

# Intermezzo:

## In-visible: Aurora's Trinity

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### The Life of the Nomad is the Intermezzo<sup>1</sup>

Holy and blessed Three,  
glorious Trinity,  
**Wisdom, Love, Might;**  
boundless as ocean's tide  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the earth far and wide  
let there be light.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 12: Hymn #466

466  
MOSCOW 664 66 64

GENERAL HYMNS  
Adapted from a tune by F. Giardini 1716-96  
in Madan's Collection 1769



- 1 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 443.
- 2 The New English Hymnal, Hymn # 466: "Thou, Whose Almighty Word," by John Marriott, 1813. [https://hymnary.org/text/thou\\_whose\\_almighty\\_word](https://hymnary.org/text/thou_whose_almighty_word).

This chapter serves as an *intermezzo*, or in-between space, to address the personal and autobiographical in pursuit of revelation. As has been expressed earlier, poetry, or rather a poetics of history, is the instrument I use in my analysis of oral histories rendered in the book's two parts. The first set of interviews examines space and the visible, while the second half explores time and the invisible. To illustrate the relation between the visible and the invisible, as well as space and time, I tell in this intermediate chapter the story of three generations of women, grandmother, mother, and daughter, using the metaphor of the Trinity to explain how we can construct a historical narrative centered on the Deleuzian "becoming" rather than the traditional historical "being." The fusion of time and space through the practice of oral history facilitates a representational shift in historicizing. Poetry is the language which makes intelligible the symbolism behind three generations of women and reveals an ontological conception of history informed by gender. This is the story of three Auroras, my grandmother, my mother, and me, respectively, characterized as "Wisdom, Love, and Might." We are an entangled triune, sharing our names but also the mystery of a sacrificial history of small renunciations driven, as Spanish philosopher María Zambrano proposed in her work, towards a poetic reason:

And the most elemental human experience has revelation qualities, although it only reiterates what is often known. History and tradition need to be reborn, to reappear; which will happen more intensely in the personal history, without the need for it to be specially woven as the history of all.<sup>3</sup>

The result is historical meaning infused with a sort of religious transcendence, an agapeic historical narrative filled with the ultimate force of life, according to both Hannah Arendt and María Zambrano, the force of love and compassion. "For love," says Arendt, "although it is one of the rarest occurrences in human lives, indeed possesses an unequalled power of self-revelation. ...Love, by reason of its passion, destroys the in-between which relates us to and separates us from others."<sup>4</sup> While Zambrano reminds us that the connecting link between life and truth is love: "the love that bears his name, that prepares and leads life toward truth. The nature of that love is to become all the more impassioned because truth is all the most universal and unmoved, distant and pure."<sup>5</sup>

The language to unveil this ontological history, this becoming, employs metaphor and analogy best expressed in poetry (verse or prose). Metaphorical is the quality of scientific language as well. Metaphor from the Greek etymologically

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3 María Zambrano, *Notas de un método* (Madrid: Tecnos, 2011), 66.

4 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 242.

5 Noël Valis and Carol Maier, *Two Confessions: María Zambrano and Rosa Chacel* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), loc. 265 of 4386, Kindle.

means “to take further.” Therefore, explains poet and philosopher Chantal Maillard, it is an instrument to reach beyond the literal form of language, allowing our mind to establish associations between two distinct realities for the purpose of explaining or developing new ideas and/or abstract arguments.<sup>6</sup> “It means that human reasoning,” says Zambrano, “must embrace the movement and flow of history, and even when it seems unlikely doable, it must acquire a dynamic structure replacing thus the static structure in place until now.”<sup>7</sup> Movement, rhythm, and music are all important for rendering faithfully the act of history. In *La creación por la metáfora: Introducción a la razón-poética*, Maillard explains how Zambrano establishes the foundations of a “relativist method.” Such method only procures models rather than absolute truths.

I resort to metaphor to explain the in-visible history of the three Auroras of this story in order to illuminate a new historical insight from the practice of oral history, which I argue offers us a path to a history understood as becoming in Deleuzian terms. This approach affords us a more dynamic narrative structure such as Zambrano proposed and aspires to highlight relativism in method and outcome.

My argument is that oral history allows for the elaboration of a history as becoming because in the practice of the interviewing and subsequent writing and construction of life narratives, time and space collide in the act of remembrance. In the following pages I develop the argument in four parts. First, I explain the historical notion of history as becoming in light of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's work in *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). Second, I focus on the notion of the in-visible as put forth by Maurice Merleau-Ponty in his posthumous work entitled *The Visible and the Invisible* (1968) to reach into the emotional fabric (or the sentient being, as Zambrano following Zubiri would call it) of historical unfolding while making the flesh (gender) its conduit. Third, I put in conversation two metaphors, the theological Holy Trinity and the quantum theory of entanglement, to escape, on the one hand, time linearity in traditional historical discourse, which privileges being over becoming and, on the other hand, spatial deterministic locality fragmentation resulting from notions of embodiment and its life to death temporal segmentations. Finally, I illustrate my argument with fragments, vignettes, memories of each Aurora utilizing the poetic form of Haibun as the medium to explore Zambrano's poetic reasoning to render an agapeic historical narrative.

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6 Chantal Maillard, *La creación por la metáfora: Introducción a la razón poética* (Barcelona: Anthropos, 1992), 97-113. See also, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

7 María Zambrano, “La reforma del entendimiento español” (1937), quoted in Maillard, *La creación por la metáfora*, 157 n. 8.

## 1. History as Becoming

María Zambrano speaks of multiple temporalities in line with the Bergsonian conceptualization of the past not as a linear series of bygone events but rather a virtual whole. This conceptualization of the past as a virtual repository of multiple potentials and the present as one (of many possible) actualizations of such potentials is also developed further by Gilles Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* and with Félix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*. Eugene Holland explains how Deleuze developed a philosophical concept that “combined instinct (from Hume and Jung), *élan vital* (from Bergson) and will to power (from Nietzsche) with the insistence that the unconscious is accessible only in and through its contingent expression in historical institutions and archetypes.”<sup>8</sup> For Deleuze, it is fundamental to privilege that fluid becoming rather than the fixed being. Becoming as creative repetition promotes difference rather than sameness as being and identity unfold. These notions are present in the relativist method that Zambrano proposes, rather than a static structure of being necessary to transverse temporalities across history and unveil the fluid repetitions leading to unknown realizations in the present after multiple permutations. This line of thought connects Zambrano's poetic reason with Deleuze's history as becoming, showing how profoundly liberating and fertile a line of enquiry it is because the outcome of creative differential repetition is always unknown, unpredictable. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari, following Bergson, propose the past as an “a-temporal bloc where each and every past event co-exists with all the others.”<sup>9</sup> This virtual whole is the precondition for the realization of the present. Deleuze and Guattari explain how this understanding of the past as the potential of the realization of the present privileges their notion of history as becoming rather than being in time. They see being as only a momentary, subsidiary contraction of becoming while the latter is always fundamental. This means that everything **is its history** rather than everything has a history.

This view, Holland points out, aligns with contemporary science informed by non-linear mathematics and complexity theory. Things' present being is understood as a more or less temporary and unstable contraction of becoming(s). As Deleuze says, “Death is what never ceases and never finishes.”<sup>10</sup> Life is manifest in historical stratification (generations) and death is only a stage in becoming, rather than a firm ending.

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8 Eugene W. Holland, *Deleuze and Guattari's 'A Thousand Plateaus': A Readers Guide* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), loc. 150 of 3787, Kindle. This is an excellent guide to understanding Deleuze and Guattari's dense text.

9 Holland, *Deleuze and Guattari's*, loc. 346 of 3787, Kindle.

10 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: Athlone, 1983), 330, quoted in Russell West-Pavlov, *Temporalities* (London: Routledge, 2013), 51.

For María Zambrano, time and being construct and sustain each other. She distinguishes a variety of temporalities: succession, duration, and a-temporality, which correspond with three different activities: vigil (succession), sleep (duration), and dreaming (a-temporality).<sup>11</sup> Time for Zambrano is a mixed reality, primarily a felt reality which intersects the biological and the emotive states. The most basic form of temporality for her is duration. For duration to exist it must suffer interruptions, so we can inhabit time. For her, Pythagorean philosophy numbers in conjunction with their musical expression provided the means to interrupt the primal time continuum into measurable and habitable extensions: “The simple feeling of time is hellish. The number reduces it, rationalizes it. When we are prisoners of the feeling of time, counting is a placating activity, a kind of rite. The horror of time is placated first by monotony. The time simply numbered is the first victory over Cronos, over the primary time that does not account for rendering any explanations.”<sup>12</sup> The narration or counting of the three generations of Aurora(s) is understood as habitable extensions of the perpetual becoming.

## 2. The Visible and the Invisible

Through the act of remembering we engage with a metaphysical exploration of Being in the world, which is nothing more than the engagement between the visible and the invisible. It is important to define the visible and the invisible argument, which informs this book's structure. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's unfinished and posthumously published work entitled *The Visible and the Invisible* (1968) allows me to articulate the important crux upon which I build my analysis of a creative ontological gendered history, a history which is more about becoming than about factual linearities.

For Merleau-Ponty, the visible contains the invisible and vice versa:

When I say that every visible is invisible, that perception is imperception, that consciousness has a *punctum caecum*, that to see is always to see more than one sees—this must not be understood in the sense of contradiction—it must not be imagined that I add to the visible perfectly defined as in Itself a non-visible

11 Gabriel Astey, “La forma de la temporalidad,” in *Nacer desde el sueño: Fenomenología del onirismo en el pensamiento de María Zambrano* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017), 5-29.

12 “El simple sentir del tiempo es infernal. El número lo reduce, lo racionaliza, Cuando estamos presos del sentir del tiempo, contar es una actividad aplacadora, una especie de rito. El horror del tiempo se placa primeramente por la monotonía. El tiempo simplemente numerado es la primera Victoria sobre Cronos, el tiempo primario que no da cuentas ni razones.” María Zambrano, “La condenación aristotélica de los pitagóricos” (1955), quoted in Astey, *Nacer desde el sueño*, 8.

(which would be only objective absence) that is objective presence elsewhere, in an elsewhere in Itself. *One needs to understand that it is the visibility itself that involves a non-visibility* [my emphasis].<sup>13</sup>

For Merleau-Ponty, the world is a “system of equivalencies” and not a collection of spatio-temporal individuals. The story that follows intends to be read in this light. Each of the three women represent an equivalency in a “system of equivalencies,” a unity in multiplicity with an inner logic that does not follow the Cartesian path but rather is predicated on a philosophy of intuition, interrogation, and at the end, revelation. Revelation sparks in the blindness point [punctum caecum] of the consciousness. “What it does not see,” says Merleau-Ponty, “is what makes it see, it is tied to Being, it is corporeity. The existentialities by which the world becomes visible is the flesh wherein the object is born.”<sup>14</sup> Disoriented consciousness grasps the indirect. The inverted, what Merleau-Ponty calls “the Being of the far offs,” is usually ignored or non-visible. “The Being of the far offs” is also our being in a vertical (rather than horizontal) temporal arrangement, which in this narrative constitutes the Trinity of the three generations of women.

This means an understanding of history as becoming.<sup>15</sup> This new historical approach is possible through the interviewing process in oral history, which reveals the *in-visible* sentient Being. I embrace Merleau-Ponty’s explanation: “What I [Merleau-Ponty] want to do is to restore the world as a meaning of Being absolutely different from the ‘represented’ that is, as the vertical Being which none of the ‘representations’ exhaust and which all reach the wild [meaning natural] Being. This is to be applied not only to the perception, but to the universe of the predicative truths and significations as well.”<sup>16</sup> The predicative truth at hand in this study is patriarchy and the different generations of women’s invisible transgressions of the customary social practices. Moreover, Merleau-Ponty highlights how the distinction between cultural and natural is abstract as everything is both cultural and natural in us (such as gendered roles) and our perception of those two planes is culturally and historically determined:

Being is the “place” where the “modes of consciousness” are inscribed as structures [*sic*] of Being (a way of thinking of oneself within a society is implied

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13 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 247.

14 “The experience I have of myself perceiving does not go beyond a sort of imminence, it terminates in the invisible, simply this invisible, i.e., the reverse of its specular perception, of the concrete vision I have of my body in the mirror.” Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 248-49.

15 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

16 Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 253.

in its social structure) and where the structurations of Being are modes of consciousness. ...The perception of the world is formed in the world, the test for truth takes place in Being.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, the writing of history will be of a history understood as “immanent geology” in which time and space collide—“this very time that is space, this very space that is time.”<sup>18</sup>

The three generations rendered here represent an attempt to demonstrate the “immanent geology” which turns into a historical landscape, a cartography of becoming, which reveals the sedimentations of each generation and a reactivation of the vertical temporal system of equivalencies rather than separate experiences with a beginning (birth) and an end (death). This continuity follows the understanding of the mind-flesh relation. Merleau-Ponty defines mind “as the other side of the body.” He points out, “We have no idea of a mind that would not be doubled with a body.”<sup>19</sup> He explains there is a “body of the mind and a mind of the body.” Rather than understanding those as separate entities, the other side is understood as depth, dimensionality, that is, not that of extension, and a transcendence of the negative toward the sensible. It resonates with the quantum entanglement notion of non-locality. The relation of the three generations reveals a sort of historical “spooky action at a distance.”<sup>20</sup>

### 3. Entanglement Theory as Metaphor: Aurora's Trinity

What is number? Number may be defined in general as a collection of units, or, speaking more exactly, *as the synthesis of the one and the many.*<sup>21</sup>

Number. Trinity. Mystery. I present here the three Auroras' continuity through the metaphor of the Holy Trinity, a narrative of difference and repetition of “three individualities but one unity,” to unveil the invisible in the visible. A loving legacy of empowerment and self-determination is built upon the multiple acts of renunciation and words of encouragement and the gift of love passed from one generation to the next. This is a triune generational story, which intends to deploy Maria

17 Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 253.

18 Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 258.

19 Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 259.

20 George Musser, *Spooky Action at a Distance: The Phenomenon that Reimagines Space and Time--and What It Means for Black Holes, The Big Bang, and Theories of Everything* (New York: Scientific American/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015).

21 Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (New York: Dover Publications, INC., 2001), 75 [my emphasis in italics].

Zambrano's sacrificial agapeic history and poetic reason through non-fictional creative language.<sup>22</sup> It follows Zambrano's intuition methodology facilitated through remembrance, metaphorical evocation, and unexpected disclosure of self-renunciations.

Why Trinity as metaphor? First, because it is illustrative of an understanding of history as becoming as it deals with concepts that encompass the notions of the one and the many, the visible and the invisible, and the entanglement of the different personas through vertical time. Second, it is a useful metaphor to explore the multiplicity of temporalities discussed above—time as a virtual whole in which all the potentialities of becoming co-exist and provide latent multiple outcomes in the present. And finally, the metaphor resonates with María Zambrano's poetic reason and pursuit of the auroral origin. She points out how a philosophy informed by poetic reason is the path to follow beyond pre-established historical periodization(s):

If philosophy exists as something characteristic of man, it must be able to cross historical distances, it must be able to travel through history; and even above it, in a sort of supra-temporality, without which, otherwise, the human being would not be one, neither in Him/herself ... nor in the unity of their kind.<sup>23</sup>

Zambrano proposes to reach into the revelation of all forgotten and invisible past experiences through the path of love, to theology and the mystical poetry of Saint John of the Cross: "Saint John of the Cross's poetry shows the fertile approach possible only through the love."<sup>24</sup> It is the manifestation of the love of life and its intrinsic mystery as Zambrano exposes it in her essay, "For a History of Mercy," impossible to grasp through only conventional rationalism:

Won't there be, away from distinct and clear knowledge, the necessity of other knowledge that is less distinct and clear, but equally indispensable? *Aren't there things and relationships so subtle, hidden and indiscernible that they can only be apprehended by feeling or intuition?* Will we be able to dispense with inspiration? In sum, let's say the dreaded word that we have been concealing so far. *Will it not be a bedrock of mystery supporting everything that is clear and visible, everything that can be enumerated?*<sup>25</sup>

22 See María Zambrano, *Persona y democracia: La historia sacrificial* (Madrid: Anthropos, 1988); María Zambrano, "Para una historia de la Piedad," in *Aurora: Papeles del "Seminario de María Zambrano"* (2012): 64-72. <https://www.raco.cat/index.php/Aurora/issue/view/19528/showToc>.

23 Zambrano, *Notas de un método*, 66.

24 Zambrano, *Notas de un método*, 67.

25 María Zambrano, "Para una historia de la piedad," in *The Modern Spain Sourcebook: A Cultural History from 1600 to the Present*, ed. Aurora G. Morcillo et al. (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2018), 40.



Therefore, to reach into the past experiences of anonymous women in Francoism through their memories is to set out on an excavation into their feelings as they reveal their acts of renunciation.

As Ernest L. Simmons<sup>26</sup> demonstrates, the Holy Trinity shares much with entanglement theory and non-locality. He constructs a new theological understanding of the Trinity through the Trinity as metaphor in conjunction with quantum entanglement and superposition. As he points out, "Entanglement is simply another way of addressing the fact that physical reality is interconnected at the deepest levels."<sup>27</sup> The two aspects in common between quantum systems<sup>28</sup> and the Trinity include: nonlocal relational holism (entanglement) and complementarity (superposition). According to holism, the part derives from the whole and the whole is more than the sum of its parts; everything is interconnected in the subatomic level: "together in separation."<sup>29</sup> Once a pair of particles or a divided one are entangled, they remain connected no matter where in the universe they go. There is a certain "veiled reality"<sup>30</sup> inaccessible (mysterious in Zambrano's terms or invisible in Merleau-Ponty's) to human understanding. Metaphor and analogy provide us the means to reach into the inaccessible. The appropriation of metaphorical concepts in quantum mechanics, side by side with Trinity, allows us here in this study to test a historicizing focused on Becoming rather than Being. Simmons explains how science and theology "struggle with the problem of reconciling unity with diversity."<sup>31</sup> In examining the narratives resulting from the oral histories, I also need to explain

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26 Ernest L. Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity: Quantum Physics and Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, Publishers, 2014). See also: John Polkinghorne, *Quantum Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2002); Kirk Wegter-McNelly, *The Entangled God: Divine Relationality and Quantum Physics* (London: Routledge, 2011); F. LeRon Shults and Lindsay Powell-Jones, eds., *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Religion (Schizoanalytic Applications)* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

27 Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity*, 145.

28 "Quantum mechanics is the name given to the field of physics that studies the very small: the forces and structures below the atomic level. Quantum comes from the work of Max Planck who very early hypothesized that energy does not exist in an incremental continuum but rather exists in packets, which he named 'quanta' to indicate discrete energy levels rather than continuum. It all began with the discovery of the dual nature of light as both wave and particle, what is now known as 'wave-particle duality...The term mechanics is inherited from Newton and refers to the regular nature of rationally discernible and mathematically expressible physical processes." Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity*, 130.

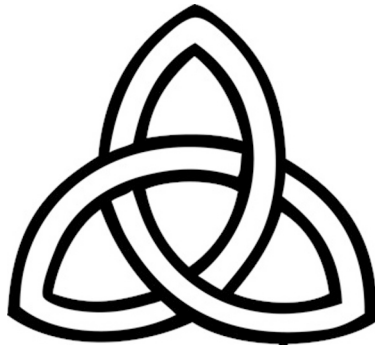
29 Simmons explains how non-linear relativity has been proven by scientists like Anton Zeilinger at the University of Vienna which carries with it some form of "action at a distance" or connectedness (entanglement). Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity*, 148.

30 Philosopher and physicist Bernard d'Espagnat's terminology. Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity*, 140.

31 Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity*, 141.

the intersection of individuality with generational connections. The Trinity's concept of perichoresis is key to sorting out the connection in separation I am after. Perichoresis is the Greek word that describes the inner relationship in the Trinity: three persons but only one substance. It could be translated as "indwelling." The three indwell with one another and yet are distinct from each other. The triquetra image that represents this concept is like a "trifold Möbius strip" in the words of Simmons. So, the three persons of the Trinity flow in and out of one another in a continuous dynamic energy exchange of Becoming.<sup>32</sup>

Figure 13: Trifold Möbius Strip



There is an affinity between Deleuze's concept of difference as life and the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Both Deleuzian difference and the Trinity are propelled by perpetual movement, a "creative force" (potentia). This turns the divine absolute (God in the Trinity) into life as pure dynamism, which, in the words of Christopher Ben Simpson, "is the affirmative force or power of repetition and differentiation."<sup>33</sup> Life manifests itself in individuals. Life is the invisible virtual force incarnating ceaselessly in infinite visible forms. Simpson points out how "Deleuze's axiomatic decision to think difference," in this light, "is a decision for that which is invisible, imperceptible, immensurable, and not thinkable."<sup>34</sup> The autogenic power springs from the dark bottomless (unground) chaos, the *infernus* (suffering and renunciation) in María Zambrano's thought. Only by accepting the mystery of eternal return may we unravel the movement of becoming.

32 Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity*, 151.

33 Christopher Ben Simpson, "Divine Life: Difference, Becoming and the Trinity," in Shults and Powell-Jones, eds. *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Religion*, 62.

34 Shults and Powell-Jones, eds., *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Religion*, 64.

#### 4. Aurora's Trinity: Wisdom, Love, Might

Emotional dimension, being invisible, finds materialization in the poetic word and in the rhythm of life beyond one single generation.<sup>35</sup> The authentic being is uncovered in my text through the elaboration of short poems based on the anecdotes the informant (my mother) highlighted through the story.<sup>36</sup> Aurora, my given name, is the heirloom passed down from my grandmother to my mother. It is the poetic word that has given me, just by poetic luck, the opportunity to illuminate my self-introspection and my historical writing.

##### Aurora's Wisdom

Wisdom, Love, Might;  
endless as an ocean's tide

*Memory Alfacar, 1942*

*My mother was born on July 5, 1933, in the village of Alfacar, just outside of Granada, known to outsiders as the place where Federico García Lorca was executed. She inherited her name from her mother, as was custom. I am called Aurora too. That is the precious heirloom I received at birth. The story of many Spanish women in the twentieth century can be told through the lives of these three generations of Auroras. My grandmother, Aurora Sánchez Jiménez, was illiterate. My mother, Aurora Gómez Sánchez, went to school until she was nine years old, when she was diagnosed with a pleural mass. The antidote, milk, was something my grandparents could not provide in the midst of the postwar hunger years. The solution was to send her to work at a milkman's house to take care of an infant in exchange for the life-giving white elixir.*

*More than the war itself, I remember the postwar. Because I am the youngest, I can only remember the misery that came after the fighting was over. It was a very difficult childhood, one with many needs but few satisfactions...of having to go to work before I was grown up.*

*She was tiny when she went to work, a small child with stick-thin legs doing women's work. They dressed her in a smock that hung about her knees and gave her an unsteady stool to stand on so that she could reach the laundry sink. The milkman and his wife weren't cruel, just indifferent. She wasn't their child, after all. Maybe it was the times, or maybe it was the tradition, but nobody said anything about a young girl forced to labor for her food. In Spain, this was no time for sentimentality. This was no time to be a child, either.*

35 María Zambrano's line of thinking follows Spinoza, Saint Augustine, Pascal, or Nietzsche's "the heart reasoning," see Ana Bundgaard, *Más allá de la filosofía* (Madrid: Trotta, 2000).

36 On the use of poetry in constructing oral history narratives see: Valerie J. Janesick, "Using Poetry in Oral History to Represent Someone's Story," in *Oral History for the Qualitative Researcher: Choreographing the Story* (New York: The Guildford Press, 2010), 129-33.

*My mother proudly describes Alfacar as “a village rich with water...and very good bread” but in the same breath, as a village that could only provide for half its people.<sup>37</sup> When I ask her to explain this, she says: “I mean that those who had a piece of land or had a shop could feed their families. But people like my father, a man with no land, no skills, and no shop, had to send his children away. My father was a peasant...who collected and brought dried sticks from the mountains to feed the bread ovens. Sometimes the Civil Guard, those who were supposed to protect people, would take the wood from him, leaving him with nothing for his day’s work.... You can imagine how we grew up...my mother with six needy children and almost nothing for them to eat.”<sup>38</sup>*

*Her family lived at the edge of the village in a neglected collection of dwellings called “Las Canteras,” where the poorest were segregated from the merely poor. My mother remembers a school for boys and girls which she briefly attended. “I did not have a book to read. At the one-room school there were some books, and the teacher would put us in a row of five or six to read aloud a line each, as he instructed. I had a small slate that broke if dropped and a little chalk, which would break if dropped as well. When I came home crying with the broken slate or chalk, my mother would scold me: ‘now you have nothing, because I cannot buy you another one’...it is amazing that I can even speak properly.”<sup>39</sup>*

*The daily routine in the classroom is vivid in her memory: “I studied in those books, did additions and subtractions on my slate and then erased them...then would do other exercises the teacher would tell us to do. ...He used to hit us a lot. On one occasion I remember he was teaching me with a stick on a map and a girl tapped me on my back. As I turned around to her, he came towards me and slapped me on the face...only for that. He wore two rings that left a mark on my face for days. My parents did not even bother to go find out what I had done and why he had slapped me. I don’t know why...maybe it was fear...”<sup>40</sup>*

Hunger, hunger  
Hidden bread  
Mother’s offering  
Blessing said

Aurora’s Love

Wisdom, Love, Might;  
rolling in fullest pride,

*Memory, Granada 1972*

37 Aurora Gómez, interview by author, 1994.

38 Aurora Gómez, interview by author, 1994.

39 Aurora Gómez, interview by author, 1994.

40 Aurora Gómez, interview by author, 1994.

*I don't know how to conjugate the subjunctive. Today, I also have my typing test. Don Vicente will blind me with his white handkerchief to see if I can type without looking at the keys. ASDFG lefties, ÑLKJH righties.*

*Father Miguel is standing at his usual spot at the top of the stairs overlooking the concrete soccer field. He knows the secret to decipher the subjunctive, even the pluscuamperfecto. I need to talk to him so he can help me. Presente de subjuntivo del verbo ser. Only ask yourself, ¿Que yo sea? And that is the secret question...the key that will unlock the conjugation.*

*Yo sea, tu seas, él sea, nosotros seamos, vosotros seáis, ellos sean.*

*¿Qué será? ¿Será? With don Vicente? With me...after all these years, my typing is good but I always look at the keys.*

*A girl's school uniform is not complete without the proper shoes. White shirt, dark blue jumper down to the knees where the edge of the skirt meets the edges of high socks, and then, the bulky black leather shoes. They have to be sturdy; they are your foundation to sustain and carry you through the day's ups and downs. Papa shined those shoes every night for the three of us. My younger brother and sister are my responsibility on our walk to school. I am the big sister, already nine years old. This morning we are running late. My shiny shoes are nowhere to be found. Mama remembers she forgot to pick them up from the shoe repair shop yesterday evening. Instead, I have to wear my white canvas tennis shoes, which belong with the gymnastics uniform, not this classroom one. Bad foundation to start the day. I know this is not a good beginning. I will have to be extra careful not to step in any mud or puddles on our walk to school.*

*Ay no! Mother Pilar is at the school entrance checking everyone's uniform.*

*I try to rush through the door unnoticed. Then, I hear her screechy voice pronouncing my name. With her right hand in the air, she motions for me to come closer.*

*When she looks at my feet, her face puckers in disgust.*

*¿Qué será, será? Forty years later, I find myself with a blue American passport and a closet full of shoes and a keyboard with no ñ.*

Hunger, hunger  
Hidden bread  
Mother's offering  
Blessing said

Aurora's Might

Wisdom, Love, Might;  
through the earth far and wide  
let there be light.

*Memory, Alfacar, Granada 1937*

*Anda, Aurorilla, sube arriba que te he puesto un pedazo de pan debajo de mi colchón!*

*The four-year-old runs up the stairs, mouth watering, to hunt for the piece of bread her mother has hidden carefully under the mattress. Hunger's invisible thumbs open her mouth wide, as wide as her beautiful dark eyes. Excitement, anticipation, and a cramping belly propel her feet up the stairs. High steps, one, two, three, she uses her hands too in the ascension to communion, into her parents' bedroom to collect a meager piece of black bread, waiting hidden under the matrimonial mattress, like a treasure, for her. Her mother knows how hard it is for her to eat at the family table. Six children to feed. Aurorilla is the baby. Everyone sits around a common pot and digs in during the last supper of the day. But the baby is too small to reach, and she always scalds her mouth. Her mother knows she is hungry all the time. The little piece of hidden bread is their secret. That bitter black bread is the token of love between them, a memory my mother has not forgotten to this day.*

The Trinitarian metaphor is not static but rather perpetual motion in tune with Deleuze's eternal return, fueled by the agapeic historical representation proposed by María Zambrano. The motion in the triune metaphor nurtures a giving and receiving, the gift of life self-generating. Being transforms into water. Always water, whether solid, liquid, or evaporated.

Lovingly, the grandmother tries to hold her granddaughter's tiny arm. The invisible **wisdom** of the photographer's eye behind the lens captures the **might** in the old woman's gesture supporting me. The recipient of their **love**.

Hunger, hunger  
 Hidden bread  
 Mother's offering  
 Blessing said  
 Transubstantiation  
 In the flesh