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# LIMINALITY AND EXILE LITERATURE OF LATIN AMERICA'S SOUTHERN CONE

By

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ABSTRACT

LIMINALITY AND EXILE LITERATURE OF LATIN AMERICA'S SOUTHERN CONE

By

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This study explores the exile literature of Latin America's Southern Cone through the novels of six political exiles written during the ruling military dictatorships of the 1970's and 1980's.

Exile prescribes an uprooting from the familiar to the unknown, from a space of defined and respected boundaries to one of limitless possibility. One's concept of self, as a consequence, undergoes changes, changes that I define here as examples of liminality - a condition of potentially permanent "in-betweenness." Borrowing the term from anthropologist Victor Turner, as he describes it in *The Forest of Symbols* and *The Ritual Process,* I argue that it is a fitting description of exile, for the subject exists in dichotomies, such as those with respect to geography (no longer members of the old country and not natives of the new), time (living in between the preterite/ memories and the present), language (mother tongue and second language/dialect), and even discursive strategies of describing the world (historical and fictional).

The physical separation from one's home initiates both the journey into exile and the exilic condition. I believe that the latter can be better appreciated by taking into account different physical spaces and experiences within the adopted land as well as others preceding the arrival to it. One symbolic space of encounter between the exiles

and the natives in the host land is revealed in Manuel Puig's *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas*, where the protagonist experiences an institutionalized exile in the United States as a patient of a nursing home, hospital and mental asylum. Exile may also be developed in between the borders of the homeland and the host land as examined in Daniel Moyano's *Libro de navíos y borrascas*. One of the first encounters with the adopted country is explored in Marta Traba's *En cualquier lugar*, where the exiles have been intentionally separated by the government from the natives into an abandoned train station. Antonio Skármeta's *No pasó nada* and Mario Benedetti's *Primavera con una esquina rota* also delineate exile from the adopted land, but in milieus where the outsiders and the insiders live side by side. One last symbolic space studied in this dissertation is that experienced within the homeland, which is analyzed in Héctor Tizón's *La casa y el viento*.

With the physical and symbolic spaces I explore in this dissertation, liminality will be seen to be fundamental in forming an exilic identity. In each space, the liminal status of the exile allows the crossing of literal and figurative borders: linguistic, sexual, racial, and cultural, as well as those between fiction and reality at the literary and extra-literary levels. This dissertation shall explore in each of the works the modifications of the political exile's concept of self, the obstacles that they must overcome, as well as the psychological techniques utilized to survive their unsolicited deracination from all that was familiar, comfortable and routine.

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# Introduction

From Ovid to Dante to Nabokov and Rushdie, back again through a kaleidoscope of languages and countries, the voices of exiles have permeated the pages of literature throughout the ages. In the twentieth century especially, the phenomenon of displacement has been a global one, peoples from myriad backgrounds and continents have abandoned their homelands or were coerced to do so for reasons varying from war, repressive governments, economic immobility, cultural suppressions, or famine, many a time never returning to their countries of origin.

Writers who question hegemonic structures, as is generally in the nature of their profession to do so, often suffer more than others the purposeful banishment by their governments from their native homelands. Latin America is no exception. During the XIX Century some of its most renowned authors (many of whom were liberators during Independence from Spain) were forced into exile, such as: Bello, Montalvo, Hostos, Echevarría, Martí, and Sarmiento. In the XX Century the extensive list of exiled writers from Latin America includes Nobel Laureates Miguel Ángel Asturias and Neruda as well as other legendary poets and novelists like Vallejo, Alfonso Reyes, Roa Bastos, Cabrera Infante, Onetti and Cortázar, to name just a few.

In the 1970's and 1980's the sanguine dictatorships of Latin America's Southern Cone, as well as other political instabilities afflicting many Latin American countries during these two violent decades (for example: El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, and Venezuela) propelled massive movements of people across borders in search of safer havens. In fact, in 1984 Julio Cortázar commented on the connection between exile and

the literature being produced by Latin American writers, "Hecho real y tema literario, el exilio domina en la actualidad el escenario de la literatura latinoamericana" (16).

This dissertation approaches the vast subject of Latin America's exile literature by concentrating on the geographical area of the Southern Cone because of its similar political history during the late twentieth century. It has been estimated that during the ruling military dictatorships of Argentina: 1976-1983, Uruguay: 1973-1985, and Chile: 1973-1989, approximately 1.5%, 20% and 2% of their respective populations went into exile.[1] Around 50 of these exiles were established writers, the majority of them being from Argentina (Cymerman 525). Those who did not flee faced the possibility of severe repercussions- often imprisonment, torture, disappearance or overt assassination.[2] In Argentina and Chile, 30,000 and 3,000 people were respectively detained by state personnel to never be seen again, and in 1976 Amnesty International charged that torture in Uruguay was routine, with 6,000 people in jail, it had more political prisoners per

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[1] Estimates for determining the percentage of the population that went into exile during the military dictatorships are difficult to come by, and may be slightly inaccurate. For Argentina, the figure above is based on information obtained from The Dynamics of Argentine Migration for which data is only available from 1970 to 1984. I then used the census population of 1982 as a base in order to determine the above estimate. For Uruguay, I rely upon Carmen Galarce's citation in her book about Chilean exile, La novela chileana del exilio. With respect to the figures for Chile, I cite Thomas Wright in his book Flight from Chile. The 200,000 or 2% of the population he refers to is an estimate of only those who exiled for political reasons, this cannot be assumed in the above figures for Argentina or Uruguay. Wright's explanation that the state of terror unleashed by the military in Chile was able "to force some and induce others of the left to leave the country and prohibit their return, presumably ridding itself of the enemy and eliminating any challenge to its authority" (Wright 8-9), can be applied also with respect to Argentina and Uruguay.

[2] Rodolfo Walsh, Haroldo Conti and Paco Urondo were assassinated under these dictatorships.

capita than any other country in the world (Davis 57). The dictatorships of the Southern Cone also collaborated together in a program labeled "Operation Condor" in which they would share each other's blacklists in order to rid their countries of so-called subversives- that is, anyone who ideologically opposed military rule. Therefore, in order to ensure one's absolute safety, exile would necessarily entail abandoning the Southern Cone region altogether.[3]

Of those authors who were able to write in exile, what they produced is generally categorized under the general label of 'exile literature.' However, this label implies a double meaning: *sensu stricto*, those works that treat the theme of exile written mainly by exiles, and *sensu lato*, all literature, whether it includes the theme of exile or not written only by exiled writers. As indicated by Claude Cymerman these two differences may also be denominated as *exile literature*, that which treats the exile and the *literature of exile*, or that which is written in exile (523-24). The expression *cultural exile*, with respect to literature, refers to that which concerns the milieu of the publishing process and reception of literary works by any given author, which if unauspicious may lure the author to leave his/her country in search of better prospects elsewhere, a decision which may or may not be provoked by the dissatisfaction with the relevant political scene. *Voluntary exile* denotes the uncoerced personal decision to leave one's homeland. In the cases of José Donoso and Luisa Valenzuela for example, they left their respective countries of origin as young adults, reasons for which were unrelated to the dictatorships that befell their

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[3] Although many decided to stay within Latin America, others crossed into the United States or traversed the Atlantic to reside in Europe- primarily Spain and France.

homelands later on. *Inner exile,* as explained by Paul Ilie, does not necessarily require territorial removal from the country of origin. It entails a perception of alienation felt by the subject, due primarily to the effects of authoritarian political systems, from her/his fellow citizens and country at large.[4]

The literature written by those writers who lived under a dictatorial system versus that produced by those who left their homelands voluntarily or involuntarily can be contrasted in significant ways. Not only does the factor of one's own volition to immigrate/exile enter into the equation, but for those who continued to write under a dictatorship they had to contend with the issue of censorship. The involuntary exiles who picked up their pens in an adopted land overwhelmingly felt the "need for evidence of having experienced . . .[exile]" (Ugarte 20), which they fulfill themselves through the medium of the written and published word. The propensity for autobiographies and testimonies among exiles can be better understood within this context for through them the authors clearly voice their own experiences or that of others who underwent the same. Other genres as well are exploited for the same purposes, and while the 'evidence' may then be wrapped within the fabric of a fictional product, historical reality frames it. In fact, many fictional pieces written by exiles were censored or banned from publication/distribution in their native homelands because they contested the "official" version of historical events promulgated and enforced by the military dictatorships.

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[4] The idea of internal exile was developed in modern times by German intellectuals who remained in their country during the Nazi period while opposing the regime. The concept also existed in ancient times, as Lagos-Pope makes evident with a quote from Cicero, who wrote, "exile can occur without one's being driven from a home" (10).

Eduardo Galeano, an Uruguayan exile, elucidated that the dictatorships, "Se proponen enmascarar realidades, borrar memorias, vaciar conciencias: desde el punto de vista de este proyecto de castración colectiva, las dictaduras tienen razón cuando envían a la hoguera libros y periódicos que huelen a azufre y cuando condenan a sus autores al exilio, la prisión o la fosa. Hay literaturas incompatibles con la pedagogía militar de la amnesia y la mentira (6). Although the 'military pedagogy' enforced a policy of non-remembrance (conscious forgetting),[5] the suppression of disparate views, and the elimination of otherness, exiles wrote to claim memory to another story, to that which they left behind, and to that which they were currently experiencing as a consequence. And yet, as their stories about deracination are rooted in the political histories of the Southern Cone, they transcend their local geography to express a universal theme of modernity, for as Edward Said explains, "we have become accustomed to thinking of the modern period itself as spiritually orphaned and alienated" (49).

In Spanish, multiple terms exist to explain or attempt to explain the exilic experience: *exiliado, desterrado, transterrado*, each striving and failing in part (hence the existence of multiple terms) to explain the unsettling nature of exile. Whatever one's semantic choice, exile is undeniably a forced separation between an individual and his/her

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[5] In a Lexicon of Terror, Marguerite Feitlowitz quotes Oscar Camilión, a diplomat under the Argentine dictator Videla, who acknowledged the conscious and voluntary forgetting that countries can engage in, "A nation creates itself not just with what it remembers, but with what it forgets." Marcel Proust, years earlier, distinguished between "mémoire voluntaire" and "mémoire involuntaire" which is not really about memory, since he believed this could never be erased, but rather the issue was more about its recall, which can be open to access or blocked from it. The same, I believe, can be said about forgetting, and it is the voluntary forgetting of the dictatorships that the exiles were compelled to address.

natural environment, and regularly involves a traumatic experience of loss for all that once was-- from the rhythms of one's mother tongue to the contours of one's city, the climate, festivals, funerals, and in particular one's identity as hitherto known. In the words of Edward Said, "exile is fundamentally a discontinuous state of being" (51); it entails for Andrés Avellaneda a confusion of identities (84).

The disruption of one's identity as a consequence of exile and experienced by Latin American exiles in Europe (though applicable elsewhere) has been explored by Ana María Araujo and Ana Vásquez in their study, La maldición de Ulises: Repercusiones sicológicas del exilio. They describe three phases in the consciousness of the exile, 1) the stage of trauma and sadness; the rejection/denial of any new models of social organization and its symbols 2) the acceptance of one's condition of exile, and 3) finally the problem of one's identity manifests itself. In another study by Leon and Rebecca Grinberg entitled, Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile, phases with respect to the same subject are also established, which happen to coincide with Gustavo Pérez Firmat's, an exile himself, who delineated his own phases of exile in Life-on-the-Hyphen: 1) denial of the displacement, 2) estrangement and disconnection, and 3) acceptance of the exilic condition.

Phases two and three are reversed in the models above, which is telling for one may not necessarily precede or proceed the other, rather, for the exile both may manifest themselves concomitantly. That is, even if exiles accept their exilic condition their identity can no longer be defined exclusively by that which defined or characterized them in the native land. In exile the exile's identity becomes newly associated with that of an-

other. This 'other' is not merely a sign of differentiation assigned by the adopted society to its foreign inhabitants (separating 'us' from 'them'). It also implicates the denomination of a foreign/other self within the individual that had remained dormant and quite likely unacknowledged until its awakening through the physical and spiritual dislodgment of exile. What occurs to the exiles' identity can in part be explained by Julia Kristeva's argument in Strangers to Ourselves that within all individuals a foreigner exists (what this dissertation expresses as the 'other') and "comes in when the consciousness of my difference arises" (1). This "consciousness" of the 'other' surfaces as a consequence of the exilic experience itself and its manifestation shall be carefully studied within this dissertation. Because the exilic experience prescribes an uprooting from the familiar to the unknown, from a space of defined and respected boundaries to one of limitless possibility, it is no surprise that the concept of self also undergoes changes, changes that I define here as examples of liminality.

Others have also made this connection between liminality and exile.[6] Michael Ugarte's conclusion in Shifting Ground makes reference to Gustavo Pérez Firmat's book Literature and Liminality, which suggests that liminality is essential to literature, for "literature often finds itself on the threshold of something, in the middle ground between two mutually exclusive entities... or on the margins of both" (227). Ugarte notes that liminality "could very well serve as the essential link among the divergent pieces of exile writing" (227). Mae G. Henderson in the introduction to Borders, Boundaries, and

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[6] Another synonym for liminality has been expressed by Gloria Anzaldúa in her elaboration of a border theory. She utilizes the term "nepantla," from the Nahuatl language meaning the "in-between space..., the liminal stage" (239 Interviews).

Frame: Essays in Cultural Criticism and Cultural Essays, mentions anthropologist Victor Turner's model of liminality as a "handy conceptual model for the study of exile" (5). The arguments of Henderson and Ugarte are compelling- I concur with them and use liminality as a unifying element among the literary texts that will be studied in this dissertation. Whereas these scholars do not explain any further the relationship between exile and liminality, I hope to establish within this dissertation a firm connection between the two as well as to demonstrate that liminality, as experienced within various physical and symbolic spaces of exile can manifest itself in slightly different ways.

The term, limen, as utilized by Arnold van Gennep in The Rites of Passage, referred to the second stage of a tripartite structure categorizing puberty rites, the first being, "separation" and the last "aggregation." The adolescent subject is "separated" from the society in which s/he lives, removed to another space where s/he undergoes particular rites and rituals upon which having completed these s/he returns to society no longer as a child but as an accepted adult. Victor Turner later expanded upon Van Gennep's second stage. He modified liminality from a temporal, ephemeral state to a potentially permanent condition. This condition is one in which "the state of the individual becomes ambiguous, neither here nor there, betwixt and between all points of classification" (Dramas 232). I believe this description is a fitting one to understand better the exilic state, for not only do exiles no longer belong to the homeland nor are they native members of the adopted society that has offered them refuge, but their identity also becomes questionable, as seen above. While in Van Gennep's model the subject eventually returns to his/her society, exiles may never return home, (in spite of the hope

to) and thus, they may indefinitely exist existentially in a type of middle ground.

The fact that they "are no longer classified and not yet classified" (Forest 96) propitiates the sense of 'disconnection' from one's environment, but this 'estrangement' curiously provides exiles with a unique position from which they can easily cross both literal and figurative borders, including those of the linguistic, sexual, racial, cultural, as well as those between fiction and reality at the literary and extra-literary levels. In this sense exiles can experience a freedom of figurative movement generally unattainable within the homeland.

Augusto Roa Bastos explains another positive element of exile, "El exilio tiene sin embargo la ventaja que da al escritor, al artista, al intelectual, una cierta perspectiva con respecto a su realidad" (Cymerman 525).[7] This perspective is one that allows the individual greater objectivity and distance. It is defined in this dissertation as the liminal condition of exile, entailing the ability both to observe and reflect about that which the rest of society normally accepts without question or ignores without deliberation, precisely because exiles see and experience from at least two spaces if not more.[8]

In addition liminality provides "the possibility. . .of standing aside not only from one's own social position but from all social positions and of formulating a potentially unlimited series of alternative social arrangements" (Dramas 13). The alternatives

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[7] Of course amidst the advantages associated with exile, it must never be forgotten that its challenges and vicissitudes are far greater. Cristina Peri Rossi reminds us of this, "el exilio es una experiencia que siempre puede capitalizarse. Si uno no se vuelve loco." (Corbatta 167).

[8] In the words of Mempo Giardinelli, "todo es doble, condenadamente doble" (41).

formulated with respect to the social arrangements of both their native and adopted lands, are associated with the double, the embracing of the concept and tolerance of multiplicity, and heterogeneity, where the borders and boundaries between cultures are lowered to include those traditionally categorized as 'other' by dictatorship and democracy alike. This is not to say that the works written by exiles are prescriptions for creating utopian societies; these 'alternative' messages are usually options through which to change social hierarchies into social equalities, irrespective of the political systems particular countries may currently embrace.

Although liminality is to some degree characteristic of the diverse forms of exile, for political exiles it is a condition of possible permanence, especially given that they knew not when their respective military dictatorships of the Southern Cone would fall, nor if they would ever be able to return to their homelands. Political exiles can also be differentiated from other exiles by their resistance to integrate into the host land while at the same time hoping that they will be accepted by the native population. The degree to which this resistance occurs may vary depending on the age of the individual and the amount of time spent away from home. In general, these exiles are not interested in becoming permanent members of the adopted society, only temporary inhabitants of it who patiently wait abroad for the fall of the dictatorships afflicting their countries. For political exiles the act of waiting puts their lives indefinitely on hold, further accentuating their state of in-betweenness.

In puberty rites, as in the case of exiles, "the passage from one social status to another is often accompanied by a parallel passage in space, a geographical movement

from one place to another" (25). The physical separation from one's home however, initiates both the journey into exile and the exilic condition. I believe that the latter can be better appreciated by taking into account different physical spaces and experiences within the adopted land (a total of three shall be examined: exile within an abandoned train station, within public health institutions, and from one's private home) as well as others preceding the arrival to it (a total of two: exile within the homeland and during the journey to the adopted country). No study of these exilic spaces to date has been published, and while I do not assume that my study here can answer all of the questions with respect to exile literature and the subject's place in geographic space, I do hope to offer some conclusions that can further expand our understanding of exile literature in general and specifically that in the case of the Southern Cone.[9] The order of the chapters

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[9] The majority of critical texts about Southern Cone exile literature concentrate primarily on specific works and authors and are published as articles. Amy Kaminsky nevertheless in her book, After Exile, does offer an excellent overview of the Southern Cone case, where she includes both political and voluntary exiles. Carmen J. Galarce's La novela chilena del exlio: el caso de Isabel Allende, devotes the first couple of chapters to the history of exile literature within Latin America from colonial times to the present and specifically details information pertaining to Chile. I am unaware of any equivalent monograph about the cases in Argentina or Uruguay.

Specific studies about the exile literature of Spain that can be generalized to other geographies include the aforementioned, Michael Ugarte's Shifting Ground, as well as Paul Ilie's Inner Exile. Another general study of exile from 1800-1990s in Latin America is that of Ingrid E. Fey and Karen Racine's (eds.) Strange Pilgrimages.

Outside of specific Hispanic literatures, Paul Tabori's classic, The Anatomy of Exile from 1972, represents one of the first works about the semantic and historical causes of exile within the global arena, and the more recent books by Azade Seyhan, Writing Outside the Nation, and André Aciman's Letters of Transit examine culture, memory and language in the exile literature of artists from several countries. Numerous publications about general trends of the exilic condition must also be noted: Edward Said's article "The Mind of Winter," Joseph Brodsky's, "The Condition we Call Exile," Eduardo Galeano's "El exilio: entre la nostalgia y la creación," Andrés Avellaneda's "Exilio y literatura latinoamericana," Claudio Guillén's "On the Literature of Exile and

does not follow a spatially sequential movement with respect to the exile's journey from the homeland to the adopted land. This has been done in order to demonstrate that there is no sequence of physical steps involved in becoming a political exile, nor is there any purpose or ultimate goal associated with political exile- no matter the current physical space he/she inhabits- other than that of escaping dictatorship. However, each of these spaces represents a different manifestation of the exilic experience as it relates to liminality.

In the present study a total of five physical and symbolic spaces will be considered and analyzed separately through the novels of six politically exiled authors from the Southern Cone: Manuel Puig's Maldición eterna a quien lea estas paginas, Daniel Moyano's Libro de navíos y borrascas, Marta Traba's En cualquier lugar, Antonio Skármeta's No pasó nada and Mario Benedetti's Primavera con una esquina rota, and Héctor Tizón's La casa y el viento. Furthermore it will be shown at times that the authors' experience overlaps with that of their characters, e.g., in the case of Benedetti, and establishes what I believe to be another example of liminality, for in these works the fictional and the factual conflate in at least two ways: via the author's self reflection and through the historical circumstances that brought about exile in the first place. Hence, in addition to the substance of the works, the structure of the 'novels' also represents a

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Counter-Exile," Claude Cymerman's "La literatura hispanoamericana y el exilio," and Mempo Giardinelli's "Dictaduras y el artista en el exilio." All of them in one way or anther discuss the impact of the exiles' forceful learning of two cultures, languages, histories and geographies. Two anthologies about exile in comparative literature with general introductions that have also been useful are, Exile in Literature; Borders, Boundaries and Frames.

liminal expression with respect to the traditional genre.

This dissertation shall explore in each of the works the liminality/modifications of the political exile's concept of self, the obstacles that they must overcome, the borders that they cross, and the psychological techniques utilized to survive their unsolicited deracination from all that was familiar, comfortable and routine, including the moment of departure from one's home as well as that of residing side by side the natives in an adopted land.

Chapter One explores Manuel Puig's Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas, in which the protagonist experiences an institutionalized exile in the United States as a patient of a nursing home, hospital and mental asylum. In this chapter I propose that the amnesic exile in conversations with an individual from the adopted land tries to appropriate the native's experiences for his own in an attempt to create an identity for himself. The exchange between the two voices leads to the dissolution of identity boundaries between the interlocutors, but contrary to our expectations of a victimized exile living deracinated from his home, Puig challenges us by offering an exile of predatory nature. In addition, the chapter shows how Puig constructs a paradoxical language situation through which the native seems foreign and the foreigner native, thus forcing the reader to question the issue of language ownership and the degree to which native speakers own their mother tongue more so than non-native speakers. Regardless, the exile is ostracized physically to only public spaces and dialectically through exclusion from the native language's field of oral communication. While an-other in exile, his preoccupations reveal to some degree his former identity of

who he was in Argentina.

Chapter Two concerns the exploration of exile from another space- that in between the borders of two lands- in Daniel Moyano's Libro de navíos y borrascas, in which the exile, Rolando, travels by sea from a familiar New World to a foreign old one. The vessel that carries him through international waters symbolizes the unanchored state of the exile, who experiences a second birth from the mother ship into the adopted land of Europe, mimicking in reverse the voyage of his ancestors who left Europe to settle anew in the Americas. This chapter is an analysis of how the divide between fact and fiction is narrowed and crossed as the exiles turn to the latter in order to try to understand the immediate past (torture and disappearances), to help others overcome it, and to confront the future. Moyano's protagonist, Rolando, consciously begins to nurture comforting alternatives of himself as 'other,' often confusing his imaginative creations with reality. As a musician who no longer has his violin to express himself, he recurs to a liminal expression of language that incorporates music and words in harmony.

In Chapter Three, one of the first encounters with the host land is examined in Marta Traba's novel, En cualquier lugar, in which the exiles have been intentionally separated by the government from the natives into an abandoned train station. They arrive by the truckload to this hitherto public space of transit that now ironically represents one of immobilization and stagnation. This chapter studies how the exiles grasp to their collective identity as Argentines in a desperate attempt to retain some semblance of their previous selves in waiting for a change of fate within the host land. Their imagined "país de ficción" fails, but as a consequence of their liminal status in the

station, experimentations with respect to other forms of identity take place, in particular those with respect to the (de)constructions of female identity.

Chapter Four explores exile from the adopted land in milieus where the outsiders and the insiders live side by side. Antonio Skármeta's No pasó nada presents an adolescent's perspective of exile, and Mario Benedetti's Primavera con una esquina rota proposes a three-generational account of the experience. Without a large social network to constantly remind the exiles of their identity by seeing their own reflection in the others, as occurred in Traba's novel, they must now rely upon their own memory in order to remember/revision themselves. This chapter demonstrates how memory leads one to a compulsive comparison of his/her immediate reality, "acá," with the one left behind, "allá," including all that participated in creating one's sense of self: one's home, the climate of the native homeland, language, acquaintances, and vocations, all of which are examined more closely. Learning how to survive in the new land as developed in these novels involves the acceptance of becoming an-other, being born again to another experience, yet always aware of one's liminality, abiding somewhere in between the past, and the future, between the homeland and the new land, living the exilic fate of a double life of in-betweenness.

Chapter Five shows that the exilic experience can actually commence within the individual's own homeland. The moment Hector Tizón's protagonist in La casa y el viento leaves his village behind, he becomes an exile. Unlike exiles depicted by other writers Tizón's protagonist is unique in that he is afforded the opportunity to bid farewell to that from which he must indefinitely part. Aware that his last days in the homeland are

numbered, he strives to retain to memory all that could possibly be of significance to him later on. In his travels to the border of Argentina, I analyze his crossing of the racial and dialectical divide (that between the oral and the written) as he records cultural information in his diary about the indigenous peoples, who have historically been excluded from official constructions of his own national identity. In addition, this chapter considers some of the manifestations of the liminal crises the exile experiences with respect to his own identity, as he is on the cusp, no longer knowing who he is or who he is becoming.

# Chapter One

## Institutionalized Exile: Manuel Puig's

## Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas

The exilic space developed within Manuel Puig's 1980 novel, Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas, comprises primarily institutionalized spaces in the United States, namely a nursing home, hospital and mental asylum, limiting the protagonist's experience of the host land to public spaces. In addition, the exile is physically confined to a wheelchair, further restricting his area of exploration. Institutions tend to objectify the subject's experiences, and as a consequence, Ramírez becomes a public item to be scrutinized and categorized according to the institutionalized generalizations and definitions created within institutions themselves. Excluded from entering the private spaces of the new land, the exile's struggle consists precisely in attempting to penetrate them.

Manuel Puig was born in 1932 in General Villegas, a small town 500 kilometers to the west of Argentina's capital. From the age of three he was already attending movies on a regular basis with his mother, which would soon evolve into a passion. Determined to write movie scripts for the actresses with whom he first became enamored as a young boy,[1] Puig traveled to Rome's Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia[2] at the age of 23 to

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[1]His favorite actresses among others were Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Hedy Lamarr and Rita Hayworth. (See Suzanne Levine).

[2]The Centro was Europe's most important film school during the 1950's. Such prominent directors as Ingmar Bergman, Jean Renoir, Roberto Rossellini and others taught courses there.

study under the most distinguished film directors of the time. His experience of the industry disappointed him though, particularly its authoritarian hierarchy and the inexorability within the establishment to experiment beyond the lens of neo-realism. As a consequence Puig decided to write screenplays on his own in a voice of his own, one of which ultimately evolved into his first novel, La traición de Rita Hayworth.

Puig's upbringing, his cinematographic education, his homosexuality, his amalgamation of low and high cultures in the representation of literature, in addition to his political reticence[3] all marginalized him as a writer. La traición, completed in 1965, took another three years for its publication, filtering through even the most liberal publishing houses, including Seix Barral in Barcelona, to finally be accepted by Jorge Álvarez in his native Argentina. Soon thereafter, however, Puig's successful literary adaptions of popular traditions, (film, soap operas, harlequin romances...), were being emulated by those who initially dismissed him as a frivolous author, including the canonized Boom writers of the 1960's.[4]

After living a number of years in Europe and the United States, Puig returned for an extended stay to Argentina in 1967 only to leave again in the early 1970's. This decision was due in large part to Isabel Perón's ultra-conservative government under which Puig was added to the Triple A's (Anticommunist Argentine Alliance) hit-list after

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[3] Puig was particularly soft spoken about politics in comparison to other Latin American authors.

[4]Examples include Julio Cortázar's We Love Glenda So Much, based on actress Glenda Jackson and Mario Vargas Llosa's Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter about a radio soap opera writer.

the publication of The Buenos Aires Affair, (1973) a novel critical of both Perón's policies and the ideologies of left-wing intellectuals. It was heavily censored and later banned as pornography. It faired no better under the military Junta, which took control in 1976, and remained on the blacklist of banned books, as would Puig's later novel, El beso de la mujer araña (1976). The Buenos Aires Affair was the last of his novels to be published in Argentina, and although Argentine publishing houses wished to continue publishing his works, Puig refused to publish modified versions enforced by governmental censorship. Searching outside his own country for publication eventually led him to form an alliance with Seix Barral.

Political exile became a reality for Puig when in 1974 after being away from Argentina for over a year, the Triple A called his parents' home demanding that Puig leave the country within 24 hours (Levine 242). No longer 'free' to return home he would search for a place to root himself, but even after the restoration of democracy, Puig would never again live permanently in Argentina: "Exile and home would always be two sides of the same coin for him" (Levine 10). At home, the intelligentsia's bland reception and dismissal of his achievements, even as he was recognized and celebrated abroad, only served to heighten Puig's marginalization within Argentina. However, his international fame depended precisely on his particularly brilliant ability to manipulate the Spanish language of his own homeland,[5] whether Puig was physically at home or in

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[5]His first two novels indeed were crafted from a personal Argentine language, while also: "As if by default, he found a way to avert the judgmental 'Argentine eye' by copying the tone of others, by allowing real people, including himself, to speak or write in their own voices. . . He could now use those wonderful clichés uttered by Malé or Carmen without impunity" (Levine 145).

exile.

Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas written by Manuel Puig while living in exile in New York City during 1976-1977, takes the form of conversations between Larry, a native New Yorker, and Ramírez, an Argentine exile. Ramírez, an elderly man of seventy-four, convalesces in a New York City nursing home after being brought to the United States, apparently without his consent, his request, or his recollection. His interlocutor, Larry, is a thirty-six year old American hired by the Argentine to take him out for strolls around the city in his wheelchair.

The novel's narrative structure is comprised primarily of dialogue, divided into two parts, 12 sections in the first and 10 in the second, with six short missives and a job application ending the novel. Six of the 12 sections are presented as Ramírez's dreams and therefore the total number of 'conscious' dialogues between the voices corresponds to 16, Puig's trademark number.[6] No narrator intervenes nor do other characters engage in their conversation.[7] As characteristic of Puig's narratives, the lack of a narrator serves to debunk the authoritarian structure he had rejected in his other literary works. He

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[6]Puig generally divided his novels into 16 chapters commencing with his first, La traición.

[7]The only hint of a narrator is one that may be classified as a textual narrator. Stephen M. Ross explains that a textual voice "is the result of elements in the physical text that signify without necessary dependence on language and . . . prompt or allow the reader to regard the printed text as a source of signification" (306). For example, dialogue between the characters as such would remain purely within an oral domain were it not for the textual narrator who transcribes their conversations, provides ellipsis at various times in order to indicate that one of the two characters refrains from responding to the other, and by providing and placing the written documents at the end of the novel in a prescribed order.

overtly eradicates the figure who would conscientiously guide the reader along a designated path to a pre-determined destination. As a consequence, however, the agents of the speech acts lack specification, and the reader must therefore pay extremely close attention so as not to confuse the two voices, which happens nonetheless.

In an interview with Jorgelina Corbatta, Puig confesses that his fictional characters are based on real flesh and blood people. His inspiration for Larry was drawn from his encounters with a "fascinating" American named Mark,[8] whom he met in October 1977 at a New York City municipal pool: "Fue un problema vivido en inglés y yo quería escribir sobre eso. Le pedí permiso al personaje ese para tomarle notas sobre su vida: tomé como doscientas páginas de notas en inglés, y ahora estoy tratando de resolver esa cuestión" (620). Mark was divorced, suffering from depression, and a failed academic. A sociologist by profession he could only find work as a part-time lecturer at New York University. Eventually Puig convinced Mark to meet with him three times a week for a couple of hours each time to take notes about his life, remunerating him for his services (Levine 294).

Puig bases Ramírez on his own father, "En la novela, llega mi papá exiliado a Nueva York y se enfrenta con este muchacho [Larry]" (Corbatta 620). From exile, Puig returns once again to the fictional recreation of his own father after a four novel absence, first examined in La traición de Rita Hayworth.[9] If we recognize that "compulsive

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[8] No reference to the surname of Puig's testimonial figure has been provided by either Corbatta or Levine.

[9]Manuel Puig's father, Baldomero, nicknamed Baldo, is translated into a similar sounding Berto in La traición who's role in the novel is that of an emotionally

retrospection", as Andrè Aciman has indicated, defines "the one thing exiles do almost as a matter of instinct," (Aciman 13) we may then conclude that Puig's own chapter on his father had not yet been closed with La traición. Baldomero Puig was a draconian figure who frequently had violent outbursts, and always preferred his more virile nephew over his effeminate son, Manuel. Their strained relationship did not improve over the years, instead, father and son drifted apart, physically and emotionally. Perhaps for this reason Puig's fictionalization of his father embodies that of a man in exile. Indeed, Puig reminds us: "Escribo novelas porque hay algo que no comprendo, un problema muy especial y entonces se lo achaco a un personaje, a un tercero y, de ese modo, a través de ese personaje trato de aclararlo" (Corbatta 605).

**Language Ownership**

The utilization of two languages in Maldición accentuates an exilic problem: in which language will the exiled writer write? Puig confesses, "Maldición fue escrita en inglés, fue pensada en inglés" (García-Ramos 36). Nonetheless, its first publication in 1980 by Seix Barral appears in Spanish. Although not published in Argentina, its circulation and reception were favorable there, "where it became an almost immediate bestseller" (Ester Martínez 80).[10] Two years later an English edition appeared, created by combining the original English draft and its Spanish translation, that is, formulating a

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unequipped father who fails the needs of his children especially Toto (representing Manuel) who demonstrates homosexual tendencies from a young age.

[10]In contrast to Puig's previous novel published in 1979 by Seix Barral, Pubis Angelical was not allowed to circulate in Argentina until 1981, possibly as a consequence of its erotic title (Martínez 80).

second English version under the auspices of Random House Publishing Company in collaboration with Manuel Puig. This historical account of the publication process, although interesting, is not without purpose.

Puig's intention at the time of writing the novel, as he states in Corbatta's interview was that the exile's English be defective and the native's not, but then Puig decides to write the novel in Spanish: "... se me ocurrió intentar, para el muchacho, un castellano de traducción, desangrado, ficticio" (620). Although Puig attests to the betrayals of translators with respect to his own works, and Suzanne Levine suggests that for this reason alone he may have decided to write Maldición in English, he nevertheless decides that his native tongue will contribute to the novel's final product. The hybridity of language through which this novel was written indicates Puig's own liminal status as an exile. He writes from two languages, both Spanish and English, a phenomenon that he explores more directly in his next novel.[11] The language that Puig develops from his exilic experience and which he expresses in this novel differs from the language of his earlier writings, though it will be seen to be just as innovative.[12]

Questions about the legitimacy of the language expressed in the novel are posited by Ronaldo de Feo with respect to the English edition: "Is Ramírez enough of a foreigner

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[11] Sangre de amor correspondido was written in Portuñol, a mix of Spanish and Portuguese, later published simultaneously in both Portuguese and Spanish by Nova Fronteira and Seix Barral respectively.

[12] I argue that Manuel Puig's novel does not fall into the following generalization that Joseph Brodsky and others ascribe to exile literature: "Perhaps an additional truth about the matter is that exile slows down one's stylistic evolution, that it makes the writer more conservative" (7).

or is he too fluent in English to be believable? Is Larry enough of an American, a native New Yorker, or does he sound too foreign?" (18). In *Newsday* Gregory Rabassa's review of Puig's novel denounced Larry's language which he found unconvincing at times due to a lack of contractions utilized by the character.[13] Although de Feo gives Puig the benefit of the doubt with respect to the language question, he ends the subject by stating that he can do so "because the entire book is pitched at a higher, a heightened level of 'reality'" (18). While other realities manifest themselves in the novel, the "lower" level of reality- language per se- constitutes a primary element in Maldición, for it is through the medium of language that the characters define and find themselves confined.

De Feo's analysis of the language proficiency of both native and foreigner applies also to the original Spanish edition, even if the voices' roles are inverted. In Spanish Ramírez sounds a bit foreign in his native tongue, while Larry is somehow too native. In constructing language contrary to our expectations of those who utilize it, Puig forces the reader to question the issue of language ownership. Do natives own their mother tongue more so than non-natives? Jacques Derrida in El monolingüismo del otro argues with respect to his French native language, although fluent in many others: "no tengo más que una lengua, no es la mía" (35). His explanation for the lack of a true linguistic ownership can be traced historically. According to Derrida the language spoken by any given culture is not an innate characteristic of its people, for "toda cultura es originariamente colonial," (57) and therefore the only language people can profess to utilize,in essence, is that of the

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[13]Another complaint by Rabassa, as delineated in de Feo's article, is that Puig should have paid more attention to "medium and milieu" than that expressed in the novel.

'other'. The language of the 'other' represents, "esa ley llegada de otra parte, sin duda, pero también y en principio, la lengua misma de la Ley, y la Ley como Lengua. . . El monolingüismo impuesto por el otro opera fundándose en ese fondo, aquí por una soberanía de esencia siempre colonial y que tiende, reprimible e irreprimiblemente, a reducir las lenguas al Uno, es decir, a la hegemonía de lo homogéneo" (58).

The 'Law' represents absolute authority and domination that subverts the heterogeneous into the homogeneous and its manifestation breaches both the public and private uses of language. The two interlocutors attempt by chance, or by forceful will to trespass, as if each represented the 'language of the law', into the private personal space of the other. Larry wants to appropriate Ramírez's personal notes, written while the latter was incarcerated in Argentina, for his own economical and academically motivated interests, notes that Ramírez no longer recognizes as his own. Ramírez, on the other hand, wants to appropriate for himself Larry's personal history for his own in order to fill the void of his amnesic memory, which developed upon arrival to the United States. Because the exile's survival depends a great extent on remembering the past, Ramírez's survival, given his memory loss, depends on annexing someone else's history. Through these processes of appropriation, each character invades the private spaces of his interlocutor and distortions of the original versions transpire as the other's language of law invades. Ramírez redefines for himself Larry's personalized space by fictionalizing it for his own interests and dismissing at will certain events while Larry constructs an image of Ramírez based on the prison notes that the author does not even acknowledge as his own. Each then, like Derrida's colonizers, attempts to usurp the other's language, that is,

the other's personal space, to such a degree that one's own language becomes contaminated by the other's.

Rather than create a hierarchy of linguistic models based on colonized and colonizer, the two voices in Puig's novel cross over into the other's linguistic paradigm- literally and ontologically, the foreigner's becomes native and the native's becomes foreign. Neither owns any language exclusively. Rather, that language which may be denominated as mother tongue, coexists in conjunction with its foreign correlative. In this manner both Ramírez and Larry are strangers to their own native languages, as Derrida attests with respect to his own: "La lengua que uno llama materna, nunca se puede poseer porque siempre se vuelve al otro, es disimétricamente del otro y el otro la guarda" (59) One's mother tongue is never purely 'natural, ni propia, ni habitable" (81). The mutual infiltration into the other's private spaces creates ambiguities between the two characters. In fact, at times the reader easily confuses one voice for the other (compounded by the lack of clarification with respect to the agent of the speech acts in the narrative).

In addition, the language of Post-Colonial Latin American literature develops from:

> . . . Writers who emerge from a culture and language born of an extended colonial experience, [who] are themselves perhaps somewhat estranged from the European languages that are (but are also not quite) their own. They would seem to come to their language from outside, from its margins. They would seem to try to free themselves from while binding

themselves to it, to work against while also working within it. (Kerr 4)

This Latin American linguistic development manifests itself in Maldición through the interplay of three European languages- English, Spanish and French- and their translations which turn language and its users inside out, and where the "insider/native" is "out" and the "outsider/foreigner" is "in." It creates a language that is formulated from the margins of those who speak it. As an exile, Puig writes this novel from a land outside his mother tongue in a Spanish perhaps somewhat foreign to him, and in an English, not quite his own, echoing the linguistic marginalizations of the voices in his novel.

Once the other's borders, linguistic or otherwise, have been trespassed, translations ensue and the subject in question becomes objectified through a transaction that, "rarely involve(s) . . . a relationship of equality between texts, authors or systems" (Bassnett 2). Puig's Maldición, however, implicates a bilateral translation between different cultures and systems, represented by the Argentine and the North American, each simplifying the 'other' into that which the translator desires.

Puig disclaims univocal absolutisms by dismantling those structures that are based on hierarchical models. Literally, Larry wants to translate Ramírez's prison notes, but in so doing, he also establishes a hierarchical situation in which he, the translator, excludes the writer from participation in the promotion of the book's decoding and publication. As if in retaliation, before Ramírez dies, Larry will be denied access to these notes, expunging possible mistranslations of the author's life. On the other hand, Ramírez fictionalizes, embellishes and truncates details about Larry's past for his own personal gain, but Larry too will claim ownership of that which Ramírez wishes to appropriate for

himself.

**Oral Communication**

The manner in which the interlocutors reveal themselves is, of course, through a dialectic that includes and excludes the other. Proficient in English Ramírez understands the words that both he and Larry use to communicate with each other, and yet, with a perfect knowledge of the language, he nevertheless explains:

> Señor Larry. Yo sé inglés, sé todas las palabras. En francés, en italiano, sé las palabras. En castellano, mi lengua original, sé todas las palabras, pero... Estuve muy enfermo, en mi país. Me acuerdo de todas las palabras, de cómo se llaman las cosas que se pueden tocar, y ver. Pero otras cosas. . . Washington, Larry, plaza, Larry joven, yo viejo, muy viejo, setenta y cuatro, y árboles, bancos, pasto, cemento...(10).

The question of misunderstandings in both the English and the Spanish language is not linguistic, but rather entails the psychological dimension embedded within uttered words. Ramírez desperately pleads for explanations as to why someone smiles, or why one's face expresses pain while running, and he, literally, is disconcerted with the psychiatric terminologies used to define him; words such as, "colapso nervioso, depresión, euforia" (10) that the psychoanalysts used to institutionalize him. Linguistic definitions only explain to a certain degree the significance of words, as Ramírez recognizes: "Sé lo que significan, leí la definición en el diccionario, pero tal vez no las haya experimentado últimamente. Y por eso entiendo el significado... hasta cierto punto, nada más" (10). And yet, he declares no such awkwardness with written discourse. An avid reader from

the moment of his arrival to the States he voraciously consumes information from periodicals, encyclopedias and he even indulges in the fictional prose of Brontë's Wuthering Heights.

Like the discrepancy between his own "reading" and "speaking" voice[14] that Ramírez recognizes, oral communication presents its own complications for him. It is the intimate oral interaction between himself and another that befuddles his primary understanding of language's vocabulary.[15] Ramírez's difficulty in comprehending particular words, such as 'smile' depends not on his fluency in English or Spanish but rather on his inability as an exile to enter, but yet again, another space- the oral and emotional terrain of speech that belongs to the native. The interest in being read to by his favorite nurse from the romantic novel of Brontë's Wuthering Heights stems from an attraction to the emotive element of language. Living in exile he expresses a clear preference for the human element in literature over the political texts that Larry favors, (Marx, Engels), texts that at one time would have most likely interested Ramírez in Argentina as a political activist. However, the written discourse of Brontë's's novel impedes Ramírez from participating in a dialogue of exchange. At best, he can appreciate the sentimentality of the novel, but in oral speech, he can neither reproduce it, nor at

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[14]In the library he comments to Larry that his reading voice, "no es mi voz...Es una voz joven. Una voz que suena bien, fuerte, segura, y hasta de timbre agradable. Como la voz de un actor. Pero después si tengo que llamar a una enfermera, o a cualquiera, oigo mi verdadera voz. Casacada, carraspeante, y no me gusta" (50).

[15]The discovery that he dreams alone and not in unison with Larry forces him to confront his own experience as separate from that of his interlocutor's. This harsh awakening provokes the onset of physical pain.

times even recognize it. What is particularly significant about Ramírez's absorption with Brontë's work, (he did finish the book in 2 days), is his effort in exile, through all means of linguistic communication, both oral and written, to (re)discover and (re)connect with the sentient self, something he completely neglected in Argentina- as evidenced in his prison notes.

A communicative speech act is imbued with tonalities that qualify the language's content. In Maldición, however, communication breaks down on a number of occasions between the interlocutors as a consequence of sentient speech deficiencies. Communication is interrupted when, as indicated above, Ramírez fails to place the psychological component with the linguistic sign. The failure to link the two induces psychosomatic pain in the subject but Larry's explanations, which Ramírez may not even comprehend, usually mitigate the uncomfortable physical symptoms.

The clear misunderstandings of emotional signs at the commencement of the novel develops, soon afterward, into a confusion of an emotional situation. For when Ramírez feels alone, excluded from Larry's personal life, or is psychologically analyzed, he actually manifests physical chest pain and heart palpitations. These visceral ailments about which Ramírez complains are directly related to language and mis-communications. And, although it is precisely the emotional connotations attached to words that confound him, it is only through them, and the healing effect of speech, that he is able to improve.[16]

(R)— ¡Qué está diciendo!, ¡el dolor es ya intolerable! Explíqueme... lo que le

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[16]Ramírez at one point elucidates: "El silencio me enferma" (80).

pedí.
(L)— Cuando se está contento con algo, uno sonríe.
— ¿Contento?
— Santo cielo ¿cómo se lo explico? Si no siente dolor, ese dolor en el pecho, si está viendo el árbol, ese árbol suyo... con la rama y toda la fruta... Y quiere comer la fruta.. Y va y agarra una, y se la come, entonces a lo mejor... sonríe, y muestra los dientes.
—...
— ¿Me entendió?
— No, demasiadas palabras. ...Pero el dolor ya no es tan fuerte, por lo menos. (13-14).

Larry, on the other hand, as a native, has access to the emotional field of expression, which for Ramírez can only be approached through the language of fiction. Hence, Ramírez's insistence and Larry's compliance to accept and follow Ramírez's fictional fabrications of Larry's past in order to fulfill Ramírez's personal emotional needs. Frocking Larry's experiences in fiction, however, functions as the antidote to Ramírez's linguistic-emotional ailments.

**The French Texts**

After Ramírez is hospitalized due to a decline in his health he receives a package of books from the Human Rights Organization that brought him to the United States. These include three novels: Les Liaisons Dangereuses, La Princesse de Cleves and Adolphe encoded by Ramírez while imprisoned in Argentina. Larry, upon perusing the books notices there are numbers above the words in what seems to be a random order, but, if rearranged sequentially, they form sentences: "'Malédiction eternelle...à qui...lise...ces pages.' Es lo primero que dice. Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas" (124). Wondering whom Ramírez might have been cursing, Larry asks if perhaps the words were directed at the policemen, who would read the pages or "a cualquiera que las

lea con malos ojos" (125). But Ramírez's replies that policemen "ayuda[n] a la gente, detiene[n] el tráfico cuando pasa mi silla de ruedas" (125). The contradictory interpretation of policemen indicates a more profound issue of temporal misunderstanding between foreigner and native. For Ramírez the here and now contextualizes his experience. He lives in the present, in New York, where policemen do help those in wheelchairs cross the street, while Larry, on the other hand, searches for retrospective significance of a signified from a land about which Ramírez's memory has disappeared, where policemen were associated with the dictatorial Proceso de Reorganización.

With the appearance of these texts it need be clarified that the three copies are in the original French form, and Ramírez's encoded prison notes are then translated by Larry from French into the language of the interlocutors, English, which we readers then read in Spanish, the original first publication of the novel. Curiously, Alejando Herrero-Olaizola recognizes that the first decoded phrase is grammatically incorrect in French, although the reader (Larry) doesn't mention this, and for that manner neither does Ramírez. The French quote is, as written above but, "el uso del subjuntivo de lire (leer) no tiene lugar en esta estructura; tan sólo es posible utilizar el presente o el futuro, que daría a la frase inicial del texto un cariz más marcado..." (490). This is also verified with the French translation of Puig's novel which utilizes *lira* in its title and not *lire*. Herrero-Olaizola argues that the subjunctive may serve as evidence of the limitations of the text. He bases this on the fact that the original text and "el trabajo de reconstrucción o interpretación que Ramírez propone en su lectura de Les liaisons dangereuses tiene un límite bien marcado:

el texto de Laclos no puede ser simplemente reorganizado por la lectura de Ramírez sin eludir una posible agramaticalidad, a saber, sin eludir la posibilidad de que su lectura pueda romper las reglas que la rigen" (491). But of course, it's not the act of reading that breaks the rules but, rather, Ramírez's act of translating and rewriting an 'original,' particularly one that has been canonized as a sacred text of 'high' literature.

When appropriating Laclos' words for himself, Ramírez transposes a new order (literally and figuratively), incorporating his native grammatical code with respect to the above quote, for in Spanish the semantic structure would indeed require use of the subjunctive. Such an occurrence is common with non-native speakers who transfer their own linguistic paradigms into other languages. If the subject has studied the language sufficiently though, such an error could be construed as a psychological slip, as a way of unconsciously retaining one's cultural heritage. Ramírez informs Larry earlier that he is proficient in a number of languages, including French. But, since this is the very first sentence he codes in the original texts, it may be interpreted that the error was intentional, as a means of consciously forewarning the reader about the complexities concerning reading and translating.

In the quote, the subjunctive predicate signifies what in Spanish would be an unforseen, unknown future reader that may or may not even exist, but upon whom the decoding of Ramírez's text depends. Since the verb in question refers to the act of reading, Ramírez may be implying from the beginning of his memoirs that the person who may eventually read his work, if this were to ever happen, may not necessarily "read" his text accurately. That is, the person translating his text may not necessarily be

true to the original, just as he, himself, was not with respect to the French texts. If we consider Pires Vieira's claim that translations disturb "linear flows and power hierarchies," unsettling the "logocentrism of the original" (111), Ramírez's curse may be directed at those who, intentionally or not, do exactly that which he, himself, is guilty of.

Within Ramírez's own translation and rewriting of the French texts he creates his own 'linear flow' and 'power hierarchy,' which without the intervention of a 'reader' to translate and thus disturb his 'logocentricm,' would remain intact. By denying Larry access to the French texts he prevents the unsettling consequences of translation in his own encoded work. Like Larry, we readers of Puig's novel are denied, twice removed, and condemned (as the title indicates), from any possibility of reading or translating the prison notes due to our dependence on Larry's oral reading of them to Ramírez. Only in one of the missives do we learn that the Human Rights Reception Committee that brought Ramírez to the United States, will take the necessary steps to publish his prison notes.[17] One can not help but interpret Ramírez's last oral testament, in which he bequeaths his books to the psychiatric hospital where he was last transferred, as the desire to uphold the discursive hierarchies of his encoded text. It might seem ironic that he requests that his work- a product of institutionalization as it was created within the walls of an Argentine prison- continue within institutional confines, where if it were to be read, it would most likely be translated according to the institutional ideology that harbors it; that is to say

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[17]Larry, inadvertently informs the Human Rights Reception Committee of the significance of these texts, which in turn provokes the organization's interest in publishing them. Due to conflicting accounts concerning Ramírez's last will and testament, Larry loses publishing privileges of the texts and they eventually fall into the hands of the committee.

psychoanalysis.[18]

One of the questions one may ask is why Puig chose these particular French books to incorporate within his own. What do they reveal about Ramírez or even about Larry? The oldest of the three, The Princess of Clèves, was written by Marie Madaleine de Lafayette in 1678, Les liaisons dangereuses by Choderlos de Laclos in 1782 and Adolphe by Benjamin Constant in 1816. We readers of Puig's novel, are not provided with any information concerning the relationship of these books to Ramírez other than that they were signed and dated by him decades before he would have been imprisoned where he encoded them.[19] All three works have been canonized and classified as primary models of the psychological novel. The oldest is considered France's first and the proceeding two exemplify the genre's depth of development and evolution within the next 150 years. Puig's contribution to the psychological novel, as a twentieth-century artist, is one that addresses twentieth-century psychoanalysis, as revolutionized by Freudian theory.[20]

All three novels respond to the construction of self as a struggle between extraneous social demands and the inner unspoken emotive desires by the subject. The

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[18]How we read Puig's novel too depends on our own 'institutionalization,' our own dogmatization and breaking indeed from these ideologues that define our subjective conception of reality. Indeed Puig's novels generally follow the trend of questioning univocal interpretations, embracing reality as a polyphonic experience.

[19]Larry notices that they are: "Libros de su biblioteca. Claro que sí, tienen su nombre adentro. Y la fecha...1928...1930... Por algo el papel se ha vuelto marrón..." (124).

[20] Nevertheless, he questions such a theory as it relates to homosexuality, as evidenced in his early work, and, especially, later on, through the narrative devise of footnotes in his bestseller El beso de la mujer araña.

persistence of the first refuses admittance of the second, referring specifically to the sentiment of amorous love. The Princess of Clèves involves a love triangle in which a princess, being in love with a man other than her husband, decides to share her secret with him, which in turn leads to her jealous husband's untimely death. Yet, because the widow ascribes to society's moral codes, she considers it impossible to remarry. Laclos's work, Les liasions dangereuses, concerns one man's challenge to seduce two women. He, nevertheless, sacrifices his true passion for one of them to a desire for recognition and fame as an undefeated libertine. Constant's novel examines the ties between father and son and the former's convictions about women that Adolphe questions as he learns that females cannot be conquered without consequence and that their perpetrators, like he, may derive guilt instead of pleasure from such actions.

Ramírez and Larry's public identities of the past (as an activist and academic respectively) obscured the personal relationships in their private lives. But, with respect to the enunciation of Puig's novel, Ramirez's adopted country imposes a generalized exile identity onto him that he finds unfamiliar and unacceptable to his present conscious self. Larry files for unemployment after being denied the work of decoding Ramírez's prison notes and after having rejected a position for a professorship at a prestigious university. Therefore, in contrast to the protagonists of the French novels, Puig's Argentine and New Yorker ultimately fail within the public sphere of social expectation.

Puig's voices long for an identity denied to them by society:[21] Ramírez yearns for

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[21] In Larry's case it is the Human Rights Committee that ultimately decides his fate with respect to the prison notes, due to their own determination of conflicting accounts. Ramírez, on the other hand, wants to be accepted beyond the institutional

an identity beyond exilic definitions and confinements, and Larry for one beyond his unrenowned vocational status into a world that would recognize his achievements and successes.

In comparison to the language factor in which Puig denies the originality of any one language, so too here he demonstrates Bassnett and Trivedi's assertion that "No text can be completely original. . . ." (3). Both Laclos' and Constant's works build from De Lafayette's model of the psychological novel, and Adolphe, in addition, as Elena Russo has claimed, "is in many ways a reading of Laclos's novel" (68). On the one hand, Puig's message seems to be that any given literary expression, by definition, partakes of an historical intertextuality, that is, an intertextual relationship with the written discourse of past, whether formally promulgated or not. As a work written about exile by an exile, Puig's novel attests to the interconnectedness of the written word despite physical and psychological barriers. Moreover, the inclusion of these French texts engages Maldición within a Post-Colonial dialectic by subverting the European legacy that had translated the traditions and peoples of the Americas as being inferior to their own. In Maldición, the 'colonized,' both Puig and Ramírez, translate the European literary model, i.e., the French texts, debunking imperial hierarchies, and, molding new models of equality through the discursive mode of 'stylization.' Kerr's definition of a stylistic operation between texts would have to be read as an "interchange between equals. According to the structure of stylization, neither voice or discourse would be situated in a privileged position. The stylizing discourse would appear to treat the original, 'serious' discourse as having a

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parameters of his exilic experience, beyond their definitions of his experience.

status equal to, perhaps even higher than, itself" (15). Puig, in this fashion, does not privilege the 'original' French texts, but, instead he treats them as equal discourses to his own.

Within the French texts, existing hierarchies of relationship are also questioned. The plots of all three novels concern loyalties, love and the lack thereof between, or among characters. Familial bonds in both Adolphe and The Princess bind scion to parent, which can be detrimental to the child's exploration of self, particularly, as it relates to amorous explorations. Father and mother, respectively, serve as intermediaries who persuade and deter their children from following their own hearts, whereby the hierarchy of the parent (authority) to child (subservience) relationship remains fixed. In Laclos' novel those who seem to control the course upon which others follow fall themselves victim to their own hierarchical web. Maldición may be considered a twentieth-century reading of the French novels' examination of hierarchical structures, including, especially the psychological consequences of those between parent and child.

Before analyzing this aspect in Maldición, we must first recognize that all three French novels address the inadequacies of language's primary communicative function, expressed succinctly in Adolphe: "'language can only designate [man's emotions] but never really define them,'" and as Russo delineates further about Constant's work, "when it comes to the description of mental life, words can designate or indicate, but they can not signify or have a general meaning" (106). Ramirez's explanations to Larry about language and emotive constructions or intentions reiterate Constant's observation, although vestiges of their inception appear even within De Lafayette and Laclos' novels.

In the French works, language, at times, even serves the opposite intention of the subject's emotive will. All characters become linguistically alienated from expressing their inner desires. Even within the language of twentieth-century psychoanalysis neither Ramírez nor Larry apprehends the identity needs of the other, nor can they utilize language to define these needs for themselves.

Missives provide a primary means of expressing emotional content in all the novels considered here, albeit at times in an ineffective or insincere manner. But the written word testifies to the daunting task of molding language to define the subject's emotions; a language at times encoded by the writer of which the recipient lacks the key.[22] In Puig's Maldición the missives serve not the amorous but rather the filial. In prison Ramírez receives a letter from his son, and then, Larry receives in textual form, (a will), from one who often literally role-played father to him.

To our knowledge, the notes written by Ramirez while incarcerated lack any specified recipient, but he does, curiously, recur to missives, encoding a substantial section of Les liasions dangereuses, which Lori Chamberlain addresses, in order to introduce content of a more personal nature. Laclos's 67th letter is from Madame de Tourvel to the Vicomte de Valmont who expresses ambivalent feelings toward him. She claims not to want to "answer" his letter and asks that he not proclaim his love towards her any longer, although she desires precisely this, while attempting to somehow defend her honor. Ramírez as explained by Chamberlain:

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[22] With respect to Constant and Laclos' novels the protagonists write letters to their lovers concealing their true feelings from them, leading to dire consequences for those involved.

> . . . Has 'translated' his own 'family romance' from his native Argentine into the language of French romance-which Larry in turn translates and reads in English. In the process of Ramírez' translation, however, he has confused the paternal role with a feminine one (that of Madame de Tourvel), making the son the seducer of the father, who in turn both wishes to believe in the son's love and prohibits any proclamation of the son's affection. What Ramírez perhaps unconsciously admits, by citing Madame de Tourvel's letter is the wish not only that his son loved him, but also that he really did love his son. (270)

Empathizing with the difficulty of expressing one's true feelings, especially those that Ramírez feels toward his son, as revealed through Laclos's 67th letter, I argue that Ramírez discovers that he can filter his emotions through another written text into a covert language rather than one that is overt. That is, through the French texts he identifies feelings toward his son of disgust, disappointment and even envy. His message, then, appears in between the texts, and in between French and Spanish, a surreptitious operation that voices disapproval of his son without blatantly exposing his own failure to love unconditionally.

**Psychoanalysis and the Exile Experience**

Ramírez has been separated from his society, mentally stripped of his old identity, (as are all exiles to a certain extent), as a consequence of amnesia, and now in New York he engages in a psychological rite that will determine whether or not he survives exile, literally. His exile to the United States, symbolically, however, provides

him, like all liminal beings, with the opportunity, "to think about [his] society, [his] cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain them" (Forest 106). Ramírez recalls absolutely nothing about his own past, but in his dialogue with Larry, their roleplaying, and his own dreams, he expresses concern, albeit at times unconsciously, about the powers that sustain human relationships, especially those of the triad mother-father-child. Because liminality provides the possibility for standing aside from all social positions and creatively formulating a potentially unlimited series of alternative social arrangements (Turner, Dramas), Ramírez incarnates the possibility of creating a new position for the exile, to be explored below, in direct opposition to that perceived and portrayed by the 'other.' This 'other' embodies the adopted society at large, who most likely is even oblivious of Ramírez's existence, but more specifically, it refers to the psychiatric institution that labels him with words lacking any personal reference[23] ('colapso nervioso, depresión' and 'euforia,'). In addition this 'other,' (society, psychiatric institution and Larry) simplifies Ramírez exclusively from a time-dependent perspective of the preterite.[24] Psychoanalysis as exercised by both institution and person (Larry) prove ineffective in helping Ramírez unlock his memory; their understanding of Ramírez's exilic condition completely excludes his experience in the country of adoption.

Remembrance forms a part in the development of self identity, but in Ramírez's

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[23] Ramírez complains to Larry on one occasion: "Está hablando como mis médicos. El mismo modo de decir las cosas. No muy personal, creo" (54).

[24] Ramírez's death leads to an exchange of missives between hospitals in which one psychiatrist attributes Ramírez's downfall to a state of depression caused by his incarceration in Argentina.

case, having lost his memory, he demonstrates a complete lack of knowledge about his past. One of the consequences of this void is the absence of a national identity. Informed by others that he indeed is Argentine, Ramírez searches for information about his country in encyclopedic works but the contents of these texts only offer objective documentation. Ramírez's lack of personal experiences obstructs, in essence, the potential to form a part of his native community, which, as delineated by Benedict Anderson, "imagines" itself. His exilic status accentuated, then, without a memory upon which to grieve, differentiates his experience from that of most exiles, especially taking into account that "la memoria del exilio es la otredad, la alteridad, el otro" ( Martínez-Gutiérrez 328). But Puig's novel provides an alternative perspective to the exilic experience. In contrast to the generalized descriptions of exile, Ramírez, (without a memory), defies the typical exilic stereotype. By creating an exilic voice with amnesia Puig's novel faces marginalization even within the genre of exile literature. Not one to follow molds, or models, Puig demonstrates the existence of other realities and perspectives of the exile experience. Unlike all the other voices studied within this dissertation, Ramírez symbolically embodies, even allegorizes, Argentina's void with respect to the past. In an interview with Armando Almada Roche, Puig attested, "Lo que pasa es que los argentinos no tenemos memoria. Mejor dicho: no nos agrada vernos tal cual somos. Un pueblo sin memoria pierde su identidad. Y la Argentina, un país que tiene miedo, al paso que vamos, es un pueblo sin memoria..." (57).

Even without Ramírez's memory, a translation of the conscious and the unconscious dialogue between the interlocutors can provide access into the inner recondite furies and fantasies of the subject in question, the exiled Argentine. Pamela

Bacarisse points out that in Puig's later works Freudian theory tends to be preempted by Otto Rank's notion of the will (110), but in Maldición Freud's influence in the psychodrama between Ramírez and Larry predominates. The reader, in turn, recognizing Freudian discourse, may interpret the oral text between the interlocutors accordingly. Ramírez's unconscious emphasis on the fulfillment of particular instincts, such as shelter, food, and the sexual drive, correlate with his wish for participation in the imagined community of the adopted country.

The exile in a foreign environment needs not merely physical shelter, but what Leon Grinberg has called a "container." For "the immigrant. . . leaving his country. . . needs to come into contact in the new environment with an object that will hold and contain him and to which he will become attached" (192). Ramírez feels little attachment toward the nursing home or hospital, but he yearns for a more intimate relationship with a real native and his home. This becomes evident during one of his strolls with Larry when upon passing Carmine Street, precisely where Larry lives,[25] Ramírez asks for an invitation into his apartment; a request that Larry refused. By this time he had already asked if it would be possible to enter some nearby locals' residences.[26] Excluded from personal spaces in the adopted homeland, Ramírez is confined to those that are public in which any native person can have access to, but does not enter unless one is ill or elderly. Institutionalized spaces are created within society so as to separate and protect its

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[25] While Puig lived in New York during the writing of this novel he lived on the corner of Carmine and Bedford (from Levine's book).

[26] He earlier inquired about the apartments around Washington Square, that Larry explains, had been converted into office buildings.

members from their diseased 'others.' As a consequence, Ramírez is unwelcome in the new land, both as an institutionalized person and as an exile. Being physically confined to a wheelchair makes his mobility within the new land difficult, but the psychological-physical barrier that separates the foreigner from entering the native home denies him admission into the adopted country's private confines. On Christmas Day Ramírez tells Larry, "No sé qué daría por ver una de esas casas, en este preciso momento..." (196). This unrequited desire to belong and attach to a "container" also invades his unconscious thoughts. In one of Ramírez's dreams in which he converses with Larry, the latter tells him of a situation in which he made an unsuccessful attempt to take a young woman in distress to a nearby house for shelter, "un rostro poco amistoso nos observó. Sacudió la cabeza en señal negativa. Era un viejo como usted, de poca paciencia" (106). Ramírez declares that he would have opened the door, but Larry reminds him that he has no house of his own. Again, this dream reminds Ramírez of his exilic condition. By not being permitted to enter a home in this, his new country, he remains isolated and distanced from any kind of social solidarity and warmth, while the shelter the institution provides him, remains purely physical and inanimate. Grinberg admonishes that without proper attachment to the reception environment the exile's survival mechanisms can break down (192), a factor that must be considered with respect to Ramírez's demise, without attributing to it the exclusive cause.

If we observe Ramirez's relationship to food one gradually notices that he begins to eat less and less. He occasionally buys Larry meals despite his own small budget, but never during the narrative do they share the intimate act of dining together. One way in

which Ramírez does include himself in the participation of Larry's dining experience transpires with the use of the first person plural when he makes reference to 'our' restaurant, that is, Larry and Ramírez's. The question remains as to whether or not they did ever eat together there, but given Ramírez's monetary contribution to Larry's dining experiences, (a common phenomena), the reader is inclined to believe that Ramírez simply buys for himself the right to use the first person plural.

Ramírez's diabetic condition induces occasional cravings for sweets while in exile but he does not consume any at all. Similarly, problems with digestion prevented Puig's own father from consuming certain foods in his later years. Possible comparisons between Ramírez and Puig's father become even more evident with the fact that the elder Puig died in a nursing home alone, already separated from his wife, Malé, a number of years, and distanced from his son Manuel. In addition, in the passage quoted by Larry from Ramírez's prison notes, the latter makes reference to a son, who, like Manuel, wanted to work within the world of acting.[27] Baldomero Puig, like Ramírez, disapproved of his son's vocational choice. Puig ultimately succeeds in his profession, (the fictional son fails), despite the lack of moral or financial support from a father who would have preferred his son to become an engineer.[28]

The bitterness of living in a community that ostracizes the institutionalized

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[27] Ramírez's son wanted to be a theater director and Manuel Puig a screenwriter.

[28] In Suzanne Jill Levine's excellent detailed biography of Manuel Puig's life she explores the relationship between the acclaimed author and his father from which I am able here to make the connections between the fictional voice of Ramírez and Baldomero Puig.

(Ramírez) explains the desperate craving for a sweet experience, intensified during the holiday season when family and friends feast together. Ramírez suggests to Larry that, perhaps, for Christmas, he could indulge his sweet tooth. But no one offers Ramírez the opportunity; in fact, not once during his exile in the United States does he consume sweets. The little food he does consume expresses both physical and psychological malnourishment, and the inaccessibility to sweets, literal and metaphorical, distances him even further from the society that controls its distribution. According to Grinberg, "In regression to more primitive levels of mental functioning, emotions tend to be expressed in relation to primal things such as food. Food takes on special relevance because it symbolizes the earliest structured link with the mother or the mother's breast" (79).

Away from the homeland Ramírez searches for a 'Mother' substitute, temporarily filled by Nurse Virgo who orally feeds him words from the texts she reads aloud, but once Larry enters the equation her virginal status becomes irreparably tainted, for she no longer is his alone. With respect to his own conscious and unconscious sexuality, Ramírez, emotionally and physically, behaves like an impotent man.[29] Larry finds Ramírez's persistence for erotic details about his past voyeuristic, but Ramírez insists that he is merely searching for an emotional understanding to "lo que sucede en lo interior de

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[29] In his dream about Edith Cavell she dies because of Ramírez's impotence (lack of power and voice) in warning her of potential danger. Larry in this dream represents the villainous German who rapes and executes her. In another 'conscious' scene in which Larry and Ramírez role-play, Ramírez refuses to make any sexual advances toward his wife, again demonstrating his sexual impotence.

la gente" (89).[30] Living in a society that thwarts his possibility for fulfillment of the instincts only augments Ramírez's exilic status. He remains a cipher of any imagined community, for neither through shelter, food, nor women does the adopted society allow him to enter its hearth.

Ramírez's solution to his emotional emaciation rests in absorbing the live (life) stories of his interlocutor, who describes Ramírez as a 'vampire:' "Se alimenta de la vida de los demás" (89). Despite the inclination of the reader to interpret Ramírez's case as that of a victim of socio-political circumstance, his treatment of Larry questions society's preconceived notions about the exilic experience, for here the exile is predatory. Of course, Larry is not innocent: absorption of the other's identity is initiated through the linguistic transaction and translation of the other's language into his own which, as it has been discussed earlier, involves both parties. In analyzing the Brazilian works of Haroldo de Campos, Pires Vieira initiates her article with two epigraphs from his works, one of which can easily be applied to Maldición: "Translations as transfusion of blood. Ironically, we could talk of vampirization, thinking now of the translator's nourishment" (195).[31] Both, Ramírez and Larry, serve as translators, as vampires of the other's life blood, a figurative blood that with exchange dissolves identity borders between the two,

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[30] Larry's intimate stories even affect Ramírez's physiological response to food. After listening to Larry's sexual adventures with his to-be-wife at the beginning of their courtship before they were married Ramírez becomes quite hungry, but upon discovering later on that Larry's wife cheats on him while Larry eavesdrops from the next room, Ramírez loses his appetite completely.

[31] If we recall Puig's comment about creating a language for Larry, he explains it as "desangrado," literally without much blood.

each becoming more like the other, as in Ramírez's dream about two Russian males who mimic each other's speech, not unlike, at times the indistinguishability between Puig's voices.

The role playing conversations between Ramírez and Larry, primarily serve the purpose of teaching the former the emotional language spoken among the members of a nuclear family-between a parent and child, and a husband and wife. Curiously, Ramírez's primary concern, in exile, is that of making his imaginary family happy by bestowing upon them material gifts. In Argentina, by contrast, he ignored the emotional needs of his real family. In fact, when he learns from Larry that his family died in a bomb that was meant for him, he displays a callous disinterest, dismissing the information as fictional. The economic factor upon which Ramírez bases his relationship with Larry is one that replicates his familial and sole role of monetary provider in Argentina. Although Ramírez hires Larry for his services he still feels responsible for him economically. He provides Larry with money for meals, both consciously and unconsciously, (in his dreams), even after Ramírez had threatened to fire Larry. Ramírez would have liked their relationship to have been one transcending the financial contract and in their last conversation, Ramírez asks Larry if he appreciates his friendship. Larry responds that he only worked for Ramírez because he needed the money: "Pero usted es insoportable, nunca se sabe con que tontería va a salir. De pronto se vuelve contra uno, y no se comprende por qué" (261). With Larry's answer Ramírez's old self reawakens: "¡He vuelto a sentir este viejo placer! Bajeza, venganza, resentimiento, para mí eran palabras vacías, pero ya no, ahora las experimento, y las comprendo muy bien" (262). Given the

opportunity within exile to nurture a personal relationship with another and thus explore his inner self, Ramírez is only able to fictionalize it and continue within the comfort zone of an economical pattern initiated in Argentina, that here fails again. Immediately following their last conversation, he is taken to a mental asylum and dies shortly thereafter.

As seen earlier Ramírez criticizes psychoanalysis for the lack of personal attention given to individual patients. Just as psychoanalysis fails to deal with homosexuality in Kiss of the Spider Woman, in Maldición it fails to deal with the exilic experience.

Larry's memories of his childhood and adolescence are imbued with Freudian theory. He too has been treated by psychiatrists, though, one may wonder to what extent his memories have been impressed and (re)formulated by analysis.

Puig's Maldición is a drama in which Freudian theory becomes a concept of inquiry and suspicion; the Oedipal equation is rewritten into an inverse translation, homicide by the father of the son replaces the traditional unconscious act of parricide. In Ramírez's last dream Larry dies by the hands of a father who had threatened to wring Larry's neck, sounding much like Puig's own father who when Puig as a young boy dressed up in women's clothing would "either slap him or, worse, threaten to beat him to a pulp: [Baldo would say] 'I don't hit, but if I ever have to, I'll kill you'" (Levine 42). The prison notes describe a man haunted with jealousy toward his son and wife, who believed that with him imprisoned, "estarán en paz, tranquilos, tienen toda la casa para ellos" (258). Similarly, Baldomero's separation from Malé led him to say that 'los novios' (Manuel and mother) could finally be together without him. The son's Freudian

instinctual desire to rid the familial triad of the father has been granted in both fictional and factual scenario. But, within Maldición the initial self annihilation of the father (Ramírez's) as depicted in the dream about his own death, which leads to his own hospitalization, is later replaced by another of Ramírez's dreams with the death of the son, (occuring after the falling out between Ramírez and Larry in their last conversation), and leading to his admittance into a mental asylum where shortly thereafter he dies. It happens when Larry puts his fate in the hands of his own father as suggested by Ramírez in the dream, a mistake that results in Larry's death. If, in Traición, Puig "betrays" his father, in Maldición, the father is cursed from ever being anything but a perfidious traitor to the son.

Ramírez's dreams involve those of an amorous triad (the one involving a nurse killed by Larry and this one above), those of paternal instincts or lack thereof (where in the one above he fails as a father, and an earlier dream in which friendly dogs save his life from Mafia figures and as Ramírez prepares to then risk his own life by giving them his oxygen mask they jump out of the window), and those of reciprocal action between a younger and older man (each man saves the other in the wilderness, in a cave and in a later dream in Russia). From these dreams as well as the role playing between Ramírez and Larry, it becomes clear that Ramírez is deeply troubled with his role as father and lover, perhaps as a consequence of his obsession with political activism (in the homeland) about which in exile he denies any interest (present or past).

Psychoanalysis as a means to unraveling the mysteries of human nature is a double-edged sword in Maldición. It can serve to open venues of the inner recondite self,

but Puig seems to imply that it can also disrupt one's inner voice and identity with its potent vocabulary. Ramírez repeatedly affirms that his identity will be revealed to him by the women with whom he's most intimate, and, or from the notes that he cannot place. Depending on such amorphous bodies, simply accentuates that which unconsciously haunts Ramírez most and of that which he himself is guilty--abandonment--both sexual (of his wife, and as the father figure to his son) and textual (of his own prison notes). Fictionalization becomes a means to and end: to construct or deconstruct the self and the 'other.' Therefore, when we read Larry's job application at the end of the novel we question his identity again. No longer embellishing his life with fictional tales to appease Ramírez's psychological imbalances, Larry's construction of self via written discourse is not the same as the one from the dialogue. He projects an image of mental instability which had been imperceptible within the oral domain between the two voices. In the job application he writes on the back of the form when he should not, he requests only the most lucrative position as researcher, and notes that he does not take drugs or stimulants. The dual discourse at hand (oral or written) echos the existence of a dual Larry, and the one pertaining to the written discourse had not been revealed to the reader beforehand. This other Larry, who seems to contradict the Larry we have familiarized ourselves within the oral discourse shared with Ramírez, could be Puig's way of reminding us that the same is true of Ramírez. We are bound by discourses to translate and yet these may be inaccurate representations of that which we wish to comprehend.

**Conclusions**

From the onset of the novel, based on the title, the reader must ask herself why

she is cursed for having read these pages. The intriguing title took Puig some time to create but in the company of Jaime Manrique he fashioned it, not to the latter's favor, who commented that he would never read a book with that title: "He [Puig] was so amused that he decided this was a good omen" (44). Its omen to the reader, both Larry and us, rings clearly. Larry certainly is cursed from ever translating its contents, and we are cursed from ever reading the translation.

In addition, Ramírez's last will and testament testifies to two different and conflicting accounts presented in both oral and written format. Ramírez's relationship to oral discourse is one in which fantasy and imagination play an integral part, hence the role-playing with Larry, and the addendums of information concerning events or situations that never came to pass in reality. When provided with the oral equivalent to its written counterpart, Ramírez has a tendency to refute the oral information in some manner. He never accepts anything read to him from his prison notes, and when he could have read them himself he becomes suddenly blind and unable to do so. Even though Ramírez wishes for the return of his notes in order to (re)discover himself, he disregards the encoded French novels as being the ones he refers to. But, when he does read, he never questions the written word.

It would seem, then, that the rules here provided would explain all with respect to these two discourses. One would be more willing to accept Ramírez's final wishes for the allotment of his prison notes to be those as explained in written format, the form he,

himself, accepts in his own experiences.[32] But, in fact, problems arise. In his last will and testament he bequeaths four books to his confident, Larry, when in fact only three throughout the narrative have been alluded to. No one, though, in the missives exchanged corrects this error, or what might seem to be an error to the readers of Maldición. In addition, we learn that a certain nurse, Anne Lewis, "la única persona con quien [Ramírez] había congeniado en el Hogar 'Village,'"(275) allegedly spoke with him during his final moments in New York. In their conversation she avers that Ramírez complained about Larry's behavior toward him. Shortly thereafter, in California, just before he dies, he asks (orally) to donate his possessions to the hospital library. Were it not for this female voice, all concerned with the matter were willing to abide by the written testament, but Anne Lewis, possibly Virgo, has the last word. In fact, she determines Larry's fate. However, neither oral nor written discourse provides sufficient clues for the readers of Maldición to know Ramírez's true intentions.

The exile is in between discourses and where the truth lies is beyond our ability as readers to translate. In essence, the exile who lives between and betwixt languages, cultures and discourses can not be defined or generalized into categorical constructions that exclude the individual. Contrary to our expectations of a victimized exile living deracinated from his home, Puig challenges us by offering an exile of predatory nature without a memory. Manuel Puig defies the exilic stereotype and questions Freudian theory in the process. Can we be defined by what we speak? Maldición's answer seems

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[32] Like Larry, the man from written discourse differs from the one from oral discourse.

to be that language confines just as much the foreigner as the native. We are cursed with or without it. We are cursed for attempting to translate the untranslatable elusive inner self that ultimately escapes language itself. And yet while the mysteries of the individual remain, Puig reminds us that the 'other' really is not all that different from the self.

## Chapter Two

### In Between Borders: Daniel Moyano's Libro de navíos y borrascas

The second space of exile to be studied here involves that developed in Daniel Moyano's Libro de navíos y borrascas, in between one's homeland and the adopted land, aboard an Italian vessel named the Cristóforo Colombo, where not only the narrator, but 700 other "indeseables" (exiles) make their way to the Old World after being rejected by the New.

The author, Daniel Moyano, was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1930, but only lived there a short time. He moved with his family to the provinces as a child and later settled in La Rioja, which became his permanent home until he was forced into exile with the military coup. Like Héctor Tizón,[1] he has been classified as a 'regional' writer, but upon leaving Argentina in 1976 and collaborating with European publishing houses, his compatriots suddenly elevated his status to that of an 'Argentine' writer.[2] Even after winning several awards, including the internationally recognized Sudamericana Primera Plana award for El oscuro, in 1967, and the Premio Juan Rulfo in 1985, Moyano still felt that he shared a common plight with authors from the provinces: "sin acceso a las editoriales" (Gnutzmann 114).

Exile for Moyano, as well as for other authors studied in this dissertation, is a

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[1] See Chapter Five.

[2] In an interview Moyano notes this observation made by David Lagmanovich and responds to it: "Fíjate, nos han dado el derecho de ser argentinos. Esa es la situación" (Quimera 34).

condition first experienced within the homeland. Besides sharing the marginalization that most, if not all "provincial" writers experienced, Moyano, in addition, was raised "en el exilio de mi abuelo materno, que era italiano" (Quimera 31). Like other Argentines (he defines his country as: "un país de exiliados europeos" given the large number of immigrants who arrived at the turn of the last century), Moyano is exposed to the stories of exile that brought his own ancestors from Europe to the Southern Cone, but unlike most, he would travel the inverse voyage of exile to the Old World. At a young age, Moyano had already become familiar with being uprooted. The death of his mother and the abandonment of his father while Moyano was still young, led to years of being shuffled among relatives, until the rescue of his grandparents who provided him with a permanent home in Córdoba. These years of insecure domain put Moyano in touch with the experience of inner exile, which in an interview he quickly differentiates from that of 'outer' exile: "No es un exilio como el que nos tocó vivir al venirnos a España, no, no, hablo de esos exilios que tienen todos los seres humanos y que consisten en ir dejando cosas. Yo he vivido cambiando de querencia toda mi vida y no me arrepiento, pues me ha permitido mirar el mundo de otra manera" (Quimera 31).

This ability to look at the world anew, especially at the land of dictatorship left behind, is expressed by Moyano through the literature he wrote in exile. The forced deracination from Argentina[3] to Spain however, affected his writing ability for a number of years: "Me había olvidado de escribir. Cuatro años después recuperé la capacidad para

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[3] On the day of the military coup, Moyano was incarcerated for 12 days with other suspect 'subversives.' Upon his release, he and his family exiled themselves to Spain.

expresarme, hasta ese momento sentí que seguía en la cárcel" (Quimera 33). From exile his first attempt at writing was to recreate the story of El vuelo del tigre he had left buried in his Rioja backyard just after the military took power. With its completion and publication in 1981, he began another narrative endeavor that would directly addresses the experience of exile that he personally underwent: "La salvación fue encontrar el tono para entrar de lleno en el Libro de navíos y borrascas, ahí pude comenzar a liberarme de todo lo que nos sucedió." (Quimera 34).

Writing as a means of liberation or catharsis from the past, seen also in Tizón's novel, serves both the author and the narrator of Libro de navios y borrascas- published in 1983. It should not be surprising therefore, that the author and his character share a number of characteristics: both are musicians, both are coerced into exile, both leave Argentina by boat to settle in Spain, and both recur to the written word, and fiction in particular, in an attempt to explain the unexplainable reality of violence and death occurring in Argentina under the dictatorship.

Tizón in the prologue written in 2000 of the latest edition of La casa y el viento, wrote of his inability to move forward with his life while in exile until he completed said novel: "Tampoco yo lograba ser otro porque me había llevado la casa a cuestas. Quitármela de encima me costó esta novela" (13). Moyano's salvation, as seen above, also depended on the cathartic act of writing. But, while Tizón's narrator professes to write in order to facilitate memory recall of the homeland once far away from it, Moyano's narrator writes in the attempt that his story may enter the realm of "comprensión" (perhaps just as much for himself as for his readers), and so that in the

process of narrating his story, he might also begin to forget about these painful events of his past.[4] Liberation for Moyano's narrator however, can only be achieved by weaving into one whole both 'reality' and 'fiction;' so that an incomprehensible reality (such as exile, torture and the desaparecidos) can be digested within a fictional framework.

Rolando, the narrator of the 15 chaptered novel, records his experiences aboard the ship, not as he had originally intended to do so- in a travel diary- but rather later on, as an *a posteriori* creation from the adopted homeland based on memory (though he never alludes to the act of remembering or even forgetting particular details or events during his journey aboard the vessel).

Though Rolando does make references, albeit brief, to his life before being arrested at his home, the approximate nine months of incarceration afterward, and his current life in Spain, the majority of the novel concentrates on the voyage from Buenos Aires to Barcelona, and the perceptions of and reactions to exile by himself and others in the same situation as his own. Unlike Tizón's narrator who had approximately a month to assimilate and experience the consequences of becoming an exile, Rolando's exilic status happens within minutes. He had serendipitously bypassed the line for receiving official documents permitting certain individuals to board the boat to Europe and just as he had placed one foot on the stair leading to the vessel, an officer started to pull him back but the man in front of Rolando, El Gordo, held onto his other arm and by mere

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[4] The narrator writes, "Y tomando prestado el clima de los viejos relatos sobre fantasmas mi burda historia real puede ganar en fantasía y entrar decentemente en el mundo de la comprensión, contándola como al descuido y un poco para olvidarme de ella" (14).

might was able to free him from the grasp of the other. In returning to those 14 days traveling across the Atlantic that mark the initiation of his separation from the motherland, Rolando lets us peer into the first days of exile beyond the borders of home. Moyano's narrator, though he wishes to share his exilic experience with others, in his attempt to do so adeptly demonstrates the difficulty in not only verbalizing the pain of deracination but finding the appropriate time-frame from which to begin and end his account.[5] Should the exile's story begin at the point of departure from the homeland, arrival to the adopted land, or prior to the events that led to one's deracination?[6] In reality, as we will see in this dissertation, the decision from which to begin the narrative of the exile experience must be made by all authors. Moyano differs from others in that while choosing to develop the exile experience in the physical space in between two borders, he still brings to the forefront these vital questions that must be asked and answered by anyone wishing to write about exile. Rolando struggles with this predicament and though he chooses to write about his experience aboard a sea ship, he had meant only to write a brief chapter about it, while the rest would then be dedicated to his experience in the adopted land. Much of the first and final chapters express his dissatisfaction with this decision concerning the physical space chosen for development

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[5] The last chapter is even entitled, '¿Fin?'

[6] One man tells Rolando before boarding the ship that, "el suelo que pisamos ya no es tierra argentina" because Buenos Aires was once made of water. The English, "durante siglos fueron agrandando la ciudad por un lado y vaciando el país por otro" (35). Rolando asks himself then rhetorically, "Así que antes de salir ya estábamos en el exilio?" (35) The question of nationality becomes an issue that provokes anxiety in the characters here as will be examined in Chapter Three.

about the exile experience: "sucede que los comienzos, como los finales, siempre me parecieron arbitrarios. Actúan como violacionies. Dejan en el olvido acaso las posibilidades más hermosas. ¿Dónde comienza un barco, o una naranja, o una mujer desnuda" (15)? In compensation, Rolando plans on writing a sequel, "que se desarrolla en Madrid enteramente" (260), but in order for this to be carried out he calculates that he would need a one year leave of absence from the factory in which he works as a "peoncito lijando todo el dia" (260): a highly improbable event. Both narrator and author coincide in their narrative desires. In a 1987 interview with Gnutzmann, Moyano had informed her that, "Actualmente estoy preparando otra novela, el Libro de caminos y de reinos, que será la segunda parte de Libro de navíos" (122). Despite the intentions on behalf of narrator and author alike, no second part is ever produced.[7] While in Argentina, Moyano was a correspondent for the national newspaper Clarin, and taught music at a conservatory that he and others founded in La Rioja, but in Madrid he had little time to write working for a multinational petrochemical company (Encuentro 174).

Finding a comfortable manner in which to tell his story, proves rather difficult for Rolando. Often he becomes side tracked with tangential topics, he takes breaks ('un descansito' from the main theme), in fact, certain details are omitted about his own life, as well as the disappearance of two fellow passengers' sons (Contardi's and El Gordo's). He provides two brief (one paragraph and one page respectively) alternative stories that

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[7] Moyano's last novel, published two years before his death, was Tres golpes de timbal. And even a posthumous novel, Un silencio que corchea, does not continue Libro de navíos either. It is unclear as to whether or not he began writing the sequel, but as of yet, there has been no indication that he did.

he would have preferred to have written about, and he tries to end his own about exile numerous times, only to continue on further with the narrative. Just as Tizón's protagonist lengthens his departure from the homeland, Rolando lengthens his story of travel to the new land because, "es difícil llegar" (391). In addition, the novel contains four chapters (more than a quarter of the novel) dedicated to the fictional creations of the characters themselves- a play, a story for Contardi to help him deal with the disappearance of his son, and an allegorical tale without the influence of a narrator about a ship leaving its familiar bay.

The structure of Moyano's Libro de navíos, with its incorporation of diverse genres dispersed throughout the chapters, reflects the liminal aspect of the exilic experience, that functions in between categories. Libro de navíos is a hybrid creation both structurally and dialectically-combining two artistic expressions, music and language, to describe the world, and the exile experience in a particularly unique manner. On the open sea, Rolando belongs to no land, he exists in between two geographical spaces and fiction facilitates his ability to cope with the past left behind and the unknown future that awaits him in Europe.

**Musical Language**

As has been discussed in the first chapter, the question of identity becomes a crucial one for the exile who has left his/her home indefinitely. Rolando realizes that a part of his identity as a musician remains in the homeland with his violin, which was left hanging in the garden when he was arrested. His separation from it, "dividió mi tiempo de vivir en un antes y un después" (73). The forced removal from his home meant death

to a previous type of existence, including literally that of his violin, which hanging in the garden would soon begin to rot.

Rolando's violin, otherwise known as 'Gryga,' (the maker of the instrument), made its way from Hungary to South America via an Hungarian exile, who when asked by others about his trip across the Atlantic was incapable of even naming the boat he traveled on, a phenomenon also experienced by Rolando's Spanish grandfather who emigrated to Argentina. Whenever Rolando's grandfather referred to the vessel that took him away from home, he simply called it, "el Cachorro" (the thing). Worse yet for the Hungarian who, " ... no podía nombrarlo, no tenía la palabra y era como si no existiese. Daba la sensación de andar como un barco adentro. Algunas veces intentó sacárselo" (54). As much as the Hungarian tried, his words would always become tangled, and in a last desperate attempt to express himself he would then pick up his violin and play. Where the Hungarian failed with words and compensated with music, the narrator unable to play music compensates with words, though at the beginning of the novel, he wonders if he will be able to tell his story, "No sé si me va a salir. Lo mío es la música, antes que las palabras" (15). Margaret Langer in a chapter from Philosophy in a New Key clarifies the artistic difference between music and language: "The real power of music lies in the fact that it can be 'true' to the life of feeling in a way that language cannot; for its significant forms have that ambivalence of content which words cannot have" (243). Rolando without his violin feels like the Hungarian musician who spoke broken Spanish; he even emulates the Hungarian's speech in order to express the rupture within himself after having lost his primary tool of expression: "Yo también llora. . . cada vez más lejos

de violino que quedaba colgado bajo el parra. Violino siempre antes conmigo y ahora está sinmigo. Avispos negros zumbando dentro de violino Mío, otoño llueve y caen hojas y violinos" (61). But, without his Gryga, Rolando discovers something new: though he lacks the ability to express himself musically through an instrument, he can express himself musically through language.

In 1987 Moyano explained the musical nature of his novel to Gnutzmann: "considero que toda mi novela está estructurada musicalmente, no en el sentido del lenguaje, sino en el sentido de la estructura, con sus temas y sus subtemas" (119). Indeed, the novel has been written like a musical composition. Although it may be impossible to designate the distribution of chapters according to one particular musical form, it does seem to pattern a concerto. The chapters are naturally divided into three separate categories (or movements of a concerto) according to time or theme: 1-4=the first day of travel aboard the Cristóforo; 5-9=the introduction to the first fictional representation within the novel (a play, proceeded by an allegorical story); 10-15= just as Rolando begins to write in his travel diary in Chapter Ten, a female passenger's torture scars, (Sandra's), are revealed as the ship crosses the equator. After leaving the Southern Hemisphere behind this last section directly tackles the issue of torture and disappearance that Rolando had wanted to avoid, but cannot upon witnessing Sandra's accusatory body against the dictatorship. Chapter Eleven, entitled Cadenza, which musically is a solo passage toward the close of a concerto (or here toward the close of the novel) actually represents the narrator's "solo" attempt to articulate in his own words that which happened to Sandra and his own reactions to it.

Above all else, Moyano "buscaba que sonara" (119) his novel of exile, something that also preoccupies Rolando. The sounds of words are important to him, and he spends quite a bit of time analyzing their musicality or lack thereof. With respect to the boat he travels on, the Cristóforo Colombo, he proclaims to change its name to Zampanó because, "cada vez que digo 'Cristóforo Colombo' me sigue sonando, aunque no lo diga, el resto del verso de Darío... y ... me sigue durando el retintín" (207). The noun 'mar' sounds more like a verb to him, and its monosyllabic structure confounds him given the profundity (literal and symbolic) of its meaning. The title of a story that he and others create for Contardi, also changes a number of times due to the dissatisfaction with its sonority. One possibility for the title was 'Faro,' but the puppeteer notes: "En cambio farol, fijese usted, a pesar de su aparente humilidad en cuanto objeto, suena mucho mejor como palabra, tiene más alcance, esa ele final le da vida a toda la palabra, la prolonga, le da posibilidades de hacer durar un poco más la o, y de quedar vibrando en la ele todavía, y todo el tiempo que uno quiera, como una gran arcada de violin" (308). The final decision for the title of said story does not end here, other modifications are made with a last suggestion in Chapter Twelve, which is all but a dying sound: 'Fsss,' only to return in Chapter Thirteen to "el farol," though the final title is never revealed. Onomatopoeias like this, appear throughout the text, (plaf, glu, plof, lof), accentuating the novel's oral dimension, which is also achieved at the beginning of the novel via the fictional framework of a Nordic seaman through whom Rolando orally tells his story,[8] and that we

[8] Moyano's own method for writing included paying heed to the oral dimension of words: "A mí me gusta mucho contar mis cuentos antes de escribirlos y voy contando diversas versiones, porque las palabras muchas veces me llevan a dar otra versión..."

readers, in a sense, listen to rather than read.

The story for Contardi is actually inspired by two Creole waltzes, produced in the 1920's and sung until the 1940's.[9] Rolando complains to the others about following the exact plot from the lyrics in creating their fictional rendition about the disappeared: "A mí las palabras me gustan más por su sonido que por su significado y no me tiembla el pulso para usarlas, aunque sepa que me estoy desviando de los contenidos" (350). Rolando's decision to part from the waltz in order to "trabajar con entera libertad," (351) with words, testifies to a transformation within Rolando who now toward the end of the voyage appears to accept language as a means of communication that he is perfectly capable of molding for his own needs and desires, even if he may have initially questioned his ability to express himself without his Gryga. Upon approaching Barcelona, Rolando recognizes that he has changed, and in one way this relates to his relationship with language: "De allá salió un Rolando contando Buenos Aires y es otro el que llega contando Barcelona" (399). Indeed there is even a progression in his narrative from a chronological description of events and the avoiding of reality via imaginative constructs to the confronting of specific issues that led to the exile and death of so many Southern Coners via other imaginative productions of language (to be seen below).

But, in an original manner, Rolando does not give up music altogether. What he does is create a language that incorporates music, both with respect to its sonority, its structure, and by simply using musical notation when he feels that words are insufficient.

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(Gnutzmann 115)

[9] See Sara Bonnardel's excellent article for more information about these waltzes.

For example, the first time he uses musical notation in the novel is to make a connection between his grandfather's boat and the Cristóforo, using an E sharp and an F natural. Of course, both make reference to the same note, though their notation differs. That is, both Rolando and his grandfather's experiences of exile are comparable though their journeys initiate from different spaces and times.

The lyrics of a number of songs also make their appearance in Libro de navíos, which has been well examined by Sara Bonnardel. Fragments of the lyrics of popular songs, including tangos, vidalas, bagualas, sung by artists such as Carlos Gardel, Agustín Magaldi, Atahualpa Yupanqui, and the Northwestern cultures of Argentina, reflect Rolando's musical inclinations. By incorporating within the novel varieties of music representative of a multicultural Argentina, Rolando provides evidence of the diversity of his country that the dictatorship from the start had attempted to suppress, formulating in its place an imagined homogeneic culture that ideologically supported the military and conformed to its policies. In other words, the polyphonic effect of music, as created by Moyano, absolutely defies the artificially created monophonic structure of dictatorship. Moreover, the potpourri of genres that compose the novel function in the same manner as the musical representations. Hence, music and language work hand in hand.

Music also inspires Rolando to imagine a unique manner in which an individual subjected to an interrogation, might respond. He rationalizes that one merely needs to find the right tone from which to address the interrogator, choosing carefully from three conditions: "intensidad, altura y timbre" (66). If the person being interrogated could somehow answer the interrogator's questions using principles based on music, Rolando

believes that he/she just might survive. Better yet, he imagines, one would have an even stronger chance of survival if one's name were forgettable and unpronounceable to the interrogator, a feat completed through music, and described by Rolando through musical notation, like a simple chord (D,F,A).

Another strategy for Rolando in beating the interrogator at his own game involves recognizing the surreal quality of the interrogations and the interrogator himself: one must "tratar de ponerse a su altura [the interrogator's] pensando que uno también es irreal" (66) That is, fiction can overcome fiction, and this is precisely how Rolando initiates his own personal story in Chapter One. He asks the reader to allow him to occupy the place of a traveler from the 'mares del Sur' who has just entered the home of a lighthouse keeper in Northern Europe after a long voyage in order to tell his own 'irreal' story. The "irrealidad" of his own exile, seems to require that it be told through some sort of "irreal" or fantastical setting. Verbalization of the exile experience is made possible by masking his own identity behind that of a fictitious character of his own imagining. However, Rolando's intentions only last a few pages. Shortly thereafter, in the same chapter, he reminds the reader that he is neither European nor the character he created, "simplemente hemos pedido prestada esa casa donde suelen suceder los cuentos de aparecidos para contar una historia relacionada con el Cono Sur, de infelice memoria" (50). The fictitious north (a cardinal point symbolic of death) nevertheless provided not only a propitious setting for stories about the unbelievable, about 'aparecidos' (ghosts), and their opposites, the 'desparecidos,' who never reappear. The character of the lightkeeper will be returned to when the exiles decide to write a story for Contardi. The lightkeeper whose vocation is

"hacer girar luces sobre mares y desgracias" (20) in order to help stranded boats find their way in tempests, cannot prevent shipwrecks or drownings. In fact, on the walls of his home oval pictures hang of sailors who disappeared in the sea and the word 'ovalos' is repeated numerous times by Rolando: to describe the faces of those who accompany him in the truck headed to the ports in Buenos Aires, and with respect to the handwriting of his grandfather in letters he wrote to his family who remained in Spain. Rolando imagines that he too will write to his family in the inverse direction of his grand-father, but unlike him his orthography shall consist not only of oval letters but of oval notes, which he immediately forms and incorporates in the narrative after this last observation. From the boat the faces on shore become oval in shape as well, disappearing in space and time, like musical notes that have been played.

**The Mother ship**

From mother land to mother ship, Rolando's exilic experience aboard the Cristóforo Colombo differs from that encountered by exiles living in the adopted lands. For any exile, the separation from the homeland literally begins aboard some form of transportation, like the Cristóforo Colombo in Libro de navíos. The Cristóforo symbolically represents the unanchored state of the exile who belongs nowhere. Rolando though, attaches his own symbolic value to the vessel that takes him to a foreign land. First, he compares his leaving the homeland to the act of being weaned from his aunt, Clara; as Rolando climbs the stairs to the boat, he imagines her assuring him that now that he has been weaned, "ya estás en condiciones de echarte a andar por esos mundos" (74). Hence, exile is compared to the physical separation from mother, who can no

longer provide of her own sustenance for her child's survival. Now the exile must depend entirely on him/herself. One of Rolando's first experiences aboard the ship verifies his exilic state. He becomes easily lost, in part contributed by the vessel's symmetrical form, and when Rolando finally asks for directions from one of the crew members who answers his question in a language unknown to him, Rolando feels "inmigrante hasta la médula" (73).

The experience of exile aboard the Cristóforo, becomes somewhat ameliorated once the boat exits the Río de la Plata and follows the coast of Brazil, leaving behind the Southern Cone. At this juncture, Rolando decides to take some form of control concerning his surroundings. He renames the vessel to something "más acorde con nuestros deseos y esperanzas" (208), eventually deciding on the name 'Zampanó' from Fellini's "La Strada," which expresses the itinerant state of exile, much like the protagonist of the movie. Thereafter, for the first time Rolando refers to the vessel as "nuestra segunda madre, que nos desteterá" (208), though he alluded to this possibility earlier when he climbed the stairs connecting the continent to the boat, referring to them as the "escalera umbilical." Therefore, weaning occurs twice. But, more significant still is the second symbolic entrance into the womb after having been weaned before boarding. In this manner, the exiles live in a liminal state, existing in between the living and the dead (in the womb). Arriving to the Old World requires another birth and another process of weaning. Though this time the ejection of the passengers is anything but natural, just as exile is coerced, the symbolic second birth can only succeed with forceps (210).

**Questionable Identities**

The mother ship, as Rolando calls it, holds 700 people traveling from Argentina, Uruguay and Chile (the Southern Cone), all of whom share a common political history of dictatorship, and who leave their countries in exile to the Old World. Each of their stories "eran iguales en sus estructuras" (70), which inclines Rolando to write that, "Éramos setecientas fotocopias de una misma historia, donde no había azar ni diversidad" (70). Upon arrival to Barcelona, one passenger, Bidoglio, compares their lot to that of a boat with Turks he once watched disembarking in Buenos Aires: "... todos igualitos," (411), just as they will now be to the Spaniards: "Parecemos todos turcos" (411).

For the Southern Coners boats are linked to their own concept of identity, for when asked by the helmsman of the Cristóforo about their origins, one passenger speaking for all simply states, "Descendemos de un barco como éste" (198). Many of their ancestors like the XV Century explorer after whom the vessel is named, in searching for more than the Old World had to offer journeyed west from Europe to the Americas. Now, they return east to Europe feeling as if they have failed their European ancestors. Not only do the Southern Coners travel the inverse route of Christopher Columbus' five hundred years later, but in Rolando's case he also travels the inverse journey of his own Spanish grandfather. The symmetry present here with respect to the movement in space and time is also experienced by Rolando with respect to his own body where the ocean sustains him aboard the boat, "mantener unos huesos simétricos que sentía por mitades, me pertenecía a medias, la otra mitad me seguía a duras penas, como si fuera mi sombra, callada y achatadita" (101). Rolando perceives himself physically symmetrical but

psychologically separate: one aboard the ship and the other lagging behind. Curiously, the captain discusses with Rolando experiments in which it has been proven that one electron can pass through two holes simultaneously, psychologically speaking Rolando too is both aboard the Cristóforo and somewhere else in another fantastical world (to be seen below).

The land that Columbus described with superlative adjectives and likened to the paradise of Eden, expels some of its unwanted members back to where their ancestors came from. Where Columbus saw utopias, Rolando experienced incarceration, witnessed disappearances, tortures and assassinations. In Christopher Columbus' Diaries he wrote about a land of marvel, and as critics have noted, one of the most frequent words repeated by Columbus to describe the Americas is the word, "maravilla" (something wonderful). Moyano dedicates an entire chapter to the meaning of the word and the interpretation of it by the helmsman and that of a few exiles conversing with him in Chapter Seven. According to the European helmsman what he understood to be a maravilla, "tenía que existir forzosamente. . ." (195). Unable to precisely explain what it consists of he assures his listeners that "no se trata de una fantasía." The Southern Cone exiles remain incredulous, for them 'maravillas' have ceased to exist except those of the imagination. But before scepticism prevails, Rolando observes that upon the suggestion by the helmsman that those who lack a land of origin might have come from the island of the forgotten Atlantis, "vi que cada uno tenía en los ojos un pequeño brillo atlante" (199). The helmsman momentarily entrances them with his argument: "Resistirse por olvido o por lógica a ser atlantes, sobre todo en circunstancias tan especiales como este nuevo

exilio, es negarse una posibilidad, hacer desaparecer un reino, arrancar del libro una página importante de la historia, o sea de la vida. Hay que ir preparando los ojos para cuando aparezcan las verdaderas maravillas" (199). While the Southern Coners would like to fall into the spell of "maravillas" and "encantos," their experiences, especially that of exile itself, cause them to reject the existence of these other-worldly imaginings. The interior monologue Rolando engages in with his defunct grandfather about the boat the latter traveled on, brings to light his own desire for the marvelous to exist: "Por razones de simetría quiero que sea un barco de maravilla, para que éste también lo sea, y ahora me salís con que era un cacharro" (215), but as much as he wants the marvelous to exist, he only receives affirmations that it does not. The Italian vessel, "no transporta inocentes inmigrantes sino setecientos indeseables, indignos del Cono Sur" (215).

One person who does somehow experience the 'marvelous' despite exile and even the fact that his son has disappeared is the painter Contardi. Upon arriving to Barcelona the children aboard the Cristóforo surprise him with "una caja de zapatos llena de basuritas para sus cuadros" (412). Full of cork, yarn, bottle caps, marbles and other items, Contardi declares, "Es una verdadera maravilla" (412). With these items he plans on creating a work of art depicting the province of La Rioja in Argentina. And Sandra, an Uruguayan woman who was raped and tortured while incarcerated, decides that she will begin to believe in God, not the God of war and rape, but one that she imagines as a reformist, half sacred and half profane. The affirmation that she will believe in a God, provokes her to ask Rolando, "No te parece una maravilla?" (262). In both cases, the marvelous is a manifestation of an inner desire brought to the surface. The helmsman

explains how he thinks 'maravillas' function, "Me ocupo de pensar en un hecho para que pueda suceder. Si no las pensamos, las maravillas se cansan y se van"(202). Contardi and Sandra demonstrate that even from exile, even with the grief of losing one's son or experiencing severe pain, the mind can still create and nourish maravillas. Contary to Gil Amate's conclusion that Moyano's novel lacks, "el más leve vestigio, positivo," (582), Moyano here demonstrates that a positive perspective of the world can exist, despite one's inauspicious circumstances.

It is true, however, that nurturing maravillas is no simple task. Even if Rolando classifies his exilic journey east as "...una tercera o cuarta generación de españolitos bastardeados que regresan fracasados de las Indias," (394), when he empowers himself with language and renames the Cristóforo to Zampanó, the boat mutates (on occasion he even calls the ship a 'barco mutativo') achieving for him the allure of a "barco maravilloso" (216). But once the boat approaches Barcelona, it mutates back, "Ya no era Zampanó, claro; demasiado nombre para un camión donde se cargan trastos" (392). The marvelous disappears with the appearance of a list of vessels due to dock in Barcelona's harbor, where one mistake is made with respect to the cargo aboard the Cristóforo, indicating "Lastre" instead of "Pasaje." Before Spain even meets these people, they have been reduced to mere objects, and the 'marvelous' boat that Rolando had imagined, vanishes.

Rolando believes that had he been traveling the inverse journey on a XVI Century galleon headed to the Americas, he would have written about his "tremenda expectativa" of things to come; perhaps then, his perspective of the marvelous would have been

different. But, even his own name, represents an inversion of American and European experiences. In contrast to the French epic hero from Chanson de Roland, who dies fighting the empire's enemy, Rolando is his own country's enemy, defenseless against the exile forced upon him, and destined (like most exiles) to be forgotten by his compatriots, unlike his revered and beloved French counterpart. In addition, the title of Moyano's novel, Libro de... brings back images of the Medieval *Libro de caballerías*, (knights errantry), where heroes without fear or flaws of character engage in fantastic adventures, saving damsels in distress and victoriously gaining fame and fortune.[10] Again, Rolando's exilic experience represents the anti-heroic adventures of his European counterparts.

Comparisons are also made with respect to the Spanish exiles who left Franco's dictatorship in the 1930's to the Southern Cone exiles of the 1970's and 1980's. They arrive to Spain with the desire to integrate, "seamos europeos," but for all who arrive, the government stamps in their passports, "prohibido trabajar en España" (427), and as one sarcastically comments, their situation is, "Como en el 36 cuando llegaban allá los exiliados españoles y se juntaban veinte mil gallegos en el puerto para esperarlos y había amistad y laburo para todos. Igualito" (419). The Latin American exiles find themselves rejected by both America and Europe.

Only the Spanish cook aboard the Cristóforo, Rafa, (who left Spain as a consequence of Franco's military dictatorship) could possibly fathom the difficulty of deracination and that of transplantation that awaits Rolando. In an act of exilic

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[10] Various critics have noted the comparison of Rolando to his French counterpart as well as the historical significance of the novel's title.

camaraderie, he gives Rolando the address of his niece in Madrid. His generosity of spirit is even more remarkable when one realizes that he does so believing that Rolando is the mentally disturbed passenger, known as Masoca, who desperately asked for a compass upon boarding the ship, worried that they may be headed for another torture camp in Southern Argentina. In any case, Rolando's beacon of hope lives on "Humiliation Street."

**Nieves/Sandra and the Barco Paralelo**

For Rolando, Nieves represents the "caballero's" damsel, but unlike the knight errantry heroes, his lady needs no rescuing. In another reversal of roles, it would be she the one rescuing him from the marginalization of exile. Indeed, he even imagines her as an intermediary who somehow convinces the ultimate Spanish authority (envisioned as a count), to allow him entrance into Spain. Rolando finds himself fantasizing about her, as he did about other women while he was incarcerated, but this time instead of her being "borrosa[ ]y cambiante[ ]... ahora había un puente real que la fijaba: el papelito"(which contains her address) (84). When it comes to expressing his erotic fantasies about her, Rolando decides to cloak his voice through that of an-other, this time the passenger, Bidoglio.[11] The 'erotic' details remain innocent. After all, Bidoglio's voice is still Rolando's, and he can only write about that which he feels comfortable with. In his fantasies though, he imagines them walking about in a Madrid where it begins to snow (a rare phenomenon in the Spanish capital). It reminds the reader of the tango, 'Volver,' (a name Sandra suggested for his parallel boat as well as for his imaginary child), so often

[11] Rolando writes, "preferiría pasarme a otra voz, como si la contase otro" (89).

mentioned in the novel, where one verse alludes to the snow that falls on the singer's face: "Volver, con la frente marchita, las nieves del tiempo platearon mi sien." Through Nieves, he in effect, also returns home.

Coping with a traumatic event, such as exile, manifests itself in various manners. For Rolando, as seen above, Nieves represents a physical link to the other side, and through her he finds comfort. Masoca obsessively searches for scientific evidence, such as a compass, that will provide him with objective information about the vessel's direction. Contardi, in contemplating Goya's painting, 'El quitasol,' becomes one with the work when he decides to, "meterme dentro del quitasol" (290), where he finds peace and tranquility. Other exiles aboard the ship recur to playing music, and later as we shall see, fictionalizations of their experiences also help mitigate the pain of their experience. In Rolando case, once he receives Nieves address, he fabricates in his own mind a 'barco paralelo,' in which he places her beyond the grasp of any interrogator (his experience with interrogations and death lead him to remain cautious even with his fantasies).[12] Through the parallel boat Rolando can imagine that he is an-other: Nieves' beau, father of their child and living a content life in the land that soon enough will label him an outsider. By imagining himself as this 'other' he avoids the fact that he is becoming an undesirable 'other' (a man without a land, without a family, a vocation or security). This parallel boat functions like a treasure box, in it he could "guardar ese montón de cosas que desde hace milenios andan dando vueltas por el mundo sin poder posarse por falta de

[12] "Y si un gendarme muy avisado llegaba a descubrir sus amores secretos, podría matarlo a él pero jamás a Nieves, que era inmortal en el barco paralelo" (95).

palabras, que necesitan ser nombradas o deseadas para salvarse del olvido" (88).[13] However, because it holds so much, its size overtakes that of the Cristóforo, erasing it and Rolando in its path, and provoking the narrator to temporarily lose his mental and physical health. Somehow the parallel boat stays afloat but once he allows the imaginary to invade reality, by telling others that he has become a father (of an imaginary child he and Nieves engender together), even if it was done merely to keep Sandra quiet while listening to a musical concert aboard the ship, he soon realizes, expressed in the third person that, "todo se le iba de las manos, incluso el barquito paralelo" (115). Though he would have preferred to continue writing about his parallel boat and his relationship with Nieves (259), an incident with Sandra, destroys the imaginative coping mechanism to avoid reality by using it instead to confront reality.

The only real flesh and blood woman that Rolando invests time with is Sandra, and especially once he and others learn about the torture she endured while incarcerated. This occurs on one particular evening as the boat approaches the equator when Sandra raised her arm to say goodbye to a Southern Hemisphere constellation and her short sleeve slid back revealing torture scars. With this visual reminder of the cruelties inflicted on the body by the dictatorship, and where the body functions as evidence

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[13] Other attributes of the parallel boat include, "Un barquito que se pareciese más al de mi abuelo para poder vincularme a un tiempo verdadero. Surgido del deseo, no de la mécanica migratoria. A la vez, especie de arcón para ir guardando lo que hallase en el camino que hay que hacer solito después de ser destetado por la tía Clara. Arca para guardar virtualidades, objetos en proceso de génesis que hay que alimentar con el deseo hasta que crezcan, y volcarlos después en la realidad que nos imponen, aunque más no sea para enrarecerla. Ficción contra ficción, algo parecido a acoplar palabras propias a las del interrogador, para descolocarlo y hablar de igual a igual. Un barco para asegurar las existencia precaria de las virtualidades" (88).

against it, Rolando feels unable to continue his imaginary affair with Nieves or pass on the topic of torture to the barco paralelo, so that he would not have to write about it. Indeed, when he looks at his own body in the mirror for the first time after nine months, he finds it unrecognizable. He would have preferred to "seguir tocando con sordina" (260), but with the above incident, he decides to throw the mute away and play his violin without being concerned about its volume. He had tried circumventing the topic of torture until this point, but now he feels obliged to dedicate a chapter to it. Geographically it proves important because Rolando addresses those issues that forced exiles to leave the Southern Hemisphere just as they are crossing the equator and leaving it behind.[14] Rolando begins this chapter entitled Cadenza, with an admonition to his readers, "puede resultar un tanto fuerte. . . no porque vaya a mostrar carnicerías y torturas... a esas cosas que las cuenten los que tengan mejor estómago que yo" (257-58), and for more details he suggests the reader consult Amnesty International. The 'Cadenza,' or cadence, (where "la orquesta se va apagando y me quedo solo ante el público con mi violincito, tengo que lucirme" 259) which doesn't end the novel since another four chapters proceed it, approaches in an obscure manner Rolando's attempt to address that which he "no volveré a tocar el tema en mi vida" (280). He is barely able to transcribe information about Sandra's experience in prison- the fact that Sandra was raped by all the guards for example- and he can only listen to her story with the help of alcohol. Once inebriated Rolando takes advantage of her. His identity suddenly changes

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[14] With the changing of the stars, many exiles hope that the Northern Hemisphere will also bring them better luck.

and he becomes an-other, not one based on fantasy but one who in reality he envisions to be like his own abusive father who mistreated his wife, or like Sandra's torturers to whom she would plead, "por favor" as she does now to him. The man he no longer recognizes in the mirror, is the one who earlier had imagined that if he could only remember what he was thinking the moment before he was arrested he could now continue as before, "todo volverá a ser como antes, al menos por dentro. Será como volver a casa" (147). His behavior with Sandra demonstrates that he can no longer return to a time of innocence. He no longer is the man he once was, returning home is impossible. The Cadenza is not a musical score, but a compositional literary rendition and he creates it not as a musician but as an-other, as a writer.

Another consequence of learning about Sandra's torture, is the fact that Rolando can no longer continue writing in his travel diary. Though he had only the night before written in it its first and now last line, "Anoche empezaron a cambiar las estrellas," he feels it improper to continue. Like his grandfather, Rolando now finds himself also failing at the attempt to write a travel diary. Indeed he fulfills the same objective by artistically creating a rendition of his experience via an *a posteriori* novel. The travel diary then became the medium through which he and his friends aboard the Cristóforo would write their story about desaparecidos for Contardi, appearing later in the novel. Of the remaining four chapters after Cadenza, two are dedicated to this fictional creation.

**Fictionalizations**

Having at least approached the issue of torture in the Cadenza, Rolando's next chapter turns to fiction in order to verbalize in a coherent form, his and others' thoughts

and feelings about the desaparecidos left behind. As mentioned above, Contardi's son, Haroldo, has disappeared, and it is for him, at least formally, that Rolando and the others write their fictional story. Before continuing, it must be noted that the painter Contardi and his son Haroldo, sonorously remind the reader of the writer Haroldo Conti, a friend of Moyano's who disappeared during the military dictatorship.[15] Contardi had explained to Rolando at the beginning of their voyage that, "todo objeto ... necesita un marco para ser percibido plenamente" (85). This need is temporarily fulfilled by telling Rolando's own story of exile within the Northern European setting. Its construction does not completely fail for the exiles later utilize the lightkeeper theme in framing their story for Contardi.

Fiction and reality function together to create a real physical text about that which many feel to be quite surreal, be it exile, torture, or/and the desaparecidos. At the initiation of Rolando's journey, the Spanish cook, one with over 40 years of exilic experience tells him, "Los inocentes... se niegan a vivir en la ficción pero no pueden o no alcanzan a ver que son ellos los únicos que podrían devolver la realidad al mundo;" paradoxically he affirms, "es soñar la realidad en un mundo ficticio" (77). In fact, Rolando later realizes that reality can be "un desaparecido más" (339) but fiction may help in reclaiming it, especially the historical omissions in the official story told by dictatorship. In the novel there is much debate concerning the meaning of the word

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[15] Moyano explained to Gnutzmann that Libro de navíos, "Es un homenaje, digamos, cariñoso a Conti.. . A mí me detuvieron el mismo día del golpe y estuve doce días en la cárcel. Luego fui a Buenos Aires, porque ahí no me molestaba nadie por ser otro distrito militar. Llamé a Haroldo por teléfono para decirle que me iba y le avisé que se cuidara. Pero él me contestó que no le iban a hacer nada, ¿porque ? ¿qué había hecho? Me invitó a un chinchulín, pero no fui. Ese mismo día lo detuvieron." (121)

'desparecido.' To most, these people are dead, but for some, the desaparecidos are neither dead nor alive, and thus, they exist in limbo. Contardi believes that while the desaparecidos are dead, the violent nature of their deaths left behind their souls in search of their bodies. They cannot move on to the other world until these have joined again. Contardi conjectures that help for the desaparecidos can only come from "afuera" (outside), "algo así como un faro" (289). And hence, the passengers create a story about a lighthouse, its keeper, his daughter, her coming of age and departure from home, and finally, the father's strange disappearance.[16]

Rolando's obsessive return to the role of matches in the lighthouse keeper's ability or lack thereof to maintain light in the lighthouse, reminds the reader of Rolando's prison companion, El Flaco, who cached as many matches as possible in hopes that attaching them to his body he would be able to fly to his escape. Neither El Flaco nor the lighthouse keeper survive.

At the beginning of the story the creators of it want Contardi to identify with the lighthouse keeper, who would always keep its light burning, but then, the story takes a life of its own, and Contardi's needs become secondary. Bidoglio for one, feels that they should be "objective," even if it is at Contardi's expense: "que a la historia hay que llevarla hasta sus últimas consecuencias" (310). And although Rolando tries to follow the plot of the song in creating the story, he too notes, "Si esto no sirve para Contardi es otro

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[16] The lightkeeper is also Haroldo Conti, the 'faroldo.' Moyano explained in an interview with Navarro that his friend, "Una vez paró en casa, en La Rioja, y se la pasó comprando faroles para su colección. Mi hijo Ricardo le dijo, 'Vos te llamas Faroldo Conti'" (199).

asunto." (311). According to the passengers, fiction must have some sense of veracity, and even if they'd like to present a happy ending in the story for Contardi, they realize that it would not be realistic.

But, ironically, after all of them make an effort and actually do see a light from what they think is the shore of Africa, their fictional light keeper suddenly becomes "real," and it is to him that they give credit for the light's appearance. The suggestion here is that reality and fiction may be difficult to separate. The reality of the light seen by the passengers of the Cristóforo now becomes a part of the story for Contardi, they write that the light keeper, "estaba muy feliz y en curda acurrucándose en su catre cuando recibió nuestras llamadas telepáticas y se le jodió la cosa" (316).

The story demonstrates the creative process in which the passengers engage: deleting passages, rewriting others, but also discussing the various possible outcomes for the light keeper, the possible reactions of their primary audience-Contardi, and to what extent he should determine the storyline. After a brief interruption with Chapter Thirteen, the story continues, though this time Rolando clearly indicates that after having polished the first part in order to satisfy Contardi, with the second, "podemos trabajar con entera libertad" (351). This story that was crafted with such thought for the benefit of Contardi, in the end was never given to him. In fact, Rolando still holds it in his possession.[17] Why did they not give Contardi the story? Could it be that the fictional rendition of an account about desaparecidos for a man who's son goes missing seems cruel, as Rolando implied,

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[17] In Chapter Ten, he writes about the only sentence recorded in his travel diary, (which later becomes the story for Contardi), and he alludes to the proximity of its location: "un cuaderno que anda por ahí dando vueltas todavía..." (231).

when they first began the project? Their attempt to mitigate a real event via fiction in the end may not have been successful for Contardi, who never reads it, but it does serve a purpose for all who participated in its creation. Through their characters, they, like Moyano himself, can begin to liberate themselves from their traumatic experiences.

Another fictional rendition of an historical event, takes place in Chapter Five, in the form of a play with puppets about the period of Argentina's first years of independence. The parenthetical annotations concerning the scenes are provided by Rolando, in an objective style, delineating in written form, movements and other facets only visible to the audience. So detached is he as a narrator of the play, that he even addresses himself in the third person, when he speaks. The chapter includes both that presented on stage and that discussed in the audience, particularly their reactions, which vary from disgust (like La Torre de Pisa who disagrees with the 'historical' account of the events presented), to embarrassment[18] (Rolando finds the topic too 'intimate' to be addressed in a public setting).

The title of the puppet performance, 'El lavallazo,' refers to General Juan Lavalle who in an act of treachery in 1828 ordered the assassination of the then legitimate governor, Coronel Manuel Dorrego. In this chapter Moyano juxtaposes this event of early Argentine history with that of the military dictatorship of the 1970's and 1980's. The play alludes to a vicious cycle of repetitive deleterious political actions that the

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[18] At the beginning of the narrative Rolando also uses the word, 'vergüenza' when he was arrested and taken from his home while his neighbors watched. His private feeling of embarrassment for being treated like a criminal though he is innocent, is reverberated in this 'public' setting of a (hi)story symmetrical to his own.

Argentine people, as a whole, never benefit from. Representatives of government are corrupt and utilize any means necessary to achieve the power and financial prestige they want, be it in the nineteenth century or in the twentieth.

In Chapter Two, Rolando mentioned Dorrego in his musical theory concerning interrogations, where he explained that Dorrego "es fusilado sin palabras" because he was denied a court appearance or the right to verbally defend himself before his executor, Lavalle. The exiles too are sent away from their homeland in silence, but unlike their predecessor, they are able to voice their stories, which they choose to do so through fiction.

Those few who do disagree with the historical rendition of Dorrego's death argue that, "Lo que pasa es que cambian la historia como se les antoja y no respetan ni a su madre" (163)- a comment that could have easily been made by the exiles concerning the present military dictatorships, is instead uttered by an Argentine tourist.[19] El Gordito responds to the above comment, that nothing has been changed, "salvo la historia oficial" (164). Moyano seems to imply that official versus unofficial historical accounts have plagued Argentina, from its very beginning as a nation, and until there can be some sort of a consensus about the facts, including those of the last century about which people

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[19] In Bonnardel's study in Novela y exilio: entorno a Mario Benedetti, José Donoso, Daniel Moyano she describes how history was molded by its writers to create a hero out of a villain:

> Las cartas leídas por Rauch en la pieza de teatro, forman parte de los archivos de la Historia argentina. Una vez que esas cartas toman estado público, el fusilamiento de Dorrego es visto desde otro ángulo y Lavalle aparece en las versiones de algunos historiadores como un militar honesto, víctima de las presiones de políticos avezados que se sirvieron de él sin comprometerse. (116).

should be less attached to emotionally than to those of the present, the country will continue to be divided.[20]

In any case, Moyano asserts that, "todos en el barco eran títeres, como una gran farsa, como la historia de Lavalle y Dorrego de la función. . . Y la historia de Dorrego significaba un eslabón fundamental en la cadena de nuestros dramas. Lavalle es nuestro Videla" (201).[21]

Just as Moyano utilizes real names of historical people and places, he also makes use of fiction in order to mask the real name of another (Contardi), to hide his own voice, or to prove the potent force that fiction can have on reality. For example, two passengers, Bidoglio and El Gordito, have known each other since childhood, but never spoke again after Bidoglio stole El Gordito's eraser. Aboard the ship, El Gordito tells everyone that Bidoglio has the face of a police officer, and although he is not one (but one who did suffer from the police's actions) everyone aboard is easily persuaded by El Gordo's arguments and they begin to think that maybe Bidoglio not only looks like a police officer, but is one. Though the two later reconcile their differences, Moyano proves that fiction can quite easily alter reality for both participants and observes alike, for good or for bad.

Curiously Moyano equates exile with a return to childhood. And true enough, Rolando does return to childhood memories, especially those that were significant in

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[20] The counter argument by the tourist is, "Ahora me explico por que los corren del país" (162), El Gordito assures her that she is correct.

[21] Quoted from an interview with Felipe Navarro and published in Novela y exilio.

establishing his own concept of Argentine nationality. The maps he would color as a child, where different colors divided the land from the ocean, become real in his mind as he is separated from his homeland- colors blend at the border, and then separate again. Childhood games suddenly have significance: toy soldiers that were played with as a child, are real soldiers as an adult. Rolando wants the reader to understand that he/she too will play a game with respect to the novel, "en el momento menos pensado estaremos jugando sin saberlo" (15). That is, the suspension of disbelief will be established again and we readers will enter the game of reading fiction without being reminded that it is, until the next time. But, the creation of fiction becomes a game for the narrator (and Moyano), with examples such as the puppet play, the chapter about the ship and the bay, and the fictional story for Contardi. Even the characters themselves engage in the game of looking for a lighthouse while writing their story, losing themselves in their own creative fictions.

Indeed, fiction is the only artistic creation allowed into the adopted land. As seen earlier, Rolando's Gryga is left to drown in the rains of the Northwest, and another musical instrument, a guitar, drowns in the Mediterranean. This particular instrument, shaped by the Northwestern Argentine, Fede, into a musical object of perfect delight, had no worthy player of it until one couple without children decided to have a child just so that Fede's guitar would have someone to play it. At Barcelona's harbor, it accidentally falls into the water. Consolation is given to its owner by telling him that Spain is the land of guitars (implying that he can easily find another to replace it). Even if musical instruments drown, Moyano's novel assures the reader that language will not. Words will

survive shipwrecks, injustices, and history. At first torn from having lost his Gryga, Rolando now creates a maravilla of his own, a fictional story about reality that utilizes both music and language, a hybrid genre that depicts the in between liminal state of exile, including that of his own identity as 'other' and the same.

## Chapter Three

## The Arrival: Marta Traba's En cualquier lugar

Marta Traba's novel, En cualquier lugar, develops the exilic space within the adopted land partially explored in Chapter One. Here, the Southern Cone exiles' first "encounter" with the new country transpires through a second medium- from a physical space separate yet within the space of the host country.

The author was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and left her country in 1950 to study art in Rome and Paris after having graduated from the National University of Buenos Aires at the age of 20. In an interview Traba told Evelyn Garfield, "I left Argentina because I didn't like it there at all, not at all" (124). The political repression under Perón and the claustrophobic conditions of living in a city that was unequipped to handle the number of its inhabitants, which had tripled in just a few years, were reasons that she cited for leaving.

Shortly after Traba's stay in Europe she relocated to Colombia, a country she would call her home for some 14 years until she candidly criticized the government's violent retribution against students who were protesting a visit by Rockefeller to the University of Bogotá's campus. Though the government of Colombia had at first demanded that she leave the country within 24 hours, people from around the nation immediately came to the defense of this art critic who had become a national celebrity. Of her accomplishments one must mention that she founded the Museum of Modern Art in Bogotá, and consistently and passionately informed others about Latin American artistic contributions with her numerous publications and television programs. The

overwhelming response by and outrage of the public, persuaded the president to pardon her, but in turn, she was obliged to relinquish her position as professor at the University of Bogotá. The effect was the same: she was forced into exile. She would live the remainder of her days in temporary homes-Uruguay, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Spain, the United States, and France. Shortly before her untimely death in a plane crash with her husband Angel Rama, near Madrid, Spain in 1983, President Belisario Betancur of Colombia granted her Colombian citizenship.

Marta Traba began writing fiction after having established herself as an art critic. Her first novel, Las ceremonias del verano, won the prestigious Premio de Novela from the Casa de las Americas in 1966. She would live to write another six novels, two of which have been published posthumously.

One of these two is En cualquier lugar,[1] written in the United States the year before the Reagan administration rejected her application for permanent residency in 1983. Her outspoken political views during her three years in Washington D.C. would ultimately lead her into exile once again. The title of the above novel could very well refer to Traba's own exilic experiences; at the time of writing the novel her fate within the USA was still unclear, and later on she ascertained that her life, "no ha sido más que una serie de saltos acrobáticos en el vacío" (Poniatowska 892). En cualquier lugar

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[1] The second is Casa sin fin. In an interview with Evelyn Picón Garfield, Traba had told her that En cualquier lugar, and the novel that preceded it- Conversación al sur, as well as Veinte años no es nada (posthumously published in 1988 as Casa sin fin) would comprise a trilogy that she wanted to entitle, La vida a cuestas: "There is no other possible theme in my present writing than that of the life we began to carry around with us on our backs when it became impossible to return to our countries" (139). The second of the trilogy, studied here, deals entirely with the theme of exile.

recognizes the absolute unpredictability of the exilic "landing," if you will, from the leap beyond the familiar into the unknown, or "vacío," as Traba defined it, to literally 'anyplace' where one might be accepted.

For most exiles, the landing into the host country, once, hopefully, a host country has been found, is anything but smooth. In addition to coping with the unsurmountable sadness of all that has been lost, the exile must confront some of the foreign elements of surviving a new environment, such as those of the linguistic, economical, political and social ilks, to name but a few. Just as in Moyano's novel the exiles aboard the sea vessel are vulnerable to the possibility of a shipwreck, through the voice of Mariana in Traba's novel, the arrivals to the new land feel as if they have experienced just that. The difficulty and abruptness with which the exile must assimilate the constant input of new information is apparent in even the simplest of matters, such as that which opens Traba's novel in which Mariana hailing a taxi to work finds herself helplessly unable to remember the name of the city she now inhabits. This city's name soon comes to her mind, but Traba strategically excludes it from the novel, thereby delineating the feature of the qualitative "cualquier"/any "lugar"/place (un)described in the title.

Traba sets the novel in an undisclosed northern European city where exiles escaping Argentina's military dictatorship arrive and settle in an abandoned train station provided by the host government. Six thousand exiles live in the station and in the surrounding emergency homes adjoining it. They arrive by the truckload to this hitherto public space of transit that ironically now represents one of immobilization and stagnation. Its location at the outskirts of the city separates the natives from the

foreigners, dissuading contact or conversation between the two. The diegesis is sustained by two events that galvanize the host country and affect the fate of the stationers. First, Flora, a victim of torture in the homeland whose newborn child disappeared there, commits suicide one year after living in the host country. Basically overnight, the host government renews its policy of 'dislocation,' i.e., evacuation, of the stationers, provoking the exiles to politically mobilize in order to protect themselves from the possibility of being left without any shelter at all. Two years later Flora's torturer, Torres, who accompanied Flora and her husband on the exilic voyage to Europe and with whom they shared an apartment in the host country, is found assassinated in another continent. With Torres' death the host government immediately decides to once and for all demolish the train station with no promise of accommodations afterward, giving originally one month's notice to its inhabitants, and then suddenly only two days.[2] After being forced to leave their own homeland, the exiles become now an object of coercion by another state, initiating, as many explain it, their second exile. The connection between Torres and the host government with respect to the final dispersal of the exiles is not arbitrary, it is based more on similarity between the two than difference, for both intentionally sought to annihilate or remove that which hindered their ideal of a homogeneous society, be it in

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[2] After the explosion of two bombs in a newspaper building that had been printing articles opposing the exiles, the host government made the decision to demolish the station within two days. No clues are provided as to who may have been behind the attacks, (The fact that, "Raúl [who plays no role in the novel] estaba formando una milicia armada" (207) as noted by Ana Cruz, seems to be in response to the newspaper bombings in the first place). The host government cannot be dismissed as a potential culprit, since, it would then be able to expedite the dispersal of the exiles, with whom they have become increasingly impatient.

the homeland (citizens in disaccord with the policies of the government), or in exile (as outsiders). Torres' obsession with creating order and giving orders (even to himself) in order to maintain a homogenous state, is taken with him in exile where he describes the station as, "toda esa gentuza viviendo en el peor desorden, en la peor anarquía, sin nadie que los metiera en vereda" (72)... "el orden se había perdido. Rumiaba el orden, quería tragarlo y no era posible; vomitaba el orden" (73). The host government is really not much different than Torres in that they recur to physically ostracizing the exiles from the native citizens so as to maintain their own idea(l) of order.

For the majority of exiles arriving to the host country they have no other option than to stay in the train station. Hundreds of exiles have applied for apartments especially built for them by the host land, but only a select few inhabit these prized residences, obtained through either pure savvy (like Flora) or political position, which even under these circumstances requires a waiting period of a few months. Not all exiles were satisfied with these arrangements; given the spacial constraints in the station and the indeterminacy of their stay away from the homeland, some in their 20's or 30's, decided to take an alternative less accepted route (by the other exiles), offered by the government and move to a remote area known as the "tiendas del Este." This run-down commercial zone with time becomes reactivated through their efforts without infringing unwantedly upon the natives or their territory. Approximately 1,000, or 1/7 of the total exiles obtained an apartment in the Este, where they are able to work for a living and contribute financially to their own personal needs. Due to the location of the tiendas del Este, those inhabiting this area come into contact with the city and its inhabitants, whereas the station

dwellers, isolated from contact with the natives, choose not to venture beyond the perimeters of the station, regardless of the months or even years they have spent there.[3] The fact that the Easterners can in large part provide for themselves in comparison to the stationers is one of the points of contention between the two groups. Luis, the 29 year old protagonist of the story, who lives with his mother in her print shop near the station, is unemployed, and often feels that the Easterners judge him for it. Many of the latter are interested in making business deals and adjusting to their new environment as best they can, while the stationers, in many ways epitomized through Luis, wait for the host or home government to change their fate. Because these two institutions have been slow to change in the exiles' favor, the stationers have rebelled on numerous occasions against their deplorable living conditions: the dilapidated station, the tight quarters without any possibility for privacy, and the endless waiting in line for meals and latrines. But, with the overcrowding even of the tiendas del Este, they have no where else to go.

**Maintaining Nationality**

In Traba's novel integration is not a goal for the exiles (they even lack curiosity about the country they now inhabit), nor is it wanted of them by the host government- which displays a distant reception of them into their land. While the exiles reside in a new land, they are forcefully marginalized within it. In fact, their present exilic state is one that they hope soon to forget, one that they envision as temporary. Therefore the disinterest by many of the exiles (Easterners and stationers) to learn the language of the

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[3] In fact the majority of the station dwellers have not visited the host city even once, regardless of the time spent in the host country.

host country, its politics, its culture, even to visit the city that they inhabit, represents their conviction and desire that exile does not and cannot become a permanent state for them. As Leon and Rebeca Grinberg delineate in their *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile*:

> In any migration the subject fantasizes about returning, but these fantasies usually meet with one of several fates: the idea remains as a future possibility and meanwhile acts as a source of secret pleasure to compensate for the persistent discomfort of uprootedness; the fantasies are acted out in sporadic visits; or the fantasies lead one to make concrete arrangements to return. (179)

In En cualquier lugar, the exiles' fantasies with respect to the return home apply primarily to the first fate- to psychologically ameliorate the current upheaval of the exilic condition- though one character, Mariana, does actually return home, and another character, the older son of Alicia, still as a child, begins to save money in order to return to the land where his father was murdered. In general, the exiles in this northern European country also comfort themselves by pretending to believe that a rendition of a better version of the country left behind is being formulated within the train station, through in reality they are cognizant that their efforts remain primarily within a fictional domain.[4] The fictionalization of the station as a pseudo-sovereign state, a 'país de ficción' as they

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[4] Various characters realize this at some point in the novel: Vázquez, Ada, Alí and Mariana who says that she prefers a world in which "nada se comunica con ella" to "buscar la mentira de la estación... Pero lo cierto es que Alí no ha podido deshacer su argumento de que eso es una ficción de país" (108).

denominate it, however, does present 'real' ramifications to those inhabiting it when its 'borders' are threatened and later dissolved by the host land.

First of all a better understanding of country and nation must be addressed before further exploring the "país de ficción" imagined by the exiles in Europe. Luis conceives 'patria' in a manner that holds true for many of his compatriots, "para él la patria se transportaba con la gente y estaba ahí donde siguiera la discusión y se armaran líos entre grupos y personas" (63). For Luis, one's 'patria' can be transferred beyond its traditional political borders via its people if they are able to stay together to keep its language and culture alive. Hence, his obsession with tabulating the new arrivals to the station, their whereabouts, his preoccupation with the possibility of evacuation from the station, and his disappointment when his compatriots stray, if they do, into the host city.

Benedict Anderson's definition of nation as an "imagined political community" also applies to the exiled community at hand. By imagining themselves as a country within another country, if even one that is fictional in nature, certain developments arise: the political parties of old are reestablished, politicians vie for leadership, free elections are declared, and political scandals ensue. Of the six political leaders that emerge, Vázquez gains the majority of support from the stationers with his demagoguery, and harangues about an imminent return home. He hopes that his political role in exile will ensure him the reputation needed to succeed back home. However, in exile he must, "manejar un material irreal, pero venció esa irrealidad con un discurso que tomó cada vez más cuerpo, adaptándose a las nuevas circunstancias. . ." (60). He is able to establish a so-called "programa, una dirección departamental y una tesorería," demonstrating that

exilic fictional imaginings can propel real political manifestations within the train station. Fiction functions not only as a defense mechanism against the present struggles of exile, it can transform reality.

Yet, beneath the politically active surface of the train station lies a deep paralysis that has infected and affected all of the deracinated as a consequence of the existential state of immobility symbolized in the train station that takes no one anywhere. Inhabiting a dimension in between the fictional and the real, in a non-space (in the new land but still separate from it) and a non-time (where the present tense is interpreted as temporal and hopefully forgettable) also affects the exiles' identity, which in Traba's novel they try to preserve by reinforcing their common nationality.

In Ross Poole's definition of nation, he elaborates upon Anderson's concept of "imagined community," stating that the first steps toward its explanation

> ... are when we realize that when we imagine the nation we do not merely construct an object of consciousness, but we also form a conception of ourselves as existing in relation to that object. The nation is not just a form of consciousness, it is also a form of self-consciousness. As members of the nation recognize each other through the nation, they also recognize themselves. If the nation is an imagined community, it is also a form of identity. (12-13)

When this self-consciousness of nation for the stationers becomes jeopardized through the host nation's evacuation policy, the exiles indefatigably defend their territory (the station) which in effect, is equivalent to defending their own identity- all that is left for

them from their lives in the homeland. Suddenly, the fictional cohesion of community becomes a real sensation and one that the exiles feel naturally inclined to protect.

Other exiles who had arrived to other areas of the country encountered similar provocations by the host government that they tried to disrupt to no avail.[5] Here, besides the 6,000 living in and around the station, the Easterners also rally to support their compatriots. Any attempt to create distinctions between the two groups, which have not seen eye to eye on all issues related to their exilic status, fails. Men, women, the young and the old, all march outside the station united in their effort to prevent the dispersion of their people, and of what ultimately would be their last ties to a tangible rather than an abstract concept of national identity. This time they succeed in thwarting the host government, but their future is precarious, for of those in other cities who were obliged to leave their exilic communities, over time they lost all contact with other nationals, "se desconectaron enteramente de ellos" (206). The fear of breaking apart from a group that reinforces the identity of its members and together consciously imagines the return to a better homeland is articulated by Luis: "que algún día ese país se trasladaría en bloque a su verdadero lugar, cuando echaran a los asesinos en el poder; pero jamás los echarían, jamás, si empezaban a licuarse y disolverse en ese mundo extraño, donde hablaban otras lenguas y tenían otros modos de vivir incompatibles con los suyos" (144). For Luis, and others, the dispersal of the collective community into the host land is akin to the loss of

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[5] One character remembers, "no hicieron más que mandar a los chicos para que se pusieran delante, y claro, los tipos se bajaron de las caterpillar, sacaron a los chicos... y después que revisaron que no había nada, ni gente ni muebles en las casuchas, las voltearon en minutos" (129).

self.

**Us versus Them**

Poole's definition of an imagined community depends on its existence, "as an object of consciousness. It is the public embodiment of the nation's conception of itself. As a form of identity, it exists as a mode of individual self-and other- awareness" (12-13). Indeed, both the host country and the exiles differentiate themselves from each other. The newspapers on more than one occasion "señalaban con temor el crecimiento incontrolado de los refugiados en la estación" (138). Luis realizes that they have become a threat to the host country: "Se trata de que somos una ciudad dentro de la ciudad y crecemos como los monstruos de las películas de ficción" (129). Comparing themselves with aliens from another planet is truly in accord with their sentiments that their experience is one belonging to a fictional realm. They have become the 'other,' and the 'other' for them envisions the exiles as foreign- as misplaced and displaced beings, while they in turn dehumanize the natives, referring to them as savages and strange people with a bizarre language.

In order to avert the natives' attention from the exiles in their homeland, the government of the European country decided to place them in an area away from the city, a space that both the natives and the exiles disparage and even compare to a concentration camp. Curiously though, it seems that the natives have been led to believe that the exiles live in the way they do because they want to, not because they have not been offered adequate housing. From the newspapers, "[los exiliados] leía[n] con disgusto que hablaran de ellos como de pordioseros amontonados unos sobre otros, sin trabajo, sin

porvenir, empeñados en volver a un lugar que día a día se hacía más infranqueable y remoto. ¿Cómo era posible que vivieran como bestias? ¿Cómo era posible que no tuvieran un techo propio. . . Y la gente se preguntaba también: ¿cómo era posible" (198)? With photographs printed in the newspapers of the stationers, "La opinión pública se horrorizó: ¿cuándo y cómo se pudo establecer ese campo de concentración?" (199), but even journalists realizing from conversations with some of the stationers that they are unhappy with their current residence, wonder why then they had refused the relocations offered by the government earlier. The Gálvez family being interviewed by one particular journalist simply doesn't understand what relocation offers he is referring to, and as the narrator comments, "Era un diálogo de locos" (200). This conversation is actually one of the few attempted between the natives and the stationers and though they misunderstand each other, it is not due to the lack of an efficient interpreter, as transpires during the evacuation attempt between representatives of the station and those of the host country,[6] but rather an intentional non-translation by the host government to the exiles. Given the surprise expressed by the journalist with respect to his interviewees response above, the reader must also assume that the host government has not been informing its citizens of

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[6] During the protests against 'dislocation' after Flora's death, representatives of the host government arrived to the station prepared to assess the situation and possibly evacuate the exiles, when instead they found themselves listening to a rather quiet interpreter interpret Vázquez's speech to the protestors about why the stationers should remain where they are. Unable to hear their interpreter- one of the exiles who has some knowledge of the native language- the inspectors preferred to "mirar el espectáculo de Vázquez vociferando y se desentendieron del sentido" (153). This first attempt (at least in the diegesis of the novel) at a dialogue between the two groups and especially that of attempting to communicate the exiles' concerns to the representatives of the host country goes unnoticed and unheard.

its true policies toward the exilic community. It seems that the European country wants its citizens to believe that it is taking appropriate and just action with respect to the exiles and therefore, the fact that they continue to live in the station can only be assumed by the natives to be based on their desire to be there. Once the natives see the photographs taken by the journalists of the station and the conditions in which the exiles live, no one from this European country seems reluctant to utilize 'concentration camp' to describe them, though the blame is placed on the exiles for its very existence. Ironically, given especially twentieth-century European history, the natives never heed the fact that people do not voluntarily live in concentration camps, but that rather, they are coerced to reside in them. The lack of liberties exiles experience is also manifested linguistically during the earlier evacuation attempt by the government, when the term 'ghetto' is used to describe the stationers themselves. These terms must not be simply glossed over for they connote violent and cruel treatments of innocent people who historically were pursued and persecuted for their ethnicity, sexuality, nationality or religious affiliations. Traba includes the exiles within this group. Pursued and persecuted in the homeland they now experience the same in the adopted land. It is no wonder then that upon learning of Flora's death Luis could only imagine that the local papers might write something like the following about them: ¿De qué país de salvajes llegaban? ¿Qué podía esperarse de gente que había sido perseguida, violada, torturada, destrozada?" (138). What Traba seems to imply is that this 'civilized' European country can be just as 'salvaje' (cruel and corrupt) in the name of democracy as the homeland the exiles fled.

Reference to the 'other' is also made by the exiles with respect to those

compatriots who stayed behind. Tensions have always existed between these two groups, as Noé Jitrik and others have documented, and as Traba fictionalizes through the voice of Luis, "Nos hemos ido saliendo de allá los más capaces, los jefes, los profesionales, los tipos diferentes a esa manada de bestias que se quedó moviendo la cabecita afirmativamente, como muñecos de celuloide. De modo que la casa está aquí y no allá, pero sin el lastre de aquella basura" (56). This dichotomous creation by the exiles between 'us' and the 'other,' even between those left behind who shared the same ideology as those now in exile, is precisely one of the factors fomenting their current anxiety in the host country with respect to themselves.[7]

The fragility of the exiles' identity away from all that is familiar and known, provokes the exiles to expect of each other a more uniform and limited expression of self so as not to further isolate themselves from each other. Indeed many of the exiles, such as Ada, do not tolerate any deviance from the specter of a cohesive unity of exiles, that is, any semblance of 'other' among the exiles is firmly objectionable. When Ada takes her friend Alicia downtown for the first time and they decide to try on clothing in a department store, Ada becomes extremely uncomfortable with Alicia who lets her guard down and role-plays that of a woman who could afford and enjoy the dress she is trying on. Alicia embraces becomes an-other, if even in jest, but Ada still judges her friend for what she interprets as a betrayal to the stationers. Even though Ada realizes the

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[7] It is the belief of many exiles that the future of their country depends on the democratic governmental system they develop/practice in exile. Luis, for example, feels that "el país verdadero se estaba construyendo afuera y volvería a recolocarse" with the fall of the dictatorship.

marginalization of the stationers, when Alicia tells her that they, "deberían venir acá, qué se yo, caminar por estas calles...Es inhumano que los hayan acorralado en aquel campamento horrendo" (182), Ada responds incredulously, "¿Pero qué haríamos aquí?" (182). The answer is exactly what happened to Alicia, they would potentially become an-other, and Ada, like some exiles, including Luis, fears that their previous identity and connection with the homeland could crumble as a consequence. Staying together would ensure the exiles a certain measure of stability with respect to their identity, and the otherwise inevitable confrontation of becoming an-other.

Because the "país de ficción" in the new land depends on the return to the homeland, many begin to realize that the creation of a transnational space entails more difficulties than they might have imagined. The fictional country, first of all, depends on maintaining borders within already sovereign borders. Without the train station, the leaders have no method of uniting physically, controlling or accounting for their 'nationals' inhabiting the host country. The fictional constructions of country, rely secondly, on articulating as possible, what have come to be prolonged dreams of an imminent return to the homeland. Home indeed, is exactly what the 'fictional' country cannot fictionalize to the exiles in present tense; and a lack of a home is precisely the reason why the exiles do not desire to stay in the train station but must because the host government provides none for them. As long as the exiles have no other choice than to remain in exile they would prefer to remain close together rather than dispersed throughout the country as has occurred in other cases with exiles (which they explain to

the host government in Ana Cruz's manifesto).[8] The architectural plans they have prepared would even save the host land money.

Their preoccupation with becoming an-other perhaps explains their overlooking of the 'other' who walks among them, namely Torres. He has gone into exile along with his victim and her spouse, because of a chain of events related to the former. The other exiles learn about the extent to which Flora endured torture in Argentina with the autopsy of her body, in which scars, especially a very long one along her torso, explain to many the reason for her suicide. Later on the narrator describes Torres' own version of events in the old school converted into a prison and center of torture: "Fue mala suerte que cayera justo cuando el médico cosía a la Flora, mientras dos enfermeras la entubaban para que no se les quedara ahí mismo. Y en cambio de felicitarlo por ese buen trabajo, [el jefe] lo empujó fuera de la sala de emergencias y empezó ahí mismo a darle bofetadas y patadas hasta que lo dejó en el suelo lleno de moretones" (149). In vengeance against his superior, Torres frees Flora and her revolutionary husband, Alí. Exile however does not liberate Flora, Alí or their marriage from the tortuous past. In fact, like Vázquez and Mariana's marriage their relationship is one struggling from a lack of communication, literally, a paucity of exchanged words between the two.

**Pseudo Dialogues**

Just as the station represents a semi-fictional nation to many, but one that they hold onto due to the lack of an alternative, so too can the personal relationships between

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[8] The exiles even have plans created by an architect that would allow them to live near the station.

some of the characters be categorized. In order to better understand these, we must first look at the narrative voice and the textual construction of the novel itself.

In contrast to previous works examined in this dissertation, Traba's novel does not follow the pattern of a fictional autobiographical account written by a character who experienced or is experiencing exile. A traditional third person narrator guides the reader through the thoughts and actions of a few key voices in the story, though most details about living in the station are provided through the perspective of Luis. Secondly, the chapters in the novel are not arranged in a linear chronological fashion. The second chapter actually transpires before the first ('la muerte de Flora'), which not only anchors the novel in a violent act of self-destruction that transpires after fleeing from the physical torture endured in the homeland, but the first chapter also accentuates the psychological pain the exiles take with them to the adopted country, and from which they may not necessarily become liberated. Chapters Three and Four deal exclusively with the 'desalojo' and 'demolición' respectively, and Chapter Five with the 'partidas.' Chapter Two entitled, 'la pieza' becomes of central relevance because it transpires primarily within the private spaces of Mariana's home where intimacy can be expressed, or at worst, fictionalized, as Alí denominates his relationship with Mariana in retrospect.

Mariana and Vázquez share an apartment together as husband and wife though they both are engaged in extramarital affairs and rarely see each other, let alone converse. Aware that her husband has been seeing Ada for some years, Mariana decides to find a lover of her own, also someone younger than herself. Her affair with Alí ends with the death of her lover's spouse (Flora). Mariana and Vázquez's relationship functions on a

public level, that is, they are loyal to each other in the public eye though not in the private one. Even Alí and Vázquez mutually respect each other despite the latter's awareness of Alí's affair with his spouse, but Vázquez admires Alí's courageous feats in the homeland, and Alí the political voice of Vázquez's in the new land. The affair between Alí and Mariana was an intimate relationship more of pseudo dialectical than physical significance. Neither Flora nor Vázquez hardly speak to their spouses. In Alí's case they have barely exchanged words in over a year. Alí and Mariana try to compensate for their spouses' silence by speaking about it to each other and listening to that which their spouses refuse to hear. They confess to each other episodes about the past as best they can, "lo que le pasó a ella, lo que le pasó a él," but, " han adquirido un tono impersonal, de investigadores que examinan hechos que les son extraños" (95). Their words about personal experiences however, become impersonal in format; words have become somehow separated from the subject in order to confront the past, and therefore, the space of the 'pieza' beckoning intimacy (dialectical and physical) is not fully answered. Though both Alí and Mariana condemn Flora for her silence, they often feel that they must recur to the voice of another by reciting the poetry of W.H. Auden (who also underwent exile) in order to articulate their sentiments concerning human suffering.

Between the other characters little dialogue occurs as well. Luis and his mother, like Ada and Vázquez, rarely have time to speak to each other about issues other than politics. The discourse between Mariana and Flora, which by all indicators seems to address intimate issues concerning Alí and his disappeared daughter, ended disastrously. Ada and Alicia's attempt to discuss their exilic status essentially terminates their

friendship. Dialogues seem incapable of addressing intimate issues related to exile or the exilic experience, they are only pseudo conversations, for language seems at least initially, insufficient to explain the unexplainable nature and consequences of exile.

However, the manner in which Flora confronts the past is highly personalized, and transcends the verbal. In remembrance of her and Alí's disappeared daughter's second birthday, she decorates the apartment in celebration. Alí is unable to talk to her about the occasion and escapes to the arms of Mariana in search of comfort. Flora's actions not only honor a life lost, but they also confront Torres- the man responsible for her daughter's disappearance.

**Female space**

Many exiles are confused as to why Flora committed suicide when she did, a year after living in the host country: "¿por qué mierda no se mataron allá?" (66). But, perhaps another question need be addressed here: once we learn about the horrors of the torture Flora endured in Argentina, how was she able to survive afterward, even a whole year in exile? The fact that she finds an apartment in which she, her husband, and Torres share the same private space, can only be analyzed upon realizing that Torres is the man responsible and therefore, the only one knowledgeable about her daughter's disappearance. It would not be surprising that Flora's decision to live with Torres in a private space entailed a strategy of breaking his silence with respect to their disappeared daughter, believing that such a space might provide for the discursive opportunity of

revealing intimate information.[9] Nevertheless, Flora's own verbal silence does not last when against Alí's wishes Mariana decides to confront her the day after the birthday celebration. Flora commits suicide the following day after their exchange, (from which the reader is excluded, except for the detail about their yelling to each other that Torres overhears), and in the post-scriptum we learn that Alí and Flora's child never reappears.

Flora had never fit into the pattern of expectation that the exiles had of each other, especially those of Luis, who "trataba de crear dependencias y lo lograba en casi todos los casos" except with Flora, "y por eso mismo la desestimaba y se ponía de parte de Mariana y hasta de Alí, con tal de hundir a Flora. Nunca consiguió de ella la menor confidencia, jamás ella le contó, como tarde o temprano hacían los otros, las terribles situaciones por las que había pasado" (57). She would not even reveal this information to her husband.

Flora's suicide resonates louder than words ever could. Back home she became a heroine for her intrepid acts against the dictatorship, never relenting even as a pregnant woman and as a mother of a newborn child. Defying the mother myth of recoiling from the public sphere to concentrate her efforts on the private affairs of motherhood, Flora became even more engaged in political causes, becoming commander of a mission that led her to into the hands of Torres.[10] In exile, Torres had hoped that she or Alí would

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[9] I disagree with Vara Rust's analysis in her dissertation that Flora's obtainment of an apartment to be shared with her husband and torturer, "es consecuente con su estado de desequilibrio mental; la Flora de antes de la mutilación no hubierta tratado de obtener privilegios porque luchaba por su completa eliminación" (185). I do not believe Flora's obtainment of a lucrative apartment was done in order to enjoy a bourgeoisie lifestyle, it merely represents the means to an end.

[10] Specifically, Flora "había sido la de la bomba en El Tigre" (70). While in the novel El Tigre refers to a place, perhaps even a concentration camp, the name was also a

have denounced him, "para que todo el mundo supiera quién era, pero no decían una palabra. Lo peor es que no lo veían," (72); they had mysteriously unarmed him. By remaining silent about her tortuous past, Flora was able to minimize her role as victim, but once provoked to speak with Mariana, revealing details to her that the latter believes even Alí is unaware of, Flora's identity became that of another victim with a language that Luis or others could catalogue and soon forget. The act of committing suicide, I believe, counters her own vocabulary of victimization, and her suicide then definitively destroys her identity as victim and concomitantly that of Torres' as torturer. The fact that this occurs as a consequence of her celebrating her daughter's birthday, also indicates Flora's renunciation of her previous identity as mother, for her daughter, as Mariana must have confronted her about, most likely no longer lives.

Flora's suicide portends Torres' own physical death for he is incapable of existing beyond his previous identity of torturer (exercised and expressed in exile on the only being he could physically victimize-an unclaimed dog). The narrator explains that, "Le aterrorizaba pensar que los [Flora and Alí] perdería de vista y podría llegar a olvidarse de sí mismo" (72). Although most compatriots are not surprised by her death, it does galvanizes particular individuals to realize that the past can no longer define their present relationships: Vázquez soon leaves his wife, Mariana; Alí moves into the station and

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pseudonym for Jorge Eduardo Acosta. During the 'Dirty War' he was Chief of an International task force and was responsible for 5,000 disappearances and murders, including the death of R. Walsh.

stops seeing Mariana;[11] and Torres leaves the exilic space altogether.

While in Traba's novel the exiles have little tolerance for anyone who breaches the uniformity expected to maintain the cohesion of the group, the 'other' does nevertheless manifest itself, be it via the occasional Easterner or stationer who slowly begins to learn the language and culture of the host land, but in particular via the women who debunk their traditional roles as designated within hegemonic structures. The exiles' liminal position, in fact, seems to foment experimentation with respect to identity and therefore, while all exiles do unite with their fellow citizens together in defending their national identity as seen above, renegotiations do take place with respect to the identities of voices considered subaltern in the homeland.

Traba's own definition of female writing "no está contra la literatura masculina, primera cosa, ni está por encima de la literatura masculina, ni está por debajo de la literatura masculina. Es una literatura diferente, es decir que su territorio ocupa un espacio diferente" (Hipótesis 21-22). This 'different space' is epitomized in her novel, En cualquier lugar, with the female voices who respond to their liminal status by contesting the 'fictional' representations of them, as created by the societies from which they came, in order to establish within exile an identity of their own accord. Separated from the physical barriers of the homeland, the adopted space provides the propitious environment for such experimentation.

Ada, Vázquez's lover and some 25 years his junior, superficially seems to embody

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[11] Alí and Mariana's relationship only existed because of the difficulty with their spouses, with Flora dead, Alí no longer needs to continue seeing Mariana.

a traditional female sacrificing her best interests for those of her partner. For example, she gives up an apartment in the city and remains in the station so that Vázquez would appear to be in close contact with the stationers, even though he does not dwell among them. She does make his political career easier as his attentive secretary in both public and personal matters, but while Ada convinces Vázquez that he needs "una compañera dócil" (59) she does not exactly fit this mold: as a woman of action she founded a school for the children of the stationers, a job for Alí as a teacher there, and later on a human rights organization named after Vázquez upon his decease. By participating in the patriarchal political system, cognizant that a woman's role in the predominantly male system depends greatly on her influencing those in power, she is able then to create a space for her true objectives: bringing to justice those guilty of crimes comparable to the torture and death of her father by the military in the homeland. Indeed, it is because of Ada that Vázquez's interest in politics is even renewed in the first place, and once the station has been demolished it is Ada who involves herself and Vázquez in other affairs related to the homeland. The incident between Ada and Alicia can in part be explained as a difference in ideology with respect to hegemony: Ada prefers to work within the system, while Alicia does not mind looking beyond it.

Ana Cruz, Luis' mother, asks the host government for the abandoned offices within the train station and establishes in one of them a print shop in the lower floor, creating jobs for a number of people, and producing enough income so that it became unnecessary to ask for unemployment benefits. Ana Cruz's endeavors represent a success story: she is the first exile to establish a business, and a flourishing one at that, who also

happens to be an indigenous woman in the community. In addition, she is the only person who after learning of Flora's suicide blames Torres and states, "háganle a él lo mismo" (65) and when he is murdered two years later she candidly replies that he deserved it. Before even learning about Torres' identity Ana instinctively knew he was a torturer and named him as such. His presence however, was tolerated by most until Flora's suicide, when he then fled, but who the responsible party or parties were in assassinating Torres, is never revealed to the reader; we only learn that his body was found somewhere near the Río Grande.

Three females in the novel are mothers: Flora, Ana Cruz, and Alicia; Ada role-plays a mother figure to young children both in Argentina and in exile as a teacher. These women all present alternative versions to the myth of motherhood as an idealized state with no other preoccupation in life other than that of fulfilling maternal obligations. Ana Cruz, for example, who is an older woman, has a lover with whom she shares her apartment. She is politically active, back home she maintained an intimate relationship with a white man (Luis' father) for a number of years until they mutually decided to separate, though most believe she must have been raped when they see her son's white skin. In the host land the written word is in her control, for it is through her print shop that the exiles publish their manifesto sent to the government, and later, once the government warned of the demolition of the station, Ana Cruz took it upon herself to inform the stationers of the government's new policies acting against, "la ignorancia en que se mantenía la gente" (199). As an indigenous person Ana's crossing into the patriarchal structure of the exilic space is significant, as a woman and as a minority. In an

interview with García Pinto, Traba explained the connection between her socialist and feminist ideologies:

> En que todo lo que escribo, sea ensayo o narrativa, está impregnado de esa simpatía social, alimentada desde una perspectiva socialista. Agrégale a eso de que, siendo mujer, no puedo sino escribir como mujer, y por consiguiente me siento parte de lo que Pierre Bourdieu llama acertadamente las 'contraculturas,' refiriéndose a los grupos minoritarios, étnicos, y también a las mujeres. Escribo lo que llama Elena Poniatowska, la 'literatura de los oprimidos;' escribo algo que sea verdad, que siento la imperiosa necesidad de comunicarlo y que tiene una gran carga de rabia, de cólera revanchista ante las injusticias y las atrociadades que nos rodean. (43).

Ana Cruz is an example of a woman who was able to overcome some of the problems women face, though we must remember that her business succeeds in exile, where experimentation takes place with respect to gender expectations and where she was able to literally voice (print) her own concerns.

Alicia, a 24 year old woman with two children helps Ana in the print shop. Even though most mothers in the station seem preoccupied with returning to the homeland, Alicia makes sure that while they are in the host land her children are enrolled in school. The day that her children delightfully screamed without fear while playing together outside, Alicia realized that they were finally recovering from the ghosts of the past. Their future is important to her, but so is her own. Alicia's dreams do not die as a mother

or a widow, in fact, she makes an effort to materialize her dream of becoming a poet. After Alí's break-up with Mariana she initiates a relationship with him, crossing the border of traditional gender role expectations, and as announced in the post-scriptum they are married for four years. Afterwards she marries a successful poet; Alí remains single.

The power of the written word goes virtually unexplored by the exiles, except by the women, like Ana with her print shop, which at one point becomes the vehicle through which the exiles express their arguments against the evacuation policy to the host government. Alicia too, in a contrasting manner to Ana, uses the literary word to express her own experiences through poetry. Mariana who was an eminent lawyer in Argentina brings home from the library where she works a book of poetry by W.H. Auden whose words pacify both her and Alí when they lack the ability to speak what they feel (as explored above). And both Mariana and Ada cut out newspaper clippings to help Vázquez distinguish his friends from his enemies, who change sides more regularly than not. It is the women who utilize and control the written word in their community, and with that they can help shape their own futures as well as the collective future of the exiles.

Mariana in her role as wife felt compelled to follow her husband into exile, even though she was not being pursued in Argentina, and was aware of his affair with Ada. Her own involvement with a much younger man seems to help her emotionally overcome the difficulties of her broken marriage and it also reaffirms her own sexual prowess as a mature woman capable of seducing someone half her age. Mariana is one of the few exiles who has friends in the city where she works, ordering on occasion works in

Spanish to be added to the small collection of Hispanic literature in the library. In the homeland Mariana was friends with Flora's mother, Angélica,[12] whose draconian parenting toward Flora led Mariana to cease their friendship around the time Flora was a teenager. In Argentina, Mariana had always respected Flora and they would have become friends had Angélica not impeded it. Mariana's interest in speaking to Flora after the latter's birthday celebration of her disappeared daughter, transpires however, only because of her association with Alí, whom she later loses because of her intervention. The exchange between the two women most likely involves an issue that all of the exiles must face at some time or another: that of accepting or not becoming an-other in order to survive exile. By committing suicide, among all of the other symbolic issues discussed above, Flora also rejects for herself the option of becoming an-other.

After learning of Flora's death, Mariana thinks: "Tal vez yo también esté muerta, pensó. Y sintió un indescriptible alivio" (52). Death may seem inviting when one has lost already so much, as here Mariana confesses to herself. When she runs into Torres on the street, Mariana physically accosts him and he flees as quickly as possible from her punches that leave her hands sore and swollen. Mariana never empathized with the stationers' lot, she referred to them as 'mendicants,' but she speaks for them when she says, "Aquí no era nada" (170).[13] Once she and Vázquez separate, she decides to return

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[12] As a member of a bourgeois, conservative family, Angélica never was able to understand what had happened to her daughter or how her grand-daughter disappeared, even when she left to Chile in search of the young child. Politically she was the complete opposite of her daughter.

[13] Sandra in Moyano's novel, also reiterated the same sensation upon landing to the Old World: "No sé, no soy nada, no soy persona" (388).

home to her previous life. The fictional image of a traditional wife no longer applies; she returns home to fulfill a dream about establishing a flower business. Unlike the other exiles, Mariana had a choice with respect to returning to the homeland, this choice perhaps hindered her, as Luis explains from becoming an-other, "como le estaba ocurriendo a los demás" (171). As she prepares to leave, she fulfills the exilic dream, she tells herself, "nunca estuve aquí" (220), and in the airplane headed home she feels that, "ya tengo otra memoria" (224).

**Conclusions**

The last section of the novel, a one page post-scriptum,[14] delineates the futures of the characters after the demolition of the train station. Other than Mariana no one returns to the homeland, each finds his/her own niche in exile, as best as he/she can, and with respect to the homeland, "El poder pasó de un militar o de un grupo de militares a otro, con tanta frecuencia, que el país, finalmente, dejó de ser noticia. No interesaba a nadie" (247). The absence of the name of "el país" could in effect represent any country with a history of dictatorship, for this reason perhaps the narrator commences the post-scriptum with the following words: "Como se trata de una historia real, parece necesario contar qué les pasó a los personajes en los años subsiguientes" (247). In other fictional accounts the futures of the exiles remain shrouded in mystery; Traba here wants the reader to conflate the fictional with the historical in order to prove that life does go on and it can even

[14] Some critics only attribute four chapters to the novel, assigning the fifth as a coda-entitled "Las partidas," literally concerning the departure of two characters- Mariana and Luis from the host country, as well as the entry of the majority of exiles into the host society and thus their farewell to the life they have become accustomed to in the station

flourish, (as in the case of many of the characters), after the initial disruption of exile, whether based on fact or fiction.

Traba's novel captures the psychological aspect of the "landing" in the adopted land- the difficulty the exile experiences in moving forward and capitulating to the probability of remaining longer in exile than hoped for or anticipated. Through the train station, Traba creates a physical space for the existential angst of the exilic experience, where the exile belongs no-where nor to any-time. What they have left to hold on to are fictional renditions of the old country lost, and while the "país de ficción" doesn't survive exile, the manners in which nation and nationality are constructed and contested help provide a better understanding of them both beyond the perimeters of the train station. How we imagine ourselves and our identity is in many ways dependent upon the reflection(s) given to us by our society and by our nation, yet many of these images are based on fictional reflections. These are what the female characters in Traba's novel contest, and in exile, they experiment with respect to gender identity in order to create one that is more fitting to their own experiences. Marta Traba's 'anyplace' in effect, becomes the ideal location for discursive and corporeal experimentation with respect to the fictional, and the hitherto silenced; it argues for and acknowledges a model of identity that is based upon principles of inclusion and heterogeneity.

## Chapter Four

## Processes of (Pseudo)Integration: Antonio Skármeta's No pasó nada and Mario Benedetti's Primavera con una esquina rota

This chapter about the exile experience examines the integration processes, or lack thereof, with respect to exiles in a host country. In No pasó nada by Antonio Skármeta and Primavera con una esquina rota by Mario Benedetti the exiled characters have already established themselves within the adopted land: Germany in the former and what appears to be Mexico in the latter[1], where they live side by side the natives. What is particularly unique and valuable about both authors' presentation of the encounter with the new land is the perspective of various age groups, including children, adolescents and the elderly.

Antonio Skármeta was born in Antofagasta, Chile in 1940. Before the coup d'etat of 1973, Skármeta had traveled outside his native country a number of times, including to Europe, Latin America, and the United States. He has obtained a number of prizes for his literary work, including the coveted Casa de las Americas, and he has also been recognized for his involvement with film, such as his script, La victoria, which was awarded a prize at the Prague Film Festival in 1973, and in 1976 he won the Bundes Film Prize in Germany for Reina la tranquilidad en el país. In 1992 his television program, "El show de los libros," became a big hit, bringing him great popularity. Given his particular

[1] Though the host country is never explicitly named, allusions to it are made, such as the physical descriptions of its urban landscape, phonetic pronunciations of particular words and idiomatic expressions which all point to Mexico. Nevertheless, by not naming the host land, Benedetti universalizes the exilic arrival to any country around the globe.

background, Skármeta explained in an interview, "I was a man who had really rehearsed exile" (Alternative 72-73). From 1973-1975 he lived in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and then moved to West Berlin and remained there until the fall of the dictatorship in 1989.

Mario Benedetti was born in El Paso de los Toros, Uruguay, in 1920. At the time of the military coup, he was chair of the department of Hispanic literature at the University of Uruguay in Montevideo. As he states, "estuve muy poquito, un año y poco porque vino el golpe; los militares entraron en la universidad y me tuve que ir corriendo" (105). He went into exile first to Argentina, then Peru, Cuba, and later Spain, where he now lives six months out of the year,[2] and the other six months in Uruguay. He has received the Premio Reina Sofía de Poesía Iberoamericana and in 1987 Amnesty International awarded him with Premio Llama de Oro for his novel, Primavera con una esquina rota, which will be discussed in this chapter.

Of all the exiled writers examined in this dissertation Skármeta and Benedetti were the most prolific; the former wrote some five novels during those 16 years of exile[3]; and the latter some 6 works during his 7 year exile, though a decade had passed since writing his last novel.[4]

The narrator of Skármeta's No pasó nada is a 14 year old male adolescent who

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[2]About Spain he says, "estoy casi como en mi casa" (105)

[3] Soñé que la nieve ardía 1975, No pasó nada 1980, La insurrección 1982, Ardiente paciencia 1985, Match Ball, 1989

[4] La casa y el ladrillo 1977, Con y sin nostalgia 1977, Cotidianas, 1979, Viento del exilio 1981, Primavera con una esquina rota 1982, Geografías 1984.

recounts in the first person his story of exile from West Berlin. Barely a year in Germany since his family left after the military coup, Lucho has had better success than the rest of his family adapting to the cultural and linguistic challenges of the new land. With respect to the latter, Lucho is the only member of his nuclear family who is able to communicate in both German and Spanish. As a consequence, his family has come to depend on him for translations: be it the television for his younger brother or scheduling appointments for his parents' students who are learning Spanish. As an adolescent coming of age, Lucho experiments with the 'adult' German world that surrounds him, while also attempting to reconcile his Chilean heritage. His encounters become dangerous when his interests in the opposite sex lead to an unsolicited fistfight with a German boy. Lucho immediately defeats him, but the victim's older brother decides to unrelentingly seek vengeance. Once Lucho accepts the challenge to fight the older brother and again prevail against a stronger and older adversary, the two miraculously become friends. It is this exilic Bildungsroman that compels Lucho to tell his story. Skármeta deftly crafts this autobiographical account in a manner veracious to a young adolescent's mind, who's speech emulates the oral quality of colloquiality[5], with an at times anachronic organizational method, both of which nevertheless, transcend its puerile nature to intensify a type of adolescent awkwardness akin to the exilic state and the existential

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[5] Lucho at times asks questions to his reader/listener, such as, "¿a qué no adivinan quién estaba en persona en medio de todos los Internationale Solidaritat? No, pu', esta vez se equivocaron. No era Michael..." (84); or, "¿Ustedes han oído ese refrán que dice 'hogar, dulce hogar'? Bueno, al tipo que lo inventó habría que darle el Premio Nobel de los mentirosos" (66).

pangs of exile, that afflict both the young and the old.[6]

Primavera con una esquina rota is comprised of 45 chapters, that are not numbered as such, but instead are arranged by seven different titles each dealing with a particular character in the novel and not arranged in any particular order: Intramuros (6 total)-about Santiago who is incarcerated in Uruguay; Don Rafael (7 total)-Santiago's father; El Otro (7 total)-Santiago's best friend, Rolando; Exilios (9 total) -Mario Benedetti's voice; Heridos y Contusos (7 total)-Santiago's wife, Graciela; Beatriz (7 total) -Santiago and Graciela's nine year old daughter; Extramuros (2 total)-Santiago's discourse once he has been released from prison. Everyone but Santiago has left the country; he remains in Uruguay enduring the inner exile of incarceration. Benedetti utilizes various narrative techniques in presenting the voices of each character: letters written by Santiago in Intramuros- of which all are written keeping in mind the censors, except for one received by his father; stream of consciousness as expressed by Santiago upon his release from prison in Extramuros; monologues in the first person for both Beatriz and Don Rafael; a third person narrator in El otro and Heridos y contusos; and autobiographical/testimonial accounts about Mario Benedetti in Exilios- including one poem within this section of chapters. The voice of each character is presented in the first person except for Rolando and Graciela, whose thoughts are communicated via a third person narrator or via dialogues. The novel opens and closes with Santiago, who outnumbers in chapters all other characters except for the italicized autobiographical

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[6] Lucho himself realizes the disorder of his thoughts, perhaps in part due to the fact that he retells the story from memory: "Ahora me ven como me ven y no pasa nada. Es que les cuento todo revuelto y a saltos" (44).

sections about Mario Benedetti, which exceeds the former by one section. Through this device of incorporating his own voice, Benedetti conflates the fictional and the factual, where exile becomes not only an imaginative construction, but one based on reality. In Benedetti's Primavera a number of genres are present: [7] novel, autobiography, epistle, poem, fiction, history, or in this case, a hybrid creation of all, testifying to the liminality- the state of in-betweenness- of the exiled author and the exiled fictional character that I argue is characteristic of exilic writings. It can be said that no one character dominates the story, though it is true that the characters are all connected to and revolve around Santiago in some way, as he who is absent from his wife, daughter, father, and friends' lives, but who nevertheless is always present in their thoughts, as they are in his. Benedetti's story testifies to the fact that exile and incarceration do not merely affect the individual at hand, but his/her whole network of social relations. Santiago's wife and daughter must not only face the travails of reincorporating into a new environment, they must do so without him. The ties that Graciela once felt for her husband, begin to disintegrate after four and half years of separation, (with the possibility of never reuniting again if the authorities decide to detain him indefinitely), as she decides to once and for all move forward with her life once she realizes that she no longer physically desires him. Ironically, she and Rolando begin an affair just a few months before Santiago's release, who has not been informed about Graciela's change of heart.

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[7] I agree with Rosa Maria Grillo who states Mario Benedetti's novel is "difícil de definir" (150).

**The New Land versus the Homeland**

The life of an exile, as delineated in the novels by Skármeta and Benedetti, and as many a critic has realized, can be divided into two temporal tenses and geographical constructions: the "aquí" versus the "allá," equation. Memory anchors the exile to the time and place of "allá," which can lead to a compulsive comparison of his/her immediate reality with the one left behind, including: one's home, the climate, language, acquaintances, and vocations, which shall be examined here more closely.

One of the greatest difficulties about deracination involves the act of leaving behind one's physical house, the place one calls home. Here, the exiles have already left their native countries and they have begun the process of assimilation in the host land but the idea(l) of 'home' resonates strongly within them. Both Lucho's family and Graciela's move into apartments in the host countries, but even after the initial shock of relocation, their abodes still do not quite feel like home. For Don Rafael, when he first arrived to Mexico, he referred to his apartment simply as, "una habitación," slowly, with time, he promoted it to an 'apartment'- "un simulacro de casa: una habitación con agregados" (23), but it never quite acquired the physical warmth deserving of the denomination, 'home.' In Lucho's case, the apartment in which they reside has only one bedroom for all four members of his family. He explains that of the four of them his mother suffered this change the most because in Chile they had plenty of bedrooms and space. Though the children, like their parents, have difficulties adjusting to the cramped quarters, they adapt much more easily than their parents because for them 'home' is wherever their family is together. The new land certainly requires of all exiles a readjustment of their previous

concept of 'home,' which sometimes can only be tolerated by believing in its temporality, that the return to home in the homeland will occur in the not too distant future, which was seen in Traba's novel.

If one's private space does not quite feel like home, the public sphere feels totally alien to the exile, in particular for older generations. It was seen in Traba's novel, how most exiles beyond their thirties avoided any encounter with the host European city and those who do venture into the urban center, like Mariana, became easily disoriented. In Benedetti's novel, Don Rafael, a 67 year old, used to find comfort in the familiar streets that would lead to his home in Montevideo; now in exile he is constantly and not pleasantly surprised by the topography that always seems to change on the route to his apartment. In an effort to mitigate his perpetual shock, Don Rafael begins to use a cane, which he eventually disposes of once he accepts that his concept of 'normality' will henceforth be the perpetually abnormal.[8] Lucho, on the other hand, finds the streets welcoming, especially its dark corners that he and the opposite sex use to their advantage. On the streets is precisely where Lucho both integrates into German society holding hands with his German girlfriends and yet, where he also disintegrates within it, when his exilic status is revealed and requires defending from local adolescent ruffians.

In both Skármeta and Benedetti's novels the climate/topography plays a key role in formulating the identity of their characters. In No pasó nada one of the first calamities the family faces in Germany is Lucho's younger brother falling ill "por el cambio de

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[8] Don Rafael explains that with respect to utilizing a cane: "Era una consecuencia del desaliento... Aquí, ... empecé a caminar y a sorprenderme. Y la sorpresa me fatigaba" (23).

clima" (28). For the exile, the change in weather is not merely interpreted as a difference in temperature, it actually represents another barrier to overcome, of the many in exile, which in an extreme case, as that presented here, can manifest in the form of illness. The climate of one's homeland can also represent and form an integral part of one's identity. Lucho, who arrived to Germany when he was 13, remembers distinctly the warmth and sunshine of his homeland. In fact, numerous times during recess in Germany he would search for a patch of sun, like a "largarto" (as his friends called him in Chile), trying to warm himself in the overcast skies and intemperate weather of Northern Europe: "Yo y el sol, íntimos" (31). Unlike his German classmates, this association with and love of sunshine distinguishes him from them. For Lucho, this physical memory and connection with Chile is also based on the unique topography of its land, and of all things, its tectonic plates. While watching the film "Earthquake" in the movie theater, as the audience laughed with excitement, he felt "mucha pena porque me acordé de Chile" (32). His nostalgia seems a bit misplaced to an older generation, especially to his father who cruelly responds to his son's story by physically striking him, and verbally insulting him: "Me dijo que si estaba tonto de andar echando de menos los terremotos, que lo único bueno que tenía estar lejos de Chile era no sufrir los terremos y que ahora yo venía y le salía con esa estupidez" (32). Lucho's remembrance of the land left behind can be said to be amorphous, at best, for nothing else provokes nostalgia for Chile like this episode at the movie theater. Still, his emotions of nostalgia are real, but in comparison to his parents, Lucho's response is dependent primarily upon his physical memories of Chile, rather than those of perhaps more complex categories of higher cognitive thought

experienced by his parents.

If Lucho's memory clings to what he recalls best about Chile, Beatriz, who was five years old when she left Uruguay with her mother, recalls virtually nothing about the country left behind. Not even does she have 'physical memories' of the homeland's climate, for when her mother tells her about a fourth season, fall, Beatriz is somewhat incredulous that it even exists: "Yo le digo que puede ser pero nunca la he visto" (30). It is only through her father that she is convinced when he writes her that, "está muy contento porque las hojas secas pasan entre los barrotes y él se imagina que son cartitas mías" (31). Beatriz's interior monologue about the different seasons allows her a space to reflect about the 'importance' of spring, which is the season when, "aprehendieron a mi papá. Aprendieron sin hache es como ir a la escuela" (30), and for which reason her mother, "no le gusta la primavera" (ibid). Beatriz recognizes that "cosas lindas" can also happen in the spring, but the act of being separated from her father during this season, over five years ago, taints the positive associations normally made with it. In fact, spring's symbolism of renewed growth and life even for Santiago had been distorted when years ago his mother died of a heart attack while listening to Vivaldi's 'Spring' of the 'Four Seasons' on the radio.[9] From this time onward, Don Rafael believed that the word spring, "ha quedado ligada para siempre a su [Santiago's] vida" (190).[10] Indeed, it

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[9] Mercedes, Santiago's mother, had confessed to her husband two years after being married how wonderful it would be to "morir escuchando alguna de las Cuatro Estaciones de Vivaldi" (190).

[10] Don Rafael elaborates, "Es como su termómetro, su patrón, su norma. Aunque no lo mencione sino rarísimas veces, sé que para él los aconteceres del mundo en general y de su mundo en particular se dividen en primaverales, poco primaverales y nada

is the image with which he describes his euphoria in returning to his family, "después de estos cinco años de invierno nadie me va a robar la primavera" (196). He continues, "la primavera es como un espejo pero el mío tiene una esquina rota" (ibid)- being incarcerated and separated from those he loves may have damaged Santiago's own symbolic rendition of spring, and though he suspects that exile may have also affected that of Graciela's, he is quick to disregard this thought, as "una locura y ella me esperará en el aeropuerto con beatricita y el viejo/ todo recomenzará normalmente naturalmente aunque el espejo primavera tenga una esquina rota eso sí la tendrá seguro la tendrá" (197). Santiago's suspicions however, are correct, spring can never be the same after having experienced exile (whether within the homeland or outside of it).

One entire chapter in Primavera is dedicated to Beatriz's fascination with the urban landscape of rascacielos. The skyscrapers certainly catch the young girl's curiosity not merely because of their size or the linguistic element that demands a singular article for the noun, whether referred to in the singular or plural, but also because she imagines that her father would enjoy visiting the skyscraper that her mother works in. Beatriz's interest in the world surrounding her and all of its glorious and bizarre manifestations, provoke in her a yearning for the father who has been absent for half of her young life. The connection between present and past is a constant in Beatriz's mind, the past associated with her father, is always present in her thoughts.

Other differences that lead to comparisons between 'aquí' and 'allí' involve the vocations of the exiles in the host country, usually not the same as those held in the

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primaverales" (190).

homeland. Lucho's parents were both professors, but in Germany, the only work they can find is that of tutoring students who are learning Spanish, though they themselves cannot speak German. Lucho's role, as mentioned earlier, would then be to schedule appointments for his parents, quite a responsibility given that "los primeros meses dependía del teléfono que comiéramos" (30). Their situation at the beginning was so dire economically, that as Lucho explains, "no vimos ni el pellejo a la carne" (45) for six months. Lucho's street-smarts however, lead him into in-door markets to keep warm during the cold winter in Berlin where he stumbles upon a particular store in which samples of various foods are offered to the customers; thanks to this, Lucho recalls, "de hambre no me moría" (46).[11] When he does finally find a job after school, Lucho shares his earnings with his family and even his younger brother who likes to read comics.

In Benedetti's novel, Don Rafael, like Lucho's parents, used to be a professor, but he too must now resort to teaching Spanish in order to make a living. Exile for Don Rafael however, does not signify a complete disillusion vocationally for now an old desire to write fiction has been rekindled within him. Graciela, on the other hand, feels desperately bored with the rote nature of her job as a secretary, even though she very well knows, "... no todos los exiliados del Cono Sur han conseguido una tarea tan bien remunerada con sólo seis horas de trabajo, y por añadidura con los sábados libres" (47). For the moment no other vocational options are available for Graciela, and as the sole

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[11] When Lucho told his parents about this store they did not believe him, but one day when his father had to provide a blood sample as part of the bureaucratic procedure for exiles, he asked Lucho about it. They decided to go together: "Ese día lo pasé muy bien con el papi" (47).

provider for her daughter she must continue working at a dissatisfactory job. With respect to Rolando, it appears that he is unemployed though neither he nor anyone else refers to his current employment status.

In addition to the difficulties in finding a position in the adopted land that remunerates sufficiently to support a family, let alone one that fulfills the creative potential of the individual, exiles must also overcome the language barrier, even if they, like those from Benedetti's novel, move to another Spanish speaking country. For Lucho's family the task is an even greater one, given that they must learn German. In any case, the differences in language/dialect are addressed by the exiles, whether it be through a verbal awareness of the various forms of expression existing in different dialects or by making an effort to learn the host county's language, as in the case of Skármeta's novel.

Lucho's motivation for learning the language is attributed in great part to his attraction to the opposite sex, like his schoolmate Edith, "Pienso cosas que me gustaría decirle cuando la vuelva a ver otra vez, que me salgan bien en alemán. Me fijo bien cómo se dicen, en el diccionario" (32). Besides Lucho's own vested sexual interests in learning the language, sessions both in and out of school advance his skills, such as that of practicing German while playing soccer with his classmates, and especially learning some of the essentials from his best friends who understand his linguistic isolation having experienced it themselves as Greek exiles. Soon he became "un fanático de la radio portátil" (49), and he began to memorize the lyrics of German songs, "cuando agarraba una palabra, abría el diccionario, y la iba repitiendo hasta aprenderla," with time, "..yo era el tipo que sabía más canciones que nadie en Berlín" (49). His parents, on the other hand,

who work during the day, have little time to dedicate to the study of German. When they do, Lucho can't help but to silently poke fun at them, "Al papi le ha dado que para pronunciar bien el alemán hay que hacer como si uno tuviera una papa entre los dientes" (96). Lucho's younger brother does not learn German as quickly, probably because he lacks the adolescent curiosity that foments Lucho's interest. In this sense, Lucho's age benefits him, but his accent and misuse of certain German phrases can still get him into trouble. One evening with his second girlfriend, Sophie, a couple of German boys began to taunt them; his response, spoken with an accent was that, "estaban apurados," which at that time of night in Germany could only mean that he was in a hurry to go bed with her, something he unfortunately did not intend to imply. Upon hearing this, one of the boys tries to put his hand up Sophie's skirt, and Lucho defends her by kicking him in the testicles. The force of the impact requires hospitalization of the boy. Being able to respond verbally with the correct speed to a question or an assault, is precisely the manner in which Lucho fell victim to his foreignness with the German language. The short amount of time expected for a verbal comeback, and especially one under such strenuous circumstances, led to a mistake in translation by Lucho who recurred to his mother tongue. Thus, the problem that Lucho faced was not only that of sounding foreign with respect to his pronunciation, but that of the time pressure of producing a coherent and intentionally meaningful response. The next day Sophie breaks relations with Lucho and provides the victim's brother, Michael, with his home phone number.[12] Michael's

[12] Sophie's actions against Lucho cannot logically be justified though we may imagine that she no longer finds Lucho appealing since his status as exile became fully disclosed in the above incident.

mission to avenge his brother begins by harassing Lucho by phone, then by following him in the streets and finally, two days after the fight with Hans, Lucho and Michael take their battle to a wrecking yard where the younger of the two defeats his German adversary, and ultimately befriends him.

The linguistic exile that Lucho experiences as a foreigner, prevents him initially from orally being able to liberate himself from a perilous predicament. When Michael first calls him at home, all Lucho can answer to Michael's threats is 'yes:' "De repente se me había olvidado todo el alemán. Así era el comienzo cuando no entendía nada. Repetía sí, sí, y ponía cara de idiota" (70), but by the end of the conversation his fear is replaced with valiance:

> -Bueno, Chileno, vienes o no?
> -No- le dije.
> -Entonces, donde te agarre. . .
> -... me sacas la cresta. Eso ya la dijiste.
> -Entonces...
> -Tú y cuántos más? (73)

Even Lucho is astonished by his own response. One day later, on the anniversary of Pinochet's military take-over in Chile (September 11th), Michael calls again to set a date to fight Lucho. This time Lucho accepts the 'invitation,' (a tribute to the Chilean spirit to fight the adversary who unjustly pursues the innocent), especially since he knows that he has put his family's exilic status in jeopardy and if he wishes to continue living in Germany he must either fight him or face the possibility of deportation upon Michael's notice to the proper authorities of his brother's hospitalization. No matter the degree to which Lucho hitherto was accepted into German society, he cannot escape his exilic

condition: "Total, estaba perdido por goleada. No tenía mi país, la Sophie no quería verme nunca más, un tipo me andaba buscando para arreglarme, y había mandado a un alemán al hospital. Por mucho menos hay gente que se pega un tiro" (66).

Benedetti's novel is more subtle with respect to the differences in language between Uruguay and the host country, Mexico. Beatriz, Don Rafael, and Rolando realize the linguistic changes from their homeland, and though more often than not, it might appear humorous, on occasions Rolando reminisces the "sobrentendidos." That is, sometimes, even in Spanish, he finds that it is necessary to "explicarlo todo y escucharlo todo" (39). Don Rafael begins to cuss in the local dialect, reflecting however, each time on how he would have expressed himself in Uruguay. And Beatriz, whose curiosity about language leads to searches in the dictionary and queries to her elders, not only reflects the human desire at any age to verbalize one's thoughts in a meaningful and coherent manner, she epitomizes the linguistic 'desajuste' of exile and dictatorship, its incompatibilities with previously known meanings, and their replacement for new ones. In the chapter entitled, "Una palabra enorme," Beatriz analyzes the meaning of the word 'libertad:' for example, "si una no está presa, se dice que está en libertad. Pero mi papá está preso y sin embargo está en Libertad, porque así se llama la cárcel donde está hace ya muchos años. A eso el tío lo llama qué sarcasmo" (109). Her friend, Angélica, likes the word 'sarcasmo' so much that she gave her new puppy the name. She understands her father to have been imprisoned "porque tuvo muchísimas ideas, tantas y tantísimas que lo metieron preso por ellas" (111), and while she too at times has ideas, "todavía no soy famosa. Por eso no estoy en Libertad, o sea que no estoy presa" (110). It is a confusing

world in which language distorts meaning for its own sarcastic purposes, leaving both young and adult alike disgruntled, disillusioned and unable to 'own' language, in the Derridian sense studied in the Chapter One.[13]

Beatriz recognizes that having arrived to the host land at a young age she does not remember much about her native country, she notes: "Una de las diferencias es que en mi país hay cabayos y aquí en cambio hay cabaios. Pero todos relinchan" (84). Observations with respect to the nuances in pronunciation between the two countries' dialects depends not on Beatriz's own memory of the country left behind, but rather on what she hears from her closest examples in the new land: her mother, grandfather, and Rolando. In any case, her conclusions are optimistic, and language for her is not a barrier, if she can enter and decipher its sometimes mysterious code.

A vital factor in the integration process depends on the exile's association with the host country and its inhabitants. In Lucho's case, his contact with the other school boys playing soccer and his quick response of "No pasó nada" in Spanish when something went awry, led the others to don him this particular nickname though they do not understand its meaning nor the fact that the phrase contains three separate words, thus, their pronunciation of it is that of one long sound: nopasonada. The Germans ironically (though ignorantly) name him "nothing happened" when in fact, a great deal has

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[13] In the novel Beatriz ponders two other words that provoke in her both fascination and confusion: polución and amnistía. The two have symbolic meanings with respect to her father and Rolando, the sexual connotations of the first, (which Beatriz unravels) are in reference to Rolando and his affair with Graciela, which will have a direct effect upon Santiago's life when given amnesty. Not only do words become contaminated, friendships and intimate relationships do as well, something which Beatriz at her young age realizes.

happened to him and his family. It is another linguistic misunderstanding, for Lucho writes his story (or tells it-this is not quite clear), that which we readers read, precisely because pasó algo in his life. And this something is with what he begins his story on page one: the date of the military coup in Chile. Lucho knows that he is Chilean and is proud to show his inquisitive schoolmates, who had never heard of his country, where it is located on a map. However, he is careful in choosing not to tell them anything other than the soccer feats associated with Chile's National Stadium. He prefers to remain silent with respect to its later defilement into a concentration camp where his own uncle was murdered, "Yo nunca ando contando estas cosas porque no me gusta que la gente se ponga triste" (28).

Lucho's best friends however, are not Germans, but Greeks. Their common differences as 'other' (ones who are not integrated into Germany) bond them into a friendship that lasts beyond the return of his friends back home after the fall of the dictator Ioannides. Lucho's access into the German world however is achieved through the females he pursues, first Edith, then Sophie, then back to Edith. It is for them and because of them that language becomes such a vital force, for better or worse, in his young life. This method of integration, via the female sex, is something that even Don Rafael acknowledges and accepts for himself in Benedetti's novel.[14] In fact, through his lover, Lydia, (whose name literally means to face the other), he begins to lose his notion of foreignness, "no me siento extranjero porque ella no es mi extranjera sino algo así

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[14] Both Lucho and Don Rafael experiment with this form of integration, but neither of them ever forgets about the possibility of one day returning home.

como mi mujer" (170). She becomes the host country incarnate, introducing the exile to the customs, food and people of her land. Even in Daniel Moyano's novel, Rolando's imaginative relationship with Nieves "se trata de fundar otra realidad porque a la otra la perdimos, y toda fundación, como es natural, pasa primero por lo erótico" (91).

In the case of Graciela, the loneliness of exile, and the possibility that her husband may never be released from prison become issues for her with respect to how she must cope in the new land- whether alone or perhaps with another man by her side. Her associations with the natives are limited to her colleagues at work. Only on one other occasion outside of work does the novel relate an encounter between Graciela and the Mexican people. Upon returning home after taking Beatriz to school, (with whom she became upset and even started to cry because Beatriz wanted to cross the street with a red light), Graciela stumbles across a mendicant woman with two children asking her for money. Graciela responds by telling her that, "¿No se da cuenta de que Dios no quiere amarla?" (88). Graciela's cruel words seem to reflect more a loss in faith about a supernatural protector in her own life than in that of the mendicant's. She has survived exile, the loss of a husband, the raising of a child by herself, all of which have made her more bitter about life, including perhaps her ability to respond compassionately to another in need. Later she realizes her act of injustice, but at the time she did not apologize for it. The exilic plight is not limited to adults, it also instigates the young, like Lucho, to pose philosophical questions about the existence of God, "Yo a veces no creo en Dios porque veo que en el mundo a la gente le cuesta mucho ser feliz, y si Dios que pudo hacer el mundo como él quería no lo hizo feliz, es que Dios no es tan poderoso como dice la

religión, si es que acaso Dios existe... Yo por ejemplo no entiendo bien por qué Dios no hizo nada para salvar a todos los compañeros que los militares mataron en Chile" (91). His questions go unanswered.

That same afternoon of confrontation with the mendicant, Graciela initiates an intimate physical relationship with Rolando. She confided earlier to a friend that with Santiago, "El problema es que la obligada separación a él lo ha hecho más tierno, y a mí en cambio me ha endurecido" (73), but this 'endurecimiento' becomes soft again in the arms of her lover. The narrator notes that from her sexual experience with Rolando, "nunca había sacado tanto partido, no sólo físico, sino también espiritual" (156). It is a relationship that both Rolando and Graciela commit to a future, complicating matters when all involved learn of Santiago's imminent release.

**Memories and Loyalties**

Liminality as a condition of existing in between categories, be it with respect to country, grammatical tense or reality versus fiction, necessitates a link to each one of the categories one is still affiliated with. For the exiles abiding in the new land their experiences are similar to those represented in other geographical areas of exile explored in the dissertation, except in this case, that which binds them to the homeland is solely dependent upon memory.

For the younger generation of exiles who may have little or no memory of their native country, they learn about it from their elders, and develop from them, what Marianne Hirsch has coined, "post-memory." She describes this memory as "characterized by those who grow up dominated by narratives that precede their birth,

whose own belated stories are displaced by the stories of the previous generation, shaped by the traumatic events that can be neither fully understood nor re-created" (420). I would extend the definition of the term a bit further to include narratives that proceed the birth of the individual, but who may simply be too young to remember the events themselves. They are shaped by "traumatic" events but also by the more mundane ones remembered by their parents which they may not fully comprehend, but that they do attempt to imagine in their own way.

In Lucho's case this is certainly true, for as seen earlier, his own memories of the homeland (the nostalgia for earthquakes) are immediately dismissed by his parents who have memories of more pleasant or eventful times. In fact, in Lucho's home he is constantly reminded of his Chilean roots by the picture that hangs on their wall of the presidential palace in flames caused by the coup d'etat. It represents a moment in history that changed the fate of Chile and his own family but about which he reveals no personal memory of the event itself. Still, it shapes his narrative, for with it, he begins his story. What he clearly remembers is his birthday two days later, on the 13th of September, and receiving a guitar that he would never play because it was left in Chile with his aunt when his family went into exile. Later it was sold in order for his aunt to buy food. September 11th is in fact therefore responsible for the change in Lucho's young professional aspirations for the future, "A mí ya no me importa que hayan vendido la guitarra y que nunca pude tocarla, porque ya no quiero ser más cantante. Ahora quiero ser escritor" (26). Exile requires of Lucho that one means of expression (music) be left behind while another (language, including literature) be acquired in the new land, just like Rolando in

Libro de navíos.[15] The fact that he writes, "No es que ahora yo me crea Goethe. . ." instead of comparing himself to a known Chilean writer, like Neruda, for example, indicates the extent to which Lucho is culturally responding to the host land's own icons. This is not to say that all Chilean icons are replaced with German ones, for Lucho many a time makes reference to Chilean star athletes and musical artists that he loves. He represents a model for the liminal condition of exiles, who exist and often learn from living in between two very different cultures.

His parents are dedicated activists against the Chilean dictatorship, and in Germany they are both involved in organizing meetings and charitable events in benefit of the homeland, (in which Lucho also participates). His parents' sense of duty toward their compatriots involves a sense of frugality in the host land for the economic benefit of the Chileans at home: as his father explains to Lucho, "Que cada peso que gastaban en nosotros aquí, era un día más que duraba allá el fascismo" (44). On the anniversary of the military dictatorship, the Chileans unite together to march in Berlin in order to vocalize their cause and raise money through donations and the selling of Chilean crafts. In fact, painting posters for the 11th of September late into the evening of the 9th, the same evening Lucho kicks Hans in the testes, excuses him from arriving home early the next morning (after spending the night at Sophie's in order to avoid possibly being accosted on his way home) by showing evidence of paint on his hands to his parents. But, when on

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[15] Lucho mentions enjoying his German literature class in school, especially Bertolt Brecht's (who was forced into exile) 'La excepción y la regla,' which he relates to Chile's corrupt judicial system. That same day he receives his first threatening phone call from Michael.

the 12th Lucho complains of sickness (more psychological than physical given the later appointment with Michael that day), his father, "Me siguió hasta el baño diciéndome que yo me echaba a morir por un dolorcito de guata, y que pensara mejor cómo estaban los niños de Chile con sus padres presos y pasando hambre" (75). Lucho's father never lets him forget, "por qué estábamos aquí" (75). Lucho does understands the political reasons for their exile, and like his parents he too wants to return home, but he must deal with its consequences in Germany in his own way, and often all alone. As a family they do share moments of pain and joy, such as all of them weeping together in sadness or rejoicing the march in Berlin on the 11th. Each, however, regardless of age, has his/her own battles to fight whilst in exile.

Beatriz, in contrast to Lucho, remembers even less about her homeland; her primary link to the homeland is her incarcerated father. Cognizant of her origins, but confused about her current status, she decides to ask her 'uncle' Rolando, "cuál es *mi* patria, la tuya ya sé que es Uruguay, pero yo digo en *mi* caso que vine chiquita de allá, eh, decime de veras, cuál es *mi* patria" (103). He answers her that she has two patrias, one 'titular,' which is Uruguay, and one 'suplente,'which is Mexico. These terms do not quell Beatriz's yearning for a stable and clear answer, she personally feels oddly in between, and no linguistic terminology can mitigate this feeling.

All of the Beatriz entries make reference in one way or another to her father, no matter what the present situation is, she is always in some manner able to relate it to her father, papá. While she consciously uses the term 'papá' to refer to her father, she rarely uses the term 'mamá' but instead 'Graciela' when referring to her mother. This provides

Beatriz with the ability to at times manipulate her mother's emotions to her own advantage, (especially when she may have done something to the dissatisfaction of her mother), by calling her mamá instead of Graciela, as she usually does. But with respect to her father, he is always Beatriz's 'papá.'

Lucho's parents loyally send what little money they can to their compatriots, but Graciela's loyalty to the homeland cannot be measured in economic terms, it is dependent upon the conjugal ties with her husband. The letters she receives from Santiago constantly remind her of the past, and of her life with him; she knows that his memories of her and their life together represent his only mental escape from his present physical incarceration, but for her these reminders only create an emotional prison for her, as she tries to escape from the past in order to rebuild a future for herself. When Graciela begins to have feelings for Rolando, she asks her father-in-law for advice about whether to inform Santiago of the events or not. He suggests that she remain quiet for the benefit of his son, who most likely clings to the belief that his family, and in particular his wife, will wait for him until he is released. Don Rafael asks for the loyalty to his son that Graciela in her affair with Rolando is unable to return to her husband. As a consequence, Graciela finds herself in between the past and the present. She continues to write Santiago as if nothing has happened, (though he notices that the tone in her letters has somewhat changed), while also hiding from Beatriz the truth about her relationship with Rolando. Beatriz however, suspects something, as both Rolando and Graciela note, in Beatriz's penultimate monologue she clearly distinguishes her preference for and loyalty to her father: "Cuando venga la amnistía capaz que Graciela le dice al tío Rolando, bueno chao"

(176).

Don Rafael's own memories of the homeland and the notion of home are discussed above. Having lived the majority of his life in Uruguay, exile becomes a challenging matter: "Reorganizarse en el exilio no es, como tantas veces se dice, empezar a contar desde cero, sino desde menos cuatro o menos veinte o menos cien" (96). Nevertheless, as he realizes, "lo esencial es adaptarse" whatever one's age, and to make one's own exile one's own even if others may attempt to impose a foreign definition of identity upon them. As painful as exile is, Don Rafael still enjoys some of the pleasures of life, like his new girlfriend, and wanting to experiment with writing for the first time in fifteen years. Don Rafael's suffering stems from the knowledge that his son at any time of the day or night might be victimized by torturers, whose pain he physically feels.[16] Having escaped Argentina, and not his son, he experiences a rather common syndrome among exiles of 'survivor's guilt,' (diagnosed by himself). Don Rafael realizes that if a return to the homeland is possible, it will be the generation of his grandchildren to rebuild the country and the role of their elders, like him, "recordar lo que vieron. Y también lo que no vieron" (98). The older generation's responsibility to the young is to inform them of the "unofficial" history silenced by the dictatorship so that the future generations will remember and learn from the past.

We learn about Santiago's memories through both his monologues as well as discussions about his letters to his recipients, namely his wife and father. To Graciela,

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[16] "Pero yo a veces imagino que a Santiago le están aplicando la picana en los testículos y en ese mismo instante siento un dolor real (no imaginario) en mis testículos. O si pienso que le están aplicando el submarino, literalmente me ahogo yo también" (51).

she tells a friend that Santiago yearns for her touch but no longer feels the need for his. He remembers happier times with her, attending concerts and vacationing, but to his father we learn of a letter that the past has also haunted Santiago, where he confesses to the murder of his cousin Emilio. When the incident occurred, the two were alone- Emilio, armed in policeman uniform instructed his unarmed revolutionary cousin to surrender, Santiago offered his hands as if to be handcuffed and then maneuvered them to his cousin's neck and choked him to death. Santiago since then suffers from recurring nightmares about Emilio. He feels guilty for killing his cousin in this "innoble" and "ruin" manner, even though he later learns that Emilio was an infamous torturer. Nevertheless, Santiago realizes that with this violent act "acogoté me infancia" (130). This rupture of familial loyalties, as a consequence of ideological differences, in a way portends other broken loyalties outside the homeland, specifically those involving the amorous triangle among Santiago, Graciela and Rolando. Past and present may not be able to make amends. The Emilio of Santiago's childhood with whom he would play was not the same Emilio as an adult.[17] Santiago writes, "lo maté sencillamente para sobrevivir" (131), and when undergoing torture sessions, he explained to his father that he came to realize that those who would say nothing to the torturers would live, "De ahí que te repita que no sé si callé por convicción o por cálculo" (126). His lauded loyalties to his comrades then, Santiago believes, may have simply been circumstantial in his own efforts to save himself.

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[17] Santiago tries to understand his own violent behavior against his cousin in the following manner: "Son, como te diré, dos valores distinos, dos identidades distintas, dos Emilios yuxtapuestos" (131).

Don Rafael after talking with Graciela about her affair with Rolando becomes obsessed with trying to find "ese hijo verdadero que acaso todavía no sé quién es" (125). He wants an explanation as to what could have led to this "desamor" by Graciela, if perchance it reflects in Santiago an inherited "carencia [que] ha heredado de mí o de su madre" (125). He then re-reads the letter that somehow bypassed the censors that details Emilio's death and about which Santiago asks that his father not disclose the contents to Graciela, "porque ella tiende a simplificar las cosas" (132). This letter in a sense humanizes Santiago from the elevated irreproachable status to which all of his acquaintances had placed him-the perfect loyal friend and comrade- who, nevertheless, took the life of his cousin. Perhaps, had this letter been written to his wife she too would have been more understanding of his weaknesses, instead, he becomes a man to idolize rather than one to love. As much as Santiago tries these memories are concretely ingrained in his mind: "El primo no se me borra" (129).

**El Otro**

Of the seven titles of chapters in Bendetti's novel, one is designated"El Otro," of which there are seven entries pertaining to the voice of Rolando, who for Don Rafael, Beatriz, and Santiago (though he knows nothing during the diegesis about his wife's affair) is the other Man and rival for Graciela's love. The symbolic significance of the 'other' does not pertain to Rolando's case alone, though we will here begin with it.

Rolando's reputation in the homeland was that of a womanizer, one who never seemed able or even interested in settling down with one woman. In exile however, it is not he who seduces Graciela, but she, for even if he were attracted to her or any of his

comrades' wives, he had never been disloyal to his friends in Argentina. The only difference now, and as a consequence of exile, is that "la Graciela de ahora es otra cosa. Y él también ha cambiado" (134). Exile has changed them both and now Rolando has become a man capable of commitment to one woman, but in doing so to his friend's wife, he will always be El Otro, (at least to one disapproving of his relationship with Graciela and about which we may assume that the narrator does).[18] Graciela has also changed, she is a woman of economic independence, one who supports herself and her daughter without a man, and one who initiates relations with Rolando- embracing her other sexual self, which with Santiago was repressed.

Santiago's incarceration in Uruguay also designates him as the 'other,' the one experiencing another type of exile, that of inner exile- about which he writes to Graciela that, "algún día abandonaré este raro exlio" (78). Both he and Graciela experience their own type of exile while separated from each other, and therefore, when Santiago is freed from prison, catalogued in the novel under the chapter titles of "extramuros," he actually is not liberated from the muros (walls) that have been built in the host land by Graciela, (closing him out of the relationship with her, though it is true, that he too has built his own walls, excluding her from secrets of his past). In order to 'document' the damage inflicted upon couples who have been separated like Graciela and Santigo, Benedetti includes a chapter about a couple, friends of Rolando, who when the woman is released

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[18] We could hypothesize that Don Rafael is the potential narrator of the story, given that he uses the term "heridos y contusos" in one of his dialogues and he certainly would not look auspiciously upon Rolando, but rather as the 'other' who destroy's his son's family.

after six years of incarceration is afraid that her boyfriend will no longer have an interest in her since she has dramatically changed physically as a consequence of the torture sessions. She sends him a picture, and he tells Rolando, "...nunca imaginé que el estar feliz incluyera ¿sabes? tanta tristeza" (180).

Exile changes everyone, it may begin in the homeland with the subtle and often unconscious changes that progressively develop and transform the individual in the host land until one's identity is comprised not only of that which was expressed in the homeland but also new manifestations of the hitherto unexplored 'other' within. The combination of the two may perplex the individual as to which manifestation is his/her real self, noted by Don Rafael, "Pero también cabe la posibilidad de que el verdadero Rafael Aguirre sea éste, el insoportable, el pesado, el retórico, y que en cambio el otro Rafael Aguirre, el que disfruta haciendo juegos de palabras y se burla un poco de los demás y bastante de sí mismo, sea en realidad una máscara del otro" (168-9). But, in exile, the individual is both the same and 'other,' they live with respect to their identity in a liminal status, as with so many other facets of their lives away from home.

For the young, exile may represent an expedited rite of initiation from adolescence to adulthood, as in the case of Lucho: "No me gusta decir de mí mismo que era un 'niño', porque mi papi nos dijo que desde ahora en adelante se había acabado la niñez para nosotros. . . Que las cosas iban a ser muy duras, y que teníamos que portarnos desde ya como hombres. Que no anduviéramos pidiendo cosas porque no nos alcanzaba para comer" (44). Childhood is left behind as the harsh realities of life suddenly become a

personal struggle for survival.[19]

The physical form of Benedetti's novel, with its diverse chapters, also mirrors the theme of 'other' with its incorporation of the sections entitled 'Exilios,', which refer directly to the author Benedetti's own personal experiences. Mario Benedetti writes about the events leading up to and including his own exile, and provides chapters for them in his novel Primavera. As testified in the recent Autobiografía sobre Benedetti, that which is described in the first two and last entries of "Exilios" are verifiable as autobiographic details of Benedetti's life. The other remaining six include a poem, a type of eulogy, and the encounter of other exiles, friends or unknown acquaintances, trying to find a place to call home, away from home. Given that these entries appear in italics and are about Benedetti's life experiences, the reader must reevaluate the novel as a hybrid creation in which both fact and fiction serve a creative need of the exiled author, making both real and unreal the exile experience.

By incorporating his own personal voice, Benedetti creates another 'other' within the novel. In fact, given the question of loyalties in the novel-that of Graciela to her husband, that of Rolando to his friend, that of Santiago to his cousin, that of Don Rafael to his son, that of Beatriz to her mother and father, one begins to wonder if in fact not only Rolando or even Benedetti's voices in the novel represent the 'other' but that all to some degree are the 'other' in each other's eyes.

If, as Santiago explains, one positive element can be obtained from exile-inner

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[19] Lucho's younger brother also loses some of his innocence, in fact, he is so untrustworthy of others (not to mention hungry) that when they leave the house with their sandwiches for lunch at school, he immediately eats his.

exile- it is that of getting to know oneself better than before, to understand the necessary silences required for a successful relationship, such as that of sharing quarters with a stranger. Rolando echos this philosophy when he tells Graciela that they must embrace silence with respect to their thoughts about Santiago for they have spoken all they can about him. Don Rafael asks that his daughter-in-law remain silent in her letters to Santiago with respect to her affair with Rolando. Silence is a powerful tool in the novel, it can hold pieces together sometimes better than words can. Of course, silence does not guarantee safety or freedom, in fact it often speaks more about the personal and collective vicissitudes of exile than words spoken or written can. Herein lies the superb narrative technique of Benedetti's: not to tell too much, but to hold on to enough silence about his own experiences and those to come between Graciela, Rolando and Santiago, for the reader to imagine the underlying un-vocalized suffering caused by exile.

In Skármeta's No pasó nada, the author also bases his own experiences of exile to Germany in the creation of the novel. He became inspired to write the story after meeting a friend of his adolescent son who liked to write and play music. Skármeta realized, "nuestros muchachos navegaban fluidamente en un doble código: aceptaban los restos del nuevo ambiente y al mismo tiempo no se desafilaban del universo de sus padres" (21). The 'other' in Skármeta's novel, besides the Germans to the Chileans or the Chileans to the Germans, is the adolescent and the elderly, the at times overlooked young and old, who also endure the pangs of exile and the strenuous processes of (pseudo)incorporation into a new and foreign environment. Curiously Don Rafael and Lucho explore more in the new land than the generation of the latter's parents. In fact, Lucho and Don Rafael

seem at times more in tune to the suffering of others than Lucho's parents with respect to the younger and older generations. Lucho recalls, "cuando la mami y el papi se encerraban a llorar con las noticias de Chile, a mí me daba pena por ellos, y como soy medio sentimental, lloraba" (110). On the other hand, when Lucho's father sees his son crying he tells him "La próxima vez que lo pille llorando le voy a sacar la chucha para que llore con ganas. ¿Entendió?" (111) There is little understanding on the part of Lucho's parents with respect to their children's behavior or exilic difficulties, just as in Benedetti's novel no one seems too concerned about how Don Rafael makes on in the new land, though he is concerned about everyone else.

**(Pseudo)Integration**

Integration in the adopted country, as stated in the Introduction of this dissertation, is resisted by political exiles because they classify themselves as temporary inhabitants of the new land who are merely waiting to return home. Nevertheless, as they wait they almost inevitably have encounters with the native inhabitants. These encounters and even relationships, however, are with strings attached- to the homeland. For this reason the exiles' integration process can at best only be called one of a pseudo nature. In addition, the exiles may be unwelcome in the new land, they may be discouraged from forming their own groups there, they may be separated from the natives and they may even tell themselves that the return home is imminent in order to avoid confronting the subject all together. Barriers must be overcome, from the linguistic to the economic, political and social, to those involving one's own personal relationships with those who remained in the homeland versus those who have gone into exile as well.

Skármeta's novel while disclosing the struggles of an adolescent boy trying to fit into a foreign German environment, ends the story positively. Lucho fights and defeats Michael with a blaring knockout, but afterward invites his adversary to a pizza. They become friends, Michael learns about Chile, and becomes so interested that he decides the following week to attend a meeting of the Chile Comité. The 'other' is not that different after all from any one else; differences in skin color, language or culture exist but Skármeta's novel rejoices the ability of all to be able to overlook them, even after severe damages inflicted upon each other, to instead celebrate their common humanity. Just as Lucho's Greek friends were able to return home, Skármeta seems to suggest that hope too exists for the Chilean exiles, but meanwhile, they can try to become friends with their host countries, and once they get to know each other they can hopefully learn from each other as well. In the end, Lucho even wins the girl (Edith) who attends the Chilean march with her father and donates money to the cause.

Curiously, in Benedetti's novel one chapter is dedicated to the story of an Uruguayan family living in exile in Germany while the father is imprisoned back home. The children are able to gather the support of their classmates and their parents so that with enough influence, letters and money, they are able to persuade the Uruguayan government into releasing the father of the exiled family. But, not all stories about separated families in exile have happy endings. Santiago's future with Graciela and Beatriz in the same household doesn't appear to be auspicious. Becoming assimilated in the new society may require first, as Benedetti's novel suggests, the confrontation of one's past, whether to move forward or not, but always, as Don Rafael explains, "todo

comienzo es joven, y yo viejo rejuvenezco... Estoy condenado a rejuvenecer" (68). Being an exile involves the acceptance of becoming an-other, being born again to another experience, yet always aware of one's liminality, abiding somewhere in between the past, and the future, between the homeland and the new land, (therefore never quite integrated), living a double life of in-betweenness.

## Chapter Five

## Leaving Home: Héctor Tizón's La casa y el viento

Héctor Tizón's 1982 novel, entitled La casa y el viento,[1] concerns the travels of a man who experiences one last time and records for future reference in a diary those places and people dear to him before he permanently leaves his country. His departure is voluntary but his country's growing dictatorial climate during Argentina's Proceso de Reorganización persuades him to bid goodbye to all that he loves.[2] Once he closes the doors to his home, he enters the zone of exile and displacement, although he still remains sheltered within the familiarity of his homeland, a condition different from others who physically crossed the borders, but one clearly experienced by Tizón who regularly considered himself an exile within his own country.

The homeland of the author Héctor Tizón is Argentina's Northwestern province of Jujuy and the town of Yala where he was born in 1929.[3] He started attending school around the age of nine (Gilio 44) and learned shortly thereafter how to read and write. Just a few years later his stories were being published in the local newspapers. The vignettes he wrote as an adolescent marked the beginning of his literary career that today includes more than a dozen novels and collections of short stories. Tizón's works have

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[1] Its publication, however, did not occur until 1984, after democracy was reestablished in Argentina.

[2] "No quise seguir viviendo entre violentos y asesinos . . ." (175)

[3] The provinces of Jujuy, Salta, Catamarca, Tucumán and Santiago del Estero form the area denominated as Northwestern Argentina (Noroeste Argentino, NOA).

been translated into a number of languages, and he has received accolades from the Academia Nacional de las Letras, Consagración, and the Gran Premio 2000 del Fondo Nacional de las Artes, to list only a few. By profession he is not only an acclaimed author, he has also served as a diplomat, a lawyer, and currently he presides as judge to the Supreme Court of Jujuy.[4]

Until relatively recently, the literature produced by Argentine writers who lived beyond the parameters of Buenos Aires was negatively stigmatized as 'regionalist' by publishing houses located within the capital. Originally used as a term to classify nineteenth-century literature reflecting the so-called exoticism of the country side, it later became associated with provincial writings. The utilization of terminologies that divided Argentine literature according to geographical location, where that from Buenos Aires was associated with the 'center' or the 'nation' and that beyond its borders was considered 'regional,' demonstrate an historical reality of inclusions and exclusions within the Argentine national construct that date back to the times of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (i.e., 'la civilización' versus 'la barbarie'-city against countryside), and include such other dichotomies as South-North, urban-rural and white-mestizo(Indian). Héctor Tizón, like other writers from the provinces, addresses these dualities and provides a space and voice for the second of the hyphenated elements, while never ignoring the demands of an audience beyond the local milieu. For a variety of reasons, including the

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[4] In an interview Tizón confesses the economic need that led him to search beyond the vocation as writer in order to survive: "Los que viven de la literatura son los editores, y no todos. Para seguir sobre el nivel de flotación hago lo que puedo. Y no me quejo" (Encuesta 370).

artists' treatment of universal themes, the creation of such groups as La Carpa[5] and the journal Tarja[6], publishing houses in Buenos Aires in the 1960's finally became more accepting of these authors and began to publish them alongside those from the capital.[7] But, even as these writers consciously addressed the universal, embedded within their narratives are images, geographic spaces, and traditions pertaining to the provinces from which the Northwestern writers received their inspiration.[8] In Héctor Tizón's fiction,

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[5] In the 1940s intellectuals from Tucumán, organized a group known as La Carpa with the objective to revolutionize the traditional literary aesthetic produced by the interior. They declared an official break from the folkloric tendencies of their predecessors: "... proclamamos nuestro divorcio con esa floración de 'poetas folkloristas' que ensucian las expresiones del arte y del saber popular utilizándolas de ingredientes supletorios de su impotencia lírica."(Prólogo a la *Muestra colectiva de poemas*, Tucumán, La Carpa, 1944. Cuaderno número 3. Reproducido en David Lagmanovich, *La literatura del noroeste argentino*, Rosario, Editorial Biblioteca, 1974.) Tizón joined the movement and participated in the 1955 journal, Tarja, which received the collaboration of writers from the provinces representing all genres of literature.

[6] The journal Tarja survived for six years (1955-1961). During that time it socially denounced the secondary status relegated to the interior regions of Argentina by the centralized government in Buenos Aires. They strove to reintegrate their cultural image into the national construct by publishing texts written in indigenous languages (quechua) and fictionalizing figures common to the social fabric of the Northwestern region such as, "el indio," and "el changador." (Poderti 249).

[7] The fear of being categorized as a writer of 'regionalist' literature however, was a common sentiment among authors from the provinces. Tizón explains: "Quería huir, yo también, de aquello que después señaló Arguedas: del peligro del regionalismo que contamina la obra y la cerca o engrilla y acota...Yo quería ser un cronista de mi pueblo, pero narrar con un instrumento universal" (Las palabras 509).

[8] In the Carpa's first publication the authors promulgated a direct connection between the earth and literature: "Creemos que la poesía es flor de la tierra. . . " (Lagmanovich 80).

inspiration is found in the Argentine Highland of the Puna.[9]

Tizón's status as an author who writes beyond the capital in the province of Jujuy (2000 km from Buenos Aires) and the fact that he and the Northwestern people historically have had a stronger connection to Peruvian culture[10] than to that of Argentina, incline him to feel doubly marginalized within his own country: "Pero es más; yo siempre me sentí un exiliado dentro de lo que se llama la Argentina. Yo fundamentalmente me considero, y soy, un escritor de los bordes, un escritor de frontera" (Buchanan 42 ). Given the historical and political context of the Northwest, it becomes clear that Tizón writes from a borderland space that belongs to two cultural traditions, in

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[9] The Puna is Argentina's Northwestern highland that reaches between 2000 and 4500 meters. It is part of the Andean Altiplano, stretching into western Bolivia, southern Peru and eastern Chile. The climate within Argentina's Puna is harsh and desertic. Its sparse rainfall and drastic fluctuation of temperatures limit vegetation to primarily grains and cacti.

The inhabitants of Argentina's Puna are primarily mestizos and indigenous peoples. During the Inca Empire the native Apatama, Casabindo and Cochinoca adopted the traditions and language (Quechua) of their conquerors (Hernández 125). Today an estimated 20,000 people in Jujuy and Salta speak Quechua and Aymara (Klein 15) and approximately half of the Northwestern Amerindians are bilingual speakers of Spanish and an autochthonous language (Klein 1).

[10] During colonialism, Argentina's Northwestern territory became central in the route to and from Lima, the nearest city from which Spain would conduct its trade and business with the southern viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata. Historically, Spain formed this fourth and last territory in the Americas by dividing the already existing Peruvian viceroyalty in half, creating a new area that would include modern Argentina, southern Bolivia, Uruguay and Paraguay. Tizón elucidates the consequences of this political act by the Spanish government for the peoples of Argentina's Northwest: "nos partió a nosotros, trazando un límite caprichoso y meramente administrativo, como lo son casi todos los límites políticos, y desde entonces, los que nacimos en esa zona, nos preguntamos a cuál cultura pertenecemos" (Equívocos 120). His personal response to this question of identity is the, "cultura alto-peruana, no . . . la cultura del resto del país o pampeana." (Ibid, 121).

a land where dualities coexist, though not necessarily in harmony.

For Tizón, the exile he experiences at home would later become physical exile with the military coup of 1976 when he and his family resided in Spain, until the restoration of democracy in 1983. Just a year before being exiled, in an interview with María Esther Gilio he explained how difficult it was for him to write away from his home, "Me resulta difícil escribir fuera de aquí en México o París porque no les veo las caras a la gente ni escucho cómo habla. No me cruzo con mis personajes" (94).[11] Accustomed to writing within the borders of his own land, writing beyond them proved to be a formidable task; during his six-year exile, though he wrote a number of non-fictional essays, he produced only one novel. In a 1999 interview he recalled the creative process of La casa y el viento:

> Recuerdo que pensé que no iba a poder volver nunca a la Argentina y que tampoco podía convertirme yo en español. Sentí que mi destino era no escribir más. Pero pensé también que no podía irme así, que tenía que despedirme. Entonces, como quien cuenta la historia de un hombre que se exilia y para poder hacerlo recorre todo su mundo, conté los lugares que fueron míos, los de mi infancia y mi juventud. Le fui diciendo adiós a todo. Eso fue lo que después se llamó *La casa y el viento*. No fue el último libro sino el comienzo del fin del exilio y la recuperación de mi lugar, que es éste. (El viajante 5)

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[11] Quoted from Adrián Pablo Massei's book, Héctor Tizón: Una escritura desde el margen.

As professed by Tizón, this novel contains a certain amount of autobiographical information (both narrator and author are lawyers who leave their homeland as a consequence of the increasing violence, they both recur to the written word to record their experiences, and they both share a number of Tizón's own memories), but by creating a fictional rendition of exile, the exiled author not only potentially liberates himself from directly recounting the trauma of his own personal exilic experiences, the historical/factual becomes transcended through the medium of art.

The innominate narrator makes his journey north to the province of Jujuy where he was raised as a child, for like so many others before him, he too, left the North in search of a better economic future in the South, [12] (namely, Buenos Aires), returning to his roots before what he believes will be a permanent[13] departure from Argentina. The narrator's journey to the border is one without premeditated direction or specific itinerary: "Hacia dónde voy? Mis pies lo sabrán" (94). Utilizing various means of transportation: train, bus, cart, car, mule, and his own feet, the narrator makes what could be a short and efficient crossing of the border, a much longer trip that lasts over a month[14], involving the approach and subsequent retreat from the border to areas south of it. The narrator begins

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[12] The loss of the young to the allure of a better economic life in Buenos Aires, as presented in the novel, affects the Northwest in myriad ways, particularly the disruption of the local communities and their communal knowledge.

[13] At the beginning of his journey he writes: "No regresaré, me dije. No volveré nunca más. . ." (32).

[14] Because the narrator does not keep a precise account of the time period spent at each leg of his journey, I have approximated a month for his travels, though it could be longer, but not much shorter.

the account of his travels at the train station in Jujuy. He moves north to Humahuaca, then northwest to a nameless mine and lake in the area of Rinconada, then farther north to Casira (about 5 km from the border to Bolivia). He glides the Argentine-Bolivian border moving east to La Quiaca and back west to Casira again. His brush with the other side is interrupted when he decides to "deambular" (stroll) south passing through the following desert towns: Acoite, Abra de Quera, Cerrillos, and Pozuelo. Afterward he returns north to Yavi, a bit east of La Quiaca, and from there he continues north ("rumbeando") until he finally crosses into Bolivia, where the story about his exilic journey suddenly stops.[15]

Although the narrator intentionally travels through the Northwest, with the objective of eventually crossing the border, he does so, as explained above, without any specific route in mind.[16] Why then does he on numerous occasions feel as if he has taken the wrong path, "el camino equivocado?" By having decided not to continue living in a land of dictatorship, he takes the path less traveled, on a route that separates him from those who stay behind. It's a decision that he questions to the end and one that deeply concerns him because he believes that leaving "es un acto de desamor" (147). The narrator, like all exiles, must somehow reconcile the act of abandoning his own land with the love he still feels for it.

In much of the literature about the exilic experience the exiled character has already crossed the border. Tizón's novel, in contrast, explores the very initial stages of

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[15] From the epilogue we learn that his final destination is one of a cold climate by the sea, but the narrative does not explain how, why, or when he arrived there.

[16] For example, he only stays in Humahuaca because a fellow traveler on the train asked him if he would be staying there.

the exilic experience involving the time period before the physical crossing of the geographic threshold of the native land into the unknown. What the reader might construe to be the most difficult of first steps has already been taken by the narrator: he has abandoned his home and village, knowing, or at least believing, that he would never see them again.[17] In contrast, however, the narrator of La casa y el viento finds it even more difficult to be torn from his physical and social environment, particularly that of his childhood in the Northwest, producing thus, the procrastination of his departure. As time passes, he searches for excuses to prolong his journey- "aún no estaba madura la partida" (76), he needed to accumulate more facts, experience more rendezvous with old acquaintances, and fill in certain personal gaps in order to "conformar el inventario de mi adiós" (76-77).

This 'inventario' is recorded by the narrator in a travel diary ("testimonio" as he designates it on page 152), which in turn represents the corpus of the novel for the reader (chapters 1-4). Its order and arrangement are decided by the narrator once he crosses the border. From the new land he writes three additional pieces: the fifth and last chapter entitled, "Desde lejos," a prologue that lacks a title, and the initial page of the novel that contains two epigraphs-one alluding to the winds of history that can easily blow away one's home and the other referring to an unconscionable homeland that ejects those who

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[17] Often he imagines what his neighbors will think of him once they realize he is gone: "Muy pronto todos hablarían de mi desparición como una fuga hacia la frontera" (32). Leaving, therefore, may be construed as an act of cowardice; only toward the end of his travels does he refer to his departure as an 'exilio' (152).

love it.[18] In the 2001 edition by Alfaguara, which claims to provide the 'definitive edition' of the novel, an addendum entitled "La casa a lo lejos," written by Tizón in the year 2000, is included just after the epigraphs. One would expect it to be included before the epigraphs, and so the question must be asked about its placement, as with the fifth chapter, a type of epilogue, that was grouped within the travel diary section.

The narrator as we have seen thus far, lives his last days within the borderlands of his native province, where he crosses over into cultural and psychological zones of the self that his fellow compatriots do not regularly explore or perhaps are not provided with the opportunity or interest to do so. As a consequence, the organization of the novel reflects the narrator's (and the author's) own experience of movement with respect to traditional borders. By placing "La casa a lo lejos" after the epigraphs the novel contains two subsequent prologues, one belonging to the original text and this *a posteriori* addendum juxtaposed right before it. In reality though, even the chapters that take place within the homeland, as mentioned above, are organized and reedited by the protagonist from exile, and therefore the inclusion of the fifth chapter among the previous four, accentuates the *a posteriori* assembling of the novel as a whole. In this sense the external structure complements the unplanned, goal-less uncertainty and anxiety of this agent of the exile experience.

**Writing and Denouncing**

In the prologue the narrator writes about his traveling intentions: "Pero antes de huír quería ver lo que dejaba, cargar mi corazón de imágenes para no contar ya mi vida en

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[18] The epigraphs are by Louis Guillaume and Salvador Espriu respectively.

años sino en montañas, en gestos, en infinitos rostros; nunca en cifras sino en ternuras, en furores, en penas y alegrías. La áspera historia de mi pueblo" (16). In order to facilitate recalling details about the homeland once away from it, the narrator records information about himself and his people, penetrating into the private spaces of the homeland and enjoying the warmth of his compatriots' homes and their conversations.

The memories that he wants to take with him beyond the homeland will eventually become "convertida[s] en palabras porque es en las palabras donde nuestro pasado perdura" (174). The transition to paper is a small but difficult step that the narrator recognizes early on. While critics have noted that, "la escritura de la memoria es una necesidad para la supervivencia" (Martínez Gutiérrez 327), choosing what to write and how to read these memories becomes an issue for the narrator who realizes the impossibility of fully rendering memories and the realities from which they emanated to written discourse.

Only a fragmented reality can be translated to paper and realizing this, the first time the protagonist makes reference to the act of writing, he explains: "Sé que lo que de noche escribo en estos cuadernos no es la verdad. O, al menos, no es toda la verdad, sino retazos, trozos de la vida aparente, de mi vida y la de los otros, que de pronto vuelven a narrarse. ¿Pero acaso la historia no es eso?" (105). Only 'trozos,' pieces of reality can be reconstructed in his notebook, because writing about the past requires a process of selection that then depends on the subjectivity of the individual writing it. He discovers not only the difficulty in reflecting truth via written discourse, but the writing process itself involves frustration ("tampoco pude escribir un sólo párrafo") and attentive

organization that at times he fails to conquer.[19] His words "se borran o confunden" and what was no longer is. His words written in pencil disappear and with them the past. Given the deceptions embedded within the written word and the impossible challenge to depict reality in its entirety, the narrator eventually believes that truth can be found only in the body (129).

However, in a dictatorship even that which the body experiences and what the senses perceive is disavowed by the military juntas: "News reports failed to mention the escalating number of disappearances that occurred daily throughout the country. The make-believe world ...became the official version of reality and was relentlessly transmitted through the media" (Taylor 98). The narrator's words then reclaim what the body, both personal and collective, knows to be true under the dictatorship. Although he writes about his own travels, the images he records in his diary are tainted with injustices and discriminations inflicted against those deemed perilous to the establishment. He documents the infiltration of dictatorship into both the public and private spheres and he personalizes examples of the terror and violence, under which people are forced to live.

The narrator of the travel diary keeps an account of his travels through the Puna, which includes his reflections and experiences, and the dialogues he engaged in with the mostly indigenous peoples he encountered. He records the stories of the lives of two mythic figures, Belindo and the 'foreigner' in Yavi (to be examined below), which exemplify the richness of the oral discourse of the Puna. However, he barely provides

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[19] The narrator's experience is contrasted to that of Don Placido's (Yavi's commissioner) who sets time aside for organizing his papers.

any information about his own personal relationships. Only very late in the narrative does he even mention an immediate family. In Yavi he indicates that he was once married but not until page 127 does he makes reference to his children which emerges as he recounts a story about a friend of theirs who was tortured by the military and who by some miracle lived to tell the story. Sixteen pages before the ending of his travels, he alludes to the death of his wife and one son, but he does not explain how they died.[20]

Most of the stories told about the narrator's life pertain to the time period of his early childhood. Certain people might trigger a memory, the owner of a prostitute house who looks much like a friend of his father's, or the 'foreigner' in Casira who reminds him of the childhood stories that taught him to fear strangers who supposedly steal little children from the Puna. The weather itself might even lead to remembering such events, as the loving touch between his father and his school teacher on a thunderous afternoon. Introducing these memories sometimes occurs without any formal transition or introduction in the narrative. The reader must continue reading in order to realize that the information pertains not to the present, but rather to the narrator's past. In these ways, the narrator weaves a story of past and present that together becomes both a diary of memory

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[20] He then awakes from a nightmare in which his wife committed suicide, but, of course, the reader does not know if his dream reflects the reality of her death, or not. The lack of information about his family may seem to be consciously omitted by the protagonist in order to avoid the highly emotional sentiments of having lost them. His journey after all is taken alone, without any family members. Another possibility for being reticent could be to protect his family from any harm that might come to them through the discovery/reading of his notes by agents of the dictatorship, which could occur either by confiscating his notes while within the borders of Argentina, or potentially through their publication (it seems likely that the narrator's organization of the notes into the format of a book is done with the intention that they become public).

and one of travel.

The narrator of the prologue and epilogue writes these particular sections from exile in an effort to contextualize the travel diary. Through them we learn that the narrator did indeed cross the border, to a land where he now feels at peace with himself and his surroundings (171). Even with the pain of displacement, he tries to remain positive: "...he abandonado una forma de vida que no recobraré jamás, pero no he roto mis lazos con los seres humanos. Desde este mismo día me he dispuesto a pensar y aun a soñar, si es que esto es posible, en cosas sencillas ¿qué más es la vida?" (172). In other words, years of exile have not made the experience any easier, but "este mismo día" he decides to make an effort to change his outlook, realizing that while "un soplo desvaneció mi casa... ahora sé que aquella casa todavía está aquí, erigida en mi corazón" (175), a statement that brings the epigraph by Guillaume full circle. In Julia Kristeva's Strangers to Ourselves, she categorizes two types of foreigners as those "who waste away in an agonizing struggle between what no longer is and what will never be...they are not necessarily defeatists, they often become the best of ironists," and "those who transcend: living neither before nor now but beyond...they are believers, and they sometimes ripen into skeptics" (10). Tizón's protagonist, a believer, seems to fall into the second category, perhaps like Tizón himself who confessed that writing La casa helped him "quitármela [la casa] de encima... y empecé a estar seguro de ello cuando estuve convencido de que nada vuelve, que el regreso no existe" (prologue 13).

Writing serves many functions, many of which are contradictory (upholding the status quo versus challenging it, elevating the soul or debasing it). In addition to the

personal catharsis mentioned above, the narrator fulfills another significant function- reclaiming a public and political voice from exile that was denied him within the borders of his own country. By literally naming the atrocities committed by the dictatorship and the climate of fear suffocating those who live under it, the narrator defies the dictatorial silence imposed upon his people. The military recurred to both covert and overt operations in purging the country of 'subversives,' making sure that the political heterogeneous body within the country was muffled to the point that only the dictatorship's own voice could be heard, utilizing horrendous methods of torture, disappearances, and assassinations in order to obtain their objective, to which Tizón's protagonist makes clear and poignant reference.

One way to impugn the dictatorship would be to self-impose one's own disappearance, as enacted by Tizón's narrator, before the system does. By vanishing though, the narrator becomes a fugitive of dictatorship, and his fear entices him to hide from others even if he has done nothing wrong. Wrongdoing, however is arbitrarily determined by the dictatorship and might be construed as something as simple as owning a map, like his friend Rogelio who was arrested by the police and never returned home.

> -Vinieron ellos y revisaron por aquí, la casa y la oficina; urgaron por todas partes y se llevaron un montón de papeles y libros. El era muy leído y tenía todo eso; y un mapa.
> -¿Un mapa?
> -Sí. Del mundo.
> La mujer dijo:
> -Por algo será, pues. (40)

Rogelio, a literate man, who happened to own a few books and a map, has suddenly disappeared. No one seems to find this occurrence much out of the ordinary. The empty

explanation of approval expressed by the female interlocutor who believes this man's arrest must be just, exemplifies the extent to which the discourse of those in power could actually become inculcated within the minds of its subjects. She, like many others, becomes a model for the regime as one who does not question the questionable but instead simply accepts an upside-down world for one the military would have all believe is right-side-up.

Writing becomes the only weapon of defense for an innocent people who have been erased from the body politic, be it through expatriation, like the narrator, or through other annihilations within the country's own borders.[21] Tizón's novel refrains from naming people or political parties in describing a dictatorial milieu that transcends local geography, but the specific references to the Northwest definitively root the novel in Argentina. In this dual manner, Tizón addresses those elements of dictatorship that plague not only his own land, but possibly, any nation.

Through his writing the narrator also contests the dictatorship's idea of nation, which is predicated on the suppression of diversity, exclusions, and eliminations of 'otherness.' Tizón shatters this perverse creation of reality by bringing to the forefront the excluded bodies of Argentina. In this manner, the peoples of the Puna, central to La casa y el viento counter the regime's imposed artificial homogeneity.[22]

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[21] ". . . que un pequeño papel escrito, una palabra, malogra el sueño del verdugo" (152).

[22] About the subject of nationality within dictatorships Amy Kaminsky writes, "Thus, far from proposing a native-born inhabitant's natural connection to nation, repressive regimes such as Videla's in Argentina and Pinochet's in Chile enforce their own performative, and often racialized, versions of who belongs to the nation, and by

At the initiation of the narrator's journey he describes an asphyxiating atmosphere of terror. At a provincial train station waiting for the next train that will take him away from home, he observes, "sobre el muro de la estación, entre dos puertas, hay un cartel que comienza con la palabra DENUNCIELOS. El cartel tiene los colores de la bandera nacional" (19). Although the poster continues with more words than those recorded in the travel diary, the message of this one word in bold letters atop the colors of the national flag, suffices. The colors of the flag are not specified and by this time the reader has not been provided with enough information to deduce the precise locale of the novel. The flag of any nation with such an ominous imperative exemplifies the intentional creation of a national division of its people, "us" versus "them." The authorities must contend with all those who do not fit within the standards of the inclusive group and they would do with these 'others' as they saw fit. Unification of the nation under the military regime depends then on a homogeneous construction of acquiescent, submissive citizens. Under such a system families and neighbors are coerced into becoming suspicious of each other, fomenting a society of mistrust and apprehension, as evidenced earlier with the female's response about Rogelio.

The novel both commences and ends with disappearances. The day before the narrator makes a decision to cross the border, the police enter the schoolhouse where he is staying and out of panic he hides.[23] It turns out that they are looking for another man, a

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reciprocity, to whom the nation belongs" (27).

[23] This is not the first time the narrator hides out of fear. He did so once before in an open market believing that he was being followed. His actions reveal the extent to which fear had controlled the actions of people living under dictatorship. In the narrator's

trucker named Amadeo, who happens to be amorously involved with the school teacher there. When they are leaving she asks them again:

> --¿A quién dice que buscan?
> El oficial ya se iba.
> --No importa-dijo-.En realidad, ya lo cazamos ayer. Sólo, de paso, queríamos echar un vistazo por aquí. Ya volveremos." (167)

No information is provided as to the reason for detaining Amadeo, and no questions about his detainment are asked. Protest is silenced through fear of reprisals. The police forcefully impose their presence without permission, and they likewise investigate the premise, informing her that she must comply with subsequent intrusions that will occur at their disclosure. Tizón demonstrates again here the extent to which dictatorships intentionally invade not only public spaces but the private spaces of one's home. Nowhere can one escape the dictatorial omnipresence that invades even the most rural, desolate and intimate of areas. As shown here, once the authorities have taken someone into their custody, the particular individual loses his/her identity and becomes part of a collective, disposable and nameless enemy. Before the protagonist loses anymore than he has already lost, early that next morning, before sunrise, he crosses the border.

**The Other Within**

The Conscious Realization of the 'Other'

One's sense of self is not constructed in isolation; it comes into being through a process of interactions with one's environment-social, environmental, political and historical. From the private confines of the home to the public sphere beyond, identity is

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case, it certainly affected his decision to leave Argentina, though he curiously does not directly refer to it.

forged not only in the way we see ourselves but also in the way others perceive us (Taylor 92). In the case of exile, identity becomes an issue, for no longer can the exile depend on the homeland from which s/he is now severed, to reinforce his/her concept of self. As such, the exile's identity comes into question within the new environment, especially one that imposes such ostracizing classifications as 'marginal,' 'other,' or 'foreigner.' With respect to the narrator of La casa, his sense of self comes into play already within his own homeland. As he journeys toward the border he finds himself in a liminal state between the old self as defined by what he is leaving behind and a new self, not yet formed.

The narrator represents every person who loses his/her identity as a consequence of deracination. Stripped of his old identity, (he even lacks a name), he no longer belongs to any particular group, but as such, he begins to empathize with people who have been figuratively exiled within the country he is about to flee.

While still in Argentina, however, the narrator is distraught about his identity; he recognizes that he changes and that on occasion he becomes someone not quite himself, one who he denominates as the 'other.' Kristeva in Strangers to Ourselves, makes the case that, "the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrecks our abode, the time in which understanding and affinity founder" (1). This 'other,' this foreigner, "comes in when the consciousness of my difference arises" (ibid), which for the exile occurs precisely upon realizing that s/he will no longer form part of a former group, society, or nation. Indeed, in the first paragraphs of the narrator's prologue he acknowledges the fact that his decision to leave his country would be "un acto irreparable" (15) and it certainly is with respect to his identity. Once the 'other' within

becomes unleashed, so to speak, he cannot configure his identity to return to its former 'natural' state. Particularly curious in Tizón's novel is that the protagonist refers to his exile as a 'fuga,' that he is a 'fugitivo,' a fugitive not only of a dictatorial state that represses and strangles the plurality of voices from within its borders, but also, I believe, a fugitive of himself, from the 'other' within, of whom he is frightened and perplexed, but who nevertheless becomes a part of his identity.

The first time he consciously enunciates the acknowledgment of the possible manifestation of his 'otro' occurs in a foreign environment while alone in the room of a Humahuaca hotel, named Numancia, a name that recalls the mass suicide of the Numancians under Roman occupation in Spain, and which is fitting here because the protagonist's sense of self as understood until now has died. From his hotel room he goes out to the balcony and almost gives into the temptation to become an-other by spying on his neighbors: "En la soledad siempre podemos ser otro" (31). He did not, on this occasion, allow the 'other' to manifest itself, but it is significant in that he is completely aware that the 'other' within the self not only exists but it can dominate one's familiar identity under certain circumstances. He chooses here not to succumb to this 'other,' for he is able to consciously control it; in other cases, however, it will happen almost involuntarily.

The first time the narrator is actually aware of the 'other' taking over his customary self, he is at a lake shooting ducks with his friend Juan. The narrator missed every shot he took at them, and later with Juan when he vents his frustration at the birds ("Estos patos de mierda" 45) he felt that he had become an-other ("era otro" 45). Juan, a

man of mixed Indian and white blood, represents the union of man with nature; each time he contemplates his environment it is as if it were the first, and each time he kills he does not want the animal to die. In the past both men were usually successful at shooting game, but this time Juan believes that his friend failed because he wanted to kill the birds. a clear explanation that the narrator begins to feel the disruption of the relationship with the natural environment of which he will soon no longer be a part.

Already at the beginning of his journey his exilic state begins to take form and he finds himself out of touch, as much with the external natural forces, as with the internal ones. At night, after a celebration, confrontation and peaceful resolution between villagers and a foreigner staying among them in Casira, the narrator approaches an indigenous woman named Rosa, to whom he finds himself suddenly attracted. This was a new experience. He had shared her company before, but no such feeling arose. He lifts the corner of the straw mattress covering her as she sleeps. Surprised at his own actions, he wonders: "Pero yo mismo puedo, tan pronto, ser otro?" (73).

The narrator's 'other' manifests itself a third time in a house of prostitution in La Quiaca.[24] He converses for a while with the owner of the establishment, but when the latter leaves to respond to a phone call, the ensuing silence propitiates the manifestation of his 'other,' "Quedo otra vez solo, pero ya soy otro" (85). Being an-other encourages

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[24] The owner of the prostitute house/bar is based on a real figure and place. In an interview Tizón explains: "Una vez conocí al dueño de un burdel en el que había un cartel con letras de neón que decían: 'Recuerdos del 37.' 'Pero recuerdos de qué, cómo eran?' le preguntaba la gente. El siempre contestaba lo mismo: 'Aaaahhh.' 'Sí, pero, a ver, cuentemé, ¿por qué del 37?' Y él repetía: 'Aaaahhh.' Algo muy estupendo le había pasado ese año, pero nadie supo, salvo él, qué había sido." (Clarín 1999).

him to follow one of the prostitutes upstairs. Once in her room however, he suddenly feels ridiculous, perhaps due to the return of his usual self, and he decides to leave.

What the narrator covertly expresses through the 'other' in the previous two examples is a man detached from his own sexuality.[25] In this case, being an-other brings him in touch with those aspects of the self that have hitherto been denied by the subject. Though at times the encounter with his 'other' is a negative experience, it provides him with the opportunity to explore aspects of the self that otherwise would have gone unexamined. However, no dialogue occurs between the self and his 'other,' and no reflections are made as to the reason(s) for the 'other's' appearance.

The narrator's ease in becoming 'el otro,' manifests itself in a different manner in the town of Yavi. During his stay there, the narrator learns about a foreigner who had arrived decades before trying to make his fortune searching for gold. Two sisters, physically similar to each other, fell in love with him, and he eventually chose one for himself. When he died in a house fire, apparently started by the sister he rejected, the other sister went mad and was taken to the South. The one who lives in Yavi entertains the narrator in her home a few times. After hearing the details from the villagers about the two sisters and the foreigner with whom they fell in love, the narrator falls ill, loses weight, and physically becomes like this man from the past ("Soy ahora, también, un hombre flaco y macilento")-using the same adjectives to describe himself as were used by the villagers to describe the foreigner.

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[25] The death of his wife conceivably helps the reader to understand this change in behavior.

Indeed, it is in Yavi where for the first time in his own words he becomes, "casi un extranjero" (81), taking on the physical characteristics of the only other foreigner he could identify with. In Casira he learns about the repercussions of acquiring this status, though the people there do not consider him to be a foreigner. Instead, they vent their anger on another man labeled an 'extranjero' who, "ni siquiera ha dicho su nombre este jodido" (54)- a statement that could precisely be directed at the innominate narrator. The physical attack by the villagers of Casira on the 'extranjero' serves to warn the protagonist of potential difficulties he will have to confront once he crosses the border.

In another incident in Yavi, the narrator sees someone imitate his exact movements when walking in the fields; if he speeds up so does the other, if he slows down, the other does as well. Unable to speak with the man repeating his actions, the narrator finally turns around to go his own way, but when he looks back, in the man's place is now an old sheep.

With respect to the example that takes place in Yavi, past and present merge, neither 'foreigner' lasts in this town; both die-one literally, the other (the protagonist) figuratively begins to die to his old self. In the second example, in a more optimistic manner, though the narrator may leave the Puna, the Puna will continue to follow him in its many forms, wherever he goes.[26]

The Unconscious and Unnamed Dictatorial 'Other' Within

Although the narrator refuses to continue to live any longer under the reigns of an

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[26] He ends the novel by writing that he knows his 'home', "está aquí erigida en mi corazón" (175).

oppressive dictatorship, another authoritarian-dictatorial 'other' manifests within himself, but about whom he makes absolutely no declaration as being an 'otro.'

The more subtle forms of dictatorship are curiously emulated and documented by the narrator (spying, eavesdropping and lying) in his travel diary, though he does not, at least formally, recognize the connection between his own actions and those of the regime. If the military used the same discourse as the liberals to defend human rights while at the same time burning books and assassinating people (Osvaldo Bayer[27]), then the protagonist in an inverse situation, rejects dictatorship as he utilizes its tactics in the process of fleeing from it.

A primary task for the dictatorship became that of locating delinquents within the country and castigating them for their so-called crimes. Obtaining information about the nation's people and eliminating those who might possibly question the establishment became possible through both overt and clandestine efforts of espionage, including eavesdropping.

Whereas at the beginning of the narrator's journey he rejected the idea of spying on his neighbors, toward the middle of his journey at a hotel in La Quiaca, he decides to capitulate to this desire and eavesdrop on the people who entered the room adjacent to his own. What he listens to is an intimate conversation between a man and woman who fear for their lives as they are in the process of escaping from Argentina. They are on the run to the border, though they too have done nothing wrong, save, according to them, "no

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[27] For more information see his article, "Pequeño recordatorio para un país sin memoria" in Represión y reconstrucción de una cultura: El caso argentino. Ed. Saúl Sosnowski.

estar de acuerdo con ellos" (80). A difference in ideology with the dictatorship literally meant risking one's life. The private words between this couple are recorded in the narrator's travel diary, and although in the general scheme they represent the terror that all Argentine people experience under the dictatorship, the narrator, in effect by writing about them and in particular, by including one of their names (transcribed from their conversation), potentially incriminates the couple, as would occur if for some reason the police were to interrogate the narrator and confiscate his papers. More importantly though, he crosses into the personal space of his neighbors' room without their knowledge and makes public their words of intimacy.

The narrator's first night away from home is spent with the merchant, Sanromán, who sat next to him on the train to Humahuaca, where they share a room at the Hotel Numancia. During their time together, the narrator becomes conscious of the fact for the first time that the possible manifestation of his 'other' is fomented when alone, and though he is tempted to spy on his hotel neighbors when Sanromán goes for a walk, as explained above, he decides not to. What he does decide, however, is to spy on Sanromán: "Sanromán era demasiado locuaz, y lo había visto entrar en el cuartel de la gendarmería" (32). Suspicious of the fact that Sanromán had visited the police station, he searches through his suitcase looking for possible clues that might reveal Sanromán's identity, who did confess to once being a politician. He finds nothing in the suitcase that could possibly incriminate Sanromán as a governmental agent. The narrator's own action though are akin to one.

Like the dictatorship that penetrates into the private spaces of the nation's

citizens, here too, the narrator emulates this behavior by disrespecting his roommate's privacy. He leaves a visible trail of his steps by leaving the contents of the suitcase disorganized. Sanromán makes no reference to this fact later on, but actually reveals even more personal information about himself to the protagonist, possibly because he realizes the connection between the narrator's unease and his own visit to the police station. Sanromán explains to him that he has a daughter in Humahuaca who is dating a policeman, hence his visit there. She does not know that he is her father, but Sanromán believes that if he were to tell her the truth: "Ella no sería más feliz. No le falta nada ahora, y en eso de los sentimientos a veces es mejor lo que parece que lo que es" (37).

These words could also apply to the narrator, whose appearance seemed "mejor" than the man he demonstrated he was: a man who's ends justified his means, even against one who trusted him enough to share a hotel room without knowing the narrator's name. False appearances occur again with the protagonist when he lies to the school teacher with whom he stays almost two weeks, by telling her that he is a philologist, or by letting others believe that he is a merchant or a coal miner (149). At the school house he notes how the teacher automatically trusts him solely on the basis of his physical appearance: "Ella no me pregunta nada; confía en mis modales, en el color de mi piel, de mi barba, de mis ojos, o en la calidad de mis botas; en la historia acumulada de las imágenes" (153). The dictatorship also depended on creating a false appearance of normalcy to an international community that was beginning to ask questions about human rights in the country. In response, Argentina began for example, to emphasize women's rights by increasing their salaries, and admitting Vietnamese refugees into the country (Sheinin),

all the while causing the disappearance of Argentine citizens, most of whom were in their early 20's.

**Reading Dictatorship**

During the dirty war, and really under any type of dictatorship, those in power realize that language, especially as expressed in written discourse, has the potential to rouse and galvanize large populations, both literate and illiterate. The published word, given its permanency, and its potential to question and oppose the establishment, becomes then a primary target of censorship. The obligatory reading materials of society's most young and pliable minds are vigorously controlled, as the narrator observes during his stay with a school teacher who received a letter from the government mandating her to incinerate certain books that have been officially black-listed. She is liberated from this task only because the school does not own any of the books cited in the missive. Indeed, she informs the protagonist that it had been a number of years since the school received any new publications for the children. With this example Tizón demonstrates how the inhabitants of the interior are unequally treated by the governmental system; they do not receive the same teaching materials for their young as for those from Buenos Aires, whose school books were now considered objectionable by the military. Even the schoolteacher, a non-native to the region, pejoratively refers to her pupils as "animalitos," (154) when the narrator suggests that the children might help him in his field work as a philologist.

The narrator is unique in that instead of reading the one book he takes with him on his travels, he ends up writing one, the one we readers read. He does however, provide

himself with the opportunity to read while on his journey to the border, if even his numerous attempts to do so prove unsuccessful. During his last days in his native land, no book seems capable to compete with the profound magnetism he feels toward his surroundings, the images and sounds of the Northwest that he does his best to record for future reference in exile.

Curiously, he does not provide a title to the book he carries with him nor does he admit to a questioning stranger's knowledge about it. Yet, when Don Félix, an elderly peasant, asks him if the book he owns is the same one "que leen los curas" (60), he replies that it must be ("ha de ser el mismo"). In order to discover what book the narrator really carries with him we must jump ahead to the only clue he dispenses about it. Toward the end of his travels, while staying at the school house, he confesses to having deliberately *chosen* a particular book before leaving home and he quotes from it one line: "Ferox gens nullam vitam rati sine armis esse" (155). This Latin phrase comes from an historical treatise about the Roman Empire written by the Roman historian, Livy (Titus Livius). The quote from Livy's<u>The Dawn of the Roman Empire</u> (<u>Ab Urbe Candita</u>) refers to Marcus Porcius Cato's bitter military campaign in securing Spain from revolt by forbidding the inhabitants from bearing arms. Livy attests: "The Spaniards were so humiliated by this that many took their own lives -*they are a headstrong people, feeling a life without weapons to be meaningless*" (157, the italicized section is the English translation of the Latin quote). In other words, Livy asserts that the Spaniards preferred death to a life without the means to wage war. His text exemplifies the age-old tradition of the victors' writing and recording history in their favor, just as in the case of

Argentina under the dictatorship. However, it seems highly probable that like in the later cases of Numancia and Sagunto the Iberians committed suicide not because of their obstinacy or disillusionment of living a life without war, but rather, because they preferred death to accepting life under the rule of foreign intruders. The Roman Empire flourished by means of cooperative alliances: "In exchange for 'cooperation,' the Romans offered protection and self-rule. Those who remained loyal and contributed the most aid were given the highest privileges; those who wavered or deserted were punished or annihilated" (Greer 91). On the other hand, those peoples who preferred their independence saw the Romans simply as destroyers of liberty. If the narrator affirms that Don Félix's assumption that his own book and the Bible must be the same, it is with respect to the fact that Christianity, like the Roman empire expected its members/subjects to relinquish their hitherto respective spiritual and political liberties.

Those who preached the word, expected their new followers to adopt cultural changes in accordance with the particular religious institution they represented. When the Spaniards initiated their evangelization of Latin America, they considered it necessary to "borrar [del indio] todas las creencias de su medio cultural para inculcarle con firmeza la verdad de la fe en Jesucristo. Se usaría entonces el método de 'tábula rasa,' es decir, se le iniciaría en la doctrina como si en el indio no hubiera habido ninguna revelación del Señor y como si él no tuvierna ninguna verdad que le fuera propia." (Liboreiro 27). Over 500 years later, Tizón's novel addresses the continued struggle between the traditions of the indigenous peoples that were never completely eradicated by the Spaniards (still relatively newcomers to the Church in comparison to Christian Europe) and the Catholic

Church. The Second Vatican Council of 1962-65 again reiterated the Church's rejection of syncretism and its favoring of mainstream Catholic teaching and practice at the expense of popular 'folk Catholicism.' Of course, the degree of tolerance for accepting certain traditions of native cultures within Catholicism depends at the local level on the particular representative of the Catholic Church, especially at the level of the priesthood.[28] In La casa y el viento, the townspeople of Yavi explain to the narrator how in the past a particular town priest had prohibited his parishioners from listening or playing music, lighting bonfires or donning traditional indigenous clothing worn for Catholic religious festivities. Their lack of acquiescence led the priest to finally abandon his post, taking with him a number of precious material items belonging to the town church. Once the villagers caught up with him, they retrieved the town's possessions and left him alone in the paramo to fend for himself. In a scene akin to Fuenteovejuna, when the bishop ordered an investigation into the manner, no one claimed to know anything about the incident. The solidarity of the community defeated the oppressive rule of one representative of the religious establishment, but in many of the communities visited by the narrator, churches are empty and some towns even lack priests. In the novel, these men of the cloth are avaricious and unkind, interested only in their own well-being; they blame the natives for the inclement weather and for their own poverty, and they steal

[28] In Eduardo Galeano's Open Veins of Latin America he explains syncretism with respect to the Maya-Quiche culture and the Catholic Church upon the arrival of the conquistadors: "The Catholic religion assimilated a few magical and totemic aspects of the Maya religion in a vain attempt to submit to the Indian faith the conquistadors' ideology. The crushing of the original culture opened the way for syncretism" (50).

from their indigent, including the orphaned (Don Félix's case)[29] and the ill. The narrator's own deracination leads him to question the Almighty: "No, Dios no era el buen padre, sus dones eran siempre incongruentes y caprichosos. Sentí que odiaba el poder..." (44-45). What is admirable about Don Félix, however, is that even with the affirmation that the narrator potentially carries with him a document that he finds oppressive to his people, he nevertheless demonstrates a level of tolerance, acceptance and even friendship that, at least in the novel, was never reciprocated by those representing the Bible toward their parishioners.

The narrator commences his journey with one book, but later on he acquires a second, offered to him as a gift by Yavi's commissioner, Don Plácido, who sarcastically tells him, "Llévelo..Aquí ya nadie lee... Está prohibido" (139). Even though those from the town of Yavi have access to a public library, none of the inhabitants utilize it. While in principle the library is open to the public, no one can enter it without the commissioner, who holds the key to its building. When the narrator's efforts prove fruitless in finding information about a saint whose sculpted image adorns the local church, Don Plácido immediately blames the natives: "Quizás se lo llevaron hace mucho tiempo, cuando esto estaba abandonado y buena parte de los archivos, asientos de bautismos y casamientos fueron robados para encender fuego, o para otros usos vulgares"

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[29] The narrator's host in Casira, Don Félix, as a child lost his father. Before the father died he informed his son that the local priest has had in his possession their milking cow for three years, "en pago de unas misas que me le dará a mi alma mientras la vaca dure" (68). When Don Félix approaches the priest to retrieve the animal the latter replies that said cow had died, assuring him that, "Esa que estás viendo de lejos es solo parecida" (69).

(124). It must then be noted that the natives of Yavi did discriminate among the works and by burning the baptismal and marriage records, as well as a good portion of other archives, they destroyed a substantial record linking the people of the community to the Catholic Church, and the civil state. Their desire for independence from these two oppressive forces, resonates profoundly. But, through these actions, like the narrator, one could say that they emulate the tactics of the dictatorship, for both the military and the natives make those documents of interest to them disappear (just as they did with the priest above).

Though it is clear that among the natives they knew exactly what information they were burning, Don Placido's comment about the locals' lack of interest in reading still overlooks the educational and economic hardships of his fellow villagers. The highest rates of illiteracy in Argentina are concentrated in the Northwestern provinces, where both high percentages of rural and indigenous peoples live.[30] In Jujuy alone, 24% of the population is illiterate. (Padua 65). Over 60% of schools in the interior are privately owned and those that belong to the state are few and far between. (Padua 61). La casa y el viento portrays a people of great determination to educate their children, even if their young must walk many a mile to reach an educational institution. Regrettably, under a government that takes no active role in reducing the levels of illiteracy in the provinces or increasing the number of schools there, learning how to read is a feat many natives are unable to conquer. Instead, representatives of the government, like Don Plácido blame

[30] However, it should be noted that Argentina has one of the highest rates of literacy in the world, 94-96% (Padua).

the victims for the government's failures. If no one reads from the library it just may be because few are actually literate and of these, perhaps they refused to use this 'public' institution (only available via Don Plácido) in protestation against the centralized government's policies toward them.

**Translations**

Translations provide the means to understand a system foreign to one's own, be it cultural, linguistic or otherwise. The narrator expresses the necessity for this transaction for the first time after quoting Livy's text, when he confesses to having taken with him on his journey a Latin dictionary, should he require it in translating the historical treatise. Toward the end of his travels he spends his mornings "en cama y prefiero traducir a leer; o leer traduciendo" (157).

The innominate narrator can be compared to the dictionary he carries with him, for he becomes for the reader of his diary, a translator (due primarily to his liminal status), not of a written text, but of his own homeland, of its Northwestern peoples, and of the exilic experience. Of the written text, that is Livy's quote, he provides no translation. By refusing to do so he negates the victor's version of historical events. For what remains unacceptable is the manipulation of words by the victors, like the Latin quote cited by the narrator, in order to create a univocal and distorted version of history. The Latin quote serves as a reminder to the narrator that he must continue translating his experience and that of his peoples' in order to substantiate an alternative version to that provided by the ruling military. In this manner, though the protagonist abandons his

country, he does not abandon his country's polyphonous voices.[31]

The protagonist provides a space for the indigenous peoples by walking among them and recording his experiences with them in his diary. He presents a dual perspective of the native cultures of the Northwest by both observing how the outside world responds to them and how they respond to it. In the novel the "indios" are objects of prejudice and negatively stereotyped; even a soap salesman (Sanromán) whose clients include the indigenous peoples, claims that they are 'dirty' and 'unclean.' Don Plácido finds them to be "mezquinos y jodidos," and as seen earlier the school teacher claims her students are "animales." Society tends to objectify and dehumanize the indigenous peoples, by both educated and ignorant alike. In his travels, the narrator also encounters two children, who, when asked what town they are from, respond " Don Sixto Tolay," that is, not a place, but a person, the same man who owns the cows they tend.[32]

In comparison to the natives' treatment by the society at large, those natives the protagonist encounters in his travels always share with him their homes and what little provisions they own. Far from creating of them models of the 'bon savage,' Tizón depicts their human nature, at their best and at their worst. As seen earlier, the natives, just like the narrator, also resist the dictatorship/oppression, but on occasion emulate it as

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[31] I disagree with Celina Manzoni who writes, "Fuera de la tradición religiosa, aunque probablemente marcada por ella, la posesión del libro, como fetiche de la ilustración, conserva el prestigio del saber, de la tradición, del conocimiento de los que han sido" (34). With the translation of the quote from the author and book I provide above, the possession of said book represents the exact opposite.

[32] Tizón might base this scene on his own childhood experience: "Y Julián, un mulato de mi edad, compañero de juegos a escondidas, cuando él lograba escaparse de la vigilancia de su patrón, un terrateniente déspota" (Encuesta 366).

well (for example the woman in the mining town who thought that a disappeared man must have done something to deserve what happened to him; the indigenous peoples create the disappearance of a priest and they intentionally burn documents). In another example, a foreigner staying as a guest in Don Félix's home, is physically attacked by members of the community. Fear of the 'other' afflicts any and all groups of people, not just the majority or dominant race against a minority, but vice-versa as well. When a voice of reason intervenes, like Don Félix in the case above, the foreigner is finally given the opportunity to speak. Communication between foreigner and native breaks the barrier of difference and the two sides begin to acknowledge instead their similarities. Although the protagonist's skin color could classify him as a foreigner as well, it is curious that no one in the community feels threatened by his difference in appearance. As one experiencing liminality, he moves in between the dominant and minority cultures, as he does with respect to oral and written discourse.

All humans are united by our desire and need to communicate with others, but in order to understand the peoples of the Puna, the narrator realizes that he must search beyond the written word to find meaning within orality. In the journey from home to border he moves from a written culture to an oral culture. But, in order to preserve the history of the oral culture he must return to the written culture's writing system. Writing centralizes the marginality of the Northwestern peoples of the Argentine Puna, but writing can at times be a double edged sword. His primary intention entails the act of rooting through words the memories of his homeland before leaving it. However, the act of writing, as explained before, can not fully render reality, as one observes it. Further

complications arise when taking into the account one's audience. Like the exile, Rámirez, in chapter four, the narrator fears that "lo que uno escribe no es lo mismo que los demás leerán" (148). Unlike Ramírez who denies the prison notes he wrote while incarcerated in Argentina as his own, the narrator of La casa y el viento continues writing, even if his words might be misunderstood.

In representing the oral discourse of the indigenous Quechua speakers of the Puna, Tizón innovatively constructs linguistic phrases that incorporate Quechua into Spanish syntax, such as, ¿Cuya sería la llamita que nos comimos? (71), instead of De quien sería... Tizón, in the tradition of Arguedas and Rulfo, expands the Spanish language by addressing linguistic realities common to its oral use.

The Chilean writer Elicura Chihuailaf utilizes the term "oralitura" to explain the literature of oral cultures that exists despite the lack of a written discourse normally associated with literature per se. The second of four chapters in La casa y el viento, entitled "El verso perdido" concerns the narrator's search for the missing pieces to the story and mysterious death of an illiterate poet from the Puna, named Belindo. No written record about this character, real or not, exists and therefore the narrator depends entirely on the collective oral memories of the communities and individuals he comes into contact with in order to construct a cohesive, albeit at times contradictory and fragmentary account about the poet. Why the protagonist suddenly expresses a desire for learning about this figure stems from the last scene of the previous chapter, where he had been hunting ducks with his friend Juan. The disjunction between the narrator's old self and the new self that manifests itself on occasion as he begins to experience exile, serves

as an impetus in unraveling Belindo's story[33] who spent his adult life searching for a lost verse that with its discovery he believed would convert him into an-other, 'en otro.' The protagonist loses a part of his old self as a consequence of exile and the search for the lost verse, represents the opposite search of Belindo's. The narrator has already become an 'other,' what he would hope for is a way in which to hold on to and remember his old familiar identity before crossing the borders of his native land. The words of the verse however remain a mystery and all that the narrator is left with are the phrases and images of the Northwestern culture, that without written discourse he too could easily forget.

Tizón's representation of the spoken word in the Puna mirrors that of the sparse land that these peoples inhabit. That is, there is a certain economy (28) with respect to language, as there is with respect to the vegetation. The narrator explains that for the people of the Puna words "son un peligro mayor que el propio vacío" (41). Loquaciousness manifests itself only under the condition of abundance in one's immediate environment with respect to food and fire (51). Under the dictatorship however, the usual silences of the Northwest, are infiltrated with military marches blasting on radios that the listeners quickly turn off. In contrast to the music made for political purposes, the Northwestern people play music, especially that of a particular flute, the erke, for religious and secular festivities. In Yavi, during the narrator's stay, a religious holiday is celebrated and the saint about whom no information could be found, is taken by the parishioners in a procession through the town. Is the saint an idol of the

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[33] Belindo, son of an indigenous woman, who bleated as a child and never suffered the sting of a bee, heard the lost verse by one who stabbed him and then whispered it in his ear just before dying.

past? Syncretism seems to exist, another form of liminality (in between two religions) that Tizón seems to play with in the novel with respect to the indigenous peoples who have been marginalized by the society as a whole.

Another form of music that they enjoy is the poetry, recited and sung by the cantores, literally singers, who "desde tiempo inmemorial abundaban en esta tierra" (37). Their words are remembered from generation to generation, as testified by the narrator who learned Belindo's poetry from his own grandfather. If we recognize Walter Ong's affirmation that in primary oral cultures words are considered to have magical potency, it should then not surprise us the difficulty the narrator would have in translating the oralitura into written discourse.

**Conclusions**

The narrator's journey to the border becomes not only an external journey but an internal journey of discovery about the self. How does dictatorship affect the identity of the people living under it? Tizón allows us to peer into a world where the victims of dictatorship both suffer from its atrocities and actually appropriate some of the dictatorial tactics for their own agenda. One's home is no longer a sacred space untouched by the outside word; it has been penetrated by the regime, and it has left its mark on those inside who have no means of escaping from it, but that of escape itself. Their only hope is for someone to tell their story. By physically exiling himself, the narrator can write/right his own story and that of his people who have been silenced, into a space where the heterogeneity of his nation, including the exiled, will in the future be remembered and celebrated. Despite the winds of history, home can be reconstructed through the word, by

building it anew with the foundations of truth into the land of memory and into the heart of its owners.

## Conclusion

It has been the objective of this dissertation to explore exile from various physical and symbolic spaces through the novels of six exiled authors. Whether the exile resides in the host country or is on the journey to it, s/he experiences liminality upon the initiation of becoming an exile - which may in fact begin within the homeland. Liminality expresses the exilic experience of belonging in dichotomies, such as those with respect to geography (no longer members of the old country and not natives of the new), time (the past/memories from where they came and the present tense that they currently experience), language (mother tongue and foreign language/dialect), discourses (oral and written), and discursive methods of describing the world (historical and fictional). The novels studied here also represent examples of a 'liminal genre.' That is, these works can not be defined within the constructs of the traditional category of 'novel' per se. Elements of two or more genres are incorporated into the creation of one structurally unique text (e.g., in Moyano's case the autobiography of the author is embedded within a fictional construct, a play constitutes a chapter, an allegorical tale another, and musical notation forms part of the novel's language). In both the physical form of the novel and its contents, exile expresses a transcendence of categorization, crossing over into zones generally demarcated from passage.

The exiles' particular physical location in space constitutes its own obstacles and mechanisms of survival that have been delineated in the chapters of this dissertation. Chapter One studies the difficulty the exile has in penetrating the private spaces of the host land, be it literal or figurative, from the public spaces of institutionalized exile

(hospital, nursing home and mental asylum). Ramírez's loss of memory leads to a coping mechanism of trying to appropriate his native interlocutor's past history for himself. Nevertheless, the lack of true intimacy from both parties, as well as the inability to create a viable identity for himself in exile leads to his own death.[1]

In Daniel Moyano's novel, Rolando travels in between two borders by ship from the New World to the Old. He has difficulty assimilating his newly acquired identity as an exile especially given that he was unaware of the fact that he would be parting from the homeland until the event actually took place. Besides writing, which actually transpires after arrival to the host land, Rolando copes with his new status aboard the ship by using his imagination to create another Rolando in his mind whose situation is more favorable than the one he experiences in reality. Fiction is used not only by himself for himself but by many in order to explain the unexplainable disasters left behind in the homeland.[2]

In Marta Traba's novel, the exiles who have arrived to a host land in Europe encounter one major obstacle in that they are hoarded together in an abandoned train station without privacy or any guarantee from the host government that a home will be

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[1] In Manuel Puig's novel the revolutionary from Argentina becomes transformed into an unheroic figure without any recollection of his past. Revolutionaries in Rodolfo Rabanal's En otra parte and El pasajero, like Ramírez, from Puig's novel, are also not to be revered but reviled. The manners in which society constructs and destructs its heroes are questioned here by both authors, as does Mario Benedetti with Santiago in Primavera con una esquina rota.

[2] Daniel Moyano's novel where imagined and experienced realities conflate, can be compared to Edgardo Cozarinksy's Libro de Manuel, Vudú urbano, a novel consisting of post cards written from Buenos Aires (homeland) and Paris (adopted land), in which the narrator conflates memories with the present tense so that the two cities become indistinguishable.

provided for them. They have become outcasts and the host country has labeled them as undesirable 'others' who have nothing to offer their society. The manner in which the exiles survive this unwelcome beginning in another country is by upholding their identity as members of the same nationality. Still, experimentation with respect to identity takes place, especially with the women in the novel who are able to create identities of their own accord and not those based on hegemonic standards.[3]

Antonio Skármeta and Mario Benedetti's characters live in the host lands and their challenge consists of learning how to survive in a foreign environment once having obtained a private space of their own from within it. The adults in Benedetti's novel must decide whether or not to move forward with their lives in exile, or if this would imply a disloyalty to the homeland and those left behind. Benedetti's Don Rafael, and Skármeta's adolescent Lucho, both acquaint themselves with the new land via the native women, and language becomes the primary vehicle in befriending the 'other.'[4]

We have seen in Héctor Tizón's novel[5] that it is extremely difficult to bid farewell

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[3] This experimentation with gender identity is especially seen in female exiled novelists, such as Cristina Peri Rossi in La nave de los locos, Isabel Allende in Eva Luna and Luisa Valenzuela in Novela negra con argentinos.

[4] The exploration of the exilic experience from this physical space can also be seen in other novels such as Mempo Giardinelli's Qué solos se quedan los muertos; Gabriel Casaccia's Los exiliados , José Donoso's El jardín de al lado; Alfredo Bryce Echenique's Un mundo para Julius, and Mario Goloboff's Caballos por el fondo de los ojos.

[5] In Héctor Tizón's novel the exiled protagonist intently records cultural information for himself as well as for posterity about the indigenous peoples of his homeland, something that occurs also in Gregorio Manzur's (also an Argentine from the interior of the country) Solstice du jaguar. The desire to not only remember but honor the native inhabitants of the countries from which the authors exiled themselves, becomes evident in other novels as well, such as Mario Vargas Llosa's El hablador, and Luis Sepúlveda's Un viejo que leía novelas de amor.

to one's homeland, and yet, having accepted exile as the only viable alternative to dictatorship, the protagonist begins to experience a change with respect to his identity before having crossed the border. He senses that he no longer is the man he once was, and this uncontrollable other within is disturbing to him. Writing as a means of catharsis is a survival mechanism that he recurs to, as do Daniel Moyano and Antonio Skármeta's characters. Psychological survival for Tizón's character entails that of recording on paper those memories that will remind him of home.

As a consequence of exile, the subjects are separated from their familiar environments and cast into unknown geographies from which they may never be able to return home, though they always hope that one day they will. This displacement can be both crippling and liberating: crippling in the traumatic sense of having lost all that one has hitherto known and loved, but liberating in that the individuals can experiment with the crossing of borders as well as with their own concepts of identity.

Unrestricted, unconfined and undefined, exiles trespass into unchartered territories that cultures have impeded or thwarted its members from normally experiencing. The exchanges between the exiles and the various environments they encounter express the degree to which translations are a crucial part in communicating that which is considered to be 'other,' be it with respect to people, cultures, or languages. The act of translation is common to all people in all corners of the world as Octavio Paz has recognized: "Translation is the principal means we have of understanding the world we live in" (Bassnett 2). For exiles however, the translations they engage in so as to understand their new environments as well as those left behind are not one-sided, nor merely related to

linguistic events. Exiles are both subjects who translate their surroundings and objects of translation by their adopted societies. The liminal status as exiles, however, requires of them not only to translate the external world but also the internal one as well. For exiles the latter seems to lead to the realization of Rimbaud's assertion that, "Je est un autre." The exile literature presented in this dissertation demonstrates that translations provided by exiles help explain to a large degree how we imagine and define ourselves, own communities and nations and how we confront that which is unfamiliar and unknown.

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