

**Liquid Metaphors in Caribbean-Canadian and Chicano ‘Sea(e)scapes’: Confronting Dionne Brand and Gloria Anzaldúa.**

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Abstract

This essay explores the significance of liquid metaphors in American imagination with a specific focus on the literary production of Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa (1942-2004) and the Caribbean-Canadian Dionne Brand (1953 -). The aim is providing a parallel and comparative reading of the narratives, images and language used by the authors as a form of ‘sea(e)scape’, a way of transcending their personal and communal socio-cultural and emotional reality through writing. The standpoints around which investigation is constructed are: 1) The *middle passage*, at the core of Brand’s literary and family experience in the Caribbean’s, since it is connected with the African diaspora, and; 2) the Chicano American dream that the crossers of the Rio Grande embody and that Anzaldúa puts into question both emotionally and culturally in her literary production.

Keywords: Dionne Brand, Gloria Anzaldúa, Caribbean’s, Chicano, Sea(e)scape,

## Liquid Metaphors in Caribbean-Canadian and Chicano 'Sea(e)scapes': Confronting Dionne Brand and Gloria Anzaldúa.

### 1. Preliminary considerations<sup>1</sup>

"We were born, so to speak, provisionally, it doesn't matter where. It is only gradually that *we compose within ourselves our true place of origin* so that we may be born there retrospectively and each day more definitely" (italics mine). Italian cultural anthropologist and visual artist Fiamma Montezemolo recalls this quotation by Czech poet Rainer Maria Rilke in her short movie *Traces* (2012) in order to highlight the necessity of all human beings to know our place of origin and to come back repeatedly – both physically and emotionally - to this geo-psycho-mythical location in the course of life. Seen from this perspective, one's own native place and origin appear as a work-in-progress, a construction made of the narrative we tell and retell ourselves, and other people, about who we are and where we come from.

In this virtual monologue before the wall that separates Mexico from the U.S., Montezemolo traces the genealogy of a possible change, of a future exchange between what is kept inside and what is left outside the geo-political barrier that Mexican people have tried to overcome over time. The author's gaze seems to walk alongside the wall - similar to an iron curtain loaded with the written signs of the human passage - that divides the two Americas, and ends up melting in the ocean's waters. This powerful image, that sees water as the location where every kind of separation is overcome, recalls the work of Guyanese-English scholar Paul Gilroy, who consecrated the ocean's waters - what he called the Black Atlantic (1993) - as the place where diasporic people deported from Africa to America actually rooted their new identities during the *middle passage*.

The waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the waters of the Rio Grande (the natural border between Mexico and the U.S.) represent for us a form of 'sea(e)scape' for those African and Mexican/Chicano people who have been forced to undertake, respectively, the century old transatlantic journey towards a destiny of slavery, or the voluntary crossing of the river to get closer to their American dream. 'Sea(e)scape' is the figuration we take on here to: 1) describe both the actual condition of people escaping their reality choosing water as the channel of change, as their 'means of transport'; and, 2) acknowledge the fact that the geo-political, cultural and emotional landscape we live in should be considered also in its significant liquid element, namely, as a 'seascape'<sup>2</sup>. The African diaspora and the Mexican/Chicano American dream are the two key concepts around which we constructed our reflection on the importance of the water element in American imagination - with a specific focus on the literary production of Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa (1942-2004) and the Caribbean-Canadian Dionne Brand (1953 -) – in order to provide a parallel and comparative reading of the narratives and language used by the authors as a form of 'sea(e)scape'.

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<sup>1</sup> Preliminary considerations and conclusions are by Carbonara and Taronna. Pages 518-520, and 524 are by Carbonara; pages 521-523, and 525 by Taronna.

<sup>2</sup> This neologism recalls Arjun Appadurai's description of our contemporary world as the result of a series of fluxes - ethnoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, ideoscapes and technoscapes, which he presented in *Modernity at Large* (1996).

## 2. Water, Diaspora, and the American Dream

In the last scene of the 2006 movie *Nuovomondo* (subtitle *The Golden Door*), by Italian director Emanuele Crialese, the protagonists swim in a sea made of milk, after an extremely long and difficult journey from Sicily towards America, and an even more painful stay at Ellis Island for the complex sets of physical and psychological tests that immigrants, in the 1900s, had to undertake at the frontier before being accepted in the U.S. Crialese transforms the water of the ocean, that they courageously crossed to search for a new life in a new world, into milk, the liquid *par excellence* which represents nourishment and care. Will the protagonists of the movie, poor Sicilian people, find nourishment in such an hostile country where officials decide who is going to be accepted and who is going to be rejected no matter if belonging to the same family? The director leaves this unsolved as the movie ends with the milk image, and the spectators are left free to find their own possible endings.

What can be seen as the Golden Door of opportunity, for Crialese's characters and for immigrants searching a new beginning in a New World, represented indeed an Iron Door for the millions of Africans that undertook a forced journey to America during centuries of slave trade. Caribbean-Canadian author Dionne Brand<sup>3</sup> entitles her 2001 memoir *A Map to the Door of No Return* referring to the symbolic (and actual) door<sup>4</sup> that slaves passed through when undertaking the *middle passage*, and evoking the idea that, maybe, it is impossible for their descendents, like her own grandfather in the Caribbean's, to trace a way back to the continent. An ancestral map that cannot be drawn. Milk, in the case of African slaves, turned into blood: the blood of people died on the ships and thrown into the ocean's waters, the blood of people that threw themselves into the ocean's waters, the blood of people tortured by the slave traders and future owners, the blood of women raped and beaten, the blood of kids separated by their mothers, the blood of people that turned the blue Atlantic into a black Atlantic. Crialese's white sea of hope represented, for Africans, a black sea turned into blood.

Dionne Brand provides important water suggestions both in *A Map to the Door of No Return* (2001) and in *No Language is Neutral* (1990)<sup>5</sup>. The sea, the ocean's waters, become the symbolic door through which the author experiences the world: she observes the Caribbean landscape being shaped and reshaped by the tides and conceptualizes her powerful idea of "a sea not bleeding" (1990, 31), a clear reference to the African diaspora. The sea, carrier of secrets and stories, of people and memories, surrounds the author and sometimes overwhelms her. The sea is powerful, it has its own rules and politics; it is a place on a map and at the same time, "the sea is history", as the author asserts recalling Derek Walcott. The author's identity is connected to water and to the Caribbean landscape, as she frequently asks herself questions about 'where' she is and 'where' she comes from, rather than 'who' she is. Origins and being are related; ancestral belonging becomes necessary until she expressively states that her family and people's origins are located in the sea.

<sup>3</sup> Dionne Brand is a poet, writer, filmmaker, educator, and activist born in Guayaguayare, Trinidad in 1953 and moved to Toronto in 1970. She has published poetry, fiction, essays and other writings and taught literature, creative writing, and women's studies at various universities in Canada and the United States. She is also an influential human rights activist, and winner of many prizes. For a detailed biographical reference see <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/dionne-brand/>.

<sup>4</sup> The House of Slaves on the île de Gorée in Senegal.

<sup>5</sup> Brand 'borrows' the expression "no language is neutral" from Derek Walcott's "Midsummer".

They, actually, originated in the sea (an assertion that recalls Paul Gilroy's theory of the Black Atlantic, as seen before).

The loss of spatial memory, embodied by her grandfather who does not remember the name and the original location of their tribe in Africa, does not correspond to a loss in historical memory, which is indeed very present:

To live in the Black Diaspora is a think to live as a fiction – a creation of empires, and also self-creation. [...] I have not visited the Door of No return, but my relying on random shards of history and unwritten memoir of descendants of those who passed through it, including me, I am constructing a map of the region [...] The door out of which Africans were captured, loaded onto ships heading for the New World. It was the door of a million exists multiplied. It is a door many of us wish never existed. It is a door which makes the world *door* impossible and dangerous, cunning and disagreeable [...] **We live in the Diaspora, in the sea in between** (2001, 19-20)

Living in this peculiar space means, for the author, living in between horror and romance: the horror of slavery and the romance of the past, of an African mother-land. History and its memory, in a certain way, engage individuals: "One enters a room and history follows; one enters a room and history precedes. History is already seated in the chair in the empty room when one arrives" (2001, 25).

The following quotations are taken from *A Map* and from the collection *No Language is Neutral*, and they intend to sketch the author's continuous reference to the water element in her quest for a spatial identity, as she strives to position her people's origin not in a historical fact or time, as much as in a floating location.

From *A Map* (2001)

[...] **The sea behind the house where I was born was a rough country sea**, with a long wide shining white beach. I recall waking up each day to discover what it had brought us, and what it had carried way. **The word gaze only applies to water. To look into this water was to look into the world**, or what I thought was the world. Because the sea gave one an immediate sense of how large the world was, how magnificent and how terrifying. **The sea was its own country, its own sovereignty** [...] (7)

[...] **Water is the first thing in my memory. The sea sounded like a thousand secrets, all whispered at the same time** [...] It's difficult to live near the sea. It overwhelms. Well, not true. It owns. Your small life is nothing to it. **The sea uses everything** [...] The sea can make a tree into spongy bits, it can wear away

From *No Language* (1990)

[...] Here was beauty and here was nowhere. The smell of hurrying passed my nostrils with **the smell of sea water** and fresh fish wind, there was history which had taught my eyes to look for escape even beneath the almond leaves fat as women, the conch shell tiny as sands, the rock stone **old like water** [...] (19)

[...] **Pilate was the river I never crossed** as a child. A woman, my mother, was weeping on its banks, weeping for the sufferer she would become, she a too black woman weeping [...] **Pilate was that river I ran from** leaving that woman, my mother [...] as if not to see it any more, that constant veil over her eyes, the blood-stained blind of race and sex [...] (24)

[...] Five hundred dollars and **a passport full of sand and winking water**, is how I reach here, a girl's face shimmering from a little photograph

a button to a shell. It can wash away blood and [...] (25)  
 heal wounds [...] (7-8)

[...] **Our origins seemed to be in the sea.** It had brought the whole Guayguayare there from unknown places, un known origins [...] My grandfather, who knew everything, had forgotten, as if it was not worth remembering, the name of our tribe in that deeply unknown places before the trade. Derek Walcott wrote, **“the sea is history”**. I knew that before I knew it was history I was looking at [...] (12)

[...] In another place, not here, a woman might touch something between beauty and nowhere. Back there and here, might pass hand over hand her own trembling life, but I have tried to imagine **a sea not bleeding**, a girl’s glance full as a verse, a woman growing old and never crying to a radio hissing of a black boy’s murder [...] (31)

The idea of crossing the water to reach another life in another place – seen both in its factual and symbolic meaning - is also present in the literary production of Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa who problematizes the experience of a community of people that for centuries has longed for the American Dream and put into question such fundamentally traditional concepts as American citizenship and history. To this extent, Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987) is provided here as an example of revisionary narrative undercutting naïve notions of nationhood and underlining the contested and liminal nature of national cultures (Zaccaria, 2006), as an attempt to collectively reorganize fundamental events and to name those who are responsible for the historical ‘open wound’:

The US-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and **bleeds**. And before a scab forms it **hemorrhages** again, the **lifeblood** of two worlds merging to form a third country- a border culture. Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them* (Anzaldúa 1987, 3)

*Esos movimietos de rebeldia que tenemos en la sangre nosotros los mexicanos surgen como rios desbocados en mis venas. Y como mi raza que cada en cuando deja caer esa esclavitud de obedecer, de callarse y aceptar, en mi està la rebeldia encimita de mi carne* (15)

Anzaldúa’s writing, as much as it is a medicine offered to her people for the wounds of the past exerted by their oppressors, is also a call to consciousness and to change, and therefore it has to do with history and human condition. Crucially, she compared the U.S./Mexico border to an ‘open wound’ that violently splits homes, bodies, and cultures. But while the physical demarcation of the border may be a space of divisiveness and pain, the regions on either side of the border – the ‘borderlands’, as Anzaldúa calls them – are vibrant, dynamic places of creation and innovation. Artistic, political, and cultural practices in the borderlands blend pre-Conquest, Indian, and European heritage to form new, syncretic traditions. Because the geographic placement of a national border is always arbitrary and artificial, the zones on either side of it contradict the notion that people and cultures can be kept separate or distinct from one another. Instead, borderlands are permeable places where traditions interconnect and cultures overlap. They are bleeding spaces marked by conflict, violence, and hatred, but they can also produce cooperation, innovation, and positive hybridity.

Anzaldúa's narrative symbolism is also embedded in other liquid elements such as the frequent repetition of water metaphors related to the physical and political act of crossing the river to get to the U.S. avoiding police checks. This is what thousands of people, also known as the wetbacks/*los mojadros*, have done since the Guadalupe Hidalgo treaty (1848) sanctioned that they were not Mexicans anymore and that Spanish was not their language. Crossing the river waters to reach the shores of America represents still today their quest for liberty though hundreds of Mexicans are often intercepted and immediately shot at their backs by North American border patrols in a way that their American dream of migration and exploitation cut short before it could ever even begin in earnest. Anzaldúa<sup>6</sup> dedicates a big part of her research to the story and symbolism of this crossing and to the power of the water image. In a poem included in *Borderlands/La Frontera* she writes:

Wind tugging at my sleeve  
 feet sinking into the sand  
**I stand at the edge where earth touches ocean**  
 where the two overlap  
 a gentle coming together  
 at other times and places a violent clash.

Across the border in Mexico  
 stark silhouette of houses gutted by waves,  
**cliffs crumbling into the sea,**  
**silver waves marbled with spume**  
 gashing a hole under the border fence.

*Miro el mar atacar*  
*la cerca en Border Field Park*  
*con sus buchones de agua*  
 an Easter Sunday resurrection  
 of the brown blood in my veins.

*Oigo el llorido del mar, el respire del aire,*  
**my heart surges to the beat of the sea.**  
 in the gray haze of the sun  
 the gulls' shrill cry of hunger,  
 the tangy **smell of the sea seeping into me.**

I walk through the hole in the fence  
 to the other side.  
 Under my fingers I feel the gritty wire

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<sup>6</sup> Gloria Anzaldúa described herself as a "chicana dyke-feminist, tejana patlache poet, writer, and cultural theorist". She was born in 1942 in the Rio Grande Valley. As a teacher, Anzaldúa worked in a bilingual preschool program, then in a Special Education program for mentally and emotionally handicapped students. She also worked to educate college students about feminism, Chicano studies, and creative writing although she was not well accepted by the American academic community. For a detailed biographical reference see <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/utlac/00189/lac-00189p1.html#bioghist>.

rusted by 139 years  
of **the salty breath of the sea.**

Beneath the iron sky  
Beneath the iron sky  
Mexican children kick their soccer ball across,  
run after it, entering the U.S.

I press my hand to the steel curtain—  
chainlink fence crowded with rolled barbed wire—  
rippling from **the sea where Tijuana touches San Diego**  
unrolling over mountains  
and plains  
and deserts,  
this “Tortilla curtain” turning into **el río Grande**  
flowing down to the flatlands  
of the Magic Valley of South Texas  
its mouth emptying into **the Gulf.**

1,950 mile-long open wound  
dividing a *pueblo*, a culture  
running down the length of my body,  
staking fence rods in my flesh,  
splits me splits me  
*me raja me raja*

This is my home  
this thin edge of  
barbwire.

But the skin of the earth is seamless.  
**The sea cannot be fenced,**  
***el mar does not stop at the borders.***  
To show the white man what she thought of his  
arrogance,  
*Yemayá* blew that wire fence down [...]

Faceless, nameless, invisible, taunted with “Hey cucaracho” (cockroach). Trembling with fear, yet filled with courage, a courage born of desperation. Barefoot and uneducated, Mexicans with hands like boot soles gather at night by **the river where two world merge** creating what Reagan calls a frontline, a war one. The convergence has created a shock culture, a border culture, a third country, a closed country. Without benefit of bridges, the “**mojado**” (**wetbacks**) float on inflatable rafts across **el río Grande**, or wade or swim across naked, clutching their clothes over their heads. Holding onto the grass, they pull themselves along the banks with a prayer to *Virgen de Guadalupe* on their lips: *Ay virgencita morena, mi amdrecita dame tu benediction.* [...] cornered by flashlights, frisked while their arms



stretch over their heads, **los mojudos** are handcuffed, locked in jeeps, and then kicked back across the border (11-12)

Though these excerpts can be seemingly read as an evidence of Anzaldúa's critical and skeptical attitude towards the river/border crossing as the ultimate fulfillment of the American dream for the Chicanos, the passages below reveal a sort of misleading ambiguity and sharp awareness of the *travesia*:

For many *mexicanos del otro lado*, the choice is to stay in Mexico and starve or move north and live. *Dicen que cada mexicano siempre suena de la conquista en los brazos de cuatro gringas rubias, la conquista del pais poderoso del norte, los Estados Unidos. En cada Chicano y mexicano vive el mito del Tesoro territorial perdido.* North Americans call this return to the homeland the silent invasion (10)

The bleeding wound that Anzaldúa locates on the border between Mexico and the U.S. can be associated to the bleeding sea Brand looks at, in reverse, to search for her family roots. But if, for Anzaldúa, water represents the merging point of two different worlds and the only element that cannot be fenced in, Brand's relationship with this liquid element is complex since she fears and loves it at the same time. Indeed, seen from this perspective, "Whereas for immigrants and refugees, the New World historically has signaled new beginnings, painful histories erased or escaped, for those who came in chains, history is a haunting" (Sanders 2009, IX). Probably, the ocean's vital and scaring power of creation and recreation, of movement, resembles Brand's troubled desire to free herself from the narrative of oppression that she sees embedded in the "trope of colonialism", or "story of captivity", that she wants to dis-remember (2001, 42). "Water is the first thing in my imagination [...] All beginning in water, all ending in water" (2001, 6), she affirms.

### 3. Possible 'Sea(e)scapes': the Door and the Bridge

Throughout this paper we attempt to examine the extent to which both Brand and Anzaldúa have embraced a transnational imagery not only through the juxtaposition of images of water with images of blood in their narrative texture, but using powerful figurations to convey their understanding of the water-crossing – of the river and the ocean – which are respectively the bridge and the door. It is interesting to note that the door is, for Brand, something that Africans left behind them, a physical and spiritual location lost in the sea which they find difficult to re-map. She states ironically: "To have one's belonging lodged in a metaphor is voluptuous intrigue; to inhabit a trope; to be a kind of fiction" (2001,18). She also writes:

Having no name to call on was having no past; having no past pointed to the fissure between the past and the present. That **fissure** is represented in the **Door** of No Return: that place where our ancestors departed one world for another; the Old world for the New. The place where all names were forgotten and all beginnings recast. In some desolate sense it was the creation place of blacks in the New World Diaspora at the same time as it signified the end of traceable beginnings (5)

On the other hand, Anzaldúa's bridge stretches towards the other side of the river to reach the American dream and to find another way back 'home':

Whenever I glimpse the arch of this **bridge** my breath catches. Bridges are thresholds to other realities, archetypal, primal symbols of shifting consciousness. They are passageways, conduits, and connectors that connote transitioning, crossing borders, and changing perspectives. Bridges span liminal (threshold) spaces between worlds, spaces I call nepantla, a Nahuatl word meaning tierra entre medio. Transformations occur in this in-between space, an unstable, unpredictable, precarious, always-in-transition space lacking clear boundaries. Nepantla es tierra desconocida, and living in this liminal zone means being in a constant state of displacement—an uncomfortable, even alarming feeling. Most of us dwell in nepantla so much of the time it's become a sort of 'home' (2002, 1)

It was within this historical context that Anzaldúa was raised by a family of farmers, the first of six generations to leave her homeland. As with many women's autobiographers, for Anzaldúa, the return to her homeland takes place in the process of writing itself, a process in which she reestablishes a relationship with the past and the present, and therefore with the community and the family: "To this day I'm not sure where I found the strength to leave the source, the mother, disengage from my family, *mi tierra, mi gente*, and all that picture stood for. I had to leave home so I could find myself, find my own intrinsic nature buried under the personality that had been imposed on me" (16). This first rupture from the familiar represents the beginning of the journey towards building her own identity, both distinct from the set of preconceived cultural expectations and ideas of her community, and linked to it through a path chosen and rediscovered by the author (Cantelli, 2012). Her quest for freedom passed through a process of rethinking of her strong roots.

Differently from Anzaldúa, who had to live home to find herself and establish her elected roots on the bridge between two cultural identities, Brand's longing to discover her line of unique ancestry, and draw a geo-historical map, represents her search for a place to call home. This search passes through the door of no return, and gets lost and found in the ocean's waters. Indeed, she affirms that, as a child, she felt disoriented spending hours in the sea and at the same time she breathed water instead of air (2001,73). Both the authors, in this way, embody what Susan Friedman called a "narrative of becoming" (1998), a fluid and flexible spatial rhetoric that posits identity as relational, situational, and interactive; the result of an ongoing process of becoming linked to their geo-historical location. It is also possible to recognize parallels between the river crossing and the *middle passage* since water in both contexts is a metaphor that runs deep in historical memory, a repository for countless untold stories. Many died en-route and were tossed overboard, others, hoping to return home, jumped overboard and to certain death; "wetbacks" illegally cross the river avoiding police checks, leaving behind them the remains of the crossing, as shown in Paola Zaccaria and Daniele Basilio's documentary *Altar* (2009).

Connecting the experiences of these two authors to Montezemolo's words at the beginning of this essay - "It is only gradually that we compose within ourselves our true place of origin"- it is possible to affirm that the process of identity formation for a diasporic consciousness is, indeed, gradual and linked to the landscape and the history that has taken place within it. It is connected to the presence of the liquid element (the ocean and the river), which helps the authors conceptualize their positionality and find a form of (sea)escape from a reality they do not accept. The reality of racial and historical oblivion for Brand, and the reality of colonization for Anzaldúa. If the metaphorical bridge over the river dividing the two Americas is seen as a possible, although suffered, escape for Chicanos, the actual door that Africans passed through in centuries of slave

trade represents the impossibility of escaping and finding a way back home. The ideal door acts, however, as an inspirational guide for the author to look for her personal and communal narrative. In the end, the images of water—the muddy water, the out of control water, the water that drowned people, the water carrying bodies, the water covering disappeared bodies—looked like the same water. Both were water of hope and death.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

Drawing on the reading of Brand's and Anzaldúa's fluid textualities which shape the Caribbean-Canadian and the Chicano 'sea(e)scapes' as carrier of secrets and stories, of people and memories, we want to propose some concluding connections between their sea(s) and the one which we currently live by: the former is the Atlantic and the Pacific traditionally experienced as the seas of the distance, the latter is the Mediterranean historically perceived as the sea of proximity (Matvejevic, 1987). Though the evident historical and geo-political differences concerning the three seas under discussion, it is to be said that also the metaphors of the Mediterranean have been many and ambivalent throughout history since it has been similarly portrayed as a bridge or as a frontier, a point of arrival and departure, stasis and transition, entrapment and escape, belonging and not belonging. It has been looked at as a sort of salt lake among different continental lands (Europe, Asia and Africa), as the etymology of the word Medi-terranean testifies<sup>7</sup>; and its border-lands have come to represent the limits of what has been intellectually known, acknowledged and accepted by the people who inhabit it.

On this background, we urgently need to find new figurations to describe and interpret our closer reality with the attempt to show that, in the turbulent narratives written on the wet bodies of the sea-crossers either getting the US shores (i.e. the *mojados*) or the Afro-Mediterranean routes (i.e. the *harriaga*, the boat people), new water metaphors are emerging together with a new anti-democratic border language. More specifically, these remarks bring us back to the dehumanising and anti-democratic language of contemporary migration, a language that repeatedly depicts the new forms of enslavement of thousands of people crossing the Mediterranean to reach the small island of Lampedusa in Southern Italy in terms of 'massive influx', 'mass immigration', 'human tsunami', 'boat-people' thus symbolically and visually conveying the idea of identical modules in a liquid carried along in flows, streams and waves. This combination of dehumanising language and antidemocratic border practice is what Foucault (1972) called a discourse, or *discursive formation*, which generates meaning and produces knowledge. This particular discourse of migration helps to make it possible for states, governments and the publics of host countries, especially rich Northern ones, to respond to migrants not as individual human beings, people like us, embedded in contingent social and historical circumstances, but as anonymous and dehumanised masses that portray the Mediterranean as paradigmatic of a new transnational dis/order. In particular, endorsing what has been termed a "mobilities perspective" or "mobilities paradigm" (Hannam et al, 2006), the new metaphors of the Mediterranean mentioned here- as much as the metaphorical liquid imagery which permeates Brand's and Anzaldúa's works- not only put into question the concepts of democracy, hospitality, community, transnationalism, sea boundary/border/margin, but shape new 'sea(e)scapes' in which the Mare Nostrum has overcome geographical boundaries and has turned

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<sup>7</sup> A wide analysis of this aspect can be found in Zaccaria P., "Medi-Terranean Borderization, or De-Territorializing Mediterranean Space" (2011).

itself into a human unit, a historic personality, a place loaded with symbolic representations (as, certainly, has always been).

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