

Silfra 64.2550° N, 21.1230° W

A bright methylene blue fissure where the Eurasian and
American tectonic plates meet.

by
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This text is part of an ongoing project, where I have been experimenting and researching the interaction between the body and garments in different contexts as a social phenomenon. I have examined trends, exotic habits, aesthetic appropriations, and simulations, in relation to identity, through observations in my every day life. For example, with my friend Rodienne. She is originally from Curaçao, but she's living now in a suburb in Amsterdam called "the Bijlmer"¹. She gathers with her friends at home to braid each other's hair and to make wigs. She carefully combs the pieces of fake hair, cuts it and sews every single hair the way she wants. It is like a ritual, a feminine ceremony, a moment of preparation for transmutation. She sometimes has straight hair, sometimes very long, the curls of a fairy-tale princess or the flashy contrast of her black skin with blond hair. She experiments with her self, with her hair in search of something. In a search for identity, she wants to express it, to transform it. These type of modern rites result into neo-aesthetics, part of a whole imagery and a visual culture.

As a part of this continuous research, a new piece was born; a vital knot on the net²; a script. This one is accompanied by a lexicon, which is in the same way an indispensable part of the work. It describes words, objects, symbols and situations in the script and also explains the meaning of some Mexican localisms, each of them is marked with a number. I suggest to read the lexicon in parallel with the script, in order of appearance, jumping from the dialog to the lexicon and vice versa. I wrote this script based on my personal experience, and the experience of Santiago, Luis and Jerónimo. It doesn't follow one, but many stories, with the intention of sharing the insights and thoughts, that lead me to understand an essential part of my own work. Thoughts about my origins; about the place where I come from, about land, my country, about genealogy, my unknown grandfather, about our ancestors, about our history, their history, about our past and present. This way I relate to the people and subjects I research in my projects. And this realization crated an extra layer, a connecting point between me and them. It knotted myself with the work, and this knotted the people and topics in my work with me. We are all now inside a net, that was woven through thoughts and memories from the past, connected to

my present, about my life, my origins and the history of my country.

I grew up in a white middle class family in México. Where, as a result of European colonization, 93% of the population are mestizos (or half-caste in English), but the indigenous features predominate, from a mix of Mexican indigenous with Spanish. White skin is associated with having money, with power, with being foreign. I guess this comes from the mistaken Aztec prophesy. When the Aztecs expected the gods to arrive, and instead, the white, bearded Spanish came to our land mounted on big beasts, giving us pieces of shiny glass in exchange for gold... they were mistaken for gods.

Every time I go to the market in México, the merchant calls me "güerita"³ even though I have dark hair and eyes. But I am white, or at least whiter than the rest. I look different, I wasn't, and I am not perceived as someone "from here", from my country. A few years ago I moved to Amsterdam ... Like the Argentinian song writer Facundo Cabral sang; "I'm not from here, nor from there".

The multiculturalism of the city is the evident result of the history of the country; the people who moved here from Suriname and the Antilles in the Caribbean part of the Dutch colonies. They left the tropics to live in a concrete jungle. And also more recent political and economical strategies brought people from other places. Like the Dutch-Moroccans and Dutch-Turkish generations, who were born from working class people, who came to the Netherlands in the 1970's to do construction work (I guess the work Dutch people didn't want to do). It is a place with a big racial diversity and several minority groups. I perceive a separation between minorities and Dutch society. The majority doesn't seem to accept the minority, and the minority doesn't integrate into the majority. For example, there are no Moroccans, Surinamese nor black students in the art academy where I am studying.

In this script, I question the sense of belonging and I search for origins: the essence of textiles as basics, as raw materials, survival tools. The transformation of the present into past. A tiny imperceptible moment, where

the present almost doesn't exist. Just as the stars we see in the sky. They are not there any more, and what we see is the light that once was shining but died and left that place, and is now traveling in time and space, directly to our eyes. Our present has passed, our past is our present. Our past became important.

The universe is permanently expanding, and everything that is inside the universe is traveling together with it. The earth is constantly spinning and traveling around the sun. All telluric things are in movement. We are moving. I think of movement as a cultural connector, as the knots in a net. Movement is a recurrent subject in my research in different ways: the influence of movement in history and cultures; movement within geography; movement as displacement; migration, forced migration, expulsion, exile; leaving and arriving. Also body movement. This is the most intimate form of movement to us; the body itself is the medium, the tool. I perceive body movement in three main categories:

- The natural, thoughtless movements, relating to our physiognomy and necessity. Like the way our legs move when we are walking. Or the way our eyelid close when we sneeze, to prevent our eyeballs from exploding out of our skulls.

- The interactive movements, where the body communicates with and through objects and things, creating a mutual empowerment. For instance through textiles, which are the closest objects to the human body.

- And simulations, which are both conscious and unconscious movements, relating to circumstances and are created from something that is already there, a copy. When simulating, we recreate, and create a new situation, a new reality, a simultaneous reality.

My approach, my way of working connects the subject with the practice. It is about re-acting on research, re-enacting my research, my observations. In the work "coding" I explore *interactive movement*. This project was an experiment, inspired on the body language that Central American gangs in the United States use to secretly communicate. I asked several people from different

backgrounds to shortly introduce themselves with improvised movements involving the garments they were wearing at that moment. The result was a video compilation of short sets of different actions.

In a later work I explore *simulations* in what I call an "unconscious collective performance". My focus was on these actions among young Dutch-Moroccans in Amsterdam. I observed that when they were hanging out, they unconsciously created a play, and they used the street as a stage. They had a code of dress, a specific tone for their speech, props, and specific body movements.

I spent a month in Morocco where I could experience the fascinating culture and observe and think about how a Moroccan background influences someone as a Dutch citizen. Moroccan and Dutch cultures seem to me as opposites, and Dutch-Moroccans are in between, they are in a gap. And they have the necessity to recreate a situation to belong to.

When I was back in Amsterdam I started filming, hanging out with Moroccans in coffee shops, wearing Gucci and Louis Vuitton bags across my chest. Talking with them, making selfies with them. I adopted the role of a male Moroccan. I studied their body language, their movements and rehearsed at home. I filmed myself. And I started building up a choreography inspired by all of those elements to produce a video-performance. My research method is not the same as that of an anthropologist. I realized I am not an outsider, because in a way, I belong. I feel you, Moroccan brother. This is our story:

CHARACTERS

ME: Me

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR: Spanish priest and historical character from the Mexican conquest. Also a castaway from Carlos Fuentes story "Las dos orillas" (the two shores) He unexpectedly landed in the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico, lived with the Mayans and learned their language. Later on in 1519 he became the translator and interpreter of Hernán Cortés together with "la Malinche"

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO: Real life character from "the story of a shipwrecked sailor" from Gabriel García Márquez, who in 1955 drifted on a life raft for ten days without food or water, was proclaimed a national hero, kissed by beauty queens, made rich through publicity and then spurned by the government and forgotten for all time.

SANTIAGO: Old fisherman and main character from "The Old Man and the Sea" written by Ernest Hemingway.

NON-SPEAKING CHARACTERS

HERNÁN CORTÉS: The Spanish conquistador who conquered México and defeated the Aztec empire. Tall with a dark beard.

MARINA: Indigenous woman; lover, translator and adviser of Hernán Cortés. She betrayed her people. Also known as "La Malinche"

CHAPTER 1

"La Travesía"⁴

FADE IN:

ME:

- My grandmother was born in the middle of the Spanish civil war. Her father and family were Republican fighters against Nationalist Falangists. When Francisco Franco won the war, they had to escape out of their hometown, with two children and one baby, to hide in the most remote places in Spain. They lost everything in the war; they had nothing.

My grandmother's mom boiled pieces of dusty curtains from nearby destroyed houses, and served it as soup for dinner. And after escaping Spain, in a refugee camp in France, she and hundreds of mothers gathered like marabuntas to fight for a banana peel thrown by someone walking by on the other side of the fence. A few weeks later, they were on board the boat "Sinaia", this boat transported and saved more than 300 families to the other side of the Atlantic ocean, to Veracruz, México.

It was only 36 years later, when Franco died, that they could go back to Spain.

(pause)

My father arrived in Mexico at the end of the 1970's. He was a young university student when he escaped from Argentina, during the military coup. Some of his friends were sent to prison. Other friends and family members disappeared, and many people were thrown into the sea.

HALF. TROPIC OF CANCER. THE TRACES OF A CRAB

ME:

(Voice in off)

- I am a daughter of the old world⁵
and a persecuted man from the
south. A ship sank between two
continents and I was born in a
new land. I was born in the
unknown.

-I am creole, I am the tropics⁶.

CUT TO:

JERONIMO DE AGUILAR:

-God dragged me here.
He drew a line across this
country. An imaginary line that
divides the land in half.

CUT TO:

DARK JUNGLE. DEEP GREEN. UNCONTROLLABLE GREEN. PLANTS ARE
CONSTANTLY GROWING AND CHANGING THE SPACE, REDUCING THE
SPACE. PEACEFUL HECTICNESS. AN INSECT ORCHESTRA.

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

-I contemplate the surroundings.
Everything here is nature, the
incarnation of God on earth.
We walk through the jungle to
collect wood to keep us warm at
night. We hunt for food.
I use the fur of the animals to
cover my exposed body.

CUT TO:

NO IMAGE

ME:

(Voice in off)

-I am floating in the middle of the sea, in between the infinity of different universes. And when I look up to the sky, I can see the moon from both sides, but the rabbit turns around, going up and down, depending on where I am.⁷

DAY. BEACH. SOUND OF WAVES. BIG BOATS APPROACHING. HORIZON.

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

-I prayed so much.
I've been longing for this moment, and I knew this day would eventually come.
Are they looking for me? Are they bringing me back home?...

CUT TO:

BACK INTO THE JUNGLE. HE COVERS HIMSELF WITH A PIECE OF ANIMAL SKIN⁸.

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

-This is my home now, my people. They adopted me as one of them.
-I grew to love my new people, their simplicity in approaching matters of daily life, their ability to find a natural outlet

for common needs without
neglecting serious things.

CUT TO:

ME:

-Where am I? Where do I
belong? Where am I going?

FADE TO:

LIFE BOAT. FLOATING. WAITING. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN.
NOTHING AROUND. SLOW MOVEMENT

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

-Four hours have passed since the
boat drowned... I think the
airplanes will come rescue me
soon.

I unbutton my shirt to be ready
to take it off and shake it in
the air to make signs.

ME:

- I prepare.

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE BEACH

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

- Nobody is looking for me, they
are looking for gold. Same as I
was when I started sailing in the
Mediterranean sea six years ago.
But things changed on the way. I
lost my way. A big and powerful

wave sank my boat to the bottom
of the sea. Somewhere we have
never been before.

CUT TO:

ALMOST SILENCE. NO MOVEMENT

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

-I spend the whole day looking up
to the sky, searching. My eyes
are screaming! They are blind
from the sun.

ME:

- I await...

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

-But the airplanes never came.

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

- I wait for the boats to
arrive...

MIDDAY. HEAVY SUN. FOUR DAYS LATER

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

- I have been four days floating
in this small life boat. My lips
are cracking, and hunger is
driving me crazy.
I suddenly see a bird standing on
the edge of the boat. But then I
think there are no birds so far away
from land...I must be loosing my mind.

(short pause)

Or maybe close to land.
I could eat the bird. I should
eat him.
But this bird brought me hope,
and he's my only companion. I
shouldn't eat him.
I struggle with my mind for a
long time, hoping the seagull will
fly away and give an end to the
dilemma...

A FEW OURS LATER...

I uncover my head, and cover my
back with my shirt, to protect my
lungs from the sun.⁹
I hear his bones cracking on my
teeth. I ate my hope, and it made
me more hungry than before.

CUT TO:

I PUT ON A BRIGHT RED AND BLACK "PONCHO GAUCHO"¹⁰ MY DAD
GAVE ME AS A PRESENT. AND TIE TIGHT AROUND MY WAIST, THE
SPANISH REPUBLICAN FLAG THAT COVERED THE COFFIN OF MY DEAD
GRANDMA. I ENCIRCLE MY BARE ANKLES WITH "AYOYOTLS"¹¹ TO
HEAR MY OWN STEPS.

FADE TO:

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

-The boats arrived from my mother
land. And I am worth gold to
them being able to speak both
languages. I became the
interpreter of Hernán Cortés
together with Marina¹².
All my acts were directed to one

goal: the victory of the Indians
against the Spanish.
I translated as I pleased... I
added, inventing on my own and
mocking Cortés... I translated, I
betrayed, I invented...

CUT TO:

STILL FLOATING. TWO DAYS LATER. BLURRY

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

- My name must be sounding at
this moment back at home. But who
am I besides the echo of my name?

(pause)

I lost all sense of hope and
trust...

FADE TO:

THE DEFEAT.

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

- It wasn't enough,
I wasn't enough. With Marina's
words, Cortés conquered the
Aztec empire.

(long silence)

-I saw it all. The fall of the
great Aztec city. I saw the burnt
water of the lagoon where the
great Tenochtitlan¹³ settled down.

CUT TO:

SLOW MOTION. CARNIVAL. CHINELOS¹⁴. DANCING. LIGHT.
SUNSHINE. GENUINE SMILE

ME:

- I used to dance with you, we
used to laugh...

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP. PLAIN BACKGROUND. NAKED TORSO. COVERED FACE.
CHINELO MASK.

(strong voice in off, almost
demonstrating)

- Cortés; I am wearing your face
on this infertile body. My eyes,
nose and lips are covered with
your virile beard. But I have
tits, I still have tits!

FADE TO BLACK.

CHAPTER 2

"La reconstrucción"

"The City of Eternal Spring". That's what they call it. Hard to believe, but true. That's the place where Hernán Cortés decided to build his castle, also the place where I grew up, surrounded by palm trees, flowers and swimming pools. I didn't know what the seasons were until I moved to Europe. I thought it was just a term used in clothing stores to change the whole collection. We only had a dry season and a rainy season. No winter, no snow. Sunny days the whole year. I used to wear slippers and shorts almost everyday. Now that I think about it, my city was a very particular place to grow up.

Mr. Amado Carrillo used to live close by, on our way from home to school. He was better known as "The lord of the skies" and was categorised by the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration of the USA) as one of the most powerful drug traffickers of his era. He used to transport drugs on jets across the sky, that is where his nick name came from. He owned a weekend house in my neighbourhood, and only a few blocks down the street there was what some would call a ghetto. The territories of different social classes, are sometimes very close to each other, only slightly divided. Only a few steps can drastically transport you to a different reality. The space doesn't transform gradually but rather in a shocking beat of contrast.

Palm trees and swimming pools were not only attractive to the biggest drug dealers of the country, but also to many important artists and international figures like John Cage, Mathias Goeritz, Frida Kahlo, Erich Fromm, Alejandro Jodorowsky and the French emperor Maximilian; who lived in a mansion with beautiful gardens in the center of the city, which is now a touristic attraction called "Jardín Borda". Some may remember his tragic execution painted by Édouard Manet. Cuernavaca was a hidden but very fruitful place at that time. And the concentration of these sorts of personalities converted the city into a strategic place for art.

Mysteriously, almost none of these people lived there permanently, just for a period of time. Some of them only had a weekend house or a studio, it seems to me a place for temporary inspiration. There were always people leaving and new ones arriving. It was, and still is, a transitory place.

A few years ago, the Mexican state declared war against drug cartels and organised crime, and together with corrupted politicians, drug cartels took over the

country. My city was an important target. Some of the main figures from the strongest cartels, were there, hiding in their weekend mansions.

Green tanks and helicopters were everywhere.

Society adopted a culture from new icons, the so called "narco-culture"¹⁵.

In this terrorised society, culture and art became irrelevant. Insecurity increased in an alarming way and surviving became a priority. There was nothing there for us any more. Some people moved to the capital, to another city or to another country. All my friends left. Some died and only a few stayed...

We started a process of metamorphosis; adaptation is essential for a species to survive. It was around that time when I decided to leave.

SURRENDER. GREEN. NEGLECTED. CONCRETE.

ME:

- This summer I went back home. I arrived to a tropical ruin. A big bunch of rubble in human forms, sounds, shapes, trash, literally trash and flesh.

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

- rain, water, wind, fire,
trash...

FADE TO:

A LAKE ON FIRE

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

-The temples fell, the standards, the trophies. The very gods themselves fell. And the day after the defeat, using the stones of the Indian temples, we began to build the Christian churches.

(long pause)

CUT TO:

SILENCE. THE SOUND OF NOTHING. SOME WIND. ASHES. A FEW COALS

ME:

-I cover my ears with my hands to block the sound, but I can still hear a voice in the background...

THE VOICE. OF WERNER HERZOG.

"We here, in the broken nation, are tired and bruised. We've been left here alone with nothing. We've been abandoned. We're like vomit in the street outside of a seedy bar. We've been relegated to the bottom of the barrel, and all our senses of understanding and love seem gone forever. In order to survive here we have to become like animals and we have to forego all sense of civility and understanding..."

IN THE SEA. ON A FISHING BOAT. TIRED. EXHAUSTING FIGHT.

SANTIAGO:

- I can barely move with the pain on my back, and this gigantic creature pulled me so hard the fishing line cut my hands, like if I was holding a razor blade tight in my hands. I eventually stop feeling my hands.

HOURS PASSED. IT GOT DARK. THE MOON ROSE.

SANTIAGO:

-It is getting cold, and in a few hours I could freeze and die. So you my friend, would finally win...

HE TAKES DOWN THE SAIL FROM THE MAST AND WRAPS HIMSELF WITH IT.

FADE TO:

LAST DAY IN THE SEA

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

- I imagine my funeral while
floating.

CUT TO:

AT NIGHT

SANTIAGO:

-I have never seen or heard of
such a fish. But I must kill him.
I am glad we do not have to try
to kill the stars. Imagine if
each day a man must try to kill
the moon. The moon runs away. But
imagine if a man each day should
have to try to kill the sun?
We were born lucky. It is good
that we do not have to try to
kill the sun or the moon or the
stars.

It is enough to live from the sea
and kill our true brothers.

FADE TO BLACK.

(CONT) WERNER HERZOG'S VOICE.

"How is it possible that a nun can fly? How is it possible
that she falls out of a plane and lands unscathed? But who
are we? Who are we to scoff at such things? Who are we to
doubt such miracles? Alas, we are but tramps in the gutter
here in the broken nation. But a little faith can take us
a long, long way. If you're pure enough, if you believe
enough... sisters believe me, you will fly. God will be
your parachute. You will experience the miracle I have
felt."

FADE TO:

THE UNEXPECTED

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

-And suddenly, when I thought I
was dead, I get to a shore.
I am laying on the sand, with no
energy to cry or to
feel anything any more.

SANTIAGO:

-But man is not made for defeat;
a man can be destroyed but not
defeated.

CUT TO:

A COAST. BEACH. WAVES ARRIVING AND LEAVING. SLOW RHYTHM

LUIS ALEJANDRO VELASCO:

- After a few hours I'm able to
open my eyes again. I'm not sure
if this is real or just an after
death illusion. I touch the sand,
and it feels real. This must be
for real. I try to figure out
where I am, but it takes me a
while to confirm I am still
alive. Then I guess I'm in
Barbados or Jamaica.

I suddenly see a black girl
walking by and I ask for help in
pathetic English. The girl
looks at me with her eyes more
open than eyes are normally
open...

CONFUSED. SCARED

ME:

- She runs away without understanding a word he said. He landed at the unexpected, he is in Colombia, he is at home.

FADE TO BLACK.

ANCESTORS. ORIGINS. DISCOVERING THE UNKNOWN

JERÓNIMO DE AGUILAR:

- How long the mansions of our only God will last, built on the ruins of not only one, but of a thousand gods?

ME:

- I took a shovel and searched for the past, for my forgotten ancestors...
Take a brush, and dust off the pieces you find, then put them together carefully, to rediscover yourself, to understand ourselves, to understand our present.

BLOOD. UNKNOWN

ME:

-To my biological grandfather, who I never met, but he is still alive:

To be honest I've always been curious about you. It's not that I care about you, I mean, you

are a complete stranger to me.
But sometimes I ask myself if you
ever felt curious about me? Or
about my mom and uncle? About
their children, your
grandchildren, about us? About
me? That doesn't really matter
any more...

I recently realised something
that turned you into someone
important to me: You are the only
connection between me and my
country. You are the only Mexican
blood I have in myself.

STRENGTH. TRANSFORMATION. RE-INVENTION. RED AND BLACK.
ALCHEMY.

ME:

- In the tropical ruin, art makes
sense again. There is an urge to
create, to move on, to change. To
clean up and transform all the
misery, product of a failed
nation, a broken nation.
I believe in art as an essential
component in designing a better
society.

I believe in the unification
between artistic autonomy and
political commitment.

In re-designing art, in
re-designing structures, re-designing
the unchangeable. In
turning the stiff into soft, in
reconstructing from what is
deconstructed.

I believe in our origins. In
exploring our past to transform
our future, and understand our
present. I believe in alchemy.

LEXICON

1 The Bijlmer: It was built back in the 1960's in the south-east of Amsterdam, inspired on Le Corbusier's "futurist" architecture. The project resulted in high-rise blocks of apartments in which Dutch families didn't want to live. Instead the Bijlmer became the home of people from more than 150 nationalities like Surinamese, Africans and Dutch Antillean immigrants who got a low price for a social rent.

The new habitat was almost the opposite from the one from which the immigrants came. They came from tropical places, full of flora and green. They live now in a concrete jungle; in big blocks of grey mass strategically spread on a flat field. The buildings camouflage with the sky, and the environment feels static and quiet.

2 Net: A net is a structure made out of only one thread, and from this single thread (the starting point), the rest is woven, out of knots that at the same time construct empty spaces. Some things stay inside and some outside.

3 Güerita: From "güero(a)". It is a Mexican localism referring to a blond person. This term is not only used for someone with blond hair but also for people with lighter skin.

4 Travesía: Is a long journey, a voyage. Also a pre-Columbian archaeological site, hard to find on the Internet, and located in the Ulúa river valley in Honduras. The mouth of the river eats the water of the Caribbean sea, to feed the valleys in the heart of the country.

5 The Old World: Also called the "main land". Was a term used by Europeans to refer to every known land before Christopher Columbus "discovered" the Americas. Mexico was called "The New Spain" after Hernán Cortés conquered our land.

6 Tropics: From Greek "tropos"; "a turn"; to turn, return.

7 The rabbit on the moon: It is neither an optical illusion nor a myth, but rather a matter of perspective. It is about where you are at this moment. In Mexico, the craters of the moon have the shape of a rabbit. The Aztec legend tells: God Quetzalcoatl took the shape of a man and went to the earth to have a walk in the forest. He eventually felt hungry, and saw a rabbit walking around. The rabbit offered him self as food for the young man, and instead of eating him, Quetzalcoatl lifted him up, and marked the moon with the shape of the rabbit. So people would always see a portrait of light to remember the generosity and humbleness of the creature.

8 The origin of clothes:

"He covers himself with a piece of animal skin"

"The lord god made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them." (Genesis 3:21)

After eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve became conscious of their nakedness and felt ashamed and scared of god. God knew they disobeyed, and he performed the first sacrifice, killing an animal to make a tunic, to cover their exposed bodies.

The most primitive act in regard to "wearing".

9 Covering (to protect):

"I uncover my head, and cover my back with my shirt, to protect my lungs from the sun"

Every experienced sailor knows how lethal the sun could be. It can burn your lungs through the skin and muscles in a few hours without you noticing. It works like a microwave, cooking things from inside to the outside.

10 Poncho Gaucho: From Quechua dialect "punchaw": "the day". The head goes through the only gap in the woolen rectangle and invokes the image of the rising sun in the

early morning. It covers the whole body, and protects the inhabitants of the Patagonian grasslands from the cold. A poncho is also used as a blanket or a pillow at night. It is a survival tool rather than a garment. Giving a red poncho to a chief, consecrated him as a great warrior.

11 Ayoyotls: Are wearable instruments, made out of big seeds from an autochthonous Mexican-Central American tree. Their sound is like the rain in a storm. Aztecs wore ayoyotls for their rituals and dances.

12 Marina: Is the literal translation from Spanish word for marine: a shore, a coast, a female sailor. See 'characters list'.

13 Tenochtitlan: Was the largest and main city of the Aztec empire, it was built on an island in the lake of Texcoco, and is underneath what is now the gigantic Mexico City. Carlos Fuentes wrote about it in the following text: "Anyone curious or who happens to be a mole, will find at the base of the columns of the Cathedral of Mexico the magic emblems of the God of Night; the smoking mirror of Tezcatlipoca." Strong and invisible; duality.

14 Chinelos: From Náhuatl dialect "tzineloa": a hip sway. Chinelos are the performers of a traditional dance, which developed after the Spanish conquest in the province of Morelos, the place where I am from. It mixes native traditions blended into Christian celebrations (carnival). The way chinelos dance comes from "axcatzitzintin" a prehispanic rite that means "comfortably jumping". Their costume consists of a long velvet tunic, a male mask with blushed cheeks and a pointy beard made out of animal hair, with the look of the old Spanish knight. A large plumed hat and gloves. The tunic and hat are decorated with several shiny materials, embroidered designs, glitter and bright colours, it has a feminine appearance, giving the dancers an androgynous aspect.

15 Narco-culture: Also known as "narco-folklor". It is the culture that results from drug-traffic (narco-traffic). The word "narco" refers to narcotics, and derives from the Greek word "narkotikós" which means "to make numb", "numbness". Numbness-culture. It is a culture with an eccentric but decayed imagery. People with little resources quickly became rich and acquire expensive and

luxurious items like diamonds, Cartier, Gucci, Armani, gold, wads of cash, "trocas"¹⁶, "cuernos de chivo"¹⁷, "Buchanan's"¹⁸, "narco-corridos"¹⁹.

16 Trocas: Is an adaptation from the English word "truck", to refer to a big car.

17 Cuerno de chivo: A "goats horn" is an urban word referring to an AK47. An iconic rifle, popular among organised criminals.

18 Buchanan's whiskey: It is a distinctive drink among 'narcos'. In photos or videos there is always a bottle of Buchanan's. It is like a prop on a scenography. Often mentioned in "narco-corridos."

"Cuando me muera no quiero llevarme un puño de tierra échenme un puño de polvo y una caja de botellas pero que sean de Buchanan's."

"When I die I don't want
to take with me a handful of soil
Throw me a handful of dust
And a box with bottles
With Buchanan's bottles."
by Chalino Sanchez

19 Narco-corridos: "Corridos" used to be popular songs in the times of the revolution, with a poetic narrative, and protest subjects about socially relevant topics. "narco-corridos" follow the same musical structure but telling stories about "narcos" (drug-traffickers) and their lifestyles.

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