

# CHAPTER 9

# **EMBODIED AUTHORSHIP IN FEMINIST AND QUEER ZINES IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA**

**Laura López Casado**

**DOI: 10.21747/9789898969606/inda10**

**T**he concept of authorship has been profusely contended and addressed during the last decades. Roland Barthes declared the author dead in 1967, but since then, new approaches, ideas, and reflections have prolonged the discussion until the present day. This chapter proposes to navigate through authorship studies in order to examine authorship practices in zines. The Do-It-Yourself movement has always moved through non-conventional authorship, but the paradigm of the zine has changed in the last decades. The popularity of self-publishing also has changed how these practices are understood. Specifically, I will focus on feminist and queer zines within the Iberian Peninsula. The selected object delimitates the study, and, furthermore, it provides the epistemology and methodology to the chapter. A feminist and queer theoretical approach will be fundamental to understand the embodied authorship that has surfaced in these zines.

**Keywords:** authorship, zines, feminist, queer, LGBT, Portugal, Spain.

## 9.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to develop a theory of authorship in feminist and queer zines. Zines produce and reproduce knowledge collectively and collaboratively. Discussing authorship in the medium of zines can help us to understand the tensions within the feminist movement, and their manifestations of social action and agency.

But, before I begin exposing the notion of authorship, I need to approach the framing of my research in the Iberian Peninsula to study the feminist and queer movement. It is not only a geographical presumption, since there are other factors that also come into play. The Spanish State and Portugal share centuries of history, despite their particularities and differences, they have reached a parallel political and social continuum. Iberian Feminism is a concept that has been used sporadically in the last decades. The concept was first used in 1970, but only referring to the different realities in the Spanish State (Campmany & Alcalde, 1970) excluding Portugal. However, the comparative between both countries, from a feminist perspective, has been used more recently (Simões, 2006) and defends that we can look at the Portuguese and Spanish feminist movements with a similar lens. What I want to emphasize when I use this concept is the notion that in the Iberian Peninsula all the territories create a network, and thus this space is better understood as a whole, as set out by the most recent feminist investigations (Bermúdez & Johnson, 2018). This idea shapes how I approach zines created and distributed in the Iberian territory, zines that articulate feminist and queer discourses.

The study is comprised of three parts. The first part draws on Barthes and Foucault, approaching authorship studies. I explore why their work on the author was a critical turning point and the impact their theories have had in gender studies. Ironically, these authors function in the text as arguments from authority, regardless of the deconstruction of authorship in their discourses. I address the main ideas of authorship to delve into to the second part, where I approach the issue of authorship in the DIY (Do-It-Yourself) and DIT (Do-It-Together) movements.

Unavoidably, I will face the different negotiations around notions of authorship and ownership which rise between insubordination and discomfort. The third part is dedicated to exploring embodied authorship in feminist and queer zines in the Spanish State and Portugal. Exploring embodiment, bodies will transcend from a symbolic element to the flesh one. The zine-maker embodies a “subject-position” (Fuss, 1989) that discloses authorship in the feminist and queer zine in the Iberian Peninsula.

## 9.2. “What Matter Who's Speaking?”

To start the chapter is necessary to establish some existing ideas in authorship studies.

The most important theorists in authorship studies are, among others, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. In 1967, Barthes proclaimed the death of the author. In his essay, he argued that in “primitive societies” the importance of the discourse prevailed above the author, who was considered a sort of shaman, mediator or speaker (Barthes, 1977: 142). Barthes points out that it is a capitalist notion to recognize the author as an individual person and emphasizes that every text is composed of several layers of writings. There is a turning point towards the end of the essay when Barthes announces that the collector of writings is the reader.

Two years after, in 1969, Michel Foucault wrote “What is an author?”, which is traditionally understood as a response to Barthes’ essay. Foucault continues in the same line of thought and claims that the figure of the author has been sublimated and transformed into another part of the discourse. He defends “the ‘author-function’ is tied to the legal and institutional systems that circumscribe, determine, and articulate the realm of discourses” (Foucault, 1996: 130). He finished his essay with a series of questions, some of which are very pertinent to this object of study and I will bring them back later, the very last one being the title of this section: “What matter who's speaking?”.

What does it matter who is speaking? This is a question that resonates with the DIY spirit. When addressing feminist and queer zines, does it matter who is expressing themselves? A partial answer comes from the Portuguese zine *Your Mouth Is a Guillotine* (YMIG). The zine is defined in the Tumblr profile<sup>83</sup> as follows:

*Your Mouth Is A Guillotine is a Portuguese zine that serves as political commentary and space for alternative representations of the feminine, assuming the imperative promotion of the work of women artists within the Portuguese context but also within an international context. It proposes itself as an alternative to the more institutionalized discourse on the theme and is engaged with an intersectional approach to feminism within a Marxist frame of analysis. (Your Mouth Is A Guillotine, n.d.)*

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<sup>83</sup> <https://your-mouth-is-a-guillotine.tumblr.com/about>

The first number of YMIAG, called Fragment<sup>84</sup>, consisted of a kind of puzzle book, with different games. One of them simulates the tone of those ‘Spot the Difference’ visual games. It includes two paintings. One of them is Judith beheading Holofernes<sup>85</sup> by Artemisia Gentileschi and the other one is Judith beheading Holofernes by Caravaggio (YMIAG, 2013). As it is common in these types of publications, the solutions can be found in the last pages. Here the zine points out two main differences. First, the difference resides in how the painter has represented the two women in the picture. Artemisia's work shows a powerful Judith with a big determination to finish with the life of Holofernes. Caravaggio, though, paints a Judith who is disgusted with the action that she is doing. The second characteristic that the zinemaker stresses is that the first picture shows a relationship of support between the two women in the picture, Judith and her young servant. Caravaggio's, on his part, represents the maid as a very old woman without any type of emotional bond with the young Judith. The zine's analysis finishes with the warning that no work is better than the other, but is important to perceive when the different point of view of a woman is being represented.

This subject was also explored in another zine from the same authors: *Livro de Vulvas para Colorir* (YMIAG, 2015). This zine is a tribute to *Cunt Coloring Book* (1975) made by the female artist and activist Tee A. Corinne. On the first pages of the zine a comic script describes how to pass from being the object of a work of art, to be the muse, and finally be the subject, the author. Joana Tomé and Andreia Costa (the women who were behind of YMIAG at that point) review some representative scenes from respected artists, from the Greeks to more recent figures, such as Dorothea Tanning or Judith Chicago. This short history (short in the sense of the space that occupies in the zine, just a few pages) describes the artistic process and identifies some important figures who have led the journey in material, symbolic and cultural sense to produce their own representations. This connects with and illustrates the aim of feminist and queer zines. Also, towards the end of their analysis, there is a little disclaimer that notes that sex is not the same as gender. Thus, their aim in their vulvas colouring book is “to imagine alternative ways to represent vulvas; not equate “woman” with “vulva”: the vulva is a possibility amongst a large plurality of others” (emphasis in the original) (YMIAG, 2015: 10).

Zines, like other cultural productions, emerged because it is was fundamental to all those who had been the object and not the subject, to control the representations of the self. It is important to note who is speaking, although DIY and DIT movements fight against the traditional idea of the author.

<sup>84</sup> <https://issuu.com/yourmouthisaguillotine/docs/ymiag-fragmento>

<sup>85</sup> Both paintings represent the same biblical episode. Holofernes, a Syrian General, was infatuated by Judith, a young widow from the city that his army was besieging. Judith took advantage of that situation and went to his tent and beheading him while he was very drunk.

## 9.3. Do Authorship Together

The amateur press scene historically has resisted mainstream and academic notions of authorship and ownership (Comstock, 2001: 395). The DIY movement, where zines are circumscribed, supports political dimensions of authorship and introduces new dynamics to the concept of intellectual property, distribution, and circulation of knowledge in opposition to the commercialized version of copyright<sup>86</sup>. Notions of authors' rights are transformed into readers' rights. This feature of the DIY movement resonates sharply with the last phrase of the essay "The death of the author": "the bird of the reader be ransomed by the death of the Author" (Barthes, 1977: 148). Indeed, the DIY communities go one step further and consider everybody as a potential author and consumer at the same time. They are not separated into two different groups, which is the very defined structure of the capitalist system. Instead, actions of production and reception interact in endless feedback. This ethical strand is indeed close to the idea of self-sufficiency, but this concept has provided the creation of another one which is quite similar but has a significant nuance: Do-It-Together (DIT). This concept appeals to collaborative methodologies in the work system, such as communication, edition, and distribution. Do-It-Together implies not only practices of collective authorship, but also practices of a modification of a previous work or translation of a text into different languages, to name two very popular zine practices or interventions.

A strategy of resistance in feminist and queer zines is the intervention of pre-existing images to change the meaning of the message. An example of this is Bravas (2013-2018)<sup>87</sup> a fanzine from Barcelona, which focuses on image and text, balancing the protagonist of both elements. The collective Las Bravas is formed by Tania Terror and Mar Cianuro. These two pseudonyms are on the first page of the zine, but among the pages, nothing is identified as made by one or the other. They combine interventions of existing pictures (in black and white, as is presented the zine) and the inclusion of original text. Authorship in the zine is considered from different perspectives over the pages. Besides, they use different techniques of manipulation of the previous material: there are collages, there are photos where they introduce text or change the photo caption and they even play with the composition of the page where image and text influence the meaning of each other.

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<sup>86</sup> There are legal consequences in play for the subject of the author. It is important to discern between the author's rights and copyright. The first concerns the author and her/his work, given immediately after the production. The second one concerns the work and how this is shared with the society. To change the economic dynamics of circulation it was necessary to create a set of new licenses, among which are Creative Commons or Copyleft. In Creative Commons, the circulation and distribution do not allow commercial uses and demand a recognition of the sources. In the case of Copyleft, the material is open to intervention and circulation and there is not a mandatory point out the authorship.

<sup>87</sup> To see some of the work published in their zine or collaborations in other zines can be visited their Tumblr (<https://lasbravas.tumblr.com>).

The central pages of the first zine *Bravas* (Terror & Cianuro, 2013) showcase a snapshot of a demonstration: this image functions as an illustration of the intervention the authors do over the text and image. According to the aesthetics of the participants, it seems as if the picture was taken at the end of the seventies or the beginning of the eighties. In the image, all the protestors are men and carry signs and banners. The dramatic effect of their intervention is made by erasing all the text in the banner. The men stand together proudly, but the zinemakers have stolen their words. The result is a “silent” picture that I interpret as a protest about who has been taking the floor, dominating the public space.

The last characteristic of this zine that I want to stress is how they work with the text as an image. Visually, every phrase is like a cut from a previous text, matched and photocopied for *Bravas*. The total of the phrases of the text overlaps and makes a new composition, which is made by Tania Terror and Mar Cianuro. This insinuation that the text is kind of a collage, much like the pictures in the zine, suggests the idea that every text is an assembly. The usefulness of the zine resides in that it shows how playing with the invisible threads of the composition reveals a hidden truth: that every text is a montage and all images are manufactured. The creative mechanism is revealed as a sort of collage as set out some thinkers around the authorship.

Zines are publications that could be potentially used and mobilized for any purpose. Even when set out with a feminist and queer objective, their authorship could be pointed out or not depending on the zines’ aims. One of the distinctive features which brings Chris Atton (2002) to identify a publication as an alternative media, including zines, is looking at the way these texts have been produced, the relations that have been created around the media and the construction of horizontal communication. These characteristics work also in the construction of feminist and queer zines. Production must be feminist and queer, and authorship does not have to be an exception. However, these can cause some contradictions, as I will examine in the next part.

Zines also function to promote the free circulation of ideas, approaching ownership in a non-traditional sense. There are numerous examples of zines that have been used as vehicles to spread texts that have not been published in their country or there is not a translation in the vernacular language. Spain and Portugal lived dictatorships that ended in 1975 and 1974, respectively. These dictatorships cultivated isolation from international discussions and new intellectual trends. The privation of external influences and possible dialogues slowed down some debates, and the LGBT/Queer movement and theory<sup>88</sup> were especially affected. When democracy arrived in the Iberian Peninsula, it took several years to introduce and appreciate international debates. In that context, some zines used their pages to approach ideas, authors, thinkers that had not yet arrived to academia nor were they present in the movements’ debates. For example, Fefa Vila, one of the

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<sup>88</sup> The distinction between theory and movement resides in that the former is based in foundational texts and the latter has its roots in direct political action. In the case of the queer theory and movement, they were not necessarily born at the same time, as queer political agitation precedes its theoretical construction.



members of one of the first queer group in Madrid called LSD<sup>89</sup>, has admitted that their zine *Non-Grata* (1994-1998) introduced authors such as Judith Butler and Teresa de Lauretis, throughout amateur translations, years before they were published in Spain and even considered in the context of academia (Expósito, 2013). In other words, zines have been spreading words, images, texts and ideas from any part of the world with the firm conviction that their dissemination prevails over ownership.

Likewise, the labour of translation and introduction of new debates through collaborations between groups outside and inside of a country is also very common in zines. Another example worth mentioning is the Portuguese zine *!MULIBU!* (1994-1995). In their second issue, the zine published some texts of the activist group from Leeds M.A.S.S (Men Against Sexist Shit) introducing ideas of new masculinities which would take time to arrive to Portugal. This zine is also proof that in the Iberian Peninsula cultural, theoretical and political flows exist: the first number of *!MULIBU!* includes a contacts section with information of different international organizations, and includes two Spanish ones, one from Madrid (Asociación Antipatriarcal/ Antipatriarchal Association) and one from Barcelona (Mujeres Libres/ Free Women). The second number of the zine sets out the intention of not only to create a network, but also to bring their realities closer. There is an in-depth article about Spanish exiled Anna Delso<sup>90</sup>. This publication, also reproduces the song lyrics in Spanish of a Valencian<sup>91</sup> group, ALLORARALAIGLESIA.

## 9.4. Embodied Authorship in Iberian Zines

Barthes writes: “writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing” (Barthes, 1977: 142). Here, again, we can ask ourselves: who can peel off this body? While looking for that answer I came across the zine *De Un Plumazo*<sup>92</sup> (1993-1997), made by one of the very first queer groups in Spain, La Radical Ga<sup>93</sup>

<sup>89</sup> LSD was an acronym which changes the meaning depending on the context. They were Lesbianas Se Difunden (Lesbian dissemination) Lesbianas Sin Dios (Lesbians without God), Lesbianas salen los Domingos (Lesbian go out on Sundays), Lesbianas Son Divinas (Lesbian are Divine), ...They play with the fluidity of her name in the different situation they were present as a collective.

<sup>90</sup> Anna Delson was one of the members of the collective Free Women who lived in the Second Republic in Spain and she had to go into exile after the Civil War.

<sup>91</sup> Valencia is a region in the southeast of Spain.

<sup>92</sup> “De un plumazo” is a Spanish expression that means that something is abruptly suppressed or ended. It could be translated as a “stroke of a pen”. But also, when a man has a behaviour interpreted as a performance of the feminine gender this is colloquially described as “pluma”.

<sup>93</sup> The word “Gay” is intentionally wrong written. They want to establish distances with the Gay Movement which was interpreted as an assimilationist model inside of the capitalist system and they wrote “gai” to show that they were claiming another kind of identity. This group rises with LSD as two of the firsts groups in Madrid to introduce new political debates around the LGBT identity. Indeed, the first time the word queer was written in Spain was in *De Un Plumazo* (Solá, 2012, p. 267), in their edition of 1993 when they called “Queerzine” (La Radical Gai, 1993). In the case of LSD, they identify themselves as queer lesbian from the first number of *Non- Grata* (LSD, 1994, p. 4)



(LRG). In their 1994 issue, dedicated to the homosexual body in the middle of the HIV crisis, they wrote: “the AIDS pandemic has done nothing but confirm corporeality as the only recognized dimension of homosexuality”, and added, “the denial of corporeality has become a pernicious strategy in many gay groups”<sup>94</sup> (La Radical Gai, 1994: 4). Thus, they exposed and criticized that some gay associations and collectives refused to consider potential sick bodies or, to put it another way, they wanted to stop being a body. La Radical Gai went further and they arrived at the conclusion that, historically, to be a body sometimes means ceasing to be a citizen. They mentioned slaves and women as examples of hyper corporeality that is granted at the expense of other rights (La Radical Gai, 1994: 4-7).

Amplifying the voices of oppressed subjects hides a latent question that has been both addressed and avoided, in equal measure, in feminist theory in the last few decades. This is the debate of essentialism against the influence of poststructuralist thinkers and deconstruction. Toril Moi explains well how authorship has been studied from a feminist point of view:

*Today, then, theory and practice appear to be just as out of synch as they were by the end of the 1980s. The result is a kind of intellectual schizophrenia, in which one half of the brain continues to read women writers while the other continues to think that the author is dead, and that the very word ‘woman’ is theoretically dodgy. (Moi, 2008: 264)*

In 1949, De Beauvoir formulated the important idea that “one is not born but becomes a woman” (Beauvoir, 2011). This helped to popularize the distinction between sex and gender, denying any inherent feature in the woman’s condition. Feminist theory existed then in a period that oscillated between essentialism and deconstruction until 1990, when Judith Butler deconstructed the very idea of the gender category. Butler introduces the concept of “performance”, that will be very useful to address authorship, as I explain below. In the 1980s, subaltern studies and specifically, Gayatri Spivak, launched the concept “strategic essentialism” (Eide, 2016), a concept for when theoretical and philosophical ideas fail to work in practical terms. For that reason, strategically, some thinkers believe that is still necessary to work with some categories, although in a theoretical sense they understand the necessity of deconstructing them.

This intellectual schizophrenia raised by Moi has also arrived at the study of feminist and queer zines. While the term queer is fundamentally anti-essentialist on its origin, it is also used nowadays as a de facto substitute for gay and lesbian, discarding its meaning as a category for the deconstruction of sex, sexuality and gender. Consequently, this ends up forming an essentialist way of looking for the gay person behind the queer authorship.

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<sup>94</sup> My translation.

Here, I retake some of the final questions posed by Michel Foucault in "What is an author?". In the very last paragraph, he asks a set of questions: "What are the modes of existence of this discourse? Where does it come from; how is it circulated; who controls it?" These questions are the core of alternative media. When I refer to alternative media, I am describing the model exposed by Chris Atton that is not only limited to political or "radical" media but is also different artistic and literary media and cultural forms, such as zines and hybrid forms of electronic communication (Atton, 2002: 8). All these questions appeal to these publications, which feature non-hierarchical organizations, prioritize the inclusion and participation of people and groups traditionally absent from traditional media and always emphasizes the circulation in their production, never the economic benefit.

Two final questions that Foucault poses are fundamental to understand a relevant definition of authorship in zines: "What placements are determined for possible subjects? Who can fulfil these diverse functions of the subject?" Here, it is useful to raise the idea of "subject-positions" collected by Diana Fuss (Fuss, 1989: 29), when she affirms "we should be interrogating not only the place of essentialism but the essentialism of place". In other words: where do I stand? This same question was addressed around the same time in other disciplines and fields of study, where concepts as the "standpoint theory" (cited in Harding, 1986: 3) and "situated knowledge" (Haraway, 1991: 188) were developed. Both epistemological proposals emphasized the need for a critical inquiry into the site of enunciation and highlighted how this site transforms the knowledge that is being produced. Haraway's concept also highlights the unavoidable political implication of any topic, its selection and or analysis, insisting on our responsibility towards it.

What is the site that is occupied by the feminist and queer zine in the Iberian Peninsula and their authors? To begin with, it is a geographical one. But over and above this, the position occupied has to do with the circulation of zines and the relations that are established through the process. I want to emphasize here that the feminist and queer zines authors build discourse that occupies a political space. This space also transcends the content of the zine. A zine is an object, and it is understood as much more than the sum of its parts. For that reason, in English, these authors are zinemakers. They are not being considered writers, designers, artists... they make zines. This action is made by bodies, corporal identities that realize a praxis of embodied authorship, a concept that I will address hereafter.

To understand better this idea of the embodied authorship I appeal to the production of Meri Torras and the investigation group that she conducts, "Cuerpo y Textualidad" (Body and Textuality). This group belongs to the Department of Spanish Philology at Autonomous University of Barcelona and part of their investigations study ideas of authorship and the body. To the idea of performance launched by Judith Butler (1990), they emphasize the importance of the concept of "subject-position". Gender performance is linked to the idea of repetition of the different characteristics associated with the two possible gender.<sup>95</sup> Hence, authorship is also a performance, what Foucault calls the function of the subject is performative. This idea is very engaging with the object of the investigation, since zines are artefacts of self-representation where there is no intermediary. One

of the characteristics that many zines share is the use of a pseudonym, and a pseudonym is a total commitment to the performance for the subject-position of the author. A pseudonym often functions as wordplay: it can be a pun, a suggestive name or a name that operates as a nickname. It is not unusual to find pieces inside of the zine without a signature or with the name of the collective. However, there is no denying that there are a lot of recent zinemakers that are concluding her/his work with name and surname. For example, Araceli Pulpillo, coordinator of the zine *Labio Asesino*, includes a disclaimer after the editorial that specifies that all the texts without authorship are hers. This option, to point out the authorship, is becoming more and more popular nowadays, which reflects a fascinating point: how the capitalization and institutionalization<sup>96</sup> of the zine have affected the recognition of the authorship in a traditional sense. A paradigmatic case are the abovementioned publications of *De Un Plumazo* and *Non-Grata*. There has been an evolution, in both zines, of the ways in which they addressed authorship throughout the 1990s. In the 90s, there was a significant progression of the use of technologies and maybe for that reason, the aesthetics of the zines changed a lot from issue to issue. Due to the professionalization of the format, the last issue in both publications resembled a magazine more than a zine. Simultaneously, authorship was changing: from anonymous texts, collective authorship or pseudonym to a signature with name and surname in a lot of the texts on the very last zine of *Non-Grata* and *De Un Plumazo*.

Zines have similarly granted space to the potential expression of everybody, guaranteeing freedom and protection, which has been vital to the discussion of some topics. For instance, *Organa*, (1990-1991) a Portuguese zine, was one of the first publications by lesbians and for lesbians. They served as a referent for the emerging Portuguese lesbian community and every issue included a warning on the first page: “Respeitamos o anonimato de todas as assinantes e colaboradoras” (we respect the anonymity of subscribers and collaborators). The pseudonym, the nickname, provides a safeguard and a border where everybody could tackle a controversial issue from a safe space.

Going back to the concept of gender and performance Judith Butler writes: “gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original” (Butler, 1991: 21). Those words deeply resound in the production of zines, and illustrate how the performative feminist and queer authorship in this type of publications disrupts the interventions of the copies of the material, where the sense of the original loses significance. Adela C. Licona’s words, “zines perform the differences they are trying to make” (Licona, 2012: 2), gain a new layer of significance if we interpret them from the perspective of gender performance and authorship in zines. Therefore, when I refer to this embodied authorship, I also consider the circulation and interventions of the zine, which can sometimes be even unintentional due to the medium’s cycle of doing copies over and over.

<sup>95</sup> It is important to note that in this heteronormative society there is no more space for other genders.

<sup>96</sup> The zines community has suffered an extreme change in the last years. The popularity of the format has produced an explosion of self-publishing markets, they are present in bookshops and the material has been valorized by different institutions. There were expositions in museums (Library in the library. Self-publishing in Porto, 1999-2019 at the Serralves Museum), workshops (Ways of Doing Through the Feminist Fanzine archives from 6/11/2019-2/12/2019 at the Museu Nacional y Centro de Arte Reina Sofía).

From the point of view of gender and authorship studies, the nature of the feminine subject seems condemned to the reproduction instead of the creation of an original (Torras, Pérez & Croquer, 2015: 2). Likewise, autobiographical creation, a genre traditionally associated with women, has been rejected as art, since women have traditionally been relegated to the private spheres. In the case of feminist and queer zines, autobiographical topics are not only not dismissed, but they are welcomed and celebrated, transforming them into one of the principal themes. On the roots of this private sphere, it comes to the fore the hyper corporeality of the subjects that make zines. Zines are born from insurrection, but also, they originate from the mundane world. The bodies which produce zines are also, on many occasions, the focus of the zine itself: repressed bodies, ridiculed bodies, abused bodies, sexualized bodies, resilient bodies. The corporeality transcends to the zine as resistant spaces.

In the Iberian Peninsula, feminist and queer zines have served to introduce debates and small breaks, subtly, to the hegemonical thought. For example, the recent zines *Hair* made by Andrea Coutinho (2018) and *A Kindumba da A.N.A*<sup>97</sup> by Francisca Nzenze de Meireles (2019), deal with the preconceptions of black women's afro hair. Hair in black communities has become a symbol and its importance is correspondingly reflected in these zines. Thus, in a country with white hegemony like Portugal, the introduction of debates around racism or intersectional feminism in the format of a zine, in both cases with autobiographical stories, are like small stones trying to break a crystal, expecting to hit right on target and provoke a small fissure. Thus, their authorship is also a resistant practice.

Another way of confronting the idea of traditional authorship arises from the fact that creative work has been always considered a lonely endeavour. In zines, solitude and loneliness can drive the idea behind the reasons for publishing but can also be interpreted as the way to fight them. Within zines' communities underlie a necessity for connection. Thus, authorship is "a site of collective struggle and interactivity" (Comstock, 2001: 384).

The last issue that I would like to explore is the concept of agency behind the embodied authorship that I have been discussing throughout the text. Zines are expressions and representations of themselves. As others have demonstrated (Licona, 2012; Piepmeier, 2009), making zines is making theory and doing feminism, whereby zinemakers are proposing social change. Social change is made possible through the action of making a zine and interacting with a community, or even with society. Agency, conventionally, has been considered an attribute of the individual, interpreted as the capacity of an agent to act in the world. However, if authorship can be expanded as a collective action, then agency can be defined with the same parameters. Agency is the conjunction of a set of social and subjective relations that constitute the possibility of action (Licona & Herndl, 2007). To be able to do

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<sup>97</sup> Francisca Nzenze de Meireles specified on the first page of the zine that A.N.A is so named because she was born within the group *Angolanas Naturais e Amigos* (Natural Angolans and Friends). A discussion forum (on Facebook) about naturally curly hair (and more). This zine is published in Portugal by Sapata Press, a small publisher focus in feminist and queer zines.

an intervention, the subject must be situated. Agency, much like authorship, comes from a site.

*Salmorejho Majhao. Feminismo(s) Andaluz(es) Colectivo(s)*<sup>98</sup> (2019) by Carmela Borrego is a zine created after the presentation of a final dissertation of a Master in Gender Studies at the Barcelona University, where her work on Andalusian feminism was highly criticized. The main complaint was the very delimitations of her work, as the evaluators denied the possibility of the existence of Andalusian feminism. Carmela Borrego edited her zine as an act of subversion in response to this academic experience. She, with the other collaborators of the zine, defend that the Andalusian feminism is a site from which to create knowledge. They defend that Andalucía articulates a specific experience that is urgent to name. Joana Tomé (the fixed member along the years of YMIAG) wrote in an article “the zine format allows YMIAG to propose a viable alternative to the more institutionalized discourse on gender, body, sexual orientation, among others, and the academy that, while vital, elitizes (sic) access to the deep problematization of these issues” (Tomé, 2017: 41). Borrego felt a similar need to publish a zine in order to elevate the discussion to a higher level. Labio Asesino, a zine from Jaén (Andalusia) also published some months later a monographic about the same topic<sup>99</sup>. The necessity to identify themselves with the local has gained importance in zines. Feminist and queer zines in the Iberian Peninsula have similarly showcased the fragment identities of these movements. In other words, they have helped to develop an agency from particular places which would have been impossible without the existence of an extended network.

## 9.5. Conclusions about bodies, representations and zines

Throughout this chapter, I have been investigating notions of authorship in feminist and queer zines, publications that have been resisting the academic and traditional conceptions of authorship. The theoretical framework of my study (Barthes, Foucault, Spivak, Fuss, Butler, etc.) consists of authors that have been very influential in academia in the last few decades. I have added a new dimension to their works by applying the theory to artistic, textual, and political praxis in feminist and queer zines. This chapter has also provided a summary of some new approaches to zines and new theories of authorship with a feminist and queer perspective. The body has been textualized and the text has been embodied. Their embodied authorship is performative and not fixed. Embodied authorship is the practice of the theory, and the results, are feminist and queer creations. The zines,

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<sup>98</sup> The name of the zine is the name of a typical dish in Andalusia (the region in the south of Spain). The subtitle concerns to the plurality of the feminism, identities, and collectives that can come up in Andalusia.

<sup>99</sup> In the last years have been launched the concept of “Andalusian Feminism”, one of their precursors is Mar Gallego, mainly through the blog Como vaya yo y lo encuentre (<http://www.feminismoandaluz.com>), but also collaborating with some recognized Spanish feminist media, as Pikara Magazine and introducing the concept in some articles. She has just released the book Como vaya yo y lo encuentre: Feminismo andaluz y otras prendas que tú no veías.



the textual objects, are queer and feminist, and they constitute a site of struggle. From that very same struggle, the agency of subaltern identities rises and, both bodies and texts are deployed in the zine as sites of resistance. Iberian zines, with their particularities and universalities, show an authority that lies in their authorship.

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**Laura López Casado** holds a BA degree in Journalism from the Complutense University of Madrid (2009), and in Audiovisual Communication from the University Rey Juan Carlos (2011). She has also a master's degree in Equality of Gender in the Social Sciences from Complutense University of Madrid (2016). She was admitted to PhD-COMP in the academic year of 2017/2018S as a doctoral student and in 2018/2019 she was granted a scholarship (PD/BD/143049/2018). Her research focuses on Queer Zines and Feminist Theory in Spain and Portugal, under the supervision of Professors Luísa Afonso Soares (University of Lisbon) and Carmen Romero Bachiller (Universidad Complutense de Madrid).

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5176-5829>.



