, included the concerns that teachers voiced following the post-2008 global economic crisis budget cuts and how they affected students from immigrant families in disproportionate ways. After 2008, countries around the world cut public spending on education, which often involved freezing or cutting teacher salaries in the following years. The effects of the crisis were not felt immediately, however. At first, many countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) increased their public spending on education in order to offset the crisis or because the budgets had been decided already. Spain was among the countries that began to put in place austerity measures between 2009 and 2010. Teacher salaries are one of the first items on which countries reduce spending when they attempt fiscal consolidation, and teacher salaries were significantly impacted in Spain, along with the salaries of all other civil servants in July 2010 (OECD). The paradox, of course, is that "[e]ducation is the best protection against the

crisis," and the financial crisis only exacerbated the impact that education has on employability (OECD). Unemployment rates between 2008 and 2011 increased for adults with a lower level of education and less so for those with higher education (OECD). Miranda skillfully uses these concerns as the backdrop of her play. The teacher Antonio laments the situation when Ionut arrives from Romania without knowledge of the Spanish language:

> Antes
> los alumnos que venían de fuera,
> tenían aulas de enlace, eran aulas de castellanización,
> en donde se metían esos alumnos que es que llegaban
> sin tener ni pajolera idea de la lengua, ¿no?
> Con los recortes a partir de dos mil nueve, dos mil diez todo eso se quitó,
> entonces tú imagínate a un alumno que acaba de llegar como Ionut . . .
> Y la administración te deja ahí y te dice: hala, ahí te las compongas.
> No sé quién gestiona todo eso.
> No sé quién es la mente
> pensante,
> e
> iluminada
> que se pone a pensar estas cosas.
>
> A Ionut le estamos negando un derecho.
> Existe un derecho que es el derecho a la educación.
> Y la propia institución se lo está negando. (Miranda 78)

Kelly and Maharaj's concern about the disparity of educational and employment outcomes for youth of the next generation is, thus, also a concern of Miranda's and of the educators she interviewed.

The place-based experiences at school differ from those experienced in the neighborhood, some of which were seen in *El señor Ye.* This is because, for several hours a day, the students are outside of the purview of their families or communities. Xiaomei's basement apartment becomes like China for her, a place where she and her mother follow Chinese customs and norms and organize time according to the traditional Chinese calendar. However, *Fiesta* focuses on the other extreme; the group of students may have similar place-based experiences as Xiaomei when

they go home, but at school a new set of factors and influences shape their trajectories. In fact, school is a place where students may become aware of their cultural difference for the first time:

> From dietary habits through to religious practices and ways of dressing, language and body language, hygiene standards, and values and social norms, this is the apprenticeship of life in a familial cell and in the framework of their parents' migrant community. At school, the child realizes his or her foreignness in terms of differences between his familial environment and the dominant society. (Timera 149)

Fiesta puts on display how this "apprenticeship of life" under migrant parents and according to family values interacts in the classroom with the daily shocks that occur as students are forced to continually recognize their foreignness, despite being born in Spain.

These daily shocks are constituted by experiences of stigma, marginalization, and prejudice, faithfully represented on Miranda's stage. Each of her young characters comes into contact with the mainstream culture in their interactions with the teachers and staff, who may give, according to Kelly and Maharaj, gendered and racialized guidance or support, as well as with other minor and transnational cultures in their remedial class (318). Hugo, a Spanish-born boy with Spanish parents, teases Kamila, whose parents come from Ecuador, about the vocabulary she uses for "pencil case." When Kamila protests, "Yo lo digo así, déjame," Hugo laughs, "Se dice estuche, pero ¿en tu país no se habla español?" (Miranda 68). He proceeds to call her "panchita," a derogatory term to which Kamila takes double offense because it elides the differences between Ecuadorians and Mexicans. Hugo does not let up, and adds, "Da igual, te llame panchita o no, no va a cambiar que los latinos nos robáis los trabajos" (Miranda 71). In this interaction, the audience watches Kamila become aware of her cultural difference, as manifested in her language, and then suffer for it as her classmate racializes the linguistic difference, teases her, and further escalates their interpersonal conflict.

Many other examples of these place-based experiences and moments of racialization of cultural difference appear throughout the play. Mustafá expresses his surprise and confusion after hearing that Nate believes, without a doubt, in the theory of evolution discussed in their Biology class: "Pero cómo vas a venir de un mono" (Miranda 88). He is shocked to find out he is different in this way because of his religious beliefs. This young man of Moroccan heritage later talks about how other classmates have bullied him, accusing him of being a terrorist by shouting at him in the hallway, "Mira que se va a inmolar / Al·lahu-àkbar" (Miranda 90). When a classmate makes a xenophobic comment[42] toward Ionut, recently arrived from Romania, the latter punches the former, but the school's director chooses to suspend Ionut for two weeks instead of the original offender (Miranda 80). As explained, these experiences can impact negatively the trajectories and outcomes for students of the next generation because they affect their success in class. Timera's study claims that in the face of stigma and marginalization, many students remain quiet in the classroom (149). We see this in Xirou, a character of Chinese parents who was born in France and arrived in Spain at the age of six, who is almost always present in the classroom scenes. However, she never speaks onstage, and only speaks once offstage, preferring to answer her teacher and classmates' questions with a shrug. This chosen silence begets further marginalization, as her peers assume she does not understand Spanish. Hugo condescendingly tries to "translate" the class discussion to her by slowing down and loudly enunciating each syllable: "U-na fies-ta de-las-cul-tu-ras," to which she responds with "un recorte de mangas" to assert that she does, in fact, understand what has been said (Miranda 36). These are just a few of the examples of the daily, forced recognitions of foreignness, of cultural difference, that these characters endure as they negotiate and construct their identity in this place.

[42] He yells, "¡Un rumano en clase, guardad las mochilas!" (Miranda 80).

The teachers want the school to be a place of acceptance and celebration, one that fosters success for the students in the remedial class. The play only nebulously defines this class, run by Antonio and covering the "Lengua y Sociales" part of the curriculum. In Antonio's description, littered with line breaks that denote pauses and hesitation in the original recorded interview, he tries to explain his job and the students with whom he works as delicately as possible:

> Ser
> maestro de compensatoria es atender a un…
> tipo de alumnado
> pues muy específico
> que tienen
> fundamentalmente
> dos años de desfase
> curricular
> con respecto
> a lo que tendrían que…tener. (Miranda 37)

Although these requirements seem vague, the class's student makeup makes it apparent that the school system is not supporting effectively the education of its minority students. Almost all of the students who qualified for the remedial class are multicultural and next generation migrants. Even more unfortunately, whatever policies and structures are at play within this secondary school, this remedial education is not successful, either, as Antonio notes that very few of the students enrolled in this program end up graduating high school (Miranda 38). The dialogue of the teachers and staff at the school demonstrates the deep care and love that they feel for these students, but many of their comments and actions also reveal their implicit biases and prejudices as well as their ineffective strategies to help these young individuals succeed. They are unable to free these students from the systemic disadvantages and inequality inherent in the school and Spanish society overall because they are still functioning within the confines of these systems.

One of the "inclusive" strategies meant to encourage the minority students to perform well is the multicultural celebration assigned as their class project. Antonio designs this project

as a fun and interesting way to engage his pupils more deeply in the research and work required for the curriculum, to celebrate a number of different cultural backgrounds, and, as he explains, to find their hidden talents and develop them (Miranda 34). Even in his initial directions, however, this project's limited scope and ineffectiveness are on display. Antonio introduces the project with a cultural reference to *The Magnificent Seven*, a movie none of the students have seen and whose connection to their assignment goes unexplained, and he gives only vague instructions and unclear learning objectives in response to the curious students' questions. Their instructor explains, "Vosotros elegís la fiesta que os dé la gana, por ejemplo, la fiesta de la Paloma en Madrid, o una fiesta popular marroquí" (Miranda 35). According to the stage directions, upon the mention of Moroccan culture, Antonio looks intently at Mustafá, who, realizing the insinuation, objects, "Es que yo soy español. Y yo no tengo ni idea de lo que pasa en Marruecos" (Miranda 35). Instead of taking ownership of his mistaken assumption, Antonio doubles down and says that the students have to interview their parents or grandparents and research the celebration, "una fiesta típica de su país" (Miranda 44). Although he claims the students can choose the culture they want to research, the implication is that there is no choice. For example, Mustafá has to choose a Moroccan celebration on which to present and will have to research all that he does not know about a festival in which he does not partake. Antonio makes a point to mention "la fiesta del dragón chino" as another example of a project-worthy festival. Nate asks Xirou, "Será en China, ¿a que es en China?" but Xirou, who has never lived in China, can only respond with a shrug (Miranda 43). The project needed better framing, a more thoughtful explanation; as is, it attempts to restrict the students to clearly defined categories and is an example of racialized guidance and support with unintended consequences.

Celebrating the many cultures that make up the students' backgrounds at this school is an admirable goal, and Antonio's good intentions are clear. Equally obvious, however, are the limitations of such a project that focuses on diversity as a goal in and of itself. Bhabha draws a distinction between cultural difference and cultural diversity and many Western countries' preference for the latter. He explains, "In fact the sign of the 'cultured' or the 'civilised' attitude is the ability to appreciate cultures in a kind of *musée imaginaire*; as though one should be able to collect and appreciate them" (qtd. in Rutherford 208). In *Fiesta*, the project is this *musée imaginaire*, based on interviews of family members about a particular cultural celebration in their home country, including the traditional dress, music, dance, instruments, and food involved. This assignment demonstrates the desire of multicultural education to celebrate its students' diversity. However, Bhabha would say of efforts like this that "although there is always an entertainment and encouragement of cultural diversity, there is always also a corresponding *containment* of it. A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture, which says that 'these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid'" (qtd. in Rutherford 208). Although Antonio wants students to feel more invested in the project and to learn about their backgrounds and families, there is an inherent sense of wanting to locate their cultural differences on a cognitive map that follows the structures and norms of the dominant society. Antonio wants his students to find their "roots," but they are not and do not feel uprooted. In the containment of their cultural difference, there is also a containment of the individual students' identities.

Additionally, this exaltation of cultural diversity without recognition of cultural difference is treacherous, and Miranda organizes her scenes to demonstrate this. Bhabha argues that "it is actually very difficult, even impossible and counterproductive, to try and fit together

different forms of culture and to pretend that they can easily coexist" (qtd. in Rutherford 209). This is mirrored in *Fiesta*'s structure. The explanation of the project is sandwiched by incidents of violence, calling into question its limitations and restrictive assumptions. When Antonio first enters the classroom, the students discuss a confrontation that happened at recess, including reports of a "menuda paliza" and "un ramillete de pelos y todo," echoing directly the description of a similar fight that Nate recounted in the previous scene (Miranda 33). After the more in-depth conversation on what the project will entail, and despite Antonio's pleas that the students focus, the audience witnesses another moment of violence, although not physical. Hugo, the only student in the class with Spanish parents, complains of a bad odor. He sprays cologne around the room and at his classmates and calls Farah, a Muslim student, a "piojosa." This provokes Mustafá and Farah to insult Hugo and his family, which causes Hugo to lunge at Farah as if to take off her hijab. According to Bhabha, racism is still omnipresent in multicultural environments "because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests" (qtd. in Rutherford 208). Thus, the discussion of the celebration that permits cultural diversity immediately flows into racialized tension based on those norms. By interweaving the plans for a multicultural celebration with instances of physical, verbal, racist, or xenophobic violence, Miranda argues that so are celebrations of diversity and multiculturalism interwoven with violence in Spanish society, as they continue to center and normalize whiteness.

Miranda's play takes its title from this planned multicultural celebration, and the party frames much of the action of the plot. However, the audience never witnesses the students' multicultural presentation. The product of their work is not what is important, but rather the process leading up to it: the students' everyday interactions amongst themselves, their teachers,

and the world. This reflects the importance and effectiveness of focusing on the processes of identification rather than the identity outcomes, as Somerville suggests.

In the performance of *Fiesta* that perpetually builds to the class project but never arrives there, the characters negotiate their identities and cultural difference much more effectively. They do this through a performance of hybridity and by crossing a number of borders. The characters often break with the reality of the classroom. They move in time, in location, in genre, and between their roles. These various literary border-crossing techniques create interstitial spaces, moments of liminality that allow for the opening up and out of possibilities. I argue that each time a character transgresses a textual boundary, a third space appears. This resulting third space "enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it," making way for something new (Bhabha qtd. in Rutherford 211). The overall performance that these fictional students put on for *Fiesta*'s audience is a better celebration of their multifaceted, complex understandings of their cultures and heritages than the strictly-defined project that Antonio planned. After all, according to Bhabha, descending into the third space may lead "to conceptualizing an *inter*national culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*" (56). In a world where educational systems exoticize student diversity and where children, after assimilating at school, may suffer identity crises at home with their immigrant families (Timera 150), Miranda's play imagines a different and more hopeful possibility. To demonstrate their hybrid identities, the student characters break out of the structure of the play and dive fearlessly into these in-between spaces. In their musings and imaginings they produce a much more faithful rendition of their "fiesta," their celebration of where they come from, supported by the opening and ending "Soy de" deliveries.

Although the play includes many moments of place-based experiences at school and their potential effects on student outcomes, the setting of the play is not fixed in a specific school location. The setting itself is meant to be a hybrid, fluid space, able to change quickly between the real-world locations of the classroom and school hallway to students' homes and workplaces. Miranda notes, "A veces estamos en el aula o el pasillo del instituto. Y otras veces estamos en las casas de las madres o en un restaurant chino, pero no es una escenografía realista, sino evocada" (21). This is an evoked story, an evoked reality. These evoked spaces are flexible, without firm boundaries, and the characters are able to flow between them freely, especially with the help of their talents of imagination.

Imagination plays a fundamental role over the course of this play about the next generation. Gardner argues for the importance of "children's play, fantasy, and cultural work in creating . . . a 'new generation' of imagined 'homelands'" and that these imaginings help determine future transnational relationships (901). For Espiritu and Tran, imagination, cultural rediscovery, memory, and invented traditions[43] make up a symbolic transnationalism, which influences how individuals of the next generation "imagine themselves, their social membership, and their future plans" (370). As the students exit the space of the classroom and enter into their imagination primarily through monologues, they begin to construct and negotiate alternative forms of belonging.

One way they imagine other forms of belonging is by imagining their future career possibilities. Kelly and Maharaj note that if the immigrant parents' generation is underrepresented in a particular profession, studies show that their children encounter more difficulty in envisaging their futures in that field (322). However, the youth of Miranda's play

[43] Espiritu and Tran cite the concept of the invention of tradition as studied by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in their 1983 book *The Invention of Tradition*.

are constantly imagining exciting careers, full of potential and opportunities. Mustafá wants to be a lawyer, Xirou a viola player, Farah an author, Ionut a scientist. Additionally, several characters talk about their occupational dreams in soliloquies that contrast starkly with intercalated soliloquies by a first-generation immigrant parent. In these intercalations, we see echoes of the first generation's experiences in their children.

These scenes highlight the tensions and undermine the expectations of intergenerational marginalization. Nate gives the first speech of this type, in which he describes his deep love of kickboxing and other sports. He ruminates,

> Yo me imagino teniendo un pedazo de gimnasio, *(ríe)*
> un gimnasio con un pedazo campo de fútbol fuera . . .
> y hasta una piscina, así es como me lo imagino yo.
> Ser el propietario de un gimnasio, sí. (Miranda 28)

At the end of his reflection on his future gym and what academic steps he will need to complete to achieve this goal, the stage directions note that he passes his boxing gloves to his mother, Ana, who is from Equatorial Guinea and works as a nurse. Despite this physical exchange, Nate and Ana's speeches do not share the same diegetic space. As Nate finishes talking about his career goals, his mother takes up this thread and starts her soliloquy by talking about her job as a nurse, focusing on the racial prejudices she encounters at the hospital and in public transportation. Passing off the gloves to her son, Nate continues in this vein and recounts an instance of racial prejudice at school. Ana says, "No, no, esta historia / a mi hijo no se la he contado," and Nate echoes, "Mi madre no se enteró. / No. / No se lo conté" (Miranda 31, 32). This scene reinforces the idea of immigration as an intergenerational process: "By this, we mean that when immigrant parents find themselves marginalized in social and economic terms, the impacts of such marginalization do not end there, but are often reproduced among their children" (Kelly and Maharaj 315). Racism, access to the labor market, language barriers, and precarious legal status

can be reproduced in the lives of migrant children, but Miranda allows her characters to use their imaginations to construct a more optimistic future.

This interlacing of the experiences of the parent generation of migrants with those of their children is repeated in an intercalated scene with Kamila's mother, who appears onstage cooking tamales and dancing, and, most strikingly, in the monologues of Ionut and his mother Flori. Ionut is himself a first-generation immigrant, recently arrived and with little verbal practice with the Spanish language. Flori immigrated nine years previously, sending remittances earned from her housecleaning job to her sister and son until finally she was able to bring the latter to Spain. This scene is a strong visual representation of the power of imagination. Multiple diegetic spaces exist onstage at once, and the breaks in the narrative flow multiply. Ionut's thoughts interrupt the dialogue of the classroom, where the audience sees Antonio, Mustafá, Nate, and the other students. A separate explanation of the state of education in Spain by Antonio interrupts Ionut's soliloquy, and Antonio is interrupted by Flori who retells part of her migration story. Alma cuts off Flori to reimagine what discipline and positive reinforcement should look like at school. The sense of textual migration between these scenes occupying different narrative spaces continues to augment and allows for the creation of Bhabha's third space in these narrative fissures. The scene ends with Ionut and his mother delivering interlaced soliloquies, represented in the text by two columns separated by a vertical line over which the reader must cross with each change in speaker. Ionut speaks in his native Romanian, with the Spanish translation projected during the performance for the audience to read, while his mother speaks in an imperfect Spanish. The switches in language create audible breaks, as well.

However, while Flori focuses on the past and on the sometimes-dismal reality of her present, these concerns do not limit the wandering of Ionut's mind. Throughout the scene, he

wears skates. When he is supposed to enter into the diegetic space of the classroom, the stage directions say, "IONUT en lugar de sentarse comienza a patinar. En el fondo se proyecta una ciudad, un cielo, un mundo que es de él" (Miranda 77). Through movement, Ionut escapes from the reality of the host country to retreat to an imagined place, a newly fabricated "homeland" of sorts. In this world of his own creation, he feels free. "Entiendo todo / porque todo está aquí," he claims, signaling his head,

> Por ejemplo para mí cuando me pongo a patinar me pongo los cascos y voy solo
> me siento en mi mundo
> el mundo para ti
> en mi mente. (Miranda 77)

This world within his mind is the place to which he turns repeatedly in the face of daily stressors in his new environment, the homeland conceived "not only as a physical space that immigrants and their children return to for visits but also as a concept and desire—a place to return to through the imagination" (Espiritu and Tran 369). This world of his own, at which he arrives through a combination of movement and music, through "performative, embodied acts," is a reimagined home and refuge where he can dream of his future in this country and explore multiple possibilities (Anttila et al. 214). His goal of becoming a soldier has transformed into a hope of doing something in medicine or working in a laboratory (Miranda 76). Anttila et al. believe that "[t]he subjective experience of performing, that is, *being seen*, coupled with witnessing others performing, that is, *seeing*, creates a possibility for shared space where something new may emerge; where (cultural) difference may become articulated, sensed, and welcomed" (214). Ionut uses movement on his skates to express himself, while a David Guetta song plays in the background, and although unseen by his classmates, he is seen by the audience, and this shared space of performed difference, audibly marked by his use of Romanian, fosters courage, confidence, and hope.

Despite the obstacles and discrimination he encounters on a daily basis at school that have often made him feel useless or like he should return to Romania, he has high hopes for his future in Spain and the confidence that he will not give up so easily. Although at the end of the play his first "Soy de" proclamation returns to sentimental longings of his real homeland with "Yo soy del *shawarma* que comía en Rumanía y que aquí no hay los ingredientes," a later line asserts, "Yo soy de patinar solo con los cascos y el mundo para mí" (Miranda 107, 108). These affirmations are important because, as Gardner explains, "insights into children's imaginings shed new light on the cultural construction of place, identity and interconnectedness" (900). Ionut's identity contains a multitude of experiences, is both of here and there, and reimagines his process of being and becoming. This, in turn, allows autochthonous Spaniards and other audience members or readers to question the construction of place and identity in their own lives.

As seen in the case of Ionut, Miranda uses textual migration in the experimentation of time and space as the play shifts diegetic spaces and toys with the reality of the characters. Miranda also imbues her work with metatheatrical migrancy. Stevens studies "the metatheatrical trying on of different personas" in several Dominican plays and claims that it "constitutes a translation strategy that does not result in assimilation—replacing one nationalist attachment with another—but in hybrid identities that embody multiple identifications" (191). One way in which Miranda utilizes this technique in the 2017 performance is by assigning actors to multiple characters and using versatile costume items and lighting strategies to signal to the audience which character is which. Actor Anahí Beholi's characters, which include Farah, Kamila, Naima, and some of the teachers and staff, are especially prone to this migrancy as Beholi moves in and out and through their separate personas. In the following case study spanning a series of six scenes, I analyze how Beholi's Farah, through textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy,

displays the process of identification and the working out of contradictions and tensions inherent to who she is.

It is no surprise that Farah's character receives the attention of six of the twenty-four total scenes. As a Muslim Spanish student of Moroccan heritage who wears a hijab or some other type of head covering, identified by "velo" or "pañuelo" in the text, Farah is one of the "impossible Spanish subjects" mentioned in Chapter 2 (Moffette 19), the feared and anxiety-inducing "Moor." Like Fátima and Said in *Maldita cocina*, Farah is especially adept at unsettling the status quo; her mere presence is disruptive. The textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy in Farah's scenes mirror this as the boundaries between characters and genres are blurred, disrupting expectations and neat categorizations.

A series of six scenes, or a fourth of the entire play, center on Farah and what it means to be a "good" Muslim girl in Spain. This series starts with the scene titled "El velo," continues in "Con un par de ovarios," "Hago lo que quiero con mi velo," "La sonrisa de los pasillos," "Las normas de Farah," and ends in the scene "Vida galáctica," which takes the audience into the science-fiction genre. Thematically, the hijab is one of the connecting threads through each of these scenes, but physically it is also the item of clothing that Beholi uses to make a visual switch between characters onstage. In the performance, Beholi uses a versatile double-sided cloth, black on one side and orange on the other, and fashions it into different-colored hijabs, a shawl, or another item of clothing as needed. With just this simple but visibly noticeable costume modification, Beholi signals to the audience which character she intends to embody in that moment. The migration between personas is, as we will see, rather messy, which helps to untether the characters' identities from any fixed categories.

The first scene opens the discussion on the hijab, as the students in the classroom discuss the presentation on which they are working. When the instructor asks Nate to remove his hat, he asks about Farah's hijab. Farah switches briefly to a narrator role, stepping out of the diegetic space of the classroom, signaled by a lighting change, and speaks directly with the audience about her decision to wear the hijab. A metatheatrical "coro de alumnos" surrounds her and asks a slew of questions without pause about this item of clothing, breaking with the reality of the classroom to represent how overwhelming the obsessive curiosity and microaggressions can be. The chorus members gather behind her in a small square of light, popping out with exaggerated motions and voices to achieve this effect, even pulling at the hijab and singing about how she reminds them of a nun. Beholi then shifts to the role of substitute instructor, Laura, who walks into a new spotlight and adjusts the cloth so it becomes a shawl across her shoulders, and her discussion of the hijab leads to the introduction of Naima.

The character switching between Farah and Naima is especially impactful. Stevens calls metatheatrical migrancy "the moments in which the characters flow from one identity into the next so quickly that traces of previous characters peep through," which is precisely what happens at the end of this scene (197). Alma, the mother-like office worker of the school, explains to the audience that she had a close relationship with former student Naima. This young girl also wore a hijab, and the actress differentiates it from Farah's orange hijab by using the black side of the double-sided scarf. In this scene, Naima shows her hair to Alma in a "ritual" act of trust and confides in her about her arranged marriage (Miranda 53). Naima uses a mirror as a prop to represent a bedroom or bathroom setting where she and Alma could have these intimate conversations. Alma attends her graduation as well as her wedding, and explains to the audience that Naima married who she wanted to marry and is studying to be a medical doctor. She notes to

the audience that Naima is "una tía con un par de ovarios. / Atípica," turns to Naima and says, "Tú eres una mujer atípica. Y harás cosas atípicas para tu pueblo" (Miranda 56). According to the text, the scene ends as a light turns on and the audience sees Farah gazing at herself in the same mirror in which Naima looked at herself before, drawing a clear visual parallel between these two young women. In the 2017 performance, Beholi switches the black fabric over to reveal the orange hijab and become Farah once again, and the transition is ushered in by a stark visual and aural shift without warning as three other actors dance and sing in color-changing lights the lyrics, "Hago lo que quiero con mi velo." In the short scene that follows, Farah describes her hair. This speech picks up the thread from the previous section, the theme of hair as an important marker of identity, and thus a part of Naima peeps through the character of Farah. This begins to illustrate Farah's fluid identity, multilayered just like the cloth of her double-sided hijab. Naima functions as a sort of double of Farah; she represents another version of the "good" Muslim girl.

Another doubling of Farah occurs in "La sonrisa de los pasillos." The character double is never seen, but the inclusion of her story is meaningful because it contrasts Naima's successful outcome with a much more negative one. Amal, another young Muslim woman and former student, experiences both an ontological[44] and a physical death. She differs from Naima and Farah in that the instructors praise her practices of assimilation, her effective integration into what they consider Spanish society. She did not wear a hijab and her closest friends were Spanish. Antonio comments, "no intuías que fuera musulmana de origen . . . no se relacionaba con musulmanas," and perhaps because of this perception of her perfect assimilation into Spanishness, she was a favorite amongst the faculty (Miranda 60). The teachers and staff, bathed

[44] Coleman considers the erasure of parts of one's identity to gain entry to "Spanishness" as an ontological death (*The Necropolitical* 14).

in gloomy blue lighting, lament her death and reveal to the audience their suspicions of foul play. They explain that the mother was a "radical" Muslim, and Amal became of marriageable age according to her family's customs and "el mundo musulmán," which led the teachers to believe "que la habían suicidado. / No que se suicidó / que la suicidaron" (Miranda 61). The previously-established threads of the themes of marriage and the hijab seen in Naima's scene are picked up in the story of Amal, albeit from a different perspective and with a different conclusion. While Naima seemed to succeed at "upward assimilation and biculturalism, in which young people can work equally in multiple cultural registers," Amal tried to assimilate "upward . . . into the mainstream" of Spanish society, but the socialization she received at school came into conflict with her position in familial space[45] (Kelly and Maharaj 317).

The tone shifts drastically in the next scene, signaling another fracture in the play in preparation for a textual border crossing. The tone of "La sonrisa de los pasillos" is sad and reflective, and the actors' performances combined with the lighting makes the scene seem confessional. In "Las normas de Farah," the tone changes radically to one that is upbeat and playful. This fissure, however, is not a clean break; one can see the other characters and layers peeping through Farah's façade. In this scene, Farah takes up the marriage thread from Naima's and Amal's scenes and returns to the career thread from Naima's "Un par de ovarios." After explaining how the arranged marriage process works according to her tradition, Farah leaves behind her student role and migrates into a pretend teacher role, using an overhead projector and various slides to enumerate her "normas" for her future partner. She ends the scene by explaining her interests, the languages she speaks, and her desire to travel. Her last comment to the audience seems to contradict what she has already explained, as she says she does not want to work in the

[45] See Timera for more information on the differences in the socialization and management of intergenerational conflict for boys and girls of African descent.

future and would rather take care of her children full-time. Between these two seemingly contradictory desires, a tension grows that allows for a creative third space to form. In this third space, there is room for fantasy and creativity.

"Vida galáctica" is the embodiment of this fantasy and creativity. The transition between this scene and the previous one is abrupt, and lighting and sound effects suggest a setting of outer space. Miranda's stage directions note that the music should be reminiscent of *Blade Runner*, and two characters come onstage "vestidos como del futuro, galácticos" (65). The actors perform a brief segment of a love story ending in a kiss, followed by a spotlight on Farah who explains that she is the author of this fictional story. She plans to write an entire saga based off this book. Again we see the contradictions that Farah's identity contains. According to Bhabha,

> Hybrid hyphenations emphasize the incommensurable elements—the stubborn chunks—as the basis of cultural identifications. What is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities: the regulation and negotiation of those spaces that are continually, *contingently*, 'opening out', remaking the boundaries, exposing the limits of any claim to a singular or autonomous sign of difference—be it class, gender or race. (313)

Farah just claimed that she did not want to work, and yet she is an avid writer and dreams of the future of her books. Furthermore, Farah realizes,

> Mis personajes son
> españoles,
> con padres
> españoles.
> Es muy raro,
> nunca me he fijado que todos mis personajes,
> que mi personaje no tiene pañuelo. (*silencio*). (Miranda 66)

Although previously she proclaimed that she wears her hijab by choice, she also dreams of a world in which she does not wear it, a universe of other planets, stars, passionate romance, and adventure, one that is not, in her words, boring (Miranda 67). It is, of course, possible that through her experiences at school and with her friends, a modern Spanish imaginary has imposed

itself on Farah, causing her to internalize what society views as normal and write according to those standards. However, what is remarkable is that through her writing and imagination, she is able to navigate those questions herself and explore different possibilities for how she perceives who she is.

The contradictions in Farah's monologue speak to the complexity and multiplicity of her identity. Her capacity for language, her yearning to translate while traveling to distant places, her desire to follow in her mother's footsteps and fulfill traditional roles for women, and her longing for the adventure and romance that she envisions for her fictional, autochthonous Spanish counterparts are all the incommensurable "stubborn chunks" that make up who she is and that necessitate negotiation. Each time one of these scenes opens out or crosses a boundary between the many different realities contained within the play, toying with genre and diegetic space, Farah is participating in this negotiation.

Additionally, each doubled version of Farah represents another incommensurable element in the creation of her identity. Naima, Amal, and Farah are each a separate version of the overarching Farah character, made up of multiple identities that, if we borrow Bhabha's words, "do actually articulate in challenging ways, either positively or negatively, either in progressive or regressive ways, often conflictually, sometimes even *incommensurably*" (qtd. in Rutherford 208). Through the technique of metatheatrical migrancy, Farah is able to put on different identities in each scene just as her actress puts on different items of clothing or uses different props, and these other identities peep through the layers of who Farah is and who she believes she is. The success of Naima and the tragic failure of Amal do not define who Farah has to be. Borrowing again from Bhabha, in "the dynamic process of the articulation of cultural difference"

(qtd. in Rutherford 208-9), Farah can continue to negotiate between these two extremes, as they do not represent her only options.

This series ends with "Vida galáctica," a scene that looks outward to space and forward to the future. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha expounds on a special kind of future: "Such assignations of social differences—where difference is neither One nor the Other but *something else besides, in-between*—find their agency in a form of the 'future' where the past is not originary, where the present is not simply transitory. It is, if I may stretch a point, an interstitial future, that emerges *in-between* the claims of the past and the needs of the present" (313). Farah's imagined future lies in this fertile, in-between space. Imagination is Farah and many of her peers' powerful response to marginalization, an overemphasis on cultural diversity, and the incessant desire of society to fit people into boxes.

Through the characters' imaginings, especially the ways in which they imagine their futures and define their origins, Miranda's next generation migrant characters break apart conceptual boxes and purposefully overlap categories. They never arrive at their destination, the planned "fiesta," nor any particular identity outcome, because such a fixed notion does not exist. Instead, the play ends as it begins, and the cyclical nature of the work emphasizes further the rejection of fixity or a specific identity outcome. The process continues. Nate opens the first scene by making many "Yo soy de" statements: "Yo soy del plátano frito que hace mi tía Mary en las fiestas guineanas. . . . Yo soy de mis botas de fútbol que me regaló mi hermana. Yo soy del último asiento del 620 a las dos de la mañana" (Miranda 23-4). Some of his peers join him onstage, dancing and singing as he makes his assertions.

The stage directions note that the lighting of the first scene, "Yo soy de," is repeated in the last scene, "Yo soy de future." This concluding scene transpires after a brief interlude of the

adult characters discussing the question, "¿Qué es la patria?" These adults, two of whom are immigrants, all mention different ways of defining "la patria," and this philosophical reflection morphs into the children's discussion of defining themselves. In these last moments of the play, all of the teenage characters announce proudly where they are from. The students claim to be "from" their traditional foods, places for which they are nostalgic, music that makes them emotional, favorite items of clothing, childhood games, or family customs and rules. The origin claims become more complex and abstract, as the characters quote things people have said to them or thoughts they have had that in some way represent how they feel about their identities. According to Miranda's stage directions, "Las siguientes frases las dicen sin tener en cuenta el personaje" (107). The dialogue picks up some of the threads from previous scenes, such as Ionut's skates and Mustafá's romantic dreams of Paris, but these lines may not be voiced by the characters to whom they originally belonged, continuing the trend of metatheatrical migrancy as traces of the characters peep through one another and they flow between identities. In the final lines, they claim their space and announce their hope:

> Yo soy de todo lo que quiera ser.
> Yo soy de un futuro abierto.
> Yo soy de un futuro que aún por escribir.
> Yo soy de aquí.
> Yo soy de aquí.
> Yo soy de aquí.
> Yo soy de aquí. (Miranda 108-9)

Like Bezerra's "CONTINUARÁ…" this play looks to the future and leaves it open for the young protagonists.

Through their movement between diegetic spaces and personas, these next generation youth have maintained their sense of migrancy, not allowing society or their school to fix their identities into a specific cognitive landscape. Miranda's play leaves conceptions of belonging

and identity open and ready to be rewritten. "¿Qué es la patria?" (Miranda 106). What is Spain? What does it mean to be Spanish? Who am I?

In the last line of the play, all of the characters onstage say together, "Yo soy más de aquí que de allí" to emphasize one last time the need to reanalyze what it means to be Spanish (Miranda 109). Coleman explains that in his conception of convivial theater, "racialized characters are depicted as part of the national fabric" as they work toward tolerance, integration, identity negotiation, or other outcomes (*The Necropolitical* 121). So have these members of the next generation asserted their place in the national fabric of Spain by weaving this theatrical tapestry. Miranda's characters end *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta* with this celebration of their identities on their own terms rather than the celebration originally planned by their teacher and curriculum.

Like Xiaomei in *El señor Ye*, the next generation characters of Miranda's *Fiesta* possess several cultural repertoires upon which they may draw depending on their circumstances. They do not define themselves according to a binary, as belonging strictly to either their home country or their host country. Instead, they revel in their hybridity and the possibility of making meaning outside of the repression of pre-existing norms. *El señor Ye* and *Fiesta* explore the process of being and becoming by opening out expectations and crossing and remaking boundaries. Bezerra and Miranda accomplish this through the subject matter of their plays as well as in their structures, through textual migration and metatheatrical migrancy, moving fluidly between genres and diegetic spaces. Movement as both action and theme aims to destabilize fixed notions of identity and to decenter what "Spanish" means. These two plays move beyond the practices and techniques of the necropolitical theater so popular and common in earlier plays about immigration in Spain. Death—whether physical, ontological, or social—is not the only option for these next generation migrant characters. These plays move beyond "mere survivability for

nonwhites" to new possibilities, to a rich and vibrant life (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 15). Despite the marginalization and stigmatization they face, these characters use practices of transnationalism and their unbridled imagination to reconceptualize their place in Spanish society, to reconceive the possibilities for their futures, and to reimagine themselves.

Conclusion: Moving Between and Beyond

This is an intervention. A message from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonised/coloniser. Marginality as site of resistance. Enter that space. Let us meet there. Enter that space. We greet you as liberators.
—bell hooks, "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness"

Cuando alguien estudia dos lenguas, es bilingüe, suma una a otra. Sin embargo, en el caso de la hibridación cultural el resultado no es la suma de dos culturas diferentes sino algo totalmente nuevo, distinto. Por eso resulta tan enriquecedora.
—Celia Marcén, in Zhou Wu's Gente de aquí, gente de allí

As Eileen J. Doll notes, "el personaje [migrante] es ya familiar," having formed part of Spanish casts since the end of 1980 (*Los inmigrantes* 278). However, the six plays studied here illustrate an important evolution, although nonlinear, of the migrant character being represented and the migrant stories being told onstage. This dissertation aims to expand on the scholarship of migration literature in Spain and to highlight plays that move beyond the damaging tropes, stereotypes, and trite plotlines used in many Spanish immigration plays of the 1990s. *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última*, *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros*, *Maldita cocina*, *Un trozo invisible de este mundo*, *El señor Ye ama los dragones*, and *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta* contain migrant characters who refuse to fall neatly within binary categories. These characters are neither the figure to be feared nor pitied; they are neither fully Spanish nor fully Other. Their stories are complex and multifaceted and reflect more faithfully the hybrid identities of the real-life border crossers they depict.

Chapter 1, "Creative Border Encounters: Rehearsing New Possibilities on the Move," focused on sub-Saharan African migrants and the many borders they must cross on their journey

to their European destinations. Scholars show that the borders at the edge of Fortress Europe are some of the deadliest in the world, and these dangers are worsened by new bordering practices and securitization efforts that include surveillance technologies, information-sharing systems, and border externalization. As the EU shuts down more and more of the safer regular pathways for migration, migrants look toward the more dangerous irregular routes, such as hopping the fences in Ceuta or Melilla or passing through Libya and boarding *pateras* to cross the Mediterranean Sea. Guimarães's *La increíble historia de la chica que llegó la última* and Teatro sin papeles's *¡Boza!: El grito que derrumba los muros* make visible the perils of these journeys and hold the EU and Spain accountable to the violence their bordering practices have caused. Their characters, unlike their counterparts in earlier Spanish migration plays, successfully navigate the many border spaces they encounter and do so with creativity, humor, and imagination. The border, for them, truly is "a meaning-bearing space, meaning-generative too" (Longo xi).

In the second half of *¡Boza!*, the migrant characters who have arrived in Spain attempt to settle into a community and find work and personal connections. Here they encounter the "proliferation or multiplication of walls and borders of various kinds" (Mezzadra and Neilson 71), as they experience social exclusion and other blockades to enjoying full citizenship or belonging in their daily lives. Representations of these sticky borders and methods of transgressing them are the focus of Chapter 2, "Migrants in the Labor Circuit: Everyday Movements of Resistance and Cooperation," which analyzes the migrant characters of *Maldita cocina* and *Un trozo invisible de este mundo* and their interaction with the labor market and Spain's social and racial hierarchy. These migrant characters come from a variety of countries and regions, offering to audience members a panorama of who may approximate whiteness and

who is differentially included on a day-to-day basis. The restaurant, construction, and domestic workers encounter exploitation in the workforce and must resist having their identities reduced to the labor they produce. Cabal and Rodríguez's characters, despite rampant interpersonal conflict, end up working together to destroy the very place that has oppressed and contained them. Botto's Paulino, Mujer, and the Artist face immense struggles as they navigate society's lonely, liminal non-places, but through their daily choices and the connections they make and networks they build with other marginalized individuals, they challenge preconceived notions of belonging. Neither play offers a specific alternative or solution to the poor treatment and exclusion migrants to Spain experience, but their open-ended conclusions allow for the space to contemplate and redefine what real community should look like.

Senses of community and belonging are further redefined by the children of first-generation immigrants, who feature as main characters in the plays analyzed in Chapter 3, "Reimagining Migrancy: The Next Generation." In many cases, they have grown up in a different country with different cultural norms than their parents. Dichotomous terms like "host country" and "home country" no longer apply adequately to these individuals' experiences. Next generation migrants engage in transnational practices with the country of their parents' emigration, including remittances, written or digital communication, and visits, and they may even imagine new concepts of home altogether. Bezerra's *El señor Ye ama los dragones* and Miranda's *Fiesta, Fiesta, Fiesta* both include young characters whose hybridity is so apparent that they reject any possibility of their identities being fixed within the cognitive landscape of white, autochthonous Spaniards. They become experts at tapping in to multiple cultural repertoires, and this flexibility affords them new opportunities for success. *El señor Ye*'s Xiaomei and *Fiesta*'s students take advantage of their unique positioning in society to cross

borders of all kinds, redefine what cultural and national belonging means, and reimagine their futures.

These six plays by six different playwrights or theatrical companies over a period of two decades depart from many of the harmful elements of their predecessors. Coleman classifies these precursors as necropolitical theater, explaining that "many of the plays, despite aiming to humanize the immigrant experience, actually reify sensationalized, autochthonous anxieties that are often found in the media and politics" (*The Necropolitical* 1). These earlier plays, most often written by white, autochthonous Spaniards, utilize migrant characters who are flat and undeveloped, who confirm stereotypes, and whose only possible fate is death of some kind, "social marginalization, forced assimilation, and in the most extreme cases, physical death" (Coleman, *The Necropolitical* 2). Conversely, most of the theatrical works studied in this dissertation do not include death for the migrant, and those that do undermine death's gravity and finality. Instead, they choose to focus on the multiplicity and complexity of migrant stories and identities and to imagine different and abundant outcomes.

The plays share amongst themselves many of the techniques used to create these new narratives and challenge previous plays' habits of casting the migrant into limited roles with limited outcomes. Regarding their content, most of them do not include a dramatic, dangerous, or tragic crossing of a wall, fence, or other physical border; no bodies wash up on the southern shores of Spain, for example. Vivek Shraya asks, "Why is my humanity only seen or cared about when I share the ways in which I have been victimized and violated?" (qtd. in Walia). As if in response to this idea, these characters demonstrate their humanity by sharing stories of success, joy, and laughter, too. The characters may struggle in their new environment, but their failures are not all-encompassing and do not define them. Furthermore, van Dijk explains that "in Spain

there is scarce coverage [in the press] of the everyday lives, the work and activities of minorities" (67-8). However, we do see mundane activities such as playing "I Spy" in *La increíble historia*, taking public transportation in *¡Boza!*, cleaning the floor or cooking a meal in *Maldita cocina*, telephoning a spouse or eating pizza on a rooftop in *Un trozo invisible*, celebrating a birthday in *El señor Ye*, and preparing for a school project in *Fiesta*; the intentional performance of these daily, ordinary actions of migrants is, in this sense, radical. The numerous motions of everyday life amplify the international movement that began their migration journey, and the migrants repeatedly cross the borders they encounter, dispersed throughout their communities or carried on their bodies. As Andrew Smith wisely states, "By becoming mobile and by making narratives out of this mobility, people escape the control of states and national borders *and* the limited, linear ways of understanding themselves which states promote in their citizens" ("Migrancy" 245). It stands to reason, therefore, that these narratives of mobility may also reject limited, linear structures.

The plays studied in this dissertation certainly defy a number of structural limitations and genre conventions. *La increíble historia*, *¡Boza!*, *Un trozo invisible*, and *Fiesta* all contain temporal jumps, shifts in and out of multiple diegetic spaces, and metatheatrical role changes. The most linear, chronologically straightforward plays in this dissertation are undoubtedly *Maldita cocina* and *El señor Ye*, but even these are fractured in other ways, such as through the interweaving of a nauseating multitude of storylines, drastic shifts in tone, or a confusion of genres. Some of the plays seem to engage in realism up until it no longer serves their goal, and then they cross textual borders into fantasy or science fiction, trying on different genres as it suits them. The intertextual references in these plays abound, and many of them use the metatheatrical technique of self-reference. Richard Hornby elucidates, "With self-reference, the play directly

calls attention to itself as a play," so every time a character breaks the fourth wall to speak with the audience or uses a costume piece to transform into a new role, the effect "is direct and immediate, a splash of cold water thrown into the face of a dreaming, imagining audience" (103, 104). Zatlin also emphasizes "the subversive potential of metadrama" and the "fictional games" it plays with its audience ("Metatheatre" 60). She explains, "In fully developed metadrama, the spectator 'sees double' and hence experiences a kind of dislocation," and, in the case of the plays in this dissertation, this dislocation helps to destabilize previously held beliefs about what it means to be part of the Spanish community (Zatlin, "Metatheatre" 56). Additionally, "metafictional characters call attention to the fluid nature of individual identity," so Samia, Mujer, Farah, and others assert this fluidity and allow for the questioning and exploration of identity (Zatlin, "Metatheatre" 59). In their content, in their structure, and through these experimental techniques, the plays of this dissertation approach Coleman's idea of a convivial theater that more faithfully represents the realities of Spain and its migrants.

Writing, performing, viewing, and learning about these plays is essential for disrupting dominant discourses about migrants. According to van Dijk:

> That is, racist practices, cognition and discourse are intimately related: we learn our prejudices largely through text and talk, first from our parents and friends, then from textbooks, television, and the newspaper, that is, from the symbolic elites: teachers, journalists, writers and politicians. The same is true, obviously, for our antiracist beliefs, ideologies and practices. (60)

The media plays a significant role in defining migrants according to strict binaries and sensationalizing their often-violent and tragic experiences. Literature, especially theater, can interrupt these narratives and offer other possibilities. As this dissertation has discussed, according to prevailing assumptions, migration is optional and unidirectional and migrants willingly and enthusiastically leave their countries behind because they find a better life in the

receiving country, into which their goal is to assimilate seamlessly (Ahmad xviii). Teatro sin papeles, Guimarães, Botto, Cabal and Rodríguez, Bezerra, and Miranda open up space for alternative stories to be told that contradict these notions. They avoid these pitfalls in part because the playwrights are either migrants themselves or have included migrants directly at multiple levels of the artistic process of creation. Camila Pinzón Mendoza, the director of Teatro sin papeles's other work *Las latinas son…*, states clearly why migrants must be involved in the telling of their stories:

> Es absolutamente imprescindible que seamos nosotras mismas quienes contemos nuestra propia historia. Llevamos décadas siendo invisibilizadas o contadas por personas ajenas a nuestra realidades, y esto además de ser un discurso incorrecto es racista y colonial. Creencias de lo que creen que somos, de lo que creen que pensamos, de lo que creen que hacemos; es decir, de lo que no somos. Lo peligroso es que estas creencias se han consolidado tanto en la sociedad que han terminado creando realidades y determinando realmente nuestras vidas. Por eso, nuestro objetivo es crear nuevas narrativas, desde la visibilización, la reflexión y la denuncia, basadas en la realidad de nuestras vidas dentro de una estructura social que nos oprime, y en este sentido únicamente podemos ser nosotras quienes nos narremos. (Teatro del Barrio)

As more works by migrants and for migrants are written and performed, they should begin to effect changes in the fabric of Spanish society.

Since the beginning of this dissertation project, much has changed worldwide that has heavily impacted migrants and the salience of the topic of migration in general. The COVID-19 pandemic caused countries to lock down their borders more tightly than ever to hopeful migrants, disrupting migrant labor sources as well as individual lives. Harsha Walia explains that the pandemic "provides a perfect excuse to hasten in the vision of securitized borders and usher states of emergency into permanency," seen, for example, in Malta's decision to abandon boats of refugees in the Mediterranean because it was too overwhelmed by COVID-19. The pandemic made crowded migrant and refugee camps' already precarious conditions even more dangerous. Migrants were and are thus more susceptible to the virus and have tended to avoid entering

highly surveilled public areas like healthcare spaces (Walia). It is also predicted that as climate changes become direr in countries around the world, climate migration will increase rapidly. Ian Urbina reports, "Climate change is expected to displace 216 million people across the globe by 2050. Rising seas, desertification, famine, etc. will drive the desperate to places like Europe and the United States." The expectation is that this will worsen the perilous conditions in the Mediterranean.

The war between Ukraine and Russia also forced an international conversation about who is allowed to cross borders and how differential inclusion operates. Judith Sunderland, acting deputy Europe and Central Asia director at the Human Rights Watch, had this to say about the different treatment of migrants based on their skin color: "On the other side of Europe, Ukrainian refugees are rightly welcomed with open arms but here [in Morocco] and elsewhere along Europe's borders we see a total disregard for Black lives" ("Morocco/Spain"). The issue of race and migration was in the spotlight in June 2022, as well, when the Melilla fence made international news. Migrants attempted a mass crossing and were met with excessive police force, including teargas and beatings, resulting in at least twenty-three deaths, and there were reports of hasty mass burials in Nador and illegal summary returns without the chance to apply for asylum ("Morocco/Spain"). It is obvious that migration will continue to be a topic of major importance on the international sociopolitical stage, and media reports will amplify fear and pity and flatten migrants into mere numbers. By telling migrant stories through literature and embodying those stories on the stage in front of crowded auditoriums, perhaps migrants and their allies can resist this erasure.

There remains much work to do to contribute to the study of contemporary Spanish theater about migration. Scholars must start by "refusing selective amnesia and shifting the gaze .

. . toward the enduring project of Europe" (Walia); Ahmad claims that "we can't understand contemporary migrations without understanding slavery and colonialism as their precursor and cause" (xx). With this foundation, scholars can analyze a theatrical repertoire that is ever-expanding, as "migrations will continue; migrants will suffer and flourish; new migration stories will be written, sung, painted, filmed, and coded" (Ahmad xxix). Future studies can move beyond Madrid or Barcelona to analyze migration plays with settings in more rural parts of Spain. Works whose characters are motivated or affected by climate change and COVID-19 will undoubtedly proliferate. Several of the playwrights and theatrical companies studied in this dissertation have other works about migration also worthy of analysis. Bezerra's *Dentro de la tierra* takes place in the greenhouses common in southern Spain, most notably in Almería, and comments on the exploitative working conditions migrant workers endure there. Teatro sin papeles's *Las latinas son…* would be of particular interest, as it gives voice to a specific but incredibly productive and valuable subset of migrants to Spain. Lucía Miranda's Cross Border Project conducts many community programs, including one in which migrant youth and their classmates collaborate in theatrical creation, including a 2019 production called Generación Global. Just as the future is wide open for the migrant characters in the six plays studied in this dissertation, so is the future wide open for further literary investigation on this topic.

bell hooks, whose words introduced this conclusion in an epigraph, argues in defense of "that marginality one chooses as site of resistance—as location of radical openness and possibility" (23). Her words resonate profoundly with what has been said here:

> Silenced. We fear those who speak about us who do not speak to us and with us. We know what it is like to be silenced. We know that the forces that silence us because they never want us to speak differ from the forces that say speak, tell me your story. Only do not speak in the voice of resistance. Only speak from that space in the margin that is a sign of deprivation, a wound, an unfulfilled longing. Only speak your pain. (23)

The migrant characters, actors, and playwrights studied in this dissertation refuse to be silenced in either of these ways. They speak far beyond their pain. Through the opening up of third spaces, they are able to create new meaning and negotiate their identities and senses of belonging, being, and becoming. These in-between, interstitial spaces become their sites of resistance, from which they speak their pain and their joy, their failures and their successes, their pasts and their futures, and all their desires. The impacts of their redefinitions of self and home reverberate out into their communities, displacing dominant and oppressive discourses, and the more we listen to their stories, the more we are all changed.

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