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*Escrituras geológicas*, by Cristina Rivera Garza. Madrid: Vervuert, 2022. 205 pages.

In this new series of essays, Cristina Rivera Garza engages with work conducted by José Revueltas, Kathryn Yusoff, James Scott, and Paul Crutzen by applying a geological framework to violence, displacement, and dispossession in Latin American literature. The introduction conceptually establishes geological writing as a critical lens while the first section, “Escrituras geológicas”, includes nine analyses that exemplify Rivera Garza’s framework. The second and final section, “Desedimentaciones”, draws from Yusoff’s theory of desedimentation to discuss topics such as migration, femicide, and border studies. Garza’s critical approach to Latin American violence and its relationship to space, place, and the environment positions itself as a theory recognizing the present-day impact of colonial violence in the nation.

The author defines geological writings as works from authors who live in and discuss territories threatened by the *capitalocene* which deal with the relationships between land, belonging, dislocation, and the places/spaces which humans (and non-humans) occupy (11). She asserts that geology has historically been a racialized and colonized process that goes hand in hand with processes of extraction, dispossession, and dislocation of Indigenous and Black populations. Despite attempts to hide this history of oppression, remnants of structural and systemic violence remain as sediments. Thus, geological writings engage with the process of “desedimentación”, which seeks to excavate the social life of geology and the “gramática de violencia” (12). In revealing the layers of both material and linguistic sediments, Rivera Garza argues that such writings highlight the interconnectivity of the past, present, and future and have an ethical imperative to uncover, act and remember. And she is right. Geological re-writings offer the capacity to revive aspects of cultures that fell victim to disaster and the de-sedimentation process opens the possibility of a new relationship with history.

Chapters one, two and six of the first section delve into space, place, and their relationship with deep time. Chapter one discusses how Gerardo Arana’s *Suave Septiembre* (2011) exemplifies the concept of deep time by connecting a Bulgarian past with a Mexican present, ultimately demonstrating that locating oneself both temporally and spatially provides a sense of belonging. Chapter two discusses the dramatic scene of the desert in *El luto humano* (1943) by José Revueltas, where we observe that conflict between humans is fundamentally also a conflict of “condiciones materiales de existencia” (39). The critic connects this concept with that of ideological time and the theory of “la vida y la no vida” (35). Chapter six, on the other hand, takes on the representation of deep time in Selva Almada’s *No es un río* (1973). Here, Rivera Garza asserts that Almada’s narration not only de-centers the human perspective, thus widening our own perception as readers, but also reveals the inter-related

nature of geological past, present and future through its non-chronological advancement.

Another equally salient theme is the questioning and exploration of the role of nature in geological writings present in Chapters three, four, seven and nine. Chapter three includes an in-depth analysis of *La culpa es de los tlaxcaltecas* (1964) by Elena Garro which personifies nature as a material witness of violence and discusses the myth of the “traidora” in the Latin American imaginary. While the previous chapter takes on questions of gender violence and materiality, chapter four uncovers violent pasts and indigeneity in *Volver a comer del árbol de la ciencia* (2018) by Juan Cárdenas. This time, Rivera Garza analyzes the bullets in the Colombian mountains as sediments which communicate violent colonial histories of a “Cauca profunda” (65). Chapter seven discusses Claudia Peña Carlos’s *Los árboles* (2019) and argues that nature is an active participant and witness in the cycles of life and death, examining how to write and represent non-human perspectives. Lastly, chapter nine takes on César Calvo’s complex novel, *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía* (2015). In it, the author discusses the power of listening to the sounds of nature while simultaneously questioning the limitations of literary representation.

The final theme which emerges in chapters five and eight is the relationship between humans, non-humans, and the land. Chapter five deals with the territorial paradigms of war, elaborating on the relationship between the government, territory, and its population. Garza elaborates on the colonial violence of commodifying land and the role of capitalocene writing in giving a collective voice of solidarity to Central American migrants. Chapter eight takes on Gabriela Cabezón Cámara’s *La China Iron* and examines how colonial violence impacts the way in which the Indigenous China Iron and her Scottish companion Liz interact with and experience the land, environment, and other non-human elements of the Argentinian landscape.

The “desedimentaciones” section begins with the de-sedimentation of Gloria Anzaldúa’s writings on the borderlands. Using both Anzaldúa’s personal history as well as the history of the borderlands more broadly, Rivera Garza investigates the geographical, economic, and geopolitical conditions of the borderlands, and how this impacts the current collective imaginary. Along the same lines, chapter eleven consists of Rivera Garza’s notes for a desedimentation of the Rio Bravo. Adopting a more geographical lens, chapter eleven harkens back to José Revueltas by discussing the Rio Grande Valley as “una región transfronteriza...que se ha convertido en principal testigo del drama migratorio en nuestros tiempos” (159). She discusses the complex relationship between the State, the land, and the ancestral ties of those who have lived there, highlighting the family histories of Chicana authors Emmy Pérez, Vanessa Angélica and Iréne Lara Silva. The final desedimentation relating to border lands is chapter twelve’s analysis of *Sangre en el ojo* by Lina Meru-

ane. Using Meruane's writings as an example, the Mexican writer asserts that the materiality of migrant experiences "se sedimentan en el cuerpo" in the way one speaks, moves and behaves (165-66).

Following the essays on borderlands, Rivera Garza tackles the subject of state sponsored violence. Chapter thirteen discusses the publishing of Sarah Uribe's *Antígona Gonzalez* as a form of social history which reveals the reality of forced disappearances in 21<sup>st</sup>-century Mexico. Equally testimonial is the next chapter, in which Garza examines femicide through reflecting on her sister's unsolved murder. Combining her own experiences with Svetlana Alexiévich's theory of "los originales" (180), Rivera Garza goes through her sister's belongings as sediments documenting a tragedy which is both personal and collective. The final chapter of the book diverges from the previous essays by discussing the idea of home, identity, and dislocation. Here, the writer associates her healing process after her sister's death with the un-furnishing of her home, concluding by saying that Liliana "me ha enseñado a desamueblar de otra manera" with respect to writing (196).

*Escrituras geológicas* provides a solid theoretical base for understanding geological frameworks and their relevance to contemporary Latin American literature. Rivera Garza highlights how geological writings provide a new understanding of Latin Americans living under the threat of the capitalocene and successfully manages to unite a wide variety of texts under a single framework. However, this framework would be further strengthened by engaging more profoundly with Latin America's colonial histories and those who actively engage in dismantling them. While Rivera Garza touches on geology as a colonialist and racialized praxis and correctly identifies the connections between geology and the dislocations of marginalized peoples, the texts analyzed are notably by white *criollo* and *mestiza* authors. This book is ideal for scholars interested in engaging with capitalocene writings and holds potential for scholars specializing in colonial violence interested in how one might situate geological theorizations within a broader historical context.

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