

**The Corpses of Itoiz: Mapping the Hydro-Necro
Assemblage in *Cavando el agua* by Iñigo Aranbarri**

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The novel *Cavando el agua (Zulo bat uratan)*¹ by Iñigo Aranbarri chronicles the construction of the Itoiz Dam, and the race against time to exhume bodies from the reservoir cemeteries and mass graves outside of the *camposanto*. The Itoiz Dam and reservoir, which sits thirty minutes Southeast of Pamplona, in the Spanish state of Navarre, became a mid-1990s flash point for politics of ecology in Spain and Europe, as it gained international attention for destroying protected wildlife habitats, and displacing small towns and their inhabitants. The Itoiz Dam, like other dams across Spain,² prove problematic for environmental as well as subterranean memory sites (especially the mass graves outside of the *camposanto*), which would eventually be flooded, and ultimately erased from historical memory. And thus, Aranbarri mines the incredibly complex socio-ecological layers of Spanish hydromodernity and mobilizes the human corpse as a mechanism for redefining the interconnected relations of memory politics and the environment, and the large hydro-infrastructure that reterritorializes them.³

Cavando el agua adds to the growing body of Spanish literature that narrates the construction of dams and the disappearance of the towns and ecosystems along the banks of Spain's progressively permutated rivers, or the "Dam Novels," as Martín López-Vega has called them. Among these are Jesús López Pacheco's realist novel *Central eléctrica* (1956), the most well-known of Jesus Moncada's novels, *Camino de sirga (Camí de sirga* 1989),⁴ and Julio Llamazares's *Distintas formas de mirar el agua* (2015), which all highlight the centralizing powers of State-run and private water companies, the capital's striation and overdetermination of water, and the co-option of State violence at the expense of the environment and historical memory.⁵ During an interview with Radio Euskadi, Aranbarri suggests just that, claiming that the protagonist of the novel, Imanol, "está loco para las historias en minúscula"

(is crazy for lowercase histories), which places the novel squarely within the literary scene of post-*Ley de la Memoria Histórica*, passed in 2007. And yet, brought to bear in *Cavando el agua* are the explicit, and often violent, interrelations of hydrocapital and necropolitics, which have become central axes of the literary assemblage of Spain's transition to liberal democracy.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's assemblage theory provides a framework for analyzing *Cavando el agua* as the novel explores interfacing, fragmentary entities of material, discursive, and virtual composition that stratify into regimes of power, or disassemble into trajectories resistant to stratification, and thus create nonhegemonic social formations. "Stratification in general," write Deleuze and Guattari, "is the entire system of judgment of God," as it organizes social reality under a single hegemonic force. Opposed to stratification is the "Body without Organs," which "constantly eludes that judgment, flees and becomes destratified, decoded, deterritorialized" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 40). Stratification and deterritorialization constitute, characterize, and disarticulate assemblages. Manuel DeLanda, among the most important contemporary assemblage theorists, calls assemblage theory a "multi-scaled social reality" in which the micro-macro distinction is abandoned (251). Global capital, or hydrocapital in the form of fixed capital (dam, spillway, reservoir, turbines, and power station), tips the "multi-scaled social reality," as I will call here "the social," toward stratification, consigning its disparate relations to the framework of surplus value extraction, turnover time, profit, and the like.⁶ What interests us here is the corpse's disruption of hydrocapital, and its possibility to create oppositional territorialities.

Cavando el agua is a proper example of an assemblage, with its multiple intertexts, natural and fabricated elements, and interwoven histories. And yet throughout the novel can be identified a mechanism "which is continually dismantling the organism," or, in this case, the centripetal configuration of the Itoiz Dam, "causing asignifying particles or pure intensities to pass or circulate" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 4). Deleuze and Guattari call this mechanism, or side, of the assemblage the Body without Organs (BwO). It opposes stratifications of capital that "break into" and reterritorialize the flows of the social totality (*Anti-Oedipus* 9). Put another way, the BwO is "a set of practices" that map capital's inherent contradictions, its "antiproduction" that escapes the stratification of hydro-infrastructure in Northern Spain. This essay sets out to analyze the historical formations of hydropower and necropolitics, and the territorialities that take shape in a relatively small, but growing subgenre of contemporary Iberian literature. Within the framework of the novel, it is my suggestion that the corpse of Juana Ardanaz, a former *maqui* resistance fighter who was buried in a mass grave, and her attempted exhumation, mimics the BwO as theorized by Deleuze and Guattari, and can

be read as “cutting across and dismantling” hydrocapital, deterritorializing its vast influence into networks of resistance (*A Thousand Plateaus* 159).

The following analysis is posited along two important vertices: Dam(s) and Corpse (Body without Organs). The former is discussed as a metonymy of fascist organization of water. The networks of dam building and canalization constructed by Franco are no doubt carried over through Spanish liberal democracy, but difficult to perceive through a static perception of landscape, water, and fixed capital. The intertexts of the novel further complicate a univocal interpretation of the construction of the Itoiz Dam. The latter section of the essay characterizes the corpse of the defeated (*maqui* in this case) buried in mass graves as a Body without Organs, which acts as a novelistic tool by which to uncover and reinterpret historic territorialities of resistance of Northern Spain. Furthermore, I read the BwO as deterritorializing local exhumation practices into a transatlantic struggle for the recuperation of memory in postdictatorship Spain and Argentina. The mass graves of Northern Spain are likened to the mass grave of El Río de la Plata, which, after the “Death Flights” of the Junta Militar, has become a hydrologic landscape of trauma and memory. These transatlantic affinities of landscape, water, and exhumation constitute a hydro-necro assemblage.

Dam(s)

The Franco dictatorship, marks, albeit paradoxically, the beginning of “hydromodernity” in Spain. Here, hydromodernity refers to the process by which Franco mobilized the infrastructures and discourses of progress and development within the Iberian hydrosocial cycle.⁷ The dictatorship sought to industrialize water along the lines of progress and development during the widespread droughts of the late 1940s, what became later known as *los años del hambre* (the hungry years). Erik Swyngedouw notes in *Liquid-Power* that during *los años del hambre*, hydraulic interventions in the Spanish landscape were relatively scant, and thus Franco sought to revitalize Spain’s arid regions by grafting a glorified rural imaginary onto the “material and symbolic bearer of the fate of the land”: water (69). At the midpoint of the century, Franco’s hydrovision for Spain started to become reality, as the number of hydroprojects, mostly dams and canals, grew from roughly two hundred to more than eight hundred (13). This rapid construction of dams would suggest “the hydrosocial cycle as an integrated unitary national cycle” (14). A hydro-assemblage was taking shape, where overlaid on Spain’s river systems were those networks of Franco’s sovereign power in the form of dams, reservoirs, canals, and spillways. The construction of these hydro-infrastructure expanded after Franco’s death.

Spain's transition to liberal democracy has been rebuked from myriad angles. Paloma Aguilar, an important scholar of Spanish transitional justice, writes, "Francoism instilled a ferocious, obsessive and omnipresent fear of any repetition of the Civil War . . . thus taking refuge behind a traumatic memory on which the 'never again' consensus was already built" (26). Aguilar's words ring true for hydro-infrastructure in two important ways. First, a dam and its water system of reservoirs are fixed capital, hiding under the surface of the water that appear "at first sight, a very trivial thing" — a lake — the labor required to build it (Marx 160). In the case of the Itoiz Dam, this is particularly true as the waters obscure from view both labor and environmental protest. In 1996, when legal action against the dam was not enough to paralyze the project, anti-Itoiz dam activists entered the construction site, sabotaging the project by cutting important cables and in doing so, coined the chant "Riau, Riau, Riau, los cables se han cortado" (Riau, Riau, Riau, the cables have been cut). The response to such sabotage, as Aranbarri lays out, is State intervention, as the Guardia Civil armed the worksite and nearby towns and attempted to silence contestatory discourse on the walls of local bars and restaurants: "Los afiches que denunciaban las obras del pantano habían sido arrancados por disposición del Ayuntamiento" (Aranbarri 24) (The posters that denounced the reservoir projects were ripped down by disposition of the City Council).⁸ In the documentary *Hasta vaciar Itoiz* (Itoiz hustu arte, 2008), lawyer Juanje Soria reminds us that the Itoiz was never a project of Navarran local government, but a work of the State.

Secondly, the omnipresent fear of repetition of war trauma, which arrived at the supposed consensus of "never again" in Spain's transition to liberal democracy, was built into the very hydro-infrastructure that, ultimately, served to silence historical memory, "las historias en minúscula." This is manifested not only geographically, but also in the tension of timescales present in the novel: turnover time of various firms financing and providing labor for the construction of the dam; the sixty odd years since the Civil War; the length of decomposition of the human body of precariously buried Republican soldiers and victims of war; and the eternity promised to those buried within the *camposanto*, or Catholic cemetery, which is now deemed *cemeterio del embalse* (reservoir cemetery). These timescales are material, ideological, and theological and yet tend toward the former: the turnover time of the construction of the dam and the conversion of hydroelectric energy to power the regions in and around Pamplona. The stratification under the clocks of capital is expressed in a conversation between Imanol, the novel's protagonist and journalist at a Navarran newspaper, and a beat photographer who claims, "Los pantanos son sitios horribles para hacer fotos, el agua se come la luz" (43) (Reservoirs are horrible places to take photos, the water eats the light). In order for the

photograph to supposedly project reality as it truly is, it requires light, which has been robbed by the “enigmatic character,” as Marx put it, of the reservoir (163). For Aranbarri, the viewfinder captures the very process of stratification by hydrocapital, in which landscape is no longer home to flora, fauna, or memories, but instead portrays an increasingly machinic social reality. These time-space scales are further problematized in conversation with the structural elements of Romantic landscape.

In the first half of the novel, Imanol writes an article on one of the novel’s many intertexts, *Chalk Cliffs of Rügen* by the German Romantic painter Casper David Friedrich. But once word comes about the flooding of the valley of Aoiz, he becomes disillusioned by the article and the painting’s representational implications. Eighteenth-century German landscape painting had become too claustrophobic for Friedrich, who thought, “Things that are separated in nature by large intervening spaces are crowded together all touching each other, overfilling and oversaturating the eye, and making an unpleasant, disquieting impression on the viewer” (qtd. in Hofmann 19). *Chalk Cliffs of Rügen*, in contrast, depicts three figures spaced symmetrically: in the foreground, Friedrich paints a woman in a red dress pointing before a man on all fours digging in the grass, to the right of whom stands another man, arms folded, looking out onto the sea that stretches beyond the white cliffs of Rügen, where float two sailboats. Friedrich paints despair in the painterly figures in the foreground who look out onto “Nature simply, nobly and greatly, as she truly is” (qtd. in Hofmann 19). In other words, the painting depicts sublime nature.

Aranbarri’s comments on *Cavando el agua*’s three characters require a close reading of Friedrich’s painting in the novel.⁹ The novel’s three main characters (Imanol, Oscar, and Maite) are, according to Aranbarri, characters of *abandono* (abandonment): Imanol is abandoned, displaced along with the small towns and their inhabitants by the Itoiz Dam; Maite, a forensic anthropologist from Barcelona, exhumes abandoned corpses from the Navarran soil; and Oscar, perhaps the most abandoned of the three, is an Argentine exile from the Junta Militar, works alongside Maite exhuming bodies while he recounts the traumatic events of his youth in a first-person soliloquy, or rather, *testimonio* (testimony), to which we will return later. *Chalk Cliffs of Rügen* also proleptically paints the triad above the Navarran hydrologic landscape of the future, only it no longer maintains its simple, noble, and great allure that would allow for self-reflection, rational thought, even transcendence, but is hollowed out by “las explosiones como las ruedas gigantes de los camiones posándose sobre las hojas” (Aranbarri 118) (the explosions as well as the giant wheels of the trucks parked on the leaves). In contrast to the open water of the Friedrich painting, the waters of the Itoiz becomes machinic and, as Ima-

nol observes, “la Cortina del embalse cerrando la salida del valle” (43) (the curtain of the reservoir closing off the exit from the valley). Thus, Romantic nature, and in this case, its somewhat crystallized form of landscape in *Chalk Cliffs of Rügen*, no longer offers escape, whether primordial or sublime, from human suffering, but instead embodies it.

Corpse (Body without Organs)

Necropolitics, according to Achille Mbembe, focuses its attention on “the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations,” and begs the question “who is disposable and who is not” (14; 25). An important axis of the plot of *Cavando el agua*, however, is the sovereign decision of disposal itself—the burial place—and the corpse’s subsequent and secondary inscription by the sovereign: *which* bodies will be exhumed, catalogued, and transported to a new location outside of the path of the Itoiz Dam and reservoir. In this section, I will consider how the corpse, while being overinscribed by the necropolitical sovereign decision of disposal, projects contestatory territorialities that reject both this sovereign decision and the stratification of hydrocapital and reanimate territorial and literary networks of resistance both in Northern Spain and abroad: these are *maqui* and transnational *testimonio* territorialities comprised of mass graves, deer paths, deltas, and deserts.

In the early 2000s, the exhumation of corpses, which is part and parcel with *La Ley de la Memoria Histórica*, became an important social development across Spain. As early as 2008, Aranbarri’s Basque readership, and Spanish readership in 2011, had become only slightly familiar with the growing field of forensic anthropology in Spain, which borrowed a great deal from the Equipo Argentino de Antropología Forense, “the first group of forensic experts devoted exclusively to human rights work,” creating a Spanish-Argentine transatlantic human rights connection, a connection that will be highlighted in what follows (Rosenblatt 4). It wasn’t until October 2000, with the exhumation of thirteen corpses from a *Republicano* grave in Priaranza, that the political turn toward historical memory began to employ the exhumation of bodies both with technical support and expertise, and as a tool for transitional justice. Francisco Ferrándiz writes:

One of the darkest public secrets of Spanish democracy was finally exposed to the public eye: Shocking images of skeletons marked by evidence of perimortem torture and summary execution, unearthed in archaeologi-

cal excavations, started to appear and proliferate in the mainstream media and, later, on the Internet and through social networks. (38–39)

The transition to liberal democracy is thus constituted by two seemingly conflicting social formations: the construction of dams, continuing the legacy of Franco’s nationalization of the hydrosocial cycle, and the excavation of bodies that carry the potential to halt construction of these dams within newly valorized process of exhumation.

Aranbarri brings to mind the Tignes dam in the French Alps, built in 1952 to fuel a growing ski industry, that was met with protest from local communities that were forced to relocate due to the waters of Lac du Chevril, and with them, the bodies of their buried family members. Imanol, who sees before his eyes history repeating itself, claims:

en Tignes utilizaron a sus muertos como escudos humanos, las protestas de los difuntos que resuenan: “¡esta es nuestra tierra!”. Gritando aún después de muertos: “¡queremos vivir aquí!”. Los huesos se convirtieron en la principal arma contra el pantano. Había visto las fotografías. Hombres y mujeres hundidos en fosas que les cubren casi enteramente, armados de palas. Fuera de los hoyos, apoyados contra la pared, los ataúdes. (155)

(in Tignes they used their dead as human shields, the protests for the bodies echo: “this is our land!” Yelling even after dead: “We want to live here!” The bones turned into the main weapon against the reservoir. I had seen the photographs. Men and women buried in graves where they were almost entirely covered, armed with shovels. Away from the graves, leaning against a wall, the coffins.)

The photographs depict Tignes, a small town much like those of Navarre, disassembled before its inundation—the church, the cemeteries, and the town hall—which was undoubtedly a parallel case for Aranbarri as he too comments on the fragmentation of the Navarran towns, and specifically the church, where the bell has been removed from the steeple, “lista para ser llevada a alguna parte” (31) (ready to be taken somewhere else).¹⁰ Aranbarri complicates the relocation of the corpse in the Spanish context for a very important reason: the bodies of many, especially those antagonistic to the Franco regime, were buried in *fosas comunes* (mass graves) outside of the

camposanto, and outside of the ledger of the Catholic Church and Spanish State.

The exhumation of corpses in the early 2000s was no doubt a response to the systematically repressive burial practices by the Franco regime. Imanol interviews Faustino Ibáñez, a former *maqui*, or resistance fighter, who claims, “La posguerra tuvo que dar de comer a la arrogancia de los vencedores, habría cientos de casos parecidos en toda la cuenca de Pamplona” (110) (The postwar left nothing to eat but the arrogance of the victors, there were hundreds of similar cases in all of the Pamplona basin). The case he refers to is that of Juana Ardanaz, a *maqui* sympathizer and dissident, the search for whose corpse pivots the second half of the novel, and along the curvature of whose history the official exhumation, documentation, and relocation of bodies from cemeteries in Orbainz, Nagore, Itoiz, Muniain, Górriz, Artozki, and Larraingain begins to disassemble and deterritorialize along subversive lines.

The *fosa común* is the dug-out, buried-over spatiality of the sovereign decision of disposal, or the burial practice according to the sovereign decision of sacrificability and burial rites of the Spanish, and Franciost for that matter, necropolitical regime. The *fosa común* is oppositional to the *camposanto*, where death and Catholic burial continue to endow the corpse with citizenry in the Catholic (necro)polis, while outside of the walls of the *camposanto*, the corpse is rendered pure materiality. The decomposition of the corpse in the *fosa común* is unmediated by ecclesiastical stratification, and becomes a part of Nature, decomposing into geologic time, and the entropic biosphere: “destinadas a ser el refugio de vete a saber que animal de agua dulce” (141–42) (destined to be the refuge of who knows what freshwater animal). Juana Ardanaz is buried, along with countless other *maquis*, “fuera de los muros de los cementerios,” in “aquel agujero sin nombre, . . . aquel hoyo eterno, un no-lugar” (138; 136–37) (outside of the walls of the cemeteries, in that hole without name . . . that eternal pit, a nonplace). While in the novel, the Catholic Church, led by an effort of the Archbishop to the tune of 1.6 million euros, funds the exhumation and relocation of the bodies within the perimeter of another *camposanto* in Nagore, it leaves the corpses of the *fosas comunes* to be flooded by the waters of hydrocapital. The placelessness of the corpse in the *fosa común* comprises a fundamental aspect of hydrocapital assemblage contrary to the mediation of the Catholic Church. This is to say, within the hydrocapital assemblage—its dam wall, turbines, spillway, and reservoir—can be found a corpse in a *fosa común*, which does not demarcate a site for the extraction of surplus value, or hydroelectricity, but is its antiproduction, its nonplace, a body without organs. For Deleuze and Guattari, the BwO is a deterritorializing effect present within all assemblages. It has the likeness of an escape valve within the circuits of capital, wherein functions of interfacing entities dissolve and are made anew outside of the logic of capital.

The corpse of the *maqui* fighter Juana Ardanaz is a BwO. The search for her corpse and the *fosas comunes* in and around the Itoiz Dam create an altogether distinct territoriality within the assemblage of hydrocapital and restructure the hydrosocial cycle away from co-optation during Franco's dictatorship. The novelistic triad's search for her corpse constructs a *maqui* map of "axes and vectors, gradients and thresholds involving energy transformation and kinematic movements involving group displacement, by migrations" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 153). The movements, axes, and vectors do not follow the logic of global capital, but instead guide the narrative along oppositional lines. This is outlined in Imanol's conversation with Faustino Ibáñez, in which the old man, whose memories often escape him, draws Juana Ardanaz's *maqui* map:

Me habló sobre la red que los maquis habían conseguido establecer para poder pasar activistas desde Pamplona al otro lado de los Pirineos, de las casas que disponían, del tren del Irati, cómo se valían de él para llegar hasta Aoiz . . . emborrónó una especie de mapa, con cuatro flechas que salían de Garde y Jaurrieta, en el extremo oriental; la segunda la situó entre los ríos Slazar e Irati, al norte del pantano; la tercera línea cruzaba hacia el oeste y buscaba la zona de Olagüe; el último sector, en cambio, abarcaba la zona entre Etxalar y Amaiur. Dejó de hablar y dibujó un círculo obsesivo cuatro, cinco veces sobre la flecha que segundos antes había trazado. (113)

(He spoke to me of the network *maquis* had established in order to shuttle activists from Pamplona to the other side of the Pirineos, of the available houses, from the Irati train, how he was valued to arrive to Aioz . . . he smudged a type of map, with four arrows that went from Garde and Jaurrieta, in the Eastern extreme; the second arrow was situated between the Slazar and Irati rivers, to the north of the reservoir; the last sector, however, covered the zone between Etxalar and Amaiur. He stopped talking and drew an obsessive circle four, five times around the arrow drawn seconds before.)

Ibáñez sketches this map in the same breath as he demands the exhumation of Juana Ardanaz's corpse that lay somewhere within its blurry confines. The smudges of the *maqui* map are drawn in her image: cutting across Navarre's

rivers and other natural borders are arrows and trajectories, rather than points. This map is haptic, even nomadic, superimposed onto the historical movements of *maqui* resistance, and thus mobilizes these networks anew in the machinic landscape of the Itoiz Dam. Aranbarri characterizes Juana Ardanaz's map as comprised of "vericuetos de la historia" (112) (the deerpaths of history), and these trajectories speak to a mobilized resistance that imbeds itself, and thus unpacks from within, perhaps the most striking contradiction of hydrocapital, its spatial fix. David Harvey calls the spatial fix the "insatiable drive to resolve its [capital's] inner crisis tendencies by geographical expansion and geographical restructuring," which in this case, refers to network of fixed capital of the Itoiz Dam (24). The corpse can be found in a *fosa común* (placelessness) at the very center of this spatial schizophrenia of State-run hydrocapital, and it is only through the corpse that these *vericuetos de la historia* are traced, these lowercase histories, wherein resistance to the imbrication of fascism and hydrocapital is made possible.

This resistance becomes apparent in *Cavando el agua* along its two narratological trajectories that meet in Navarre in and around the Itoiz Dam: one trajectory is Imanol's narration of the novelistic present, interspersed with news clippings about Romantic painting, Nazi war ships, and the exhumation of corpses; and the other is Oscar's somewhat suffocated, insular, testimony of childhood trauma during the Junta Militar in the first person to Maite. The latter, which shares elements of *testimonio*, links a transatlantic line of flight of the disappeared and undiscovered bodies of fascist regimes: the Argentine Junta Militar during the 1970s and 1980s and Francoist Spain. Through this trajectory, the linkages of the hydro-necro assemblage—between the arid, machinic landscapes of Navarre and the Itoiz Dam, and the desert memories of Oscar and the subaqueous dead of El Río de la Plata—are brought out.

In his essay "Ibizan Sequence," Benjamin lays out his memory methodology: "He who seeks to approach his own buried past must conduct himself like a man digging" (1). For Benjamin, the "site where he gained possession" of authentic memories, and not the site of the memory itself, is that which influences our findings and mode of critique (1). Thus, Navarre's hydrologic landscape, irreversibly altered by the Itoiz Dam, is this very first layer, the point of departure, or the "strata which first had to be broken through," through which Oscar must dig in order to mobilize authentic memories of the disappeared of Argentina. And the search for Juana Ardanaz in the *fosa común* parallels the search for *los desaparecidos* in the waters of El Río de la Plata. Along this line of flight is Aranbarri's titular paradox: "cavando en el más bello embalse posible, en el Río de la Plata, que más que río es mar, en busca de los treinta mil que la Junta Militar hizo desaparecer" (74) (digging in the most beautiful reservoir possible, in the Río de la Plata, that more than a river

is ocean, in search of the thirty thousand that the Junta Militar made disappear). The trauma of the disappeared in Spain and Argentina is no doubt manifested by the search for Juana Ardanaz, and given narrative voice by Oscar's testimony, linking the two practices, exhumation and testimony, along the *maqui* vectors of resistance to fascism.

Oscar directs his testimony toward Maite, and in it he apologizes, makes errors, and tries to remember details and often fails; he meanders along the *vericuetos* of his memories. Maite, similar to the reader, is a listener of a testimony. And while *Cavando el agua* possesses characteristics of a love story, this view would render Oscar's narration a soliloquy, and in doing so, pass over the transnational (Spain and Argentina) childhood political trauma and disappearance that characterizes the contestatory scope of the novel. Oscar remembers a desolate dreamscape demarcated by two spatial logics: "Un desierto dibujado a golpes de escuadra y cartabón, hecha de líneas rectas y perpendiculares" (A desert drawn in fits and starts with square and triangle, made of straight and perpendicular lines), but where, "las distancias entre los puntos de población adquieren otra dimensión, nada que ver con esto" (88) (the distances between points of population acquire another dimension, having nothing to do with this). This desert landscape, the setting of his childhood memories, is a stratified place, similar to the arid landscape of Navarre, and yet within it is a fluid nomadic movement. Deleuze and Guattari write the BwO in a similar way: "The body without organs [is] at the edge of the deterritorialized socius, the desert at the gates of the city" (Anti-Oedipus 102). Furthermore, the topos of Oscar's memories is similar to the maqui map drawn by Ibáñez in that, like Deleuze and Guattari's formulation, the desert sits along the edge of a stratified zone. When he closes his eyes, he sees the unraveling of this stratified zone:

Un desierto ocre que se extiende hasta el horizonte. Extraen del interior de la tierra el petróleo crudo, pero cualquiera diría que picotean los granos de piedra de la superficie. Las cigüeñas y un camino de ripio surcado por dos dibujos de neumáticos, de acá para allá y de allá vete a saber hacia donde: esa es mi casa, Maite. (87)

(An ochre desert that extends to the horizon. They extract from the interior of the land of the crude oil, but anyone would say that they peck the grains of rock from the surface. The storks and a path of rubble ploughed by the drawings of tires, from here to there, and from there who knows to where: that is my house, Maite.)

Oscar's house is composed of rubble, decay, and tires, forming pathways across the desert. Inhabiting this desert are storks that dig holes, similar to Maite, Oscar, and Imanol in the Navarran landscape. This memoryscape is geological. By digging through the primary strata, the Itoiz Dam, the memory work uncovers crude oil, or compressed, liquid death of geologic time, no doubt the same compression of time that awaits the cadavers in the *fosa común*.

Oscar bears witness to the disappearance of his neighbor, *el negro* Osvaldo Fossalto, whose etymological similarity to the *fosa común* presages the same fate of that of Juana Ardanaz. Like in the Iberian context, the Argentine government attempts to assuage collective trauma by digging for remains of the victims of State violence: "están cavando entre pilares de la autopista, en el predio donde se hallaba el Club Atlético" (they are digging between freeway piers, in the building where the Club Atlético could be found), but inevitably, "Buscan lo imposible, están cavando el agua" (148) (they search for the impossible, they are digging water). The paradoxical formulation refers not only to the inability of both Argentine and Spanish governmental agencies to uncover the truth of their own crimes, but also that they are looking in the wrong places as the corpse of Osvaldo is embodied in Oscar's memories. Oscar himself tells Maite, "también yo fui desaparecido" (149) (I too was disappeared), by which he actualizes the disappeared corpse and mobilizes it in the context of Northern Spain. This tells us an important aspect of Aranbarri's novelistic project: excavation is less about uncovering the body itself so as to identify it, but rather about exhumation as a practice that disarticulates the corpse's conscription under the lingering territoriality of fascism embodied by the Itoiz Dam, and mobilizes it across regional and international trajectories, thus creating new territorialities and new affinities of resistance, whether they be the *maqui* maps of Spanish resistance fighters, or the memories enunciated in testimony by victims of the Junta Militar.

By way of conclusion, I turn to Foucault's remarks in his introduction to *Anti-Oedipus* by Deleuze and Guattari, a work he claims to point out "the fascism in us all" (xiii). The built environment is constructed under a spatial fix covered up and valorized by ideology, and in the case of the Itoiz Dam, embodies fascist territoriality of a unified Spain. Aranbarri points out the fascist legacy built into large hydro-infrastructure, as it shares with other tactics employed by contemporary Spanish politics of forgetting, erasure, and amnesty that continue to operate under the practice of unification. Literature on hydro-infrastructure requires theoretical frameworks that mobilize the moving parts that assemble it, and disassemble it, not merely on political or economic lines, but rather, as an assemblage from which emerge the stratification and disassembly of social formations, old and new, manmade or naturally occur-

ring. *Cavando el agua* narrates the emergence of the hydro-necro assemblage of Navarre, which carries with it the possibility for its own undoing, its own antiproduction in the trajectories of *maqui* resistance fighters. The growing literary genre of the Dam Novel highlights a contemporary impulse of cataloguing decaying emergent properties buried over by hydrocapital, whether the corpse, as in the case of *Cavando el agua*, or defunct coal mines below the Mequinzenza Dam in *Camino de Sirga*. The opposing forces of inundation and excavation are not phenomena of disparate subsections of the social, but rather one imbued with one another, constituting a polarity in a complex assemblage that in places stratifies social reality and reveals a new map altogether, a *maqui* map of resistance writ along the curvature of newly visible social reality.¹¹

Notes

1. Published in Basque *Zulo bat uratan* in 2008.
2. The Mequinzenza Dam in Zaragoza, built in 1964, possesses an agentive quality in Jesus Moncada's *Camino de sirga*, similar to the Itoiz Dam of *Cavando el agua*, as it floods towns and their surrounding environs.
3. Mark Bonta and John Proveti write in *Deleuze and Geophilosophy* that reterritorialization is "the process of forming a new territory" and "never a return to an old territory" (135), and along with deterritorialization, reterritorialization is an omnipresent process in assemblages that follows "vector[s] of escape" and the result of "a move between milieus" (106). Here, the process of reterritorialization refers to a shift in the consolidation of hydropower under Franco's rule, and which continued throughout the transition to liberal democracy.
4. See William Viestenz's essay "The Town Assembled: The Social Interference of Quasi-Objects in *Camí de Sirga*" in which he employs assemblage theory in the analysis of the social implications of hydroelectric dam in *Camino de sirga*, particularly the material realities of the "town"—its means of production, household objects, its statues, and *escombros* [debris]—which take on wholly new social significance under the waters of the Mar de Aragón reservoir. I join Viestenz and Erik Swyngedouw's *Liquid Power* in assemblage theory analysis of Spanish hydro-infrastructure.
5. Just a year before the publication of *Cavando el agua*, the Spanish government passed the 2007 *Ley de la memoria histórica*, which considers within the purview of history "los diversos aspectos relacionados con la memoria personal y familiar, especialmente cuando se han visto afectados por conflictos de carácter público, forman parte del estatuto jurídico de la ciudadanía democrática" (Boletín Oficial del

- Estado) (the diverse aspects related to personal and family memory, especially when they have been affected by conflicts of a public character, form part of the juridical statute of democratic citizenship).
6. The tipping also refers to the axis of the Earth that has been tipped by hydro-infrastructure. See Malcolm Browne's "Dams for Water Supply are Altering Earth's Orbit, Experts Say."
 7. See Jaime Linton and Jessica Budds's essay "The Hydrosocial Cycle: Defining and Mobilizing a Relational-Dialectical Approach to Water," which characterizes "the hydrosocial cycle as a socio-natural process by which water and society make and remake each other over space and time" (179).
 8. The translations were done by the author unless otherwise stated.
 9. See Aranbarri's interview with Bego Yerba on *Hágase la luz*.
 10. See Dmitri Kessel's documentary film entitled *Doomed Village* (1952), which documents the evacuation of the small French town of Tignes, and the removal of familial remains from the town's cemetery for the construction of the Tignes Dam. There is perhaps no better example of the power of the State-backed hydro-infrastructure than the depiction of Hercules on the Tignes Dam, a commission piece for the 1992 Winter Olympics in France.
 11. A special thanks to Professor William Viestenz who oversaw the many drafts of this essay.

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