

Summary

The history of Galicia has been so marked by the continuous and successive migratory processes that the image of a woman awaiting the return of the emigrant known as *viúva de vivo* – widow of a living husband, has been used countless times as a metaphor for the subaltern nation. This image is usually framed in a traditional and essentialist vision of the experience of absence. However, behind those Penelopean figures there are bodies of specific women who often emerge recovering the burden of social denunciation and the desire for the vindication of the woman who had inspired the section "*As viúvas dos vivos e as viúvas dos mortos*" from *Follas Novas* (1880) by Rosalía de Castro, whom we owe this very concept.

Starting from the observation of this phenomenon, we take as a general framework recent currents of thought that are interested in societies and cultures with regard to the aspect of change and mobility; José Colmeiro (2011), Kirsty Hooper (2005), Thomas Nail (2015). This allows us to analyze other concepts of *galleguidad* (the quality of being Galician) and assess how emigration also affects those who wait, contemplating the migratory process not as a result, but as a transition driven by the *promise of happiness* (Sara Ahmed, 2015). Such perspective facilitates the approach of this classic and central figure of the Galician imaginary and the cultural policies that construct it (Sara Ahmed, 2010). We will study this figure in some texts and artistic works of Alfonso Daniel Rodríguez Castelao, Rafael Dieste, Luis Seoane and Xohana Torres, whose common characteristic is the fact that all four write from a position of some kind of marginality or exclusion – a fact that fosters the search for other national representations more in line with those who feel stigmatized as others, as foreigners. This led to an alternative line tradition of national construction from Rosalía de Castro to Xohana Torres. The transition begins with the *viúva de vivo* created by de Castro, passing through the crazy widows that sometimes become monstrous witches, as in the poetry of Seoane, to the *orfa de vivo* – an orphan of living parents (González Fernández: 2012) from Torres's only novel. Resistant to madness or suicide, Torres's protagonist makes way for *la chica rara* – the strange girl (Martín Gaité, 1987), deviated from the norm, who then opens the door for the thoroughly studied "Penelope" turned into a seafarer from *Tempo de Ría* (1992) by

Xohana Torres, and a very long genealogy of feminist poets who take up the topic. Hence, the essential purpose of this work is a detailed study of all these characters and female representations that will allow us to trace the transition between the most classical representation and the emancipated Penelope – a stage that is also essential, and which, nevertheless, has not been studied enough.