



Crimes at the Maritime Border: Miguel Pajares's *Aguas de venganza* [*Waters of Revenge*]

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Abstract. This essay analyzes Miguel Pajares's *Waters of Revenge* (2016), delving into the representations of the Mediterranean Sea as a constructed lawless maritime border where crimes are unpunished; revenge occurs; and official explanations of border casualties interact with a narrative of border crimes, public negligence, and injustice.

Li lasciamo annegare, per negare
[*We let them drown, to disown them*]¹
—Erri de De Luca, *Solo andata*

THE GEOPOWER OF THE SEA IN BORDER CRIMES

Clandestine migration has been on the rise since the mid-nineties when many EU nations implemented the Schengen Agreement to abolish border controls at the mutual borders of the member states and fortify external ones. Efforts to prevent the clandestine maritime crossing have deadly consequences and migrant deaths have become part and parcel of current clandestine migration. Since the early 2000s, the Mediterranean basin has been turned into a “postmodern cemetery” (Gjergji 159) and the ultimate resting place of an average of 2,000 migrants per year (Brian and Laczko; Papadopoulou-Kourkoula 2). Given the unwillingness to recover or identify the bodies, the maritime stretch has become the place

Silvia Ruzzi holds a PhD from Humboldt University in Berlin. Her PhD thesis examined the literary representations of the Mediterranean Sea as a border space in border-crossing fiction of the twenty-first century, with emphasis on the intimate interconnections between geopolitical implications of border imaginaries and aesthetic practice. Her recent publications have focused on U.S.–Mexico border fiction and Mediterranean border fiction.