Chapter 10
Esperanza's and Adoración's Cartographies of Mercy

Irse.
Decidir irse. O mejor, quedarse.
porque es demasiado largo,
decidir. No hay paciencia.
Hay infinitos puntos, como
en el trayecto de Aquiles, o el de la flecha
que nunca alcanzará la diana.
El irse
se divide en fragmentos,
la decisión en otras decisiones,
y estas a su vez
se subdividen.

Irse:
Salir de la ciudad, pero antes,
de una casa y antes aun,
de una habitación y para ello,
levantarse, poner
orden entre los huesos
y cerrar el cuaderno y previamente,
dejar de escribir para qué?
Si: irse. Irse quedó atrás. Se escribió más arriba,
o en la página anterior.[1]
Chantal Maillard, *Hilos* (2007)

1 *Leaving. Deciding to leave. Or better, staying. Because it's too long, deciding. There is no patience. There are infinite points, like in the path of Achilles, or that of the arrow that will never reach the target. Leaving is divided into fragments, the decision into other decisions, and these in turn subdivide into more decisions. Leaving: Leaving the city, but first, leaving a house and even before, a room and for that, getting up, that is the problem, getting up, putting the bones in order and closing the notebook and previously, stop writing for what? Yes: leaving. Leaving fell behind. It was written above, or on the previous page.* [my translation] Maillard, *Hilos*, 83-84.

Mystery is not found outside;
it is within each of us,
surrounding and enfolding us.
We live and we move within mystery.
The guide to avoid getting lost in it resides in Mercy.[2]
María Zambrano, "Para una historia de la piedad" (1989)

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Figure 38: Esperanza with her son on his First Communion day, Bilbao, c. 1957

2 "El misterio no se halla fuera; está dentro y en cada uno de nosotros, al par que nos rodea y envuelve. En él vivimos y nos movemos. La guía para no perdernos en él es la piedad." Zambrano, "Para una historia de la piedad."

Espe's life and times as "bonne à tout faire"

Espe was born on February 24, 1923, in Ermua, a town in the province of Vizcaya in the Basque Country. Her father never laid eyes on her, having died only a month before. Her mother was left a widow with two little girls and a newborn. Perhaps these circumstances led the young mother to optimistically name the girl Esperanza. Hope was literally all she had left.

Espe's mom worked as a cook, and her late husband had been the chauffeur for the noble Chávarri Salazar family in Bilbao. The couple met in 1918 while working as part of a staff of eighteen domestic servants in the renowned Chávarri palace.[3] After the death of her husband, the young widow had no choice but to send her two oldest daughters away. She placed her middle child with relatives and the oldest in a nunnery boarding school in Larrauri (Munguia), keeping baby Espe with her in Bilbao. Mother and baby would share the attic quarters in the Chávarri palace with two other servants.

From birth Espe was sickly. "As soon as I got wet, I caught colds," she explained. One of the other servants suggested the possibility of sending Espe to Carranza, a pastoral rural town. There the little girl's health would improve under the care of this woman's mother, who would take Espe in for a small payment. But the arrangement did not go well with that lady in Carranza, "because **she threw me out the window**," Espe declared.

Thinking that I misunderstood her I ask her to explain. With a small nervous laughter, she added: "Well, I did not like milk.… And then, she said that I put soap in the milk…maybe I did, I do not know." Espe was seven years old when this happened. She fell from the window into nettles, where she sat crying. A neighbor passed by and heard her. "He saw me in such a state and took me to a family who brought me into their home," she explained. This family offered her shelter, not knowing where she came from or who were her relatives. They fed her and sent her to school. Seven years later, Espe reunited with her mother, who still believed she was living where she had placed her in Carranza.

I used to attend the Sacred Heart school located near the train station and one day, while I was in class, I turned my eyes to the window and saw my mother passing by on the street. "MY MOTHER! MY MOTHER!" I screamed. And the teacher, startled, said, "but what's wrong with you?" and I kept yelling "MY MOTHER!" So, they fetched her and indeed…there she was…my mother walking, WALKING BY MY SCHOOL…AFTER SO MANY YEARS. So, I then took her to the house where I was truly living and I introduced her to that kind family. "This is my mother," I told them. And they said, "Oh well then, child, you must go with her as

3 Now the Chávarri palace is the site of Bilbao's Civil Governor's office.

she is your mother." …And then I told my mom, "I have lived all these years with this family who I call my grandparents, and Aunt Anita, Aunt Enriqueta," and my mother was shocked.

After their reunion Espe's mother took her back with her to Bilbao where she joined her two older sisters. It was 1936, the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. They lived in Bilbao during the three years of civil war and Espe, now a teenager, started to work as a kitchen aide in the cooking school of a restaurant called "El Cano." There she met Victorino in 1937, in the Playa Moyua.

I met him there. He came along with a group of friends. Then, when he turned eighteen he went to the front…. He fought for the Republic in the Ebro battle…very famous. He said to me "I want you to be my war sweetheart," and I said, "all right."[4] *We wrote to each other and I made him a sweater; I remember sending it to him. He wrote love verses and drew for me…. He had a little notebook, with some flowers on one side…and then written all over with poems for me.* [Espe smiled].

Espe remembers the advance of General Mola and how he died in a plane crash, and then she mentions Queipo de Llano who in her opinion was much worse than Mola, and how the alarm sirens are still vivid in her mind, and the bombing of Guernica enters into our conversation.

Well, the ones who bombed Guernica were the Germans! My uncle who lived in Guernica knows this very well. My sister had lived with them for a while. Luckily, by then she had returned to Bilbao to live with my mother. But my uncle and his family still lived there. He had a workshop that made engines…to export abroad…huge machinery…. And he always said…"I dare anyone to ask me, who did it…" because Franco was saying, "the reds have burned Guernica." And he [referring to her uncle] *used to say, "REALLY? ASK ME! I WAS THERE." People took refuge in the church….* [she repeated her uncle's words to me]: *"I saw the planes, how they bombed the city…they bombed Guernica," because the Basque government was there in Guernica. Because the Fueros of the Basque Country were in Guernica. But they*

4 The "madrinas de guerra" were women who volunteered as pen pals, writing to soldiers. The women wrote letters to more than one soldier, many times unknown to them. The purpose was to raise the morale among the troops. The practice was institutionalized on the rebels' side while the Republican side introduced it later and for a shorter period. Many of the letters from the republican godmothers are lost, since they might have been destroyed after the Francoist victory. Not only did these women send letters and postcards but also clothing and food. See: https://journals.openedition.org/bulletinhispanique/4284#tocto1n3; Mary Nash, Rojas, *Las mujeres republicanas en la Guerra Civil* (Madrid: Editorial Taurus, 1999); J. Martínez y N. Rodríguez, "Cartes d'un soldat republicà" en www.aasit.com/informatiu/hemeroteca/[…]; Carmen Ortiz and Manuel de Ramón, *Madrina de guerra: cartas desde el frente* (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2003).

didn't bomb the official buildings or the church. ONLY THE PEOPLE, YES! The people…they knew what they were doing.

During the war, Espe kept corresponding with Victorino and working at the El Cano restaurant. This training helped her to get a job with the Chávarri's children (her parents' employers) when they moved to Madrid in 1939. The Olábarri Chávarri family owned an entire building on elegant Genova Street. The couple had eight children and a staff of eleven domestic servants. Then sixteen, Espe was hired in 1939 as a kitchen aide with a monthly wage of thirty-five *pesetas*.

Between 1940 and 1950, more than half of the female labor force in Spain worked in domestic service, which was more than simply a job for poor young women. As historian Eider de Dios points out, domestic work for poor women represented an essential piece in the National-Catholic political agenda emerging after the Francoist victory in 1939. In the new Spain taking shape after the civil war, being a servant meant a kind of indentured servitude for many poor women who belonged to the vanquished side.[5]

The whole building belonged to them on Genova street…they were big capitalists. …They had two floors. Below were the service rooms and a bathroom. Upstairs they had the laundry and a line to hang their clothes. When my mother was in their service, they employed twelve or fourteen servants. When I was there, we were eleven. They had a cook and a kitchen aide, a waiter to serve meals, and his scullery maid. She and I were the helpers and mops [she laughed softly]. And then they had one woman to iron clothes all day. Another one to hand-wash clothes, because at that time you washed clothes by hand. ….They had a chauffeur, a chambermaid for the husband, a chambermaid for the wife, a nanny for the boys and a nanny for the girls, and a head housekeeper. Can you imagine?

In the year [19]39…when the war ended…in the [19]40s these people had all that…I worked for them three years from 1939 to 1942. They had a villa in Bilbao, in Las Arenas, and every summer we all went there to their chalet to serve them…I used to make breakfast for twenty-two people every morning. I baked bread every day…white bread YES! Because the Master

5 Eider de Dios Fernández, *Sirvienta, empleada, trabajadora de hogar: Género, clase e identidad en el Franquismo y la transición a través del servicio doméstico (1939-1995)* (Málaga: Universidad de Málaga, 2019). See also: Sescún Marías Cadenas, "Las empleadas de hogar durante el franquismo y la transición democrática: entre el paternalismo y la marginación (1939-1981)" in Ana Antón-Pacheco Bravo et al., eds., *IX Jornadas Internacionales de Estudios de la Mujer* (Madrid: Editorial Fundamentos, 2011), 297-307; Cristina Borderias Mondéjar, "Las mujeres autoras de sus trayectorias personales y familiares: a través del servicio doméstico," *Historia y Fuente Oral* 6, (1991): 105-21; María Jesús Espuny Tomás and Guillermo García González, *Relaciones laborales y empleados de hogar reflexiones jurídicas* (Madrid: Dyckinson, 2014); Rocío García Abad and Arantza Pareja Alonso, "Servir al patrón o al marido: Mujeres con destino a la Ría de Bilbao," *Arenal* 9, no. 2 (2002): 301-26.

went to Cuatro Caminos to buy flour and all that. They had to…because there was rationing at the time. We [referring to the poor] *got just a piece of hard bread that you could bounce off the floor! BUT they* [referring to the rich] *were given…white bread. As I say, WHAT DISCRIMINATION, really!? I think about it and say…lucky I served the rich.*

The 1940s were known as "The Hunger Years." Ration books were in circulation until 1952. A year earlier, Cardinal Vicente Enrique Tarancón had published "Our Daily Bread," a pastoral letter denouncing the utter destitution of the larger population while the Francoist establishment controlled much of the black market. Gerald Brenan recorded in his travel log a visit to Spain in 1949 when "the ration consisted of a small roll of bread a day, a quarter of a liter of olive oil, and three ounces of sugar a week, with minute quantities of chickpeas and rice, very irregularly distributed. Even these rations are not always honored. And on the black market the bread are twelve *pesetas* the kilo—just the average daily wage." [6]

Espe felt fortunate that she was able to secure a good job with the rich during the early postwar hunger years. Thirty-five *pesetas* a month allowed her to save a little money and buy her trousseau. "In Madrid I bought the fabrics," she recalled, "every month I would buy some sheets.[7] In 1939 Victorino was stationed in Valladolid to fulfill his mandatory military service. He paid her a visit to Madrid, and they got engaged. In 1942, once he completed his military service, they both moved to Bilbao and got married in the San Vicente parish in 1947.

What happiness Espe experienced was short-lived, as her husband soon became sick with active tuberculosis.

We got married and went on our honeymoon to Haro, in La Rioja, and stayed at his uncle's place. He [Victorino] kept coughing, and coughing, and coughing at night…for eight days.… He kept on coughing and coughing when we returned to Bilbao and I said, "We have to go to the doctor" but he would say, "Why go to the doctor. They will just have me rest and I'm not going to stop working." I would insist, "Well, I'll work! Do not worry, I will work," I'd say to him. We were living with my sister and my mother in my mother's attic…the house being as big as it was. And one day, we would have been married no more than two months, I said, "Today it's happening, I'm taking you to a private doctor." I took him to a lung and heart specialist, the best in Bilbao who had a sanatorium for tuberculosis patients. In those days,

6 Aurora Morcillo, *The Seduction of Modern Spain: The Female Body and the Francoist Body Politic* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2010), 132. See also: Oscar Rodríguez Barreira, *Migas con Miedo: Prácticas de resistencia al primer franquismo Almería 1939-1953* (Almería: UAL, 2008), and also by the same author "Cambalaches: Hambre, moralidad popular y mercados negros de guerra y postguerra," *Historia Social* 77 (2013): 149-74. Hunger was rampant throughout Europe in the 1940s; for Germany see the work of Paul Steege, *Black Market, Cold War: Everyday Life in Berlin, 1946-1949* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007).

7 Esperanza, interview recording, 2007.

the clinic in question was crowded because the prisons' inmates were infected. So, I took him to the doctor who said, "Well, he has to rest for at least three months...at least." So, I kept him at home. And one day, a friend of my mother's came to visit; she was coming precisely from another clinic where my husband had gone to be treated before we got married, but now he refused to go back. So, I decided to go there to find out more, and the doctors confirmed, "This young man was here three years ago. At that time, he would have healed in six months, but he didn't want to continue the treatment." [Espe stopped and looked at me sadly] *You see, the problem was there was nothing to eat in those days.... So, that friend who came to visit, she saw how having a sick man like that at home was no good…A young girl, like me, strong, of course, but really…we had been married for just two months. And so, she advised us to contact the hospital's director as there was a pavilion for this illness, a tuberculosis wing. And the director of that pavilion also had a private practice in his home. …And so, I took him there. He took X-rays and told me, "Come in four or five days to get the results."*

We were still sleeping in the same bed, but I told him from that day on, "Look, you are going to sleep here…but I'm going to sleep in my mother's room," and I went to sleep with my mother. She had two beds in her room. My sister moved out and went to the village as soon as they told us what he had. My mother and I stayed. I went for the X-Ray results and the doctor said to me, "There is nothing impossible for the Almighty. But for science this case is very tough. [She paused] *We have to operate."* [She pauses again looking at her hands] *and then he said…"We can admit him in the hospital." When I got home, he asked, "What did the doctor tell you?" and I said, "Well, nothing; you just have to rest." I never told him what it was. NEVER! And he was admitted to the hospital. I called the pavilion of infectious cases at the hospital and requested someone to come to our home to transport him. They disinfected the mattress, everything, and sealed the room…they did…it was extraordinary…in the year [19]47. THE YEAR 47, that was.*[8]

When we committed him to the hospital, we were relieved. "Luckily I am not pregnant...What a relief!" I thought...because I had my period…in November and December, and I thought…"well, I'm not pregnant." But after four months or more missing it, I went to the doctors and they told me, "You are pregnant." [Espe stared at me in silence] *CAN YOU BELIEVE IT! I told him about it. But of course, he was never with our baby. He saw him from afar in the garden. I was working then as a cook downstairs in the building where we lived, I remember. When he fell ill, they told me they needed a cook and since they lived on the floor below, I went down every day. Also, I took a part-time job cleaning an office. At six in the morning I cleaned the office and then went to work as a cook. So, one morning my mother was walking out of our building when she ran into my mother-in-law and my mother said to*

8 On the treatment of tuberculosis in Bilbao see: Antonio Villanueva Edo, "Las instituciones de la lucha antituberculosa en Vizcaya (1882-1957)," *Euskal herriaren historiari buruzko biltzarra* 4 (1988): 201-20 (La crisis del Antiguo Régimen), https://www.ehu.eus/documents/1738121/2349786/Tuberculosis.pdf.

her, "Do not go upstairs, because your son is in the hospital," and she [the mother-in-law] *started shouting, "MY SON! MY SON IN THE HOSPITAL!" She went crazy.*

Victorino's family had concealed his condition to secure the marriage. Espe reflected:

They ought to be thankful that I swallowed that lie…because I never told my son that story because…WHAT FOR? WHAT FOR? My brother-in-law did say to me, half surprised, "Seven years of courtship with him, you hadn't noticed? He had never told you anything?…because you surely must have had some intimacy…." And I said, "NO! NOTHING!" You see, what happened is he [Victorino] *figured, "If I say something about this she will leave me," and his mother told me later, "If I had suggested to my son, 'tell her or leave her'…HE WOULD HAVE JUMPED OUT A WINDOW." That is what my mother-in-law told me…I was lucky he did not infect me…because I had lived with him for a few months of marriage. Earlier in our relationship nothing happened because at that time you did not touch each other…only a stolen kiss and nothing else.* [Espe laughed]

I think he got sick in the war…he went to the front…the front of the Ebro was VERY, VERY HARD! [said emphatically] *and he was sent there…the battle of the Ebro. Then he did three more years of military service in Valladolid, and then the job he had!* [referring to the window cleaning] *always raining in Bilbao….*

Victorino spent two years in the hospital. He never returned home.

In November he fell ill and in January he entered the hospital [1948]. *It was also in January that he died, just two years later. Until I gave birth, I visited him every day. I cleaned the office in the morning and then worked in the kitchen. After I finished at four or five, I went to the hospital every day. Once he entered the hospital, my sister moved back home with her girls to live with us. And she was the one who took me to the hospital to deliver my baby when the time came…My sister and I, I remember we walked all the way to the hospital at two in the morning. …They would not pay any attention to me until eight in the morning.* [she giggled nervously] *It wasn't very far but still it was a walk…. And they put me to bed and at about six o'clock they came to me, they got me up, and he was born with the help of the midwife. And then I was torn apart and they explained I had a total tear inside and out. Because the child took so many hours of labor to deliver, he was born with such a cucumber shaped head* [she put her hands on her head to show me] *the forceps, you know, to get him out and they said, "Don't worry, his head will go back to normal right away." They told me the doctor had to come.* [She paused for a moment] *And there I was waiting, waiting, waiting. The child had already been taken downstairs with my mother and she knew nothing of what had happened to me. Then, I told the doctor, "Look, my husband has tuberculosis and he is hospitalized," and the doctor said, "Ah, good you have told me. Right now, I am going to call Madrid so they can send us the vaccine…the Bacillus of Koch." And it arrived immediately, the next day. I*

remember, I would take out my breast milk onto a spoon and mixed it and that's how I gave the vaccine to the baby…that was so he wouldn't catch tuberculosis. Thank God…he has never had anything…never…And I was also lucky that he [her husband] *didn't infect me.*

Espe was twenty-seven years old when her husband died in 1950. Alone, with a toddler, she sought more work to provide a better future for her son. Even though she had been denied an education, she was determined that her son would not suffer the same fate. A friend told her there was work at the elegant five-star Carlton Hotel in Bilbao. They were looking for a seamstress and ironing maid. She proudly recalled how, while working as a young kitchen aide, she had also attended sewing classes and was ready to take the job at the fancy hotel.

And I worked there for six years. In addition, I continued to clean the office…and whenever anyone needed a cook for a First Communion banquet I would also go to work.

Her work at the Carlton involved both sewing and ironing.

*We had to iron bed sheets, men's suits…. In the laundry room there were about ten women who ironed by hand, four or five who used machine irons, and two more to do the folding. That was so efficient! I became a friend of a girl who worked in the hotel's kitchen and she told me she was moving to Paris. "You know," she said one day, "I'm going to work in Paris. She was also a widow…**So, in [19]56 I went off to Paris**[9]**… just six years after my husband's death**.*

9 On the migration of Spanish women to work as domestic servants in Paris see: Laura Oso Casas, *Españolas en París: Estrategias de ahorro y consume en las emigraciones internacionales* (Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2004). There was also a film released in 1971 by the same title *Españolas in París,* screenplay and directed by Roberto Bodegas, with Ana Belén, Máximo Valverde, and Tina Saenz in the leading roles. Some studies on the Spanish migratory movements during the Franco regime include: Alicia Mira Abad et Mónica Moreno Seco, "Españolas exiliadas y emigrantes: encuentros y desencuentros en Francia," *Les Cahiers de Framespa* [En ligne] 5 (2010). http://journals.openedition.org/framespa/383; DOI : 10.4000/framespa.383. Luís M. Calvo Salgado et al., *Historia del Instituto Español de Emigración: La política migratoria exterior de España y el IEE del Franquismo a la Transición* (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración Subdirección General de Información Administrativa y Publicaciones, 2009); Pedro José Chacón Delgado, "El Asimilacionismo Nacionalista Vasco: La emigración española al País Vasco en la segunda mitad del siglo XX," *Cuadernos de Pensamiento Político* 45 (January/March 2015): 123-52; José Babiano and Sebastián Farré, "La emigración española a Europa durante los años sesenta: Francia y Suiza como países de acogida," *Historia Social* 42 (2002): 81-98.

According to Laura Oso Casas, the 1960s saw an increase in the number of women migrating to France as domestics.[10] The French government established the National Immigration Office in 1945 to recruit foreign labor to contribute to the postwar reconstruction of the country. In 1956, the Franco regime established the Instituto Español de Emigración (IEE) to regulate the flow of emigrants to the rest of Europe.[11] While these two agencies were officially in charge of implementing the 1961 bilateral agreement between France and Spain, most of the women traveling by themselves like Espe made the move outside of the institutional bureaucracy. Spanish women migrated to Paris during the 1960s and 1970s to work as servants or *bonne à tout faire*[12] for middle-class French families. They followed the connections with acquaintances and other women who had already migrated. Espe's friend worked polishing floors for the French consulate in Madrid. With her connections she helped procure a contract for Espe to work for a family in Paris.

I then realized my options. And remember telling [my friend], "Oh, María, I would go wherever necessary.... Because I ca"t give my son a good education here." My friend understood

10 Between 1962 and 1968 the percentage of Spanish women within the emigration influx went from 44% to 47%. The majority of these women who worked as domestic servants for the new bourgeoisie came alone, whether single or widows. They resided in Paris mainly in the 16th district, while other areas also saw a presence of families where the Spanish had settled at the turn of the twentieth century, the so-called *Petite Espagne* in the northern district of Siene-Saint Denis. Oso Casas, *Españolas en París*, 29.

11 Babiano and Farré, "La emigración española a Europa durante los años sesenta," 88.

12 According to Laura Oso Casas, "Some of the women who migrated with their husbands or who were regrouped by them, headed for their arrival in Paris to other less bourgeois neighborhoods of the city, such as the East of the capital (Paris XI, Paris XII, chambres de bonnes Paris XX ...), where they initially rented or roomed in hotels. And they combined this residential strategy with work or multi-employment. However, they often worked as a femme de ménage and had other extra jobs. They were also set up in a stage of occupational mobility for women who started working as bonnes à tout faire. Some of the women who left domestic service as ménage femmes (living in the house environment of their employers) left to work in one or two houses. The advantage of this type of work is an improvement in living and working conditions. The extra work consisted, first, in working as an external servant in several houses. This work could be combined with other occupations such as 'burones' and 'pubelas.' The work of 'burones' is, in the jargon of the Spanish diaspora in France, office cleaning, which is done in the morning early or at night. The 'pubelas' consisted of cleaning the stairs and taking out garbage in buildings that had an electronic intercom rather than a concierge/doorkeeper. One other occupation of Spanish women in Paris was sewing. The XI district of Paris was characterized by sewing workshops, where some Spanish were employed, who could take their work home to sew a few hours before bedtime." Laura Oso Casas, "'Chambras,' 'porterias,' 'pubelas' y 'burones:'" estrategias de movilidad social de las españolas en París," in *Un siglo de inmigración española en Francia* (Vigo: Grupo de Comunicación Galicia en el Mundo, 2009), 88-90.

and told her boss, a French diplomat, …"Sir, she is desperate because she really wants to give her son an education." I was indeed an unhappy sight to see as I was not able to provide him with a good education. I would have liked to study myself. Because I liked it but couldn't do it because of the war. The war prevented me…. When my friend told me about a job…I asked to see the conditions of employment…I needed a passport, travel money…and they agreed to cover everything. So, I got my passport, bought a train ticket, and left. I made 700 pesetas working in the hotel while in this job I was offered 2,000 plus room and board. SO, I said "I'M GONE!" I said, "I'm going alone to try and see if it works for me or not. It is better to expose myself alone without my child." My mother said, "Oh dear, you are crazy, crazy…You think 'streets are lined in gold.'" "No, Mom," I replied, "I only see that here my son is growing up and I am not able to give him a good education."

I left. *I went with that French family; he was a doctor and diplomat. I learned a little French with the little ones. The older boy would say "regarde le papillon." …He was two and a half years old or three years old. "Regarde le papillon."*

Espe laughed as she remembered and said the words in French, and I am able to see the butterfly flying between us. She continued: *He was a diplomat. Then, just nine months after I arrived to work in their home in Paris, he tells me, "Look, we are going to Madagascar and there you have nothing to do but take care of the children. Because there, black servants will do everything…cleaning…everything. You will just take care of the children." But when I found out this move was for three years…the thought of going without my son…no, I could not do it. I accompanied them to Marseille to take a ship to Madagascar. I spent the day after they left sightseeing in Marseille and then returned to Paris.*

I stayed with a couple from Bilbao…Communists, of course. They were exiles from the war there and they worked as janitors/doorkeepers of the building.[13] *It was a good place they had, I remember, rooms for those seeking employment in the city. I stayed there with other girls, and they assured me, "Don't worry, you'll find work right away…."*

Espe's predicament was similar to that of many Spanish women who arrived by themselves to the big city. Many of them found refuge in the Residence Saint Didier located on Rue Saint Didier (Paris 16th district) and run by the Sisters of Mary Immaculate nun order, the Adoratrices Order, or the Spanish mission on Rue de la Pompe, also in the 16th district. In this center the newcomers could find a temporary place to stay and the nuns would help them find a job. A network of volunteers waited at the train station for their fellow Spanish women, and they would bring them to the shelter.[14]

13 Many families lived as doorkeepers in bourgeois buildings. The ground floor quarters were small and lacked services but allowed many to combine a paid job with family living arrangements.

14 Oso Casas, *Españolas en París*, 37-38.

Espe did not use these shelters but rather stayed with her exiled Communist friends who helped her find another job right away.

Indeed, I found a family right away, but they told me I was too fancy of a cook for them. I had already learned to prepare some French dishes…I made her dessert…. It was in this house that the owners got me the legal paperwork for a permanent work permit. The lady wanted me to pay her for my travel expenses as part of all the paperwork, and I said, "Non merci, c'est moi qui ai payé le voyage." I said, [Espe looked at me with pride] *I said no, my former employer had paid for my travel expenses and then deducted monthly from my wages what I owed him little by little. I also asked them to let me bring my son, and they wanted him to be put in a boarding school. I did not like it. I was not about to do with my son what they wanted but rather what I decided as his mother.*

This family let her go, and Espe returned to Bilbao, where she found employment as a cook with a German family until she was able to arrange for another home in Paris. This time, bringing her son was a condition she was not willing to negotiate. Her son was already ten years old when she was able to bring him to live with her in the house where she worked. He arrived at the Gare Austerlitz accompanied by another friend who also worked in Paris like Espe. She remembers fondly how this woman and her husband admired her dedication to her son.

I would take him to visit them, this Spanish couple…we called them pop and mom…who were Communists…The kindest people, very good people…they helped me so much with my son.

Espe sent her son to school as she had always dreamed of, and he was a dedicated student who quickly learned French. The home employer where she moved in with her son was supportive. She advised her to become a French citizen so her son could have access to the financial aid benefits. As Espe put it, "I became French and immediately my son along with me." Her son learned French in a summer while she took extra work with a friend of her employers who had young children and asked her to be their cook during the summer vacation.

We were there three months and he learned French perfectly as he was spending his day with the other children playing and so on. Then he completed his four years of High School and sat for the graduation exam. When I went to speak with his professor and told him, "Now that he has completed his diploma, Monsieur Professor, I would like him to go into technical education." And he said, "Vous-êtes malade? Vous n'avez pas de travail?" and I replied, "No Monsieur, Oui, je travaille," and he told me, "You ask me an impossible thing; how many French would I wish were like him!" And then, I understood. "No Monseiur, on ne parle plus," I said with conviction. "Let's not talk anymore; my son must continue his education." So, he finished his studies. He did the bachelor's first and then studied industrial engineering.

Espe paused for a moment and looked me in the eye with pride. Like in Bilbao, she worked for two generations of the same family during the next twelve years. These families she worked for helped her achieve her goal of seeing her son succeed.

And there in that house I stayed six years. And then I worked for the daughter who married an American from Wisconsin, another six. Twelve years with the same family, I was. The daughter had an apartment in Cannes where we spent the summers…all summer.… They had a pool! And a large yacht where they entertained guests…well, Americans and so on.…

This couple helped my son while he was studying engineering because he was required to do an internship on site and write a report. The first year he worked in Paris at Citroën. I remember in the year [19]68, the student revolution in France; he did not strike. I remember that his friends were saying, "You are a strikebreaker," and he would tell them, "But if I go on strike I risk them taking away my scholarship, NO. I have a scholarship! The state pays for my studies."

Espe is quick to point out how not everyone she worked for was so kind and generous. Referring to the parents of the wife in this family, she recalled:

Just the opposite of her parents, who were so tight and mean.… I had to tell that lady once, "Madame, with this food my son does not have enough. If you buy three steaks and my son eats one, that means I haven't eaten."

Espe stopped to make the point clear to me. *I did tell them one day, you know?* She switched to French to repeat the moment she told her employer,

"Non madame, c'est moi qui ne mange pas." Because, you see, she entered the kitchen and we [she and her son] *were eating and she remarked, "Of course we have to support your son here," and I immediately replied "NON, MADAME! non madame, c'est moi qui ne mange pas. S'il mange, je ne mange pas." But the daughter and her American husband were kinder.*

Espe's son was able to do some internship work in the American factory owned by her employer and eventually found a career as an industrial engineer in the United States. He got married and moved to America. After twenty-two years living in France, Espe found herself alone and decided to return to Spain. Looking back, she considers her move to France the best decision she ever made in her life.

When I arrived in France, the difference was…well, like water and wine. It was like that…totally opposite. Absolutely…not only people's life, eating, the everyday and all that…it was the way they related to each other.… I mean, they would walk out of the subway and would kiss each other, and I did not see that in Spain. I remember how one day my husband put his arm like that over my shoulder in the park and a police guard came to scold us.… There were so many things I experienced…it was that freedom! That was the "thing" in France. They indeed

were twenty or thirty years ahead of us. It's true, in everything. Because in those days Spain was VERY, VERY poor. Even the Basque Country, because the Basque Country was not the worst in Spain, but it was behind….

It was very, very bad…. So people emigrated, many, many people. Those from the south went to Germany. Large numbers of young men from the countryside went to Germany to work, while in France, we were mostly domestic servants. And in Germany it was more country men like Luis Mariano the Spanish actor and singer; he was first working in the French grape harvest…he sang so beautifully…. Those rural country men came to work every summer.… Yes, because the conditions of work were very good; they had their little barracks, their showers, very good. At least in France, in other places I do not know, but in France they were fine.

Espe's eyes lit up when she spoke of Luis Mariano.

I went out with my friends to the movies and that…. Yes. I remember that we went to see Luis Mariano…if we used to go out…. We had a center. In the French parish there was a Spanish priest, Asturian. They let us use a chapel where they gave Mass for the Spaniards, the Spanish priest. And we prepared the mass for us. It was a huge center. We used it to teach children the catechism…to have parties on Sundays. And each one made a meal and brought it to share at dinner. …Well, there we were, our center. The priest gave us a key…and…we made meals…each one carried what he wanted. First there were my son's in-laws. He was the president and he told me, "You are going to be my secretary," and I said, "Good," but when he stopped being president, they ELECTED ME! And I was the president until I came back to Spain.

We gave informative talks too. Because many Spaniards were not paid by insurance, I had to go with some to make a claim. I would say, "Look, you, madam, you don't pay this." I knew because we were going to the UGT union, one of my friends and me. We were going to see what rights we had. Sure, homework too. But, let's see what rights we had. You have the right to this, this, and this. …Then we used to give talks. "We have the right to this, this, this. And if the employer does not pay you, you have to protest. But you also have the responsibility to do the work properly and punctually."

I remember someone who hadn't been paid, and I went with her because she didn't speak French. "Madame, I'm sorry, but you haven't paid Edurne," I said. And I went to another session with someone else too, and the employer said, [thoughtful pause] *How did she tell me?* [Speaking to herself] "*Let her speak too…because she also knows French," she told me, because I was going with those who didn't know French, to help them.*

Espe's story shows the often fraught relationship the Spanish émigrés had with their French employers, and the larger problem with the way foreign workers are in general treated by the country that needs and benefits from their work. The cognitive dissonance on the part of the French was partly reconciled by creating simplistic caricatures of the foreign workers, and in this case, the female Spanish

domestic employee. The maid's job is the one that fed the most prevalent stereotype of most Spanish immigration in France, personified in the character of "Conchita." As Bruno Tur points out, "the stereotypes of the sixties in France are not born ex nihilo: they are inspired, prolonged, perpetuated or modified preconceived ideas existing since the beginning of the XX century, some of them inherited from the XIX, while the most ancient date back to the modern era, sometimes before to the French Revolution (1789)."[15] Tur explains how in 1968, when the novelist Solange Fasquelle published in the Albin Michel editorial a humorous work on the maids of Paris, *Conchita and you: Practical manual for people who employ Spanish maids,* Conchita was already a stereotype well known to the French. Before "Conchita the maid" there was "Conchita the Spanish woman," who lived in Spain and was not an immigrant. The stereotyped character appears in the light comedies of the Parisian capital (théâtre de boulevard), in literature, and in songs like the one by Luis Mariano:

This is the wonder
That you repeat daily,
Because the young seamstress
Becomes a fairy-godmother in Paris.
Miracle of Paris, Paris, Paris,
In silk and lace,
Girls who live, live, live
Making others' dreams come alive[16]

The Spanish woman of the French imagination is a brunette, beautiful, seductive, with the potential to do great harm. She knows how to dance, how to move her body. Like Mérimée's *Carmen,* Conchita is often portrayed as a gypsy, Andalusian. Her character embodies something inaccessible and, ultimately, wanton. This character follows that of Bécassine, a French comic strip character inspired by the earthy maids from Brittany who left the farm to work in Paris.[17]

Espe returned to Spain in 1977 after her son married and moved to the United States. She was fifty-four years old. With the money she had saved she bought a small delicatessen in Bilbao, in the Basque country, her native country. There she

15 Bruno Tur, "Estereotipos y representaciones sobre la inmigración española en Francia," in Grupo de Comunicación Galicia en el Mundo, *Un siglo de inmigración española en Francia*

16 Esta es la maravilla/Que a diario repetís/Porque la modistilla/Es hada en París. /Milagro de París, París, París,/En seda y encaje/Muchachas que vivís, vivís, vivís/Haciendo soñar. [My translation] "Milagro de París," song lyrics sung by Luis Mariano, a famous tenor in France, Spain, and Latin America in the 1940s through 1960s. Luis Mariano was born in Irun, Basque Country, but grew up in France where his family migrated after the war. Esperanza was one of his most devoted admirers.

17 Tur, "Estereotipos y representaciones sobre la inmigración española en Francia," 130-31.

worked until her retirement. Espe's move to France was, in the end, the key to making her return to Spain more comfortable. She followed the pattern of migration with the objective to save and return home.

Historian Eider de Dios utilizes oral history to reconstruct the experiences of the domestic servants during the Franco regime. She divides her study into three parts, according to three categories she designs to characterize the worker in each period: first, the servant (1939-1959); second, the housekeeper or "empleada de hogar" (1959-1975); and finally, the domestic worker or "trabajadora del hogar" (1975-1995). Espe belonged to the first category, although she would take charge of her own destiny by moving to Paris where labor conditions and pay for domestic servants were better. Three years after she migrated to Paris, the decree of March 17, 1959, established a Montepío Nacional del Servicio Doméstico as an official policy for Spanish domestics working abroad. The Women's Section of Falange partly directed it between 1960 and 1970, the years that Espe was working in France.[18]

In retirement, returning Spanish domestics who had worked abroad typically had to rely on different sources of income. For Espe that meant a partial pension from the French government for the years she paid into its system and also a partial retirement from the Spanish government. The wage disparity for female domestics in Spain and France is what made the biggest difference for Espe and thousands of others like her who could barely subsist in Franco's Spain but could live a relatively comfortable life outside of it. The higher wages and the advantages of living in the booming, modern, postwar Europe paid even more dividends for her son. In France he had access to a better education and to job opportunities that did not exist for the son of a domestic in Spain. In order to achieve her objectives, Espe, like so many of the other Spanish domestics, had to be bold. She had to leave everything she had known—people, culture, language—and adopt another country's language and culture as well as its way of life. What she discovered when she moved to Paris is that life under Franco for poor Spaniards was mostly a dead end. They were locked into a life of servitude with little hope of advancement. Their work was indeed needed to take care of the Spanish elite, as illustrated by the large number of domestics employed by the families for which her mother and father, her husband, and even she had worked. The indignities of being a "Conchita" in France and having to organize to demand justice from unscrupulous employers or businesses, however insulting, were a small price to pay for the opportunities afforded by working abroad. The truth, as Espe came to realize, was that the domestic servant was not going to be treated well by the upper classes, whether in Spain or in France, so she might as well take the money. That made all the difference.

18 Fernández, *Sirvienta, empleada, trabajadora de hogar*, 131.

Dori's Many Returns

El irse
se divide en fragmentos,
la decisión en otras decisiones,
y estas a su vez
se subdividen.
Irse:
salir de la ciudad, pero antes,
de una casa y antes aun,
de una habitación y para ello,
levantarse, poner
orden entre los huesos
y cerrar el cuaderno y previamente,
dejar de escribir para
que? Si: irse. Irse quedó atrás. se escribió mas arriba, o en la página
anterior.

Dori was born in December 1940 in Alhama, a village in the southern coastal town of Almería.

My parents had never left the town…. I mean my mother had never traveled…. The farthest she ventured was perhaps Barcelona…. She, once, had visited Granada…and talked a lot about the times when she was young and used to go to Linares because they had some relatives there and so, I think, in her youth she had visited Linares…. My parents had seven children, six daughters and the last one a boy. My father was a wine barrel maker. Here the grape industry began to provide a lot work, and he spent almost all year making barrels. There are several barrel making workshops in Alhama. And then when the time of the grape harvest came, they called it the "labor" season…he had a lot of work.

My mother stayed home taking care of the children. There was nowhere for women to work either…that's what happened to me and other people my age. My father did not want us serving the rich…cleaning and so on. My father never could stand that we were cleaning anyone's home, so he would prefer working as many hours as he had to. We only worked during "labor" harvest…cleaning grapes…then everyone worked, including married women and all the young, worked as we did not go to school. Nowadays everyone goes to school, right?

So, I had already left school…very small…I did not graduate…I attended school for a very short time…. I was eleven years old. My mother would go to work at the harvest, and I stayed home taking care of my siblings. The little bit I know I have learned on my own. I did not even finish learning my multiplication tables.

During the civil war, Dori's father fought on the Republican side along with one of his brothers. "He was a Communist, my dad," she remarked, "but after the war we had to make sure to keep our mouth shut." Dori's family was not religious either. Her parents never got married, even after being pressured and harassed by the village to "sanctify" their union in church.

They didn't get married…no one could convince them to get married…and then the gossip…. "Oh, you all are going to be bastard children, bastard children," and then of course the fear seeps in because the village people put you in a box with a label. At home we didn't talk about anything; my father was a very quiet man. I was forced to go to mass every Sunday while I went to school and made my First Communion without even putting much thought into it. No special dress, no party, nothing to celebrate.

Alhama's provincial values kept young men and women strictly separate.

Figure 39: Newlyweds, Munster, Germany, 1963-64

I had had a boyfriend or two before I left for Germany. My father worked packing grapes in another village. He used to stay with a family there and became very friendly with them. So, a son of this family was the one I started seeing as a suitor. In Alhama we went out only with other groups of girls. We went for walks just on Sundays...Sundays or holidays, but not every day. Women did not often go out in public. You would embroider or learn to do some handcrafts or clean the house. Occasionally, there were parties, mainly in the summer, and we were allowed to go dancing a bit or go to the movies on Sundays. I went to the cinema a

lot with my sister and her boyfriend as a chaperone. In Alhama there was a summer terrace cinema and a winter cinema. I remember the first movie I ever saw, because they opened the cinema when I was a young girl. I remember Jorge Negrete and María Félix. They distributed the film advertisement in the cinema when you entered. It was a flyer with the title of the film, the cast names, and a beautiful picture of the movie. I remember that my sister collected them.

There was another very nice winter cinema; it was like a theater. Later on, they demolished it to make flats, but it was very beautiful; it had an orchestra and mezzanine with the peanut gallery upstairs. That was where the troublemakers sat. [She laughed] *The couples courting sat farther back for all the petting. Of course, it was dark and one could do certain things. When the characters were about to kiss on the screen, they always cut it. A cut kiss caused an uproar in the cinema.* [She laughed]

Dori was twenty-one when she got engaged. Her husband-to-be was a distant relative whose family were bakers. He had migrated already to Germany with a friend, and one of the summers he returned to Spain for the holidays. That's when they became boyfriend and girlfriend.

I became his girlfriend before he returned to Germany, and we had a short time of courtship, she remarked with a smile, *maybe a year and a bit. He was very handsome, and I fancied him.*

During that year they exchanged love letters:

It was hard for me to write, but I wrote,

she reminisced with a happy laugh.

I would get up early to post my letters in time for it to go out the same day.

They got married on June 2, 1964 and spent their honeymoon in Granada.

In those days honeymoons were modest,

she was quick to note. As soon as their honeymoon was over, they traveled together to Germany.

Germany had signed a bilateral agreement with the Franco regime in 1960. The German government policy of active labor recruitment took place between 1960 and 1973.[19] The Bundesanstalt für Arbeit (BAA, or Federal Employment Office) was

19 According to historian Carlos Sanz Díaz, between 1955 and 1982, approximately 800,000 Spaniards migrated to the Federal Republic of Germany, of which 86.1% returned to Spain

the official German body in charge of implementing and monitoring immigration matters under the Spanish-German agreement. On the Spanish side, the agency was the IEE. To execute the agreement, the BAA established a technical delegation office assigned by the IEE in Madrid, the so-called German Commission. It opened in April 1960 with fifty employees in the Spanish capital in addition to various mobile teams of contractors and doctors from the BAA. These teams traveled to different Spanish provinces to recruit applicants for the job vacancies in Germany.

There were three types of Spanish emigration to Germany. The first, named *first path*, was regulated emigration in which the IEE and the BAA controlled the entire process. This first path could be through open recruitment or by nominal request (Namentliche Anforderung). The second variety of emigration, called *second path*, was accomplished through an entry visa, issued by the German consular representatives in Spain. Dori's husband went in 1962 under this second path.

They sent him a contract…there was another friend of his working in Germany already…because no one could go except with a contract from Germany. There, in Germany they admitted workers, but with a work contract. A friend who was already working there arranged for the employers to send two contracts, one for my husband and another for a friend. That's how they went to work in the paint factory called Glasurit. A big factory with three thousand workers in the district of Hiltrup in Münster, the city where we lived. When I arrived, we rented a room with a little kitchen. I was fortunate to have a stove. There was the bedroom, a hallway, the kitchen…but there was no toilet, only outside in the stairs shared by all the neighbors. I had to wash up in our room with a washbowl.

in the same period. The years of greatest emigration were: 1964 (81,818 emigrants); 1965 (82,324); and 1970 (61,318). Carlos Sanz Díaz, "Las relaciones del IEE con Alemania," in Luís M. Calvo Salgado et al., *Historia del Instituto Español De Emigración: La política migratoria exterior de España y el IEE del Franquismo a la Transición* (Madrid: Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración, Subdirección General de Información Administrativa y Publicaciones, 2009), 168-188. See also: Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, "Una introducción a la historia de la emigración española en la República Federal de Alemania (1960-1980)," *Iberoamericana* 46 (June 2012): 23-42; José Babiano y Ana Fernández Asperilla, *La patria en la maleta: Historia social de la emigración española a Europa* (Madrid, Ministerio de Trabajo y Emigración, 2009); Antonio Muñoz Sánchez, *Entre dos sindicalismos: La emigración española en la RFA, los sindicatos alemanes y la UGT, 1960-1964* Documento de Trabajo 1/2008 (Madrid, Fundación 1º de Mayo, 2008); José Manuel Azcona, "Tratamiento político de la emigración exterior española en el tardofranquismo (1974-1977)" *Estudios Internacionales* 182 (September-December 2015): 9-35.

Figure 40: Newlyweds cooking in their apartment in Münster, 1964

Dori's experience is that of many thousands of southern European and Northern African workers who migrated to Germany as part of the so-called *Gastarbeiter* or "guest worker" program developed after World War II.[20] There was also a *third path* of entry. This was when the emigrant arrived in Germany as a tourist and later obtained the legal working permits (work and residence) to stay. The Spanish IEE did not play any role in the second and third paths, leading to tensions with German authorities whose practices hampered the Spanish authorities' ability to control Spanish migratory flows.[21]

The regulated migration followed a series of official controls and protocols. Workers who wanted to accept the jobs offered by German employers had to register at the regime's local Syndical Union offices. They had to go through a double selection process. First, technicians from the IEE or the Falangist Trade Union Organization checked their professional qualifications and administered a first medical examination. Those who passed this screening phase underwent a second medi-

20 During the 1950s and 1960s, West Germany signed bilateral recruitment agreements with a number of countries: Italy (22 November 1955); Spain (29 March 1960); Greece (30 March 1960); Turkey (30 October 1961); Morocco (21 June 1963); Portugal (17 March 1964); Tunisia (18 October 1965); and Yugoslavia (12 October 1968).

21 Sanz Díaz, "Las relaciones del IEE con Alemania," 174.

cal clearance and review of their trade skills, this time administered by the mobile German Commission teams sent to different provincial capitals.[22]

Those selected received a bilingual contract, usually effective for one year. In addition, the German government issued a visa and work permit and detailed information about the working terms and conditions they should expect in Germany. The IEE and the German Commission coordinated the travel arrangements of emigrants by rail in "joint transport" every week. They crossed the Spanish-French border through Irun, in the Basque Country, and reached their destination at the Cologne-Deutz railway station in Germany. An average of 800 Spanish workers arrived in Germany each week during the 1960s. Representatives of German employers and labor authorities received them at the station with great pomp and publicity.[23] Most Spaniards continued their journey in smaller groups until they reached their final destinations, which, in the case of Dori and her husband, was Münster.[24] The 1960 bilateral agreement between Spain and West Germany provided for family reunification (article 17) under the requirement that the emigrant had "appropriate housing" for the worker and his family, while the German State did not have any obligation to accept the requests for family regrouping.

Dori did not speak a word of German when she arrived, and yet she told me she found herself in "wonderland."

Newlywed, in love with my husband and…I don't know, everything was so very different. It was truly a wonderland! Just going to the supermarket, something we did not have in Spain yet; well at least in Almeria, but a superstore where you could buy everything from a tub of butter to a car?! So, all that for me made a great impression. In Spain we would buy a small can of foie gras, and we would have to spread it so very thin so everyone could have a taste, but in Germany you could buy whatever because you knew you could afford it with your wages. Also clothing in Spain, you had it made, homemade, while over there [Germany] *you could*

22 Sanz Díaz, "Las relaciones del IEE con Alemania," 175.

23 On September 7, 1964, only a couple of months after Dori and her husband arrived in Germany, Armando Rodrigues de Sa, a 38-year-old Portuguese carpenter, was welcomed as the one millionth guest worker by a German delegation and journalist who recorded how he was given an award and a motorcycle.

24 Those who decided to emigrate on their own opted for requesting a work visa at the German consulates in Spain before traveling to Germany or entering as tourists. Approximately 30% of Spaniards who emigrated to Germany did so without the assistance of the Institute of Emigration. This irregular emigration was especially high between 1960-1967. For the same years, illegal practices of intermediaries were also detected. These intermediaries provided Spanish emigrants with the transfer to Germany and entry into the country through poorly monitored border crossings with a payment of a fee. Sanz Díaz, "Las relaciones del IEE con Alemania," 175-76; and Carlos Sanz Diaz, *Clandestinos, ilegales, espontáneos emigración irregular de españoles a Alemania en el contexto de las relaciones hispano-alemanas, 1960-1973* (Madrid, CEHRI, 2004).

buy an already made dress with great ease. Everything for me was amazing. I liked it very much at the beginning. Then, little by little, I started to miss my family and my hometown.

Dori soon started to work too. Having two salaries made it more affordable to access the consumer economy in her new home country. First, she worked in a clothing factory where she met other young women, many from southern Spain, and a few from Italy. She recalled how hard working German people were and how she took pride in showing her dedication to them by doing a good job. After a few months she went to work at the same paint factory where her husband was employed.

They paid us well. In Germany we lived better because we earned two salaries. Women there worked too. All of us who migrated, even those who had never worked in Spain, went to work when they moved there [Germany]. *And that was that, two salaries, husband and wife worked. Because in my village there was no work for women at all. You see, we* ***were going to save money to return home****...what men and women worked for then was to save some money. We lived off one salary and sent the other wages home to save up to build a house or start a business and be able to make a better life.*

Dori became pregnant two months after they arrived in Münster. Instead of losing her job, as she probably would have in Spain, she was paid for two months leave by the German social security system.

Social security was very good [in Germany]; *better than in Spain. You could not even fix your teeth and all that in Spain, and there* [Germany] *you could go to whatever doctor you chose, everything covered by social security. I had my first baby girl, and they gave us four weeks before and four weeks after the delivery. When I returned to work, I used to leave my baby with a German neighbor. She was married and also took care of her sister's baby; the sister was a single mother. Germans did not look down on single moms. There were many German girls who had children and weren't married. Young people used to leave their parents' home when they were of a certain age; even the parents encouraged them to be independent, very different from what we did here* [Spain]. *We sheltered our children too much.*

When the baby turned six months, Dori and her husband decided it was better for her to return to the village. She had been in Germany a little over a year.

Because I got pregnant again and already had my baby girl, we decided it was best. I already wanted to come back, to tell you the truth. So during our vacation visit my husband said, "Look, you're going to stay. I can send you the money, and here you don't have to work and you have some help from the family." So I stayed in Spain, and he went back to Germany.

Cristi was born and then when Santos was born…in [19]67 my husband came back to set up a greengrocer shop here in Alhama, and in the greengrocer shop the customers began to order rosquillas,[25] *and so, we started making rosquillas to sell in Almeria too. Our customers began to ask for more rosquillas, more rosquillas, more rosquillas, and we closed the greengrocer business to become bakers. BUT again, he had a longing for Germany and decided to go back alone for a while. He would visit us twice a year, get me pregnant, and leave again. I had four babies in a row. I missed having him by my side. So many departures and so many returns.*

*Raising children is a big responsibility, you see? Having two, three children, they would get sick and in the middle of the night I found myself looking for help…a lot of responsibility for a mother to have a child and not have the father there…**to be alone!*** [she uttered in a whisper] *My family helped me. I was living in my parents' house when I first came back pregnant with my second baby boy, Cristi. But then, after he was born, we rented a house, and I went to live on my own with the children. My sister sometimes would stay the night so I would not find myself all alone with the children. Ana was born in Germany, Cristi in Alhama fourteen months later. Then Santos and then baby Dori were born a year and thirteen days apart in Alhama. So, I had four babies in four years. Dori was born in the house I moved to by myself with them, and then and there I learned the business of baking "rosquillas." In that house we built a big storage shed and a bakery workshop. We opened the bakery, and my husband did not return to Germany anymore. Eventually, we bought a plot of land in the village to build this house* [where we were holding the interview] *and the business in the same place. The truth is that after we had been working abroad and endured separation after separation, we did save a little, but not enough to build the house…We weren't away that long either…not so many years…a short time really. And also, I had to sustain myself and the children here while he also had to live there and send money to us. I saved a little but not so much. Then with our savings, we had to buy an oven and build the storage to be able to work in the first house we rented. So, when it came to building this house, we had to do it…little by little. We bought a plot first, and since at that time things were not as expensive as they are today, we were able eventually to do it but the materials we picked were the basics, so the house ended up costing around 500,000 pesetas. We brought the equipment from the other workshop in the house we had been renting and established ourselves here.*

Dori spent most of her young adult life taking care of her family. A few years after her husband returned for good from Germany in 1971, he fell ill and after nine years of a chronic illness, he died in 1987. By then, they had had another child, a baby girl they named Sofia, only ten when her dad passed.

Dori expressed some regret that the two boys ended up staying closer to her to help with the business rather than going to college.

25 Round-shaped bread with a hole in the center.

They had to get to work. They were still very young. Santos was still going to middle school. Both boys were still in school. But my Santos, I had to wake him up a little earlier in the morning. He was small. We started working early before they would leave for school. They would help me make the bread dough. I would maybe wake them up at seven o'clock or around then so they would help me a little before leaving for school.

I sit listening in admiration of this tiny woman who was able to accomplish so much in her life, not only for herself, but also for her entire family. She tells me she was always thin, never weighed more than 130 pounds maximum. Yet, she is the incarnation of strength and grit. Her workday starts at five thirty in the morning and doesn't end until sunset. When I ask her if she is still able to lift the heavy flour sacks, she very calmly explains she does not have to as she utilizes a baker's pourer and works the dough into pieces. The only tiring aspect of her routine, she confides, is the fast pace.

I work very fast because these are doughs containing yeast and you have to watch them closely, you have to guard the oven, and you have always to work in a hurry. And to tell you how many hours? I have no set schedule or fixed hours. I get up at five thirty, have breakfast on the go without stopping. At noon on the mark, I prepare lunch and many times dinner too. My sister comes for lunch to make sure I eat, and she eats with me. Sofia sometimes used to come for lunch when she was at school, sometimes not.

Dori gave her youngest child a name that she wears well, Sofía. Sofía means wisdom, and she is indeed wise. Sofía is a respected historian of contemporary Spain, now a professor and a prolific author whose works focus on the experiences of those outside of history in the violent Spanish twentieth century.[26] Dori has a clear sense of her historical non-being as she reflects on her life.

Well, I don't know.… I have not done anything.… I believe that I have not been an exceptional woman in anything. I've accepted my position as it was dealt to me. I learned with my husband side by side in the bakery and always worked here with him at the oven. Then, my children, as they grew older, also helped and took on more responsibilities. Now, even to run the business paperwork and so on, it is Santos who is the one in charge. Old age is not important for me. I am not afraid of getting old. I am not scared of dying. No, no. I neither

26 Some of Sofía's publications include: Sofía Rodríguez López, *Memorias de los nadie: Una historia oral del campo andaluz (1914-1959)* (Sevilla: Centro de Estudios Andaluces, 2015); *El patio de la cárcel. La Sección Femenina de FET-JONS en Almería (1937-1977)* (Sevilla: Centro de Estudios Andaluces, 2010); *Quintacolumnistas: Las mujeres del 36 en la clandestinidad almeriense* (Almería: Instituto de Estudios Almerienses, 2008); *Mujeres en Guerra: Almeria (1936-1939)*

fear death nor old age. Having the bakery makes me get up in the morning. When I hear people talking about that so and so has more money or…I say, "I BELIEVE WE HAVE MORE THAN PLENTY." We must always look back and down, not look upward to someone else having more than you. Instead, I look back on those who have so little, not even food to survive. We have enough to eat, we have enough to dress ourselves, we have enough to buy ourselves a treat now and then. ***Accumulating money is not necessary;*** *only just having what you need and a little more in case you want to buy yourself a treat or you want to take a trip. So, for me there is more than enough.*

*What have I lived? Well, I have lived the life that happened to me, and I regret it was not a life such as it is lived now that we enjoy other choices, another way of living. THAT I would have liked to live. I would have preferred that life had not been so…well as I told you…****so difficult.*** *We have endured and persevered through everything because we were young and did not realize how hard we had it. Now, we look back and see things differently, but that was what life was like. We thought nothing of it, just that that was the way to live. But of course, as one grows older, one sees that life need not to be so hard. I would have liked that life would have been, as it is now…****a life of freedom.*** *In sum I have lived an ordinary life…nothing special.*

Dori does not say this with false modesty. She really believes that her life was nothing special. She had been conditioned to think that women's sacrifices, women's work, was of little worth. Spain under Franco was also conditioned to take women like Dori for granted. Spanish women were given a role in National Catholic propaganda, but that role was as support for heroic men forged by the regime. The reality was that Dori, like so many Spanish women of her era, was the driver of both the domestic and the economic spheres of her family. She was a business partner, a babysitter, a cook, a listener, and moral support for an extended family. She cared for the past and future generations. Instead of being the tail wagging behind, these women were the head of their families, leading the way.

* * * * *

Espe and Dori's delivery of their stories is diametrically different. Espe's is a knotty narrative, untangled urgently, populated with parenthetical clarifications, backtracks, and fast-forwards. Hers is constructed of those details, sparks of her own logic. The narrative switches from Spanish to French in a re-enactment rich in dialogue. Constant through her rhizomatic storyline is the sheer determination and fixed aspiration to provide a better life for her son.

By contrast, Dori's diction is slow and deliberate. She speaks almost with detachment about her own life, embracing, dwelling in her non-being. She rides waves of the storm as they come. But she too is determined to provide a better life for those who come after, her children.

I am a migrant, an expat like Espe and Dori, the subjects in these two stories. Their given names predict their lives' paths. Esperanza (Espe) means hope in Spanish. Adoración (Dori) means adoration. My name, Aurora, dawn, has illuminated my journey into the unknown. Theirs and mine are "nomadic histories"[27] impelled by survival, grit, and the acceptance of life's unkind terrain. The sole purpose of falling is to lift ourselves up again and again. Guided by the plural "us," we venture across physical and metaphorical borders.

As Deleuze and Guattari write, "[i]t is true that the nomads have no history; they only have a geography."[28] We *nomad(ologists)* realize that "History has always dismissed the nomads."[29] Deleuze and Guattari also point out that "the nomad is not at all the same as the migrant; for the migrant goes principally from one point to another, even if the second point is uncertain, unforeseen, or not well localized. But the nomad goes from point to point only as a consequence and as a factual necessity."[30] Espe's and Dori's motions mark those of migrants, but they are also nomads. Their moves respond to life's necessities. Their names, Hope and Adoration, poetically propel them in their quests. Espe's and Dori's testimonies illustrate the concept of "nomadic subjects" afforded by feminist scholar Rosi Braidotti as well as María Zambrano's notion of "Sacrificial/Merciful history." According to Braidotti, a nomadic subject is a:

> [T]heoretical figuration for contemporary subjectivity. A figuration is a politically informed image of thought that evokes or expresses an alternative vision of subjectivity. […] The black feminist writer and poet bell hooks in her work on postmodern blackness, describes this consciousness in terms of "yearning." She argues that "yearning" is a common affective and political sensibility that cuts across boundaries of race, class, gender, and sexual practice and "*could be a fertile ground for the construction of empathy—ties that would promote recognition of shared commitments and serve as a base for solidarity and coalition.*" [my emphasis][31]

The affective yearning described by Braidotti is clearly articulated in María Zambrano's poetic reason. Recognizing each other's neglect borne out of our evanescent

27 The inspiration for this chapter comes from a Deleuzian nomadic model as presented in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "1227: Treatise on Nomadology—The War Machine," in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Oxford: Bloomsbury, 2016), 409-92. Also see Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Craig Lundy, "Nomadic History," in *History and Becoming* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 64-103.

28 Deleuze and Guattari, "1227: Treatise on Nomadology," 459.

29 Deleuze and Guattari, "1227: Treatise on Nomadology," 459.

30 Deleuze and Guattari, "1227: Treatise on Nomadology," 443.

31 Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, 22.

experiences of isolation and displacement (inner and worldly) may only be overcome by our yearning to be free. Such yearning is the force guiding the invisible nomad subjects in their paths. Zambrano's sacrificial history is a quest for revealing the mystery that connects us as one. Zambrano calls mercy such a yearning in her 1989 essay "Para una historia de la piedad" (For a History of Mercy). She defines mercy as "the feeling of the heterogeneous quality of being," and therefore it is "the *yearning to find the ways of understanding* [my emphasis] and dealing with each one of those multiple ways of reality. …Mercy is knowing how to deal with what is different, with that which is radically other than us."[32] For Zambrano, poetry is the language of mercy. The emphasis on the rational leads us to "only know how to deal with those which are almost a reproduction of ourselves. …And that is how," she explains, "we ended up alone; alone and unable to deal with 'the other.' But if we put together the various kinds of 'otherness,' we realize that it is nothing but reality, the reality that surrounds us and where we are anchored."[33]

Espe's and Dori's testimonies of migration are infused with yearning, mercy, and self-empowerment. They epitomize Braidotti's nomadic subject notion, a notion only possible to historicize in tracing their lives' paths. Theirs are two emotional cartographies of hope and adoration. Espe's and Dori's moves crossed national borders, but they were informed by their trespassing inner boundaries and limitations of class and gendered specific expectations. Esperanza and Dori made themselves anew, the former as a maid in Paris during the late 1950s, the latter, as a factory worker in Germany in the early 1960s.

Spanish emigration at the end of the 1950s is part of a broader migration system that included nine countries: Portugal, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. These countries provided cheap labor to northern European countries: France, Great Britain, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg. By the mid-1970s, around eight million migrants resided in a European country other than their own. The movement of this labor force was sanctioned by a series of bilateral agreements between the receiving and sending governments. Franco's regime signed the first agreement with Belgium in 1956; West Germany in 1960; and France, Switzerland, and Holland in 1961.[34] Leaving Franco's Spain as an emigrant allowed many to escape the regime's economic repression. The regime signed with more developed European countries a number of "guest worker" programs, which led many of the poor to find employment abroad to provide for their families. In most cases, the emigrants planned to return to their home countries

32 María Zambrano, "Para una historia de la piedad," in Aurora G. Morcillo et al. eds., *The Modern Spain Sourcebook: A Cultural History from 1600 to the Present* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2018), 35-41. Translation by Asunción Gómez.

33 Zambrano, "Para una historia de la piedad," 38-40.

34 Babiano and Farré, "La emigración española a Europa durante los años sesenta," 82.

after a few years. However, there were some who did not feel the need to return to a country in which they felt like second-class citizens or as outsiders in their own land.

Realizing from afar that a strange land provides more for you and your family than your own birthplace became in many cases (and today as well) a blunt riposte to hollow patriotic and nationalistic slogans. The truth for many Spaniards in the 1950s and 1960s was that the Franco regime could not provide the sustenance of the more democratic neighbors to the north. While Spain languished as a quaint culturally and morally stifling backwater autocracy, the free democracies of Europe and the United States raced ahead of it. Instead of exporting its products and ideas like other countries, Spain could only offer its workers to clean the houses and make the goods for others. Ironically, these workers and their perambulations created cracks in the regime's wall, where subversive ideas seeped through. The act of working abroad also loosened the loyalties of many people who saw that the outside world was doing more for common Spaniards than even their own government.

Espe and Dori did not see themselves as part of the resistance to the regime, but in actuality they were. Their form of resistance was to dare to go abroad to seek a better life. What they brought back from their travels were tales of a better world and the yearning to remake Spain so that their children and their children's children would not be forced to make the same perilous choice.